

# DEFENDER OF THE EMPIRE

## Rules of Play

### Introduction

This is a simple mechanism to unite a series of battles into a narrative of an Empire's fortunes against its neighbours. It's not so much a campaign as a *raison d'être* for having HOTT battles (other systems could be used equally well). A hex map is used, but a series of boxes could be used equally well. The terrain depicted on the maps is really just to make it look pretty, however it could if players desire equally well indicate the type of terrain to be used for the battles e.g. Hills, Steppe, Desert, Arable, Littoral or Woods etc. A blank map is also provided for players to decorate as they see fit.

In its simplest form, players from 2 – 7 fight HOTT battles. One player may take on the role of the Empire and the others the separate barbarians, or players or teams of players fight the battles as they are available and as they arise. Or, as players represent only field generals, they may change sides.

Overheads are reduced to nil by fighting all battles with full 24AP armies. The only overhead is the moving of the markers. If pins are used then the board is more permanent. Should players wish then obviously they can carry losses forwards.

### The Map

The map is a stylised rendering of an empire and six surrounding enemy states. Starting on the outside, the:-

- three hex areas represent the Barbarian homelands (each with a number from 1-6),
- the thick black line is the border,
- the two hex areas are the frontier provinces,
- the single hexes are the internal provinces and,
- the central hex is the Capital.

### 1. Set-up

Players decide the nations/tribes that make up the Empire and the Barbarians. These are noted in the boxes in the Barbarian homelands and in the Capital hex on the map. Place 6 different coloured markers in each of the Barbarian homelands and six markers of the same colour to represent the Empire's frontier garrisons. Six empire armies face off six barbarian armies.

### 2. Activation Roll

Roll a D6 and the number rolled is the enemy nation activated corresponding to the table and homeland area.

Move the Barbarian marker into the facing frontier province to signify an invasion.

### 3. Battles

Fight a Battle between the Empire and the invader.

If the Empire wins, move the invaders marker back into its homeland area.

If the invader wins leave the Empire's marker back to the inner province immediately behind. If this is from an inner province, then into the Capital.

Thus after each battle the new frontiers may be seen at a glance.

Players collect prestige points as in the HOTT battle rules.

### 4. Repeat the above.

### 5. The Empire Fights Back!

If the same Barbarian enemy is activated twice (or more) consecutively then the second (or more) time(s) it is deemed to be the Empire's counter attack. In this case the Empire's marker is moved into

the area with the Barbarian marker. Should a barbarian marker be pushed back into its own homeland and then be defeated the Empire annexes over its homeland and that nation is out of the game. As an option, players may add additional provinces beyond to represent nations that are further afield. These then take over the defeated nations die roll number. As many nations may be added as players wish, so long as the total number remains 6.

## **6. Victory**

The game ends when a player reaches a previously stated number of Prestige points or when either:-

- the Empire's army is defeated in its Capital area, or
- all of the Barbarian Homelands are captured.

## **Example of Play**

### **Round 1**

A '1' is rolled.

1 represents the Goblins

Move the Goblins marker from its homeland into the Empire's Bordering province.

The Empire fights the Goblins.

The Goblins win.

The Empire retreats to an inner province.

### **Round 2**

A '4' is rolled.

4 represents the

Move the Elves marker from its homeland into the Empire's Bordering province.

The Empire fights the Elves.

The Empire wins.

The Elves retreats back across the border into their homeland.

### **Round 3**

A '4' is rolled a second time.

Again, 4 represents the Elves. But...the Empire strikes back!

Move the Empire marker from the Empire's Bordering province into the Elves homeland.

The Empire fights the Elves.

The Empire win.

The Elves are knocked out of the game. The Empire's borders are extended.

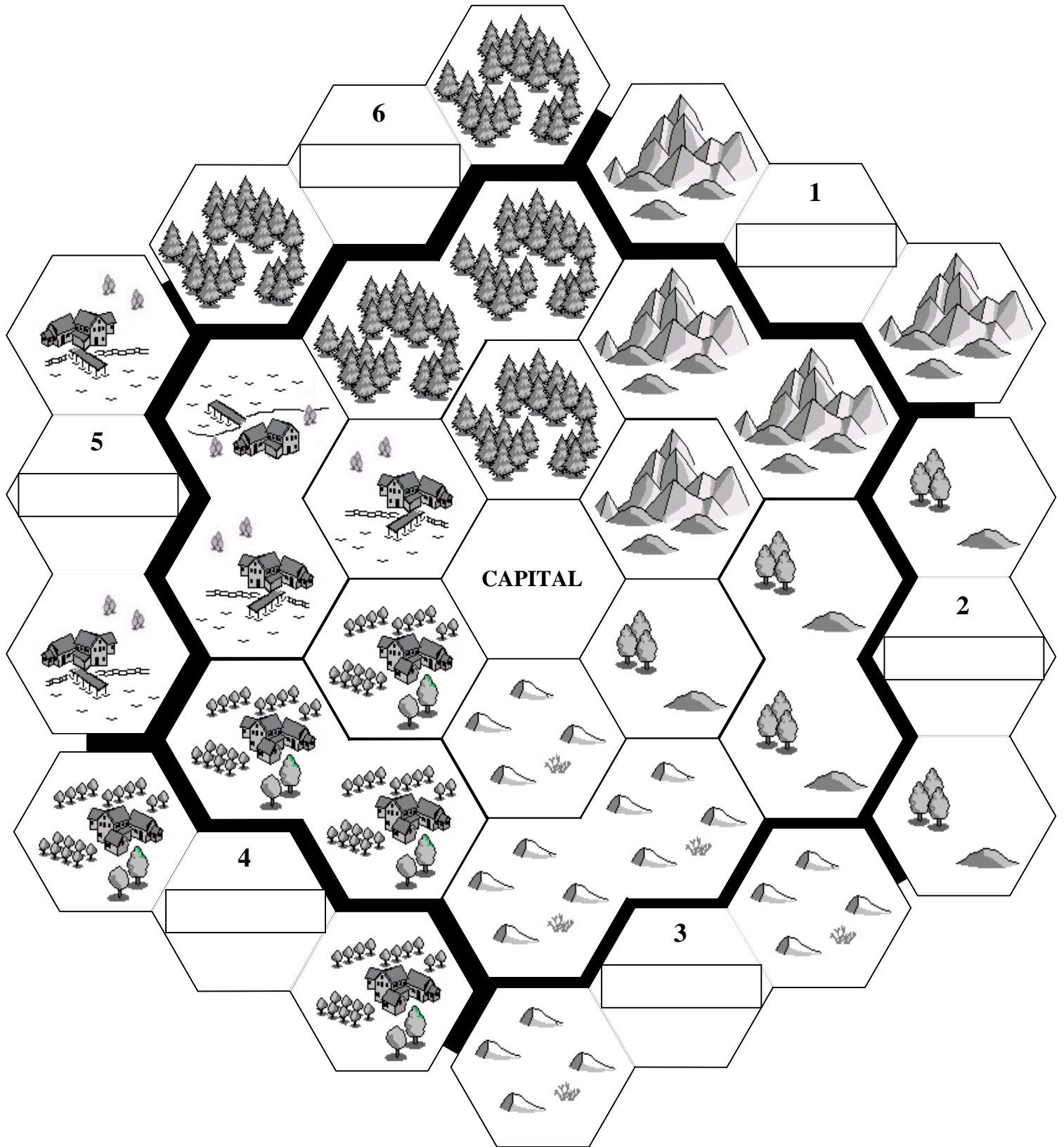
And so on...

## **Alternative**

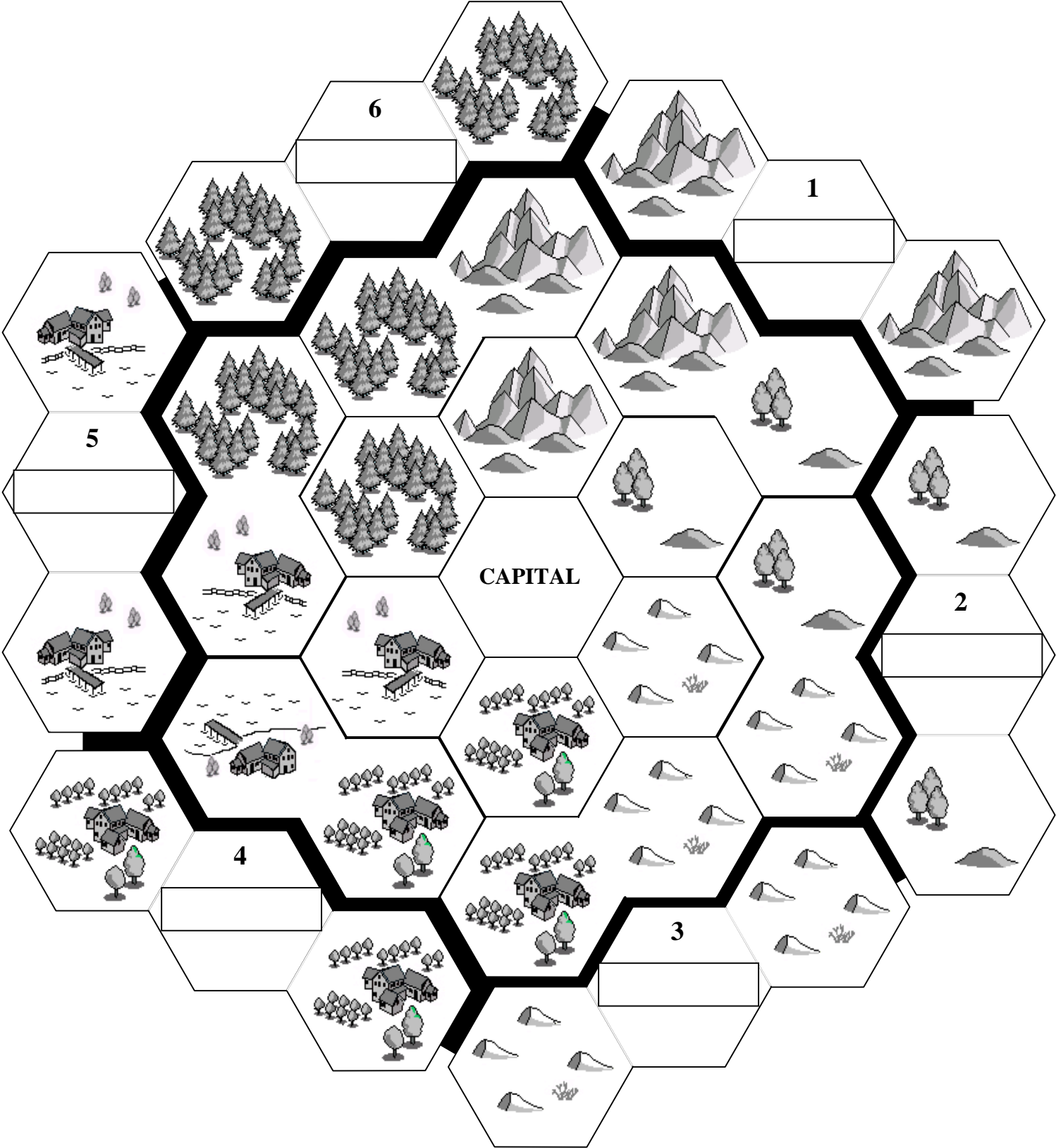
An alternative that could be easily used with the DBA six player campaigns is to only use five Barbarian homelands and the central Empire takes the '6' die roll. This will allow the Empire to take a more proactive role. So remove the 'Empire Strikes Back' rule which in turn will allow the barbarians to penetrate deeper.

I'd appreciate any feedback from this and or any suggestions for amendments etc. E mail me at [john.gillson@cwgsy.net](mailto:john.gillson@cwgsy.net)

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