

# 7th Sea CCG Beginner's Guide

Everything you need to conquer the Seas of Theáh

Brought to you by



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# Introduction

Welcome to the Beginner's Guide to 7th Sea CCG. This guide is intended to help new players learn the game of 7th Sea, expose them to the strategies they are likely to encounter, give ideas on how to make decks, provide information about the game and help them to become better players. That's a lot to attempt, but I've tried to make this guide a comprehensive source for all the information a beginner would need to get started in the game. My name is Jason MacConnell, I am not an employee of AEG (the maker of 7th Sea), I am just a player like yourselves who wanted to help new players into this game. I think 7th Sea is an excellent and extremely fun game and hope others enjoy the game as much as I do.

- Chapter 1 of this guide looks at the different factions and their respective strengths and weaknesses, along with the story behind each. This is designed to help new players find a faction which interests them and fits their style.
- Chapter 2 looks at many different types of decks which you may want to make or will encounter. The most common types and variants are looked at along with their advantages and disadvantages, and examples of each type.
- Chapter 3 lists the different sets of 7th Sea and when they were released, along with what they added to the game and cards to get from those sets.
- Chapter 4 is a list of mistakes commonly made by beginning players and how to avoid them. These are things which I and other people have observed beginners often do and how they can be fixed to make them into better players.
- Chapter 5 contains sample decks for every faction, constructed from only common and uncommon cards to make them easier to create. Each one is an example of a different type of deck so beginning players can see what different deck types would look like. Each deck contains a section on how to play this deck, how to beat the deck if you face one, and rare cards which would be good to get for that type of deck. Additionally, there are only decks for the most common ships and captains for each faction. You are review additional ships and captains at [7thSea.info](http://7thSea.info).
- Chapter 6 is a miscellaneous chapter that has information that I though beginners would like to know, such as card distribution, what foils are and where they can be found, tournament rules, and 7th Sea resources on the internet.

I'd also like to thank several people who helped me edit, proofread, or construct this guide: Paul Main, Tom Pleviak, Mark Packard, and Tom Packard all assisted me in one way (often many ways) or another in putting this guide together.

-Jason MacConnell, circa 2001

## *Notes from the Editor*

Sometime ago I found just the introduction to this guide while digging through archival information from a long forgotten 7th Sea fan site: *7th Sea World*. It was extremely fortunate that, after over a decade, Jason was still using the same email address and still had the original word documents for the following six chapters. All too often gems like this from the golden age of 7th Sea are lost forever and I am very happy to be able to breathe new life into such an excellent guide. The guide, as last revised by Jason, was updated after the release of Reaper's Fee sometime in the late Spring of 2001. Jason was gracious enough to share his work publically once again and it has been a real pleasure to update the guide to include the complete card base and game aspects through the last release. Thank you to all the 7th Sea faithful around the world, who have made building 7thSea.info such a joy over the last year.

If anyone has any comments or suggestions about this guide, please feel free to send a message via <http://7thSea.info>. We welcome any comments or suggestions you might have on ways to improve the site, this guide, or anything else related to 7th Sea CCG.

-Stuart Longley



# Chapter 1: The Factions

There are 10 different factions as well as an unaligned group with multiple captains and ships to choose from. This chapter will provide a brief history and storyline behind each faction and primary captain as well as some of their strengths and weaknesses. I have summarized the strengths and weaknesses first for easy viewing, followed by more detailed descriptions.

## [Castille](#)

Strengths: Lots of Swordsmen, high swashbuckling  
Weaknesses: Cannoning, good crew rather expensive

## [Montaigne](#)

Strengths: High influence and cannon  
Weaknesses: Smaller ships, mediocre adventuring

## [The Brotherhood of the Coast](#)

Strengths: High adventuring  
Weaknesses: Low swashbuckling and influence

## [The Sea Dogs](#)

Strengths: Very maneuverable, very well rounded  
Weaknesses: Not very strong in any one area, mediocre adventuring

## [The Crimson Rogers](#)

Strengths: Lots of cannon  
Weaknesses: Mediocre adventuring, not a lot of influence

## [The Explorer's Society](#)

Strengths: Good adventuring and influence  
Weaknesses: Low hit taking ability, need adventures to function

## [Gosse's Gentlemen](#)

Strengths: Lots of swashbuckling, very good crew, excellent ship abilities  
Weaknesses: Not the best cannon or adventuring

## [The Corsairs](#)

Strengths: Lots of people to move the ship, can have tons of crew on board  
Weaknesses: Poor cannon and swashbuckling, many decks hinge on one or two cards

## [The Vesten Raiders](#)

Strengths: High swashbuckling, good adventuring  
Weaknesses: Almost no cannon, mediocre influence

## [The Black Freighter](#)

Strengths: Hordes of cheap skeletal crew, high crew maximum  
Weaknesses: Can only use in-faction crew (generally), skeletal crew can't tack to take hits

## Castille

*Featured Sets:* Base Sets (Enrique Orduño), Reaper's Fee/Iron Shadow (Captain Margareta Orduño)

*Captain(s):* Enrique Orduño, Captain Margareta Orduño, Inquisitor Figueroa (Syrneth Secret)

*Ship(s):* Corazon del Castille, El Fuego Negro

*History:* The nation of Castille (the 7th Sea equivalent of Spain) is a country in turmoil. It is currently engaged in a devastating war with the country of Montaigne (France) to the north and it isn't going well for the Castillians. The Montaigne currently occupy the western 3rd of Castille but the war has now come to a stalemate. The land war has stalled and the Montaigne Navy has placed a blockade around Castille to stop any trade or assistance by sea. The king of Castille has commissioned Admiral Enrique Orduño to lead the Castillian Armada to break the blockade and take back the seas. Castille is also the center of power for the Vaticine (Catholic) Church and its Inquisition, a very powerful political force in Theáh.

*Storyline:* Admiral Orduño has succeeded in breaking the Montaigne blockade and managed to defeat the counter attack of Montaigne Admiral, Valoix. However, the Castille lost another city to the Montaigne occupation in the process. Orduño is ordered by the Inquisition to receive the surrender of the General, who has been paid by them to betray his crew and turn them over to the Inquisition for a mock trial. Orduño is disappointed by the General's lack of honor in betraying his crew, he is actually glad when the General refuses to turn them over. Orduño in turn refuses to attack them, for which the Inquisition has him arrested and removed from command. Enrique's wife, Margareta, takes command of a new ship and enlists the aid of a former enemy, the General, in freeing her husband from prison.

*Strengths:* The Castillians are primarily a boarding faction. Both of their ships can start boardings by themselves and they have a whole lot of crew with high swashbuckling and the Swordsman trait.

*Weaknesses:* The Castillians have some trouble paying for all their big Swordsmen. Their larger ship is somewhat hard to move and their smaller ship can be a hindrance for a boarding deck. Their adventuring and cannon are decent but not spectacular.

## Montaigne

*Featured Sets:* Base Sets (The General), Shifting Tides/Iron Shadow/Syrneth Secret (Admiral Valoix), Syrneth Secret (Ysabelle du Montaigne)

*Captain(s):* The General, Admiral Alazais Valoix-Praisse III, Ysabelle du Montaigne

*Ship(s):* Grenouille du Grace, Le Predateur des Mers, The Wayward Swan (unofficial)

*History:* Montaigne (France) is currently the most powerful nation in the world. Led by Le Emperuer Leon Alerandre, Montaigne is the cultural and political center of the world. The Montaigne navy is the largest in the world and its army is currently involved in an invasion of neighboring Castille as well as distant Ussura (Russia). The nobility of Montaigne possess a form of sorcery called Porté, which can transport objects and people over long distances.

*Storyline:* Le Emperuer hired The General, an Eisen mercenary, to hunt down pirates who disrupted Montaigne trade routes and chief of among these is the Brotherhood of the Coast. The General ruthlessly hunted the Brotherhood at the expense of all else, finally catching the Brotherhood but before he could finish the job, he received word of the Castillian attack on the Montaigne blockade. He was forced to abandon his attack to avoid being trapped by the Castillians. After this development Le Emperuer put Admiral Alazais Valoix in charge of the Montaigne Navy to fight the Castillians. Admiral Valoix launched a counter attack on the city of San Filipe but was intercepted by the Castillians under Orduño. The General, frustrated at his crew abandoning him for the Admiral, makes a deal with the Inquisition to turn over his ship and crew to the Castillians. The General's sense of honor wins out in the end though, he can't bring himself to betray his crew who have remained loyal to him so he loads the money he was paid into a cannon and fires it out to sea. The General returns home to Eisen to reclaim his honor and is met by an emissary from Margareta Orduño who asks him to help her free her husband from the Inquisition's prison

in El Morro, he agrees. In the meantime, Admiral Valoix is planning a decisive end to the Montaigne/Castille war, by taking the Castillian capital of San Cristobal.

*Strengths:* The Montaigne have oodles and oodles of influence. Two captains have 5 influence with the third having 4 and a large number of their crew have at least 1 or 2 influence themselves. This allows you to use some of the more expensive crew where other factions have a hard time putting into play. They also have a good amount of cannon; they have more in-faction Gunners than any other faction. In later sets they were balanced a bit for boarding.

*Weaknesses:* The Montaigne are decent, but not good, at adventuring. They also don't have a whole lot of swashbuckling or crew with the Swordsman trait so boarding can be difficult. The small crew maximum on the two ships can be a hindrance if not offset by The General's captain ability (if you have three or more other Montaigne crew on your ship your crew max is increased by two).

## *The Brotherhood of the Coast*

*Featured Sets:* Base Sets/Syrneth Secret (Allende), Fate's Debt/Iron Shadow (Jerimiah Berek), Syrneth Secret (Joaquin Orduño)

*Captain(s):* Allende, Jerimiah Berek, Joaquin Orduño

*Ship(s):* The Hanged Man, The Falcon's Roost, La Venganza (unofficial)

*History:* The Brotherhood of the Coast was founded shortly after a rebellion on the prison island of La Bucca. The leader of the rebellion, Allende, founded a pirate kingdom based on the principles of equality and democracy...and piracy. The Brotherhood is made up of a diverse group of ex-criminals who are now dedicated to freedom from the corrupt aristocracy. The Brotherhood has become a thorn in the side of Montaigne and Avalon merchants, though rarely Castillian.

*Storyline:* The Brotherhood became the primary target of the Montaigne's General attack on piracy. Allende and his crew are hunted down by The General but before they are destroyed Allende's first mate Allesio, a Fate witch, alters fate to save them. The General receives news that the Castillians are attacking and he must retreat. After the battle, Philip Gosse and his ship come upon the badly damaged *Hanged Man* and help repair it before taking the booty on board as a fee. Later Allesio guides the ship to a location which she insists will save the Brotherhood. When they arrive they discover a man floating in the water, a man who turns out to be the captain of the Sea Dogs, Jeremiah Berek. They rescue him and in repayment he agrees to help the Brotherhood. His help is soon needed. Allesio is forced to betray Allende by three Fate Witches in the service of the Vodacce merchant prince Vincenzo Caligari. The Witches kidnap Allende and kill Allesio, though with her last breaths she tells Berek that he must save the Brotherhood and rescue Allende. Berek warns the rest of the Brotherhood of what has happened and gets them off the *Hanged Man* before the Fate Witches burn it to ashes. They then find another ship in the harbor and steal it, sneaking out to sea by disguising it as a Castillian ship. Then, with help from El Vago and one of the other Vodacce merchant princes, they go to rescue their missing captain from Caligari's dungeon.

*Strengths:* The Brotherhood's greatest strength lies in their adventuring. Many of their crew have a large amount of adventuring and this lets you pay for some of the higher adventuring cost adventures and attachments and complete adventures much easier than other groups. With Jerimiah Berek and the *Falcon's Roost* the Brotherhood can also be very good at taking hits in the mid to late game.

*Weaknesses:* Many of the good Brotherhood crew are rather expensive and the Brotherhood doesn't have a lot of influence to spend. They do have some good cannoners though and a few crew that are good in boardings if you wish to go that route. Have to adventure to be jacks of all trades, masters of none.

## *The Sea Dogs*

*Featured Sets:* Base Sets (Berek), Scarlet Seas/Iron Shadow (Bonnie McGee)

*Captain(s):* Berek, Captain Bonnie McGee, Tyler Jones (Syrneth Secret)

*Ship(s):* The Black Dawn, The Hurricane

*History:* The Sea Dogs are the privateer navy of Avalon (England). Led by the legendary Jeremiah Berek, the unofficial navy of Avalon plunders the ships of other countries, especially Montaigne and Castille, and brings the treasures back to Avalon. This action is covertly supported by Elaine, Queen of Avalon, though she claims not to have control over him. Berek and his crew have legendary luck, partially through use of Glamour, a form of magic that draws power from legends.

*Storyline:* Berek, in keeping with his reputation of fearlessness, steals a prized artifact from the most feared man ever to sail the seas, Reis of the Crimson Rogers. This infuriated Reis beyond belief and he set out to track down Berek and utterly destroy him and his crew. Reis caught up with the Sea Dogs and it looked as if the Rogers would kill everyone. Rather than lose his entire crew, Berek jumped onto Reis's ship and fought a one on one duel with Reis, giving his ship time to escape. In the process, Reis wounded Berek and knocked him overboard, seemingly killing him. Berek's first mate, Bonnie McGee, swears revenge on Reis and sets out with the remainder of the Sea Dogs and a new ship to hunt down Reis for good. Her search for a way to defeat Reis takes her to the Sidhe land of Bryn Bressail where she asks the Grey Queen for a way to defeat the monster Reis. After a short time in the lands of the Sidhe, the Sea Dogs head for Eisen, where they search for the Nibelungen, the makers of legendary Dracheneisen weapons, weapons harder and lighter than steel. In return for an item given to Bonnie by the Grey Queen, they agree to forge weapons of Dracheneisen to aid in Bonnie's revenge. The crew is saddened by the discovery that one of their own, Lyin' John Fox, was responsible for the murder of the father of another crew member, Nicole Cowbey. Once he is discovered Lyin' John flees the ship.

*Advantages:* The Sea Dogs biggest advantage is their versatility. The Sea Dogs have pretty good cannon, good sailing, decent adventuring, a good amount of influence, and decent swashbuckling. They aren't the best at cannon or boarding or adventuring but it does make them very suited to take advantage of whatever is best in the situation. Particularly on the *Black Dawn* since it is a 2 move cost ship you can really take advantage of any weakness of your opponents if one angle of attack doesn't work.

*Weaknesses:* The problem with being so balanced is, of course, that they aren't nearly as specialized as other groups. If you get into a boarding with a Castillian or stuck in the same sea with a Crimson Roger you might be in a world of hurt. Their low adventuring can be trouble, a decent number of their crew have adventuring but usually less than 3 which can make it hard to pay for larger adventures and the like.

## *The Crimson Rogers*

*Featured Set:* Base Sets (Reis), Scarlet Seas/Iron Shadow (Captain Reis)

*Captain(s):* Reis, Captain Reis, "Reis" (Syrneth Secret)

*Ship(s):* The Crimson Roger, The Scarlet Roger

*History:* Little is known about the Crimson Rogers other than that they are the most bloodthirsty crew to sail the seas. The captain, Reis, is thought by some to be a demon because he is so vicious and brutal. Recently, Reis struck a bargain with one of the Vodacce (Italian) merchant princes, Vincenzo Caligari, and now seizes Syrneth artifacts to sell them to Caligari.

*Storyline:* The Crimson Rogers have recently been out to destroy Berek and the Sea Dogs for stealing an important artifact from Reis. The Rogers caught up with the Sea Dogs and Reis appeared to kill Berek, although his crew and first mate escaped. This infuriated Reis even further because the Sea Dog first mate, Bonnie McGee, had escaped him once before, to do so twice was simply unforgivable. Reis and his crew search for McGee to finish the job, killing all who get in their way. The Rogers can't seem to find the Sea Dogs (little do they know they are actually in Eisen) so they decide to take their wrath out on the coastal



towns of Avalon, wreaking havoc and destruction all along the Avalonian coastline. One of Reis's crew, Javier de Bejarno, discovers a secret which he believes can make someone immortal. The method to do so centers on the mysterious Sentine Key the Rogers had recently discovered. Once Reis learns this he promptly kills Javier and takes this information for himself.

*Strengths:* Cannon, cannon, cannon. The Crimson Rogers have a lot of cannon, almost all their crew have at least one point in that skill which can make life very painful if you are stuck in the same sea with them. With their newer ship and captain however, boarding is a very viable and effective tactic.

*Weaknesses:* Being Villainous tends to make one unpopular. Both captains have low influence and starting wealth scores which make it hard to build quickly. The Rogers also suffer from some problems with adventuring, which can make it difficult to pick up some of the bigger cannon adventures.

## *The Explorer's Society*

*Featured Sets:* Base Sets (Guy McCormick), Horizon's Edge/Iron Shadow (Cosette)

*Captain(s):* Guy McCormick, Captain Cosette, Captain Flanagan (Syrneth Secret)

*Ship(s):* The Discovery, The Redeemer

*History:* The Explorers Society was founded by Cameron McCormick, grandfather of Guy, to seek out Syrneth artifacts and preserve them for study. The Society has continued to the present day with this mission and Guy McCormick is one of its main captains. McCormick, however, has a mission of his own. His wife disappeared on a voyage in search of the mythical 7th Sea. While searching out artifacts for the Explorers he is also searching for any information on the whereabouts of his wife.

*Storyline:* McCormick finds what he believes are the key to finding his wife, a set of Syrneth switches that he believes, when activated, will open the way to the 7th Sea. Unbeknownst to him, the captain of the Corsairs, Kheired Din, is also in search of the switches and has already activated the first one. Guy finds and activates the second, but Guy and Kheired Din arrive at the third switch at the same time. A fight breaks out and Kheired Din sees a tattoo on the foot of Maggie Malone, an Explorer crew, that he recognizes as the 'Mark of the Lightbringer'. The two captains immediately stop fighting and make a deal to cooperate in their shared search. McCormick finds the fourth switch, but his ambition seems to be getting the better of him, he has grown noticeably harsh and demanding of late, the search for his wife seems to be all he cares about. Guy eventually loses all concern for anything else, when Kheired Din asks Guy to deliver the Lightbringer, he and Mumblety Peg kidnap Maggie Malone and take her onboard the Strange Skies. Cosette leads the rest of the crew in a mutiny against McCormick, but he escapes with Maggie and the Corsairs.

*Advantages:* The Explorers, like the Brotherhood, are good at adventuring and can take hits moderately well. Guy's captain ability allows him to pull adventures out of your deck which means you can complete a large number of adventures very quickly. They are also good at getting some of the more expensive artifact adventures that are hard for other factions to complete. Later captains have similar abilities around finding and completing adventures. Captain Flanagan has an ability that builds off of Ally cards.

*Weaknesses:* The Explorers have some minor influence problems which can be trouble, but they have other ways of gaining influence. They don't have much swashbuckling and next to no Swordsmen so boarding is pretty much out of the question. Although cannon is their best option, their in-faction Gunners are not the best. A Control win condition is possible, but difficult without some of the newer cards.

## *Gosse's Gentlemen*

*Featured Sets:* Strange Vistas (Philip Gosse), Horizon's Edge (Melinda Gosse), Iron Shadow

*Captain(s):* Philip Gosse, Captain Melinda Gosse, Captain Red (Parting Shot)

*Ship(s):* Uncharted Course, El Toro Rojo

*History:* Thirty years ago Philip Gosse was the most famous pirate on the ocean. He was known for being kind and chivalrous to the ships he captured, often treating their crew to a good meal and party on his ship if they didn't resist. After a long career, Philip and his crew retired with their riches to a hidden island paradise to live out their lives. Recently Gosse and his men have returned to their previous occupation with a new crew. The crew now consists of some of the original crew as well as the next generation, born on the island and anxious to see the world the way their parents did. Gosse is still as generous as ever, out for one last adventure before he dies.

*Storyline:* Philip Gosse has been enjoying reliving his old adventures, but the realities of the life of a pirate are returning to him as well. Recently he lost the life of his own son protecting one of his fellow sailors. Other parts of his past are also coming back to haunt him. A man he once killed in a fit of rage has returned as captain of a ship of the dead and seems intent on settling the score. Gosse's crew and the Black Freighter race to reach the Spear of the West Wind, a very powerful artifact which would allow its possessor to control the weather. Gosse destroys the Spear rather than let it fall into Necros' or anyone else's hands. Now with the help of the Order of the Rose and Cross, Gosse and his crew head for the Mirror where a mystical island rises from beneath the waves that will determine the future of all Theáh. Philip is later killed by Necros and his first mate Melinda Gosse seizes a new ship and leads Gosse's Gentlemen to seek revenge for their slain leader.

*Strengths:* The Gosse are a very good faction with a lot of strengths. Their strongest area however is swashbuckling. Many of them have a large amount of swashbuckling and their captain ability gives them even more. They also have pretty good influence and some cannon and adventuring. Their charter allows them to get any card out of their decks, a very powerful ability not found on many other cards. Their ship ability is also a great help, allowing them to use cards that are less feasible for other factions.

*Weaknesses:* The Gosse don't have any real glaring weaknesses. Their adventuring and cannon aren't that great, but they are pretty good in most areas. What weaknesses they do have can be helped by Fine Galley, a card found in most Gosse decks because it doesn't take up a crew slot on their ship. Because of their relative strength the Gosse faction did not see a lot of powerful cards in later releases. They were also 'Marked for Death', which killed off many of their crew and limited new cards of a release.

## *The Corsairs*

*Featured Set:* Strange Vistas (Kheired-Din), Fate's Debt (Ernesto Castillus), Iron Shadow

*Captain(s):* Kheired-Din, Ernesto Castillus, Kheired-Din, the Reborn

*Ship(s):* Strange Skies, Freedom's Key

*History:* The Corsairs are somewhat of a mystery, appearing 20 years ago, they are raiders from the forbidden Empire of the Crescent Moon. Led by the charismatic Kheired-Din, the Corsairs are known for attacking coastal villages and carrying off all the inhabitants to serve as rowers in their enormous slave galleys. Their leader, Kheired-Din believes that he has a sacred duty from Theus to act as the messenger of the Prophets on Theáh. They are known for quick, unexpected attacks and their brutality towards their captives. No one knows how the Corsairs are able to attack the lands and ships of the nations of Theáh because all sea routes to the Empire of the Crescent Moon are supposedly blocked and guarded by the Vodacce merchant princes.

*Storyline:* Kheired-Din has embarked on his holy quest to activate all of the Switches which he believes will open up the gates of Paradise. Unbeknownst to him, the Explorer's Guy McCormick is after the same goal, but for different reasons. Kheired-Din activates that first Switch and Guy activates the second, the two

factions met at the location of the third. A fight erupted between the two rival crews. Kheired-Din was ready to kill Maggie Malone when he recognized a tattoo on her foot as the Mark of the Lightbringer. He immediately called for a truce and the two factions agreed to work together to find the switches. A short while later, the ship's pilot, Espera leads a captive revolt on the ship and escapes in a ship of their own. Espera reveals himself to be Ernesto Castillus, a descendant of the ancient magic using rulers of Castille. Believing him to be their savior, many captives join the escape and join Ernesto on his new ship, Freedom's Key. Kheired-Din's quest to unlock the 6 Svrneth switches continues, with the help of Maggie Malone, kidnapped by her own captain from the Explorer's ship, he opens the 5th switch, only one remaining. Meanwhile his scouts are rather unsuccessful in catching and returning Ernesto and his ship.

*Strengths:* The Corsairs have two ships that can hold a lot of people and lots of cheap sailors to move them. Their biggest advantage is their ability to move. This can be used in many ways, cannon, boarding or a mix are all common strategies.

*Weaknesses:* The Corsairs have a low average swashbuckling, many of them with only 1, and their in-faction Gunner is among the least efficient in the game. This can make it hard to decide what route to choose since they only seem to be good at moving, but if played right the Corsairs can be one of the strongest factions in the game.

## *The Vesten Raiders*

*Featured Sets:* Shifting Tides (Yngvild Olafssdottir), Reaper's Fee (Captain Jorund Guttormson)

*Captain(s):* Yngvild Olafssdottir, Captain Jorund Guttormson, Scar (Svrneth Secret)

*Ship(s):* The Revensj, The Sea Lion

*History:* The Vesten Raiders, or more properly, the Vestenmannavnjar, are a dying breed. Their society is under attack from the forces of progress that threaten to end their way of life. Their society has been split in two, between the Vendel, who embrace the modern world and trade, and the Vestenmannavnjar, who reject modernity to revere the religion of their ancestors. The two groups have been waging an extremely bitter war against each other for many years now, with many atrocities being committed on both sides. Many Vesten have taken to the sea to attack the Vendel's most important activity, trade. Yngvild and her crew sail the seas plundering Vendel ships and anyone who helps them in an effort to destroy the Vendel and return her people to their traditional way of life. The Vendel hire mercenaries and others to keep the Vesten at bay.

*Storyline:* The first major storyline element for the Vesten was a surprise attack by a traitor planted on the Revensj by the Vendel. The traitor, Jorund Guttormson, attempted to kill Yngvild after they captured a decoy Vendel ship. He was unsuccessful, but he did succeed in wounding the first mate, Hoskuld Hardrada, and killing another crew member, Iken of Venderheim. Yngvild was able to fight off her attackers, but Jorund and the rest escaped. Yngvild and her crew mourned the loss of Iken and made him a proper funeral pyre, resolving to continue her mission to bring the Vendel to their knees. The first point of action is to find the traitor Jorund and see that he gets what's coming to him. Meanwhile the Vendel have outfitted a merchant ship to hunt down the Vesten, captained by the traitor Jorund Guttormson. They have hired mercenaries and others to use whatever methods are necessary to finish Yngvild and her crew. Yngvild goes to see a Vesten sage for answers on how to defeat the Vendel. He tells her of a gateway that is rising in the Mirror that, if she acquires it, can unleash the hordes of Valhalla on her foes, wiping them out. Yngvild and her crew set out for the Mirror at once.

*Strengths:* The Vesten make a very good boarding faction. They have a number of crew with very good swashbuckling and their ship ability assists in boardings as well. Yngvild's ability to make Weather cards cheaper combined with her Laerdom (weather magic) allow the Vesten to make use of some of the cards that deal hits from a distance such as Theáh Eats the Weak and others. They are also the only faction that can make a truly effective Dueling deck. They gained a crew in Scarlet Seas, Orf Helfir, whose ability allows him to start a Duel, eliminating the need to have a particular card in hand. Captain Jorund's ability and large ship also lend themselves to a possible Control strategy.

*Weaknesses:* The first thing you will notice looking at the Vesten crew is the almost complete lack of cannon. They have a grand total of 3 crew with cannon, none of whom are that good. Even Yngvild and Captain Jorund have cannon scores of 0. This pretty much rules out cannon as an option for them, though there are those who have tried it. The Vesten also have some problems with influence, Yngvild doesn't have all that much and many of their good crew are in the 5-6 cost range which can make a quick build difficult.

## *The Black Freighter*

*Featured Sets:* Black Sails (Captain Necros), Iron Shadow (Comte Robert Méchant)

*Captain(s):* Captain Necros, Comte Robert Méchant, Captain Upham (Syrneth Secret)

*Ship(s):* The Black Freighter, The Freighter

*History:* Tales of a ship of the damned have haunted sailors for centuries, but not all of these tales are mere legends. One particular story tells of a greedy ship captain who made a deal with a crooked merchant. The merchant would hire the captain to transport some goods to a far off port and insure them for a great sum. The captain would then run his ship into a reef, destroying it and killing his whole crew, except himself of course, and he could be rich. The captain did as was planned, but did not enjoy his ill gotten riches for long. His ship and crew returned, though different than before. Legion had given them new life to take revenge on their betrayer and when they caught him they tied him to the prow where he remains to this day as a figurehead. The Black Freighter still sails the seas with its crew of the damned, leaving only death and terror in their wake. Crew and Captain are never in short supply as the seas and those who sail them ensure a steady supply of souls.

*Storyline:* The Black Freighter is the most recent faction in the game and they have a link with the Gosse. It appears that the captain of the Black Freighter was an enemy of Phillip Gosse in his younger days. Phillip killed him and his entire crew in a fit of rage after he kidnapped and murdered Phillip's wife. It seems that he has returned for revenge, already taking Phillip's own son Thomas and it doesn't look like he plans to stop there. Necros learns of an artifact called the Spear of the West Wind which would allow him to control the weather over large areas, an incredible power over the seas. Phillip Gosse and Necros race to find this treasure, which Phillip finds first and destroys rather than let it fall into the hands of Necros. Necros now races Gosse toward the Mirror to take advantage of a mystical island which is rising from the ocean that will give its controller great power. In an epic battle many Gosse and Freighter crew are eliminated, allow a new generation of crew to emerge... for now.

*Strengths:* The Freighter has a larger natural crew maximum than any other ship in the game, 13, which can make it a very nasty boarding deck. They can do cannon, just not as well as boarding. One of their greatest strengths is their Skeletal crew. Skeletal crew are extremely cheap, usually 1 or 2 influence, and cannot be sunk from play, whenever they would be sunk they instead go to the discard pile. When combined with various methods of bringing crew back from the discard pile you can have a never ending stream of skeletons at your disposal.

*Weaknesses:* The Freighter's biggest strength is also its biggest weakness. Most Skeletal crew, with one exception, cannot tack to absorb hits, they must sink (or in their case, go to the discard pile). This means that although they can continue to come back again and again, they have to be paid for each time because if they take hits, they're gone. This means that a ship full of Skeletal crew will disappear quickly. Under a few big cannon shots, a Freighter player could lose 6-7 crew from only 3-4 good sized hits. The Freighter is also sort of low on influence, but the very low cost of Skeletal crew offsets this problem to a large degree.



## Chapter 2: Deck Types

There are as many different types of decks as there are players, but here are some of the more common types of decks to give you some ideas. The two most common types are boarding decks and cannon decks.

There are advantages and disadvantages to both tactics, each player should decide which they want to concentrate on, or if they just want to use a little of both. Cannon has the advantage of reliability, if you cannon someone for 6, you know that they will have to tack crew, sink crew, or use a card ability in play or from their hand to take those 6 hits. In a boarding the opposing player can send forward one of their crew to block yours and no matter how many hits your crew can deal, if they lose the boarding attack they do not do any. Another problem with boarding is that to do anything to your opponent you need to get on board their ship. This means using a lot of crew that can move your ship or often other cards that can start boardings without tacking your crew. Some cards such as *Common Pier* and *Ambush Boarding* can begin a boarding that cannot be refused without a card effect, but if your opponent is playing cards that can cancel boardings you may be out of luck. People using the small 1 or 2 move cost ships can be particularly tough opponents for boarding decks because, although they have fewer crew, most of them can move the ship and therefore cancel conventional boardings. Additional information about deck types are outlined below.

### *Boarding*

There are some distinct advantages to boarding. One of the biggest is that once a boarding has begun, it is difficult to end. The other player gets an action between each cannon attack, which can be used to run away but once a boarding has started it becomes very difficult to run away. The only way to end a boarding is when both players pass or by a card effect, many of which have cancel costs. With sufficient crew, an entire ship can be destroyed over the course of a single boarding, something much more difficult to accomplish with a single cannon shot. Another advantage is that every crew has the trait needed to inflict hits in a boarding, swashbuckling, while not every crew has cannon. If you get into a boarding, even a *Marketeers* or *Fancy Dans* can sink your opponent's crew. Similarly, a *Marketeer* can stop *Enrique Orduño* and all 8+ of his hits if you have the right distribution of boarding cards in your hand. A side advantage to a boarding deck is that it often contains crew with a high swashbuckling, these crew will do more damage in a boarding. Swashbuckling is also used for taking hits from your opponent which means that even if you cannot board your opponent, it will be very hard for them to hurt you because you can soak so much damage.

Boarding decks have several variations. One type is known as the 'finesse boarder'. This deck is most concerned about winning any boarding attacks it is involved in. The idea behind it is that the biggest, strongest crew in the world can be stopped by a *Fancy Dans* if the *Fancy Dans* wins the boarding attack. These decks are often carefully crafted to have an even distribution of boarding boxes (the boxes on each card, punch, dagger, club, etc.) and to draw cards during the boarding to give themselves a better chance of having the cards they need to win.

Another style of boarding deck is the 'gang-beating' deck. These types of decks use superior numbers to overwhelm their opponent and allow their one key crew to get past the other player's defenses and inflict huge damage. This is obviously best suited for larger boats such as the Corsairs and Black Freighter, because they have a large crew capacity without any modifications. In the sample deck section you will find a number of examples of boarding decks, a Castillian deck, a Vesten, a Corsairs, and a Black Freighter deck.

A similar style to this is 'speed boarding', which tries to board its opponent very early in the game, first or second turn, before they can get many crew and overwhelm them with superior numbers of small crew. The downside to this is if the deck hasn't won by fourth turn it is almost assured of losing the game. In the sample deck section you will find an example of this type of deck using the Montaigne.

## *Cannon*

Within cannon decks there are two common subsets, often called ‘atomic cannon’ and ‘plink cannon’.

‘Atomic cannon’ means piling as many adventures and things that add to the cannon skill onto one or two crew, often the captain, because they are immune to many cards that can target other crew. Once ready, the player hits their opponent with a cannon shot so large that the opponent can’t take it and crumbles. These decks often use other cards to insure that their huge shot is not stopped, or worse, returned to them. Atomic cannon is dangerous because it puts all your eggs in one basket, so to speak. If your big cannon shot is somehow avoided or canceled, you are out of luck. It also makes the crew with all the cannon adventures vulnerable to cards like *Challenge to a Duel*, *Listen*, and *King Before Captain*.

Plinking or pining decks use as many crew as possible with at least 1 cannon and slowly wear down their opponent with small shots until they end up sinking all their crew from 1-3 (sometimes higher) point cannon shots. These strategies also have their advantages and disadvantages. A plink cannon deck will be hurt less by a card that cancels one of its cannon attacks, it has plenty more, however your opponent will get an action in between each cannon attack to fire back or run away. Some decks are naturally resistant to certain strategies, a Brotherhood deck using *Jerimiah Berek* and *The Falcon’s Roost* is fairly resistant to both these strategies, especially pinging. In the sample deck section you will find Crimson Roger and Explorer’s Society decks that focus on cannoning your opponent to the bottom of the seas.

## *Combination*

Combinations of cannon and boarding are also very popular tactic with many players. Usually, several crew will be loaded up with a few cannon adventures and used to soften up the opposing ship for the boarding which follows. The purpose is to tack as many crew as possible to give you a crew advantage in the boarding and also to force your opponent to tack his or her Topmen, which often tack for extra hits, to make boarding them easier. In the sample deck section there is a Gosse’s Gentlemen and two Sea Dog decks which utilize this strategy.

A different kind of cannon and boarding combination has been made feasible by Captain Reis from Scarlet Seas. His ability to reduce the costs of anything which costs cannon makes many cards which were formerly too expensive much easier to use. This deck will attempt to board its opponent and once it does, let loose with cards like *Close Range Cannon Volley*, *Guns Blazing*, and *Canister Shot*. You can also use cards like *Fire as She Passes* and the *XX-Pound Cannon Volley* cards which are now even more efficient. An example of this deck is in the sample deck section.

## *Control*

The Shifting Tides expansion introduced a new victory condition called ‘Control’. If a player has a Control card in each of the five seas at the end of the turn, they win the game. The trick is that each Control card requires a large amount of a particular ability and the ability is different for each sea. The Control card can also be discarded if your opponent pays a large amount of particular skill while in the correct sea.

There are currently several different sets of Control cards which all have different abilities and costs to play and discard. Some, like the Shifting Tides Controls, give you a helpful ability, while others, like the Fate’s Debt Controls, help you put out more Control cards and are very hard to discard. There are cards which prevent sea attachments (which all Control cards are) from being discarded and the fact that Control allows you to win without actually killing your opponent can make Control a viable option. The sample deck section contains a Brotherhood of the Coast deck designed to win by Control.

## *Weather & Direct Damage*

There are a myriad of other options to base decks around. One is the use of a number of cards that cost adventuring and deal hits to your opponent when you are in another sea. These cards, such as *Theáh Eats the Weak* and *The Living Storm*, are one of the few ways to hurt your opponent when you are on the other end of the board. An opponent may think they are safe when you cannot move anymore and tack

themselves out, but with a few well-placed hits you could sink a good number of crew from the safety of a different sea. Vesten and Brotherhood decks make the most use of this tactic, because of their high adventuring scores. The Vesten in particular make good use of this because of Yngvild's ability to lower the cost of cards with the Weather trait (which many of these cards have) and can increase their hits through her Laerdom (weather magic). The Experienced version of Delaina Darling has a similar ability and can allow other factions, especially the Brotherhood (her faction) to use this strategy. The Vesten deck in the sample deck section uses this strategy combined with a boarding strategy to kill its opponents.

## *Allies & Cohorts*

In addition to Control cards, Shifting Tides introduced Ally cards, cards which can move on their own and assist you in various ways, from cannoning your opponent to completing adventures for you. Ally decks are of Montaigne and use the special ability of *Amiral Alazais Valoix-Praisie III*, his ship and the high Montaigne influence to amass an army of allies and overwhelm their opponents. The sample deck section has an example of a deck based around this strategy. There are a number of non-Ally sea attachments which can damage your opponent, these can also be the focus of a deck, though most of these cards have an adventuring cost making adventuring high factions such as the Brotherhood a better choice for these types of decks.

## *Miscellaneous*

Shifting Tides also added Duels to the playing environment. Duels are started by a card effect, which will specifically say so, between two crew, the Duel card will specify how these crew are chosen. Duels function as a mini-boarding between two crew, any damage inflicted by the victor is only applied to the loser, and none of it carries over to the loser's ship no matter how much damage is done. Duels are often used as a supplement to boarding decks to eliminate key crew on their opponent's ship. They can be very effective in eliminating annoying crew as well as forcing your opponent to play important cards from their hand if they want to try and save their crew. The Vesten and Castellians have an advantage in this area, because they have abilities which allow you to start a Duel on a permanent basis, rather than being forced to play a card from your hand to initiate one.

Some types of decks perform at a natural advantage or disadvantage against other types, this is a fact of life in card games, but I thought I'd mention a few of these interactions here so you aren't surprised when you see them. Speed boarders tend to perform very poorly against most Villainous captains. The reason for this is because speed boarders rely on crew advantage and Villainous captain, since they tend to *Cat O' Nine Tails* or *Black Heart* crew rather quickly, often start with a lot of crew and are usually multiple seas away. Without crew advantage speed boarders have a very hard time winning. The Black Freighter does very poorly against ping cannon, often much of their ship is made up of Skeletal crew who cannot tack to absorb hits. Each cannon shot, even if only for 1 point, will cause a crew to sink, emptying their ship faster than they can refill it. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, *Jeremiah Berek's* Brotherhood does very well against small plink cannon decks, they can just tack one of their adventures to take the hits, leaving all their crew untacked for other uses. *Captain Bonnie McGee* does very well against just about any Villainous captain, her bonus to all Sea Dog crew gives her a huge advantage against Villainous captains. On the other hand, if she isn't fighting a Villainous captain she has no ability at all. Her ability is very powerful, you just need to be careful that those Villains do not kill you too quickly, you start very near them and they will want you out of the picture as soon as possible. Boarding decks of most types will have a hard time against people using a 2 move cost ship, especially *The Black Dawn* and *Freedom's Key*, because of their faction's abilities to exceed their crew maximum. So many of their crew move the ship that you would have to fill your ship up with Topmen to catch them and if you did that, you wouldn't have any big Swordsmen to kill them with.



## Chapter 3: 7th Sea Sets

**No Quarter!** (September 17th 1999): Following demos at Origins, 7th Sea was officially released at GenCon 1999. No Quarter is the first edition of the base set and, except for a few small differences, is identical to Broadsides, the second edition of the base set. These small differences include wording changes on a number of cards, either as errata or to make the cards more clear. The main difference is that 'No Quarter' starter decks included a fixed, faction specific Charter or Letter of Marque card in place of the Figurehead's found in Broadsides starters. Some of these cards are very good, some are not, you should check the spoilers on [7thSea.info](http://7thSea.info) to see what your favorite faction's fixed card is and if it is worth getting. These cards were not be reprinted, so 'No Quarter' starter decks can be a rather hot commodity.

**Strange Vistas** (December 1999): The first expansion for 7th Sea included two new factions, Gosse's Gentlemen, a former pirate back from retirement to see the world one more time, and the Corsairs, a fierce band from the Empire of the Crescent Moon which roams the seas of Theáh taking captives to row their ships. Both groups are very powerful factions, and the sets contains a number of useful cards. Among the powerful rares from the set are: *Torvo Espada*, *Posh Quarters*, *Kheired Din's Secret*, *Andre Braudel*, *Edhago*, and *Tyree the Worthless*.

**Broadsides** (January 2000): Broadsides is the second edition of the base set, released to alleviate the shortage of 'No Quarter' among many retailers. It is basically the same as 'No Quarter', except some wording changes on cards and fixed Figureheads substituted for the Charter or Letter of Marque cards found in 'No Quarter' starters.

**Shifting Tides** (April 2000): The second expansion for 7th Sea introduced another new faction, the Vesten Raiders, a Viking like group with weather magic. It also brought the first experienced faction, the Montaigne. The Montaigne got a new ship and captain which worked with one of the new elements introduced in this set, Allies. Ally cards are other ships that help you out in different ways such as attacking your opponent or completing adventures for you. This set also introduced a new victory condition, Control. If a player has a Control card on each of the five seas at the end of the turn, they win the game. This is not as easy as it might sound however, each Control card costs a large amount of a different skill to put into play and can be discarded by your opponent by paying a larger amount of that same skill. Some cards to get from this set are: "*Captain*", *Aether Compass*, *Major Hull Damage* in addition to some very useful commons like *Last Second Escape*, *Into the Fog*, and *Challenge to a Duel*.

**Scarlet Seas** (August 2000): Scarlet Seas added two more experienced factions, the Sea Dogs, now under the command of former first mate Bonnie McGee, and the Crimson Rogers, commanded by an Experienced version of Reis. This set made Control a more viable option, it added another Control card for each sea as well as several new ways to prevent them from being discarded. It also bolstered a number of factions with very good new crew or better experienced ones and a number of cards to combat speed boarding decks. Some cards to get from this set are: *Syrneth Powder*, *Phantom Topman*, *The Grey Queen's Price*, and *I'm Not Left Handed* (yes, a *Princess Bride* reference. You will come across them from time to time).

**Black Sails** (November 2000): Black Sails was a mini-set of only 54 cards which introduced a new faction to the game, the Black Freighter. The Black Freighter is a ship of the dead which sails around the world striking terror into sailors and adding to their numbers. One crew from each faction had died within the past two sets and they all showed up in this set as crew of the Black Freighter. This set is packaged differently from previous ones, it is sold either as a starter deck or a large pack which contains one of every card in the set, except the captain, ship, Letter of Marque, and *Skeletal Brutes*, which are found only in the starter decks. This means you can get a complete set from buying a starter deck and one 50 card 'uber' booster. Because of how the set is distributed all cards are considered fixed, so there is no rarity in this set.



*Fate's Debt* (January 2001): This set contains experienced versions of the Brotherhood of the Coast and Corsairs factions, both with new captains and ships. It also added 3 unaligned ships, which any faction can use. This set helped bolster several strategies, Control was improved by the addition of another set of Control cards, many cards dealing with Allies were added as well as several cards which make excellent use of the cannon-boarding style of *Captain Reis*. A number of excellent Experienced crew are found in this set, many of whom have 4 adventuring, an ability very rare until this point.

*Reaper's Fee* (March 2001): This set has a new ship and captain for the Castellians and the Vesten, as well as two new unaligned ships and the first unaligned captain. It contains the first Nation symbol and Pyerem cards, Ussuran shape shifting magic, as well as a new card type, Chantey's. Chantey's are cards that effect both players and have their effect until they are discarded or a new Chantey is played, which then replaces the previous one. This set also has many more very good Experienced crew, interesting new ones, and more cards which give bonuses for using in-faction crew and damage attachments.

*Horizon's Edge* (June 2001): This set has a new Gosse's Gentlemen and the Explorer's Society ship and captain and leads up to the end of the first storyline. In addition to the faction specific ships and captains there is also an unaligned Captain and Ship from Eisen. The set builds on the knacks and magic of prior sets while adding the first secret society to the game. Several new Chanteys were added and they continued the trend of adding experienced crew. *Horizon's Edge* had been called 'Tales of the Kire' prior to release.

*Iron Shadow* (August 2001): This was a monster 600+ card set, which introduced new frames and reprinted many of the most popular cards. *Iron Shadow* was originally supposed to be the final set in the first story arc for 7th Sea, but instead AEG combined it with a planned third base set, *Jolly Roger*. The base set portion included significant errata changes to existing cards to make them more playable or balanced. Starter decks included two ships and two captains for each faction including a new ship and captain for Black Freighter. This should have been a major boon for 7th Sea, but the changes to existing cards and unfamiliar frames confused and annoyed players. 127 new cards were printed in the set, but they were hard to come by in packs with so many reprinted rares.

*Syrneth Secret* (January 2002): The first expansion set for the second story arc, it involves the General being transPortéd through a gigantic Porté hole, among other interesting developments. The set builds significantly on the nation and secret society traits introduced in prior sets. The set includes 10 new captains, one for each faction except Gosse's Gentlemen, and 4 new ships. Sadly, this was the final printed set of 7th Sea. In April 2002 AEG announced the end to the CCG franchise sighting low sales.

*Parting Shot* (April 2002): This set was released digitally in installments mostly to balance the existing factions and wrap up some outstanding story and game elements. It included an Ussuran ship and 3 new captains, including the final Gosse Captain. One captain, Captain Roberts, was just for flavor and another 'Princess Bride' reference.



## Chapter 4: Common Mistakes and How to Avoid Them

After I had been playing 7th Sea for a while I began to notice some interesting patterns among people who were just learning the game. This section is intended to help new players overcome a few of these common mistakes and learn to be better players.

The first mistake beginning players make may seem like an obvious thing, but if you remember it, it will help your playing immensely. Pay attention to what your opponent is doing at all times. Count their untacked crew, count how many of them have cannon, how many of them can move the ship. See if they have any way of starting a boarding without using one of their crew, be aware of their number of untacked crew compared to yours. See what crew have special abilities that may come into play, see which crew have adventures or attachments which might suggest something about how the deck operates. If your opponent has a Topman with 3 sailing and a +3 sailing adventure on them, most likely the deck uses *Better Part of Valor* or *Betrayal*, consider that they may have those cards in their hand when you plan strategy. Keep in mind your own capabilities as well, count how many attacks you can do and for how much. If you see your opponent has tacked crew in such a way that you could cause them to sink crew, attack. Carefully keeping track of the entire playing field will let you see openings which you can exploit for victory.

Another very common mistake made by beginning players is to tack all their crew before they sink any when absorbing hits. Tacking them all first would seem to be the logical thing to do, why lose crew permanently if you can just tack others? The problem with that reasoning is that some crew absorb more hits than others, you may not want to tack your crew that absorbs 4 hits to take a 1 hit cannon attack. This goes back to watching your opponent and what they can do. If you see they have 2 Gunners with 6 cannon apiece untacked, save your large hit absorbers for them, don't tack them to take the 2 point shots they hit you with first. You will lose crew but not as many as you would have had you tacked your large hit absorbers to take the early hits. Learning to sink crew when it is tactically beneficial is a very important skill to learn in 7th Sea.

A common thing for beginning players to do is to use the biggest, most expensive crew they have for their faction. Bigger does not always equal better. Some factions have a harder time with influence than others, a Montaigne deck can get away with playing more expensive crew since they have so much influence, a Brotherhood deck on the other hand cannot. If you get the First Mate for your faction, the first thing you may want to do is put them into your deck. Though some First Mates are very good (*Bloody Bonnie McGee*, *Andre Braudel*) others are not (*Alesio*, *Cosette*). In most Brotherhood decks, *Alesio* is simply not worth her cost, her only real good trait is influence but she is so expensive to put out herself that if you can pay for her you probably don't need her. Her Fate ability is nice, but you can get the Fate from *Lucrezia*, an unaligned crew from the base sets who only costs 3 influence. Another good example is *Timothy le Beau*, very expensive and not worth the cost for his ability, unless you are using *Porté* in your deck, even then there is a 3 cost unaligned crew who has *Porté* as well.

A somewhat related problem is the selection of starting crew. I won't go too deeply into this, Mike Mullins has a Deck Divination article<sup>1</sup> on this subject which covers it in more detail, and I just want to explain the basics. Though it may be tempting to start the game with a very large crew, your First Mate for example, this is often a bad idea because you won't be able to build fast enough and do the other things you need to do in the early game. The type of deck you play will determine what your priorities for starting crew are. If you are playing a speed boarding deck you will need as many crew that can move your ship as possible. If you plan on cannoning your opponent very quickly you will probably want crew who start with some cannon. All decks need influence to start off with, without influence you can't hire more crew and you won't get very far in the game. Another early game concern is taking hits, if someone comes after you very early in the game they can cripple you if you aren't prepared to take some hits right from the start. For this reasons, cheap, unaligned crew such as *Brutes*, *Cuthroats*, *Fancy Dans* and *Marketeers* are a very common part of many decks starting crew. They can provide cheap influence to hire crew and the ability to fend off

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<sup>1</sup> Mike Mullins' Deck Divination articles, like #112 noted above, can be found on <http://7thsea.info>.

early attacks until your deck can build up. Using an expensive crew like a First Mate to start with limits what you can do at the beginning of the game. They may have good stats but you must remember that you can only use them for one of those stats a turn. For example, a Sea Dog deck using *Berek* that starts with *Bloody Bonnie McGee* and a *Rigger*. *Bonnie's* stats are as good as *Berek's*, it's almost like starting with 2 captains, however this start is a very dangerous one. If someone were to cannon you for 3 or more you would have to tack either *Bonnie* or *Berek*, halving your influence. If you wanted to pick up an adventure you would have to tack *Bonnie* or *Berek* as well. If you come up against a speed boarder they will most likely have you drastically outnumbered. Using a starting crew of *Lyn' John Fox*, *William Toss*, and a *Fancy Dans* would still let you put out two crew a turn while giving you better hit absorption. It is also a crew who could move the ship, cannon, or pick up an adventure, and provide more in-faction numbers to activate your captain's ability. Cheap, unaligned crew make excellent starting crew, they are your best defense against speed decks (both cannon and boarding) and are very useful for their cost in the early game.

A common deck-building flaw among new players is the tendency to want to prepare for every possible occurrence. They may want to include various cards that are only useful against certain factions or strategies, in case they come against them at some point. The fact is, you can never put enough cards into a deck that will help you against all strategies you might face, there are just too many different types of decks to protect against them all. The problem is that, unlike Magic: the Gathering, there is no sideboard in 7th Sea, anything you want to use must be in your deck from the start. Rather than putting in 2 *Uprisings* in case you play a Corsair deck or 2 *Cut the Ropes* in case you play a boarding deck, concentrate on using cards that are useful against many types of decks. *Into the Fog* is a good example, it will prevent all damage from any source outside a boarding, this means cannon as well as generic hits caused by things like *Here There be Monsters* and *Theáh Eats the Weak*. If a particular strategy or deck type will really hurt you, use cards to defend against it, but if you find yourself vulnerable to many different strategies you may want to rethink the concept of the deck itself. Cards that hurt a specific faction are rarely worth including unless you can be sure that they will work on a large number of your opponents. *Uprising* might be worth it if your two main opponents play Corsair decks regularly.

Another common element in the decks of new players is the tendency to use all different types of adventures, ones that boost swashbuckling, cannon, sailing, etc. Many factions have a particular area they are strong in, the Montaigne have a lot of influence for example, the Brotherhood and Explorers have a lot of adventuring. These factions don't really need adventures to boost the skills they excel in. You also need to consider if you will ever really need to use the skill in question. A cannon deck doesn't really need any swashbuckling adventures because it ideally won't be getting into a boarding. If you are using a Sea Dog deck where every one of your crew can move your ship, you really don't need sailing adventures. Remember that each adventure you play is costing you a slot in your deck and will cost one of your crew an action to complete it. Consider if the benefit from this adventure is worth what it will cost for you to use it.

An often overlooked element to deck construction is maneuverability. If you are making a boarding deck you cannot afford to load your deck with only high swashbuckling crew, if you can't get on board your opponent all your swashbuckling will do you no good. It's the same with any kind of deck, if a cannon deck can't move it can't chase its opponents. It can be hard to pick up an adventure 3 seas away if you can only move 2 seas a turn. If you can't move your opponent has an easy advantage on you, they can do their thing, pick up adventures, etc. while dodging you. Worst of all this forces you to operate on your opponent's timetable, they control the tempo of the game. They will only let you catch them when they are ready to be caught, usually not the best time for you to catch them.



# Chapter 5: Decks

The purpose of this section is to give you an idea of what types of decks are out there and to provide you with a basis to build your own decks. These decks are composed of entirely common and uncommon cards to make them easier to build, they aren't killer decks, but should work pretty well. This section can also help you build different decks and try yours against the many different strategies found here. There is at least one deck for each faction, they use the ship and captain found in the base set or initial set starter deck, along with the 2nd Montaigne, Sea Dogs, and Crimson Roger's ship/captain combinations. Additional decks can be found at [7thSea.info](http://7thSea.info).

Each deck has a deck list, a section on how to play this deck, how to beat this deck, and suggested rare cards to acquire for this type of deck. These decks should give you a good basis for the different types of decks you will come against and give ideas for decks of your own. This is by no means the epitome of decks, if you have cards that would go well, put them in. You will be able to use a deck that is customized to your resources and play style much more effectively than one you copy and build from somewhere else. So, without further ado.

[The Sea Dogs](#)  
[The Castillians](#)  
[Gosse's Gentlemen](#)  
[The Black Freighter](#)

[The Explorer's Society](#)  
[The Crimson Rogers](#)  
[The Corsairs](#)

[The Montaigne](#)  
[The Brotherhood of the Coast](#)  
[The Vesten Raiders](#)

## *The Sea Dogs*

### Fast Offensive

Captain and Ship: Berek and the Black Dawn

Starting Crew:

- Lyin John Fox
- William Toss
- Fancy Dans (can be replaced by a crew who takes more hits if your opponent attacks quickly)

<b>Crew:</b>	2 Lyin John Fox	1 William Toss	3 Jack Tars
2 Ulfied Jansson	3 Annie Rush	2 Joseph Gallegos de Avila	2 Jimmy Bass
3 Manuel Dejavez			
<b>Adventures:</b>	3 Eisen Cannons	3 Sinking of the Swan	3 Duel with a Castillian
<b>Attachments:</b>	2 Small Fortress	1 The Queen's Reward	2 Cheap Cannons
<b>Actions:</b>	3 Carousing	3 Gold Only Buys Obedience	3 Below the Waterline
3 Speed isn't Everything	3 Into the Fog	3 Last Second Escape	2 Nasty Bit o' Luck
2 "Fire as She Passes!"	<b>Chantys:</b>	3 Revenge of the Damned	

### How to play this deck:

The biggest advantage of the small, 2 move cost ships, particularly *The Black Dawn*, is their wonderful maneuverability. One of the things you will notice about the crew in this deck is that almost all of them have some amount of cannon and at least 2 sailing to move the ship. While other factions have to decide between Topmen to move their ship and crew to do other things the Sea Dogs can have both in one crew. Also most of the crew cost 4 influence so you can play two of them a turn, filling your ship quite quickly and letting you go on the offensive very early in the game, often 2nd turn. The fact that so many crew can move your ship lets you choose the best option for your situation, to cannon your opponent, board them, or run if need be. The deck is designed to keep the pressure on your opponent at all times and strike as soon as they make a mistake or you gain an advantage. The constant cannon barrage will keep them off balance so as soon as they tack one too many crew you can board them or force them to begin sinking

crew. Once that starts the end is usually in sight. You can use your adventures to give a boost to the few crew without cannon and/or sailing or increase the score of those who already do. The two Castillian crew, *Manuel Dejavez* and *Joseph Gallegos de Avila*, are in the deck because of their efficiency for the cost: *Manuel* because he can play *Into the Fog* by himself and to absorb hits, *Joseph* because he can move the ship and has good adventuring. These crew can be replaced if you don't like using out of faction crew. The *Jimmy Bass/Jack Tars* combo is designed for this type of deck, cannon them before you board and all your *Jack Tars* now have 4 swashbuckling each. Don't send *Jimmy Bass* forward during the boarding, so you can cannon them for 6 afterwards when they are all tacked out for lots of sunk crew.

#### **How to beat this deck:**

The constant pressure this deck can apply will make life very difficult, but if you can build under pressure you can beat it. *The Black Dawn* can move very easily but it has a smaller crew max than almost every other ship. If you can survive past the initial rush you will eventually outnumber them and force them to retreat. Against a deck like this you must fight your initial reaction to run. The fact is, until the late game, you won't be able to run far enough or fast enough to get away. All you will be doing is tacking your Topmen that you will need to absorb the cannon they will hit you with when they do catch you. It comes down to paying careful attention to how many times they can move their ship and how many times they can cannon you, a good thing to do in all circumstances, but especially so against decks such as these. No matter where they are in relation to you don't forget about them, if you tack too many crew they can be in your sea in no time. You will need to use your own judgment on when and how often to move.

#### **Cards to get:**

- Dorf Klinderhoff (Rare, Base Sets) This Sea Dog has everything you need, he can move your ship, cannon your opponent, and doesn't count towards your crew maximum. With the Queen's Reward you can get 9 crew on your ship, equaling that of the 3 move cost ships.
- "Captain" (Rare, Shifting Tides/Iron Shadow) Berek's pet terrier will complete your adventures, even in the wrong seas, and play many actions and attachments that need adventuring without tacking any of your crew, a very important ability on your small ship.
- Bloody Bonnie McGee (Rare, NQ/Broadsides) The Sea Dog's First Mate, and later captain, is an excellent all around crew. Though expensive, her stats are comparable to Berek's and her ability works very well in a joint cannon/boarding deck.
- Grappling Gun (Rare, Base Sets) This card lets the crew who attaches it untack once a boarding begins. This lets you use your crew to pick up an adventure or cannon someone and then have them ready to use again once a boarding starts. With 3 of these and Bloody Bonnie McGee in play you could cannon someone, use Bonnie's ability, then board your opponent and untack all 3 crew you just used.

#### **Lead & Steel**

Captain and Ship: Captain Bonnie McGee and the Hurricane

Starting crew:

- (against a non-Villainous captain)
  - William Toss
  - Ulfied Jansson
  - Cutthroats
- (against a Villainous captain)
  - 2 William Toss
  - Cutthroats
  - (could also be 3 Needle Nose Nye if they are close and you want to attempt a quick victory)

<b>Crew:</b>	3 Annie Rush	3 Phelan Cole	3 Ulfied Jansson (including 1 possible in starting crew)
3 Needle Nose Nye	3 Jack Tars	2 Jimmy Bass	William Toss (if not in starting crew)
3 Lyin John Fox	<b>Adventures:</b>	2 Dangerous Cargo	3 Castillian Merchant Ship
3 Duel with a Castillian	<b>Attachments:</b>	3 Common Pier	2 The Queen's Reward
<b>Actions:</b>	3 Fury of the Rogers	3 Last Second Escape	3 Gold Only Buys Obedience
3 Below the Waterline	<b>Chantey's:</b>	3 Yngvild's Plan	

### How to play this deck:

This deck is designed in a similar fashion to the previous one, only this deck's focus leans more toward boarding than cannon. With the *Queen's Reward*, *Hammocks*, and *Dorf* you can pack 13 crew onto this ship and still have a good deal of mobility to board or chase your opponent. The deck is designed to take advantage of the larger crew capacity of *The Hurricane* to load up on crew, then soften your opponent up with cannon then finish them off in a boarding. Since the Sea Dog's average swashbuckling isn't that high it may be better to just stick with cannoning if you find yourself up against another boarding deck, that option is certainly open to you. This deck is maneuverable enough to start or dodge a number of boardings in a single turn. *Bonnie's* ability is a definite help, it lets *Lyin' John* and *Jack Tars* move the ship and boosts everyone else's stats quite a bit. Against a Villainous captain you can either start with 3 *Needle Nose Nye* for a quick kill or 2 *William Toss* for a quick build, they become 0/2/2/3/4 once *Bonnie's* ability comes into play. If you aren't playing against a Villainous captain, *Yngvild's Plan* becomes very important. Your opponent will probably try to get rid of that as soon as they can, so be careful when you play it, don't let them just discard it. The *Cutthroats* are there to absorb early hits and to be tacked with *The Hurricane* to draw a card if the opportunity presents itself.

### How to beat this deck:

This deck can start quite a few boardings once it gets going and can be rather tricky to get away from. Your best bet is to just stay out of their sea, if they can't board you they can still cannon you pretty well so be careful. If you are playing a boarding deck yourself you can try to get them to board you, though they may be hesitant and switch to cannoning. Watch out for surprise boardings with the *Common Pier* and *Fury of the Rogers*, they can kill you with these if you aren't careful. If you are Villainous, *Bonnie's* ability can be a real pain, if not, watch out of *Yngvild's Plan* and get rid of it ASAP. If you can concentrate on whatever it is that your deck does and not let this deck sidetrack you, you should do alright.

### Cards to get:

- "Captain" (Rare, Shifting Tides/Iron Shadow): As with the other Sea Dog deck, Captain is just great. He'll pick up your adventures and in this deck will play "Fury of the Rogers" for you, how's that for irony. Captain is a card that really belongs in any Sea Dog deck.
- Dorf Klinderhoff (Rare, Base Sets): The fact that he doesn't count towards your crew max makes him worth inclusion in this deck. He can't move the ship unless *Bonnie's* ability is in play, but he is one more crew, and crew advantage is crucial to a boarding deck.
- Phelan Cole-Experienced (Rare, Scarlet Seas/Iron Shadow): Experienced Phelan Cole is an all-around great crew with a great ability. With this deck you can cannon your opponent, board them, beat them up with Jack Tars, end the boarding with Phelan Cole to hurt them some more and then open up with Jimmy Bass afterwards. Big Sea Dog beat down.
- Angus McCloud-Experienced (Rare, Scarlet Seas): Though expensive, Angus has a good spread of skills and an ability that works great in boardings, especially if you still have the *Cutthroats* around.

### Alternate captain/ship combinations:

The Sea Dog captains can use either ship fairly effectively. *Bonnie* on *The Black Dawn* can be used as a speed boarder or in the same ways as *Berek*. *Berek* on *The Hurricane* can be a card drawing machine, with their Letter of Marque, *Berek's* ability and the ship ability you can be drawing 6 cards a turn, twice that of most other factions.

## The Explorer's Society

### Adventure and Cannons

Captain and Ship: Guy McCormick and the Discovery

Starting Crew:

- Velda Conklin
- Samuel Sanderson
- Piotr the Badger

<b>Crew:</b>	2 Velda Conklin	3 Jelena	3 Kirsten Blumfeld
1 Kirsten Blumfeld exp.	3 Needle Nose Nye	2 Jacob Faust	2 Pertruccio Garibaldi
3 Morgause Mercuri	2 Gina "The Jackal"	<b>Adventures:</b>	3 Eisen Cannons
3 The Finest Cannons	1 Syrnych Tiller	3 Fine Rigging	1 Cutlass of Command
<b>Attachment:</b>	3 Only Two Came Out	2 Red Fox	
<b>Actions:</b>	3 Wenching	3 Lemons	3 Hiding in the Reefs
3 Too Close for Comfort	3 Take it like a Man	3 Call to Duty	3 Last Second Escape

### How to play this deck:

This deck is fairly straight forward, use your captain's ability to pull adventures out of your deck and cannon your opponent out of existence. On your first turn, pull your *Syrnych Tiller* out of your deck and complete it, this will let you play your *Only Two Came Out* and *Kirsten Blumfeld* for cheap. You can spread your adventures out or pile them onto a couple crew, particularly on your captain. In general, many bad things can target crew, but cannot target captains, so it is best to put more adventures on *Guy* and then one or two on other crew. On the other hand it is good to put adventures on other crew, because you cannot use *Wenching* on your captain. The *Take it like a Man* are there in case you opponent tries to *Betrayal* or *Into the Fog* or anything that would stop a large amount of your hits. The reasons there is *Samuel Smitts*, a Crimson Roger crew, in the deck instead of an Explorer's Gunner are two-fold. The first being that the two Explorer Gunners are not very good. *Wee Willy* is overpriced and *Foul Weather Jack* runs the risk of being discarded, along with whatever he may have on him, every time you use your captain's ability. Also, *Wee Willy* is a rare and unique. Many people don't like using other faction's crew in their decks so those people will want to get ahold of *Wee Willy* and hope the Explorers get a good, non-unique Gunner soon. A new 5 cost Explorer gunner, *Gus Heimfather*, was released in Iron Shadow as an Uncommon.

### How to beat this deck:

The trick to beating this deck is not getting caught. If you end up in the same sea on your opponent's action you will end up in a world of hurt. If you can stay away from them they cannot hurt you, simple as that. The problem with that plan is that, in the late game, this deck can move a lot and probably chase you down, then you need ways of stopping cannon attacks. *Into the Fog* and *Last Second Escape* work quite nicely for this, but the most reliable way is to be able to take a lot of hits. Every player should be prepared to face large cannon attacks, either by taking them and fighting back or hitting them before they can build up. Decks like this need time to build so an early attack can stop or at least slow your opponent down. Cards like *Challenge to a Duel* are a great way for boarding decks to defend themselves against a deck like this, *Duel* their crew who is loaded up with cannon adventures when they only have a few cards in their hand will really ruin their day. The rare *Purple Heaves* is another great card for when they try to use *Wenching* on their pumped up crew.

### Card to get:

- 'Sidhe Storm' (Rare, Strange Vistas): This is another Item cannon adventure, the advantage of this one being it gives +4 cannon. Adding 'Eisen Cannons' and 'The Finest Cannons' make for a heapin helpin' of cannon, all of which can be pulled from the deck whenever you want it.
- 'Sails of Wind' (Rare, NQ/Broadsides): An Artifact adventure, this card basically gives you another free move. It helps you move around quickly and is conveniently cheapest in the

Forbidden Sea. This card combined with ‘Syrneth Tiller’ and your ship’s free move can let you move 3 seas without tacking a single crew.

- ‘Foul Weather Jack’s Treasure Map’ Parts I-IV (Rares, Fate’s Debt/Iron Shadow): This is actually 4 separate cards, each of which is an item adventure that you can tack to provide a certain skill, that amount is increased depending on how many parts of the map you have. The cost of each part decreases as more of them are put into play. Once you get all 4 parts into play, you will have an extra 4 cannon, 4 sailing, 4 influence, and 4 swashbuckling to do with as you wish.
- ‘Charter’ (Fixed, No Quarter): This fixed card from the No Quarter Explorer’s starter is a great card to pick up. It can really help the cannon adventures add up and makes the ‘Cutlass of Command’ a fearsome weapon indeed, adding +3 to all skills.
- ‘The Shattered Spear’ (Rare, Reaper’s Fee/Syrneth Secret): This is a helpful card, it has the same function as ‘Only Two Came Out’, but you can use your captain’s ability to get it out of your deck. The starting crew can pick this up first turn if your opponent isn’t pressuring you and it can help you build early in the game.

## *The Montaigne*

### Speed Boarding

Captain and Ship: The General and the Grenouille du Grace

Starting crew:

Marc Pierre

3 Riggers

1 Scurvy Dogs (you can use the Scurvy Dogs even though they count as two crew, abilities such as counting as more than one crew or not counting at all do not come into play until the game starts, therefore in terms of starting crew they only count as one)

<b>Crew:</b>	3 Deck Hands	3 Cutthroats	
<b>Adventures:</b>	2 Gold Coins	3 Offensive Maneuvers	
<b>Attachments:</b>	3 Billy Bones	2 Main Gauche	2 Cargo Hook
<b>Actions:</b>	3 I Fights Better Drunk	3 Prepare for Boarding	3 Near Miss
3 Riposte	3 Reporting Drunk	3 Confusion on Deck	3 Carousing
3 Drop a Boarding Net	3 Run em Through	3 Blasted Bulkhead	
<b>Chantey’s:</b>	3 Revenge of the Damned	3 Eternal Desire	

#### How to play this deck:

Speed boarding can be a tough strategy to master, it requires very careful decision making on when to send forward crew, when to use cards in your hand and whether to play a card or keep it to use as a boarding attack. The object of this deck is to get on board as soon as possible. If you can’t board your opponent and kill them within the first three turns you will almost certainly lose the game, which is the inherent danger in this type of deck. You need to board your opponent at all costs, you have 4 boarding attempts plus your ship’s free move which hopefully will get you on board. The Chantey’s should help you get on board, either by helping pay your ship’s move cost or by increasing your opponent’s move cost. Once on board, the key is untacked crew advantage. If you don’t outnumber your opponent at first you need to do enough damage to make them tack crew or let them attack you and play cards to absorb the hits. *Carousing* combined with *Drop a Boarding Net* can be used to tack your opponents’ big crew like their captain. Unless you have several more untacked crew than your opponent, don’t use your *Riggers* to pay for the combo, instead use a *Carousing*. With all the card cycling during the boarding you should draw one soon.

Even if one of your crew is left untacked when your opponent is tacked out you stand a very good chance of finishing your opponent in one big hit. By using the “Instead of a boarding attack” cards you will continue to draw more cards until your *Riggers* can do 6-7 hits. Even if you don’t kill your opponent you should be able to wound them enough that they can’t fight you off the next turn and you can finish them off then.



The hardest thing to get used to with this type of deck is that your crew, adventures, and attachments aren't really intended to be played. Those cards are there to give you a better distribution of boarding attacks. Though all of these cards have been chosen so that they can be played, in most cases you don't want to. Most factions can make speed boarding decks, though those with a 2 move cost ship have the easiest job of it because they can hire *Riggers* and *Oar Teams* to move their boat. Sea Dogs speed boarding is the most common type of speed boarder, I built a Montaigne deck here because the Montaigne have the advantage of starting in the Frothing Sea, putting them in a better position to catch those in the Forbidden Sea and the Mirror off the start, which is a very important advantage.

One last note on speed boarding: Many players feel speed boarding is a cheap strategy, and look down on this type of deck. They feel that the game is supposed to be fun and there is no fun in a game that lasts 5 minutes, 4 ½ of which was one player slaughtering the other in a boarding. I wanted to mention this here so you aren't surprised or offended if you attend a tournament and other players get angry that you are using speed boarding.

### **How to beat this deck:**

Speed boarding can be nearly impossible to beat if you are unprepared and don't know how to fight it. The easiest way to stop speed boarders is to keep them off your boat. Cards which cancel boardings like *Hiding in the Reefs* and *Last Second Escape* can help a lot, they may board you later anyway, but at least you tacked a few of their crew before they got on board, a fact that could be crucial to your survival. Once they are on board your best chance lies in picking your battles very carefully. Let them play a few of their "Instead of a boarding attack" cards until you get a good boarding hand, your best bet is to defeat their crew in boarding attacks. Really, the easiest way to combat speed boarders is to use more starting crew. Instead of using a *Fancy Dans* use 2 *Marketeers*, for example, if your crew max will allow it. Since the most important aspect in boarding is untacked crew, if you start with more crew the speed boarder will have a much more difficult time.

Most speed boarders are very lopsided towards daggers and slashes (action cards) so use this fact to your advantage. You need to be very careful and know when to sink tacked crew rather than tack others to absorb hits; you might lose a few crew, but you will be more likely to live another day. There are a number of cards you can put into your deck which can help against speed boarders if you cannot/do not want to make other modifications. *Backs to the Wall* lets you untack crew or ends the boarding when all your crew are tacked, *Clear the Decks* gets rid of all the "Play instead of a boarding attack" cards on the table, returning the formerly prepared and drunken *Riggers* to their diminutive state. One of the most dangerous is *No Survivors*, a card which will sink all crew on both ships with a cost less than 3, which would be all of the 1 and 2 influence cost crew that make up most speed boarders. Best of all these are all common cards from Scarlet Seas, so that is the set to buy if you are having trouble with a speed boarder. Speed boarding is a good strategy to test decks against even if you don't play one yourself, all decks should be prepared with the possibility of facing a speed boarder.

### **Cards to get:**

Speed boarders really don't need many rares, few of them will be of any real use to decks like these.

- Into the Fray (Rare, NQ/Broadsides) This card will do the deck some good, it will work on Marc Pierre and the General and anyone with 'I Fights Better Drunk' played on them. It is also another "Play instead..." card so it helps with card cycling.

## Ally Deck

Captain and Ship: Amiral Alazais Valoix-Praise III and Le Predateur des Mers

Starting crew:

Marcel Entour

Rosamonde du Montaigne

Fancy Dans

Cutthroats

<b>Crew:</b>	3 Marcel Entour (1 in starting crew)	2 Percis d'Cassell	3 Ambroise Praise du Richetoisse
3 Gilles Allais du Crieux	3 Francois Gaulle dul Mott	2 Ketty Tappan	2 Michel Rois et Reines-exp
2 Vivienne Etalon du Toille	<b>Adventures:</b>	3 Eisen Cannons	3 The Undiscovered Port
3 Sinking of the Swan	<b>Attachments:</b>	3 Armed Brig	2 Adventuring Galley
2 Vendel Smugglers	3 Merchant Ships	3 Armed Sloop	<b>Actions:</b>
3 Hiding in the Reefs	3 Last Second Escape	3 It's a Trap	3 False Colors
<b>Chanty's:</b>	3 The Trail of the Dead		

### How to play this deck:

Playing an Ally deck can be difficult because you need to get used to being in control of more than just what is on your ship, you have a whole fleet out there at your command and if you are not careful your opponent will wipe them out one by one and then come for you. This deck needs some time to build up, but you should be able to drop two crew or an Ally and a crew per turn. Do not be too hasty to boot *Rosamonde* and the *Fancy Dans* off your ship, they can still help pay for your Allies, though if you need room for better crew go ahead. This particular Ally deck isn't designed for the Allies to actually kill your opponent, more to distract them and soften them up for your crew. The *Armed Brig* and *Armed Sloop* can chase your opponents or soften them up, but be careful not to give your opponent an easy opportunity to discard them, stay close and menacing and they will be hesitant to act. The real important Allies are the support ones, the *Adventuring Galleys* to pick up your adventures (especially *Undiscovered Port*) and the *Merchant Ships* and *Vendel Smugglers* to untack your smaller crew and give you more influence. This is the reason *Ambrose* is in the deck, so you can give him cannon adventures and use *Merchant Ship* to untack him. These last two Allies can be used with *Undiscovered Port* to shorten the time of their trade runs considerably, possibly doing it in one turn. These "merchant allies" also have the benefit of being hard to discard, they can act as anchors to help you move around. *Percis'* ability and *False Colors* can let you use Allies to move, giving you the jump on your opponents and *Michel* can untack them. Through careful use of your Allies you can outmaneuver your opponent and crush them beneath the weight of your cannons.

### How to beat this deck:

An Ally deck is really only dangerous once it builds up, if you can catch it before it has a number of Allies out it is at a great disadvantage. Also take every opportunity to take out isolated Allies, if you get rid of them when you get the chance you will make things much easier on yourself later. If you find yourself surrounded by your opponent's Allies you need to proceed very carefully, take note of what Allies are where, how they can be used, and if they can be moved or untacked. If you can get through the web of Allies you can strike at their center, the opposing ship. If you are facing an Ally deck like this one, that uses Allies mainly as a distraction, recognize that and act accordingly. You have to exercise a little more caution in going for the throat, as it were, because their really big guns are on their ship. Take out what Allies you can to deny them any advantage, at least when the show down comes you won't have to worry about a few extra ships firing on you, just one.

### Cards to get:

- Rosamonde du Montaigne-Experienced (Rare, Shifting Tides/Syrneth Secret) Experienced Rosamonde allows you to place your Allies in any sea you wish, letting you drop your attacking Allies right onto your opponent if you wish. It can also be used to place the merchant allies in the seas that allow them to use their abilities right off, also quite handy.
- Fair Warning (Rare, Reaper's Fee/Syrneth Secret) Fair Warning makes it harder for your opponents to discard your Allies and can be discarded itself to keep one of them from leaving play. All this for only 1 influence.

- Synchron Powder (Rare, Scarlet Seas/Iron Shadow) This card's ability works on all cannon attacks, including those performed by Allies. Inclusion of this card would necessitate more adventuring to pay for it, but its effects are quite helpful.
- Montaigne Ship of the Line (Rare, Scarlet Seas/Iron Shadow) For an Ally deck where the Allies do more of the work, this card is the best money can buy. Though it is very expensive (12 influence) it is also the hardest to discard and does the most damage.

**Mixing ships and captains:**

*The General* is often used on *Le Predatuer* simply for the extra crew space and the ship ability is ignored all together. Ally decks using *The General* on the *Predator* are also possible. *The Admiral* on the *Grenouille* is not really feasible, the ship is just too small without *The General's* ability to increase its crew max.

*The Castillians*

**Castillian Finesse Boarding**

Captain and Ship: Enrique Orduño and the Corazon del Castille

Starting crew:

Rosa Maria de Barcino

2 Marketeers

Cutthroats

Scurvy Dogs

<b>Crew:</b>	3 Manuel Dejavez	3 Alec Mercer	3 Domingo Marten de Avila
2 Antonio Aldonez	2 Miguel Cortez	2 Don Deanna	3 Sandoval's Guard
2 Santino Medrano	<b>Adventures:</b>	3 Spit in Deaths Eye	3 Castillian Swordmaster
3 Duel with a Castillian	<b>Attachments:</b>	3 Panzerhand	3 Common Pier
<b>Actions:</b>	3 Fancy Swordplay	3 Riposte	3 High Seas Boarding
3 Prepare for Boarding	3 I Fights Better Drunk	3 Near Miss	2 Challenge to a Duel

**How to play this deck:**

This is a fairly basic boarding deck, the Castillians are good at this, because they have a large ship and a lot of Swordsmen. You start with a good amount of influence so you can pay for your rather expensive crew. Once you get a few on board you should start thinking about going after your opponent. Depending on your play environment you may want to add *Grappling Cannons* or more Topmen to let you board more. Once on board you can use your superior crew to win boarding attacks. This is a finesse style boarder, it is designed to win boarding attacks and deliver large amounts of hits. To this end, the boarding boxes are fairly balanced, there are several methods for drawing more cards in a boarding and it uses *Panzerhand*, which can act as another card in hand. Ideally you should be able to defeat your opponents in boarding and sink their crew with the large amounts of damage you can inflict during the attack.

**How to beat this deck:**

As with all boarding decks the key is to keep them off your boat. Beating decks like this can be tricky, because even if they cannot get you, they have so much swashbuckling it can be difficult to do anything to them. Unless you have some trick up your sleeve, or cannot stop it, keep them off your ship at any cost. If they are going to get on your ship no matter what you do, do everything you can to tack their crew before they get on board. If you can tack a good number of their crew with cannon or whatever, you will stand a much better chance when they do board you. You need to pick your boarding attacks carefully, because they will be hard to win. This sort of deck is designed to win boarding attacks, so you cannot just pass at each attack... With some careful playing and luck you just may be able come out of the boarding ahead.

**Cards to get:**

- Padre Alfonso (Rare, Base Sets) An excellent starting crew with great influence and a very powerful ability, the Padre can be a big help in both the early and late game.
- Margaretta Orduño (Rare, NQ/Broadsides) The Castillian first mate, and Enrique’s wife, is quite a formidable fighter on her own, when Enrique is tacked she can do as many hits as her husband.
- Ambush Boarding (Rare, Base Sets) A great card for most boarding decks, two of your sailors can pay for it or you can use things like ‘Secret of the Tops’ to do it with one crew.
- Ramming Speed (Rare, Base Sets) A good thing to do to soften up your opponent or if you can’t get on board. With your 4 move cost ship this card can really hurt your opponent while probably only tacking one of your crew.
- Dispatching the Scum (Rare, Strange Vistas) Since you have so many Swordsmen you should be able to use this card effectively. You don’t get the various bonuses from your Swordsman trait or other abilities, but your opponent will most likely be sinking several crew if you hit them with it.

*The Crimson Rogers*

**Villainous Cannons**

Captain and Ship: Reis and the Crimson Roger

Starting Crew:

Jemy

Fancy Dans

3 Marketeers

<b>Crew:</b>	2 Jemy	3 Gytha Ives	3 Samuel Smitts
2 “Butcher” Pinchot	2 Gino Napoli	3 Alec Mercer	3 Morgause Mercuri
3 Julius Caligari	<b>Adventures:</b>	3 Sinking of the Swan	3 Castillian Merchant Ship
3 We Needs us an Ussuran Gunner	<b>Attachments:</b>	3 Cat o’ Nine Tails	3 Cheap Cannons
3 Merchant Ship	<b>Actions:</b>	3 Direct Hit	3 Gunnery at its Finest
3 Hiding in the Reefs	2 Flogging	3 Below the Waterline	3 Too Close for Comfort
2 Black Heart			

**How to play this deck:**

This deck concentrates on what the Rogers to best, cannon ships into tiny splinters. The starting crew are basically just to help fill up the boat, don’t hesitate to toss them overboard when you need some space. Or even better, *Flog* then *Black Heart* them to get 6 cards out of their timely exit, you’re Villainous, they are only worth keeping as long as they serve their purpose or you will give them a new purpose. On that same note, don’t be afraid to whip (*Cat O’ Nine Tail*) your unaligned crew to put crew out faster or even to whip your faction crew for cannon later in the game; if the 3 extra hits will be worth the loss of the crew, go for it. Another good use for the *Cat o’ Nine Tails* is taking hits, you can whip crew when they tack to have them absorb more hits. If they have less than 3 swashbuckling it is more efficient than tacking and sinking them. Once you get a few Gunners and a few cannon adventures out you will be able to inflict truly painful amounts of cannon, usually 10-12 hits, with several different crew. Your ship ability, captain’s ability, *Cheap Cannons* and action cards can really put the hurt on an opponent who is not expecting to take 15 hits from one crew. Do not forget about your smaller crew as well, the *Merchant Ships* are in the deck so you can drop a cannon adventure or two on a cheap crew like *Gino* or *Andrei* and hit your opponent multiple times in one turn with the same crew.

If you can keep on your opponent there are very few decks who can take the kind of beating you dish out for long. You really are not set up to fight boardings so keep other people off your ship if at all possible, this deck is much more comfortable pummeling your opponents with cannon, though with ‘Andrei’ and *Samuel Smitts’* abilities you do have somewhat of a chance.

**How to beat this deck:**

Roger’s cannon decks are some of the easiest to make, so you will probably come against a lot of these when you play. Since they do so many hits normal damage prevention cards like *Quick Tack* and *Too*

*Close for Comfort* may not be enough. Cards like *Into the Fog* and *Last Second Escape* work better because they stop all the hits. The look on a Crimson Roger player's face when you *Last Second Escape* their 18 point cannon attack is truly something to see. If you can manage to stay away from a deck like this you will be in very good shape. All of the cannon boosting cards tend to clog up their hand so if you can keep them from being able to use these cards they will be forced to decide whether to keep the cannon boosting cards or discard them in favor of other cards. When they finally do hit you they hopefully won't have as many hit boosters as they did. Just do whatever it is your deck does while staying away from them and then when you're ready, go after them, play the game on your terms, not theirs. While you are preparing be sure to hold onto all your damage prevention, you are going to need it.

#### Cards to get:

- Vincenzo Caligari (Rare, Base Sets) The Crimson Roger's patron can do a lot of useful things for you, most often completing your adventures. Though expensive, Vincenzo provides some much needed adventuring for the Rogers and won't take up any space on your ship.
- No Escape! (Rare, NQ/Broadsides) This card basically lets you tack one of your sailors to get another free move. It is perfect for when you are two seas away from an opponent and they think they are safe for the moment. "No Escape!" lets you jump two seas and cannon your opponent as soon as you get there, giving your opponent a very unpleasant surprise.
- Fire the Chase Guns! (Rare, Base Sets) This deck can easily have several crew with at least 7 cannon so multiple "Fire the Chase Guns!" can completely devastate an opposing ship. A 12 point cannon attack followed by another 12 point could tack and/or sink an entire ship if they aren't prepared to take the hits.
- Target their Powder Room! (Rare, NQ/Broadsides) Another cannon booster, however it only requires the crew to have more than 3 cannon, not 6 like "Direct Hit" or that the crew is a Gunner like "Gunnery at its Finest". You can replace either of those cards with this or use this in addition for more cannon boosting fun.

#### Cannon Skills

Captain and Ship: Captain Reis and the Scarlet Roger

Starting crew:

2 Fancy Dans

3 Marketeers

<b>Crew:</b>	3 Samuel Smitts	3 Alex Mercer	3 Cornelius Van Brock
1 Reynaldo Pasado	3 Manuel Dejavez	3 Julius Caligari	2 Morgause Mercuri
1 "Butcher" Pinchot	2 Gino Napoli	<b>Adventures:</b>	3 Castillian Merchant Ship
<b>Attachments:</b>	3 Cat o' Nine Tails	3 Swivel Guns	1 The Reaper
<b>Actions:</b>	3 Fire as She Passes!	3 Carousing	3 Guns Blazing
3 Black Heart	3 Fury of the Rogers	3 Flogging	3 Point Blank Cannon Volley
2 Canister Shot	3 Last Second Escape		

#### How to play this deck:

This is a type of deck that is made possible by *Captain Reis'* ability to lower the cost of all things cannon related, in particular actions that cost cannon. His ability lowers the cost of many good cards such as *Fire as She Passes*, *Guns Blazing*, and *Point Blank Cannon Volley*. This means they can be paid for by most Crimson Roger crew, a *Carousing*, or a key card for this deck, *Swivel Gun*. *Swivel Gun* can not only pay for your cannon actions, it can do cannon attacks by itself and better still, its cost is also reduced by Reis's ability. The starting crew is designed to bring out crew and be abused with *Flogging*, *Black Heart*, or *Cat o' Nine Tails* them if it is beneficial, though be careful. If you get rid of those crew too soon you may stall your ability to put out more crew. A good rate at which to get rid of your starting crew is something that will come with practice.

Once you fill up your ship, which shouldn't take long, start trying very hard to board your opponent. If you can't get on board your opponent's ship a good amount of the actions in this deck cannot

be used. It is not a total loss though, you can still use the amount of cannon inherent to the Rogers and your *Swivel Guns* to do some good ping cannoning. Assuming you can get on your opponent's ship you do not really even need your crew, just let the cannon actions fly. A *Guns Blazing* or two will soften up your opponent considerably and as your first action use *Canister Shot*, preferably with a *Carousing* or *Swivel Gun* for another good 8-10 hits. After that use *Point Blank Cannon Volley* as you draw them, using non-crew as much as possible, and let your crew do the rest. If you can get onboard even a dedicated boarding deck will have a difficult time withstanding your onslaught.

#### **How to beat this deck:**

The thing to remember here is that if they board you, you die, more so than other types of boarding decks. With those at least you can fight boarding attacks and hope to win, not so here. This deck will do most of its damage with cannon actions that you can't fight, you can just take it and hope to survive. No matter how annoying the possible 15 cannon attacks may be, remember that it would be much worse if they board you. For a boarding deck, do what they don't expect, board them. This will keep them from using *Guns Blazing*, one of the most painful of their weapons, and surprise them, they won't have had time to hoard all the cannon actions that would normally destroy you. If you can catch them when they only have a *Point Blank Cannon Volley* or two you will stand a much better chance of beating them. If you let them dictate the tempo of the game and board on their terms, they will destroy you.

#### **Cards to get:**

- Vincenzo Caligari (Rare, Base Sets) Again, a helpful card but here he can also pay for 'Fury of the Rogers', meaning one less tacked crew when the boarding starts.
- Volta (Rare, Strange Vistas/Iron Shadow) This is the Crimson Roger's strongest boarder, his high swashbuckling and swordsman trait let you have at least one crew who is very strong without any cannon actions.
- Ambush Boarding (Rare, Base Sets) This card is expensive, but worth the cost considering how much this deck needs to get onboard the opposing ship. You could add +4 sailing adventures to the deck or just tack 2 'Cornelius Van Brock', he wouldn't do you much good in a boarding anyway.
- The Wrath of Reis (Rare, Strange Vistas) This is a painful card, free for the Rogers, that negates the hit absorption of one crew. If your opponent is counting on any one crew to take a lot of hits during a boarding, this card will really mess up their plans. This can also be used during a boarding attack if you win to insure that the opposing crew is sunk, if they can't tack to absorb the hits they are forced to sink.

Mixing ships and captains: *Reis* works very well on the *Scarlet Roger*, his ability becomes even more powerful when it can be used on 11 crew instead of 9. *Captain Reis* is not often used on the Crimson Roger, though it sometimes does happen.

## Brotherhood of the Coast

### Control

Captain and Ship: Allende and the Hanged Man

Starting Crew:

Gillian the Razor

Jillison Brown

Shellbacks

Cutthroats

<b>Crew:</b>	3 Geno	3 Sean McCorley	3 William Fodd
2 Lt. Juan Rodriguez de Soldano	1 Velik (exp)	1 Lieutenant Novak	3 Marcel Entour
<b>Adventures:</b>	2 Crashing Seas	2 Castillian Merchant Ship	2 Cutlass of Command
3 Trinkets and Baubles	<b>Attachments:</b>	2 Adventuring Galley	2 The Gallows
1 Northern Allies (Trade Sea Control)	1 Fear and Fire (Trade Sea Control)	1 Costal Patrols (Frothing Sea Control)	1 Master of Wind and Tide (Frothing Sea Control)
1 Castillian Navy (La Boca Control)	1 Speak Softly (La Boca Control)	1 Crescent Treasure (Forbidden Sea Control)	1 Vodacce Pirates (Forbidden Sea Control)
2 Swift Vengeance (The Mirror Control)	<b>Actions:</b>	3 Last Second Escape	3 Call to Duty
3 It's a Trap	3 Becalmed	3 Carousing	2 Orduño's Honor
<b>Chantey's:</b>	3 The Rage of the Vesten		

### How to play this deck:

Control decks take a great deal of patience to play, you need to remind yourself that your goal isn't to kill your opponent, your goal is to put out Control cards and not be killed in the process. This means you have to play a very careful, defensive game though don't be afraid to go on the offensive if the opportunity presents itself. There is a decent amount of cannon in this deck so if your opponent tacks a few to many crew to discard one of your Controls you can let loose with *Geno* and kill them that way. If your opponent wants to beat you, which they do, they will have to either kill you or discard your Controls. The large number of out of faction crew are in the deck to absorb hits, the Brotherhood's primary weakness, so killing you should be much more difficult. To discard your Controls they will have to come up with a large amount of a particular skill. Ideally, when they do this you can play *To Fight Another Day* so the Control stays in play and then cannon them, because they tacked too many crew.

There is one copy of each Control in the deck for two reasons, one, so that you will have your choice of which to put out depending on how much of the required skill you have at the moment and two, because there is nothing in the rules saying you cannot have more than one Control card attached to a sea. This means you could potentially have two Controls on each sea, making it nearly impossible for most decks to get rid of two in the same sea (since they require the same skill to discard) and prevent you from winning the game. There are additional control cards, which can be substituted into this deck.

When putting out Controls, *The Gallows* is the key card, it will push the cost to play your Controls into the 7-8 range, making them playable by one crew with the right adventures on them. If you can get ahold of a third *Gallows* you will be in good shape. *Call to Duty* is good for absorbing hits but also for putting out the Forbidden Sea Controls, which require swashbuckling. With *The Gallows* out, *Allende* could use *Call to Duty* and play *Crescent Treasures* by himself. *Carousing* is handy for a surprise *To Fight Another Day* and to produce that one extra skill point you always seem to find yourself short of. *Becalmed* is another key card, as soon as your opponent passes to fulfill the cards requirement, you pass as well ending the turn. This can get you out of dangerous situations, but more importantly, let you win the game. If you can get a Control in each sea you win the game at the end of the turn so all you need to do is play *Becalmed*, they pass, you pass, turn over, you win. You do need to be careful that they do not have any way

of discarding the Control in the sea that they are in, they can't move until they pass but they can still do anything else they want, including discard your Control.

**How to beat this deck:**

When playing against a Control deck the tendency is to ignore them, they are not doing anything to you so you might as well just build up and not worry about them for a while. This is a mistake because, unlike most other decks, a Control deck doesn't have to do anything to you to win the game. If you stay close to them they won't be as free to put out Controls and other cards, they'll always have to worry about what you might have and be more cautious as a result. Another common mistake is to not worry about their Controls until they put out their 4th one. By the time they play their 4th Control, they already have the 5th in their hand and most likely a way to stop you from discarding a Control and maybe a *Becalmed* as well. Depending on how well they draw, they may be able to play the 5th on the same turn as they played the 4th. You can usually safely ignore the 1st Control, get rid of the 2nd if the opportunity presents itself. By the time they get their 3rd Control, getting rid of a Control card or your opponent should be the first thing on your mind. You cannot wait until they place their 4th Control to take action, by then it may be too late.

Always assume they have a card in their hand to prevent you from discarding 1 Control. Try to discard one of their Controls earlier on to draw out any *To Fight Another Day* or cards of that sort they may be hoarding. Playing against a Control deck requires almost as much careful planning and patience as it does to use one.

**Cards to get:**

- Aether Compass (Rare, Shifting Tides) This is a handy adventure that you can tack to make you Control cards cheaper still, making it easier to put out more than one a turn. Unlike 'The Gallows' though, you can only use 'Aether Compass' once a turn.
- Experience is the Best Teacher (Rare, Strange Vistas) This card will add 2 to any skill of a Brotherhood crew with an adventure attached, letting many of your crew with adventures put out a Control be themselves. 'Geno' with a cannon adventure, 'Jillison' with an influence adventure, 'Allende' with 'Cutlass of Command' and this card can put most of the Controls by himself.
- Secret of the Winds (Rare, Shifting Tides/Iron Shadow) This is the Mirror control card from Shifting Tides, the only one that is rare. Its ability is very nice though, you can tack it to cancel a boarding attempt.
- To Fight Another Day (Rare, Shifting Tides) This card is like 'It's a Trap', except it only costs 1 adventuring and doesn't do hits to your opponent. It is much easier for the Brotherhood to use since it can be paid for by 'Velik's ability, the ship's ability, or 'Carousing'.

*Gosse's Gentlemen*

**Gosse Versatility**

Captain and Ship: Phillip Gosse and the Uncharted Course

Starting Crew:

Dupre and Hans

Entertainers

Fancy Dans

Scurvy Dogs

<b>Crew:</b>	3 Peter Silver	2 Dupre and Hans	3 Max Disher
2 Maria Forlani	3 Mabela	3 Sergei Nyasavy	2 Wenching Jim
<b>Adventures:</b>	3 Eisen Cannons	3 Sinking of the Swan	3 We Needs us an Ussuran Gunner
3 Crashing Seas	<b>Attachments:</b>	3 Fine Galley	2 Unwritten Rules
3 Treasure Hold	2 Swivel Guns	<b>Actions:</b>	3 Gold Only Buys Obedience
2 Obscured by Smoke	2 "That Hurts!"	2 Becalmed	3 Last Second Escape
3 Nasty Bit o' Luck	<b>Chantey's:</b>	3 The Island	



**How to play this deck:**

Though many Gosse decks are boarding decks, the Gosse have the versatility to do both cannon and boarding strategies at once. Their crew and captain's ability make them very capable in boardings, with some adventures they become very capable in both. If your opponent is using cannon you can dish it out and take whatever they give you. You can hold your own against just about any boarding deck as well, you have a lot of swashbuckling and a good number of swordsmen. The bad thing is that you will need to build up before you can go on the offensive. The good thing is you shouldn't have too much trouble staying alive until you do, you can take a lot of hits very well. Your ship attachments act as extra crew, the 'Treasure Hold's provide all the influence you will need and the *Fine Galleys* do pretty much whatever you need them to.

**How to beat this deck:**

A well-built Gosse deck can seem invincible, but they can be beaten. The build time this deck requires allows a window of opportunity that can be exploited. If you can hit them hard and quickly you can use this period before they are prepared to attack, hopefully stalling them and not allowing them to gain an advantage on you. The ship attachments can also become a problem, hitting them can help you. Cards that can get rid of ship attachments include: *Errant Match*, *Hired Saboteurs*, *Seize the Reins*, *The Figurehead Released*, *No Space for Luxuries*, and *Hauptmann von Lichen*. If you are using boarding hopefully you can beat them in that aspect, it won't be easy though. The high average swashbuckling of most Gosse crew will make it hurt if their hits get through.

**Cards to get:**

- Andre Braudel (Rare, Strange Vistas/Iron Shadow) The Gosse first mate is very powerful and his ability is one of the best of any first mate. Though his ability doesn't work during boardings<sup>2</sup>, combined with 'Fine Galley', allows you to take almost any hit with just one crew. When used with 'Obscured by Smoke' you can reduce any cannon attack to 3.
- Gaspar (Rare, Strange Vistas/Iron Shadow) The ship's cook of the 'Uncharted Course' can move the ship, but more importantly, he makes each of your 'Fine Galley's produce 2 skill points rather than 1. The advantage of having 6 extra skill points to put wherever you need goes without saying.
- Wild Party (Rare, Strange Vistas/Iron Shadow) This card is handy for getting you out of whatever bad situation you might find yourself in. If someone pulls a surprise out of their hand and gets an advantage or you tack too many crew to play something you can call an impromptu party to get yourself out of danger. The card 'Becalmed' in the deck list can be substituted to fill this role.
- Posh Quarters (Rare, Strange Vistas/Iron Shadow) This card helps out immensely in putting out crew and it won't take up a crew slot itself while on your ship.
- Well Equipped Sick Bay (Rare, Strange Vistas/Iron Shadow) Another card that would otherwise take up a crew slot, this card makes you even harder to kill. In addition to all the hits you can take by tacking, you can now sink for even more.

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<sup>2</sup> See Accumulated Rulings at <http://7thSea.info>

## The Corsairs

### Crescent Boarding

Captain and Ship: Kheired-Din and the Strange Skies

Starting Crew:

Inil

Fancy Dans

2 Marketeers

Scurvy Dog

Cutthroats

<b>Crew:</b>	2 Faisal	3 Mike Fitzpatrick	3 Galley Captives
3 Dunti	3 Dalia	3 Andres Donovich	3 Gustolph Hirsch
<b>Adventures:</b>	3 Sidhe Sails	3 Castillian Swordmaster	<b>Attachments:</b>
3 Pack 'em In	2 Fine Boots	2 Hand of the Sirens	3 Leegstra School
<b>Actions:</b>	3 Eyepatch	3 Handsome Scar	3 To the Cannons
2 Black Heart	2 Flogging	3 Minor Hull Damage	3 Last Second Escape

### How to play this deck:

This is a boarding deck modified to fit the particular strengths of the Corsairs. There are a number of cards in the deck that increase *Kheired-Din's* (the Din) swashbuckling, and therefore the amount of damage he can take with his special ability. Optimally, you could take over 10 damage with just his ability, no tacking involved. The second combo in the deck involves *Andres Donovich* and easy to attach body part attachments like: *Fine Boots*, *Hand of the Sirens*, *Eyepatch*, *Handsome Scar*, and several others from later sets. Once they are all attached *Andres Donovich* will be 4/6/4/5/5, and with 3 of him and *Gustolph Hirsch* to untack them they will be a force to be reckoned with. You only really need 2 attachments because that will allow *Andres* to move the ship on his own. Use of *Pack 'em In* on your captives can give you a 14 crew ship, providing you with a good crew advantage on just about every other ship in the game and your Rowers give you much more maneuverability than most other 4 move cost ships. *To the Cannons* lets you unleash a devastating ping cannon attack if it suits the situation. The *Minor Hull Damage* cards are in the deck because your ship ability allows you to ignore one half of their downside and your large crew max means that taking up a crew slot isn't a big deal. Many of your crew are rather low on swashbuckling, but the amount of them plus *Dalia*, *Faisal*, and the *Din* should make you a very dangerous foe.

### How to beat this deck:

You need to take advantage of the low average swashbuckling among Corsairs crew. The *Din's* ability to take a big hit without tacking anyone can be overcome by spreading out your hits. The *Din* can take one big hit, but only one, the rest will have to be dealt with in some other way. Also for such a big ship, the Corsairs are very maneuverable, always keep their location in mind because they can move their ship quite a bit. Once the *Andres Donovich*/captain attachment combo is in full swing things can get really ugly, try to hit them before they can play too many of the body attachments on the captain and you will save yourself a lot of pain later. As with all boarding decks, if you are not playing one, do not let them on your boat! Their crew may not be great, but there are a lot of them, with *Pack 'em In* they can have 14 crew on their ship plus one virtual crew in the form of the *Din's* ability. If you are using a boarding deck you're best off letting them on board the first time they try, the crew you use to cancel the boardings are probably better than the ones they are using to start them, you're better off keeping them untacked for the boarding.

### Cards to get:

- Edahgo (Rare, Strange Vistas/Iron Shadow) The Corsairs first mate is an extremely key card in any Corsairs deck. His ability gives all your captives +1 to each of their skills, most importantly cannon. Now your army of captives can all cannon your opponent for 1, making for a vicious ping cannon deck. At maximum you could have 9 captive crew on your ship, each hitting your opponent for one, plus your other crew, very few decks can stand up to that kind of pummeling.

- Kheired-Din's Secret (Rare, Strange Vistas/Iron Shadow) This is another great card for a Corsairs deck. It allows you complete freedom of movement, you can go from the Mirror to the Trade Sea in the blink of an eye. This card is great for chasing down an elusive opponent or keeping away from an aggressive one. The hits it deals you can be taken by your captain's ability or other crew if you want to save the ability for other use.
- Major Hull Damage (Rare, Shifting Tides/Horizon's Edge/Iron Shadow) An improved version with double the effects of 'Minor Hull Damage', in damage prevented, move cost and crew increase. The move cost increase is ignored of course and the crew slots it takes up aren't a big deal, your crew with swashbuckling can discard them if they become an annoyance.
- Crossing the T (Rare, Base Sets) This card provides a very good use for all that sailing you have lying around, pumping it into one big, nasty cannon barrage. 'Andres' or the Din can provide the minimum cannon and your captives can turn out tons of sailing, especially with 'Edagho' in play. Just be careful of various cards that can cancel this like 'The Better Part of Valor' or 'Betrayal'. You'll probably want to leave one rower untacked in case they play 'Last Second Escape', it really hurts to see such a huge attack canceled by such an easily cancelable card.

## The Vesten Raiders

### Weather Damage and Boarding

Captain and Ship: Yngvild Olafsdottir and the Revensj

Starting crew:

Jorund Guttormson

Brawny Rowers

Fancy Dans

Marketeers

<b>Crew:</b>	3 "Lucky" Vandrads Hallvardson	3 Orm Greybeard	3 Aleen Van Ostrand
2 Orf Helfir	3 Thordis Bjerregaard	2 Ulfied Jansson	2 Yr Hagin Bronsson
<b>Adventures:</b>	2 Boatload of Jennies	3 Stolen Sword	3 Duel with a Castillian
2 Avalon Noble	<b>Attachments:</b>	2 Vilskap (Fury)	3 Sterk (Wholeness)
2 Pistol	3 Nod (Intensity)	<b>Actions:</b>	3 Into the Fog
2 Frozen Sails	3 The Living Storm	2 Mermaids	2 Challenge to a Duel
2 Ivory Totem	2 The Spear of the West Wind	3 Carousing	3 Last Second Escape
<b>Chantey's:</b>	3 Vendel Sorcery		

### How to play this deck:

This deck uses boarding in combination with a number cards that can hit people in another sea. While most decks need to be in the same sea as their opponent to do anything to them, this deck can sit in an adjacent sea or even the other end of the ocean and hit your opponent with Weather attacks that are boosted and made cheaper by your captain's Laerdom abilities. This deck's advantage is surprise, if your opponent thinks you cannot reach them they may decide to tack out their crew to pick up an adventure, etc, then you strike. Some of the Weather cards may not do all that many hits but when boosted by *Nod* and against a tacked out ship they can be devastating. *The Living Storm*, *Frozen Sails*, *The Spear of the West Wind* and *Vilskap* all generate Weather attacks which can be boosted by '*Nod*' to really hurt. If you are in an adjacent sea, *Orf Helfir* can Duel an opposing crew to tack or sink even more crew while staying out of their sea. These cards are really just to soften up your opponents though, you will finish them in a boarding. Once you've tacked or sunk some of their crew with your Weather you can move in for the kill, you can move the ship a lot and the *Pistols* can tack more of their crew once you are onboard. Attempt to board using *Thordis* first, if you do get on board they will all untack. You may want to attach some of your swashbuckling adventures to them for this reason, they will always be ready when a boarding starts. During a boarding hold onto all your *Nods*, a *Carousing*, and a *Vilskap* if you don't have one out. If your opponent

lives through the boarding the 6-8 hits you can deal with those cards against their (presumably) tacked out ship will be really painful.

**How to beat this deck:**

This decks functions by surprise, if it catches you with your pants down it can really hurt. The easiest thing to do is, once you know you are facing a deck like this, always assume they have something they can hit you with in their hand. This type of deck is fairly easy to identify, cards like *Mermaids* and *Frozen Sails* are rarely found in any other type of deck. It would be wise to be wary of this possibility whenever you face a Vesten deck, many Vesten decks will make use of Weather cards to some degree. A few other factions like the Brotherhood can use this tactic, but not nearly as effectively. Several of the cards which can hit you from another sea have very easy cancel costs which make them useless if you have a couple untacked crew. If they can't use their cards to hit you from a distance they will clog up their hand and slow them down, they will be forced to behave as a straight boarding deck, which they aren't as good at because of the Weather cards. If you deny them the ability to use a significant portion of their deck you will put yourself at an automatic advantage.

**Cards to get:**

- Red Thorfield (Rare, Shifting Tides/Iron Shadow) The Vesten first mate is rather expensive but he has some good stats and his ability is just fun, even if they hit you, you hit them back.
- Hoskuld Hardrada (Rare, Shifting Tides) Basically an all-around good crew, his stats are as good as the first mate's and you can use your excess Weather cards to boost his swashbuckling.
- Ring of Villainy (Rare, Shifting Tides) Usually a little used card, this card has some good uses in this deck. It can increase the damage done by Orf Helfir in his Duels and Red's ability when used in a boarding. With Red, even if you lose the boarding attack you can deal 6 hits to them.
- Vestenmannavnjar Funeral (Rare, Scarlet Seas/Iron Shadow) This is a nice card that will make all your Vesten crew bigger in boardings when you sink other Vesten crew. You will most likely be forced to sink crew for some reason, so you might as well benefit from their deaths by giving them a proper burial.

Ship options: *The Dolphin* (Fate's Debt/Iron Shadow) is a fantastic card for boarding decks with lots of Swordsman crew on board. And it works perfectly with *Yngvild's* move cost.

## *The Black Freighter*

**Overwhelmed with Boarders**

Captain and Ship: Captain Necros and the Black Freighter

Starting crew:

2 Skeletal Dans

Pete "Gang" Greene

Skeletal Brutes

<b>Crew:</b>	2 Skeletal Thugs	2 Skeletal Saboteurs	2 Skeletal Boarding Gang
3 Skeletal Sail Crew	3 Rigger Mortis	3 The Bloat	1 Reinheart the Ripper
2 Pete "Gang" Greene	2 Dalia	2 Don Deanna	2 Stench
<b>Adventures:</b>	2 Gold Coins	2 Scarlet Gem of Death	2 Duel with a Castillian
<b>Attachments:</b>	1 The Curse	1 Traitor's Scream	3 Common Pier
<b>Actions:</b>	3 Flogging	3 Black Heart	3 Gold Only Buys Obedience
3 Innocent Bystander	2 Brace Yourselves	3 High Seas Boarding	3 Near Miss
3 Carousing	3 Next of Kin		

Note: Since Black Sails is distributed somewhat differently from other sets, most of this deck can be made from one starter and two boosters of Black Sails. Also *Skeletal Boarding Gang* is an uncommon from Scarlet Seas so don't be confused if you can't find it with your Black Sails cards. If you don't have any,

more *Skeletal Brutes* or *Skeletal Thugs* do much the same thing. Later sets introduced several additional Black Freighter crew worth reviewing.

### **How to play this deck:**

This is a gang beating type boarding deck. The abundance of cheap crew and large crew maximum of the Black Freighter lend the faction toward this type of deck. This deck will let you put out a large number of crew very quickly and hopefully overwhelm your opponent. The reason for so many crew in this deck is that, ideally, you should be drawing and playing them very quickly. Once you get a good crew advantage over your opponent, which shouldn't take long, you should concentrate on boarding them. There are several cards in the deck that allow you more boarding attempts or make your boardings harder to cancel. Once on board, try to get a few of your crew, preferably the bigger ones, through your opponents defenses and force them to sink crew. With the *Scarlet Gem of Death* completed, all your Skeletal crew have 2-3 swashbuckling allowing them all to get some good hits in. Even if you cannot get the job done in one boarding the cards drawn during the boarding and your crew recycling ability will let you bring out new crew and hit your opponent again the next turn.

### **How to beat this deck:**

The sheer amount of crew on a Black Freighter ship can be rather intimidating and its crew recycling ability can be annoying, but if you play carefully all those crew will disappear in no time. If you are using cannon, multiple smaller cannon shots work better against them than a single large one. A single 20 point cannon attack may sink 5 or fewer crew, but 5 separate 4 point attack will sink 8-10 crew. The key is to keep on them, if you sink 3-4 of their crew a turn they will start to run out even though they can put out more. Other types of decks have a little more trouble against them. Another boarding deck will need to concentrate on winning boarding attacks, hopefully your bigger crew can take out several of their smaller ones and destroy their crew advantage.

### **Cards to get:**

- Ambush Boarding (Rare, Base Sets) This card works like 'High Seas Boarding' only slightly more expensive, but more importantly, without a cancel cost.
- Well Equipped Sick Bay (Rare, Strange Vistas/Iron Shadow) Since all your Skeletal crew sink to absorb hits the extra 2 hits absorbed allows you to take huge amounts of damage very easily.
- Posh Quarters (Rare, Strange Vistas/Iron Shadow) This reduces the cost of your already cheap crew and will expedite hiring of new crew.
- Into the Fray (Rare, NQ/Broadsides) This card will let all your crew do more damage in boardings, with the 'Scarlet Gem of Death' in play even your cheap Skeletal crew can inflict at least 5 hits each.



## Chapter 6: Miscellaneous

This chapter is intended to cover all those pieces of information that you may want or need to know, but didn't really fit in another chapter. These topics include:

[Tournament Rules](#)

[Hammocks and Betrayal](#)

[Unaligned Ships and Captains](#)

[Foins](#)

[Broadsides League](#)

[Other Promos/Crows Nest](#)

[Card Distribution](#)

[Magic in 7th Sea: types, uses, how they work](#)

[Explanation of Boarding](#)

[7th Sea Rules & Game Play Introduction](#)

[7th Sea Resources](#)

### *Tournament Rules*

The two standard forms of tournaments for 7th Sea are Constructed and Sealed Deck. You must have a minimum of 60 cards in your deck, which includes your ship and captain, but not the five seas. So that tournaments can be completed in a reasonable amount of time, there is an additional rule added in tournaments known as the 7th Sea rule.

The 7th Sea rule is used in tournaments to insure that the tournament doesn't go too long and can be quite a surprise if you're not aware of it. In tournaments, the time limit for a game is 45 minutes, when that time is up the judge will announce that it is time to go to the 7th Sea. Both players can finish their current turn and the next turn they move into the 7th Sea. This entails discarding all seas and sea attachments, both players are in the same sea, but not any sea in particular. They cannot move out of the 7th Sea and neither player can put new crew, adventures or attachments into play; they are stuck with what they have. Finally, crew cannot tack to absorb hits, they can only sink. The game continues from there until one player has died, usually not more than one turn. Since most hits must be taken by sinking crew (you can still play action cards from your hand) you run out of crew very quickly and someone will die. Cannon decks have an advantage in the 7th Sea as they can deal their hits directly, while a boarding deck must first board their opponent and other deck types are in even worse shape. Ally and Control decks have very little chance because their method of victory, sea attachments, are discarded when going into the 7th Sea. This is an important rule to be aware of if your decks usually take a long time to kill your opponent, if you play in a tournament you may find yourself in the 7th Sea, which can be an advantage or disadvantage, depending on your type of deck.

Sealed deck has several unique rules of its own. In sealed deck you may ignore the Loyal trait on crew. This is to make more of the crew you draw useable, though any cards which can only be used by a certain faction are still restricted to that faction. A Castillian captain can still not attach a Crimson Roger captain attachment. It also spices up the game, you find crew on ships they wouldn't normally be and people use cards that they wouldn't otherwise use. By this same token, a Black Freighter captain can hire non-Black Freighter crew in Sealed deck.

All cards and sets released by AEG are legal including Parting Shot. The most recent printing or errata of a card is the only version that is acceptable for ruling, which includes boarding boxes. The only cards that are not tournament legal are both versions of 'Captain Roberts' from Parting Shot.

### *Hammocks and Betrayal*

You may, if you're lucky, be looking through your cards and find a card called "Hammocks" or "Betrayal". You may notice that I didn't suggest you get either of these cards for any of the decks in the Sample Deck chapter, though they would go well in many of the decks. The reason for this is because they are both very

good and go very well in almost any deck. They are considered to be two of the power cards in 7th Sea and consequently are rather hard to come by. Some people feel these cards are broken and never should have been printed, others feel they are just good cards, they won't make or break a deck. The fact is these cards are out there so you should be prepared to deal with them in one way or another.

## *Unaligned Ships and Captains*

There are 19 unaligned ships and 6 unaligned captains in the game. These are somewhat different from the normal ships and captains that each faction has. Unaligned ships can be used by any captain, the downside is that Faction specific ship attachments cannot be put onto these ships. Many unaligned captains must use an unaligned ship and cannot start with crew that have a faction symbol, though they can later hire non-Loyal crew from other factions. Unaligned Ships and captains are considered not to have a faction and, though they can gain abilities and traits from surrounding themselves with other unaligned crew, much like the factions. Additionally, some unaligned captains do have nationality specific traits, where their nation takes on many characteristics of a faction.

## *Foils*

Starting in Shifting Tides, AEG has randomly placed foil versions of the ships, captains, and figureheads of the various factions into booster packs. There is an average of 2 foils per box, though some Scarlet Seas boxes have reported as high as 4, others as few as 1. Shifting Tides contains the foils of the ships from BroadSides through Shifting Tides and the captains from BroadSides through Strange Vistas. Scarlet Seas contains the captains from Shifting Tides, the figureheads for the factions in BroadSides and the captain and ship from Black Sails. These foils take up a common slot in the booster pack right before the rare. No subsequent sets since Scarlet Seas had foils in packs, though some tournament only foils were available after Scarlet Seas. In total 36 foil versions of cards were printed and made available in booster packs.

'Jacklyn the Black' was only available at stores that carried 'the Island of the Sunken Eye' promotion and was free with a purchase of \$10 worth of 7th Sea CCG items. Players spending more than \$25 received 10 additional booster packs for free. Circa April 2001<sup>3</sup>

'Indisposed' was only available in the August 2000 issue of Inquest Gamer Magazine and the following issue of The Crow's Nest. "Indisposed targets and effects Captains who have had too much of the good life..."<sup>4</sup>

'Betrayal' (foil), 'Brothers in Arms', and 'Fair Weather Friend' were fanclub promos #1-3 and were available in The Crow's Nests between April and August 2000.<sup>5</sup>

'A Friend in Need' was a BroadSides League participant promo.

## *BroadSides League*

"AEG is proud to announce the launch of its BroadSides League for the 7th Sea CCG. Loosely based on the popular Quickdraw leagues for the Doomtown CCG, each league event will be a seasonal, store-based monthly activity. Each League season will run eight (8) weeks, with a four week rest between seasons. The first League Kit, enough materials for 10 players, of the first season will be available at no charge. Additional League kits will be available as for-sale items to retailers by the end of April (2000).

Each of the Seasons will be named after one of the five basic seas, the first being The Mirror Season. Prizes include Plunder certificates for redemption through The Crow's Nest, and one foil stamped prize card for the league winner at each location. Each location will also receive promo cards for each participant in the League as part of their League Kit."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20010405054119/http://alderac.com/main.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20010110202800/http://www.alderac.com/corporate/announcements.html#letter>

<sup>5</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20010110202800/http://www.alderac.com/corporate/announcements.html#letter>

<sup>6</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20010110202800/http://www.alderac.com/corporate/announcements.html#letter>

## *Other Promo Cards/ The Crow's Nest*

AEG has released other foil and non-foil promotional cards through various other means, most often through the fan club. There is an application for the 7th Sea Society, the 7th Sea fan club, in the back of every instruction book. With this you would get special promo cards that are sent out with each edition of the Crow's Nest, a quarterly 7th Sea newsletter. Promo cards are commonly given as tournament prizes, for participating in the BroadSides league, or in gaming magazines. Most of these cards exist only as foils, but AEG has printed foil versions of 'Betrayal' and each of the five seas. These cards were made available to the fan club and are given away as prizes in tournaments. Two installments of a 7th Sea comic book series were printed, each with a unique, non-foil promo. The *Prelude to Ruin* series included an inexperienced, unaligned 'Captain [Bonnie] McGee' along with her ship, 'The Highland Piper' and first mate 'Salvador Bernoulli' from before she met up with Berek. The second series, *Absolution*, included a ship 'Le Petit Esprit', two crew: 'Reynard Fornier' (Black Freighter) and 'Luis Rafael Dominguez de San Angelo' (Castille), and a sea attachment 'Trechaut'. Other tournament prizes included booster packs labeled with a special AEG sticker. Copies of *The Crow's Nest* newsletters can be found at [7thSea.info](http://7thSea.info).

## *Card Distribution*

Whenever players start a new game one of the first things they want to know is which cards are rare, uncommon and common. In some cases it's easier than others, there are very good rare cards, but there are also very bad rare cards and very good common cards. In booster packs of No Quarter/BroadSides, Strange Vistas, and Shifting Tides the distribution is, from the front of the pack to the back, 11 common/1 rare/3 uncommon. From Scarlet Seas to Reaper's Fee it was changed to 10 common/1 rare/4 uncommon. Black Sails was packaged differently, each booster pack has one copy of each of the 50 cards in the set (except captain, ship, letter of marque, and Skeletal Brutes). Black Sails has no rarity. Starting with Horizon's Edge booster packs only contained 11 cards with 1 rare, 3 uncommon and 7 commons<sup>7</sup>. Parting Shot, the final set, was distributed entirely online with no rarity.

## *Magic in 7th Sea*

The world of 7th Sea is one inhabited by swashbuckling pirates, but also mystical sorcerers. There are several types of magic in 7th Sea and since the rulebook doesn't really talk about them at all, I decided to do that here. There are currently 7 types of magic in Theáh: Fate, Glamour, Porté, Laerdom, Pyeryem, Nacht and Scry. Any crew with one or more magic traits is considered a 'Sorcerer' and any card that effects these traits is a 'Sorcery'. There is an 8th quasi-sorcery knack, Fear, which is not considered a sorcery. Fate, as its name would imply, is the art of manipulating the strands of destiny to your advantage. Most of the crew with Fate are currently part of the Brotherhood, making them the faction of choice if you want to use Fate extensively. Glamour is the Sidhe (fairy) magic of trickery and luck. Most Glamour practitioners sail with the Sea Dogs, because of Avalon's strong connection to the Sidhe. Porté is the magic of the Montaigne nobility, it is used to open doorways in the fabric of the universe, so objects and people can pass through, in essence, a form of teleportation. Porté is, logically, most often found with the Montaigne. Laerdom is the rune sorcery of the Vestenmanavanjar invoking their ancient gods, often to effect the weather. Most characters with Laerdom are of Vesten heritage. Pyeryem is Ussuran shape-shifting magic, used to transform into the forms of animals. Scry is generally associated to Sophia's Daughters affiliated crew and generally has something to do with drawing cards. Nacht is generally associated with Eisen/die Kreuzritter and effects boarding attacks and duels in some way.

Fear isn't a form of sorcery per sé, but it basically works the same way, it uses knacks and crew abilities to terrify opposing crew. Fear is currently possessed only by the undead crew of the Black Freighter.

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<sup>7</sup> This needs to be verified.



It was very hard to make a deck based around a particular type of magic until Horizon's Edge was released. The set included common, relatively low cost adventures to give crew a type of sorcery. Additionally, in this set and subsequent sets there were more crew printed with sorcery traits.

With the exception of Porté and Nacht there is a captian or ship that provides starting magic to allow for quick use of you sorcery knacks. The Ram, a large ship from Syrneth Secret, gives any captain Glamour 1 or increases their Glamour by 1. Other Captains' starting magic is related to their faction or nationality. Many crew also have sorcery traits and once in play, these crew become big targets for whatever types of crew removal your opponent may be playing. Sorcerers often have a limited life span and when they die, they take all those knacks with them. The other problem that many of the magic knacks are rare. AEG has a policy of making more generally useful cards common while making Unique and less useful cards rare. An excellent policy in most situations, but this means that many of the knacks you will want to use are rare, making it very hard to get 3 of them. Many later knacks are not rare however, and are more useful because they can be put directly on your captain in most cases.

## *Explanation of Boarding*

Despite the fact that boarding is explained in detail in the rulebook, when I first learned the game boarding still confused me for some time. Judging from the frequency with which I hear questions about how boarding works, I will explain some of the finer points of boarding here. This isn't intended as an explanation of every element of a boarding, just the more confusing areas to help people understand it better.

The first part of a boarding is the boarding attempt. To attempt a boarding you either pay your ship's move cost or by other means which starts a boarding. Your opponent can then cancel the attempt by paying their ship's move cost, paying the cancel cost of the card you used to begin the boarding or by other means.

As the canceling or defending player it is important to keep the order of operations in mind. It has been ruled that primary cancel costs must be paid before other reacts can take place. This means that if you do not pay your ship's move cost or the cancel cost on a card your opponent used to begin a boarding and instead play a card like 'Hiding in the Reefs', you cannot go back and pay the primary cancel cost if 'Hiding in the Reefs' or another react is canceled. Hence you must be careful in using cards which cancel boardings, if your card is canceled in turn, you won't have another opportunity to pay the primary cancel cost.

Once on board, play goes as follows:

1. The person who initiated the boarding may send forward one of their untacked crew and play a card from their hand to begin a boarding attack. This card is only used for the largest, top boarding box (Slash, Dagger, Punch, etc.), which determines the type of boarding attack. Any text on the card is disregarded, unless it is pertinent for this situation like 'Riposte'.
2. The opponent also called the defender may decide to send forward one of their untacked crew to fight the attacking crew or may decide to simply absorb the hits by tacking or sinking crew or playing cards from their hand.
3. If they decide to defend with one of their crew, they send that crew forward and play a card from their hand, which has the type of boarding attack played by their opponent (Slash, Dagger, etc.) in one of the smaller two 'defense' boxes. This reverses the attack and sends an attack of the type in the top box back at the attacking player.

For example, the first player sends forward one of their crew and plays an attachment card which has a Club in the top box, the other player pushes one of their crew forward and plays a Crew card which has a Club in one of the smaller boxes and returns a Punch, the one in the large box. Play continues this way until one player cannot or chooses not to reverse the attack. Whoever does not return the attack is the loser.

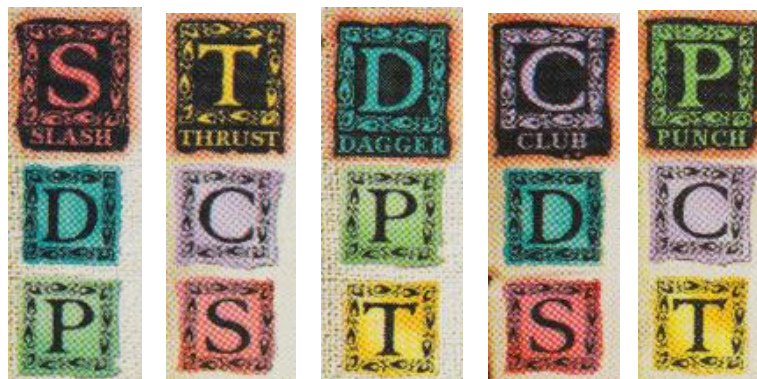
The winning crew deals hits equal to their swashbuckling plus whatever other bonuses they might have (the Swordsman trait, special abilities, etc.). The losing crew must tack and sink to absorb as many of these hits as possible, if they cannot absorb them all, other crew must absorb these hits after the losing crew has been sunk. Either player can play cards to increase or reduce these hits at any point. Once hits are distributed the winning crew is tacked.

An important thing to remember is that the winning crew does not tack to deal the hits, they will deal their hits even if they are somehow tacked between when the boarding attack begins and when it ends. This means that you can use your winning crew to play cards which further harm your opponent. An example of this is having your winning crew play 'Tagging' on the loser. This insures that the losing crew will have to sink to absorb the hits, very handy if you happen to be fighting the opposing captain. Some crew have abilities that allow them to enter a boarding attack even if they are tacked, or to tack when they enter one for some effect. These abilities are good because they give you more crew to fight with, but it also means that if that crew loses, they will not be able to tack to take any of the hits and will most likely be sunk.

Cards which say "Play instead of performing a boarding attack" are played instead of sending a crew forward, you do not push forward a crew on your turn but instead play that card. Doing this does count as an action so you could do this several rounds in a row, drawing more cards after each round. It is common for two boarding decks to each play several of these cards in the first round of the boarding, each using cards like 'Prepare for Boarding' or 'I Fights Better Drunk' to make their crew better before they begin to fight.

Most cards follow the standard pattern. Action cards are either Daggers or Slashes. Daggers return Punches or Thrusts, Slashes return Daggers or Punches. Most adventures are Thrusts, they return Clubs or Slashes. Most crew cards are Punches, they return Clubs and Thrusts. Most attachment cards are Clubs, they return Daggers and Slashes. Chanteys can be any of these types, though they always follow the same pattern (if a Chantey delivers a Dagger it will return a Punch or Thrust). Almost all cards of these types follow these patterns, there are some cards which were accidentally printed with incorrect boarding boxes. Cards from early promo decks have different boarding boxes than normal, several cards in BroadSides/No Quarter were also misprinted, 'Tagging' is printed as a Club for example. For tournament play these cards are played based on the most recent printing/errata, while in casual play these cards may be played as they are printed.

These patterns can be used to form a circle where you can play a card of one type and be sure that you can return whatever your opponent throws back at you. If you have at least one of each type of boarding box you can follow a sequence so that you are assured of being able to block their next move, assuming they don't play anything unexpected like 'Riposte'. If you play a Slash, they can respond with a Punch or a Dagger, both of which can be stopped by a Thrust. The Thrust in turn can be blocked by a Club or a Slash, both of which can be blocked by a Dagger. The Dagger can be blocked by a Punch or Thrust, which can be blocked by a Club, which is blockable by a Dagger or Slash. Both of these can be returned with a Punch, which can be blocked by a Club or Thrust, both of which can be returned by a Slash, bringing us back to the beginning of the circle. You can start wherever you like, just follow the pattern and you'll be safe. Of course, this only works when you have an even distribution, and you can rarely be guaranteed that.



## *7th Sea Rules & Game Play Introduction*

Rulebooks and rulings for 7th Sea can be found at [7thSea.info](http://7thSea.info). This includes the standard rulebook with instructions on how to play in general. Additionally, complete judge rulings for specific cards and scenarios can also be found in the same section as the rulebook. There are also step by step companion walkthroughs and introductions to make picking up 7th Sea as simple as possible. This guide should serve to supplement these more focused walkthroughs.

## *7th Sea Resources*

At the time of the original printing of this guide there were a number of 7th Sea resources to be found on the internet. Unfortunately, nearly all are no longer available, or only partially still intact. Below you will find an updated and revised list of resources to review:

7thSea.info (<http://www.7thSea.info>)

Likely the source of this strategy guide for you, or at least you may have come across the site already. It is a repository for a great deal of the remaining 7th Sea knowledge as well as articles, rules, online play resources, cards, and more. A great place to start

BoardGameGeek (<https://boardgamegeek.com/boardgame/3125/7th-sea-collectible-card-game>)

The site has some resources and the most active forum related to the CCG out there. Excellent place to ask questions and review many years of information.

Facebook: 7th Sea CCG Players (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/2233394568/>)

Another active forum for questions, trades, and announcements. Definitely join to stay up to date on 7th Sea happenings.

Alderac.com (<http://www.alderac.com> & <http://www.alderac.com/7thsea>)

This is the home site of AEG, the company that made 7th Sea. They have pages for all of their different games, including 7th Sea. There is still some useful information on this site, though much of the good stuff can only be found on arhive.org

John Wick Presents (<http://johnwickpresents.com> & <http://www.sailthe7thsea.com>)

At this time we know the rights to 7th Sea have been obtained, in part, by John Wick Presents. John Wick was the creator of the RPG and all the material that the CCG was later based on. At the moment we do not know what will become of 7th Sea, but definitely worth keeping an eye out on his site.

Ebay (<http://ebay.com>)

Not a 7th Sea site but a very handy place to pick up 7th Sea singles, as well as boxes, books and assorted other 7th Sea goodies.

*Below is the list of sites circa 2001, this can be helpful if you use archive.org to view the remaining information.*

Alderac.com (<http://www.alderac.com>)

This is the home site of AEG, the company that makes 7th Sea. They have pages for all of their different games, including 7th Sea. They often have useful information on this page, previews of coming sets, artwork, lists of stores which carry 7th Sea, and fiction from the writers of the 7th Sea storyline. They also have lists of which cards are available for plunder redemption (those little points on the booster packs and starter decks) and where to send them. Some parts of the site could use some improvement but it is being updated now more than it used to be.

7th Sea World (<http://www.ccgworld.org/7SW>)

In my opinion, and that of many others, 7th Sea World is the best site for the 7th Sea CCG on the internet, even better than the home site at Alderac.com. 7th Sea World has articles on strategy, the latest 7th Sea news, complete spoilers and checklists, including promos, from every 7th Sea set, plus a large deck archive with over 100 decks for different factions, it is also most likely where you found this guide. Most importantly, it is home to the Accumulated Rulings for 7th Sea, if a card has received errata or been clarified, a ruling on a topic issued, or an aspect of the game clarified, it will be here. If you have a rule question this is the first place to look.

7th Sea Mailing List ([http://www.darkedge.com/mailling\\_lists.html](http://www.darkedge.com/mailling_lists.html))

This is an email listserv for the 7th Sea CCG, Darkedge operates similar lists for players and GM's of the RPG as well if you're interested. This is the single best way to stay informed of the latest news, rulings and 7th Sea updates. Erik Yapple (see the K, love the K), lead designer for 7th Sea, is on the list to answer rules questions and Rob Vaux, storyline guru, and assorted other AEG folk make appearances now and then to answer questions or just be their cheery selves. You can post your deck to the list to get help, discuss strategy, post ideas for new cards or just get help from all of the lovely people (including yours truly) on the list. You can also find a link to this on the 7th Sea World main page.

Avalon Forever (<http://members.aol.com/PugoCrydee/index.html>)

This is the homepage of Mike Mullins, author of the Deck Divination articles which can be found here and on 7th Sea World. I strongly recommend looking at these articles, they are a very good read and address a large range of topics. Some of them cover the same topics as this guide but a lot of them are on different topics which can be very helpful to players new and old alike. This site is dedicated to the Sea Dogs but would be useful for any player to take a look at. He has several sample Sea Dog decks as well as a comprehensive list of all cards Sea Dog related. He also runs a trade section for those looking to trade some cards.

The Forbidden Cove (<http://www.cruden.net/7thsea/index.html>)

This is the web page of Thomas Kohler, another good player and co-founder of Team Evil, a group of people who like to use Villainous captains and just villainy in general. It also has some scans of cards and other 7th Sea news. It also has a patch designed by Sigmar Ug to allow the program Apprentice, usually used for playing Magic: The Gathering online, to play 7th Sea instead. This can be a great resource for finding people to play against if there aren't many in your area.

Dave Rice's Homepage (<http://www.qix.net/~drice6900/>)

Dave sells 7th Sea (and Middle Earth) singles at very good prices, he periodically updates the site with new cards, a very good place to pick up cards your looking for or to complete a set.

