

LEVIATHAN

A GAME OF HUNTERS & BEASTS FOR 2 PLAYERS

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RULES OF PLAY

GAME OVERVIEW & OBJECTIVE

"You had best not be too fastidious in your curiosity touching this Leviathan..."

In this asymmetrical nautical combat game, one player controls the fearsome Moby Dick and a pod of whales (the Beasts), using hidden movement to elude the opponent, who controls the whaling fleet of Ahab and his crew (the Hunters). The Ahab player wins by slaying Moby Dick. The Moby Dick player wins by sinking the Hunters' ship, the *Pequod*.

COMPONENTS

- 6 double-sided whale cards (Beasts):
 - 4 whales, including Moby Dick
 - 2 "Tricks of the light" decoys
- 4 vessel cards (Hunters):
 - 1 *Pequod* ship
 - 3 double-sided whaleboats
- 6 tactical cards — 3 for each player
- 2 movement cards — 1 for each player

SET-UP

"When I go to sea, I go as a simple sailor, right before the mast..."

The players should sit across from one another. The Moby Dick player secretly arranges the 6 whale cards in the order of their choosing and lays them face down ("submerged" side up) in a row, with their "tail" edges aligned with and touching the edge of the table nearest the player. The Moby Dick player may look at these cards' faces at any time, even once they have moved out onto the table. The Ahab player places the *Pequod* card with its stern edge aligned with and touching the table edge. Each player takes their 3 tactical cards and 1 movement card and keeps these in hand or off to the side. The Ahab player also starts with the 3 whaleboat cards in hand or off to the side.

GAME PLAY

The Moby Dick player takes the first turn, and players alternate turns thereafter. On your turn, you will conduct exactly two mandatory actions, and you may conduct additional tactical or attack actions. The turn sequence is as follows:

1. All your vessel/whale cards must make 1 **movement**.
2. Choose one of the following:
 1. Make 1 additional movement with any 1 vessel/whale card, OR
 2. Carry out a **maneuver**.
3. (optional) Announce and resolve **attacks**.

MOVEMENT

*"Wilt thou not chase the white whale?
Art not game for Moby Dick?"*

Be sure that the Ahab player only uses the movement card with the navigational arrow, while the Moby Dick player only uses the movement card with the trident. Align the stern/tail edge of your movement card so that the two rearmost points of the arrow/trident both touch the movement arc printed on the card you want to move. The points must stay completely touching the larger arc. Point the arrow/trident in the direction you wish to move the vessel/whale card. Hold the movement card in place and lift the vessel/whale card you are moving, ultimately aligning its stern/tail edge anywhere between the "minimum" and "maximum" tick marks on the scale. Be careful that the moving vessel/whale remains perfectly and vertically aligned with the movement card, and does not "accidentally" change its angle during the movement. After laying the moving vessel/whale card in its new position and orientation, remove the movement card from the play area. This constitutes one movement.

MANEUVERS

"...the unearthly conceit that Moby Dick was ubiquitous; that he had actually been encountered in opposite latitudes at one and the same instant of time."

The Ahab player and the Moby Dick player have different maneuvers available to them:

Hunters' Maneuver: Lower a boat. Place a whaleboat card beside the *Pequod* card, with either its port or starboard edge aligned with the *Pequod*'s port or starboard edge. The whaleboat may be initially deployed facing either direction the player chooses. The whaleboat must be placed so that neither its prow or stern edge extends beyond the *Pequod*'s stern or prow edge. A whaleboat may not be lowered if any part of the whaleboat card would overlap with any other whaleboat already in play.

Beasts' Maneuver: Undersea movement. The whale player may not both carry out a maneuver and play a tactical card on the same turn

(see Tactical Cards, below). If you conduct a maneuver for the Beasts, you may either (a) switch the positions of any two hidden whale cards (a whale card whose face has been revealed may not engage in this maneuver), or (b) reorient one whale card 180 degrees in its current place (its position relative to all other cards cannot be changed). Use the movement card(s) as place-holders and guides whenever conducting undersea movement, in order to ensure that all moving cards are returned to their correct positions on the table.

ATTACKS

"From Hell's heart I stab at thee!"

After movement/maneuvers, the active player has the option to declare an attack at any and all positions where opponent's cards overlap. Any hidden whale cards at that position are immediately flipped face-up (and carefully replaced to their same relative positions and orientations). If a "Trick of the light" decoy card is revealed, it is immediately removed from play. Among all cards engaged in the combat, the player whose turn it is compares their cards' "attack" value with overlapping and opposing cards' "defend" value. If the attack value is higher, the defending cards are **destroyed** (see below). If the defense value is higher, attacking cards are not destroyed.

DESTROYED VESSELS/WHALES

"Ah! How they still strove through that infinite blueness to seek out the thing that might destroy them!"

When a whale card is destroyed, the whale is slain, and the whale card is permanently removed from play. If this whale is Moby Dick, the game is over and the Ahab player wins.

When a whaleboat is destroyed, the card is flipped to its **capsized** side. The boat is out of play and can no longer be moved, but the sailors may be rescued as part of a "rescue" operation (see below).

If the *Pequod* is destroyed, the game is over and the Moby Dick player wins.

COLLISIONS

"Let Ahab beware of Ahab; beware of thyself, old man."

Any whale card can overlap with any other card with no repercussions. If, however, any two of the Hunters' vessels overlap, they collide. There are two exceptions to this: (1) the *Pequod* does not collide with a whaleboat when the latter is being lowered during a maneuver, and (2) vessels do not collide with a capsized whaleboat. In the event of a collision, the Ahab player chooses one of the vessels to be destroyed.

RESCUES

"Where lies the final harbor, whence we unmoor no more?"

Whenever the *Pequod* overlaps a capsized boat, the sailors have been rescued. Remove the capsized whaleboat card from the table. This operation is neither a movement action nor a maneuver; it occurs automatically. Each time the *Pequod* makes a rescue, the Ahab player may retrieve one spent tactical card, which may then be played again.

TACTICAL CARDS

Each player begins the game with three tactical cards, which enact unique, temporary effects on the game. A player may play up to one tactical card per turn, at any point during that turn. Once a tactical card is played, it is removed from play. The following conditions also apply to the tactical cards:

- The Beasts' tactical cards, once spent, can never be retrieved. A Hunters' tactical card can be retrieved through a rescue operation.
 - The Moby Dick player cannot both play a tactical card and carry out a maneuver on the same turn.
 - The cards "Make Sail!" and "Ramming Speed" may be played in addition to two regular movements made during a turn, thereby allowing a single vessel/whale to make as many as three movements in a single turn.
 - The cards "The Harpoon Was Darted..." and "Tail Slap" may NOT be played to alter the results of an attack after the attack is declared/after a previously hidden whale card is revealed.
 - The card "Barrel Roll," when played, is played during the Ahab player's turn, and so does not count against the Moby Dick player's limit on their next turn.
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GAME END

"And only I alone escaped to tell thee."

The Ahab player wins if they destroy Moby Dick. The Moby Dick player wins if they destroy the *Pequod*. If all three whaleboats are destroyed, each player then has three more turns. If neither player manages to win the game by the end of those three turns, the game ends in a draw.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS & OPTIONAL RULES

"Already we are boldly launched upon the deep; but soon we shall be lost in its unshored, harborless immensities."

Edge of the table: If one card is so far over the edge of the table that it cannot remain on the table unsupported, that card is destroyed. A whaleboat destroyed in this fashion cannot have its crew rescued.

Adjusting difficulty/Handicapping: Either side may be readily handicapped simply by removing one, two, or even all three of their allotted tactical cards right from the start. Players should feel free to calibrate these advantages to their personal preferences.

Positioning & Touch Rule: Precise card positioning is an important part of the game's tactics. Players should be careful not to disturb the cards' relative positions and orientations. It is advised to always use the movement cards as placeholders and measuring guides whenever cards are moved, especially when the Moby Dick player carries out undersea movement maneuver, or simply needs to check the hidden values of their cards. Once you are familiar and practiced with the game mechanics, you might consider enforcing a "touch rule," such that any time a card is touched, unless the player has specifically their intention to check hidden values, that card must be moved. This will also help prevent cards from "accidentally" arriving at positions and orientations they shouldn't have achieved. With such a rule in effect, if a player violates the rule or loses track of the correct positions due to a complicated tableau, the opponent makes a reasonable judgment on the final, corrected position.

Play Area: This game was developed on a 2' x 3' table and had been tested on larger and smaller tables as well. If your table is larger than 3' square, consider defining a smaller play area, or the game may go on longer than advertised. If your table is smaller than 18" square, this game may not work.

Obstacles: Too busy to clear off your table? Add islands to the sea! Use whatever is on your table (mugs, pint glasses, salt & pepper shakers, etc). During setup, ensure that all vessel/whale cards have at least one full card length between their starting position and any obstacle. During play, cards cannot move through or overlap the obstacles in any way.

MANIFEST

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Leviathan Game Rules: (c) 2017 Past Go Gaming

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