

Gemfire FAQ/Strategy Guide

by admtnaka

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Gemfire (SNES)

A Guide by Greg Hartman

Contact: good_catholic_boy /at/ yahoo /dot/ com
aolim: goodcatholicboy9

-if you are lame, don't bother contacting me
-if using email, please indicate in the subject that you are asking me about this guide. very rarely do i bother opening emails from people i don't know that have blank subject lines. If contacting me via my aol screen name, be warned that i check it sporadically so I very well might not get your message. Email probably works best.
-the only language i can speak with any degree of clarity is english. please, if you are contacting me, do so in english (although if you require an answer that is only half-intelligible, german might work also). definitely do not bother emailing me in any other language; i won't even respond.

Version History

Version 1.0 (8/15/04)

-first version - it ain't perfect, but what is in this life?

Version 1.01 (8/19/04)

-proofreading, some slight error corrections

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I. Preface

Gemfire is an early Super Nintendo strategy game released by Koei that allows a player to control a specific faction in a fantasy-styled war simulation environment. A player can control any number of ruling families that are in rebellion against the tyrannical Lankshire family, the evil and oppressive empire that has terrorized the people.

The game differs slightly from traditional strategy games by including a

kind of wildcard in the form of 6 different gems. Each gem allows the holder to summon its particular spirit for use in battle. The game also adds some variety by including several different monsters and mercenaries that a ruler can hire for use in battle.

Overall, Gemfire is a relatively enjoyable simulation game that is not extremely hard just to pick up and play for a short while. Hopefully, this guide will make it even easier.

II. Starting the Game

There are four different scenarios from which to choose. In each successive situation, the Lankshire family becomes slightly weaker and the rebellious factions become slightly stronger in terms of overall strength. Your choices are as follows:

1. Erin and Ander: The first scenario - here, the Lankshire family is by far the most dominant force, controlling a large portion of the map and the extremely powerful dragon gem. You can play as the following families:
 - a. Lyle - Probably the easiest ruler you can pick to play as here. They start fairly secure in the northwest corner of the map and have a good chance of eliminating the Chrysalis family early on to secure a second (albeit lousy) gem. Ander himself is a very powerful ruler, and the Pluvius gem is second only to the Dragon.
 - b. Blanche - These guys are a very close second to the Lyle family. The Zendor is a second only to Pluvius as far as controllable rulers' gems go, and Erin has almost identical stats to Ander. Not being able to easily steal the Chrysalis family's garbage gem barely hurts them at all.
 - c. Coryll - This family is a little more difficult than the Lyle or Blanche. Lars is not quite as good as either Erin or Ander, and their gem, the Emperyon, will have a much harder time standing up to the dragon. They start close to the Flax family, which gives them a chance to possibly snatch up another gem, but my experience has taught me that 9 times out of 10 Lankshire will beat them to it. Still playable, but probably not the best idea for your first time.
 - d. Chrysalis - These guys are the scenario's losers. Garth is only an average ruler, and his gem, the Chylla is pretty much the worst. To make matters worse, he has to expand outwards through Ander's domain before he can do anything else. Really the only advantage they have is that their state's island is very safe from invasion and relatively easy from which to expand outwards.
2. Flax's shame: Here, the Coryll family has been eliminated and Lyle and Blanche have gained some power. There is a new family, the Tates, in state 11. You can play as the following families:
 - a. Lyle - Ander has gained a state and a little bit of domestic abilities. He has a good starting position, and, with the power of the Pluvius, is still the best playable ruler.
 - b. Blanche - Erin has also gained a state and some war ability. He has a slightly weaker position than Ander, but is still a close second.

- c. Flax - Having defeated the Coryll family, Erik has a somewhat secure position from which to expand. The main problem is, of course, that any advances he makes will have to be into Lankshire territory. The relatively weak Scylla doesn't help him much here, although there are worse gems. Not the best choice for a beginner.
 - d. Molbrew - Prince Leander has gained a territory since the first scenario, but he has a very weak gem in Skulryk and not much in the way of talented officers. He can also make for a tough play.
3. Terian's War: This scenario has relocated the Tate family to the far west of the country, and eliminates the Chyrnalis and Molbrew families. Erin and Ander both gain some territory, and the Tordin family springs up in the south. Of those you can play:
- a. Lyle - There isn't much new to be said here. The Lyle family has gained control of some new lands as well as the Chylla gem, which serves as a worthy backup to the Pluvius. They are still the best choice out there.
 - b. Blanche - Erin has gained the Skulryk gem as his backup, and still represents the next strongest choice.
 - c. Tate - Terian is in basically the same position he was in the prior scenario, except that he has relocated to the land formerly of the Molbrew family. The Empyron is a powerful enough gem for him to do some damage.
 - d. Tordin - These guys are the losers of the scenario. They start with no gem at all, and are on the fringes of the Lankshire family's lands. It'll take some skill (and a lot of hired units) for them to fight their way out.
4. Gemfire: This is the final scenario, and the one where the King is the weakest. Erin and Ander are very powerful. Of those you can play:
- a. Lyle - Basically the same as the prior scenario, except for the addition of a new territory. By this point in the game, Ander is more powerful than the King himself.
 - b. Blanche - Erin is roughly equal in power to Ander, as usual. His brother, Pender, has defected to the Lankshire family.
 - c. Tudoria - More or less a repeat of the Flax family with a different name. The Scylla will help them a lot, however, since they will probably tangle with Terian before they engage the Lankshire family's real strength.
 - d. Divas - Loryn, a former servant of the king, has taken up the role of loser in this scenario. With no gem, they are going to need a lot skill in order to win. Their best bet is tricking Pender to switch to their side.

Once you pick your ruler, you will be given a brief commentary by a few of your officers about the current war state. You will then be asked to choose an advisor. Whomever you pick makes almost no difference at all, since they all basically say the same thing with slightly different prose.

Having chosen these options you will next see the world map and, eventually, your own turn will come about.

III. State Commands

Upon your turn you will be presented with your particular state's info screen. It lists the following statistics from top to bottom, left to right.

- a. Gold - The amount of gold in the state. The max is 999. Gold is used to hire troops or monsters (and to pay their salaries), for investing in your state's growth, or to buy food. Gold is collected in September as a function of your city's economy and people's loyalty.
- b. Food - The amount of food in the state. The max is 999. You use food primarily to feed your army while it is in the field, but can also sell it for cash or give it to your people to raise their loyalty. Your army collects food in September as a result of taxes on harvests (a function of your state's farmland development).
- c. Troops - The amount of soldiers in your state. The max is 999. You (obviously) use soldiers to invade neighboring territories. You gain soldiers by drafting or through specific events. The plague or other disasters will lower your troop count.
- d. People's loyalty - The loyalty of the people in this territory. The higher this value, the more taxes you will collect. You raise it by giving food to the people. A disaster, such as the plague, will lower it. The max is 100.
- e. Farm - The development of your state's farmland. The higher this value, the more taxes you will collect in September from your harvest. You can increase this value by spending money to develop the farmland. It decreases as the result of warfare or a disaster, such as a flood, hitting your territory. The max is 200.
- f. Protection - The protection of your state from natural disasters. The higher this value, the less damage your state will suffer as a result of a disaster. You can raise this value by investing gold to develop it. It decreases in the event of warfare or a disaster. The max is 200.

The Commands

There are 4 basic categories of commands for a state. Broadly, these are Military, Domestic, Diplomatic, and Information and are symbolized by a sword and shield, a statehouse, a flag, and a knight, respectively. An * next to a command indicates that using the command expends the district's turn for the month.

A. Military

1. * Attack a neighboring state. You will have to specify the number of soldiers you want to send, as well as how much food to bring along with them. Food (obviously) feeds your army in the field. If you run out, you will lose the battle, so make sure to bring enough. It costs roughly 22 gold per 100 soldiers you are going to deploy. In my experience, battles (against the computer, at least) rarely, if ever, exceed five days in length - keep this in mind when deploying your army. See the section on warfare commands for more information.

2. * Recruit soldiers. This will hire soldiers immediately from your current state. Each soldier costs 2 gold. There are no adverse effects after recruiting soldiers.
3. * Move troops. Move a specified amount of soldiers to a neighboring friendly state.
4. * Hire monsters. Hires a fifth unit of monsters or mercenaries. The amount of money you pay up front is the same amount of quarterly pay the unit will demand. For example, if you pay an ogre 50 gold to hire him, you will also pay him 50 gold every season to retain his services. If you cannot afford to pay a unit's maintenance costs, he/they will desert you.

B. Domestic

1. * Develop. You have two choices here, cultivation or protection. Both cost 10 gold and will raise the respective value anywhere from 2-5 depending on your governor's political/domestic ability (the one that looks like a sheet of paper). Repeatedly developing your territories is virtuous in Gemfire, and can result in random events occurring that will either raise your officer's abilities or improve your state.
2. Trade. This command allows you to trade food (either buying or selling) with the local merchant. Prices can either be "high," "average," or "low." If you think back to your introduction to economics class, you will probably remember to buy low and sell high.
3. * Give food. Distribute food to your peasants in an effort to earn their loyalty. The higher your officer's charm, the greater the increase in loyalty will be.
4. * Transport. Move goods to another city under your family's command.

C. Diplomacy

1. * Ally. Forge an alliance with another family. You and your ally will not be able to attack each other. You can break the alliance at any time with the break alliance command, which is also listed here. Besides mutual non-aggression, there is no other advantage to allying yourself with another power. The Lankshire family does not enter into alliances.
2. * Negotiate
 - a. Defection. Try to trick another family's officer to switch sides and join your force. If you select a family's capital, you can recruit any officer who has yet to be deployed. This command works very well and should be used often early in the game to recruit a pool of officers from the Lankshire family. If you recruit a lord, control of his state will switch to your faction.
 - b. Surrender. Try to force another family to surrender to you. This only works if they are quite weak and you are quite powerful. Many of the very powerful rulers (Erin or Ander, for example) probably will not surrender.
3. * Sabotage. This command attempts to lower the quality of a

neighboring state. If the commanding officer of the state has a high domestic ability, this command is more likely to fail. Sabotaging is vastly inferior to plundering.

4. * Plunder. This command lets you steal a percentage (a large percentage) of food and gold from a neighboring province. The higher your abilities are in comparison to the leader of the target states the higher the chances for success. This command is a great way to increase your gold or food in a pinch.

D. Information (or miscellaneous commands)

1. View. Lets you view any state in the land for free. Once you select the state you will also be given the following options.

- a. One - view the data of one officer in this family. The number next to the officer's name indicates the state in which he currently resides. Any officer not currently ruling a territory as lord will have your capital listed as his home state. There are four abilities in which an officer can be rated (three if he is not a ruler).

- i. Domestic/Political ability (represented by a slip of paper) - this value shows how proficient an officer is at developing either the protection or cultivation of a province, as well as how well he avoids domestic type plots (such as sabotage).

- ii. War ability (represented by a sword and shield) - this value shows how proficient an officer is at fighting in the field. An officer with high war ability will have sturdier troops that will inflict more and take less damage when in combat.

- iii. Charm (represented by a heart) - this value affects how well an officer can win the loyalty of his subjects when he distributes food. I think it might also affect the success of diplomatic commands such as defections and alliances, but I am less sure about this.

- iv. Fame (ruler only - represented by a little badge) - this shows how famous your ruler is throughout the land on a scale of 0-100. This value might have some effect on surrendering or defections, but I am unsure about this. It goes up as you conquer more land or as positive random events occur.

- b. Many - views all the family's officers. A large crown indicates that the officer is the ruler, a small crown indicates the officer is a lord (ie rules a state) and a helmet signifies that the officer is not currently assigned to rule anywhere. Hitting A will toggle pages if there are more than one.

- c. Land - view all the lands currently controlled by this family. All of the info here has the same labels as it does on the state info screen. A shield indicates that a province is the capital of your empire, whereas two cross swords indicates a province ruled by a lord. A picture of a flag means that there is currently no lord assigned to the territory, but that you are ruling it from another location. This is generally bad, because your stats will be lowered greatly in any province you rule that is not the capital. A picture of a tower indicates that a territory is currently entrusted to the care of its governor.

d. 5th Unit - view all the fifth units currently employed by the state. The number next to the flexing soldier indicates the strength (in either numbers, or, in the case of gems, the HP) of the unit. The number below is the quarterly salary currently paid to the unit. Generally, the better the unit, the higher the salary. A graph to the right indicates the range of the unit. The areas that are red indicate areas where the unit can attack if positioned in the center. A Gem will sometimes have a number listed next to its name. This indicates how many months must pass before it can be used again, as a gem can only be used once every three months. You can't view the fifth units of a foreign state without using the search command.

2. Change lord. This command allows you to change the current lord of any state underneath your control. Once you pick a state you'll be asked who you want to rule the territory. You get three choices:

a. You - your ruler will rule the state from afar (and suffer stat penalties). Generally, you do not want to do this unless you don't have enough vassals to rule all your states or you are trying to quickly build up your ruler's stats by having him rule many states at once (see the tips/faq section).

b. Lord - the lord of another state will change the state he rules to this one. Lords can only govern one state at a time. The lord of this state will then rule the state the second officer is vacating.

c. Vassal - a vassal who is currently not ruling any other state will assume control of this province.

3. Entrust - This command allows you to delegate control of a state to its lord. Generally, you do not want to do this to border states unless you are very lazy, because the computer will not impress you with how it chooses to govern your provinces. The cancel command allows you to regain control of an area that is currently entrusted to its lord.

4. * Search - This allows you to investigate another enemy controlled province to determine what fifth units are currently stationed there. Sometimes the use of this command will result in you finding a rare item that will increase the abilities of an officer. It costs 5 gold to use this command, and it expends the current state's turn.

IV. Battles

A Battle breaks out (not surprisingly) when one army invades the state of another family. The attacker (in red) begins on the left and the defender (in blue) on the right. In the top corners of the map are the names of each sides' commanding officer and the total amount of food each army has in its possession. The number in parentheses represents how many more days each side can remain in battle with their current supplies.

Immediately after the battle starts, the total amount of soldiers are divided equally into quarters, with each segment of your army being assigned to four (really three) different units types, as follows.

1. Horsemen - These guys move three spaces instead of two. They attack

adjacently.

2. Archers - Archers have the advantage of being able to attack from long distances, but they have no close range attack at all. They move two spaces.
3. Shield Knights - The units move two spaces and can build fences.
4. Knights - Same as Shield Knights, but with a different avatar.

Battle commands are incredibly simple. You move a unit by selecting it and then designating where you would like them to move. If, at the end of their turn an enemy unit is in their attacking range, you can select that unit and launch an attack on it. Your attack does more damage (and, likewise, you take more damage) based upon the direction from which you attack. A frontal assault does the least damage and leaves your unit open to take the most casualties, whereas a flanking or rear assault can do more damage while limiting damage to the attacker. The game's AI is very, very poor, so you should be able to almost always attack from at least a flank.

Knight units have the added skill of being able to build fences. Fences serve as temporary barricades which prevent any unit incapable of flight from moving onto or through a battlefield square. The more soldiers there are in a unit, the more likely they are to be able to successfully erect a fence.

Any unit that ends their turn next to a fence can attempt to knock it down with the "break" command. Again, the greater the strength of the unit, the higher the chances of successfully knocking down the fence.

You can end your turn, toggle the unit animations, or withdraw your entire army at any time by pressing B and selecting the corresponding command from the menu.

The battle continues until either one side is totally defeated, one side captures the other's flag, or one side runs out of food. After a battle is over, there is a chance that the victorious side will capture the losing commander. The captured general can be either ransomed, released, or banished. Sometimes the other family will refuse to pay the ransom and you can hire the captured officer. Othertimes, the officer will refuse to join you, even after his family has refused to pay the ransom. Banishing an officer removes him from the game completely. Finally, if you capture the head of a family and recruit him the rest of the family will surrender to your army.

V. Fifth Unit Types

*Note: Gems (and the Pastha) have hit points instead of a soldier count. Also note that every time they attack they lose a set amount of hit points (about 10%) regardless of whom they are attacking and what kind of assault it is. The more hit points the gem has when it attacks, the more damage it does. These units cannot be defeated, but rather retreat when they are in danger of possibly being destroyed. Finally, note that gems can only be used once every 3 months.

*Alright, another note: in the descriptions, a range of "adjacent" means

that a unit can attack a unit directly next to it. "Long" means the unit can attack a unit at long distances only (basically an extension of adjacent). "Box" means the unit can attack any unit that is two squares away from it, in any direction. Basically, this means any unit within two squares that isn't either next to or diagonally bordering it. "All" means the unit can attack any unit within two squares of it, including diagonals.

These are the fifth units available in the game:

I. Gems

Name: Dragon

Hit Points: 160

Upkeep: 0

Attack Range: All

Movement: 2

Game's Note:

Commentary: The best fifth unit in the game. The only way to get it, of course, is to conquer the Lankshire family, which generally takes a long time unless you are playing the last scenario. Still though, if you have it, it will be hard to lose.

Name: Pluvius

Hit Points: 160

Upkeep: 0

Attack Range: Box

Movement: 2

Game's Note: The supreme sorcerer

Commentary: The best gem you can possibly start with. Very powerful, and all the dragon has over it is a slightly more flexible range.

Name: Zendor

Hit Points: 150

Upkeep: 0

Attack Range: Box

Movement: 3

Game's Note: Master of Lightning

Commentary: Basically the same as the Pluvius, but better mobility and slightly lower HP. Still a great fifth unit.

Name: Empyron

Hit Points: 140

Upkeep: 0

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 2

Game's Note: Shoots jets of blue fire

Commentary: Not nearly as good as the previous three gems, the Empyron is still a respectable fighter and better than most of what you are going to be hiring. Used correctly, he can match up against almost any other fifth unit.

Name: Scylla

Hit Points: 130

Upkeep: 0

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 2

Game's Note: Sets the winds free

Commentary: Basically the same as the Empyron, just not as powerful.

Name: Chylla

Hit Points: 120

Upkeep: 0

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 3

Game's Note: Unleashes a deadly chill

Commentary: The Chylla...isn't that great. Her low hit points and inability to strike from a distance make her pretty much the worst gem. Just about all she has going for her is that she is free, which isn't much.

Name: Skulryk

Hit Points: 110

Upkeep: 0

Attack Range: Box

Movement: 3

Game's Note: Blows a cloud of poison

Commentary: Well, the long range attacks make the Skulryk slightly better than the Chylla, but he is still pretty lousy. He has a very low amount of hit points, so the amount of damage he does is always pretty crummy.

II. Other units

Name: Pastha

Hit Points: 160

Upkeep: 0

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 2

Game's Note: Fights for moral rulers

Commentary: You can't hire a Pastha, but if you develop your state for several turns in a row, eventually one will volunteer to fight for you. Pasthas work like gems in that they have hit points, but will only fight one battle before leaving for good. Pasthas are quite powerful and make a very good fifth unit, but are still slightly weaker than the Pluvius or Dragon, due to their limited range.

Name: Ogre

Hit Points: 100

Upkeep: 50 gold/month

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 2

Game's Note: Club-swinging giant

Commentary: Well, the ogre isn't a bad fifth unit in battle, but he's hardly great. He is hardly a good deal at 50 gold per season, so I would recommend passing on him.

Name: Lizards

Strength: 110

Upkeep: 60

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 3?

Game's Note: Legendary fire beasts

Commentary: Not really worth the pricetag. I'd pass.

Name: Bugbear

Strength: 100

Upkeep: 30

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 3

Game's Note: Throws enemy into a panic

Commentary: Similar to the Ogre, but still not a great choice.

Name: Wyvern

Strength: 150

Upkeep: 60

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 3 (flying)

Game's Note: Dragon with deadly wings

Commentary: Not bad at all. A little expensive, and probably not the ideal unit with which to challenge the dragon, but still a good choice. It can also fly over obstacles on the battlefield, which is also pretty useful.

Name: Skeletons

Strength: 100

Upkeep: 20

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 2

Game's Note: Sword-bearing skeletons

Commentary: Well, you get what you pay for. Among the worst fifth units in the game, skeletons are better than nothing and have a low upkeep cost. Early in the game they are at least survivable if nothing else is available, but later on they suck.

Name: Lancers

Strength: 180

Upkeep: 50

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 3

Game's Note: Fearless footsoldiers

Commentary: Lancers are a very powerful unit in terms of numbers, and are quite a good deal at only 50 gold/season. The problem is that early in the game when your ruler's fame is low they will probably desert you immediately after you hire them. If they'll stick around though, they're among the best.

Name: Orcs

Strength: 100

Upkeep: 20

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 3

Game's Note: Axe-wielding brutes

Commentary: Again, cheap but weak. For some reason it seems as though orks are the most likely to go on a rampage (damaging your state) of all the fifth units, but it might be my imagination. Only use these guys if you absolutely must.

Name: Pikemen

Strength: 150

Upkeep: 40

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 3

Game's Note: Zealous crusaders

Commentary: Not a bad price for what you get. Again, the biggest problem is they'll desert you just as easily as any other mercenary group, which make them harder to use until late in the game when your family has more fame.

Name: Olog-Hai

Strength: 110

Upkeep: 30

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 2

Game's Note: Sharp-clawed savages

Commentary: Basically, a better version of Orcs. If you can afford the extra gold, there's no reason not to prefer them. They also are quite likely to terrorize your state by rampaging.

Name: Spearmen

Strength: 150

Upkeep: 20

Attack Range: Long

Movement: 3

Game's Note: Spear-heaving mercenaries

Commentary: Definitely a bargain at the price. If you have the fame to keep them and need a fifth unit, they're a very good choice.

Name: Fachan

Strength: 100

Upkeep: 40

Attack Range: All

Movement: 3

Game's Note: Rock-heaving cyclops

Commentary: A very interesting unit, and the only unit in the entire game that can be attacked head on by a melee unit, then just walk around them and get a rear assault. It does have a rather low HP, so it's really not super useful, but i still like it for some reason.

Name: Gunners

Strength: 150

Upkeep: 40

Attack Range: Long

Movement: 3

Game's Note: Expert cannoneers

Commentary: Similar to spearmen, but a little more costly. Not bad, but not great either.

Name: Warriors

Strength: 180

Upkeep: 60

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 3

Game's Note: Elite Highlanders

Commentary: Another great fifth unit, but costly and eager to desert you. If you have high fame, however, there's no reason not to use them.

Name: Gargoyles

Strength: 120

Upkeep: 40

Attack Range: Adjacent

Movement: 3 (flying)

Game's Note: Winged monsters

Commentary: Not a bad choice, but not great either. At least they can fly.

Name: Shooters

Strength: 150

Upkeep: 35

Attack Range: Long

Movement: 3

Game's note: Sharpshooting mercenaries

Commentary: Similar to Gunners, but a tad cheaper. Not bad.

VI. Random Events

For the most part, you get "good" events if you develop your territory and give to the people. If you ignore these tasks, you get "bad" events. The only exception to this is the "The X went on rampage, ravaging the land" and natural disaster events, which are totally random. Disaster events occur only in specific seasons, whereas other random events can take place between any month. Anyway, here is the list.

I. The "bad" events

1. Flooding - Occurs randomly in June and damages the development of any province in the southeast.
2. Plague - Can occur every quarter randomly and damages any random state.
3. Fires - Occurs randomly in September and can damage any province in the western middle of the country.
4. Heavy Snows - Occurs randomly in December can damage any territory in the far north of the map.
5. Earthquake - Occurs randomly in March and damages any territory in the southwest.
6. Durhan rides through with the shadow of death - lowers the protection in your state.
7. Black Annis frightened the people of x - lowers the people's loyalty in the affected province.
8. A Banshee brought an evil omen to x - lowers the protection in the affected state.
9. Micheviouis pixies dug up the fields of x - lowers the cultivation value of the affected state.
10. X went on a rampage, ravaging the land - lowers all the developmental values of the current province.

II. The "good" events

1. A unicorn empowered the ruler of x - increases the affected province's lord's political ability and war.
2. Kind recaps cast good spells in x - increases the protection of the affected province.
3. A captured Leprechaun left a pot of gold in x - gives the affected state a small amount of gold.
4. A gwraig brought a charm to the ruler of x - the affected state's lord's charm increases
5. A far gorta gathered food for x - the affected state gets a small increase in food.
6. A fairy rounded up troops for x - the affected state gets a small increase in troops.

7. An elvish troubadour sang songs of praise in x - the people's loyalty of the affected state increases.

8. A Pastha offered to fight for x - you gain a pastha as a fifth unit, free of charge.

VII. Some Tips

1. Generally, you are much, much better off running your provinces yourself rather than entrusting them to their lords. The AI for entrusted territories assuredly won't impress anyone.

2. Take advantage of the fact that gems can only be used once every three months, especially if you are fighting with the Lankshire family. Take note of the first time they are involved in a battle and then try to attack them within three months of that time. This way, they won't be able to use their gem and will have to resort to either using no fifth unit or a hired monster that is probably not nearly as powerful. You will have a huge advantage fighting with your gem if they don't have theirs.

3. The battle AI is incredibly simple. Basically, every enemy unit will simply bum rush your flag. This makes it quite easy to score flanking and rear attacks on your opponents, since they don't care at all about leaving themselves exposed.

4. If you want to power your ruler up quickly, simply let him rule several provinces. Although he won't be a powerful governor, he can keep developing the states and will still get the bonuses if a unicorn or gwraig empowers him. You can max a ruler out this way fairly quickly.

5. Play against another human. It's more fun that way.

VIII. Legal

This guide is copyright 2004 by Greg Hartman.

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