

Die Erben von Hoax

Die Erben von Hoax

Translation by: Frank Branham (moo@neonate.org)

Version 11/26/99

[This one is going to be a bit of a can of worms, as I suspect that many people have been playing Hoax by various House rules. These German rules go rather further in explaining details of when you can use the powers. (The original English game was pretty vague). Which means that this translation will become a repository for house rules. Check www.neonate.org for the latest version]

Before the first game:

Die Erben von Hoax is a player interaction game that will confuse first time players. Make sure to play your first game as a test game. Discuss the various game situations during the test game and make sure that every player understands the rules and their implications.

Background

The Kingdom of Hoax is very small and lives constantly in danger of invasion from larger kingdoms. To make sure the king of Hoax is very powerful, the kingship passes (not to the eldest son) to the richest and most devious of the children of the king. You play one of those potential heirs, who play a game of Hoax on the eve of the King's death. The winner gets the throne.

Bits:

14 Identity cards with a question mark (2 each of 7 kinds)

7 Accusation cards with exclamation marks (1 each of 7 kinds)

8 summary cards

8 point markers

60 chips (20 each of wine, gold, and grain)

1 Coronation card

Glossary:

Hoax: The title of an American game from 1981.

Identity: Each player receives one identity card per round. He tries to keep this a secret. It should be placed face down before him so that there is no chance of another player viewing it. As there are two identity cards of each type, more than one player could have the same identity.

If a player is shown to not possess a certain identity, he must cover the spot on the back of his identity card using the backs of one of the commodity chips.

Summary card: Shows the identities in the game. You also keep track of your Throne points on the right side.

Reserve: A player collects wine, gold, and grain. The object is to form trios with these. A player's reserve is always openly visible. Only Trios may be stacked.

Trio: A stack of each of the 3 supplies. Trios are immune to all powers, and may only be spent by the player owning the Trio.

Throne Points: Whoever gets 10 Throne points wins the game.

The winner of an Accusation 1 Throne point (with an exception-see 3.9) 3 Throne points go to a player who is incorrectly doubted. 3 Points go to a player winning a showdown at the end of a round, and 1 point goes to the loser of a showdown.

1. The Game

1.1 Object is to become king by reaching 10 Throne points in several game rounds.

1.2 Game Course

In each round, a player receives an Identity card. Players then take turns. Each player executes on his turn an action. Other players may then execute some sort of reaction to his action. The object of all the actions is usually to collect Trios which can be used to buy information about the other players' Identities.

Once all actions and reactions are dealt with, it is the next player's turn.

Once a player is forced to reveal his identity, he is out of the round. The round continues until only two players are left (in which case they immediately have a showdown). Identity cards are reshuffled and dealt out and the next round is begun. First player to 10 Throne points wins.

2. Setup:

1. The Accusation cards and the bank are placed in the center of the table.
2. Each player takes a Summary card and marks his 0 Throne Points with his token.
3. Each player receives a random Identity card, which he looks at then places facedown before himself.
4. Each player chooses one identity NOT on his card, and marks that he is not that character by placing a spare supply chip on the back of this card.
5. Each player takes one supply chip of any type from the bank.

3. Actions

The player whose turn it is selects one action. This may be a personal (tied to one character) or a general action. Possible actions are shown on the Summary card.

When a player chooses a personal action, he assumes the identity of that character, and chooses that action. A player may only choose from identities that are not covered on the back of his card. (The heads on the back of the card are in the same pattern as they are listed on the Summary Card.)

Personal Actions:

3.1 "I am the Baron"

A: Take 2 gold from the Bank.

or

B: Levy taxes. The Baron names a supply, and each player must give him one of that Supply. The Magician is immune, and supplies may not be taxed if they are in a Trio.

3.2 "I am the Monk"

A: Take 2 wine from the Bank.

or

B: Take up a collection. Each player (save for Magicians and those with only Trios) must give the Monk 1 Supply chip of any sort (chosen by the player giving the donation)

3.3 "I am the Judge"

A: Take a barrel of wine from the Bank.

or

B: Take a sack of grain from the Bank.

3.4 "I am the Merchant"

A: Take a pouch of gold from the Bank

or

B: Exchange chips with other players or the Bank. He may take his own chips and swap them with chips in the bank or with the free chips of other players. Players who are Magicians or have only Trios are immune. Otherwise, the other players have no say as to which chips get swapped.

3.5 "I am the Magician"

A: Bewitch a player. That player must give the Magician all supply chips that are not in Trios. Magicians are immune.

3.6 "I am the Thief"

A: Steal 1 or 2 chips. The Thief takes 1 or 2 chips on one type from the reserve of another player. This power MAY dissolve a Trio. There is no defense against the Thief.

Example: Gaby has 1 Trio and 1 Wine in front of her. Gregor is the thief and steals 2 Wine. This breaks up her Trio, leaving her with 1 Grain and 1 Gold.

3.7 "I am the Farmer"

A: Take two grain from the bank.

General Actions:

3.8 "I buy information on (player)"

This action can be used to spend Trios to buy info about the identities of other players. He pays a Trio back to the bank and hands the other player the Accusation stack. That player must choose an identity that he is not, and hands it to the player who bought the information.

The player looks at the card secretly, then mixes it back into the stack.

The player who is revealing information cannot choose one of the identities which he has already been proven not to be. (One that is marked on his card.) The same player may also not be shown the same Accusation card twice.

The player buying information may put in several Trios, in which case that many different cards must be shown.

3.9 "I Accuse (player)"

The player tries to remove another from the round by showing his identity. If he is wrong, however, he drops out of the round.

The accuser takes the accusation cards, puts the card that he thinks is his target's identity on top of the stack, and hands the stack to his target. The player looks at the card and answers merely "correct" or "wrong."

If the accusation is correct, the Accused is out of the round and the Accuser scores 1 Throne Point and takes the supplies (including Trios) of the Accused.

If the accusation is wrong, the Accuser is out of the round. The Accused gains 1 Throne Point and the supplies of the Accuser.

In both cases, the actual identity of either player is not revealed. It remains untouched until the end of the round.

4. Reactions

When a player performs an action, many characters may choose a reaction which they may perform. All reactions are shown on the Summary card. Actions on the card framed by asterisks (*Questions*) may be avoided by the Magician.

Each player may only choose one Reaction per player turn.

4.1 "As the Baron, I declare this illegal"

With this, the Baron declares an action Illegal, allowing for a Judgement. The action, however, is not taken back.

Comments:

1. No Reaction may be declared illegal.
2. One cannot declare their own action illegal.
3. The same action may be declared illegal by several barons.

4.2 "As the Judge, I condemn you to a payment of (one or two) (a type of Supply chip)"

The player must pay the listed penalty to the Judge. If two chips are mentioned, the second chip is paid to the Baron that has called the action as illegal. Trios are safe against the penalty, and the Magician is safe from penalty.

Comments:

1. One cannot condemn himself.
2. Someone who has declared themselves a baron may not condemn another.
3. The judge may never set a penalty that cannot be paid by the guilty.
4. The guilty may be condemned by several judges. But he only pays one fine. The guilty player chooses which he will pay.
5. If multiple Barons declared the action guilty, the Judge chooses which Baron to share the fine with.

Example: Petra (as Farmer) takes 2 grain. Gregor (as Baron) declares the action illegal. Christian (as Judge) orders Petra to pay a fine of 2 grain. Tom (as Judge) condemns Petra to pay 1 Wine. Petra now has the choice of paying 2 grain, 1 wine, or declaring himself a Magician. If Christian receives 2 grain, he must give one of them to Gregor as the Baron's part of the fine.

4.3 "As Monk I grant a reprieve for a (supply)"

This enables a guilty player condemned by the judge to pay the monk a tithe instead of paying the judge. Trios may be broken up by a tithe, but it is the player's choice to give to the monk.

Comments:

1. Judges and Barons may not offer a reprieve.
2. Several players may offer reprieves. The player chooses which reprieve to accept and pays only one.

Example 2: Gaby decides to offer a reprieve to Petra for 1 grain. Sylvia offers a reprieve for 1 wine. Petra now has 5 possibilities: (2 penalties, 2 tithes, or declare the Magician)

4.4 "As Magician, I am immune"

The player is protected from a baron's taxations, from collection of the Monk, from the Judge's fines, trades of a Merchant, and being Bewitched by another Magician.

[Translator's Comment]

(We always played in the original that a player who claims to be the Magician as a reaction may not be the Judge, Baron, or Monk. The rules here do not mention this.)

Example 3: Petra decides to be the Magician and pays nothing.

4.5 "You are not the (identity)"

When a player claims to be an identity, any player may express a doubt. The game is immediately halted to determine the outcome of the doubt.

Each player in turn votes on whether they think the doubt is correct. If at least half of the players still in the game support the doubt, then continue. If not enough support the doubt, then the doubt ends.

If the doubt is voted in, the Accused must reveal whether or not the doubt was correct.

If the doubt is correct, the Accused marks his card to indicate that he is not that character, and may no longer use that power. The action or reaction that caused the doubt is not used.

If the doubt was wrong, the Accused flips his identity card. He is out of the round, but scores 3 Throne Points. The action still happens, however. All of the supply chips of that player are returned to the bank.

[Translator's Note: Our house rule was that if you had been doubted to be one identity, you did not get to claim to be a different identity as a reaction in the same turn. The only time you could claim a second identity is on your turn if your initial action is doubted.]

Example 4:

Christian looks at Petra and says "You are not the Magician!" Sylvia and Tom support the doubt in the vote. Since 3 of 6 players believe the doubt. Petra is not the Magician, and places a chip on her Identity card.

5. End of a Turn

Once all actions and reactions are dealt with, the next player takes his turn.

As soon as the next player takes his action, reactions are only allowed on the new game turn.

Comment: If a player wants to start his turn, and notices that players are still thinking, he should give the other players a brief moment. If they are waiting too long, he may just take his turn and keep the game moving.

6. Trios

As soon as a player has a set of each of the three ingredients, he stacks them to form a Trio. A player may do this immediately after his action so the new Trio is safe from a Penalty.

Example: Christian steals as a Thief 2 grain. He had a gold and a wine already, and so builds one Trio. Thus any judgement against him can only take the leftover grain.

7. Showdown

At the end of a player turn when only two players remain, there is a showdown. The winner of a showdown gets 3 Throne Points, the loser gets 1 Throne Point.

At the start of a showdown, both players cover all of the identities that they have shown to their opponent. If a player buys information during a showdown, then an extra space is covered as usual.

In the showdown, each player takes turns doubting one identity of the other. Or he may make an Accusation. A player who wins the showdown with an Accusation receives 1 extra Throne Point for victory with an Accusation.

8. New Game Round

After the Showdown, identity cards are revealed (so that cheaters may be formally executed) then are shuffled. One is dealt anew to each player. All supplies are returned to the bank, and one Supply chip is taken by each player. The winner of the last showdown starts the new round.

9. End

As soon as a player reaches 10 points, the game ends. If this is in the middle of a round, the game ends immediately.

Comment: You may not win the game by losing a finale, or being incorrectly accused.

10. The coronation

The winner of the game chooses a player who must solemnly crown the winner with the the line "Long live the king of Hoax"

11. Further comments

Doubts: Doubts are good because it gives player fewer actions, and makes a successful Accusation more likely.

Doubting wrongly gives the victim 3 points. Players who play this game awhile can start to look at the personalities of their opponents, and make guesses similar to Poker.

Open Information: If both Identity cards of one type are revealed, the remaining players must cover that spot on their card.

Supply chips: With 7 or 8 players, you may run short on chips, and have to use the 8 smaller black chips to cover cards.

Worn cards: If the cards start to wear, place them under the summary cards, and cover the places on the summary cards with chips.

12. Variants:

Comment: Testers seemed to like rules 3 and 4 from the original.

12.1 The Original Hoax

1. In Hoax there is no Merchant. Remove him from the game.

2. In Hoax there are no Throne Points. The winner of a game is the first player who is doubted incorrectly, or the last player in the game.

3. Accusations may be made outside a player's turn.

4. Buying information may only be done on a player's turn. However this may be done in addition to a personal action.

5. If a doubt is successful, the Identity is not covered with a marker. Everyone has to remember what the doubt was.

6. One may use all reactions each turn. That is, a player may be the Baron and declare an action illegal, then as the Judge cause a penalty.

Comment: These make a game end much more quickly, and make doubting someone MUCH more important.

12.2 Stronger doubts

Instead of needing half of the current players to support a doubt, require all active players to vote positively to support the doubt. That way if a doubt is wrong, at least everyone is responsible.

12.3 Two identities

With a few players (3 or 4) there are few identities

Some extra rules can be used:

1. If a player is doubted incorrectly, he only gets 2 points, and receives another identity card to continue the round.

2. If he is again doubted incorrectly, he gets 3 points, and is out of the round.

12.4 Playing with lots of players

If you have 2 games, you can play with up to 14 players.

1. Use only one Identity deck. The other should be split into halves to form extra Accusation decks for quick access.

2. Start the round with 2 supply chips

3. Per trio you can buy two identities

4. 4 points are given out per incorrect doubt

5. Everyone start with 2 to 5 Throne points

6. Reactions 4.1 - 4.3 may be omitted

7. Use the 3 and 4 variants from the original.

12.5 Hoax with betting

Each throne point gets a value (10 cents, 1 Gummy Bear, 1 Euro...) Everyone must add 10 points worth of stuff to the pot. At the end, each player gets his Throne points worth from the pot. The rest goes to the new King.

12.6 Hoax as a drinking game

Players drink when:

- a game begins = All drink to the dead king
- a doubt is successful = Those who voted for it must drink
- a doubt fails = Those who voted against it must drink
- correct Accusation = The Accused must drink
- wrong accusation = The Accuser must drink
- a round ends = Drink to the winner of the round
- the game ends = All drinks on the new king!