

RAIDIN' DA JOINT

GANGSTERS Newsletter

2006 World Boardgaming Championships

Forty days and forty nights. Then mayhem will erupt on the streets of the Windy City as Gangsters tournament play commences in Lancaster, PA! Will you be the master of chaos? Don't let this chance pass you by like a perfect roll of all five dice! Will Nick "Dusk" Henning score the first three-peat in Gangsters history? Will Pitt "Sluggo" Crandlemire return for a fourth term as Godfather? Or will you put a stop to it all and assert your rightful domination of the Chicago underworld?

There are some critical changes in this year's tournament, so be sure to read all about it now before the carnage begins. There's also some fun with squirt guns on the schedule. We're counting on you to get us wet!

For full details on every aspect of the WBC Gangsters tournament, go to the tournament website: http://www.gameaholics.com/gangsters_tournament.htm. The website has lots of strategy articles, all the gory details from last year, links to AREA, and up-to-date lists of nicknames! Don't forget to bring your name tag! (I'll have duplicates of them all there – but if you bring yours I can save the duplicate for a year when you really need it!)

Contents

1. Schedule
2. Survey Results
3. Changes for 2006
4. One Fedora, Two Fedoras, Three Fedoras All
5. Squirt Gun Free-for-All
6. Copies of the Game
7. Knocking off a Year of Rust

1. Schedule

Here's the complete schedule for Gangsters in the 2006 WBC:

Tuesday		
Demo	9 pm	
Heat #1	10 pm	
Wednesday		
Heat #2	1 pm	Advanced Rules Encouraged; One hour earlier than last year
Thursday		
Demo	10 pm	
Heat #3	11 pm	Official Squirt Gun Heat
Squirt Gun Free-for-All	2 am	
Friday		
Heat #4	5 pm	One hour later than last year
Semi-Final	8 pm	
Final	11 pm	

Remember that all pairings are finished by five minutes after the scheduled starting time and that you can start playing as soon as four players are seated at your game if you arrive early!

2. Survey Results

In the follow-up newsletter for last year's tournament, I asked a few survey questions. Here are the results!

a) The majority preferred to schedule a quarter-final so that all winners could continue to advance – with the quarter-final not held unless more than 25 heat winners showed up at the second round. The second choice was to set the semi-final size to 16.

Unfortunately, the BPA Board of Directors elected to impose a format that excludes the possibility of a quarter-final and requires a pre-determined size for the semi-final. As a result, we'll be going with a semi-final of 16 this year.

b) With respect to using a three-minute time limit for an entire turn (as opposed to the two-minute limit contained in the rules for the move/recruit phase), those responding to the survey were equally divided.

As a result, no change will be made. We'll continue to use the two-minute time limit per the rulebook.

c) The various possible squirt gun events each drew some support. A majority supported the Friday 2 am Free-for-All provided squirt gun etiquette is covered first.

See section #5 of this newsletter for more information.

d) The winning Cop names are:

Cop #2	Barney Fife
Cop #3	Rosco P. Coltrain (Rosco P-Co)
Cop #4	Dudley Doright
Cop #5	Starsky and Hutch
Cop #6	Kojak
Cop #7	T. J. Hooker
Cop #8	John McLean
Cop #9	Dirty Harry
Cop #10	Robocop
Untouchables	Elliott Ness

Thanks to my computer being down for three and a half weeks this past month I won't be able to introduce these fine officers the way I'd like to. So I'm going to make 2007 the "Year of the Cops." Look for cop badges for every player, unique polo shirts for 10 players featuring each cop, cop-themed table numbers, and a very special promo item you won't want to miss (but I'm not telling anyone about just in case I can't pull it off)!

e) Of those indicating a schedule change would make a difference, the majority felt moving the fourth heat, semi-final, and final back by one hour would make it easier for them to participate. I might add that a majority of all responses indicated that it wouldn't make any difference.

As a result, I've incorporated the one-hour change into the new schedule. At the very least, it'll let anyone playing Puerto Rico finish before Gangsters begins.

A big thank you to all of those who participated in the survey. Look for another survey after this year's tournament!

3. Changes for 2006

- 1) The sign-in procedure will no longer require your postal address or phone number. It's been years since I've used this information, since I now email newsletters rather than sending via the post office. Even AREA gets its information directly from the WBC. As a result, the only information I'll ask for is name, Gangster name, email address, and badge #. That'll make sign-in even faster and leave even more time for playing.
- 2) Per the requirements of the BPA Board of Directors, Gangsters no longer uses a "one win and you're in" format. Instead, a pre-designated number of entrants will advance to the semi-final. For Gangsters, this number is **sixteen**.

To determine the sixteen who advance to the semi-finals, the following tie-breakers will be applied until sixteen have been selected:

1. Won first heat entered
2. Most wins
3. Won second heat entered
4. Won third heat entered
5. Won fourth heat entered
6. Gangsters Specific: A combination of our standard completion-percentage tie-breaker multiplied by 1,000 added to the asset-percentage tie-breaker. This tie-breaker also determines who won the game for all games that don't finish by the time limit. If this tie-breaker is used to compare winners, the average completion-percentage in all heats entered multiplied by 1000 is added to the average asset-percentage in all heats entered.
7. Number of heats entered
8. Die roll

Completion Percentage: Maximum percentage completion of any strategy. For example, suppose you own 9 joints; your completion percentage is 90%. 4 of 5 purple joints? 80%. \$9,300? 93%. Cash totals will be reduced by \$350 for a missing Thug, \$700 for a missing Racketeer piece, and by \$1,050 for a missing Vamp.

Asset Percentage: Percentage of total assets (cash, joints, & gang) compared to the winner of your game. For example, suppose the winner had \$10,500 in cash, 3 joints worth \$1,200 including upgrades, and 4 Racketeers (\$1,000), 1 Vamp (\$300), and 5 Thugs (\$1,500) for a total of \$14,500. You had \$7,800 in cash, 9 joints worth \$3,700, and 8 Racketeers (\$3,600), 1 Vamp (\$300), and 0 Thugs (-\$350) for a total of \$15,050. Your secondary tie-breaker would be 104%.

Copies of the Game: If fewer than four copies of the game are present among those who have been admitted, additional conditions from the above list will be applied to admit players with copies of the game until the number with games present is four. The players admitted by virtue of having a copy of the game present replace the last players admitted who do not have copies to keep the number admitted to 16. (**Note:** Copies of the game have never been an issue so far.)

Subsequent tie-breakers apply to any group if admission of the entire group would bring the number of semi-finalists higher than 16. For example, suppose 29 gamers won the first heat they entered. Since $29 > 16$, we rank these by the number of heats won. Suppose 10 have won three or four times while 8 more have won twice. The 3-4 time winners are admitted. Those who've won just their first heat and no other are eliminated. The 8 who've won twice are ranked by which heat they won next: 3 won on their second attempt too [Admitted], 2 on their third attempt [Admitted], and three more on their fourth attempt. The last three are ranked using their Gangsters tie-

breakers. Since we're comparing winners (those who won their fourth heat), we use the average completion-percentage multiplied by 1000 plus the average asset-percentage for all heats entered. The three tie-breakers are 93081, 89108, and 75094. The entrant with the first tie-breaker becomes the sixteenth and last semi-finalist.

If fewer than 16 players are present at the start of the semi-final, all alternates present advance and games proceed (with games with fewer than four players assigned randomly). Under no condition will a player who did not participate in a heat advance.

Late Arrivals for Semi-Final/Final: Entrants who miss the moment when their name is called (starting at 0:05) will be treated as the next alternate provided that the GM is notified upon arrival. Alternates who have already answered when their name was called will **not** lose their positions under any circumstances (unless copies of the game are an issue). Be on time!

- 3) As a consequence of the new tie-breakers for advancement to the semi-finals, no flexible early semi-finals will be allowed. For the same reason, the 5-player game will not be used this year unless five players specifically request it during a heat.

There have been no changes to the rules clarifications during the past three years! You can review all questions and clarifications at: http://www.gameaholics.com/gsr_format/gsr_clarifications.htm.

4. One Fedora, Two Fedoras, Three Fedoras All

This year I'll have a souvenir black plastic fedora for everyone who plays Gangsters. Wear yours proudly along with your name tag to let other gamers know you're willing to bend the law in your favor as well as resort to Tommy Guns and Bribes if need be!

My assistant GMs will each get a colored plastic fedora so that you'll be able to identify them quickly when you have a question (or are looking for a squirt gun target).

If you bring your squirt gun from last year, you'll be completely decked out and ready for action.

5. Squirt Gun Free-for-All

On Friday morning at 2 am, immediately following the Thursday night heat of Gangsters, everyone at the WBC (even unregistered family members) is invited to participate in the first Squirt Gun Free-for-All. We'll meet by the old Amish barn across the parking lot (which is far enough away from sleeping quarters to disturb anyone much). There's no registration or sign-up. At 2 am, I'll review squirt gun etiquette. At 2:05, the action begins. Shoot and be shot. At 2:20, the free-for-all is over.

Then comes the prizes. Anyone who thinks they qualify can line up in either the wettest or driest line-ups. One prize for the wettest. One for the driest. Those who compete for the latter must be in the designated squirt gun area for the entire match. After that, it's up to you whether you head to a dry, warm bed or off to the Werewolf competition...

I'll arrange with the hotel to have buckets of water available for re-loading at the corners of the designated carnage zone.

This'll be short, intense fun. Just the break you needed in intense competition toward the end of the week. Be there. Be wet or get others wet. Don't miss out!

Squirt Gun Etiquette

Let's face it. There's a reason only one board game is cool enough to have a squirt gun. Water damages paper and cardboard game components. As a consequence, even mobsters need to use proper care when mixing squirt guns and board games. Follow these simple rules so that both you and the victim (and occasionally *you* will be the victim) gain maximum enjoyment from the experience:

- Use only squirt guns that shoot a thin, straight line of water and leave a spot about the size of a quarter
- Always fire at point-blank range (2' or less) so that all water reaches the target (except during free-for-all)
- Pull trigger firmly, quickly, and often
- Aim only at the torso; avoid shots at the face or eyes
- Carry a loaded weapon at all times
- Never fire over a game, its box, or its components
- Never squirt an innocent bystander who is carrying games
- Always squirt bystanders who make snide comments about squirt guns
- Set squirt guns at least two feet away from game components when not in use (or, better yet, on the floor)
- Make sure any water is cleaned up before leaving the table
- Always squirt the GM and as many assistant GMs as possible before leaving any Gangsters event

Now we're ready to have some fun with water and board games as only Gangsters know how!

6. Copies of the Game

I have some copies of the game available. Good news – prices remain the same as last year! I will bring a few of them to the WBC. If you let me know ahead of time, I'll bring what you want.

- \$50.00 New in Shrinkwrap
- 45.00 New -- Unpunched
- 35.00 Used -- Guaranteed Complete and in Good Condition
- 25.00 Used -- Missing Parts or Damaged

These copies are also available from me throughout the year -- with an additional \$7.00 shipping charge (within the USA). The prices will change based on what it costs me to obtain copies. Email me at john@gameaholics.com for foreign shipping.

The profits from these sales (typically \$5 each) are used entirely to fund additional inventory as well as prizes, name tags, and other mementoes for the WBC tournament.

7. Knocking off a Year of Rust

If you're like me, it's been a year since you played Gangsters. I was so rusty my 11-year-old daughter Aurora managed to pull a perfect "sneak-up-the-cash" win in the recent game where I taught her to play. So how can you kick that rust off before an enemy thug does it in a drive-by? That's the purpose of this short list of reminders.

- 1) Know how you're trying win and make certain that your moves align with that objective each turn.
- 2) Know how your opponents are trying to win and use your Cop move each turn to thwart the one who's doing the best. Be aware that more extreme measures will be needed as soon as an opponent crosses the 50% line.

- 3) Be aware of opponents who are playing "sneak-up-the-cash" strategies. These are the opponents who don't seem to be doing anything – except collecting money for their Vamp and Thug extortion each turn. Such a strategy should win in an average of only 14 turns – 10-11 turns with a few small public payoffs or lucky extortion dice.
- 4) If you're trying to win with 10 joints or a monopoly, getting your Racketeer into the next joint is the most critical aspect of each turn. As soon as your turn is over, determine the exact movement required to get to each destination joint. If multiple joints can be reached with the same roll, head to the one with the best mobility (combination of proximity to the subway and number of entrances) – since it'll make the next move easier. When it comes to your turn, you'll already know what to do on each green die roll.
- 5) When the opponent who precedes you finishes moving the Cops, make sure you know the exact movement needed to move a cop to each crime. Don't forget the subways! Failing such a roll, know who the leader in the game is and how best to steer a cop in that direction.
- 6) Make sure you know where each public is before you roll the dice. Know which public markers are in the cup and the precise roll needed to get each into your establishments. Don't let an opponent score twice with a big public.
- 7) If your Vamp is seducing gang members (presumably because you're going for joints and have plenty of cash), know the distance to each enemy gang member in range. If a single roll can reach more than one, pick the opponent who's doing the best and the piece that will hurt him/her the most.
- 8) If you're collecting cash, make sure you know how to get your Thug and Vamp to extortion locations if they're not already earning dough. Keep one jump joints in mind – you don't want to go there. Know how much it takes on a die to push a cop past your crime scene as well as how to move your Thug and Vamp safely behind an officer of the law! Try to reserve at least one of your moves for the public each turn – if only to steer one in the general direction of your best establishment (once your Thug and Vamp are safely extorting, of course).
- 9) The early threats to win the game are a Red Monopoly followed by either the Green or Blue One-Jump Strategies. These threats can't be ignored. The easiest way to stop them is to buy one of the key joints during set up for the One-Jump threats and early in the game for the Red Monopoly. Keep in mind that the gangs and cops are usually sufficient enough to stop the first threat. You're in great shape if you're the second threat.
- 10) Two minutes isn't a long time. If you don't know what to do with a piece, handle a piece you do know what to do with first. If you don't know what to do with a cop, just move one toward an obscure corner of the board – don't dawdle. Spend your time on the piece that helps advance your objective; don't spend it on miscellaneous moves until the key one is finished.

I hope these ten reminders helped put a few gears and cogs back in the machine. You're a criminal mastermind – and don't you let any of us forget it!

That's all until we meet 40 days and 40 nights from now. Get your heaters and wheels ready 'cause I'll see you soon!

John
john@gameaholics.com