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Issue #2

Making the Most of Your Crew

by Erik Yapple



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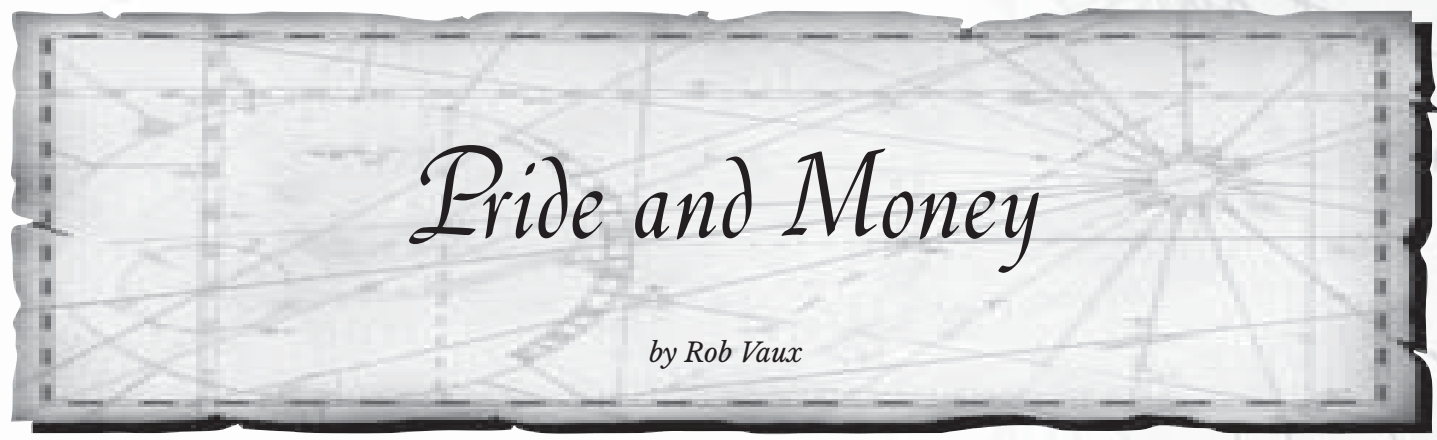
- ☐ Armada of Castille
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- ☐ The Agency
- ☐ The Flock
- ☐ Whateleys
- ☐ Lost Angels



Pride and Money

by Rob Vaux

The man in the eyepatch didn't look Montaigne, even though he wore the uniform of their navy. He sat at the bar with a drink in his hand, his ill-fitting wig perched awkwardly atop his head. A large square box lay next to his wine, locked securely with stout iron. He seemed morbidly fixated on the box, staring unblinking at its wooden top and ignoring the rest of San Augustin pressing around him. Unfortunately, the rest of San Augustin wasn't willing to return the favor.

A drunk Castillian, arms corded with muscles, staggered over to his seat and gave him a nasty shove.

"You. Pendejo. You're the one they call the General?"

"Go away." His voice betrayed his Eisen origins. "I have no quarrel with you."

"You work for the Montaigne. You sink our ships. You helped them capture our beautiful city. I have every reason to quarrel with you."

The General gritted his teeth. "Mein freund, you are drunk. I suggest you go back to your table -"

"No!" The Castillian screamed, drawing the attention of the other patrons. "My people suffer under the yoke of your masters and you have the nerve to sit there and drink our wine!" A blade flashed in his

hand and the General's eyes narrowed. "Perhaps your blood can cleanse the sins against Castille!"

AEG Fan Club

Issue #2

Production Manager	Kevin M.
Writers	Rob Vaux, Kevin Wilson
Editor	D.J. Trindle
Cover Art	April Lee
Interior Art	Chris Dornas, Beet, Randy, Gallegos, Prof
Publishing	Alderac Entertainment Group
Montaigne Magere	Maureen Yates
Correspondence to	The Crow's Nest, c/o AEG 4045 Guasti Road, Suite 212 Ontario, California 91761

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The General tensed, but his wine-soaked reflexes were not what they should have been. He could see the knife falling even before he turned and braced himself for the blow. If he were lucky, it would glance off his ribs, or...

A panzerhand crashed on the Castillian's head with a mug-rattling thud. The knife clattered harmlessly to the floor as its owner dropped like a lead weight. A huge blonde Eisen with a bushy mustache towered over him, wiping the blood off of his steel-covered fingers. He turned to the onlooking bar and treated them to a ferocious snarl.

"Go back to your drinks. Now."

The patrons knew better than to disobey. He kicked the unconscious Castillian out of the way and plopped down next to the surprised-looking naval officer.



"Thomas Metzger." He held out his hand. "And you are the infamous General."

"Ja," he grimaced. "Thank you for your assistance."

"It was nothing I assure you," Metzger returned. "We Eisen have to watch out for each other."

The General laughed bitterly. "I suppose you weren't listening to our Castillian friend here. I haven't worked for the Eisen in a long, long time. I serve Montaigne now. Or at least I did."

"You needn't explain to me," Metzger shrugged. "I'm a mercenary as well. All the more reason to lend a fellow countryman a hand. Reminds us of who we are."

The older man gauged that for a moment, then nodded.

"I suppose it's my own fault, drinking in a bar full of Castillians. I should have found somewhere closer to the garrison, but I don't find Montaigne company particularly comforting now."

Silence reigned between them for a moment.

"What happened?" Metzger asked at last.

"Apparently, I no longer lead l'Empereur's navy. They have found someone much more suited to the task. I have been recomissioned, left with but a single ship and ordered to stay out of the way."

"Your position mattered to you, did it?"

"No," he sneered, "but it means that my pay has been lessened considerably."

Metzger nodded. "I see. And your crew?"

Fat's Debt Card List

Card Names.....Rarity

Actions

- ☐ A Hero at Last.....Common
- ☐ A Pirate's Reputation.....Uncommon
- ☐ A Single Shot.....Rare
- ☐ A Thousand Fires Alight.....Rare
- ☐ Awaiting the Signal.....Common
- ☐ Better Off Chum.....Uncommon
- ☐ Blasted Bulkhead.....Uncommon
- ☐ Bloody Fight.....Uncommon
- ☐ Broken Mast.....Common
- ☐ But, not in Vain.....Common
- ☐ Call to Arms.....Common
- ☐ Captured!.....Uncommon
- ☐ Crackers on Demand.....Rare
- ☐ Crossbow Bolt.....Common
- ☐ "Cut a Path!".....Uncommon
- ☐ Dockside Raid.....Uncommon
- ☐ Dust to Dust.....Uncommon
- ☐ Entwining Kelp.....Common
- ☐ False Colors.....Common
- ☐ "Fire as She Passes!".....Common
- ☐ Foolish Bet.....Common
- ☐ Free Men Can Do Anything.....Common
- ☐ Fresh Fruit.....Common
- ☐ Fresh Water.....Common
- ☐ Frozen Sails.....Common
- ☐ Hard Tack.....Common
- ☐ Headhunters.....Common
- ☐ "Heave To!".....Uncommon
- ☐ Hidden Crew.....Common
- ☐ Hidden Rum.....Common
- ☐ Holy Vision.....Uncommon
- ☐ Honorable Surrender.....Uncommon
- ☐ Ice Storm.....Uncommon
- ☐ Ivory Totem.....Uncommon
- ☐ Launching the Falcon's Roost.....Uncommon
- ☐ Lice.....Rare
- ☐ Loot and Pillage.....Uncommon
- ☐ Mad Martin's Tattoos.....Common
- ☐ "My Last Bit of Luck".....Uncommon
- ☐ Nasty Bit o' Luck.....Common
- ☐ Next of Kin.....Uncommon
- ☐ No Fun to be a Captive.....Common
- ☐ No Space For Luxuries.....Uncommon
- ☐ Not Quite Dead.....Common
- ☐ Orduño's Honor.....Common
- ☐ Powering Through.....Rare
- ☐ Quarantened Port.....Common
- ☐ Sails Don't Bleed.....Common
- ☐ Second Chance.....Common
- ☐ "She Canna Take It!".....Rare
- ☐ "She'll Hold Together".....Common
- ☐ Shining Example.....Rare
- ☐ Steady Leak.....Rare
- ☐ The Betrayal of Allende.....Common
- ☐ The Destruction of the Spear.....Uncommon
- ☐ The Fury of the Rogers.....Common

Card Names.....Rarity

- ☐ The Futility of It All.....Uncommon
- ☐ The Next Chapter.....Common
- ☐ The Nibelungen's Price.....Rare
- ☐ The Sinking of the Hanged Man.....Uncommon
- ☐ The Spear of the West Wind.....Uncommon
- ☐ The Stake.....Uncommon
- ☐ Too Strong to Die.....Uncommon
- ☐ Undead Ambush.....Common
- ☐ Vengeance of the Damned.....Rare
- ☐ Whites of Their Eyes.....Common
- ☐ Worthless Trinket.....Uncommon
- ☐ Would-Be Adventurers.....Uncommon

Adventures

- ☐ Foul Weather Jack's Map, Part I.....Rare
- ☐ Foul Weather Jack's Map, Part II.....Rare
- ☐ Foul Weather Jack's Map, Part III.....Rare
- ☐ Foul Weather Jack's Map, Part IV.....Rare
- ☐ Nibelungen Forge.....Rare
- ☐ The Fourth Switch.....Rare
- ☐ The Lure of Gold.....Rare

Attachments

- ☐ Alesio's Fate.....Uncommon
- ☐ Arisent.....Rare
- ☐ Bad Surgeon.....Rare
- ☐ Caligari's Island.....Rare
- ☐ Carleon.....Rare
- ☐ Demon Eyes.....Rare
- ☐ Eyes of Reason.....Uncommon
- ☐ Fool's Errand.....Common
- ☐ "Have at um' Boys!".....Common
- ☐ "I've Seen Worse".....Uncommon
- ☐ Le Beau's Compass.....Rare
- ☐ Overstocked.....Uncommon
- ☐ Preparing for a Long Voyage.....Uncommon
- ☐ Reis' Brides.....Rare
- ☐ Responsive Helm.....Rare
- ☐ Salted Meat.....Common
- ☐ San Cristobal.....Rare
- ☐ Scatter Pistol.....Uncommon
- ☐ Señor Ladrón.....Rare
- ☐ Sousdal.....Rare
- ☐ St. Roger's Spyglass.....Rare
- ☐ Stealing the Falcon's Roost.....Rare
- ☐ Swivel Gun.....Rare
- ☐ The Guilding Gem of Hierro.....Rare
- ☐ The Setine Key.....Rare
- ☐ The Witches' Shears.....Rare
- ☐ Val Mokka.....Rare

Crew

- ☐ Moldy Morris.....Rare
- ☐ Skeletal Dregs.....Uncommon
- ☐ Uriah the Dribbler.....Uncommon
- ☐ Delaina Darling.....Uncommon
- ☐ Donna.....Uncommon
- ☐ Fyodor Zastienchiv.....Rare

Card Names.....Rarity

- ☐ Lt. Juan Rodriguez de Soldano.....Common
- ☐ Reggie Wilcox.....Faction
- ☐ Velik.....Uncommon
- ☐ Joseph Gallegos de Avila.....Common
- ☐ Luis de Rioja.....Rare
- ☐ Ahmed Khalid.....Uncommon
- ☐ Alix Brower.....Common
- ☐ Dunti.....Faction
- ☐ Edahgo.....Rare
- ☐ Hamish.....Uncommon
- ☐ Imshi.....Uncommon
- ☐ Petro Angelina.....Common
- ☐ Shala.....Rare
- ☐ Alec Mercer.....Common
- ☐ Julius Caligari.....Rare
- ☐ Reynaldo Pasado.....Uncommon
- ☐ Kirsten Blumfeld.....Uncommon
- ☐ Piotr the Badger.....Common
- ☐ The Calloways.....Rare
- ☐ Mabela.....Rare
- ☐ Maximillian.....Common
- ☐ William Highport.....Uncommon
- ☐ Fierbas Desaix du Paix.....Rare
- ☐ Frieda Discher.....Uncommon
- ☐ Mike Fitzpatrick, Freeman.....Common
- ☐ Montaigne Marines.....Common
- ☐ Benny Gimble.....Uncommon
- ☐ Kurt Weinberg.....Common
- ☐ "Lyin'" John Fox.....Rare
- ☐ Roger Gaffrin.....Rare
- ☐ Emily de Gallegos.....Uncommon
- ☐ Hauptmann von Lichen.....Common
- ☐ Hull Rot Bill.....Common
- ☐ Lieutenant Smith.....Common
- ☐ Rosamaria Falisci.....Uncommon
- ☐ Scott Preston.....Uncommon
- ☐ Ursula von Stahl.....Rare
- ☐ Whalers.....Uncommon
- ☐ "Niklaas Wynkoop".....Common
- ☐ Red Thorfeld.....Rare
- ☐ Yr Hägin Brønsson.....Uncommon

Ships

- ☐ The Falcon's Roost.....
- ☐ Freedom's Key.....
- ☐ Die Seevogel.....Rare
- ☐ The Dolphin.....Rare
- ☐ The Invictus.....Rare

Captains

- ☐ Jeremiah Berek.....
- ☐ Ernesto Castillus.....

“Montiagne nationals, most of them. They changed ships the instant a new admiral was named.”

“Anyone left?”

“More than a few, which surprises me.” The General stared philosophically into his wine. “Apparently, they think more of me than I do them.”

Silence fell again. Metzger watched him unblinking, waiting for the other shoe to drop.

“I’m going to betray them,” the General said at last.

“Betray them? Why?”

“Money of course.” He patted the box, “There are enough Guilder notes in here to live on for the rest of my life. All I have to do is turn my crew over to the Castillians. The Inquisition wants a show trial to assuage the populace, and the crew of the infamous General would fit the bill nicely”

Metzger’s jaw tightened.

“In three days,” the General continued. “I will meet with Admiral Orduño and fire a single shot into the air. They will board my vessel and take all hands, leaving me with the boat and a nice stipend in return..”

He laughed again, a sound full of bile and self-loathing. Metzger nodded slowly.

“It doesn’t sound like you’re convinced.”

“As you said, we’re mercenaries. The Castillians currently wish to pay me more than the Montaigne. So I work for them now.”

“And that’s why you’re drinking yourself into a stupor.”

The General’s fist slammed into the bar. “I don’t care a whit about this war, or the countries involved! Whoever pays me the most earns my services.” His voice lowered to a bitter whisper. “I serve the Empereur, a bloated pig of a man whose appetites destroy everything they touch. Or I serve the Inquisition, torch-wielding fanatics who attack everything they don’t understand. Two evils, equally balanced. I therefore should serve the one which rewards me the most.”

Metzger smiled, a sad smile his countrymen were rapidly becoming famous for. “That’s a mercenary’s life, and it has its own honor. But I fear you no longer embrace it the way you once did. Is that a fair assessment of your dilemma?”

A brooding glare answered him.

“I see that money there,” Metzger continued. “That’s a lot of money. If it’s what you want, you should take it with no regrets. I don’t know your crew, but from what you’ve told me, the ones left are loyal to you. If that’s what you want, you should honor them with no regrets. You’re not a Castillian, mein freund, nor a Montaigne. You’re an Eisen. We bend our necks for no one, we call no men our master. Stop thinking about what matters to l’Empereur or the Inquisition. What matters to you?”

The General’s lone eye squeezed shut. “I don’t know.”

“You’ll find out. In three days if not sooner.” Metzger stood and stretched. “Thank you for speaking to me. It was good to talk to a fellow countryman again.”

The blonde man turned and walked out of the bar, leaving the General alone with his thoughts.



Castille: The Lost Files

The following two characters did not make it into the *Castille* sourcebook due to time and space constraints, but both have played a substantial role in Théah's recent history. Here, we present two of the major players in the Montaigne-Castillian war: the butcher of San Juan and the defender of La Muralla al Ultimo ("The Last Wall").

General François Etalon du Toille

François grew up among the proud horse trainers of the city of Entour. He learned to ride before he could talk, and by age thirteen was winning countless prizes for his riding. His prowess led to a natural arrogance, which his family took care to temper with an equal amount of chivalry. He learned that noblemen behaved with honor and civility, even to their lessers, which helped keep his ego in check. Still, he grew up with a tendency to look down his nose at others: everyone looks shorter from the saddle of a horse.

Unlike the rest of his family, who disdained King Léon, François felt a deep affinity for his ruler, and demonstrated his loyalty by joining the military as soon as he came of age. The Étalons' family connections assured his placement in a prestigious cavalry unit and he quickly showed an aptitude for small unit tactics. Unlike many of his fellow officers, he believed that the army was more than just a social

club. He studied the works of ancient Numan generals and paid close attention to developments in the War of the Cross. By the time he finally saw combat, he had a good grasp of military strategy. His wit and intelligence earned him many friends in the upper ranks, which, coupled with his growing command prowess, allowed him to proceed rapidly through the ranks.

He was serving as a colonel in 1665, when Montaigne launched an invasion of ar-torn Eisen. His quick Thinking and bold leadership allowed his unit to secure vast tracts of Eisen territory, earning him a commendation from the King himself. François swelled with pride at the award and expected it to be the first of many. His efforts were thwarted a year later, however, when castillians sent an army to arrest Léon. The invaders easily outmaneuvered Montaigne's army - including François - and only the miracle of Montegue's stand prevented them from taking King Léon into custody. The incident filled the horseman with shame and he vowed to make Castille pay for its arrogance.

He got his chance in 1667. Now-Empereur Léon assigned him to General Montegue's staff, to assist in the invasion of Castille. Montegue had noted the cavalryman's sterling record, and gave him the job of securing the western peninsula. His task became much easier when the Castillian Don, Marcos Ochoa, agreed to betray his territory to him. Ochoa Province lay on the southern border of Montaigne, giving the invaders an instant marshaling ground. During the surrender, however, Don Ochoa seemingly had a change of heart (details can be found in the *Castille* sourcebook, page 72.) He attacked du Toille in a sudden burst while the Montaigne general accepted his surrender, delivering a nasty blow to the head before being overwhelmed by du Toille's attaché.

The wound eventually healed, but du Toille's behavior became much more erratic...some would say mad. His chivalry vanished, to be replaced by

Buried Treasure



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Gerald Hohne



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brutal pragmatism, while his arrogance grew even larger than it was before. He advanced resolutely down the western peninsula, slaughtering all those who resisted him. His aides noticed the change, but never spoke of it, fearing his wrath. It was clear, however, that the blow had deeply unbalanced him. Following the Battle of San Juan, he had an entire township massacred, burning them alive in their central plaza (see *Castille*, page 23.) The act sealed his reputation as a bloody butcher and erased years of honorable service in a single blow. He was finally stopped at La Muralla al Ultima, when General Jose Montoya repelled his troops from the ramparts. The defeat sent him into a murderous rage, which he has yet to fully recover from. He now sees General Montoya as his personal nemesis, and has vowed to complete his conquest of the western peninsula as soon as the snows of winter thaw.

Du Toille is a thin man, with a long-pointed nose and a clean-shaven face. He wears his uniform with obvious pride, and the extensive medals and ribbons speak to more than noble vanity. Don Ochoa's sword blow left a nasty scar on the side of his skull, which he covers with a powdered wig. He speaks loudly and has little time for pleasantries. The chivalrous polite man he was once vanished beneath his wound, replaced by an arrogant beast. He seems convinced that the Castellians cannot possibly stop him, and throws fits of rage whenever his battle plans fail. The defeat at La Muralla al Ultimo still gnaws at him. Were Montegue still commanding the Castellian war, he would have relieved him long ago, but the current commanders are too busy on the eastern front to be bothered. Francois currently plans to launch an assault on San Augustin, destroying the city's stubborn Castellian garrison once and for all. The bloodshed promises to be horrible.

General François Etalon du Toille (Villain)

Brawn 2, Finesse 4, Wits 3, Resolve 3, Panache 4

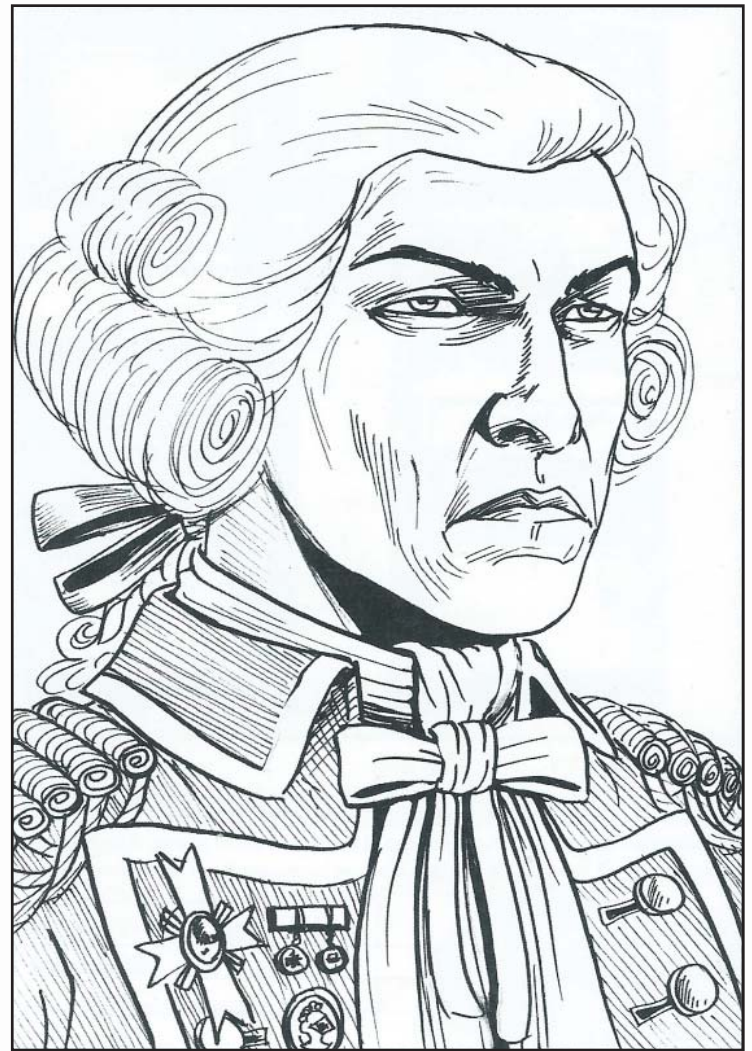
Reputation: -37

Background: None

Arcana: Arrogant

Advantages: Castille, Montaigne (R/W), Théan (R/W), Academy, Connections, Commission, Membership (Swordsman's Guild), Noble

Courtier: Dancing 2, Diplomacy 4, Etiquette 4, Fashion 3, Oratory 4, Politics 3



Valroux (Journeyman): Double-parry (Fencing/Knife) 4, Feint (Fencing), Tagging (Fencing) 5, Exploit Weakness (Valroux) 4

Commander: Artillery 2, Cartography 3, Gunnery 2, Incitation 3, Leadership 5, Logistics 4, Strategy 3, Tactics 3

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 4, Parry (Fencing) 3

Knife: Attack (Knife) 3, Parry (Knife) 2

Polearm: Attack (Polearm) 4, Parry (Polearm) 4, Set Defense 3

Rider: Animal Training 4, Mounting 4, Ride 5, Trick Riding 5

General Jose Rioja de Montoya del Castillo

Like most heroes, General Montoya never anticipated greatness. He lived according to the tenets of the Vaticine Church and obeyed his parents the way the Prophets told him to. He joined the army like his family wanted and spent an honorable, but undistinguished career hunting bandits in the mountains of Rancho Gallegos. His actions earned him command of a quiet garrison in southern Torres, where he mostly studied books by the seashore. He accepted his quiet, comfortable life and never yearned for anything more.

Then the war came. No one anticipated Don Ochoa's sudden betrayal, the Montaigne's General Montegue moved swiftly to capitalize on the advantage. He cut the western peninsula off from Vaticine City and left the large bulk of Castillian forces trapped in Torres province...with Montoya in command. Luckily for him, he didn't have to face Montegue himself. The brilliant Montaigne general had turned east towards

Vaticine City, leaving the still-capable, but less imposing General du Toille to destroy Montoya's forces. The Castillian quickly realized that Rancho Torres was lost, and that he needed time to secure a proper defense. He quickly put his bandit-hunting experiences to use, scattering his army into skirmish units and fighting a protracted guerilla war against the invaders. His strategy was able to delay the Montaigne advance while keeping the majority of his own forces intact.

Meanwhile, he ordered the construction of a defensive line just south of the city of San Augustin. The result stretched from the coast of La Boca west to the Frothing Sea – an unbroken wall of do-or-die stand. Thanks to his careful retreat, he had enough men to man the barricades, and his tactics allowed them to finally stop du Toille's advance at the battle of La Muralla al Ultimo (see *Castille*, pages 6-8 and 25.) The Montaigne have since been unable to proceed, and Montoya has been hailed a hero.



He know it won't last, however. Now ensconced behind La Muralla, he fights a bloody stalemate to prevent du Toille's forces from advancing, but the Montaigne still outnumber him, and while La Muralla is a formidable defense, it cannot stand forever. The Montaigne have blockaded the peninsula, and without reinforcements, it's only a matter of time before his army runs out of supplies. They currently hold the two southernmost provinces of Rancho Zepeda – the only parts of the province that Montaigne doesn't control. With the men at his disposal, Montoya can make things quite ugly for the invaders, but he knows that he cannot win a battle of attrition. He has accepted his fate, put his faith in Theus, and plans to make the Montaigne pay for every yard of territory they take.

Montoya is a plain, unassuming man with a wide face and heavy eyes. In peacetime, he was friendly and very open; that has since been replaced with grim pragmatism. He let his beard grow long before the war and hasn't had time to shave it properly. He speaks softly and plainly with the hard-earned wisdom of a life-long soldier. Though nobly-educated, he speaks bluntly and to the point. He knows how to motivate his men and doesn't waste time with social niceties. His only wish now is to die a good death, and perhaps allow Castille to finally defeat her hated enemy.

General Jose Rioja de Montoya (Hero)

Brawn 3, Finesse 2, Wits 4, Resolve 4, Panache 2

Reputation: 45

Background: none

Aracna: Commanding

Advantages: Castillian (R/W), Montaigne, Castillian Education, Citation, Commission, Membership (Swordsman's Guild), Noble

Courtier: Dancing 1, Etiquette 1, Fashion 1, Oratory 3, Politics 2

Hunter: Ambush 4, Skinning 2, Stealth 4, Survival 2, Tracking 4

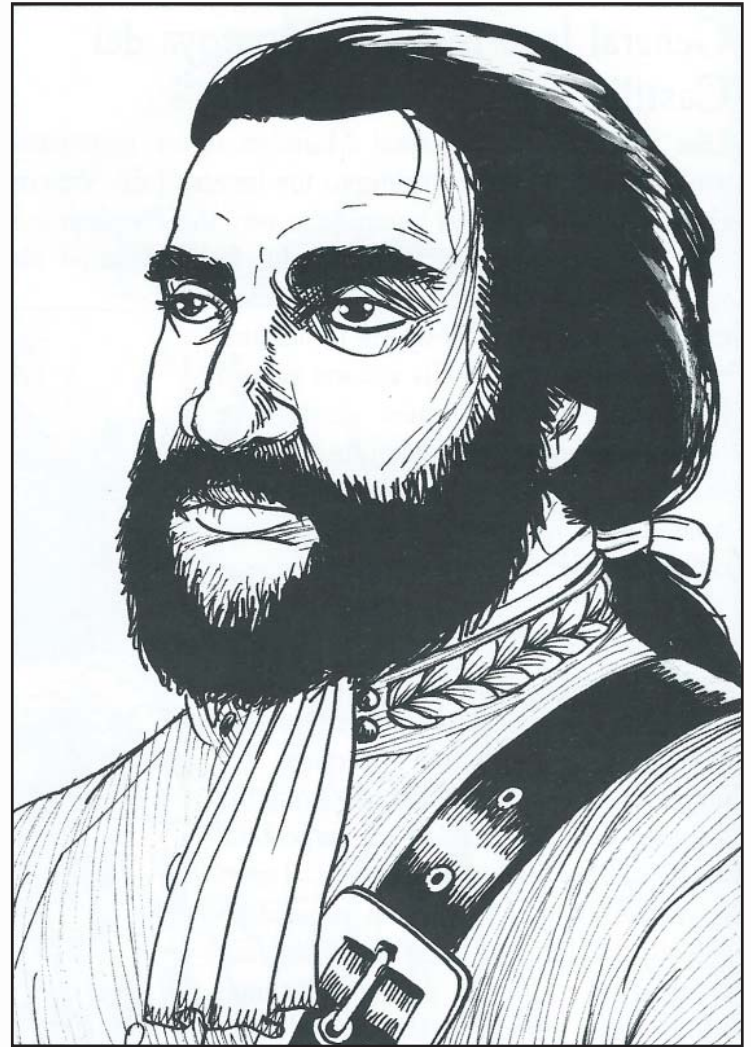
Scholar: Astronomy 1, History 2, Law 2, Mathematics 2, Philosophy 1, Research 2, Theology 2

Aldana (Journeyman): Feint (Fencing) 4, Riposté (Fencing) 4, Tagging (Fencing) 4, Exploit Weakness (Aldana) 4

Commander: Artillery 3, Cartography 3, Gunnery 2, Incitation 4, Leadership 4, Logistics 4, Strategy 4, Tactics 4

Fencing: Attack (Fencing) 5, Parry (Fencing) 4

Firearms: Attack (Firearms) 4, Reload (Firearms) 3



Making the Most of Your Crew

by Erik Yaple

Explaining Crew Advantage

7th Sea is a game about Crew Advantage. Meaning in 7th Sea, you want to have more on the table than your opponent has on the table. Ratios also play a big part in controlling the Seas of Théah. Before we continue, you should note that by Crew Advantage, we are talking about “effective” Crew. This means anything that is used instead of a Crew or anything that prevents an opponent’s Crew from being used. As we go on you will see what I mean.

When the game was initially introduced, Cannoning was seen as overpowered. Players intuitively saw that if they could tack all of their opponent’s Crew with one of their Crew (stacked on-top of several Cannon-based Adventures) that they could win the game most easily; all they had to look for was the right time to strike. As players accumulated more cards (along with more Betrayals) and with the release of expansion sets, Boarding became more of an options. Players that once scoffed at Boarding soon came to realize that, although a Boarding attempt was easy to cancel, they were essentially taking one of their Topmen for one of their opponent’s Topmen, a trade that would occur later

in the Boarding. During this time, players began setting up their tacking Ratios, whether they were one for two or seven for eight, by either having more Crew than their opponent or using Action cards that increase the number of hits delivered during the Boarding.

One of the more underrated card types in 7th Sea are the adventure. Adventures are slower to attach than Attachments, and they generally cost Adventuring to complete. When you look at them, they do not generally do anything, except increase skills, but Adventures allow you to increase skills that can assist you in setting up your tacking Ratios. When you consider that the average Crew on a Ship has a Swashbuckling of 2 and the average Crew can absorb about three hits (give or take one,) then it becomes obvious that if you hit a Ship with a four- or five-hit Cannon Attack, that he will probably have to tack two Crew or tack and sink a Crew. If you



perform a Boarding Attack that inflicts four to five hits, the Crew opposing your Crew will either, end up sinking or tacking multiple Crew to absorb those hits (given the attack is unopposed by action cards.) Those extra hits provided by a Boarding Attack can really add up. Adventures will also allow you to pay those costs that have been designed to cost you two Crew, with only one Crew, such as more expensive Artifact Adventures or expensive Action Cards.

Action cards are a great way to achieve a one-turn Crew Advantage and possibly achieve a multi-turn Crew Advantage. Instantly there are three cards that come to mind: Quick Tack, Last Second Escape, and everyone's favorite: Betrayal. Quick Tack may be one of the best examples as to how a card can give you a Crew Advantage. Say your opponent targets you

with a 1-Hit cannon attack. Essentially what he is attempting to do, is get you to tack one of your Crew (a one-for-one trade,) in (attempting to get you to sink one of those tacked Crew) or stalling the game out to buy himself some more time. When you play a Quick Tack to negate an entire Cannon Attack, you have essentially tacked on of your opponent's Crew (or un-tacked one of your own Crew, depending on how you look at it.) A Card like Last Second Escape, allows you opponent to cancel the card, which means that he is tacking his Topman to inflict the hits or start the Boarding, basically the tacking Ratio is moving towards your advantage. You are also getting him to give up a move to continue his attack, whether he pays the cancel cost or just chases you down. This is rather huge when you consider that movement is the most powerful element in the game. Movement allows you to control the tempo of the game. When you have a movement advantage, when you get to control when Cannon Attacks will be exchanged and when, if eve your opponent will be allowed to Board your Ship. It is in this way that your ship can act as an additional Crew, during play. Betrayal may be the master of the Crew advantage Action cards. First off, if you have not seen the advantage in playing with the Adventures that give your Crew an additional three Sailing, Action cards like Betrayal and Better Part of Valor are the reason. So let's say your opponent hits you with a one-hit Cannon Attack and you tack your Crew with one Sailing Adventure Sailing to pay for the Betrayal. Your opponent must now tack another Crew or sink a Crew. Betrayal has allowed you to trade one of your Crew for one of his Crew, but who Betrayals a one-hit Cannon Attack? When used to prevent the tacking of two or three crew and forcing your opponent to tack to or three more Crew, you have just traded one crew for three to five Crew of your opponent's. Now that will create a Crew Advantage.

In my humble opinion, Attachments may be the best way to increase your Crew Advantage, without Crew. Everyone sees the advantage in playing with



Hammocks. They let you have two more Crew on your Ship; everyone knows that. But there are cards out there that will allow you to tack one of your opponent's Crew and draw three cards. Pistols, Muskets, and Aspreys allow you to deliver Hits to your opponent while looking through your deck for those cards that you need. Grappling Guns are rather effective as well. Cards like Grappling Cannons allow you to enter a Boarding when you do not have decisive Crew Advantage, to deliver some damage and to get cards into your hand. The Cheap cards, which discard to produce an effect, play much like an Action card (giving you a Crew advantage for one turn,) but have the additional advantage of remaining in play until used (that way they do not sit in your hand, clogging things up.) Cards like Waylaid and Here There Be Monsters provide a Crew advantage while in those Seas. If you have formed a strategy around turtling (remaining in one or two Seas throughout the game) then these cards can prove useful. The trick is to move your opponent's Ship into the Seas where you have laid these mines. Allies also prove to be very useful in the same way, and their mobility provide offensive options that the other Se Attachments do not have.

Even small Ships can end up with an effective Crew over fifteen, if the player is attentive to the cards that he includes in his deck. When I build a deck, I consider how each card will affect my Crew Maximum. The basic concept of 7th Sea is: "Who has the most at any given point during the game?" Therefore you want to get the most out of what you have got on the table. Be mindful of the cards you include and keep that deck lean, and the Seas will soon belong to you and your Captain.



Gencon Storyline

by Rob Vaux

"Destroy it," Gosse ordered his gunners. "I want it brought down into the sea."

"Captain?!" Discher looked over with surprise. "The Spear of the West Wind –"

"Could give us control of the Trade Sea, I know. I don't care." He turned away from the island, where the impossibly tall stone spire rose far above them. Vesten runes glowed on its surface and the kneeling of the nearby sirens couldn't cover the low hum which emanated from the island.

"Necros used this to kill Thomas," Gosse continued, his fists clenching in frustration. "And he'll do it again."

"But we've come so far," Discher argued. "Overcome so many obstacles to get here."

"Do you think we can hold this island against a ship of the dead? Do you want to stay here and find out? That's just what he wants. He'll wait for me to leave part of my crew behind – to divide my forces in an effort to hold the Spear's power – and then devour them."

He leaned over and grasped the gunner by the shoulders.

"I know this man," he hissed. "Even in undeath, I know how he thinks. He wants us jumping through his hoops, he wants us to play by his rules. The only way we're going to beat him is if we change the rules – starting now."

Discher opened his mouth to protest again, then fell silent when he saw the steel behind his captain's eyes.

"Destroy it," Gosse barked. "Down to the rubble."

"Aye-aye, sir."

The results of the Gen Con tournament are in and Philip Gosse's Crew triumphed in the hard fought contest. At stake was the Spear of the West Wind, and island reservoir of Lørdom energy, which gave whoever controlled it uncontested power over the wind and waves. Gosse had long sought the Spear, but not for the reasons so many other crews did. He believed that the island had been corrupted by the Black Freighter: that the undead Captain Necros had used it to kill Gosse's nephew, Thomas. He swore that he would keep the Spear out of his old enemy's hands.

It wasn't easy. At first, they attempted to follow a map drawn by the Explorer known as Foul Weather Jack. But the map was in pieces and difficult to find; Necros himself destroyed a vital piece before Gosse's crew could locate it. In desperation, they turned to a sinister scholar – a dark expert of the occult known only as Maximilian. He told them of an artifact called the Eye of Reason, which had the ability to lead them to the Spear. All they had to do was find it...

Led by Maximilian's clues, Gosse managed to locate to Eye's hiding place, in an ancient Syrnych site on a distant island far to the west. He and his crewman Mabela ventured into the forbidding ruins, only to find that Necros had laid a trap for them: a company

of undead, eager to add the gentleman pirate to their ranks. Thanks to Gosse's courage and Mabela's mysterious loa magic, they were able to thwart Necros' ambush and claim the Eye.

In the meantime, other crews had learned of the Spear and, thinking it a Vesten weapon, began a furious search. Following the Eye to the Trade Sea, Gosse and his crew had to contend with numerous brigands and fortune-hunters- some serving foreign crowns, some serving only themselves. They sent several crews to the bottom before finally locating their prize, and had to contend with numerous sirens as well, for the infernal beasts seemed to infest the seas around the isle. At last, they reached the shore of the isle and seized control of the Spear...only to destroy it on Gosse's orders. The captain knew that Necros would eventually return for the artifact, and he did not wish to place his crew in such mortal peril. Better to destroy the Spear, to deny his enemy such an earth-shattering power and face the Black Freighter on something resembling equal terms.

The winner of the tournament, Remi Silverman, decided to destroy his prize. The results of the tournament appear in the latest *7th Sea* release, *Fate's Debt*.

