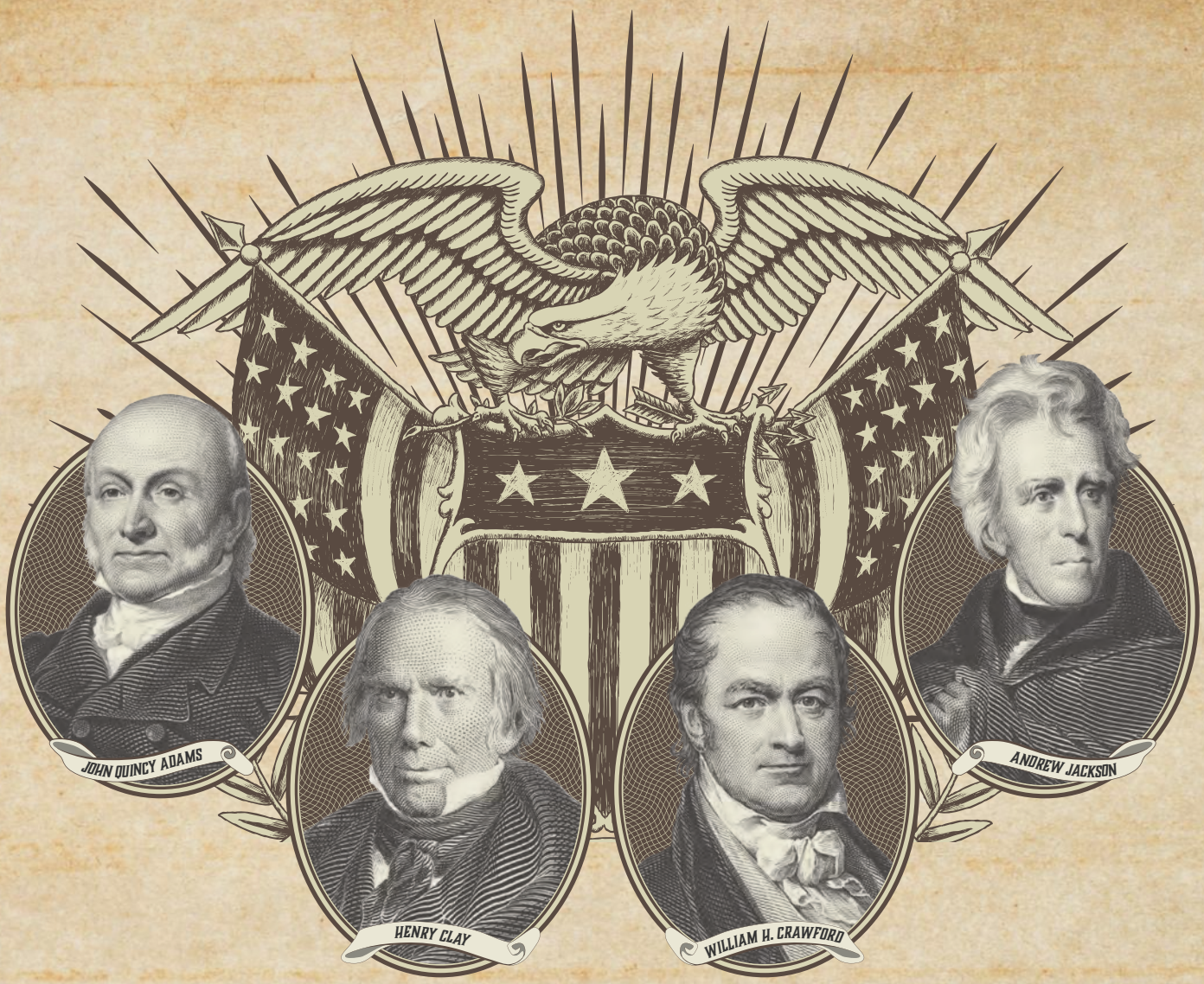
CORRUPT BARGAIN

★★★ THE 1824 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION ★★★



DECISION GAMES

INTRODUCTION

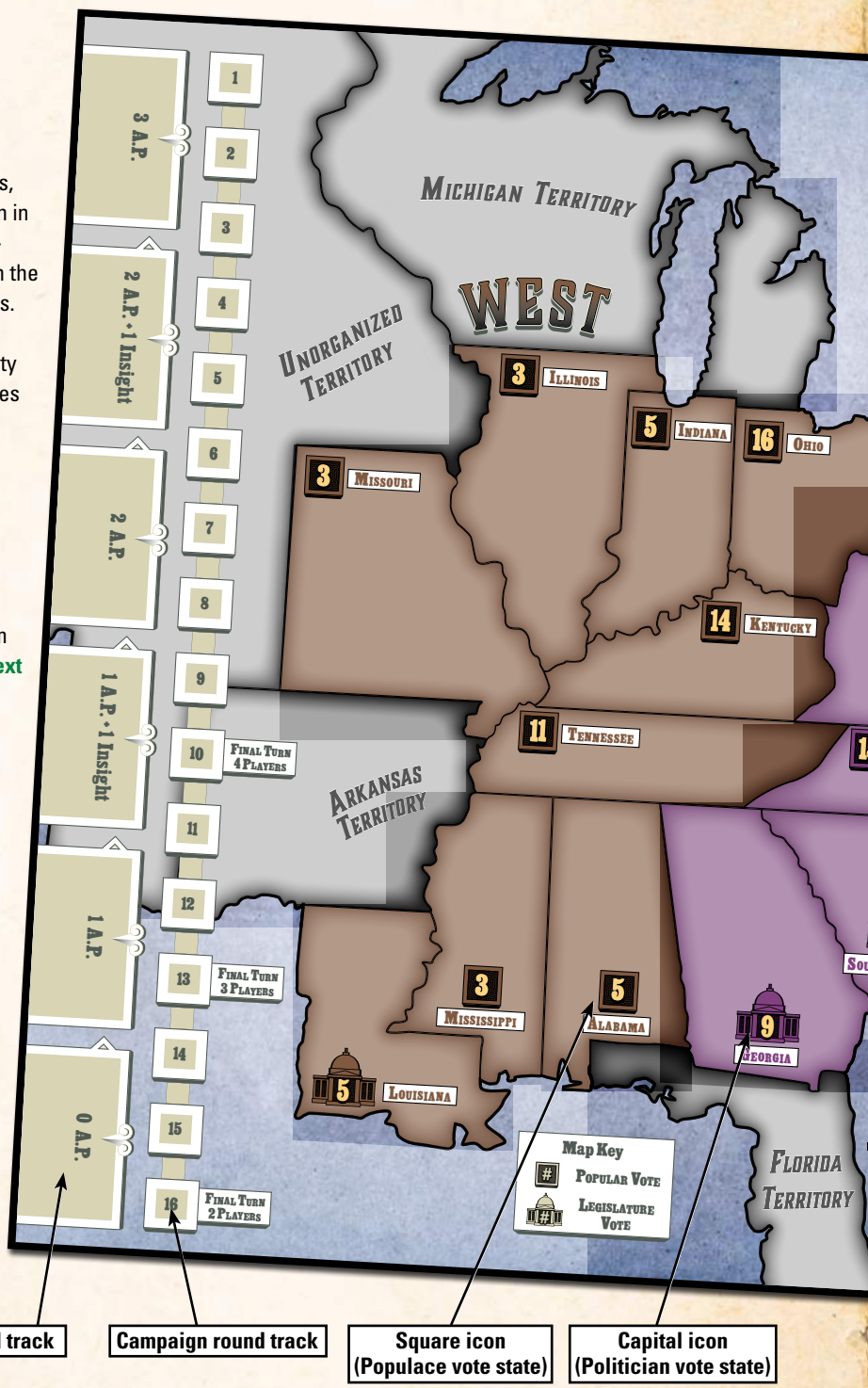
Each player represents one of the major candidates (Adams, Clay, Crawford or Jackson) and their campaign organization in the 1824 federal election. Through strategic alliances, campaigning, and back room politics, the players attempt to win the election and become the next President of the United States. The election is won outright by obtaining a majority of the Electoral College votes. However, if no player wins a majority there, then the election goes to the House of Representatives where the player with a majority of states wins.

RULES

These rules are color-coded. **Red text** identifies important rules, clarifications, and special circumstances to make them easy to locate. **Blue text** identifies examples of play. **Green text** identifies helpful play notes. These rules are followed by an article that provides background on the presidential election process, and the history leading up to the 1824 election.

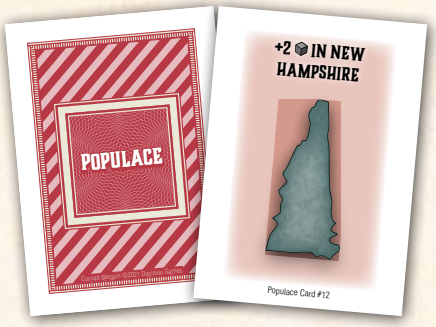
COMPONENTS

- 200 large cards (60 Populace, 60 Politician, and 80 Event)
- 25 small State cards
- 4 Player Aid cards
- 1 Mounted game board
- 1 Rules & Historical Background booklet
- 160 Populace cubes (40 red, 40 blue, 40 green, 40 yellow)
- 160 Politician octagons (40 red, 40 blue, 40 green, 40 yellow)
- 12 black Lockdown cylinders

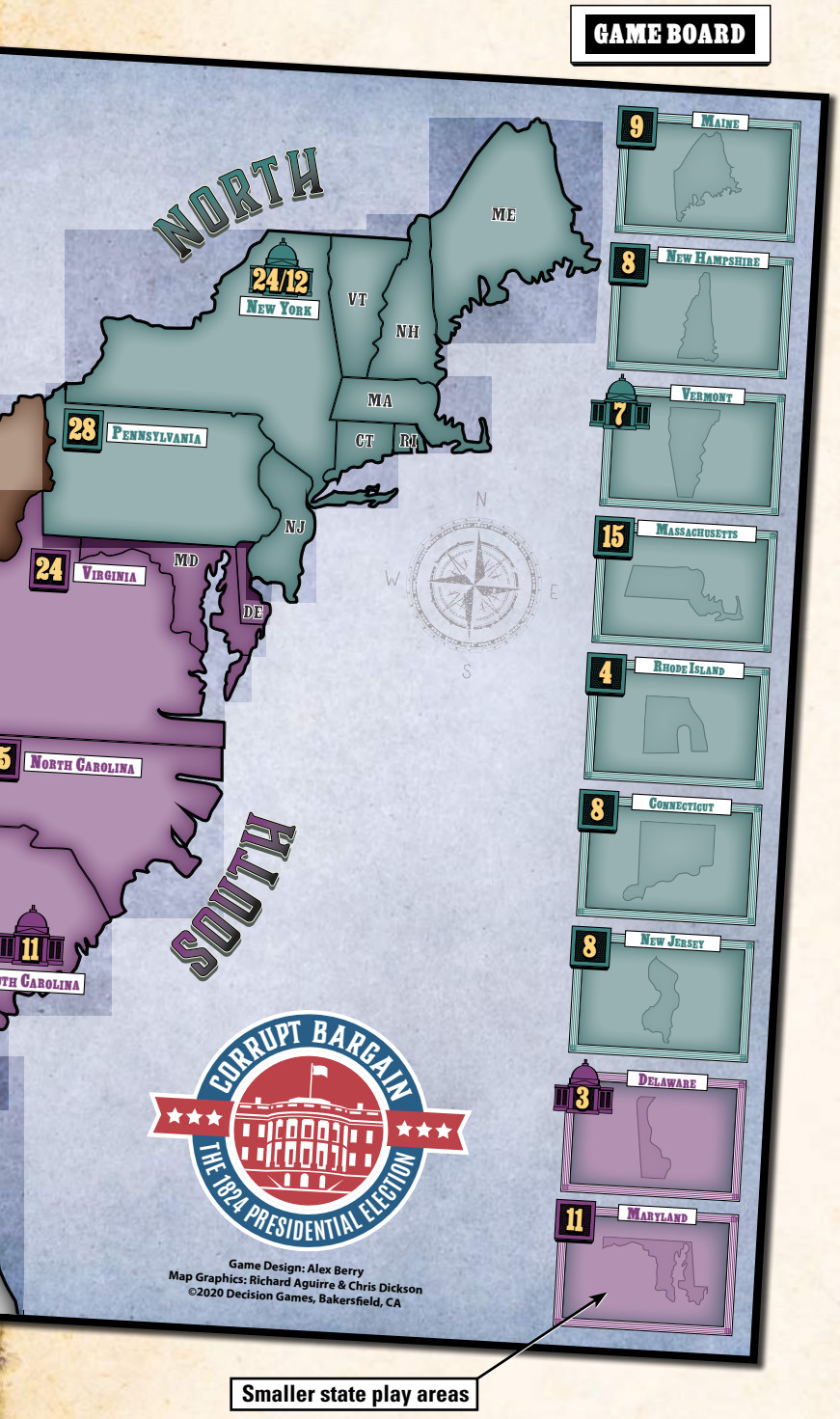


POLITICIAN CARDS

POPULACE CARDS



EVENT CARDS



GAME BOARD

The game board is a political map of the United States in 1824. Each state shows the number of Electoral College votes the winner of that state will receive. Each state also has either a square or a capital icon. This indicates whether the state's Electorial College votes go to the candidate with the most popular votes (square for cubes) or the most politician votes (capital for octagons). The smaller states are shown along the east side of the map.

The map is divided into three colored regions (East, South, and West). Along the western side of the map is the Event card track. Each turn, a player will pick one card from this group and slide the cards up to fill the empty slots on the track. Then a new card is dealt to the lowest (0 A.P.) slot (see Event cards section).

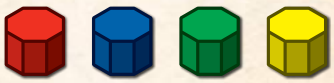
TOKENS

Cubes represent popular votes. Octagons represent politicians and their influence. The number of cubes and octagons is an intentional limit. Cubes and octagons are collectively referred to as "tokens" when both are involved or allowed in play.

Black Lockdown cylinders are placed on a state when it is locked down. No further Populace cubes or Politician octagons may be added to a state with a Lockdown cylinder in it. A lockdown occurs when a player turns in a set of three Event cards with identical policies (the suit icons in the upper left corner).

POPULACE CUBES

POLITICIAN OCTAGONS



LOCKDOWN CYLINDERS

STATE CARDS

PLAYER AID CARDS

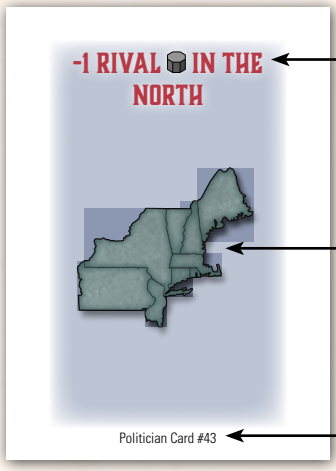
CARDS

There are four types of cards, three large and one small. Event cards are the focus of the game. Players choose an Event card each turn and play it for the specific *events* on that card as well the *Actions* and *Insights* gained from the position of the card on the Event card track. They also collect Event cards to form three-of-a-kind sets that can be played to *Lockdown* a state, preventing further play in there.

Populace and Politician cards are collected during player turns and are played during the Final Push. They provide opportunities to push ahead in votes and influence in the final run-up to the election.

The small State cards are for counting the votes during the election. As each state is counted and a winner determined, the corresponding card is awarded to that player. When all states have been counted, each player then counts their Electoral College votes or states to find the winner.

POLITICIAN CARDS



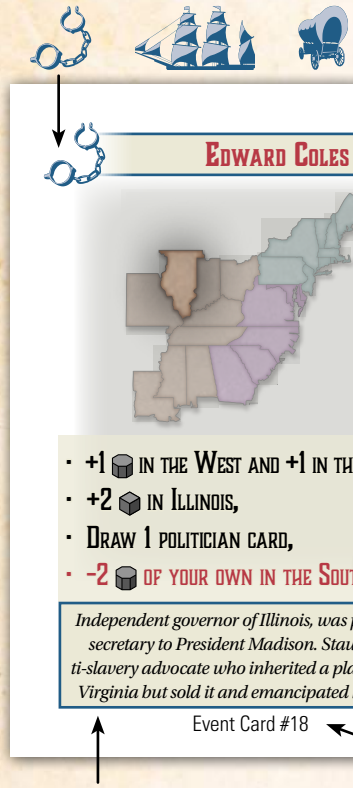
Card Actions
Take these actions during the Final Push.

Map Image

Card Number

EVENT CARDS

Card Suit
Used in the Lockdown phase.
Slavery, Trade or Western Expansion.



Card Title

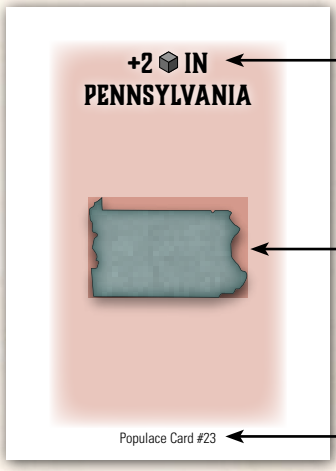
Map Image
Shows the state and/or region(s) this card can effect.

Card Events
Complete these events if possible when you take this card.

Historical Background Note

Card Number
Used in the ultimate tiebreaker.

POPULACE CARDS

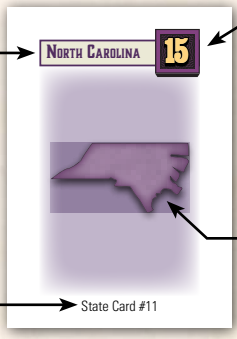


Card Actions
Take these actions during the Final Push.

Map Image

Card Number

STATE CARDS



State Name

Electoral College votes
Count these in the Electoral College.

Map Image

Card Number

HOW TO WIN

At the end of the game, a player with a *majority* of the Electoral College vote (at least 131 of the 261 possible votes) wins the game. If no player achieves 131 Electoral College votes, the election goes to the House of Representatives for a Contingent Election. The top three candidates from the Electoral College compete and the player with the majority (13 or more) of state victories wins. If no player has a majority of states, then the third place candidate is dropped and the player with the most state victories wins.

SETUP

1. Each player chooses a set of cubes and octagons of the same color.
2. Shuffle the Event, Populace, and Politician decks separately and place each deck face down on the table.
3. Deal the top six event cards face-up to the slots on the Event card track with one card occupying each slot.
4. Each player draws one Event card. The player with the highest card number goes first. Discard those cards to the bottom of the Event deck.
5. A 4-player game lasts 10 Campaign rounds. A 3-player game lasts 13 Campaign rounds. A 2-player game lasts 16 Campaign rounds.

TURN SEQUENCE

Players conduct their turns in clockwise order. In a three or four player game, the starting player order rotates clockwise each round. Thus, the second player in the first round will become the first player in the second round, etc. In a two-player game, players simply alternate turns. Players may wish to identify the first player by placing a token of each color on the Campaign round track. The player currently taking their turn is the active player.

SEQUENCE OF PLAY

CAMPAIGN TURNS

1. If the Active player has three Event cards of the same suit, they may Lockdown any one state of their choice.
   Note: This step is skipped the first three Campaign rounds (as no one has three cards to play until the start of the fourth round).
2. The active player selects one card from the face-up Event cards on the Event card track, then completes the following steps:
   a. Complete the events indicated on the Event card.
   b. Complete the number of actions and insights indicated under the card on the Event card track.
   c. Slide the remaining Event cards up the Event card track and draw and place a new Event card on the 0 A.P. slot.
3. The next player becomes the active player and completes steps #1 and #2.
4. After all players have completed a turn, the second player of that round places their token on the next turn on the Campaign round track and starts the next round (i.e. becomes the first player). If the round completed is the last Campaign round (e.g. round 10 in a 4-player game), play proceeds to the Final Push.

FINAL PUSH

5. Each player counts the total number of Politician and Populace cards they collected during Campaign rounds. The player with the most cards is the first player.
6. Players reveal one card of their choice from their hand and complete the action(s) on the card. Play continues until all Politician and Populace cards have been played. The Campaign round track is no longer used.

ELECTORAL COLLEGE

7. Check each state for a winner. The winner of each state receives that state's card (1st and 2nd place receive New York's two cards.
   Note: The states voting by state legislature (Politician octagons) are denoted on the map by a capital building. All other states vote by popular vote (cubes).
8. Players total their Electoral College votes. If any player has a *majority* (131 Electoral College votes or more), they are the winner. If not, the 4th place player is dropped, and play continues to the Contingent Election.

CONTINGENT ELECTION

9. Only the top three players in EC voting continue into the Contingent Election.
10. Check each state for a winner by counting Politican octagons only. The winner of each state receives that state's card. Don't use the 2nd place New York card in this phase.
11. Players count their state cards. If any player has a *majority* (13 or more states), they are the winner. If not (possible with three players), the player with the fewest state victories is dropped, and there is a Contingent Election recount with only the top two.

SUITS AND LOCKDOWNS

Each Event card is marked with an Issue Suit: Slavery, Trade or Western Expansion, denoted by the icon in the upper left corner of the card. At the start of their turn, if a player has three Event cards in one suit, they may discard the set to place a Lockdown cylinder on the state of their choice. For the rest of the game, no player can add or remove tokens in that state through any means whatsoever. Only one Lockdown can be performed per player turn.

EVENT CARDS

Each turn, the active player selects one of the Event cards from the Event card track and completes the events on it, drawing cards, or adding/removing tokens as indicated. These do not count as actions. If tokens of the type and location specified are not present, those tokens are not removed. If a player has already placed all of his tokens of a given type, more tokens cannot be added. Cubes may not be added to states with capitals (only octagons). If a state is locked down, no tokens may be added or removed.

Next, the cards lower down the Event card track are moved one slot higher, and a new Event card is drawn to place in the 0 A.P. slot. Players keep their Event cards face-down and separate from their Populace and Politician cards so they can turn them in for lockdowns.

Note: Players may want to place one of their cubes on the Event card track slot selected as a reminder of the number of actions and insights they can play.

ACTIONS

Depending on the slot the Event card occupied, the player will accrue up to three Action Points (AP). AP are spent on the following actions for one AP each. No action may be conducted more than once in a player's turn.

1. **Campaign for Political Support:** Place one Politician octagon in any one state.
2. **Campaign for Popular Votes:** Place one Populace cube in any one state with a square icon.
3. **Work the Back Rooms:** Draw four Politician cards. Keep one for the Final Push. Place the other three at the bottom of the Politician deck.
4. **Get Out The Vote:** Draw four Populace cards. Keep one for the Final Push. Place the other three at the bottom of the Populace deck.
5. **Political Intrigue:** Select a state where the player has at least one Politician octagon and choose one opponent. The player removes one of their own Politician octagons and up to two Politician octagons of that opponent.

INSIGHT

When a player has picked an Event card from one of the two slots marked "*+ Insight,*" after completing the actions, do one of the following:

a. Draw two random cards from one opponent's Populace and Politician cards, look at them, keep one and return the other to the opponent

b. If no opponent has two Populace/Politician cards, draw one card from either the Populace or Politician deck instead.

FINAL PUSH

After the last Campaign round, the game continues into the Final Push. Discard all remaining Event cards. The player with the most total remaining Populace and Politician cards is the first player in the Final Push and play continues clockwise. Each player plays one card from their hand per turn and completes the actions on it (this might have no effect if the state on the card is locked down). Players must play a card if they have any remaining in their hand (even if the card has no effect). When a player has no cards left, they are finished. When all players are out of cards, the Final Push ends and scoring begins.

Note: The last player plays the rest of their cards one at a time until no cards remain.

ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Players review each state to determine the player with the most octagons there (for the 6 states with capital icons) or the most cubes (the other 18 states). As each state victor is determined, the winner receives that state's card (e.g., the blue player wins Pennsylvania; they receive the Pennsylvania card showing they have 28 Electoral College votes.). Be careful to check for first and second place in New York and award the corresponding EC votes to the first and second place winners. If any player has 131 or more Electoral College votes, they win the game.

Note: Players may want to check states by completing one region at a time.

If no player won, continue to the Contingent Election in the House of Representatives. Only the top 3 Electoral College vote winners continue; in a 4-player game, the player with the fewest Electoral College votes is dropped (in a 3-player game, all three continue). If there is more than one player with the fewest Electoral College votes, the player with fewer Politican octagons on the board is dropped. If still tied, use the Ultimate Tiebreaker.

Note: In a two-player game, because there are an odd number of total Electoral College votes, a tie is not possible (the closest contest would be 131 to 130).

Two-player games do not use the Contingent Election.

BREAKING TIES

If multiple players are tied for a state's Electoral College vote, break the tie as follows:

1. By having the most Politician octagons in that state.
2. If still tied, by having the most Politician octagons in that state's region.
3. If still tied, by having the most Politician octagons on the entire map.
4. If still tied, by the Ultimate Tie-breaker.

CONTINGENT ELECTION

The Contingent Election is determined solely by Politician octagons (cubes do not count). A player wins the Contingent Election by winning a majority (13 or more) of the state votes (regardless of how many Electoral College votes those states have). The player with the most octagons in each state receives that state's card (No one receives the 2nd place New York card in the Contingent Election). Break ties as listed above (starting at step 2).

When three players are competing in the Contingent Election, and no player wins 13 or more state victories, the top two players go into a run-off. If the second and third place players are tied in state votes, break the tie as listed above (starting at step 3).

Note: In a two-player run-off, if the players are tied (12 to 12), break the tie as listed above (starting at step 3).

ULTIMATE TIEBREAKER

If no other procedure breaks a tie, those involved each draw one Event card. The player with the highest card number is the winner. Discard those cards to the bottom of the Event deck.

4-PLAYER GAME SCORING

In counting the votes for the Electoral College, the players have the following results:

Player	Red	Blue	Green	Yellow	Total
Votes	99	62	56	54	271

No player achieved an Electoral College majority (131 or more), so the top three players proceed to the Contingent Election. Now they count Politician octagons only. The results are:

Player	Red	Blue	Green	Total
States	10 NY, ME, CT, NH, NJ, RI, MD, SC, IL, MS	8 PA, MA, VT, VA, NC, GA, DE, MO	6 OH, KY, TN, IN, AL, LA	24

No player achieved a Contingent Election majority (13 or more), so the top two players proceed to a recount of states by Politician octagons as before, but with the green player eliminated.

Note: this only requires recounting the states Green won since the Red and Blue state victories would not change in the recount.

Player	Blue	Red	Total
States	13 PA, MA, VT, VA, NC, GA, DE, MO, KY, TN, IN, AL, LA	11 NY, ME, CT, NH, NJ, RI, MD, SC, IL, MS, OH	24

After the recount, blue wins the game with 13 states.

QUICK PLAY RULES

Start a game as usual, however each player's turn consists of only the following steps:

1. **Lockdown:** unchanged.
2. **Draw Event card:** the Event card track is not used. Instead, the active player draws two Event cards from the deck, reviews both, and discards one. They may then play the card for its listed events or, instead, may take one additional action in the action phase (3 total). In either case, they keep the Event card for a potential lockdown.
3. **Action phase:** the player receives two action points every player turn.
4. **No Insight phase.**
5. **Final Push, Electoral College, and Contingent Election are played as usual.**

Note: we recommend playing a two-player game for your first game (or as a quicker game by dividing into two teams). Because the Contingent Election will not come into play (one of the two players will have a majority), two player games are a straight forward race to win a majority in the Electoral College.

HISTORICAL START OPTION

Use the following historical setup to give each candidate a head start in their respective home areas. It is up to the players which player and color represents each candidate.

- **John Quincy Adams:**
  - Massachusetts: 1 cube, 2 octagons
  - Maine, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire: 1 cube each
- **Andrew Jackson:**
  - Tennessee: 2 cubes, 1 octagon
  - South Carolina: 1 octagon
  - Alabama, Pennsylvania, North Carolina: 1 cube each
- **William Crawford:**
  - Virginia: 1 cube, 2 octagons
  - Georgia: 2 octagons
  - North Carolina: 1 cube, 1 octagon
- **Henry Clay:**
  - Ohio: 1 cube, 2 octagons
  - Kentucky: 1 cube, 2 octagons
  - Indiana: 1 octagon
- Start on Round 2
- Round 2 turn order: Adams, Jackson, Crawford, Clay

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