

GOLD OF THE AMERICAS

Strategic Studies Group (SSG)

1. AN OVERVIEW

In Gold of the Americas you play one of the four great colonial powers involved in the exploration and colonization of the New World. These were Spain, Portugal, England and France. Your job is to explore and colonize as much of the New World as possible for the greater glory of your Country and your King.

You have many enemies, and no friends. Your expeditions can be lost without trace, hostile natives or disease can wipe out your struggling colonies, privateers can loot your trading ships and of course the other players can launch raids and invasions against your territories. Worse still, any money that you manage to wrest from this harsh environment is likely to be swallowed by a greedy King, whose tax rates are nothing less than extortionate.

However, there are compensations. Some activities put money directly into a special, privately maintained slush fund that is normally exempt from the tax-man's evil scrutiny. And if you are struggling with budgetary problems, you can always take it from other players with the aforementioned privateers, raids and invasions. Lastly, it is sometimes possible to manipulate the public purse. See Chapter 7 for tips on tax effective financing.

Ultimately, success is measured by the development of your colonies. You have 30 turns (that's 300 years!) to establish your supremacy in the New World.

2. TUTORIAL

2.1 How to Get Started

Read Chapter 2 (above) of this book which gives an overview of the game.

Read the computer specific notes for setting up and starting a game.

2.2 Controlling the Game

Depending on your computer, the game may be controlled by mouse only, mouse and keyboard, or keyboard only. This manual is written for both mouse and keyboard users.

2.3 Choosing Options

After the game has loaded you will be presented with a divided screen; the left hand side containing a map of the New World and the right containing the File Menu. The File Menu is divided into three parts. The first section contains file functions such as save and load game. Ignore this for

the moment.

Using the arrow keys (or the mouse) move the cursor bar into the Set Options section of the menu. Locate the bar over "New World" and hit ENTER or click with the mouse. The word HISTORICAL will change to RANDOM. Hit ENTER again and it changes back to HISTORICAL. "New World" and "Europe" are settings for the type of game. For this tutorial, leave both as HISTORICAL. "Sound" toggles on and off in the same manner, depending on whether you wish to have sound effects during the game.

The Set Players section of the menu has the names of the four players (Spain, Portugal, France and England), each followed by the word HUMAN. Move the cursor bar to "Spain" and hit ENTER. The word HUMAN will change to NOVICE. Hit return again and NOVICE will become NORMAL. Hit it a third time for EXPERT and again to return to HUMAN. NOVICE, NORMAL and EXPERT refer to the ratings of your computer opponents. For this tutorial set Spain to HUMAN (this is you!) and Portugal, France and England to NOVICE.

Return the cursor bar to "Play" and hit ENTER, or hit ESC at any point to proceed to the game. The computer will indicate that it is initializing the game and the map will adjust so that all areas except Newfoundland, the West Indies and Bahia(in South America) are in grey. These three areas are coloured green and brown, indicating that they have already been explored. (Monochrome screens will naturally have different shadings to represent different colors in the game).

The right hand screen will now contain the Inter-turn menu which has portraits of all four players and a picture of a book marked "File". Spain will be highlighted. Hit ENTER, or click on Spain, to start your first turn.

2.4 The First Turn

The right hand screen now contains the information with which you begin a turn. Your player portrait is in the top left corner. Top right is the turn number (1), the date (1501-1510 AD) and the action you are about to undertake (give "Orders"). In the centre of the screen is a list of those players with whom you are at war and with whom you are allied - none in each case at the moment. The lower screen contains the current victory status for each player (number of colonies and levels thereof), your Treasury and your Secret Funds and the amount of money in each. Do not worry about the difference between these two yet. You can spend money from either or both. Hit ESC or click the mouse on the "Continue" button (bottom left screen) to continue.

2.4.1 Acquisitions

The right hand screen is now divided into two horizontal sections, the upper containing graphs and icons, the lower containing the Treasury and Secret Funds. From left to right the row of icons in the centre represent Armies, Colonists, Trading Ships, Warships, Privateers, Slaves and Explorers. Use the left and right arrow keys to move along the icon menu, or use the mouse to click on the chosen menu. As you move, the line below the menu indicates the action to be performed and the cost.

Above each icon, except Explorers, is a bar graph. Each block filled in green indicates an item provided free by your European government. You should have three or four free armies, two or three colonists, and perhaps a warship. Above the green blocks are a series of cyan-coloured blocks. These represent the items available for purchase which you can afford.

Move to "Recruit Colonist" and hit "+" or ENTER. The cyan block will turn blue, indicating that you have purchased one colonist. Your treasury will have diminished by the relevant amount and the cyan blocks will have adjusted to show what is still available. Move to "Raise Army" and repeat the process. To change your mind about any purchase, hit "-" or BACKSPACE. With the mouse, click on a cyan block to purchase an item, or on a blue block to change your mind.

The green squares with yellow stars above the Explorer icon (far right) indicate the Explorers available for the turn.

Move to the Explorer icon and hit ENTER for full details.

Hit ESC or click on the Continue button to proceed.

2.4.2 Placing Items on the Map

The right hand screen is now divided into four parts. In the centre is the same icon menu as before and below each icon is the total number of that item available. Top right is a list of your available explorers, currently Pinzon and Ojeda. To the left is a picture illustrating the current icon, initially set to armies. The lower part of the screen, hereafter referred to as the information box, contains information on the highlighted (current) province, initially the West Indies.

To examine the individual provinces use the numeric pad with the Num Lock on to move around (turn the Num Lock off to return control to the menu). Alternatively, TAB and Shift-TAB will move the cursor around all those provinces in which the current menu item might validly be placed. Mouse users simply click on the relevant province. The information box will display what is known about the province. At the

beginning of the game this is usually just a name and the word "UNEXPLORED".

Return the map cursor to the West Indies where we will start our first colony. Move the menu cursor until it is over Colonists (second icon from the left) and hit ENTER or '+'. A colonist icon will appear in the information box and the number of colonists will diminish by one. On the map, a picture of a rude hut will appear, indicating that you are starting a colony. Place all the colonists in this province. As it is possible that the locals may be unfriendly, place two armies in the same manner. Mouse-users may place an item by dragging (click on the icon, hold down the button, drag the cursor to its destination, and release) it into the information box. To change your mind about placing an item, hit '-' or BACKSPACE, or click on the icon in the information box that you wish to remove.

Select the Explorer Icon from the icon menu and then locate the province of Yucatan (in Central America) by using the TAB keys or clicking on it with the mouse. Place an explorer in Yucatan. This will be Ojeda, and the highlighting in the top-right explorer box will change to highlight Pinzon. Put any remaining soldiers you have with Ojeda. Pinzon is pretty useless but place him in Louisiana. He might get lucky.

If you have a warship place it in the Caribbean with your trading ships. To cycle round the valid seas, make sure the menu cursor is above a ship icon and hit TAB or Shift-TAB. Mouse-users click in the relevant sea area. The information box will show the flags of the four players and will have small icons below to indicate what ships they have in the sea. Initially, only Spanish ships sail the Caribbean. Add and subtract items in the same manner as on land.

Hit ESC or the Continue button to proceed to the next phase.

2.4.3 Colony Management

The upper part of the Colony Management screen contains the title, the player's flag, a list of his colonies (in this case a list of one - the West Indies), together with three icons and corresponding buttons next to the colony name.

The three icons represent the options you have in managing a colony; Exploit (put the "Boot" in), Develop (the Graph), Placate (the gold coins) or do nothing. They do roughly what they say. Exploit puts the boot into the natives and forces them to over-produce. The surplus goes into your Secret Funds. If a province has no local inhabitants and you wish to exploit it you should import slaves as colonists do not like being exploited. Develop costs you money but increases the chances of the colony level going up (with a consequent

increase in production). Placate is a bribe to keep the natives from revolting or (if there are no natives) to maintain the loyalty of your colonists. If you choose exploit, develop or placate, the appropriate icon will appear in the information box. If you don't do anything, no icon will appear in the information box.

You do not have to choose any options, but we want to develop this colony quickly. Use the arrow keys to position the highlighting over the DEVELOP button and press ENTER or click on that button with the mouse. Your choice will appear in the information box at the bottom of the screen.

This is all you have to do here. Hit ESC or the Continue button to continue.

2.5 The Computer Players

The computer players will now have their turns. Their information screen (without Treasury or Secret Funds) will appear on the right hand side. Icons will appear on the map to indicate where they have placed things. When you have finished examining a computer player's move, press ESC or hit the Continue button.

When all the computer players have finished you will be returned to the Inter-turn menu.

2.6 Playing on

Back at the Inter-turn menu, select Spain again. The information screen will appear, this time with the word "Reports" in the top right area. Hit ESC or the Continue button to get these reports. You will receive a series of messages concerning your trading returns, your colony and your explorations.

When you have examined these, an overweight gentleman will appear and demand money from you. This is the tax-man. There is nothing you can do about him. He will take your money.

After this unpleasant little interlude, you will receive messages from Europe, indicating whether any wars have broken out or any alliances have been signed. There is nothing you can do about these either. They affect Raids and Invasions and should be noted carefully.

Continuing on from here will take you back to the "Orders", information screen and back through the cycle. There are 30 turns in all, in which you must secure domination of the New World. Spain gets a great deal of support in the first 10 turns so try and build your empire quickly. After turn 11, things will not be so easy. Good luck! For further information see Chapter 7, How to Win.

3. HOW TO PLAY

Starting a Game

Choose the type of game you wish to play from the startup screen. The choices are Historical or Random for both Europe and the New World. In an Historical game the interest level shown by the home nations and the distribution and expertise of explorers follow historical lines. The locations and situations of provinces also follow history. In the Random Europe game, interest levels start roughly even, and the players write their own history. If Random New World is chosen, all province parameters will be completely different.

Choose the number of human and computer players and the level at which your computer opponents will function (Novice, Normal or Expert).

Starting a Turn

A turn starts by selecting your country from the inter-turn menu. There are two main sections in a turn, Orders and Reports.

3.1 ORDERS

Information

The map of the New World is always shown on the left of the screen. At the start of the game it will mostly be blank.

Colonies are indicated by the flag of the owning country in the province. The information screen to the right shows the turn number and date, your country name, the countries you are at war with and those you are allied with and the state of your Treasury and Secret Funds.

This first screen is for information only. When you are ready hit the Continue button and you will be presented with the Acquisition Phase.

Acquisitions

The top right of the screen shows a series of bar graphs, representing the various items you can buy. The bottom right of the screen shows your Treasury and Secret Funds.

The icons are, reading from the left; Armies, Colonists, Trading Ships, Warships, Privateers, Slaves and Explorers.

The bar graphs show two types of entries for each icon.

Those items provided free by your gracious Monarch appear at the base of each graph while items which can be purchased appear above them. A highlight box surrounds the current icon. You can move the highlight box by using the arrow keys or clicking on a different icon with the mouse.

Purchases are made by clicking on the graph itself inside an available-to-be-purchased box or by hitting the plus key.

The box will change to indicate a purchase, your funds will

be adjusted and the graphs may also be adjusted if your purchasing power is limited. If you want to change your mind, click on an already purchased item on the graph or use the minus key. You cannot un-purchase government provided items and you can never buy extra explorers. All items cost \$500 each.

When you have made your purchases hit the Continue button and you will be in the placement phase.

Placement

This is where you assign the items you were given and/or purchased to various provinces on the map. The icon strip remains but the graph is replaced by a large picture of the current item. As you move the highlight box the picture will change.

Below the icon strip is the current province which is also highlighted on the map. If the province is unexplored you see only the province name. If it is explored you see the name of the province, the name of the local tribe and their numbers and icons for the climate and agriculture of the province.

To select a current province, click on the map with the mouse or use the arrow keys with the Num Lock held down to change the province.

When you have selected the item you wish to place and the destination province, you can click and drag an icon to the province box, and it will appear when you release the mouse button or you can use the plus key to the same effect. To retrieve something you will have to use the minus key or click on the already placed item.

There are a few special cases. Only explorers and their attached armies can be placed in unexplored provinces, and ships can only be sent to ocean areas. Sending explorers to other player's colonies is considered a raid, sending one to your own colony is a waste of time. Colonists may only be sent to your own colonies or to explored but uncolonized provinces. Slaves may only be placed in your provinces which have no natives.

There are up to three explorers per turn, and their names are written in the top right corner of the screen. The name of the current explorer is highlighted. When you select the explorer icon, you will be placing the current explorer on the map. The minus key can retrieve a wrongly placed explorer.

When you have finished placing all of your items, hit the Continue button. You will then be in the Colonies phase.

Colonies

You will be shown a list of your existing colonies, including any you have just started in the placement phase. For each colony you may either Exploit, Enhance, Placate or do nothing. Select a colony and option with the arrow keys or the mouse and choose the appropriate column for your action. Click with the mouse button or hit the Return key to select that order. The icon for the action you have selected will appear in the province box. You don't have to do anything at all if you don't wish. If you don't do anything to a particular colony, no icon will appear in the information box. When you are ready, hit the continue button. You have finished the orders section. If there are other human players they will get to issue their orders now.

3.2 REPORTS

Messages

After all players have finished giving orders, they receive their reports. You will be told of returns from trading ships, colonies, explorations and raids and receive messages about various game events. After each message hit the continue button.

If two or more explorers are sent to the same province, they will fight each other for the honour of exploring the province. Naturally only one can win. The same rivalry occurs on raids and invasions.

If two or more sets of colonists arrive at the same province, then a similar form of rivalry will occur. Only one set of colonists will prevail and attempt to set up a colony.

Taxes

The most important event in the turn is the payment of taxes. If you have enough money, the assessed tax is automatically deducted. If you don't have enough money, everything you have is taken anyway. If your secret funds could cover any deficit, you will be asked if you want to top up your taxes on a no questions asked basis. If you agree, the deficit will be deducted from your Secret Funds. Failure to pay your full taxes results in lower support next turn (less free items). It also increases the chance of a visit from the Audits Department. You must use your judgement as to whether it is worth depleting your Secret Funds in each case.

4. WHAT THINGS DO

Armies

Armies are very useful, and there are usually not enough of them. Armies that accompany explorers increase both the

chance of success and the level of reward for explorations, raids and invasions. They also protect colonists from native and slave revolts by taking casualties before the colonists. Armies do not survive beyond the end of a turn, and must be newly purchased each turn.

Colonists

These can be used to start a new colony or to bolster an existing population. They are rather vulnerable at the lower colony levels and need to be protected from hostile locals by soldiers. They are reasonably rare in the game, and should be purchased whenever possible. Note that you really need at least two colonists to start up a colony. Sending in just one is unlikely to succeed.

Trading Ships

These are a handy investment as they return money both to the Treasury and to your Secret Funds. They last until they are sunk so they should generate a good return on funds.

Warships

These attempt to sink enemy warships and privateers in the same ocean space, thus protecting your own privateers and your traders. Like armies, they disappear at the end of each turn and must be repurchased.

Privateers

Armed with Letters of Marque and a hefty broadside, these fearsome ships increase your own revenue by subtracting it from your opponents. They last until sunk and generate public and private funds. They are very useful, especially for the weaker nations. It is probably not a good idea to place them in the same ocean as your own trading ships as the temptation may be too much for them. Privateers are not available until turn 6.

Slaves

Slaves serve a single function in life, which is to be exploited. Exploiting slaves is ideal because they don't revolt like proud native tribesmen (or not as much) and don't lose loyalty like ungrateful colonists. However, if you don't exploit them, they tend to sit around and do nothing. They cannot be imported while there are still natives remaining in a province.

Explorers

You get up to three explorers per turn. They have been thoroughly Michelin-guided and are rated with one, two or three stars. Three star explorers are very good and can subdue mighty empires. One star explorers have been known to get lost between their cabin and the poop deck, but might still get lucky. If no historical figure is available then a

generic explorer is provided with a random (but usually hopeless) rating.

5. HOW THINGS WORK

Exploration

Explorers may be sent to any colony on a sea coast (although see Rounding the Horn for Pacific coastal provinces). They may also be sent to any province with a river which is adjacent to an already explored province. Remote inland provinces require an adjacent colony to provide a base for exploration.

Colonies

Colonies may only be started in explored provinces. At the start of the historical game, the provinces of Newfoundland, West Indies and Bahia are already explored.

The colony box shows the name of the colony, the name and number of the local tribe in the top left. Below this are icons showing the levels of gold and minerals, if any. Under this is the current loyalty level of the colony, which starts out at seven. On the right are the flag of the owner, and icons for climate and agriculture. In the middle is the colony icon.

Colonies start out in life at Level I, and the Level I icon is a very shabby looking shack. The population is shown at the bottom left of the icon and the colony level at the bottom right. If a colony survives the level will tend to increase, and the colony icons become more impressive as conditions improve. An increase in colony level means an increase in the output of a colony.

At colony levels 1 and 2, population may spontaneously decrease so developing to level 3 as soon as possible is a good idea. Mineral resources also may not be exploited until level 3 is reached. At levels 5, 6 and 7 population may increase. If population increases beyond maximum (7) the additional colonist will become available next turn as a free unit.

Not all colonies can reach level 7. The number of rows of corn in the colony's agriculture icon is also the maximum colony level.

The accountant will report on the output of the colony. The left hand column reports the normal output of the colony from agriculture, gold and minerals. The right hand column reports the extra amounts gained by Exploiting the colony or the amounts paid out to Enhance or Placate the colony.

Exploiting gains extra money from the colony for the Secret Funds. If there are natives present they bear the brunt of

this, and will almost certainly revolt. If there are no natives present then the colonists themselves are exploited and they will respond by losing loyalty levels. If the level drops to zero the colony will revolt and go independent. The loss of loyalty can be slowed down by importing slaves who are less likely to revolt than natives.

Enhancing increases the chance that the colony level will increase.

Placating is an outright bribe to retain the loyalty of the colonists. As the colony level increases, colonists will start wanting to become independent and loyalty levels will tend to drop, even if the colonists are not exploited.

Placating reduces, but does not eliminate the chance of this happening. At the highest colony levels, colonists will probably have to be Placated every turn to prevent loss of loyalty. Note that at loyalty levels one and two (one or two small flags in the bottom left of the colony display), loyalty will drop automatically unless the colonists are placated. Natives tribes may also be placated, discouraging them from revolting and wiping out fledgling colonies.

Independent Colonies

Should a colony's loyalty level drop to zero, it will turn independent. Independent colonies can be invaded just like any others but the colonists will fight fiercely for their freedom, and an attempt to re-conquer is unlikely to be successful unless carried out with overwhelming force.

Tax

Unhappily, as this is not a fantasy game, there is no way of avoiding tax. Tax is assessed as a percentage of your previous turn's declared earnings (that going directly into Treasury), a percentage which regrettably averages slightly over 100%. This means that on some turns you will be graciously allowed to contribute more than 100% of your previous turn's earnings. However, working in your favour is the fact that the tax-man is always one turn behind.

Secret Funds are, by and large, safe from such depredations. The Royal Office for Regional Taxation is not renowned for the high intelligence of its employees but beware of building the secret funds up too high. A surprise visit from the Auditing Department could be most inconvenient.

Raids

To raid a colony, just place an explorer on a colony belonging to someone else. The intrepid explorer will then carry out a daring raid. His chances of success are increased if he is accompanied by armies or is adjacent to one or more of the player's own colonies. They are reduced

by the presence of local garrisons and the level of the defending colony. Raids contribute to the Secret Funds, and also disrupt the opponent's economy. Allies may not be raided, but your Monarch will turn a blind eye if you should happen accidentally to raid a Neutral player.

Invasions

An invasion is just a very successful raid. A raid will be considered an invasion if you have at least one colony adjacent to the province to be invaded and are at war with the owner of the raided province. To invade the West Indies, you must have a colony in one of the Caribbean provinces (i.e. Florida, Louisiana, Texas, Mexico, Yucatan or Venezuela). The more colonies you have adjacent, the greater the chances of success.

If the raid is a stunning success, the colonists will surrender and the colony will become yours. The lower the loyalty of the colonists to their current master, the more likely they are to welcome you with open arms.

Independent provinces (ones which have broken away from their original masters) have very high loyalty towards their newly-formed nations and will need a great deal of convincing that you are a better bet.

Rounding the Horn

Any explorer may attempt to round the horn, simply by attempting to explore a Pacific coast province (Vancouver, California, New Granada, Peru or Chile). However, this difficult feat is best reserved for your three-star explorers (two-star explorers might make it at a pinch).

Once the passage has been made, the Pacific coast provinces are open for both colonization and further exploration. If another player makes the passage, your secret service may steal the logbooks and maps, (known as a Rutter), thus opening up the Pacific to you without the dangers of exploration.

Ships

Ships may not be placed in the Pacific unless you have rounded the Horn or your Secret Service has stolen a Rutter for you. Trading ships in the Pacific may suffer attrition, due to the necessity of making the dangerous passage to deliver their cargoes.

Trading ships of different countries in the same sea area will automatically engage in commercial rivalry (i.e. endeavour to sink each other) regardless of the state of war and peace in Europe. Being only trading vessels, however, they are not terribly good at it. If you have warships protecting your fleets, their chances of success are even

more limited.

Trading ships can also be looted by privateers. Privateers pay lip service to European diplomacy and do tend to attack the traders of countries with whom they are at war but, being mostly illiterate and unable to read their own Letters of Marque, they are not terribly reliable. If there is not enough legitimate business available they may even attack their own trade ships. Warships are quite good at persuading privateers to take their business elsewhere. Davy Jones' locker figures prominently on the itinerary.

Trade

Free trade is conducted with the local inhabitants of unexplored and unsettled coastal provinces. If a province has been colonized, only the player owning that colony may trade with it. As development of the coast increases, so free trade decreases. If a player settles all the coastal provinces of a particular sea area he will have a trading monopoly.

Home

In the historical game, the home nation has a fluctuating level of interest in the colonies. This is related to events in Europe and is not affected by what the player does, except that if a player fails to meet his Tax Quota the interest level will be lower in the subsequent turn.

The interest level determines the number of "volunteers" sent to the colonies as Armies, Colonists and Warships. Trading Ships and Slaves are never sent from home and must be purchased. In the Historical Scenario, France and England may receive some privateers around the end of the 16th century (about Turn 8 onwards).

Diplomacy

The state of war and peace in Europe is dependent solely on European considerations, and indeed, even to the most informed observer, seems to be determined on a random basis. It still has a great effect on the New World, as raids may not be launched against Allies and invasions may not be launched against anyone with whom you are not actually at war. You may not be able to harm someone you are after. Conversely, you may be protected from those who are after you.

Privateers, in a dubious attempt at morality, have a greater tendency to pick on ships of countries with whom you are at war and don't (often) attack your allies.

No Diplomacy in Last Five Turns

In the last five turns, all nations are at war with each other. This fulfils one of the requirements for converting

raids to invasions, and makes for a very interesting finish. A lot of territory can change hands in the last five turns, making the eventual winner very hard to pick.

6. HOW TO WIN

The key to winning the game is colonial and monetary management. To have good chance of survival, a colony should be started with at least two colonists and two soldiers.

Trying to establish a colony with only one colonist is a very chancy thing indeed. The natives will probably resent the presence of the colony and revolt, so soldiers will be necessary until there are no natives left.

At some stage, you will have to exploit colonies, in order to fill the coffers of your Secret Funds.

Early management of colonies is tricky. Different strategies may all succeed in different situations.

Developing your colony early is a good idea as you lose less colonists (who tend to die off at colony levels 1 and 2).

The disadvantage in this is that natives are unpredictable and may revolt at any time and you must keep armies in the colony to guard against this eventuality.

The cynical approach is to exploit from the beginning, secure that the natives will revolt against your harsh regime, and make sure you have enough armies present to wipe them out. This can be costly, however, in terms of your own colonists and colonists are the most precious commodity in the game.

Sometimes, it is useful to Placate colonies from the beginning. This means that the natives are very unlikely to revolt and your armies can be used for more important things (exploration and raiding).

The plague is a factor in early management as well. European diseases will wipe out the local populations within a few turns no matter what you do.

An explorer's chances of a successful exploration and the size of the loot are all increased by the addition of soldiers. An escort of about 3 or 4 soldiers is ideal.

Certain provinces are home to fierce and warlike tribes, who will require both very good explorers and a solid escort for a successful exploration. The Aztec in Mexico and the Inca in Peru fit this category and guard the two richest provinces in the Historical game.

The greatest hurdle facing players will inevitably be the tax bill. Since the tax-man is always one turn behind, one option is always to increase your income. This can work for quite a while but inevitably there will come a time when

further expansion is difficult or impossible. When that happens you must look for ways of driving the tax bill down. Spending on Development is tax deductible, in that it lowers the taxable income of a province. It is possible, therefore, to influence total income by switching Development on or off as necessary.

Spending on Placating is not tax deductible. That is although it reduces your income from a province, you will be taxed on the sum of what you actually received plus what you have spent on placation. This makes it very expensive! The placation money will have been spent on bribes, bread and circuses, none of which are well thought of by the Royal Tax Examiners.

As time goes by, it will become harder and harder to maintain the loyalty of your colonists. Colonists at higher levels are rich enough to indulge in politics, and there will always be a chance of losing their loyalty. Ultimately you may be forced to Placate every turn or you may not be able to hold them.

If a colony has seven colonists, any extra colonists generated by the colony go into the general pool of colonists and appear free in the next turn. As colonists are rare, this can be a very valuable resource, so it can be a good idea to find a high-rating area, boost the colony up to a high level and then keep the colonists happy by continuous handouts (Placating).

8. HISTORICAL SCENARIO LIMITATIONS

The Treaty of Tordesillas

To avoid disputes about who owned the New World, Pope Alexander VI, on 7th June 1494, ratified with Spain and Portugal the Treaty of Tordesillas. The "Line of Tordesillas" ran north-south, cutting across the mouth of the Amazon at 50 degrees longitude. The area to the east of this line belonged to Portugal, the area to the west to Spain, the Vicar of Christ having taken it upon himself to apportion the heathen lands between Christian monarchs.

In game terms, Portugal is limited initially to the provinces of the Amazon, Pernambuco, Bahia, Campos and the Mato Grosso, and Spain may not interfere in these provinces. The treaty was slowly eroded as Portugal took over modern Brazil so, after turn 7, both Spain and Portugal may encroach on the other's territory if they have a colony adjacent to the relevant province.

Spain

You are the top dog, at least to start with. Managed properly, you can get a steadily increasing income and

around 6 or 7 colonies in the first 12 turns. Note that Spain is not allowed to found colonies on the east coast of North America (i.e. north of and including the Carolinas) in the historical game until turn 7. Spain gets the bulk of the good explorers, and should be able to explore and colonize Mexico and Peru, as well as other choice properties. After that you hit a brick wall as interest from home drops dramatically, and your colonists start to get restless. While this is going on the other players will be snapping at your heels. The question of whether to divert your energies from colonization in order to crush the smaller players is always going to be an interesting one.

Portugal

The rise of the Portuguese is not as precipitate as the Spanish, but neither is the fall. There are some good provinces around Bahia, where the Portuguese historically settled, including the Mato Grosso. Avoid Pernambuco, where the Bishop of Brazil was eaten by the natives, until you are rich and powerful. You should capitalize on any Spanish mistakes and try to explore some of the choicer provinces before the Spanish get around to it. Try to get to the Carribean, so that you can attack Spanish colonies in Central America when the time is right.

England and France

Both nations start out very weak. You should buy Privateers and harass Spanish and Portuguese shipping wherever possible. Explorers, especially the useless ones should be used for raids on low level Spanish or Portuguese colonies. You will have to live with the fact that in the early turns you will get no support from home. Therefore you should concentrate on building up your private funds, and putting as many banana skins under the Spanish and Portuguese as possible.

Later on, the interest level will rise and you will get your chance at being top dog.

9. VICTORY CONDITIONS

For each colony level that a player controls at the end of the game, he receives one victory point. The player with the most colonies is thus usually, but not necessarily, the winner.

10. WHAT YOU SEE

(Explanations of Screen Elements)

10.1 Province / Colony Information

Information on a province is displayed in the bottom right area of the screen.

Province Unexplored. If the province has not yet been explored, only the name will be displayed, together with the word "Unexplored".

Province Explored. If the province has been explored but not yet settled the following information appears.

Top left: the name of the province. Below the name of the province is the name of the dominant native tribe in the area, together with a number of small human figures (1-7) representing its relative strength.

Centre left: a row of gold bar icons (0-7) indicates the amount of gold available in the province, if any. Below the gold icons, a row of gemstones (0-7) indicates the amount of mineral resources available, if any.

Centre right: a small picture indicates the climate type (tropical, temperate, desert or cold). Below this is a small box with a number of wavy vertical lines (1-7) indicating the agricultural potential of the province and the maximum level to which a colony can be built.

Province Settled. If a province contains a colony, all the above information appears, together with the following additional information:

Top left: the name of the province appears as above. If the native tribe has been wiped out due to whatever causes and the player has imported slaves in their place, the word "Slaves" appears below the name of the province together with a number of small human figures (1-7) representing the number of slaves.

Top Right: a flag symbol indicates the current owner of the province. To the left of this, the owner of the colony will see an icon indicating if he is currently exploiting, enhancing or placating the colony.

Centre: in the centre of the screen is a picture indicating the current level of the colony. The picture varies from a simple hut (Level 1) to a magnificent mansion (Level 7). The owner of the colony will also see a row of icons along the bottom left of this picture, indicating the number of colonists present.

Bottom Left: a line of small flags indicates to the owner of a colony the current loyalty of the colonists. Seven flags means that everyone sings the National Anthem before breakfast. One flag, however, means that the colonists are very, very unhappy and that complaints about taxation without representation form the major topic of conversation.

10.2 Sea Area Information

The sea information box contains the name of the sea, the amount of trade available to the viewing player and the number of ships each player has within that sea. The four flags indicate each nation and the nation's ships are illustrated below them.

The top row of icons represents trading ships, which may extend to the second row. A maximum of eight trading vessels may be placed per player per sea. Below the trading ships, a row of skull and crossbones indicates privateers, a maximum of four per player. Warships form the bottom row, also with a maximum of four.

11. DESIGN CREDITS

Game Design - Ian Trout

Game Development - Ian Trout, Roger Keating, Gregor Whiley

Game Testing - Josefa Nalewabau, Hans Schiller, David Freer, Mark Holman, Graeme Whittle, Gary Wells, Alex Shaw, Anthony Pearson

Computer Art - Graeme Whittle

Technical Advice - Simon Hayes

Album Painting - Graeme Whittle

Appendix A

The IBM

Gold of the Americas may be run from the floppy disks provided or may be loaded on to a hard disk if you have one.

For your convenience, the disks have not been copy-protected, allowing you to make backup copies. Please do not abuse this by distributing unauthorized copies of the game.

If you have a 512K system and cannot get the game to run, it may be because you have a number of memory-resident programs active. Re-boot your system using only standard DOS and the game should run.

Graphics on the IBM. The IBM/Tandy and all compatibles have graphics controllers which vary from machine to machine.

Gold of the Americas will attempt to detect the controller you have installed but this cannot be done with a 100% guarantee of success.

Type GOLD (and hit the ENTER key) to start the program. If you wish to make sure it picks the correct graphics mode type GOLD -E (for EGA/VGA), GOLD -T for Tandy, GOLD -C for CGA or GOLD -H for Hercules (monochrome).

The following are valid key-strokes for the IBM:

Arrow keys (num-lock off): change menu items.

Enter or '+': choose an item.

Backspace or '-': subtract an item.

TAB/SHIFT-TAB: cycle map on provinces/seas valid for current item.

Arrow keys (num-lock on): move around map.

ESC: proceed to next game phase (Continue).

F2/SHIFT-F2: cycle player's own colonies.

F3/SHIFT-F3: cycle other player's colonies.

F4/SHIFT-F4: cycle explorable provinces.

F5/SHIFT-F5: cycle raidable provinces.

F6/SHIFT-F6: cycle seas.

Save Game Details

Type F to activate the File Name area. A flashing cursor will appear. Enter the name under which you wish to save the game. If you wish to save the game in anything other than the current directory, type D to activate the Directory area and type in the relevant pathname.

If you have games already saved they will appear in a list in the small window in the lower screen. To save the game into one of these files, use the arrow keys to select a file.

When you have typed or selected the file name, hit ENTER to save the game. Once you have saved a game for the first time, any subsequent saves will occur without reference to this menu. To save the game under a different file name, select Save Game As .. in the file menu, rather than Save Game.

Load Game Details

A list of saved games will appear in the small window in the lower screen. Select a file using the arrow keys and hit ENTER to load.

For further information on Gold of the Americas, please contact:

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