

## **RANDOM EVENT CARDS IN CONQUEST OF PARADISE**

**By  
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One of the features that keeps the game of Conquest of Paradise from getting monotonous is the inclusion of Random Event Cards. First introduced in C3I magazine, No. 22, these cards added variety to the game and quickly became a standard part of it, even though they were an optional rule. These cards were so popular that when the Second Edition of the game came out, the cards were included with the game as an Advanced Rule. The cards came in two editions. The First Edition was the one that came in the magazine and was played with the First Edition of the game. While they played well, some of the cards could be devastatingly powerful in certain situations, in some cases even knocking a player out of the game, and needed correction as the original designer of the game wanted them to be “game tweekers”, not game changers. After much debate, changes were made to some of them in the Second Edition, which came out with the Second Edition of the game. The First Edition required the use of some of the information counters in the game to mark where certain events were happening in the map-board, but in the Second Edition, the events receive their own individual special counters to mark them on the map-board. Also, it was established that if the play of an event results in a player having only one Village or no Villages left on the board, then the event was treated as No Event.

In the game, Random Events do not come into effect until the Game Turn after the leading player has reached a score of five or more Victory Points. Then, during the Turn Order Step, the player with the lowest Victory Point score has a choice of either drawing a Random Event card or determining the Turn Order for that turn. Obviously, the overwhelming choice that almost all players make is to draw the card, applying the good events to themselves and the bad results to other players. The trick is to keep staying in last place so one can have control of the cards. This means having to be at least two Victory Points behind the next lowest empire in Victory Point score. But how do you do this? Well, the best way is to slow the development of your own empire in order to keep behind the rest of the players in terms of Victory Points. But this only works up to mid-game. By this time, you have hopefully hurt the other players enough to make your bid to jump ahead in Victory Points or have strengthen your own empire enough so you can withstand bad Random Events being played on you.

Most of the Random Event cards must be played immediately upon being drawn, but there are some that can be kept in your hand to be played at a later time in the game. (Six cards in the First Edition, five cards in the Second Edition.) One must read the Random Event cards carefully as some will state certain instructions that must be followed, or conditions that must exist, in order for the card to be played. If these instructions cannot be followed at the time the card is played, then the cards must be treated as No Event. While some cards do state this, others do not, but will still be treated as No Event.

In this article, we will be using the terms Early-Game, Mid-Game, and Late-Game. These are the three phases of a game and require some explanation as follows:

**Early-Game:** In this phase, players are busy exploring for the islands and atolls that will become their empire. Besides sending out their Explorers to find islands, they are building Colonies and Transport Canoes to take them to the newly discovered islands. By the end of this phase players will be starting to buy Arts & Culture cards and constructing their Transport Canoe Chain.

**Mid-Game:** In this phase, players have finished their exploring and have turned inward to get the extra Build Point. Players are fully developing their empires and will have completed their respective Transport Canoe Chains. Buying Arts & Culture cards are now the order of the day and the building of Warrior Bands and War Canoes begins in earnest.

Late-Game: In this final phase, players will be building up their armed forces to either defend their empires or to create Invasion Forces to invade other players' empires or the Independent Island Groups to the west. The eastern empires may possibly make a try to get Kumara at this time. The buying of Arts & Culture cards continues to the end of the game to get maximum Victory Points. Those with Invasion Forces will invade to capture islands and if they succeed, will declare victory. It should be noted that some players during the course of the game, may enter the next phase before others do.

On some of the Random Event cards, players will see the terms of Island Groups that are face-up or flipped face-up. Many players think at first that this applies to the Island Group and Atoll tiles that are placed on the map. However, the two Home Island Groups (Samoa and Tonga) and the Independent Island Groups and Atolls that are printed on the map are considered to be face-up as far as Random Events are concerned. The Independent Island Groups that are printed on the map can be used as a target for Random Events, but only those Islands Groups and Atolls that are controlled by either yourself or an opponent player. In the case of Random Events that affect multiple adjacent hexes (Typhoon and Tsunami), any adjacent hexes chosen after the first one that are uncontrolled Independent Island Groups and Atolls, the Event would have no effect on them in game terms. (Although in reality, the event would be just as devastating.)

## **The Random Events**

The following is a listing the Random Event cards which will include the best way to play them and the differences between the First and Second Edition versions of these cards.

1. Typhoon: This event removes one Village and one Canoe from the affected hex, with each player in the Turn Order moving the marker to an adjacent hex. The event is best played on a cluster of adjacent Island Groups in an opponent's empire. At least two and at most four hexes will be affected, depending on how many players there are in the game. This can really mess up an owning player's Transport Canoes Chain. Of course, the player who is being hit by this event will move it away into Open Ocean, if possible. But this usually occurs if the event occurs Mid to Late Game. In the Early Game, these clusters may be there but are not developed yet. So then, the next best thing to do in this case is to hit an opponent's Home Island hex. This can be especially hurtful to both Samoa or Tonga because if one of them gets hit with the event, the other adjacent Home Island hex may well get swept up into the mess. The only difference between the First and Second Editions was the type of counter used to place the event, in the first Edition it was a Battle Marker, in the Second Edition it was a special Typhoon Marker.
2. Tsunami: This event only removes one Village from the affected hex and only three adjacent hexes can be affected. What was said for the previous Random Event also applies to this one as well. The only difference between the First and Second Editions was that the First Edition used a Battle Marker to place the event and the Second used a special Tsunami Marker.
3. Volcanic Ash: These events give an Island Group or Atoll the ability to support one additional Village. Obviously, the best use for this event is to apply it to an Atoll, as it will increase its potential worth from  $\frac{1}{2}$  a Victory Point to two Victory Points. As there are eight Atoll tiles that can be drawn, plus three more printed on the map, the chances are good that you will have at least one Atoll in your empire when you play this event. The First Edition used an Improved Agriculture marker to mark the hex while the Second Edition uses a special Ash marker.
4. Discovered Spring: This event gives an Atoll the ability to support one additional Village. Like the previous card, it will increase the potential worth of the Atoll from  $\frac{1}{2}$  a Victory Point to two Victory Points. If you get this card plus the previous one, it would be best to play it on a second

Atoll in your empire as this will give a combined potential worth of the two Atolls of four Victory Points, compared to playing both on them on one Atoll which will only give you a potential worth of three Victory Points. The First Edition used an Improved Agriculture marker to mark the hex while the Second Edition uses a special Spring marker.

5. Maui is Pleased: Essentially a No Effect card. There are no differences between the First and Second Edition of this card.
6. Extensive Terracing: This event gives an Island Group with at least one Village the ability to support one additional Village. It can be used on an Atoll that has a Village from another Random Event. A fine card to play on any Island Group in your empire. In the First Edition there were two of these cards in the deck and an Improved Agriculture marker was used to mark the hex. In the Second Edition there is only one card of this type in the deck and a special Terracing marker is used to mark the hex.
7. Invasive Weeds: This event reduces the number of Villages an Island Group can support by one. When played on an Island Group with two or more Villages, one Village is removed. It can be played on a lucky Atoll that had the Discovered Spring and Volcanic Ash events previously played on it. In the First Edition one Village was flipped over and turned at a 45° angle to signify this event. In the Second Edition the Village is removed and a special Weeds marker is put in its place. This event is best played on the leading player in Victory Points.
8. Severe Erosion: This is another event that can reduce the number of Villages that an Island Group can support by one. Atolls that have had either the Volcanic Ash or Discovered Spring event previously played on them can be a victim. Even Island Groups with only one box can be a victim, thus making them worthless. The player chooses a green or brown box in the island tile, with the brown box being the first choice, and removes the Village in it. In the First Edition an Improved Agriculture marker, cocked at a 45° angle was placed in the box to signify the event. In the Second Edition a special Erosion marker was placed there. Another event to be played on the player leading in Victory Points
9. Pele's Anger: Ah, the traditional South Sea volcano of movie and television fame. This event causes the removal of one Village and one Warrior Band on one of the Island Groups listed on the card. These are Aotearoa, Hawaii, the Kermadec Islands, Samoa, the Hunter Islands, Vanuata, the Solomon Islands, and the Bismarck Sea. The nice thing about this event is that four of the Island Groups listed are in the Independent Island Groups area of the map. This provides a safe place to play this event so you do not have to play it on yourself. The difference between the First and Second Editions is that in the First Edition only three Island Groups were listed, those being Aotearoa, Hawaii, and the Kermadec Islands. Play of this event will depend on which of the listed Island Groups on the card is face-up on the map. In the First Edition, if none of the three Island Groups was face up, then the card was treated as No Event. In the Second Edition, if none of the first four Island Groups listed on the card are face-up, then you can always play it on one of the Independent Island Groups listed.
10. Warrior Leader: This event is one that you can keep in your hand until you need to play it. There are two of these cards in the deck. In the Second Edition this card is played in battle by placing a special Leader marker in the front row of the battle and the card is then discarded. This marker acts as another Warrior Band and can ride free on Canoes with other units hence, it can be used in several battles through the course of the game. In the First Edition a regular Warrior Band was placed in the battle when this card was played and would be stuck on the Island Group if victorious or removed if defeated unless the player had an extra Transport or War Canoe to transport it.
11. Shaman: This event went through a major change between the First and Second Editions. In the First Edition, the card was kept in the player's hand until he used it in battle. The event was played in battle to nullify an opponent's play of an Arts and Culture card in the battle, after

which the event card was discarded. Thus, it had a one-time use. In the Second Edition, the event is played as soon as it is drawn. The play is the placement of a special Shaman marker in one of the player's stack of units and then the event card is discarded. This marker can ride free with any other unit in a Canoe. This marker is placed in the second row of a battle formation and can nullify an opponent's play of an Arts and Culture card in the battle. The difference is that if you win the battle, the Shaman marker stays with you and can be used in future battles. If you lose then the Shaman marker is discarded. The best way to use the Shaman is to place it with an Invasion Force. In other words, use it on the offensive. On the defensive, place it on a critical Island Group. However, because opponents will see where the Shaman marker is on the map, they will avoid the Island Group if they are weak in Arts and Culture cards for battle and only attack if they are strong in those cards, knowing full well that one of them will be nullified.

12. Cultural Backlash: This event is same in both Editions with only one difference. In the First Edition you could remove from the game a face-down or face-up Arts and Culture card from an opponent's hand. In the Second Edition, you can do one of those same things or remove the top card from Random Events card deck. In early-game, it is probably best to remove the top card from the deck as nobody will have Arts and Culture cards yet. In the mid and late-game, go for the current player in the lead and take one of his cards.
13. Population Boom: This event is the same in both Editions. A Colony can be placed on any face-up or flipped-up Island Group on the map. The Colony is free and does not cost any Build Points. If placed on an Island Group controlled by another player, then the Colony marker must from that player's counter set. This event is very advantageous if played in the early-game as there will plenty of newly discovered islands that have not been settled yet. Of course, a player will always place it on one of his own discovered islands that he has not settled yet. If played in mid or late-game, just place it on one of your settled Island Groups and keep a Transport Canoe handy to take advantage of any one-box Island Groups on the map that are denuded of their Villages and Transport Canoes by some other Random Event. Be sure to bring enough Transport Canoes of your own to tie the newly settled island to your Transport Canoe Chain.
14. Taniwha: This was an event that went through a change between the Editions. In the First Edition, an Off-Course marker was placed in an Atoll or Open Ocean hex. All Canoes in the hex, and their passengers, were removed from the hex. The marker remained in the hex until the Turn Order step of the next turn and no Canoes of any sort could enter the hex during that time. There was an incident in one game where a player left an Invasion Force consisting of three War Canoes, three Warrior Bands, and three Transport Canoes in an Open Ocean hex because he lacked enough movement to reach his intended target Island Group. In the next turn, a Taniwha event came up and was played against that Invasion Force, wiping out the whole force. From that point forward the Taniwha event was deemed to be too powerful and was changed in the Second Edition. In the Second Edition only one Canoe, which must be a War Canoes if possible, and its passengers, must be removed and all other Canoes are retreated as if they lost a battle. Also, a special Taniwha marker is placed in the hex. Other than those changes, the Taniwha event operates the same in the Second Edition as in the First Edition. Obviously, this event is best played against any opponent's Invasion Force in an Open Ocean or Atoll hex. However, if none are available at the time of play, then any Open Ocean or Atoll hex in an opponent's empire will do, in order to break his Transport Canoe Chain.
15. Fijian Raid: This was another event that went through a change between the Editions. In the First Edition the player chose any hex within two hexes of Fiji and placed three Independent Local Warrior markers there. A battle would occur and if the Fijians won, they would not save any Villages, and the loser would move the surviving Fijians to an adjacent hex where another battle would occur. After this battle, the event was over. Inevitably, the targets of this raid were always the home islands of Tonga and Samoa, they both always got hit, either as the first target

or as the adjacent target. In one game, Tonga was first target and was wiped out. Since it had no other settled Island Groups to move its capital to, the player was knocked out of the game. In another game, Samoa was the primary target. There the Fijians ran into a defending force of four War Canoes, four Warrior Bands, and two Local Warrior units. The Fijians were wiped out totally in that battle. Granted, these two examples were rare extreme results in the range of possible outcomes, but were considered to make the event too powerful, so changes were made. In the Second Edition, an Island Group within two hexes of Fiji is chosen as before and three Independent Local Warrior are placed there. If there are any defending Warrior Band, one is removed. If there are none, then one Village is removed. Either way, one Fijian Warrior is removed. The surviving two Fijians are move to another Island Group within two hexes of Fiji by the player playing the event and the process is repeated. Finally, the victim of the second raid chooses yet another Island Group within two hexes of Fiji and the process is repeated again with the last surviving Fijian unit. After that the event is over. The end result is that both Tonga and Samoa are going to be hit but one will get hit twice and the other will get hit once. It is possible for Raiatea to be hit also if it has a controlled Island Group within range.

16. **Favorable Winds:** This event is the same in both Editions. It is used to bring an Explorer back from the Lost Box on the map. It can be played at any time during a Game Turn and can be kept in your hand until played. It is best used in the early-game when players are exploring and establishing their island empires. By mid-game, the empires will start to turn inward to get the extra Build Point and the event will lose its value except in one case, that being the journey to South America in the search for Kumara.
17. **Insurrection:** This event works the same in both Editions. Any face-up Island Group on the map is chosen and a blue Independent Local Warrior (First Edition) or a special Insurrection Marker (Second Edition) is placed on it. Then, the next player to attack this Island Group removes the marker and places an extra Warrior Band in his Invasion Force for the ensuing battle. Naturally, an opponent's Island Group will be the target of this event. The problem with this event is that it usually comes up before the player playing the event is ready to exploit it. If you are ready when it comes up, play it on an Island Group that you can move to this turn. If you are not ready, then play it on the furthest Island Group in an opponent's empire because if you cannot reach it, you do not want anyone else to reach it this game turn either.
18. **Deception Revealed:** This is another Event that is the same in both Editions. It is used to remove all Rumor counters from the map, including your own, and placing them back into each player's pool of buildable pieces. It can be held in your hand until played. It is best played when you are on the offensive, especially if your opponent is using a Picket Line defense. Just be sure that your Rumor markers are not on the map when you play it.
19. **Cultural Purpose:** This Event, which is the same in both Editions, is used to increase the Victory Point value of a 0VP Arts and Culture card to 1 VP. It can be held in your hand until played. The best time, and really only time, to play it is at the end of the game when everyone is counting up their Victory Points during the Victory Step to see who won. It can be nasty surprise to a player who thinks that they have won be  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a Victory Point, only to find out that they lost by  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a Victory Point.
20. **Island Location Confirmed:** This event is the same in both Editions. An unexplored hex is chosen and a random Island Group tile is drawn from the cup and placed face down on the hex. It may now be explored by any player as if another player had discovered it. Obviously, it should be played in your operating area as far away from the other player's empires as possible. Best played in the early or mid-game. By the late game there will be no unexplored hexes left or all the Island tiles will have drawn, thus, making this card a No Event.
21. **Polynesian Triangle Expands:** In this event the player chooses an Open Ocean hex that is printed on the map and places either an Off Course marker (First Edition) or a special Expands

marker (Second Edition) in the hex. This hex can now be explored. Every empire has Open Ocean hexes in their respective operating areas, Samoa to the north and northwest, Tonga to the southwest, Raiatea to the north, and Hiva to the north and east. Obviously, you are going to play the event in you area. Hiva has a special advantage here as it can play the event on one of the Open Ocean hexes adjacent to the “To South America” hexes to the northeast. If an island is found in it, it can help shorten the perilous journey to South America by one hex, as you will not have to roll on the special Kumara Search Table in that hex.

22. Drought: In this event a player removes a Village from any brown box on the map. In the first Edition the Village is flipped over to its Improved Agriculture side, in the Second Edition the Village is actually removed, leaving the Improved Agriculture marker in place. As there are seventeen brown boxes, ten on Island tiles and seven printed on the map, a player will have no problem finding one. Each home Island Group has a brown box so this event can be played even in the early game. As always, target the leading player with this event.
23. Pacification of the People: This event is the same in both Editions. It causes a player to remove one of his Warrior Bands or trade a War Canoe for a Transport Canoe. Obviously, this will be played against an opponent. While the leading player is usually the first choice, any opponent with an Invasion Force in a threatening position to you should take priority. Another event that can be played in any phase of the game.
24. Militarization of the People: The event is also the same in both Editions. It causes a player to add one free Warrior Band to a controlled Island Group or to trade a Transport Canoe for a War Canoe. This is an event that you play on yourself. Either choice will save you two Build Points that you would have had to spend to get them. (Yes, a War Canoe costs three Build Points, but you would have already spent one Build Point to get the Transport Canoe that you traded in to get it.) If you cannot play the event on yourself because all of your Warrior Bands and War Canoes are already on the board, then play it the opponent that can least threaten you.
25. Successful Deep-Sea Fishing: In this event a player with at least one face-up Transport Canoe on an Open Ocean or Atoll hex, usually as part of a Transport Canoe Chain, gets the Random Event card itself (First Edition) or a special Fishing marker (Second Edition) that he can trade in for a Build Point during the next Build Step. While a player will naturally play the event on himself, sometimes, especially in the Early-Game, he will be forced to play it on another person because he does not have Transport Canoe in the require hex. Nevertheless, the extra Build Point is always nice to have.
26. Rebellion: This event only exists in the Second Edition, as in the First Edition this event was a second Extensive Terracing card. In this event a player selects an Island Group with one or two Villages on it, which is not at the time connected by a Transport Canoe Chain to its Home Island Group. The player takes control of the selected Island Group by replacing a unit, preferably a Village, on the island with one of his own. All other opposing units on the island must retreat as if they had lost a Battle Also, if there were two Villages on the island, one must be removed. This event is best played in the Early-Game as the conditions listed on the card will most likely be present. In the later phases, it is rare that this card can be played as players will be quick to repair their respective Transport Canoe Chains.
27. Warrior Leader: This is the second Warrior Leader card in the deck and is the same as the first.
28. Polynesian Aircraft Carriers: This is the infamous Random Event card that never was. This event has been a long-running joke ever since Conquest of Paradise was in GMT's P500 list. Of course, the card never existed in either Editions, so it is listed here as an honorable mention. But if it did exist, it would read something like this: *“Keep this card, you may use it in certain Battles. +2/-2 DRM on the Battle Results Table when attacking/defending either the Midway or Hawaii Island Group tiles. Discard card after use.”* The caveat of the card is that it does not become effective until Game-Turn 286, long after any version of the game is over.

## **Conclusion**

This article has been an introduction to the Random Event cards and their possible plays and uses. It is meant for players new to Conquest of Paradise, as all of us veterans of the game already know all the tricks. It is my hope that this article leads more players try out this game, especially now that it will be going into a Third Edition.