

# Adding Companions to *Successors*

Putting to Use that Insert in Your Library

CHAMPION  
3L

SUCCESSOR  
0L

By Ed McGran\*



*This article inaugurates the publication within C3i of interesting material on games with systems similar to ones in GMT Games. Given that the variant insert mentioned below was left in limbo by the buyout of Avalon Hill, we thought this article would be a valuable service to the hobby. -SKT*

Our local gaming group has played quite a number of games of *Successors* and we do what the airlines do in order to guarantee a quorum for our game days—we overbook our games. Some time ago we had one too many players and rather than tell that extra person to watch, we decided to "fudge" a five-player game. What we came up with that night has been thoroughly tested. The components were even pre-published in the final issue of *The General* (32-3) before its untimely demise. So, without further ado, here is that long-awaited rule variant.



## 28.3 Five-Player Games

**GENERALS:** Deal out randomly ten general cards (two per player), including Eumenes and Seleucus.

**ALTERED STARTING FORCES:**

- EUMENES starts with double his listed forces. Garrisons are placed in all spaces in Cappodacia with the exception of Zimera (which is occupied by an independent garrison and the Cappodacian

army). The general and his forces begin together on any friendly garrison.

- SELEUCUS starts with double his listed forces. Garrisons are placed in Coele-Syria. The general and army are placed in Damascus (ignore the reference to Bablyonia).

**ADDED COUNTERS:** From the insert in 32-2 of *The General*, use the Legitimacy counter, Victory Point Total counter, and Successor/Champion marker, four Minor General counters, plus the numerous Garrison markers for a fifth player.

**VICTORY:** A player needs 20 victory (province) points or 18 Legitimacy points to win an automatic victory in the five-player game.

## Suggested Rule Changes

**GENERALS:** All players are dealt two general cards, they each pick the one they like, and then discard one face down. The unknown discards are reshuffled and redealt so that each player now has two generals.

**TYCHE CARDS:** If you are concerned about the increased playing time of adding a fifth player, then only deal four Tyche cards per turn. *This will greatly limit the chances of a funeral march to Pella, but then again, with four opponents in your way, that is already difficult.*

**EXTRA TYCHE CARDS:** Extra tyche cards obtained by stealing another player's card or by treasure city looting give the owner of the new card(s) a complete round (not just a Tyche Segment) for each new card so obtained.

## 29.3 Companions and Elite Cavalry

**COMPANIONS:** Craterus and Antipater each start with a special cavalry unit known as the Companions. Use nickels or create two counters to represent these two one-step cavalry units, each with a stacking value of one and a combat strength of two. The Companions are ROYAL and may switch sides or refuse to fight due to the same legitimacy/prestige rules that apply to royal macedonian units. The Companions are dispersed after combat, just like loyal Macedonians, silver shields and Royal Macedonians. Both Companions may switch sides by use of the same Silver Shields Tyche card played as a surprise card in a manner similar to the switching of the Silver Shields unit, except that the Companions do not undergo a step loss in the process. The General which has the Companions in his stack has one extra Legitimacy point for each Companion step present in his force. Companions are considered to be special elite cavalry as well.

**ELITE CAVALRY:** Use pennies (or create counters) to represent Elite Cavalry steps. All generals, except Craterus and Antipater, start with one Elite Cavalry step over and above their initial forces listed on their card (this includes Eumenes and Craterus when playing with five-players). Elite cavalry steps have a stacking value of one and a combat strength of one. All defeated Elite Cavalry steps are removed along with elephant and mercenary steps in a battle defeat.

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## Companions: SUCCESSORS Variant

**REINFORCEMENTS:** If a player controls the most unlooted treasure cities, he receives one Elite Cavalry step. Control of Armenia gives one reinforcement Elite Cavalry step. Control of Thessaly and Thrace together gives one reinforcement Elite Cavalry step. A player may take one elite cavalry step as a reinforcement instead of his normal two mercenary CU allotment. This can NOT be done for CUs earned for being Usurper or from Tyche card play.

**TYCHE CARDS:** The Arab mercenaries card and the Thracian mercenaries card each give one Elite Cavalry step and one mercenary CU instead of two mercenary CUs. The Persian Popular Support card gives one Elite Cavalry step instead of one mercenary CU per all conditions stated on card. Olympias' army receives one Elite Cavalry step in addition to the four mercenary CUs. The two Tyche card reinforcement Generals in Cappodacia and Babylon DO NOT arrive with Elite Cavalry.

### RAVAGING THE COUNTRYSIDE AND BREAKING THEIR WILL:

A force with Elite Cavalry may attack minor city garrisons and tribal strongholds at the cost of one movement point instead of two during the movement phase or during the play of a major campaign card. If an Independent garrison force or a tribe marker causes a siege point casualty, that casualty must be an Elite Cavalry, if the movement advantage was used. Major city siege attempts receive no movement point benefit from Elite Cavalry.

**CAVALRY SUPERIORITY:** A force with Elite Cavalry, when faced with a force without Elite Cavalry, gets a one column shift on the combat results table in its favor. Functioning (non-zero) elephants cancel out this Elite Cavalry column shift for combat. Independent armies are considered to have Elite Cavalry internal to their army marker. The force with Elite Cavalry gains a one-point addition/subtraction to

the relevant interception/avoid battle die roll when facing a force without Elite Cavalry. A force without Elite Cavalry, when losing a battle to a force with Elite Cavalry, faces a column shift to the right on the attrition table.

### Strategic Truisms

The following is "take it or leave it" personal advice from each playtester in Seattle.

**Mitch:** "Kill the Wabbit." Go after the guy who won the last game, as he has proven he knows how to play and is therefore a confirmed threat to win again.

**Charles:** Decide where your center of operations is and then set up a defense therein. Be cautious outside your center and extremely aggressive within your center.

**Jeff:** Every operation must have a point or reason (otherwise, take the free mercenary for not moving).

**Mark:** Control territories without owning them. The least victory points wins the turn order decision. An easily-corrected victory point deficiency will give a false impression as to the true victory point total.

**Ed:** Mahan's naval strategy says it all (substituting Macedonians for battleships). One must have a big army with Macedonians and a good general as one's single arm of decision. Small one-step armies must exist to harass and steal areas in other locations. Every game is decided by naval power or the lack thereof. Rhodes and Athens are extremely important, as is any province which yields a fleet. Naval power denies your opponents options.

**All:** It is very important to be second, because the leading player is always harassed and harried at every turn by the group as a whole. Usually one wins by being second and making a "move" while the others are still picking the carcass of the former

leader. Take as much as you can without the risk of fighting.

### Strategy By Turn

**Turn 1:** Define your center of operations and immediate sphere of influence. Arrange a juncture of your two major armies and give the best general control of all your Macedonians, all your elephants and some token mercenaries to get to eight stacking points. Use this force to stake out your center of operations which should include at least one major city. Try to get a hold of fleets, or the treasure cities, or the entire east edge of map in case you get the elephant card. If someone else is vying for the same center of operations as you are, try to convince him to go elsewhere by treaty or declaration of intent to let him escape or you escape peaceably. Grab Heracles and/or Alexander for the future.

**Turn 2:** Turn order is important. Be aware of the point position of the two top VP contenders. A lot of games are lost because the second place guy wins due to being out of contact with all the other guys while two guys succeed in wasting the first place guy. It is not that big a deal to be the Usurper in the third turn, as Legitimacy will probably only be a factor for two players at most by then.

**Turn 3:** Most games end in this turn. It is extremely important that the player with Heracles is you or the guy with the least VP + Legitimacy total. Sometimes one actually earns a victory, but more often it is handed to one by the actions of the other players in a strange train wreck of events stacked upon each other.

**Turn 4:** It is extremely important that the player with Alexander is you or the guy with the least VP + Legitimacy total.

**Turn 5:** Now it is strictly a territorial grabfest.

