

RAIL BARON® - SOUTHEAST RULES

Rail Baron is a strategy game of assembling railroad networks. You purchase railroads, and earn money by moving your train along them from one destination to the next, but if you ride an opponent's railroad you must pay a rental fee. The first player to accumulate \$200,000 and arrive back home safely wins.

The game board is a map of the southeastern United States upon which the lines of 37 historically-based railroads have been traced. City mileposts are represented by black squares, and other significant mileposts by black dots. During your turn, you move your train from city to city, counting the mileposts along the way, up to a distance allowed by a dice throw. Upon arrival at a destination you collect a payoff and can grow your network by purchasing a railroad. A true rail baron knows when to expand into new areas, and when to monopolize rail access to others.

START

To begin the game, choose a player to act as banker. The banker gives each player \$20,000, a pawn the color of the player's choosing, two chips of matching color, and a Freight engine card. Each player will place the chips on the board at the cities from and to which his train is moving. Representing a player's train is a pawn that he moves along the board's railroads. To determine who goes first, each player rolls 3 dice. The player with the highest total roll goes first, and thereafter turn order proceeds to the left.

CITY LOOKUP

Several times during the match, a player will be assigned a City via a process that involves the Destination Chart and two separate rolls of three dice. The first dice roll determines the Region, the second roll determines the City within that Region. Note that the Destination Chart has a table of Region names, such as South Atlantic and Appalachian, as well as several tables of City names, such as Atlanta and Charleston, West Virginia.

When the rules call for a City to be assigned, the player should perform the following steps:

- 1) first determine the Region: roll the three dice
- 2) if the red die is an odd number, refer to the Odd section of the Region table, otherwise refer to the Even
- 3) total the two white dice, and find the corresponding Region
- 4) next determine the City within the Region: roll the three dice again
- 5) if the red die is an odd number, refer to the Odd section of city names, otherwise refer to the Even
- 6) total the two white dice, and find the corresponding City

Example: the first roll's red die shows 3, and white dice 3 + 4. So, look up Odd 7 in the chart to learn it represents the Appalachian Region. The second roll's red die shows 6, and white dice 4 + 5. Refer to the city table for Appalachian, and look up Even 9, which is Chattanooga.

Special note: if the player is determining a destination city, and the Region he rolls is the Region in which his train is currently located, the player may freely pick any Region. He announces his choice to the other players, then rolls the dice to determine the City within the Region he picked.

HOME CITY

At the start of the game in turn order, each player determines his Home City via the CITY LOOKUP process described above. The player must make special note of this city because at the end of the game he will need to move his train back to it to win. He places onto the board at that city one of his two chips, and his train pawn.

More than one player may have the same Home City. After all players have a Home City, the first player determines his first DESTINATION.

DESTINATION

To determine a train's destination, a player employs the CITY LOOKUP process described above. He places his other chip on the board at that city as a reminder to all. In the unusual event the destination city is the same as the one in which a player's train is already located, that player loses the remainder of his turn.

HOME SWAP

After a player has determined his first destination city of the game, but prior to rolling dice for any MOVEMENT, at his option he may elect to Home Swap. In a Home Swap, a player exchanges his initial home city with his first destination city. He changes his train's starting location to the new Home City, and begins movement from there. No reason for Home Swap need be started; players often elect to Home Swap so as to end up with what they consider a better first destination, or better Home City, or both. A player may not Home Swap after he has rolled the dice for MOVEMENT.

MOVEMENT

When a player knows his train's destination city, he rolls two white dice (known as the "normal roll") unless he has already upgraded to a SuperChief engine, in which case he also rolls the red bonus die at the same time. The total of the dice roll indicates how many mileposts to move that turn. After rolling, the player may plan his train's route, however once he physically moves his pawn to another milepost, he may not take that step back.

The player moves his train pawn from one milepost to another milepost connected via a railroad segment, counting out loud the distance as he goes; doing so is simply called "riding". He may ride any railroad segment that connects the desired mileposts, and may switch from one railroad to another at any milepost served by both. He need not employ the shortest route. If he reaches his destination city, he must stop and consult the ARRIVAL rules below.

A player may not switch riding to a different railroad at location that is not a milepost. Note there are some places on the game board at which two railroad lines cross each other, but there is no black milepost. At such crossings, a player may not switch riding from one line to the other unless both lines belong to the same railroad.

NON-REUSE

A player may not ride a given track segment (even in a reverse direction) again until after he has arrived at his destination. Where the tracks of multiple railroads are parallel and connect the same two mileposts, those are considered separate segments belonging to different railroads; at such locations, the player may ride between those mileposts again only if he rides a railroad segment previously unused. Also, a player may not ride a segment if doing so means his train will no longer be able to reach his destination city without future reuse of some segment, instead he must ride a different segment. This reuse restriction applies to each player individually, that is, a player is not prohibited from using a segment simply because a different player already has. This restriction clears and starts anew only upon the player's ARRIVAL at his destination city.

BONUS ROLL

A player may be entitled to one bonus roll. If a player with a Freight engine rolls double sixes, after moving the 12, he rolls the red bonus die and moves that amount further. If a player with an Express engine rolls any doubles, after moving, he rolls the red bonus die and moves that amount further. Players with SuperChief engines do not get separate extra rolls since the red bonus die is always rolled together with the white dice, and the sum of the three dice is used for movement.

Until arrival at his destination city, a player must move his full roll, including bonus, even if he does not wish to. He may not stop short. There is no fee to ride upon a railroad he owns. If for any portion of movement a player rides upon one or more segments of a railroad held by the bank or owned by an opponent, at the end of his turn he must pay track use fees as described in the USE FEES rules below.

ARRIVAL

Upon arrival in a destination city, the player must stop train movement. He does not need to roll the exact distance, or use the full amount on the dice. He collects from the bank a payoff in the amount indicated by the Payoff chart: find the departure city along one edge of the chart, and the destination city along the other edge. The payoff amount, in thousands, is listed where the row and column meet.

PURCHASE

After ARRIVAL and collecting a payoff, next a player may purchase from the bank one unowned railroad, or upgrade his locomotive. The purchase price of each railroad is shown upon its deed; those marked Public cannot be purchased, and remain available for all players to ride upon as if they were unowned. The price to upgrade from a Freight to an Express is \$4000, or to upgrade from either a Freight or an Express to a SuperChief is \$40,000. Upon payment, the banker shall give the player the deed representing the purchase. A player may not spend more cash than he already has on hand, nor at this time may he sell or auction other railroads to raise cash. He is not required to make a purchase if he does not wish. A player can make a purchase before paying USE FEES, and can even spend cash that he needs for those fees, knowing he will have to AUCTION or sell back railroads to pay those fees at the end of his turn. Each player should keep his railroad deeds visible; all players are entitled to accurately know who owns which railroads.

BOUNCE OUT

If during the turn he arrived at his destination city a player had moved all of the total of his white dice, as well as any portion of a red bonus die to which he may be entitled, the movement phase of his turn is over. Similarly, if he is not entitled to a bonus die, his movement phase is over, even if he did not fully consume the distance allowed by the white dice. In these cases, the player does not determine his next destination city until the start of his next turn. After a PURCHASE opportunity as described above, the player should continue according to the USE FEES section of the rules below.

Otherwise, if a player had arrived at his destination by using no more mileposts than the amount shown on the white dice this turn, he may be entitled to some movement out of the city. Such "bounce out" movement is granted only if the player is entitled to movement via a BONUS ROLL. In such situation, before moving the player should determine his next destination via the DESTINATION rules above.

Once the player has determined his next destination city, if he has a SuperChief locomotive, he has already rolled the red bonus die, and should employ the amount it shows for his bounce out movement. A player with a Freight or Express engine, if he has rolled double-sixes or doubles respectively for ARRIVAL, must roll the red bonus die and move the distance it shows. If via the bonus the player arrives at another destination, he once again collects a payoff and is given another purchase opportunity, but does not get another bonus roll this turn. The bounce out is not optional; if a player is entitled to it, it must be used fully per MOVEMENT rules.

USE FEES

At the end of his turn, if during the course of that entire turn the player has ridden upon any railroads he does not own, he must pay use fees. The player pays no fee to ride upon his own railroads. The cost to ride upon railroads held by the bank (including Public railroads) is \$1000, regardless of the number of different bank railroads used and distance. For rides upon "unfriendly" railroads, i.e. those owned by an opponent, before the unowned railroads have sold out, the fee is \$5000. This flat \$5000 is paid to each opponent

whose track segments were ridden during the turn, regardless of the number of his railroads ridden, the distance, or whether the riding took place as part of the player's normal roll, bonus roll, or both. When the bank's non-public railroad holdings sell out, this fee increases to \$10,000 for the remainder of the game.

Use fees are not optional: they must be paid even if an opponent does not ask for them. If a player does not have sufficient cash to pay a use fee, refer to the AUCTION rules below.

ESTABLISHMENT

If the USE FEES increase while a player's train is at a milepost served by a railroad, the player is "established" at the prior fee rate upon all railroads the serve that milepost. On subsequent turns if he continues to ride upon an established railroad, he needs to pay only at the prior fee rate. This grandfathering right can continue for multiple turns and is lost only when the established player rides a different railroad; at that time the use fee goes up for all his subsequent rides on that railroad. A player who Home Swaps is considered established upon all the railroads at his new Home City.

Example 1: the bank holds the ABC railroad. Blue rides upon it during his turn, and thus must pay the bank a \$1000 use fee. Before Blue's next turn, Red purchases ABC. Blue is established on the ABC, so if he chooses to ride upon it the fee remains only \$1000, but he pays it to Red rather than the bank. Only when Blue rides a railroad other than ABC does he lose establishment.

Example 2: Blue's train is located at a milepost served by three different railroads when someone purchases the last railroad. That means the fee to ride unfriendly railroads increases from \$5000 to \$10,000. Until he moves again, Blue is established on all three railroads at his train. When Blue moves, he can ride any of the three railroads, and if he uses one that is opponent-owned, he pays that opponent only \$5000 in use fees. When Blue rides any other railroad, he loses establishment, and must pay the full price for subsequent rides. If in this example Blue rides a railroad upon which he is established, as well as a second railroad owned by the same opponent, he must pay the full \$10,000 because he was not established on the second railroad. If in this example Blue rides a railroad upon which he is established, as well as a second railroad owned by a different opponent, he must pay the first owner \$5000 and the second owner \$10,000 because he was not established on the second railroad.

AUCTION

If a player has insufficient cash to afford the total of all USE FEES owed to opponents and/or the bank, he must auction his railroads to other players or sell them back to the bank until he has raised enough cash. If the player chooses to sell back, he surrenders to the bank the deed card of the railroad, and collects from the bank half the railroad's listed purchase price. That railroad becomes available for PURCHASE by any player per normal rules, and subsequent MOVEMENT upon it while the bank holds it costs \$1000 in use fees.

If the player chooses to auction, he offers the railroad at an opening bid of half the railroad's listed purchase price. Bidding proceeds in turn order starting with the opponent on the player's left. Each player can bid up to the amount of cash he has on hand at that time; each bid must be at least \$500 more than the prior. The player who bids the most pays that price to the auctioneer and receives the deed. If the player still does not have sufficient cash to pay the use fees he owes, he must auction or sell back another of his railroads.

Players whose trains are at mileposts served by an auctioned railroad are established upon it for movement purposes at the fee they would have paid had the auction not occurred, however that fee is paid to the new owner. Once a player puts a railroad up for auction, he may not withdraw it, even if he does not want the high bidder to own it. If no one bids, the bank buys the railroad at half the railroad's listed purchase price. If a player auctions a railroad he has ridden that turn, he owes no fee to its new owner this turn nor while he remains established on it.

BANKRUPTCY

If after auctioning or selling all his railroads, a player still has insufficient cash to pay the total amount of use fees, he is bankrupt and immediately out of the game. His cash, if any, is returned to the bank rather than paid to anyone to whom he owes fees. If all but one player goes bankrupt, the last surviving player wins immediately and the game ends.

ANNOUNCING

A player's cash level remains secret until he accumulates \$150,000, at which time he must announce this fact to his opponents. Any opponent can ask how much cash a player has, or what his Home City is, and the player must correctly reply (if the player has less than \$150,000 he simply replies so and does not reveal the exact amount). No player may keep his cash hidden from view, but he may keep it in a stack so as to disguise its total value.

DECLARING AND WINNING

When a player has accumulated at least \$200,000 cash and is about to determine his next destination city, he is eligible to declare. Before he determines that next destination, at his option he can "declare" to his opponents that he has the required cash, and will attempt to return to his HOME CITY where he can win the game. Players are not under obligation to declare as soon as eligible, instead most continue playing, moving, and getting new destinations until arrival at a destination city in proximity of their Home City.

Upon invoking this process, the player is said to be "declared". He immediately determines an "alternate destination" city via the normal DESTINATION rules above, but ignores this alternate destination until/unless the player loses his declared status, or if the alternate destination is the city in which his train is currently located. In the latter case, the player is indeed declared, but loses the rest of his turn, and is in danger of the ROVER PLAY executed by an opponent (see below).

If the declared player has not lost his turn, he moves his train per normal MOVEMENT rules, and heads for his Home City. He need not arrive at home this turn, instead he may use several turns. If he arrives back at his Home City while still declared, and has \$200,000 after paying all USE FEES, he is the winner, and the game ends.

No payoff is awarded for the trip to his Home City unless it is also his alternate destination. If a player declares when in his Home City, he wins immediately and the game ends. If a player who can win arrives home but has not used his BONUS ROLL, he ignores that roll.

ROVER PLAY

While a player is declared and before he can return to his HOME CITY, during their turn each opponent may attempt to "rover" him so as to thwart his imminent victory. To rover a declared player, an opponent must move his train to or through the milepost at which the declared player's train is sitting between turns. During this process, all players must obey all normal MOVEMENT rules, including the prohibition against reuse of track segments. An opponent already located at the milepost of a declared player cannot execute a rover except by circling back, provided such movement is allowed by the rules, including that after the rover he can still legally reach his own destination.

By watching carefully the segments ridden by opponents, a declared player whose roll is insufficient to carry him home may be able to evade rover by routing his train's movement to end at a milepost that one or more opponents are prohibited by the non-reuse rules from revisiting.

When a declared player is rovered, he loses his declared status and must pay the opponent who rovered him \$50,000. He may not be rovered again unless he later declares again. The destination of the rovered player ceases being his Home City, and switches to the alternate destination city that had been determined when he declared. During movement to an alternate destination, a player must continue to obey movement rules

and avoid riding any rail segment he had since his prior destination city arrival. If such a player cannot reach his alternate destination without segment reuse, he may reuse only the minimum number of segments necessary to arrive at his alternate destination.

Upon ARRIVAL at his alternate destination city, a player collects a payoff as per usual rules. If a player is roved while sitting at his alternate destination, his arrival occurs immediately at the start of his next turn. If he has sufficient cash, a player may declare once again. A declared player can safely move to and through the trains of opponents without being roved. A declared player who ends his turn on a spur, such as the one to Miami, can be roved only by an opponent whose next destination city is ahead on that spur, or who is exiting that spur. If the opportunity presents itself, a player may rove more than one declared opponent on the same turn.

UNDECLARE

A player also loses his declared status if his cash level drops below \$200,000 via the payment of USE FEES, even if this happens after arrival in his HOME CITY. In such cases, the player's destination becomes his alternate destination, and he proceeds there as if he had been roved (see ROVER PLAY rules above), except there is no \$50,000 penalty. Some declared players who are unable to reach their Home City intentionally ride the railroads of opponents so as to strategically "self undeclare" (via payment of use fees), and thereby avoid being roved. If the player self undeclares in his alternate destination, he arrives immediately upon the start of his next turn. If he has sufficient cash at that time, the player may declare once again.

VARIANTS FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

SHORT GAME

To play in about half the time, use the following four rule modifications:

- 1) Reduce the price of all railroads and locomotive upgrades to half.
- 2) After all unowned railroads have been sold, any player can "Early Declare" and move back to this HOME CITY if he has less than \$200,000, except a player may not Early Declare when his train is in the Region that contains his Home City.
- 3) When an Early Declared player is caught via the ROVER PLAY, if he has less cash than the rove fee he is immediately bankrupt and must give his cash and railroads to the player that roved him.
- 4) Once an Early Declared player returns home safely, he is immune from being roved. The game continues until the round is completed so that all players get an equal number of turns. At the end of that round, the game ends, and the winner is the person with the most cash.

AUTOMATED LOOKUPS

To speed the game by 10% to 20%, use automated destination and payoff lookup software, such as the free Boardgame Conductor in the Rail Baron computer game at RailGameFans.com.

DISCOUNTED SUPERCHIEF

Reduce the SuperChief price by the number of players in the game: 2 or 3 players = \$40,000, 4 players = \$36,000, 5 players = \$32,000, 6 players = \$28,000

FREE SUPERCHIEF

Allow players to use a purchase opportunity to upgrade an Express locomotive into a SuperChief at no charge. Players may upgrade from a Freight to a SuperChief at the normal price.

STARTING AUCTION

At the start of the game, give each player extra cash in an amount agreed to by all, for example \$20,000 extra (\$40,000 total starting cash). After each player has been assigned a HOME CITY, draw at random one railroad deed then conduct an AUCTION of it. Repeat such that one railroad is put up for auction per player in the game. If no one bids on a railroad, temporarily set it aside until all such auctioning is finished, then return it to the bank for later purchase by the players per normal rules.

HONEYMOON (2 PLAYER) RULES

The following rules allow the game to be enjoyed by just two players. The main problem in a two player game is the overabundance of railroads. The solution: create an imaginary third player to reduce the supply of railroads. During the course of the game, periodically give this third player railroads chosen at random. Here's how: give it one immediately after four railroads have been purchased in the game, then another after the real players purchase two more railroads. Each time the real players purchase two more railroads, give the third player another (choose one at random from an upside-down stack of the deeds of unowned railroads). Repeat until the railroad supply is exhausted. If a railroad is sold back to the bank, subtract one from the number considered purchased. When you ride on the third player's network, calculate fees as you would normally, however, pay one half of this fee to the bank, and the other half to your opponent. This fee splitting technique helps to simulate the fees the third player would pay to the real players if it were moving in the game. This also helps to retain most of the value of city lockout (monopolist) strategies.

BACKGROUND

The historically-based Rail Baron - Southeast returns you to the 1890s, when railroad overbuilding after the Civil War has led to bank failures. The region's giant railroad companies are only beginning to take shape. You'll find the predecessors of the Atlantic Coast Line, Seaboard Air Line, Southern and others, but also many smaller railroads that must merge to survive. In the economic panic, the small railroads are available at a discount price, providing a golden opportunity to become a Rail Baron.

Not all railroads and branches in the area are depicted, only the more significant ones. Many railroads leased the lines of neighboring, connecting railways, or invested in them as part of a takeover plan. For the purposes of improved game play, some such railroads are shown independently, while others are depicted as part of their larger parent.

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