

Catspaw Diplomacy

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The basic idea of this variant was to produce a three player version using standard board and most of the standard rules. Balance and fun were major considerations and strategy of play was to be preserved. Most three player variants are lacking in one or more of the above.

The game developed because we had only three people available on Sunday afternoon, wanted to play Diplomacy and were dissatisfied with all other three-player systems with which we were acquainted.

In all other three player variants, a player has command of more than one country or some countries are vacant. In either case, interaction between players is usually limited to smash and grab tactics with little real diplomacy. It is the nature of a three player game that alliances are well nigh impossible to form or maintain. Therefore a substitute for diplomatic interaction might be found to put the fun back into the game.

Hereafter, then, are the rules of Catspaw Diplomacy.

All rules of the 1971 Rulebook apply with the following changes and additions.

There are only three players in active full command of one country each.

A player may write orders in the normal manner for his own pieces and may write EXTRA orders for pieces not owned by himself or the other two players.

The number of such extra orders he is allowed to write is determined by subtracting the number of supply centers he owns from 18, dividing the difference by three and rounding down.

Thus, he may write 5 orders, if he has 1-3 SC's, 4 if 4-6 SC's, etc. Obviously if he has no SC's he may write 6 EXTRA orders.

These EXTRA orders may be applied only to unowned units.

He may write the same order to the same unit several times within his limit of extra orders.

Conflicting orders to the same unit are resolved by plurality rule. That is, if a unit receives 2 orders to one province, and 3 orders to another province, then it would move as the three orders commanded. In equal conflicts, the unit ordered holds.

A player may write any order for a unit that the unit could legally perform. An invalid order has no effect on the resolution of conflicting orders.

A unit may not be ordered to dislodge or support the dislodgement of a piece belonging to its own country as this would be invalid according to the 1971 Rulebook.

Buils are handled differently than moves, each player being allowed to write one and only one EXTRA buil for an unowned country. Conflicting buils are handled similarly to conflicting orders. Removals and retreats for unowned units are handled as for countries NMRing.

Variations on this theme are endless; two, four, five, six, and even seven player variants are possible. Variants based on Youngstown or other variants; variants where you can order units that actually belong to other players. Combination novelty variants, such as Catspaw Black Hole, popular around here because of the quickness of it. It's quick because the board disappears around you.