

A Treatise on Nautical Matters

The River

Dozens of springs and tributaries funnel together in the midst of die Drachenburg mountains and the Hayalet-dag Mountains to form the body of water the Eisens call der Größe See. Unfortunately, the area is claimed by several neighbouring nations, so even the mapmakers cannot agree upon a name for this large lake. The Vodacce call it Lago di Commercio, the Castillians call it Lago del Rey, while many map makers simply leave it blank. This lake sits atop the continental divide, a high point at which the water can flow both ways and in some places, water flowing in opposite direction is only separated by a few yards. Two massive rivers flow out of the lake in opposite and are jointly named the River. The waters in this entire area are very treacherous with eddies, undertows, and boulders. This creates a navigational hazard that few brave, and fewer survive. Emperor Heinrich I attempted to eliminate some of these hazards and to create a means of travelling from the eastern section of the River to the western by creating a series of locks. The project involved over fifty miles of canals and locks, the largest engineering project ever attempted in Theah's history, but internal strife and high costs defeated the project even before it was completed. Even the completed locks are broken and no safer than the river itself.

Although each bank of the River are shallow, there is a deeper channel which can accommodate vessels of relatively higher drafts throughout the length of the River. A draft 4 vessel can travel as far as Barcino with difficulty, though passage beyond that point is impossible. Vessels with draft of 3 or lower can go upriver as far as der Größe See, just south of Weissbergen Mountains, but travel without a pilot who knows the River is ill-advised since the river pilots know what to look for and can "read the river." While the River itself is a mile or two wide at points, that is not necessarily the case for the navigable channel. Navigational hazards include sandbars, shallows, snags (trees caught in the mud just below the surface of the water), sunken vessels, and even rapids. Anyone attempting to navigate the river must make a River Navigation or Pilot check for every 6 hours of travel with a TN ranging from 10 to 20 (determined by the

game master) with a number of raises equal to the draft of the ship. (d20: Profession - River Navigation check DC 5-15, determined by the game master, +3 for every point of the vessel's draft). Those familiar with the River receive a free raise to this check (+3 circumstance bonus).

Depth

One of the vital aspects of both naval and river transport is depth. Draft is an indication of how far beneath the surface of the water a ship's keel extends. This is especially important when considering how far into rivers a ship may progress. Listed below is also what sort of body of water is typical for that depth..

Draft	Keel Depth	Body of Water
0	1' (0.30m)	Shallow rivers. Can be pulled up on beaches.
1	3' (0.90m)	Shallow rivers. Can be pulled up on sandy beaches.
2	6' (1.83m)	Large rivers, can tie up to a dock in harbour
3	12' (3.66m)	Deep rivers, The River's upper reaches, can tie up to a dock in a harbour
4	18' (5.49m)	The River's lower reaches, can tie up to a dock in a deep harbour
5	24' (7.31m)	Can anchor in a deep harbour
6	30' (9.14m)	Can anchor in a deep harbour
7	36' (10.97m)	Can anchor in a deep harbour
8	42' (12.8m)	Cannot anchor inside a harbour
9	48' (14.63m)	
10	54' (16.46m)	

Shallow rivers include any small tributary or waterway. Large rivers and medium sized rivers too small to appear on the front cover of the Player's Guide. Deep rivers are any river any river or lake which appears on the map on the front cover of the Player's Guide. Harbours include most river ports and sea ports. Deep Harbours include a handful of ports across Theah large enough to service the largest ships. There

are only typically one or two deep harbours in each country.

Nation	Deep Harbours
Avalon	Cardican
Castille	La Pasiega, San Felipe
Cathay	Bandar Serai, Xi Hai Long
Crescent Emire	Kulkadir
Eisen	Hafen
Midnight Archipelago	Puerto Grande*
Montaigne	Buche, Muguet
Ussura	Odyesse, Sousdal
Vendel	Vasteras
Vodacce	Amozare, Porto Spatia

*Note that the original publication did not include entries for the Midnight Archipelago. This information has been added as per *Islands of Gold* page 44.

River Piracy

River pirates share as much in common with highwaymen as their brothers on the open oceans. While the sea affords the opportunity of manoeuvrability and escape for a ship, boats on a river usually only have the choice of going upstream or down through a narrow navigable channel of deep water. River Pirates exploit this lack of manoeuvrability, waiting in ambush on shore where the deep water channel nears the bank. By sinking captured boats in the wider portions of the channel, they force the channel narrower in many different areas, offering multiple points of possible ambush. Once the boat is close to shore, the pirates rake their target to clear the decks and then leap aboard from high riverbanks or overhanging branches. Pirates live on raiding traffic and it is possible for piracy to “kill” a portion of a river, making it too risky for commercial traffic. This is why most river pirates will either take only the minor contraband or simply extort payment for passage. In Eisen, this has become almost formalized in that fortresses are built up overlooking riverbanks where they can halt the flow of river traffic. Anyone who does not pay the “toll” finds their boat and cargo seized.

Smuggling

Thousands of sailors, captains and merchants ply the waters of Theah. Despite their claims to the contrary, every one of them is a smuggler. Smuggling is nothing more or less than

simply attempting to bypass imposed fees, fines, laws and taxes. Captains and sailors constantly smuggle contraband and goods, often buried within a perfectly legal cargo. Harbour masters and officials know this occurs and turn a blind eye to all but the most egregious violations, since without the incentive of illicit profits, trade would slow to a trickle. In return, most captains know that a few well-placed bribes speed the port inspections. Smuggling is generally no more than a minor source of income, but a vital one to poor sailors and merchants.

Tax collectors also know that if they confiscate too much, shipping through that area suffers. A captain who loses an entire cargo of ore may not lose his entire livelihood, but he will certainly reconsider shipping to those waters again. Enough occurrences and the trade upon a river or sea route dries up and those who live off that trade will suffer. To that end, while many nobles charge tolls or fees on cargoes traversing their territory (1d10 toll collection spots per leg of the voyage), the tolls are minor.

Typically, the toll is either 1% of the value of the cargo or 1d10 guilders. Of course, a dozen tolls at this price can destroy the profits for an entire voyage, so many captains resort to smuggling. Smuggling may either take the form of sneaking past inspection sights or tolls in the dead of the night or hiding more valuable goods within another cargo. Often toll collectors view this process as a game and enjoy the duel of wits between themselves and those who try to avoid payment. Other toll collectors are often willing to negotiate their rates for regular customers or anyone with a quick tongue. In fact, many captains are selected primarily for their ability to haggle and bribe.

To sneak past a toll station, the ship’s pilot or captain must make a River Navigation or Pilot check or, TN 20 (d20: Profession - River Navigation check).

If the PCs hide goods within a ship or caravan, they may make a Conceal check to prevent anyone from finding them (d20: Hide Check). Otherwise the crew, captain or merchants may hide their contraband as well. These are not large caches of smuggled goods, so these require only negligible space. If a ship is involved in more elaborate smuggling techniques, use the Exotic Special Cargoes chart (see page 95 of the *Ships and Sea Battles* book). The following charts are meant to provide simple answers to more small-scale smuggling.

Who is smuggling?

Roll 1d10

Result	Who Hid the goods	Conceal TN	Cargo Modifier
1-4	The crew/wagon handlers	10	-3
5-7	The ship captain/caravan master	20	+3
8-9	The ship owner/caravan owner	30	+5
10	Roll twice more on this table -2 for both rolls.		

What are they Smuggling

Roll 1d10 + Cargo Modifier

Cargo	Value
1, 2	Liquor (rum, wine), 2 guilders
3	Cheap weaponry (5-10 swords or 3-6 muskets), 5-10 guilders
4	Spices/Drugs (1 small cask of absinthe, afyam, garlic, etc), 5 guilders
5	Clothing/Fabric (1 bolt) 1d10 guilders
6	Syrneth Items (1-2 pieces), 100 guilders
7	Artwork, 2d10 guilders
8	Church Prohibited materials (heretical texts), 2d10 guilders
9	Crescent or Cathayan Goods (rug, tapestry, jug of spices, clothing, or other fine goods), 3d10 guilders
10+	Exotic Weaponry (piece of dracheneisen, puzzle sword, or specialty blade, etc), 100 guilders

Whenever someone inspects a cargo, they must make a perception check or Conceal check with a target number shown on the chart above to find the contraband (d20: Spot check). Typically, discovered contraband is confiscated by officials or pirates. Whether or not they also collect additional cargo is up to the men involved.

Movement Rates

Ships range between 4-15 knots

Generally, the speed of a ship is Panache x2 = knots (kts)

1 knot = 1.15 mi (1.85 km)

Ship Type	Typical Speed
Schooner	11 kts
Clipper	15 kts
Ship of Line	8-11 kts
Merchant Brig	9kts
Galleon	4-8 kts

Credits

Writing

Dana DeVries and Bill LaBarge

Line Development

Mark Stanton Woodward

7th Sea System Creation

John Wick, Jennifer Wick, and Kevin Wilson

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