

Hy Breasil – A Fantasy History Simulation Game

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this game is, in addition to having fun when playing it, to make a simulation about how nations may grow and decline during the turn of history. In this way, Hy Breasil has similarities to Britannia, History of the World and Vinci.

The game is set in the mythical lands of Hy Breasil (a name used by the Irish Celts for the home of the King of the World, somewhere in the western sea). In the game, each player plays several nations from the time they enter the lands of Hy Breasil until the time these are supplanted by younger and more vital nations. Hence, a single player will usually play 2–4 nations at any one time and 3–6 during the course of a game (more for long games). The game can be played by 2 – 6 players, but it is recommended that you are at least 3.

The rules are described independently of any specific map, so they can be used with several alternative maps. The number of nation token sets or the number of tokens per set can be adjusted for use with different sizes of maps.

2 Components

In order to play, you need the following:

- A game board showing the lands of Hy Breasil, a terrain key and a victory points track.
- A handful of dice (normal six-sided dice).

- Twelve differently marked or coloured sets, each consisting of fifteen nation tokens.
- A “nation order cup” from which tokens can be randomly drawn.
- One victory point (VP) token per player.
- One Turn token.
- A “Civilization Abilities” chart (optional).

3 Game length

Before the game starts, the players agree on how long to play the game. This can be a fixed number of turns (e.g., 15), until a player reaches a certain minimum number of VP (e.g., 50) or for a specified amount of time (e.g., completing the current turn when 3 hours has passed since the game started). Each player places a VP token at 0 on the VP track and the Turn token is set to 1 on the VP track.

4 Phases of a turn

A game consists of a number of turns (see below). Each turn is divided into several phases:

1. **Invasion phase.** It is determined if new nations enter the board, and these are assigned to the players.
2. **Nation phase.** Each nation plays a nation turn, which itself consists of several phases:

- 2.1. **Random events phase.** A random event which effects the nation is determined.
 - 2.2. **Population increase phase.** The nation gains new units and places these on the board.
 - 2.3. **Movement and combat phase.** The units of the nation moves on the board and may do combat with other nations.
 - 2.4. **Support phase.** Disconnected units and units in excess of what the nation can support are removed.
3. **Victory points phase.** Each player gets victory points equal to the number of areas his nations occupy.

Each of these phases are described in detail in the following sections.

5 The invasion phase

The invasion phase is played differently in the first turn than in subsequent turns. The remainder of the first turn is played as any other turn.

5.1 The first turn

In randomly determined order, each player receives one nation: He chooses a set of identically marked tokens for his new nation. 10 of these are placed in a sea area of the players choice (except inland seas). An additional token is placed in the nation order cup.

5.2 Subsequent turns

A die is rolled to determine how many new nations enter the game:

- 1–2: No new nations
- 3–5: One new nation
- 6: Two new nations

Then, for each new nation, the following is done:

1. A set of identically marked tokens is chosen for the nation.
2. A die is rolled and 4 is added to the result to determine the number (5-10) of units that initially appear.
3. A player is selected randomly (e.g., by rolling a die). This player receives the nation and places the number of units determined in step 2 above in any sea area of his choice (except inland seas) and places an additional unit in the nation order cup.

If two new nations enter in the same turn, the first of these is assigned to a player before it is determined how many units appear for the second nation.

If there are not enough unused nation token sets left to use for the new nations, only as many nations appear as there are unused token sets. If there are no unused token sets at all, the invasion phase is skipped.

Two new nations can start in the same sea area.

5.3 Nation limit

There is a limit to how many nations a player can own at any one time, according to the table below

# of players	max nations
2	6
3	4
4	3
5	3
6	2

The numbers in the table are for when there is a total of 12 nation token sets. If you play with a different number of token sets, adjust the numbers proportionally. The general rule is that if there are N token sets and P players, each player can have N/P nations, rounded up.

If a player with the maximal number of nations is selected for receiving a new nation, he must either refuse to accept the new nation or relinquish

one of his existing nations and receive the new nation instead. In both cases, the refused or relinquished nation is randomly assigned to a new player as in step 3 above. A relinquished nation keeps all its pieces on the board, it is only the ownership that changes. If several players are at their maximum number of nations, there may be a cascade of such assignments.

6 The nation phase

Each nation does a nation turn. The order is determined by drawing from the nation order cup: A token is drawn and that nation moves, then another token is drawn and so on, until all nations have had their turn.

The turn of a nation is divided into phases, as described below.

6.1 The random events phase

A dice is rolled and added to the number of civilization tokens the nation has (see below). The result is used to index the random events table (see table 1). The resulting event is then executed. Some events (e.g., civil war or plague) have immediate effects, while other events have effect in later phases of the nation's turn. In all cases, the events apply only to the current nation turn.

The nation can choose to reroll a bad random event by taking a civilization token. A civilization token is one of the nation's units which by taking it as a civilization token is set aside so it can no longer be used on the map. It can be taken from the nation's pool of unused units or, if there are no unused units, from the board. Once a unit is made into a civilisation token, it remains so for the remainder of the nation's lifetime. Having civilization tokens, hence, limits the number of units available for the nation.

Subsequent rolls on the random event table (including the reroll) adds the new, larger number of civilization tokens to the die.

A nation does not roll for random events in the first turn in which it is in play (i.e., when it enters the game in the invasion phase). Instead, it automatically gets the event "Strong leader".

The random events are described below.

Reinforcements Roll a die and add that many units to the sea area the nation started from. If there are not enough unused tokens, place as many as there are.

Strong leader The nation has two movement and combat phases this turn.

Weak leader The nation may not initiate combat (i.e., attack) this turn.

Religious fervour The nation adds one to die-rolls for combat it initiates this turn, i.e., where it is the attacker.

Plague Roll a die. The nation removes this many units from the board. Additionally, the owner can remove up to that number of units belonging to other nations, if these are in areas that border areas where the nation has removed units. If the nation has fewer units left than the die rolled, all units are removed and the nation is removed from play (see section 8). The player can still remove up to the rolled number of units from neighbouring areas.

Famine The nation receives no population increase points this turn.

Civil war A new nation is split off from the existing nation. The owner of the nation picks half (rounded down) of the areas that the current nation occupies and forms a new nation from this. Both the new nation and the remaining part of the old nation must be internally connected as described in section 6.4 if this is at all possible. If it is not possible, each nation must consist of as few disconnected groups as possible.

Die + civilization tokens	Event
1	Reinforcement
2	Strong leader
3	Religious fervour
4	Civilization
5	Plague
6	Weak leader
7	Strong leader
8	Civil war
9	Civilization
10	Famine
11	Weak leader
12+	Civil war

Table 1: Random events table

An unused token set is chosen and used for the new nation and tokens in the selected areas are replaced with the new tokens (the removed tokens are added to the original nation's pool of unused tokens). A token for the new nation is put into the nation order cup.

The new nation gets the same number of civilization tokens as the original.

The new nation is now randomly assigned to a player as described in section 5.3. This can be the same player as the owner of the old nation.

After this, the (now reduced) original nation takes its turn normally. The new nation will take its turn when its token is drawn from the nation order cup.

If there are no unused token sets or the nation occupies only one area, civil war cannot occur and a new random event must be rolled.

Civilization The nation gains 5 VP, but gains a civilization token. If the optional rule 9.3 is used, the nation gets a new ability instead of 5 VP.

6.2 The population increase phase

The nation counts population increase points (PIPs) for the areas it occupies using the following key: 3 PIPs for every plains area and 2 PIPs for every forest or hills area. For each 7 PIPs (rounded down) the nation has, the nation is given a new unit. These units are taken from the unused tokens for that nation and placed in areas that the nation already occupy. No more than one new unit may be placed in any one area. The total number of units the nation can have on the board is limited by the number of available units. PIPs can not be saved to later turns, PIPs that are not used immediately are lost. Population increase is mandatory, a nation must take as many new armies as it is entitled to.

6.3 The movement and combat phase

The nation can now move any number of its units on the board. A unit can make the following kinds of steps while moving:

- A. Between two adjacent areas that are both occupied by the nation.
- B. Between two adjacent areas that are *not* both occupied by the nation.

Each unit can make *any number* of steps of type A during a single movement and combat phase, but *at most two* steps of type B.

Units move one at a time, so a unit must complete all of its movement before the next unit can move. Furthermore, no unit can end its movement phase in a sea area nor continue moving if it enters a land area that is occupied by another nation, even if this nation is owned by the same player.

6.3.1 Combat

If a nation moves units into an area that is occupied by another nation, it must do combat there. The nation can move more units into the area before the

combat starts, but after the combat has begun, no further movement (except retreats, see rule 6.3.2) can be made until the combat in the contested area is fully resolved. A nation can not move units into two or more areas that are occupied by other nations, so when it moves into one such area, it must resolve the battle in that area before moving into another.

Combat is played in rounds until only one nation (or none) remain in the contested area. In each round, each unit (from both sides) in the area rolls a die. Each die that shows 4 or more gives one hit to an opposing army. Hits are applied after all units have rolled. One hit to an unhurt army wounds it, a hit to a wounded army kills it. It is the player that rolls a die that decides which opposing unit is hit by that die (i.e., he can choose to let a hit wound an unhurt opposing army or kill a wounded opposing army). You must apply all hits, and you can not apply hits to armies that are already killed. Wounded armies are marked by turning them upside-down or rotating them at 45 degrees. Wounded units can not retreat (see rule 6.3.2). Killed units are returned to the nation's pool of unused tokens. When the battle is completed, any wounded units return to unhurt status.

In hills or forest, the attacker (i.e., the moving nation) needs to roll 5 or more to hit a defending opponent. The defender still only needs to roll 4 or more to hit an attacking unit.

Example: The "star" nation attacks with 3 units in a plains area where the "moon" nation has 2 units. "Star" rolls 2, 4 and 6 and "moon" rolls 3 and 4. Hence, "star" can apply two hits to the "moon" armies and "moon" can apply one hit to a "star" army. "Star" decides to apply both hits to one "moon" army, so one is removed. "Moon" gives only one hit, so one "star" army is marked as wounded. This leaves one unhurt and one wounded "star" army and one unhurt "moon" army for the next round.

If the area had been hill or forest, "star"'s 4 would not count, so both nations would have scored only one hit to an opposing army.

6.3.2 Retreat

If, at end of a round of combat, both sides still have units in the contested area, either side may retreat from the area. First, the defender decides if he wants to retreat. If he decides not to do so, the attacker has the option to do so.

If a player retreats from battle, he moves any number of *unwounded* units from the contested area to neighbouring land areas, which must either be unoccupied or already occupied by the retreating nation. If there is no neighbouring land area available for retreat, the units must stay. Note that it is not possible to retreat into or across water. Retreat is not allowed if there are no enemy units in the area, i.e., you can't retreat if you win the battle.

If both sides still have units remaining in the contested area, new rounds of combat are done until (through losses or retreats) only one nation has units in the area.

6.3.3 Movement after a battle

Once a battle is started, it must be completely resolved before any further units can move (except by retreating). When the combat is fully resolved, units that have not yet moved can do so, perhaps triggering further combats.

Note that each unit can move only once during the movement and combat phase, and hence each attacking unit can only participate in one battle. Surviving defenders can, however, be attacked again by other attacking units, either in the same area they saw combat earlier or in an area to which they have retreated.

If the attacker doesn't win a battle, he can attempt another attack on the area, but this must be done with units that have not already moved.

6.4 The support phase

Two criteria must be obeyed by a nation at the end of its own turn: All areas occupied by the nation must be internally connected (see below) and the

nation can have at most twice as many units as areas.

Two areas belonging to the same nation are connected if it is possible to move a piece from one to the other using the rules in section 6.3, or if there is an area belonging to the nation to which both are connected. In other words, two areas are connected if it is possible to make a string of moves from one to the other where every move ends in an area occupied by the nation. The nation is internally connected if all areas it holds are connected to each other in this way.

If the nation is disconnected, the nation retains the internally connected part that has the largest number of units (in case of ties, the player chooses which to retain). If there are unused token sets and the disconnected parts consists of two or more areas (that need not be mutually connected), these are made into a new nation that is immediately assigned to a player as described in section 5.3. This can be the same player as the owner of the old nation. Like in the Civil War event, the units in the affected areas are replaced by units from the new nation, but the new nation will not have a turn in the current nation phase (but it will have a turn in the next). If there is only one disconnected area or there are no available nation sets, the disconnected areas are emptied of units.

The remaining areas must have no more than twice as many units as areas. These units may, however, be distributed unevenly among the areas. It is, for example, possible to have one area with four units and two areas with one unit each for a total of three areas and six units.

Examples: If the nation has two areas with 2 and 3 units respectively, one unit can be removed from either area to bring the total down to 4 units.

7 The victory points phase

When all nations have had their turn, each player receives one victory point per land area occupied by his nations.

Victory points are recorded by moving the player's VP token on the VP track.

The Turn token is moved one up on the VP track and the next turn starts, unless the game is over according to the agreed game length (section 3).

8 General rules

If at any time a nation has no units on the board (including at sea), that nation is removed from play. This means that all its tokens (including civilization tokens and the token in the nation order cup) are returned to the pool of unused token sets.

9 Advanced rules

These rules add flavour and strategic depth to the game, and are recommended once the players are familiar with the basic game. They can be included one or more at a time in the order listed.

9.1 Races

The game can be given more Fantasy flavour by determining a race for each nation and giving races special abilities.

When a new nation enters in the invasion phase, a race is chosen for it by rolling two dice, adding the number of the current turn and then using the total to index table 2. In the first turn, no two nations may be of the same race, so reroll until you get different races.

The races have the special abilities described below:

Human: Agriculture: Counts 4 PIPs for plains areas.

Dwarf: Mining: Counts 3 PIPs for hill areas.

Elf: Hunting: Counts 3 PIPs for forest areas.

Troll: Cave dweller: Counts only 2 PIPs for plains and 1 PIP for forest. Adds one to combat die

Turn+die+die	Race
3	lizardman
4	hogman
5	troll
6	hogman
7	elf
8	lizardman
9	dwarf
10	hogman
11	troll
12	human
13	elf
14	lizardman
15	dwarf
16	hogman
17	troll
18	human
19	elf
20	lizardman
21	dwarf
22	human
23	troll
24	elf
25	dwarf
26+	human

Table 2: Race selection table

rolls when fighting in hills, both when attacking or defending.

Hogman: Forest dweller: Counts only 2 PIPs for plains and 1 PIP for hills. Adds one to combat die rolls when fighting in forest, both when attacking or defending.

Lizardman: Cold blooded: Ignores Famine and Plague random events. Furthermore, a nation that gets Plague can not remove neighbouring lizardman units.

9.2 Submission

A nation may submit to a nation that attacks it. Submission must be declared before the first round of a battle is rolled, once the battle starts, submission can not happen until another attack is made. The attacker must give the defending nation a chance to submit before the start of any battle.

If the defending nation chooses to submit, the attacker must immediately withdraw all units from the contested area, using the rules of attacker retreats.

If the defender does not choose to submit, the battle is fully resolved. If there are more battles later, the defender is, again, given a chance to submit.

Once a nation has submitted to another, neither nation may attack the other. Furthermore, half the victory points (rounded up) earned by the submitted nation while it is submitted is given to the nation to which it has submitted.

A nation can not submit if it is already submitted to another nation nor if the attacking nation is itself submitted to another nation.

Submission ends when one of the following events happens:

- The submitted nation rolls “Strong leader” or “Reinforcements” on the random events table.
- The nation to which it has submitted is eliminated from play.
- The nation to which it has submitted submits to a third nation.
- The nation to which it has submitted gets a “Civil war” random event.
- The submitted nation rolls “Weak leader” on the random events table. However, instead of regaining its independence, the submitted nation is absorbed into the nation to which it has submitted (the controlling nation). All units of the absorbed nation are replaced by

units of the controlling nation. If the controlling nation doesn't have enough spare units to replace all the absorbed units, it replaces as many as it can and removes the rest. The absorbed nation no longer exists, and all of its remaining tokens are removed from the board as specified in section 8.

If a submitted nation gets a "Civil war" random event, the new nation that is assigned to a new player is not submitted. The original nation is still submitted.

9.3 Civilization abilities

When a "Civilization" result is rolled on the random event table, the nation gains a new ability *instead of* earning 5 VP. The player can choose any one of the abilities described below that the nation does not already possess. The ability is marked by placing the civilization token gained by the Civilization event in the appropriate box on the "Civilization Abilities" chart¹. If the nation already has all civilization abilities, it must reroll the event (without gaining a civilization token).

Note that you still gain a civilization token when you *choose* to reroll a random event in order to avoid the consequences of the one you rolled. In this case, you don't get a civilization ability, you just set the token aside².

If a nation submits to another, the nation to which it submits automatically gains all the civilization abilities that the submitted nation has or gains while submitted, placing tokens on the ability chart as if they gained the abilities through a "Civilization" event. Similarly, a nation that is created in the "Civil war" event or by being disconnected in the support phase gets the same abilities as the nation from which it is split off.

If you play with civilization abilities, set one set of nation tokens aside to use as city tokens for the

¹A chart with a box for each ability.

²A "Reroll" box could be added to the "Civilization Abilities" chart.

"City building" ability (so there will be one less nation for use in play).

9.3.1 Ability descriptions

Capital The nation indicates a land area as its capital. From this point onwards, this area counts 3 VP for that nation (but still only 1 VP for any other nation). If a nation loses its capital, no new capital can be chosen, but the nation can later retake the area (and will again score 3 VP for it). It is possible for several nations to choose the same area as capital (which will make that area hotly contested).

Navigation The nation can move across two sea areas as if they were one. This counts also for connections in the support phase.

Food preservation After the nation has used PIPs to increase population, up to 6 unused PIPs can be saved until the next turn, where they are added to the newly earned PIPs. The "Food preservation" box on the abilities chart has a bar with slots for 0–6 saved PIPs. The nation's civilization token is put in one of these slots to indicate the number of saved PIPs. It is initially put in the 0 slot.

Taxation The nation can have 2.5 times (rounded down) as many units as areas in the support phase, so each two areas can support five units.

Diplomacy The nation can ask for permission to move through areas belonging to another nation. If this is granted, the moving nation can move through the other nation's areas as if they were his own, but it can not (in the current turn) attack the nation from which it got the permission. Once a permission is given, it lasts until the end of the movement and combat phase (and can not be revoked until then). Hence, it can not be used for establishing connections in the subsequent support phase.

Prophecy At the moment the nation gains this ability, it rolls its random event for its *next* turn, but does not carry out the event yet. In the random event phase of the next turn, the predicted event happens and a new event roll for the subsequent turn is made. A predicted event can be rerolled at the usual cost, but the decision to do so and the reroll itself (if any) doesn't happen until the random event phase in which the event will happen. Place the nation's civilization token for Prophecy on the relevant entry of the random events table instead of on the abilities chart (which has no box for the Prophecy ability).

City building Just before its support phase, the nation can exchange 3 armies in an area for a city token if there is not already a city token in the area. If all city tokens are already in use, no cities can be built until tokens are freed by destroying cities. A city does stay in the area in which it is built until it is destroyed. It has the following effects:

- When an area holding a city is attacked, the city fights for the defender like an ordinary army, but does not get benefits from terrain or race. It can not retreat.
- An attacker can not apply hits to a city unless all defending armies are already eliminated from the area. If all defending armies are eliminated and there are unused hits, these must be applied to the city. Like other units, it takes two hits to eliminate a city.
- If a city is the sole surviving defending unit left in an area and there are still attackers in the area, the city is taken over by the attacking nation – even if that nation does not have the city building ability. The attacker does *not* gain the ability to build further cities by taking over a city.

- If, for any reason, a city is alone in an area at any time, it is immediately removed.

A city does not count as an army for any other purpose than the above.

10 Variant 1: Continuous play

Instead of playing for a fixed game length with a fixed number of people, Hy Breasil can instead be played continuously while players enter and leave the game. Players can enter and leave the game at the start of any turn.³

10.1 Entering or leaving the game

If a player enters the game, he gains one new nation as in section 5.1 if any unused token set is available. Otherwise, he may gain new a new nation because another player has to give up one, see below.

If a player leaves the game, all his nations are distributed to existing and new players using the rule for excess nations in section 5.3, using the new number of players to determine the limits.

New nation limits as per section 5.3 may apply if players enter or leave the game. If one or more players have more nations than the limit allows, the excess are distributed as described in section 5.3. This happens after all additions and removals of players.

A player can not leave and reenter the game in the same turn.

10.2 Recording turns

Instead of one global turn marker, each player has his own turn marker, which starts at turn 1 when the player enters the game and is incremented at the start of every turn that the player is in the game. If a player leaves the game, the position of his turn

³This rule is inspired by a game called “Barbarian, Kingdom and Empire” that I, admittedly, I have only heard about.

marker is recorded. If he reenters the game again at a later point, his turn marker is placed where it was when he left the game.

When assigning a race to the first nation of a player that enters or reenters the game, add his own number of turns to the dice. When new (unassigned) invaders enter the game, use the highest number of turns played by any player still in the game to determine the new race.

10.3 Scoring

Scoring is done as in the normal game, but when a player leaves the game, it is recorded how many turns he played and how many VP he earned. His corrected score is his total VP divided by the number of turns he has played. If he should reenter the game again, he starts from his old score and number of turns in the game.

11 Variant 2: Random scoring turns

Instead of awarding victory points at the end of every turn, a die is rolled at the end of each turn. If the result is 4 or more, victory points are awarded as normally. If not, no points are awarded. The last turn of the game is always a scoring turn.