

KINGDOM OF HEROES

KINGDOM OF HEROES

A game by Gláucio Reis
for 3 to 4 players, from 10 y.o.

INTRODUCTION

The king is deadly ill and the kingdom of Kariandra is overrun by chaos. Law states that the successor must be a man, but the king had only daughters – five beautiful young ladies now, and four of them are in peril. Soon he shall choose his successor among the nobles called to save the princesses and to help rid the kingdom from its enemies. But the candidate to the throne must also marry one of the princesses.

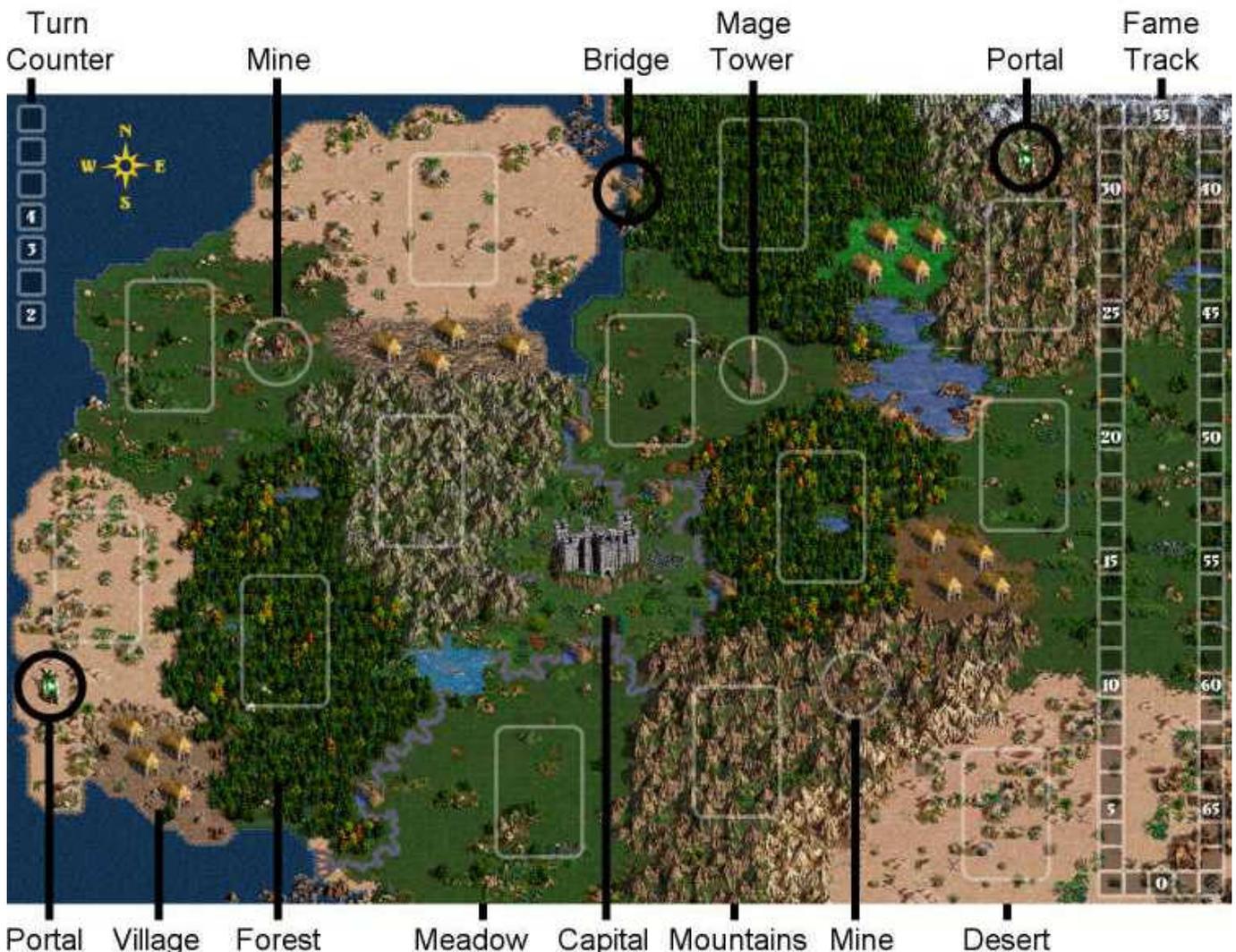
The players represent those nobles, who wish to prove their valor and leadership by sending heroes to complete various missions. They will count on the help of the Royal Wizard Zatorius and Princess Sapphire, who has become a knight of great bravery. In the end, the noble who gains most fame and the heart of a princess will become the new king.

COMPONENTS

1 board
40 mission cards
2 special cards
5 map cards
36 silver coins (1 crown)
24 gold coins (3 crowns)
1 turn marker
1 starting player marker
2 white heroes
4 artifacts (rings)
4 hearts
4 crystals
1 die (numbered 1, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4)
4 reference sheets

In each of the 4 player colors:
3 mages
4 knights
10 adventurers
1 fame marker

Board:



Each region has a terrain type. Regions with a common border are considered neighboring. Rivers and lakes separate regions, but rivers can be crossed by bridges. The desert and forest northern regions, linked by a bridge, are also considered neighboring.

Mission Card:



Terrain icons:

- Meadow
- Forest
- Mountain
- Desert
- E** East (any of the 3 regions in the far East of the board)
- L** Littoral (any of the 4 regions bathed by the sea: two deserts, meadow and forest to the West)

There are seven mission types, represented by different symbols: enemy of the crown, princess, magical prowess, war, relic, dragon and creature.

SETUP

Each player takes pieces of one color and money, according to the number of players:
 3 players – 3 mages, 4 knights, 10 adventurers and 12 crowns, placing 1 mage, 1 knight and 7 adventurers in the capital.
 4 players – 2 mages, 3 knights, 8 adventurers and 9 crowns (the remaining heroes do not participate in the game), placing 1 mage, 1 knight and 5 adventurers in the capital.

Princess Sapphire and Royal Wizard Zatorius (white knight and mage) also go to the capital, for now. The fame markers are placed on the zero space of the track, with the blank side up.

Separate the mission cards according to the letter on their backs and shuffle each stack separately, placing them face-down near the board. Shuffle the map cards and make another stack with them. The special cards are put aside, face-up, with the hearts on Princess Sapphire’s card, and the crystals on Zatorius’s. Put the remaining money (bank) in reach of the players. Randomly select a player to take the starting player marker.

THE GAME

The game is divided into *rounds*. Each round begins with the placement of mission cards on the board. The players alternate *turns* moving their heroes. The round ends with the resolution of missions. After 4 rounds, the players score their cards and other items.

Start of the Round

Reveal the top map card. It indicates where the mission cards must be preferably placed. Take the top card from stack A and place it on the board, according to its terrain icon, in the empty region with the lowest number. If all regions corresponding to the indicated terrain are occupied, move the card to the bottom of the stack and take another.

Example: You take a card with the meadow icon. The meadow region corresponding to number 1 already has a card. The meadow region number 2 is empty, so you place the card there.

Note: For the littoral icon, there may be regions with the same number. When it is necessary to choose between them, the preference is for the region with the circled number.

Do the same with cards from the other stacks, in alphabetical order. Then, repeat the whole procedure, starting again from stack A (in the first round, there will be 10 cards on the board, two from each stack). If only two empty regions remain, do not take any more cards. There is also a limit for the amount of red and yellow cards on the board: 3 red, 4 yellow. When any of these totals are reached, don't take more cards from the respective stacks.

Afterwards, Sapphire and Zatorius choose their missions. They must move onto a card in another region, Sapphire first. The card must *preferably* be blue and contain the respective hero symbol: knight for Sapphire, mage for Zatorius. Notice the following restrictions:

- Sapphire never goes to a card with a heart symbol;
- Zatorius never goes to regions neighboring the capital;
- Each one must go to a different card.

In case it is possible to choose cards, the decision belongs to the starting player of the current round.

Example: When moving Zatorius, there are two blue cards with a mage symbol, one in the region where he is, and the other in a region neighboring the capital. Thus, they are not eligible. However, in other regions far from the capital, there is another blue card without the symbol, besides a red and a yellow one with mage symbols. As all three match just one of the conditions, any of them may be chosen. But if one of the blue cards with the mage symbol was in one of those regions, it would have to be chosen, for matching both conditions.

The starting player places the turn marker in the turn counter position whose number is equal to the number of players.

Players' Turns

Each player, on his turn, may perform the following actions, in this order:

1. Movement (obligatory);
2. Promotion;
3. Recruitment.

1. Movement

The player *must* make one or two moves. He may move one group of heroes *or* two heroes separately.

– The player must move up to 4 of his heroes of a region, village or the capital. The hero or group may move inside the same region or to one neighboring region or village.

– Heroes moving into or inside a region with a card may engage in the mission, being placed onto the card illustration. Heroes in missions cannot be moved.

– If *more than one hero* enters a region with a mission card, at least one of them must engage in it, except if the player already has 3 or more heroes in that mission.

– The same group or a part of it may move a second time. Only members of the original group can move, even if the player has other heroes in the same region.

– If two heroes move separately, each hero can move just once.

– It is not allowed to move two different groups, nor a group and a separate hero.

– Gold mines and the Mage Tower: If the destination region contains a mine or the tower, the player may place 1 adventurer on it. The adventurer cannot be moved out. Each of those places can have only 1 adventurer of each color.

– Magic Portal: It is possible to move normally from one of the regions with a magic portal to the other, as if they were neighboring.

– Villages: For movement purposes, they count as a region, but may never contain more than 4 heroes of each color.

– Capital: It is not allowed to enter the capital.

2. Promotion

The player may promote adventurers to knights, only in the capital. He pays 3 crowns for each of his adventurers that he wants to promote and replaces them with knights from his reserve. The removed adventurers go back to his reserve and may be recruited again, even in the same turn.

3. Recruitment

The player may recruit adventurers (never knights or mages) in the capital and villages, taking them from his reserve and putting them on those places. He may recruit as many adventurers as he wants in the capital, paying 2 crowns for adventurer. In the villages, he must have at least one hero where he wants to recruit, but pays only 1 crown for adventurer. He can never have more than 4 heroes in each village.

Passing

If the player *cannot* move any hero, and cannot or does not want to recruit, he passes.

End of Turn

Play passes to the player on the left. The starting player must always advance the turn marker when his turn comes. When it cannot be advanced any further, the round ends with a mission resolution phase (with 3 players, there are 5 turns for each; with 4 players, 4 turns).

Mission Resolution

In this phase, gold from the mines is taken, missions are fulfilled, and apprentices can complete their training in the Mage Tower.

Gold Mines

Each mine provides 3 crowns to each player that has an adventurer on it. The adventurer returns immediately to the capital.

Missions

Missions are resolved one by one, according to the heroes on each card. Go from West to East, but attention: *red cards* must always be resolved *last*.

A mission is successful if there are heroes in the types and quantities indicated by the hero symbols on the card, counting all colors together.

In that case, assign fame points. Each player who has 1 hero in the mission scores 1 point; each player who has 2 or more heroes scores 2 points. Advance the respective markers on the fame track. If a marker goes all the way around the track, flip it over.

If there are heroes of more than one color (including white) on the card, determine the value of each color, in the following way:

1 point for each adventurer;

2 points for each knight or mage;

1 point for each symbol on the card that can be associated to a different hero;

1 point for artifact.

The “any hero” symbols are not used in those associations. Each symbol can only be used once per color, and a single hero cannot be associated to more than one symbol.

Example: There are 2 adventurer symbols on the card. The green player has 5 adventurers, but gains only 2 extra points (7 in total). Blue has just 1 adventurer and gains 1 extra point (2 in total).

The player with the greatest value is the mission leader and chooses one of his heroes to represent him, preferably one whose symbol is on the card, and places it on the mission-type symbol. In case of a tie, the player, among the tied ones, who comes earlier in turn order is the leader.

Determine casualties. The leader rolls the die. If the result is higher than the total number of heroes, there are no casualties. If the result is 1, each player loses one hero of his choice. If the result is other, divide the total of heroes by it to find the number of casualties, rounding down if necessary. Then, the player with most heroes must eliminate one of his, followed by the player with second most, and so on, until the total of casualties is reached. If that total is not reached, the cycle is repeated. Sometimes, the actual casualties may be higher than the determined number, if two or more players have the same number of heroes and it is their turn to lose one. But attention: the hero representing the mission leader can only be eliminated when the number rolled on the die is 1. Eliminated heroes go back to their players' reserve.

Example: There is a total of 10 heroes, being 5 yellow, 2 red, 2 green and 1 blue. The number rolled is 2. Therefore, 5 heroes must die. Starting from yellow, each player removes 1 hero. As there is still 1 hero needed to complete 5, 1 more yellow hero is eliminated. If the number rolled was 4, just 2 heroes should die. After the yellow player removed 1 hero, it would be the turn of red and green, as they are tied in second. So, actually 3 heroes would die instead of 2.

Distribute the rewards among all players who participated in the mission, even if they lost their heroes.

- Money is shared equally among each player and the king (the king's share is just subtracted from the total). If the division is not exact, the remainder goes to the leader.

- Heroes are split in the same way, but just among the players. In the case of heroes of different categories, the leader takes the unique hero. They are placed on the board in the same region (not on the card) and/or in the neighboring village, if there is one (respecting the limit of 4 heroes of each color), at each player's choice. If a player does not have a hero of the specified type in his reserve, he can move it from anywhere on the board, except mission cards; in case he cannot or does not want to move a hero, the new hero is lost.

- Artifacts go to the leader, but he must have, in the mission, a hero of the type indicated by the artifact symbol. Else, in case another single player has an appropriate hero, that player receives the artifact. Otherwise, the artifact is lost. The player puts a ring on the appropriate hero. Each hero can carry just one artifact. If the hero dies, the artifact is lost. If he is promoted, he must discard the artifact and receive 1 fame point.

All survivors return to the capital (heroes received as a reward remain where they are). The leader takes the card. Gained cards should be kept hidden from the opponents.

Additionally, if Princess Sapphire's mission is successful, its leader receives one heart from her card. Likewise, the leader of Zatorius's successful mission wins one magic crystal. But in the last round, the respective leaders take all hearts and crystals left.

Notice that Sapphire and Zatorius count for the success of a mission and for determining the number of casualties. They can even be leaders, if no player at least equals their value (they lose ties), and in that case the card is removed from the game. However, they do not count for the division of rewards, nor receive artifacts. They can never be eliminated as casualties and stay in the regions of their respective missions after those have been resolved.

Failed mission: If any hero determined by the symbols on the card is missing, the mission has failed. There is no leader, fame or reward. Determine casualties normally, except that the number of heroes is doubled for the calculation. The survivors must continue in the mission, which remains on the board.

Mage Tower

Each player who has an adventurer in the Mage Tower may promote him to mage, by paying 3 crowns. The player must remove the adventurer off the board and place a mage either in that region or the capital. If he cannot or does not want to pay, the adventurer must return to the capital. The player may promote the adventurer earlier, anytime during the mission resolution phase. That can be useful if he receives an adventurer as a reward and does not have one in his reserve.

Payment to Adventurers

Lastly, each player must pay 1 crown for each of his *adventurers* in the *capital* (he does not need to pay for knights and mages). If he cannot or does not want to pay for all of them, the adventurers in excess must be removed, back to the reserve. In the last round, no payment is made.

New Round

The starting player marker is passed to the player on the left, who reveals the next map card to start a new round. Unfulfilled missions remain on the board. If there are instructions to move any, the new starting player does it, deciding to where they go, before he takes new mission cards; heroes in those missions are moved along.

GAME END

The game ends after 4 rounds. It can also end if there are 6 or more cards on the board (unfulfilled missions) at the end of any round. If that happens, all players lose, and the kingdom falls.

SCORING

At the end of the game, the players calculate their fame according to the cards and other items they have gained, adding points to those already won.

The player with most magic crystals may trade them for the card of the Royal Wizard Zatorius. If he does not want to trade or if there is a tie, no player takes the card.

The player with most hearts may trade them for the card of Princess Sapphire. However, a player with no card with a heart symbol must claim that right, even if he has less hearts (but at least one, and more than other players in the same situation). In case everyone has a card with a heart symbol, if the player with most hearts does not want to perform the trade or if there is a tie, no player takes the card.

The scoring of cards is based on their variety, considering the symbols of mission types. Make card sets with one symbol of each type. They are scored according to the number of cards, as in the following table:

Cards:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Points:	1	3	6	10	15	21	28

It is possible to make several sets. Notice that a single card is also worth a point. Sapphire and Zatorius cards are used normally for the card sets.

Every 10 crowns buy 1 point (pay to the bank). Each artifact, heart and magic crystal (not traded for a card) is worth 1 point.

The winner is the player with most fame points – among those who have at least one heart card. Remember that to inherit the throne it is necessary to have conquered the heart of a princess!

Ties are broken by the following criteria, in this order: most cards; most heroes; most mages and knights; most money.



TWO-PLAYER, TWO-COLOR VARIANT

Set up the game as you would for 4 players, except that each player takes two colors and 15 crowns.

There are 7 turns per round for each player. On his turn, a player can move, promote and recruit heroes of one of his two colors. He is not required to alternate colors every turn.

Both colors of a player are considered separately for all purposes, such as the maximum number in mines and villages, determining mission leaders, casualties, attribution of fame points and division of rewards. If the two colors of the same player are tied when determining the leader, that player just chooses one.

Example: A player controls green and yellow, and he has 2 adventurers of each color in a given mission, where his opponent has 3 blue adventurers, but no red hero. Although the former has more adventurers in total, the leader is the latter, as his 3 blue adventurers are worth more than the 2 green and the 2 yellow, separately. On the other hand, he scores only 2 fame points for his participation in the mission, while the other player scores 4 points, 2 with each color. The leader rolls a 3 on the die, determining 2 casualties. But as there is the same number of green and yellow heroes, 3 are eliminated, 1 of each color (blue first, then green and yellow together). Lastly, there is a reward of 13 crowns, which is divided by four. 3 crowns stay in the bank as the king's share, the green-yellow player takes 6 crowns (2 parts) and the blue-red player takes 4 (1 part plus the remainder).

Money, cards, hearts and crystals, once gained, belong to the players and are not separated by color.

Use all four fame markers to make in-game scoring easier. Just before the final scoring, add the points of each player's colors together and remove one of their markers.

THREE-PLAYER, THREE-ROUND VARIANT

If you want a shorter and more balanced game with three players, where each one plays last in just one round, try this variant.

Separate the three cards with a heart symbol from stacks A and B. Randomly remove two cards from each of those stacks and put them back in the box, without looking. Put the heart cards back into their respective stacks and shuffle normally. Place only 3 hearts and 3 crystals on Sapphire and Zatorius cards. The game ends after 3 rounds.

Creation and design:

© 2006 by Gláucio Santos dos Reis

Card art credits:

Cursed Forest – John Howe
Demon from the Deep – Bruce Pennington
The Archmage's Staff – Clyde Caldwell
Bewitched Princess – Robh Ruppel
Army of Skeletons – Jeff Easley
The Necronomicon – Keith Parkinson
Bone Dragon – Clyde Caldwell
Excalibur – Luis Royo
Tower of Despair – Luis Royo
The Blue Rose – Kevin McCann
Barbarian Invasion – Brom
Warriors from the East – Ken Kelly
The Shield in the Tomb – Rob Alexander
Talisman of Enlightenment – Clyde Caldwell
Black Dragon – Ciruelo
Green Dragon – Matthew Stawicki
Sorceress – Clyde Caldwell
Medusa – Michael L. Peters
Fortress of the Beast – Keith Parkinson
Castle of the Traitor – Franz Miklis
City of the Gorillas – Luis Royo
Temple of the Serpent – Rowena
Orcs – Todd Lockwood
Giant Spider – John Howe
Ghost Ship – Max Bertolini
Mountain of the Griffin – David Martin
Pyramid of the Dark Sun – Les Edwards
Scepter of the Dead King – Keith Parkinson
Black Knight – J. P. Targete
Vampires – Luis Royo
Desert Assassin – Howard Lyon
Monster of the Abyss – Brom
Red Dragon – Keith Parkinson
Demon of Fire and Shadow – John Howe
Two-Headed Ogre – Jeff Easley
Troll – John Howe
Worm of Fear – Jim Burns
Lizard Men – Chris Achilleos
Minotaur – Brom
Succubus – Luis Royo
Princess Sapphire – Clyde Caldwell
Royal Wizard Zatorius – Keith Parkinson

Please send comments to <gsreis@pobox.com>

Version: 1.5