

HyBORIAN Risk

by Lewis Pulsipher



Risk is a simple but popular wargame. Lying midway between the "family" boardgame and the wargame, it presents an abstracted battle for control of the world. To add flavor to the game, many have tinkered with the system, adding more types of pieces and changing the map. One such variant follows. The prosaic world map has been transformed to represent the feuding kingdoms of the age of that mightiest of fictional heroes . . . Conan of Cimmeria.

Use the standard *Risk* rules, with these changes:

1. **The Map.** You will need to reproduce the game map shown — a large-sized rough copy can be drawn freehand in a few minutes. Be sure the relationships between the different countries are correct. Note that there are two different types of dividing lines: solid and dashed. *Areas* are each named, and are divided by dashed lines. *Territories* are made up of two or more areas each, and are divided by solid lines. Some areas contain *strongpoints*, shown by circles.

2. **Initial Placement.** Take armies and place them according to the standard rules of *Risk*. However, each player should note where his first army is placed. He may not place any subsequent army farther than three areas away unless there is no open area within that range. For instance, if a player's first army goes in Zarkheba, he may not place any armies in Argos, Korshemish, Koth, Khoraja, Iranistan, Vendhya, or any area farther from Zarkheba than those named. However, if there is no unoccupied area near enough to Zarkheba, he may place his armies in any unoccupied area. After all armies are down, players place their leaders (see below).

3. **Stacking.** A maximum of seven armies is allowed in any area. If a player has seven armies in each area, any further reinforcements are lost permanently. He cannot get more reinforcements until he can place them without violating stacking

limits.

4. **Reinforcements.** In the first round of turns, each player gets three armies as reinforcements. In subsequent turns, players get reinforcements as follows:

(a) **Minimum reinforcements:** Each player always gets at least three armies. (Note that this is a *minimum*, not a base number.)

(b) **Reinforcements for strongpoints:** A player gets one army for each *strongpoint* he controls.

(c) **Reinforcement for territories:** A player gets one extra army for each complete *territory* he controls. For example, if a player holds North Cimmeria and South Cimmeria he would receive three armies: one for the territory and one for each strongpoint. Players cannot share armies for territories jointly occupied.

When a player receives reinforcements, he may place them as he wishes in any area(s) he controls, so long as the stacking rule is not violated.

5. **Cards.** Each time a player turns in a set of cards, regardless of the number of cards turned in in the past, he receives three armies and one leader.

6. **Leaders.** Each player receives two leaders at the beginning of the game (regardless of the number of players in the game). Use the ten-army counters to represent leaders. Properties of a leader are as follows:

(a) Each leader may make a "free move" at the end of the player's turn. This is in addition to his normal "free move" for armies. However, no player may free-move a leader twice in one turn or make a free move that leaves an area vacant.

(b) The presence of a leader allows a player to roll one extra die in combat, up to three for an attacker or two for a defender. Example: A leader with one army could roll two dice for EITHER attack or defense. A leader alone could still roll two dice to defend. In no case may a player ever roll more than two dice

to defend or three to attack; multiple leaders may stack in an area but have no extra effect.

(c) A player may count a leader as an army when taking losses. The player losing the armies has the option to use a leader instead if he wishes. (If there are no armies in the area, of course, leaders must be lost.)

(d) A leader who is attacked, with or without armies in his area, may choose to retreat before combat. Before dice are rolled, he may move to any adjacent area where he has units (or any vacant area). If no such area exists, he must stand and fight. If a leader's retreat leaves an area vacant, the attacking player must enter that area with at least one unit. In no case may a player retreat armies before combat. A leader *may* fight for several rounds and then retreat, if he survives.

(e) Leaders cannot attack by themselves; there must be an army in the same area; However, a single leader can defend by himself, rolling two dice.

(f) In advancing after combat, leaders move like armies. A player may choose to advance leader(s) instead of armies, if both are in an attacking area.

7. **Vacant Areas.** It is possible for an area to become entirely vacant. A vacant area is controlled by no one; any attack on it is automatically successful. Vacant areas may also be entered by free moves or retreats.

8. **Optional Rule: Thoth-Amon and Conan.** If you haven't thrown them out, there are two cards in your *Risk* deck which can add a little "chrome" to this variant.

Thoth-Amon: The player who draws the trademark card may reveal it at the beginning of his next turn, receiving a special leader — the wizard Thoth-Amon. This Stygian necromancer is like other leaders, except that

(a) In place of his regular free-move, Thoth-Amon can teleport to any vacant area OR any area where he has units. He cannot use this power to retreat.

(b) Once per turn, Thoth-Amon may make a magical attack. Roll one die. On a roll of 1, 2, or 3, nothing happens. On a roll of 4 or 5, he may remove one army from any adjacent area. On a roll of 6, he may remove two armies OR one leader. Note that neither of these powers can be used except on Thoth-Amon's player's turn.

Conan: The player who draws the blank card can turn it in at the beginning of his next turn for Conan himself. Conan is all but invulnerable. If Conan is the attacker, no die roll will eliminate him at all (though if all armies in his area are lost, he must stop attacking that turn).

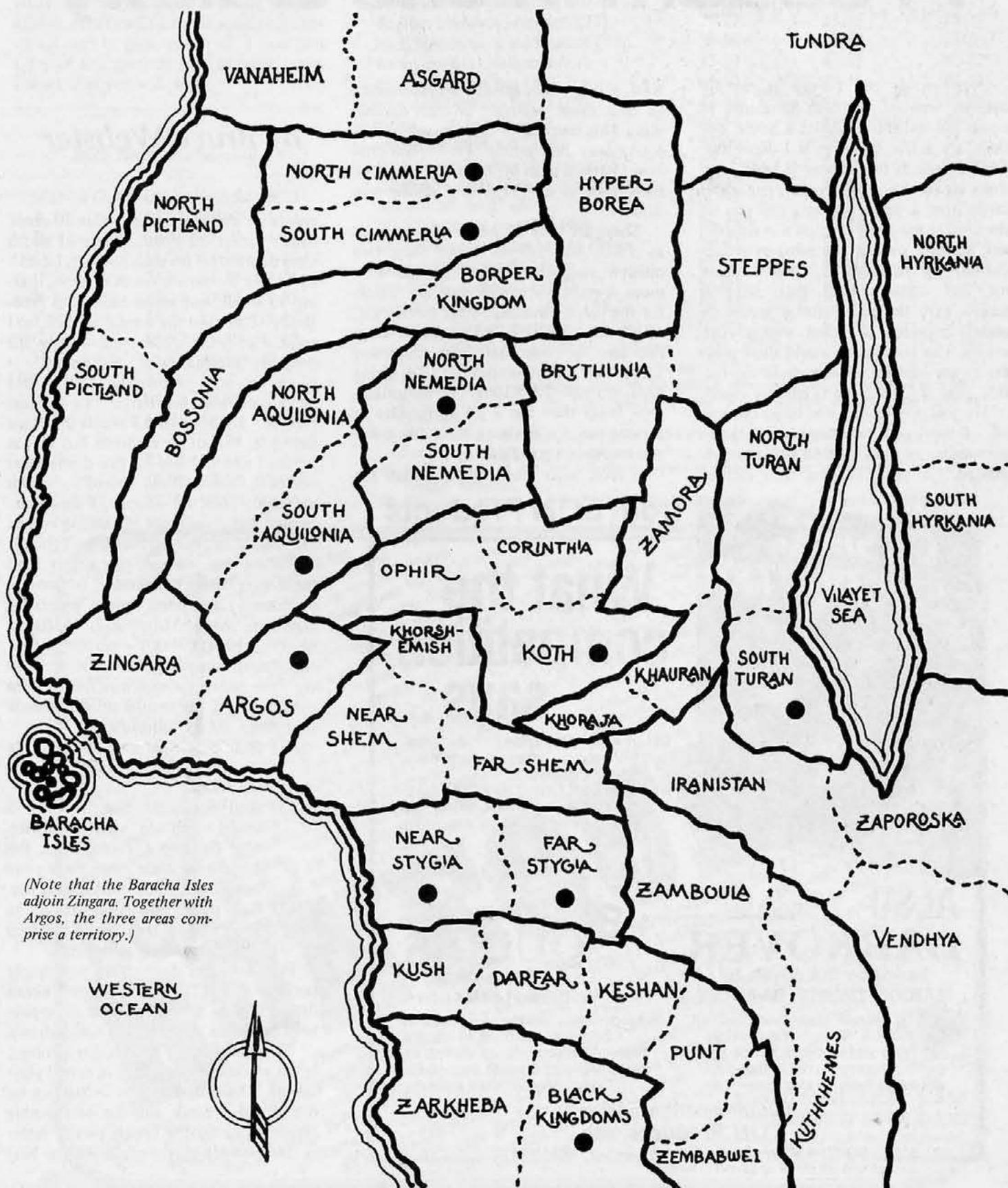
If he is the defender, he will be the last defending unit to be lost. Then, instead of being killed, he merely retreats. He may retreat into any adjacent area which contains units friendly to him, or is vacant. Conan cannot be slain unless he has nowhere to retreat to, or he is killed by

the magic of Thoth-Amon.

Players who have Conan or Thoth-Amon keep the cards unless those characters are lost in combat – the card for that character is then returned to the deck and may be drawn again.

Conan and Thoth-Amon may be rep-

resented by different-colored leader counters, coins, etc. In our playtest session, we used Cardboard Heroes for them: 1-2, the Barbarian, makes a perfect Conan, while 1-21, the Elven Wizard, makes a pretty fair black-robed Thoth-Amon.



(Note that the Baracha Isles adjoin Zingara. Together with Argos, the three areas comprise a territory.)

WESTERN
OCEAN