

RULE BOOK

THE EXPANSE BOARD GAME



60 Mins



Ages 14+



2-4 Players

WIZK!DS™



OVERVIEW

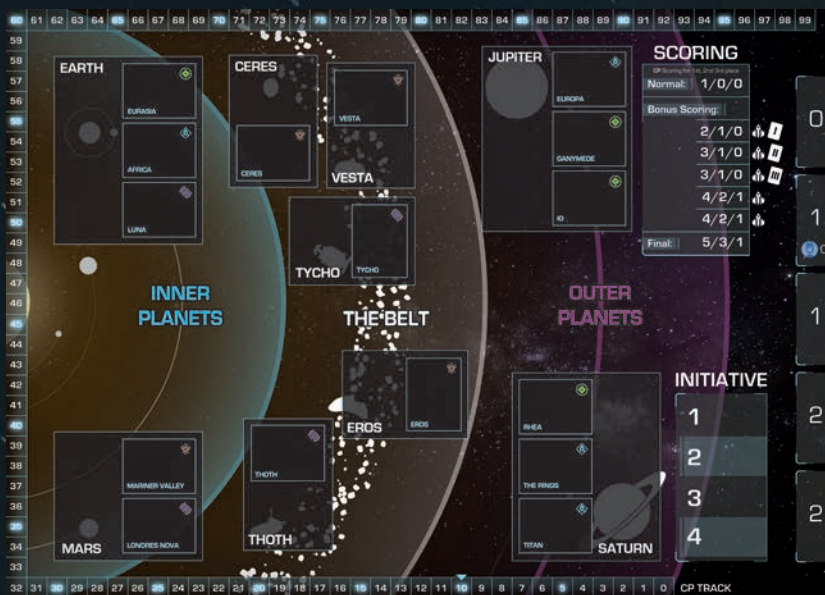
The Expanse is a game of politics, conquest, and intrigue for two to four players. Players spread their influence through the solar system onto important Bases using characters and events in the Expanse Universe, and must make clever use of their special faction abilities to gain an edge.

Play begins with a randomly chosen start player, and then proceeds clockwise around the table. On their turn a player selects a card from the Action Track or uses one of their saved Events. Action cards can be used to move and build fleets and place influence, or for their special Events. If a player selects a Scoring card from the Action Track, players score Control Points for having influence on important Bases in the Solar System. The player who selected the Scoring card also gets to select one Sector to be worth special bonus points. The game continues until the sixth and final Scoring card is added to the Action Track. There is one final Scoring round, and the player who has the most Control Points is the winner!

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GAME COMPONENTS



1 Game Board



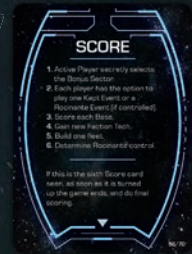
6 Bonus Sector Tokens



52 Action Cards



4 Initiative Tokens



6 Score Cards



4 Faction Mats



12 Faction Tech Cards



1 Rociante Mat



18 Fleet Tokens



69 Influence Cubes



1 Rociante Token



2 Battleship Tokens



2 Scrap Ship Tokens



2 Protomolecule Tokens



3 Diplomat Cubes

THE MAP

The board contains a map of the Solar System and consists of several different areas.

BASE: There are 16 Bases on the map. These are areas where Influence may be placed, and players earn points for having influence there during Scoring.

Each base also contains a **RESOURCE** symbol:



Food



Water



Minerals



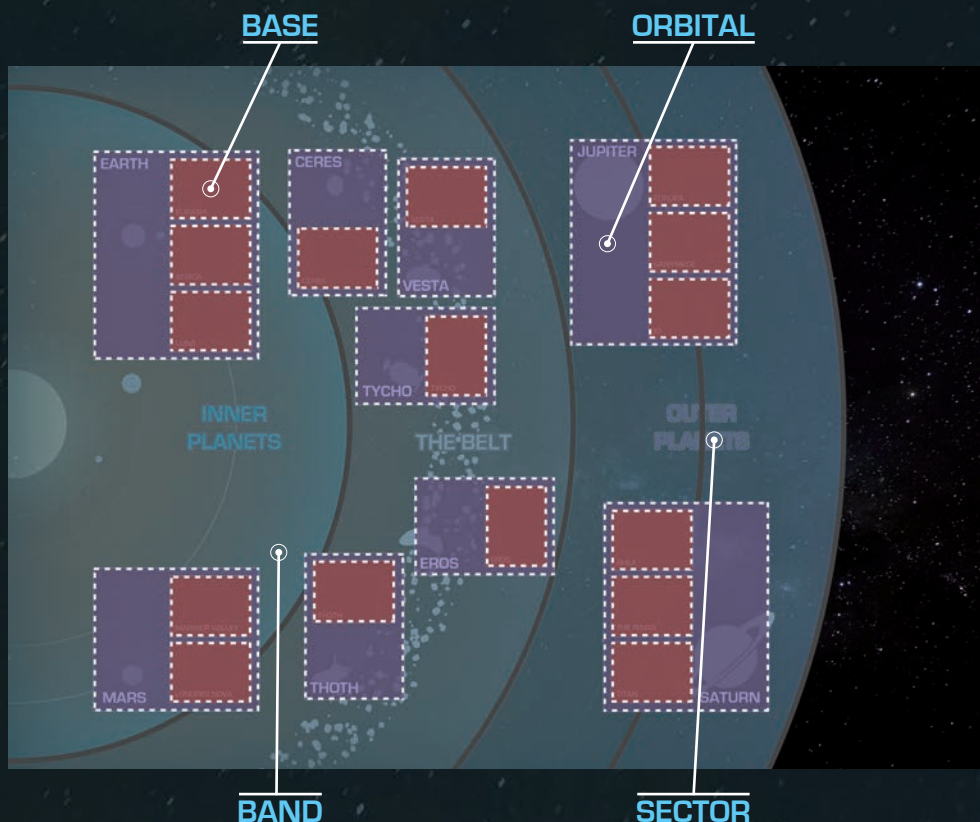
Tech

Players gain a bonus point if they have the most influence on a Base with one of their critical resources.

ORBITAL: There are 9 Orbitals on the map. Only fleets may be placed in Orbitals. Orbitals around planets contain more than one Base. Bases in the Belt each have their own Orbital. **(Example: Luna is in the Earth Orbital.)**

BANDS: There are four Bands on the map, separated by the thick colored lines. Earth and Mars Orbitals are in the same Band, all the Belt Bases are in a Band, and Jupiter and Saturn each have their own Band. Bands are used to control Movement.

SECTOR: There are three Sectors on the Map: Inner Planets, Belt, and Outer Planets. During Scoring, one Sector will be chosen to be the Bonus Sector, and will be worth more points.



GAME SETUP

Example of a four player setup:

* MCR has been chosen to go first, so the Initiative tokens are placed as shown, and ProtoGen starts with the Rocinante.



- Each player chooses a faction, and takes the components for that faction.
 - 1 Faction reference mat.
 - 18 influence cubes (UN has 15 normal influence and 3 Diplomat influence)
 - 5 fleets (Mars: 3 normal fleets, 2 Battleships; OPA: 5 normal fleets (scrap ships enter later).
- Each player sets up their forces as per the chart on the back of their reference mat.
- Randomly select one player to go first. Play will start with that player and proceed clockwise for the rest of the game.
- If playing with three or four players, place the Faction Initiative markers on the Initiative Track in reverse player order (so the last player is at the top, and the player going first is placed at the bottom). If playing with two players the Initiative Track is not used. Instead these tokens are placed face down on the bases Luna, Vesta, Io, and The Rings to show that these are out of play.

NOTE: For the three-player game the available factions are UN, MCR, and OPA. ProtoGen is not played. For the two-player game the available factions are UN and MCR only.

- The player going last gets the Rocinante mat, and places the Rocinante token in their Home orbital (where they build fleets).



6. Each player puts one influence cube on the CP track on the 10 space.



7. Prepare the Action deck. Remove the six SCORE cards and set them aside. In a four player game all 52 Action cards are used. If playing with two players, use only the cards with the 2P symbol. In a three player game use only the cards with the 3P symbol. All the rest of the cards go back in the box.



2P



3P

Shuffle the Action cards, and prepare the Action deck based on the number of players:

4 PLAYERS: Deal five cards into one pile, and then make three piles with thirteen cards and two SCORE cards in each. Return the remaining cards to the box. Shuffle each pile, then stack them so that the fifteen-card piles are placed at the bottom, with the five-card pile on top.

3 PLAYERS: Same as four players, except deal ten cards into each of the larger piles instead of thirteen.

2 PLAYERS: Deal ten cards each into three piles. There is no five-card pile with two players. Add two SCORE cards to each pile, shuffle them, and then stack the three piles on top of each other.

TWO PLAYER SPECIAL SETUP:

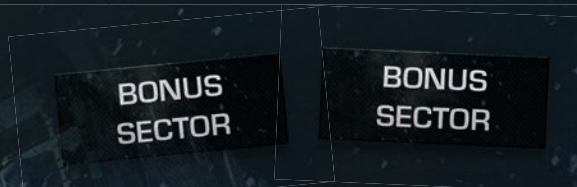
In the two player game, four Bases are not used: Luna, Vesta, Io, and The Rings. Place a face-down Initiative token on each of these bases as a reminder that no Influence can be placed there.



8. Deal five cards face up from the Action deck into the Action Track, one into each space.



9. Place the six BONUS tokens face down near the Bonus track on the map.



You are now ready to begin!

TURN OPTIONS

The Starting Player takes the first turn, and play proceeds clockwise around the table until the game is concluded. The player taking their turn is called the Active Player.

On their turn a player must either:

1. Select a card from the track
2. Play an Event that they have kept from an earlier turn.

Then, if there are any gaps in the Action Track, slide cards up to fill the gaps and add to the end until there are five cards. At the end of each turn there will always be five cards in the Action Track.



ACTION CARD ANATOMY:



OPTION 1:

SELECT A CARD FROM THE TRACK

The Active Player may take any of the five Action cards from the Track. However, if they take any card but the first, they will need to spend Control Points.

The cost of each card is shown on the Action Track and the points are spent by moving their cube down on the CP Track equal to the cost of the card. If the Active Player does not have enough CP to take a card, they are not able to.

If they take a SCORE card, go to a Scoring turn. [See the rules later on how to do this.]

Other than Scoring cards, the cards in the deck are Action cards. If one of those is taken, there are two choices:

- A. USE THE EVENT
- B. USE THE ACTION POINTS

A. USE THE EVENT

This option may only be chosen if the current player's Faction Icon is on the card.

The Active Player may either:

1. Do the Event immediately
2. Pay 1 CP, and keep the Event to perform on a future turn or during a Scoring turn. The player places the card face up in front of them. There is no limit to the number of events that a player may keep.

B. USE THE ACTION POINTS

If the Active Player chooses to use the Action Points (AP), they may spend them on any combination of Actions. Action Points cannot be saved from one turn to the next. After Action Points are used, one other player may opt to use the Event.

The player whose turn it is may NOT use the Event. Only the factions shown on the card are eligible to do the Event. The eligible faction that is highest on the Initiative Track gets the first option to do it. If they decline, go to the next on the list, and so on. If a faction chooses to use the Event, their Initiative token is moved to the bottom of the chart, and the others below them are moved up, then the card is discarded.

NOTE: If the Active Player uses the Event instead of Action Points [Option A. Use The Event], they do not move their Initiative Token.

[Reminder: In a two-player game the Initiative Track is not used. If one player uses the Action Points, the other may use the Event if eligible].

If a player chooses to do the Event, they have the same options:

1. Do the Event immediately.
2. Pay 1 CP and keep the Event to perform on a future turn or during a Scoring turn.

Unless the Event is kept, Action Cards are always discarded after being used.

After either choosing the Action Points or the Event, slide the cards in the Action Track down to fill any gaps, and then add a card to the end of the row so there are five again. There should always be five cards in the track at the end of a player's turn.

OPTION 2: **PLAY A SAVED EVENT**

Instead of taking an Action Card from the Track, the Active Player may play an Event they saved from an earlier turn. Simply perform the Event. If the Active Player does this, no cards will be removed from the Action Track, so a new card will not be added to the Action Track. After being used, the Event is discarded.

Gameplay Example 1-1:



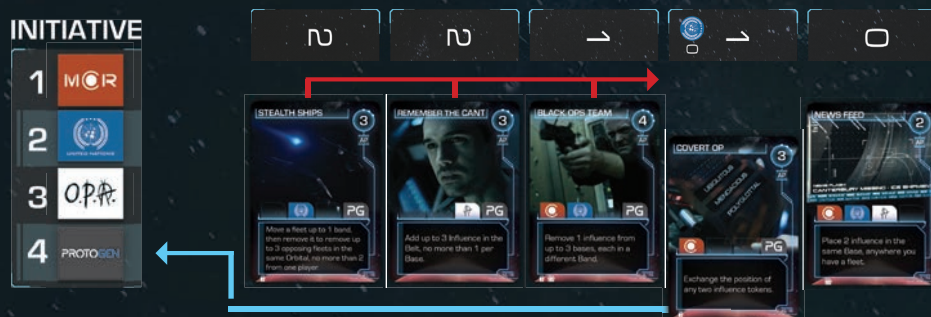
It is the middle of the game and the UN player is taking their turn. The UN takes the Paolo Cortazar card, which costs zero Control Points to take, and decides to use the 2 Action Points to move a fleet and place an influence. The Event can be used by either the OPA or ProtoGen. ProtoGen gets the first option since they are higher on the track, and decides to use it right away to place influence on Outer Planet bases. The ProtoGen initiative marker is moved to the bottom of the track, and the others are moved upwards. The other Action cards are slid up the track and a new card is added to the end from the Action card deck.

Gameplay Example 1-2:



The OPA player is up next. She takes the Razorback card, which is also in the zero slot, and decides to use the Event to move a fleet from Earth to Saturn. There is no change to the Initiative since she used the Event on her turn. The other Action cards are slid up the track, and a new card is added from the Action card deck.

Gameplay Example 1-3:



The PG player is up next. He would like to take the Stealth Ships cards, but paying 2 CP is a little too high of a price. And he may be able to get it later. So instead he takes the Covert Op card, which costs 1 CP since it is in the second slot. He decides to use the 3 AP to place an influence on Luna, move a fleet to Eros, and place an influence there. The MCR is the only player eligible for the Event, since PG already used the Action Points. He declines to use the Event however, to maintain his position on the Initiative track. The last three cards on the track are slid down to fill up the gap, and a new card is added from the Action card deck.

Gameplay Example 1-4:



The MCR player is now up. He decides to take the Black Ops Team card from the second slot for a cost of one Control Point on the CP Track, and save it to use for a future turn, or perhaps during a Scoring round. Saving the Event costs him an extra Control Point, and he moves his marker down one more space on the CP Track. The cards are slid down the track, and the next card drawn from the deck is a Score card. If it is selected by a player a Scoring turn will begin.

ACTIONS

If a card is used for Action Points, they may be spent in three different ways:

- **Move** - Move a group of fleets on the map
- **Influence** - Place an influence cube
- **Build** - Place a fleet on the map

Doing each of these actions takes one Action Point, and they may be done in any order and any number of times. Factions may also have special things that they can spend Action Points on.

MOVE

A MOVE action allows a group of fleets to be moved from one Orbital to another.

The board is divided into four bands: Inner Planets (Earth and Mars), Belt, Jupiter, and Saturn.

During a MOVE action, a group of one or more of the player's fleets that are together in the same Orbital may be moved to an Orbital that is in the SAME band or an ADJACENT band.

Example: The UN has three fleets in the Earth Orbital. They take a MOVE Action and move two fleets to the Mars Orbital, which is in the same band. They then use another Action Point to move the last fleet in the Earth Orbital to the Ceres Orbital.

On their next turn the UN player decides to take a MOVE Action with the fleet in Ceres. It can be moved to an Orbital in the Inner Planets (Earth or Mars), any Orbital in the Belt, or the Jupiter Orbital.

Players can take a MOVE action on the same fleets multiple times to move them more than one band in a turn if desired.

INFLUENCE

Influence is placed on Bases to earn Control Points.

For 1 Action Point a player may place one influence cube on a Base where they have at least one fleet in the Orbital.



Note that on planets (Earth, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn) each Orbital has more than one base. So if, for example, a player has at least one fleet in the Jupiter Orbital they may place influence on Ganymede, Io, or Europa.

If a player is out of Influence cubes and wants to place one, they can take one from anywhere on the map and move it. This is true if they are placing Influence through Events as well.

BUILD

At the start of the game all fleets start on the map (Exception: OPA Scrap Ships) However, there are Events and special abilities that may remove them.

To get them back onto the board a player must take a BUILD action. For 1 Action Point they may place one of their removed fleets onto their home Orbital:

UN: Earth

MCR: Mars

OPA: Tycho

PG: Thoth

This is also noted on the Faction mats.

EVENTS

EVENTS

A player may only choose to perform Events where their faction is listed.

[Exception: The Kenzo Gabriel Event]



When executing an Event, the Event must be performed as completely as possible, unless the wording says 'may' or 'up to'.

Example: The 'Julie Mao' event is "Remove up to 3 influence from Tech bases, not more than 1 per base". You may remove 0, 1, 2, or 3 influence when performing this Event. The 'Terraforming' Event is "Add 1 influence in each Mars base." You must do this, moving influence from another Base if necessary.

SCORING

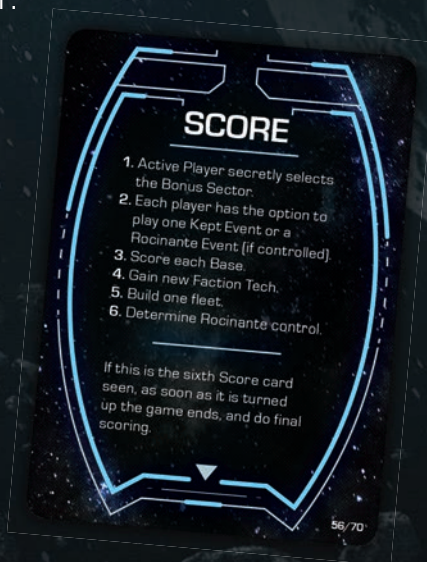
When a SCORE card is taken, instead of the normal Action Points / Event, all players score Control Points. This is done in six steps:

1. Active Player secretly selects the Bonus Sector
2. Each player has the option to play one Kept Event or a Rocinante Event.
3. Score each base
4. Gain new Faction Abilities
5. Build one fleet
6. Determine Rocinante control

Active Player Selects Bonus Sector



The player who took the SCORE card first SECRETLY decides which of the three Sectors [Inner Planets, The Belt, Outer Planets] will be the Bonus sector and receive extra points by taking the bonus marker. There are two markers for each Sector, so each Sector may be chosen at most two times as the Bonus Sector.



The Bonus points are shown on the chart as 1st/2nd/3rd. The first number is given to the player who has the most influence, 2nd to the player with second most, and 3rd to the player with the third most influence.

The first Scoring turn, Bonus Sector bases score 2/1/0. The second and third time it is 3/1/0, and the fourth and fifth it is 4/2/1.

EACH PLAYER MAY PLAY AN EVENT:

After the player who selected the Scoring card has secretly chosen the Bonus sector, each player has the option to play one Kept Event, a Rocinante Event, or pass. Starting with the player to the left of the player who chose to Score, each player gets one opportunity, ending with the player that took the Score card. If a Kept Event card is played, it is discarded.

NOTE: Only the player controlling the Rocinante may choose to use a Rocinante Event.

BASES ARE SCORED:

After all players have a chance to play an Event, the Bonus token is revealed and each base is scored.

Points are awarded to the players based on how much influence they have on a base.

The player with the most fleet strength in the Orbital gets one extra influence added to their total. This is called Orbital Control.

Remember that full-strength Battleships (MCR) count as strength 2, and Scrap Ships (OPA) count as strength 1/2.



HOWEVER: A player must have at least one influence on a base to gain the +1 bonus from Orbital Control. Orbital Control applies to all Bases in that Orbital.

If a Base is in the Bonus Sector, points may be scored by the first, second, and third place players. If there is a tie for first, all tied players gain second place points. If there is a tie for second, those players all get third place points. If there is a tie for third, those players do not get points. A player can never score points for a base where they have zero influence. If a Base is not in the Bonus Sector it scores 1/0/0 [shown as Normal on the scoring chart]. So only a player with the sole possession of first place on a base will score the point.

Example: It is the fourth Scoring card, and the Bonus is 4/2/1. Here are the influence totals:

UN: 5 MCR: 3 ProtoGen: 2 OPA: 1

The UN player scores 4 points, MCR scores 2 points, and PG scores 1.

If the totals were:

UN: 3 MCR: 3 ProtoGen: 2 OPA: 1

Then the scoring would be UN: 2, MCR: 2, PG: 1, OPA 0.

If the totals were:

UN: 3 MCR: 3 ProtoGen: 2 OPA: 2

Then scoring would be: UN: 2, MCR: 2, PG: 0, OPA: 0 (since PG and OPA are tied for third)

RESOURCES: Each faction has two Critical Resources shown on their Faction Mat. If they have the most influence on a Base containing that resource it is worth an extra Control Point during scoring. Note that a player must be receiving the first place points to get the bonus. If they are tied for first they do not get the bonus. This extra CP may be received for any base, whether it is in the Bonus Sector or not.

Gameplay Example 2:



The Critical Resources for the OPA are Food and Water. The Outer Planets are the Bonus Sector, and the Bonus is 4/2/1. Mars has Orbital Control of Jupiter, with 3 fleet strength to only 1 for OPA, so they are considered to have three influence on Europa instead of two. However the OPA still has first place with four influence, and so gains 5 Control Points, including the extra point for Europa being a water Base.

The MCR is in second place, with three influence, and gets 2 CP. Note that even though Water is a Critical Resource for the MCR they do not get the extra point since they are not in first place.

The UN gets third place, for 1 CP. PG gains nothing.

The OPA also has first place on Luna and Africa in the Inner Planets Sector. Since this is not the Bonus Sector, they gain 1 CP for Luna, and 2 CP for Africa, a water base.

NOTE: The Critical Resources for the MCR change based on the number of players. For four players it is Water and Tech. For three players it is Water and Minerals.

TWO PLAYER GAME SPECIAL RULE:

The extra point for controlling a Critical Resource is NOT awarded for the two player game.

After all bases have been scored, the selected BONUS marker is placed on the Bonus track, to the left of the bonus, showing this bonus marker may no longer be chosen.

BUILD ONE FLEET:

Each player who has any fleets off the board may place one on their home Base. Scrap Ships may not be placed this way.



FACTION SPECIAL TECH CARDS:

After the first three Scoring Rounds, each Faction gains a new Tech Card. They receive their "I" card after the first Scoring Round. "II" after the second, etc. As a reminder, this number is shown next to the first three Bonus Scoring Spaces.



Abilities are cumulative. When the 'II' ability is received, the 'I' ability and the ability listed on the Faction Mat are still available.

After scoring, the ROCINANTE card is given to the player with the fewest Control Points. If two players are tied, then it goes to the player who is lowest on the Initiative track.



THE ROCINANTE

The Rocinante is always controlled by a player. At the start of the game it is controlled by the player who goes last, and then after each scoring round control is given to the player with the fewest Control Points. When the Rocinante changes hands the fleet is not moved on the map. It remains in its current Orbital. The Rocinante mat is given to the player, both to show who is controlling it, and the special abilities.



Controlling the Rocinante gives two advantages:

1. It counts as a fleet for all purposes, except that it may NEVER be removed. Any effect that removes a fleet cannot be used against the Rocinante.
2. During a Scoring round, instead of playing a Kept Event, the controlling player may select one of the four special abilities, as noted on the mat:

 <p>ROCINANTE</p> <p>Counts as one of your fleets for all purposes.</p> <p>May never be chosen to be Removed.</p> <p>May use a Crew ability during Scoring round instead of Kept Event.</p> <p>After Scoring round, give this tile to the player with the fewest CP. If tied, it goes to player lower on the initiative track.</p>	 <p>JAMES HOLDEN</p> <p>Place 1 influence anywhere.</p>	 <p>NAOMI NAGATA</p> <p>Move the Rocinante one band and remove one opposing fleet there.</p>
	 <p>ALEX KAMAL</p> <p>Move the Rocinante to any Orbital.</p>	 <p>AMOS BURTON</p> <p>Remove 1 opposing fleet in the Rocinante Orbital for each friendly fleet there (including the Rocinante).</p>

- **James Holden** - Place 1 influence anywhere
- **Naomi Nagata** - Move the Rocinante 1 band, and remove 1 opposing fleet in the destination
- **Alex Kamal** - Move the Rocinante anywhere
- **Amos Burton** - Remove 1 opposing fleet in the Rocinante Orbital for each friendly fleet there (including the Rocinante).

GAME END AND VICTORY

As soon as the sixth SCORE card is drawn from the deck the game immediately proceeds to the Final Scoring turn. The sixth SCORE card is not selected by a player. The game just ends immediately when it is drawn at the end of a turn.

If there are any SCORE cards on the Action Track they are discarded and not scored. This means that there may be fewer than five Bonus Sectors selected.

When the game ends, the players do Final Scoring using the normal Score procedure, except that no Bonus Sector is selected. The player to the left of the player holding the Rocinante card must decide if they will use a Kept Event first.

So the player holding the Rocinante will get the last chance to play a Kept Event or use a Rocinante ability before scoring.

After each player has a chance to play an Event, ALL BASES are scored for 5/3/1 points for first/second/third regardless of what Sector they are in. The Critical Resource bonus can still be earned as normal.

The player with the most Control Points wins the game.

If there is a tie, then the player that is higher on the Initiative Track is the winner.

In a two-player game, if there is a tie the player holding the Rocinante going into final scoring is the winner.

THE EXPANSE BOARD GAME

DESIGN CONSULTANT: James S.A. Corey

DESIGNER: Geoff Engelstein

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Richard Dadisman

WIZKIDS
NECA®

WIZKIDS/NECA, LLC
603 Sweetland Ave.
Hillside, NJ 07205 USA

www.wizkids.com

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TURN SUMMARY

OPTION 1: SELECT A CARD FROM THE ACTION TRACK

- A. Use or keep the Event yourself.
- B. Use the Action Points. Then another eligible faction may choose to use or keep the Event, and move to the bottom of the Initiative Track.

Keeping an Event costs 1 CP.

If the card selected is a SCORE card, immediately do a Scoring turn.

OPTION 2: PLAY A KEPT EVENT

EVENT TERMINOLOGY

Here is a glossary of terms used on Event Cards:

ATTACHED: A Base is attached to the Orbital it is contained in, and vice versa. Example: Luna is attached to the Earth Orbital. Earth Orbital is attached to Luna, Eurasia, and Africa. Vesta Orbital is attached to the Vesta Base.

INFLUENCE IN AN ORBITAL: You have Influence in an Orbital if you have at least one influence in an attached Base.

CONTROLLED BASE: A Base is 'Controlled' by a player if a player would gain first place points if scoring happened.

RESOURCE BASES: A 'Food Base' is a Base with the Food icon. A 'Tech Base' is a Base with the Tech icon, etc.

EARTH BASE, MARS BASE, ETC: An Earth Base is any Base attached to the Earth Orbital. Similarly Mars Base, Jupiter Base, and Saturn Base is any Base attached to that Orbital.