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A few words about Beck Design's Watergate Game...

History of the game: In the summer of 1973 I got the bright idea that what the country really needed was a game to commemorate the ongoing Watergate scandal. Three of us chipped in \$1000 each and, with the help of an artist-friend, set about to build a sample run of 1000 units. Game development was new to us all - an engineer, a finance manager, and a copywriter - and we had many lessons to learn, among them that a game board is nothing more than a flat paper box. A lengthy search for a board manufacturer was quickly resolved once we learned what to look for but other delays followed. Our plan was to get the 1000 units out by early fall and use the proceeds to cover a production run of 10,000 units in time for the Christmas season. Instead, we only got the 1000 units finished by Christmas. By that time the country was tired of Watergate and was in no mood to laugh about it any longer. Ads in the Village Voice, Boston Magazine and a retail shop in the Watergate Complex sold only a few hundred games - disappointing compared to our hopes - but it was fun and we all learned from it. After that we went our ways, some of us carting the remaining inventory around with us to this day. In hindsight we were very lucky that we didn't know what we were doing. Had we gotten the sample run built on time, 10,000 units would have hit the streets by Christmas instead of 1000 - and we would be carting 9500 units around instead of 500.

Origin of the Beck Design name: I have a daughter Becky who was two years old in 1973. I won't say that I named the company after her, but her name certainly influenced the choice and I used a similar name, Beck Corporation, for a computer venture several years later.

Political Incorrectness: The game cards include a couple of references which may offend gays and Cubans. This is a reflection of the attitudes and vernacular of the time and should not be judged by contemporary standards.

Authenticity: The game that you have here was taken from the unsold inventory that has been in my attic for 28 years. It is exactly as it was in 1973 except that the plastic bag containing the game pieces is deteriorating with age. The old plastic is preserved for authenticity but it is in a new baggy to keep the game pieces together. I have tried to ensure that all pieces are included but if you find you are missing something let me know and I will send it.

I hope that you enjoy the game. There's a few more in the attic if you would like another.

Bill Wetzel

WATERGATE

Introduction to the Game

BECK Design's WATERGATE is the convoluted game of conspiracy and betrayal in which every move on the Washington Power Board can backfire against its perpetrator. 'Game' did we say? Let's call it a Power Struggle.

The objective of the power struggle is to eliminate all of your Rivals. Starting from the safety of their own headquarters, teams of five aides and one chief move themselves or their rivals according to increments indicated on Motion Cards. On every move, a team draws a Revelation Card acquiring evidence against its rivals. When armed with sufficient points of evidence, a team can move a player to a rivals increment, exhibit the incriminating revelations, and thus capture the rival, eliminating him from the Washington Power Board.

The Revelation Cards also contain numerous devious Plots -- Spying Conspiracy, and Cover-Up just to mention a few. Strategic use of these cards will greatly assist in capturing a rival, but you can go to jail if you get caught. An advantage in eliminating your rival can also be realized by sending one of your team to the Washington Tourist Spots -- the Watergate Apartments, the Bug Store or the Phone. BECK Design's WATERGATE is an exciting simulation of the personalities, their actions, and the complexities involved in the real life Washington tragedy.

Equipment

The Power Struggle is waged on the Washington Power Board. Each team has a deck of 10 Motion Cards color keyed to its building and players. The Watergate Post Revelation deck consists of 56 Revelations, Plots and Wild Cards. Four Watergate Post cards display the points required for various capture situations. Each of the 4 teams consist of 6 players, 5 Aides and 1 Chief.

The Washington Power Board

The Washington Power Board must be studied very closely. If you are not an 'old hand,' if you 'don't know your way around town,' you can be hurt very badly very quickly. So, study the board. You will observe that it is divided into four Spheres of Influence; the White House, CIA, Department of Justice, and CREEP, denoted by color. Each rival's sphere of influence varies in strength, denoted by shading--with the Inner Sanctum shaded dark, the Outer Offices medium, and the Passageways light. Each space enclosed by dark lines is one square (or increment) regardless of size or shape. The Inner Sanctum, Center Fountain, Bug Store, Watergate Apartments, Phone and Jail are one increment. The set of steps in front of each rival headquarters is one increment. Jail may be approached only from the Center Fountain, and not from the passageways going over the tunnel. The tunnel is not considered an increment; it is one move from the square at one end to the square at the other end.

Heavy lines inside the various headquarters represent walls; no movement can take place across these heavy lines. In the Inner Sanctum and Outer Office areas, rivals may not move through occupied squares. Elsewhere on the Washington Power Board, rivals may pass through occupied squares. Only one rival may occupy an increment at any time. This applies to all increments except jail

The Teams

Each rival team consists of 5 Aides and one Chief. By examining the capture tables, you will see that within a team's own Sphere of Influence a Chief is harder to capture than an Aide. However, in rivals' territory, all are on an equal par. Note also that a Chief has an advantage over an Aide when he is capturing a rival.

The Tourist Attractions

On the Washington Power Board are three famous (or perhaps infamous) Tourist Attractions; the Watergate Apartments, the Bug Store and the Phone. Any rival placing a man in one of these spots immediately gains a 1 point bonus in any capture situation. That is, subtract one point from those shown in the capture tables. There is a minimum of one point required for any capture; you cannot apply the Bonus when the points required is already only one.

However, in 'Mister President's' America, there is no such thing as a free lunch. And there is a definite risk in occupying the Bug Store, Phone, or Watergate Apartments. As indicated in the capture tables, it takes only one point to capture a rival in any of these places.

To get to one of these attractions, you can move along the passageways in the usual manner or go directly using one of the three 'Go To ----' cards in the Revelations deck.

Jail

If you don't watch your step, you may wind up in Jail. A rival can be sent to Jail by moving to his increment and exhibiting the 'Send Rival to Jail' card. Indiscreet use of many of the Plot cards may also result in a Jail sentence. Examples are getting caught Spying, attempting a Cover-Up or a Conspiracy and so on.

To get out of Jail you must exhibit two Revelation points against your own team or a Presidential Pardon card. At the same time you must also play a Motion Card to move your man out. (In lieu of a Motion Card, a 'Go to ----' Revelations card can be exhibited and your man sent directly to the indicated spot.)

A rival in Jail can be captured by locating your man in the increment directly in front of the Jail and exhibiting the required number of Revelation points.

Motion Cards

Each team has a color coded deck of Motion Cards used to move the men around the Power Board. The top half contains some 'good news' for the team and the number of increments which a person may move his OWN team members. However, once that card is played -- by placing it down in front of you on the table -- your own move may backfire against you. Your rivals can utilize the 'bad news' in the bottom half by moving YOUR man the indicated number of increments in a direction favorable to him, and returning the card to your hand.

Only those Motion Cards in your hand can be used to move your own men. Only those Motion Cards already 'played' by a rival can be used to move a rival's man. You may use only one motion card at a time. They may not be combined for a larger move. You must move the exact number of increments indicated on the card. Motion can be in any direction.

It may happen that you will run out of motion cards in your hand. Well, Fella, tough luck. All you can do now is move a rival....if he has any cards played on the table in front of him for you to use.

You may only move a rival's Chief when all his aides have been captured. This applies in moving a rival by returning one of his motion cards, in using the Send Rival to Jail card, or in any of the other Plots when a rival is caught 'red-handed' and must go to Jail. However, if you can successfully 'Cover-Up' the attempt by a Chief to capture you, then, of course, the unfortunate Chief must go to Jail (in our version of the scandal at least.)

Revelation Cards

The Watergate Post Revelation Cards contain evidence to be used in plotting your rival's capture. Along with the evidence is the point value of the card. Sufficient points must be accumulated from one or more cards to reach the value required to capture as indicated in the capture tables.

In addition to the cards containing evidence, other Watergate Post cards contain Plots which can be implemented to Spy, Cover-Up, Conspire, render Inoperative a rival's Cover-Up or Conspiracy, or Catch his Spy (by the toe). Still others allow you to send a rival to Jail, and obtain a Presidential Pardon.

It is not necessary to discuss here the 'ins and outs' of these Plot cards, and what they will do for your hand. Each Plot card is self-explanatory when you get it. One note on a Conspiracy -- the team initiating a Conspiracy must have a Motion Card to enable one of its men to land on the victim's increment.

Dedicated to the real hero and heroine of the whole sordid affair are the Senator Sam and Martha Mitchell wild cards worth two points against any team (including your own if you want to get out of Jail.)

At the beginning of the game each person is dealt 5 Revelation Cards. Thereafter he must maintain 5 cards in his hand. After you 'exhibit' or 'present' one or more of your Revelation cards, they are delivered to the discard pile. You then take sufficient new Revelations cards to maintain 5 cards in your hand. If, on any turn you don't exhibit any cards, draw one card and discard one in that order. When the pile of Revelation cards becomes exhausted, shuffle the discard pile and put back into play.

The Capture

The capture is your goal, it is your high, it is what your cunning, devious plotting is all about. To survive in this Power Struggle you must eliminate your rivals. If you don't, they will surely eliminate you. To capture a rival you must move one of your men to the increment occupied by your intended victim and exhibit the required number of Revelation points as determined by the capture tables. If your man on the attack is a Chief, use the Chief Capturing table; if he is an Aide, use the Aide Capturing table. Remember the points required are determined by the position of the 'victim' relative to his own 'Sphere of Influence' as well as his rank and yours.

How you get to your victim is immaterial. You can move to him; you can move him to you. You can use a 'Go To -----' Revelation card if he is at one of the Tourist Attractions. So long as you have the points, he is your victim.

To capture a man who is in Jail, a rival must locate a man in the increment directly in front of the Jail and exhibit the required number of points.

You may have an excess of points in capturing a victim; however, the excess cannot be refunded. A captured player is removed from the Washington Power Board and can never return.

A capture example: to capture a rival's Aide in his own Passageway with your Aide would require 3 points.

Preparation

Place the Power Board down on a good sized table leaving ample room on all sides for Motion Cards to be played. Remove from the Watergate Post deck the 4 capture tables and distribute so all can see. Sort the Motion Cards by color and pass out so that each person has all 10 cards of his team's color. Shuffle the Revelation Deck and deal each person 5 cards. Place the remaining face down on the Power Board next to the Washington Monument. Each person should arrange his team in his Inner Sanctum (Chief) and Outer Offices (Aides) any way he chooses, however only one player per square.

The Play of the Game (shall we call it the 'Game Plan')

The White House gets the first turn at play. Thereafter play proceeds around the board clockwise. On each turn a team may:

- 1) Play one of its own Motion cards, placing it down in front of him and moving the indicated increments.
- or: 2) Play one of its rivals Motion cards, returning it to its rivals hands and moving its rival the indicated increments.
- or: 3) Utilizing one of the 'Go To -----' Revelation cards, go immediately to one of the Tourist Attractions.
- or: 4) Utilizing the appropriate Revelation card, initiate a Conspiracy or Spy on a Rival.

You may only do one of the above on any given turn. 'At this point in time' if you have sufficient Revelation points, and if you have landed on a rival's increment, you may capture the poor fool.

If, during the play you exhibited any Revelations cards, discard them and draw sufficient to maintain 5 in your hand. Otherwise draw one card and discard one card.

Congratulations, your turn is over. Play proceeds to the person on your left. Just sit back and wait for your rival's next scurrilous move.

The Power Struggle can be played by any number of people. But if more than four people choose to play, there must first be a preliminary conspiracy to organize the four rivals. It is possible to play with three or even two rivals, instead of the usual (and much better) four. Simply remove the inactive rival(s) Revelation cards and proceed in the usual manner.

Epilog

This concludes our discussion of the rules. You are free, of course, to add little nuances and conventions of your own. BECK Design recognizes that there may be some differences of opinion on these rules. If you need a definitive interpretation, we urge you to write to our distinguished panel of judges at BECK Design.

So, Watergate is not a simple matter -- not in the game or 'power struggle' and certainly not in 'real life'. It is difficult in these times for any American to tell the difference between the game and real life. But we are confident that this Republic will endure. As Sir Winston Churchill once said, 'All may yet be well,' And it is in that spirit that we urge you to have fun with our version of Watergate.