

Naval Panic Postmortem Notes

I created this game for a class challenge. The challenge was to create a game based on WWI which could not involve territorial acquisition. In the more challenging levels of the assignment, it couldn't involve conquer or destroy nor direct conflict with other players. I chose a collecting card game and a race-to-the finish mechanic to meet the most challenging level of the assignment. However, I found that the easier assignment, which allowed conflict, was more fun to play.

In prototyping this game, some things were notable about the design

- Strategy: Going for safety in the variation game may keep you safe, but you lose the opportunity to take out several ships on the way.
- U-Boats, being the most versatile, may actually be the greatest asset, although the Light Cruiser seemed to be so at first.
- The ability to move diagonally actually revealed some interesting prospects as well as rapid movement on the board.
- Getting near to port without actually going into port puts some of your best ships at risk. For instance, it seemed good strategy to move out the Light Cruisers first because they were fast and the 20-sided dice obviously at greater advantage in battle. However, moving them first meant less spaces to travel through to get to port and an increased risk of losing the ship in battle.
- The card game becomes tedious if the game is just between 2 people. In this case, perhaps the cards could be dealt out and ships simply placed instead of playing the card game.
- The race-to-the-finish game mechanic really altered the pace of the game. The card game was more fast-paced and then the game settles into a slower strategy and luck-based race mechanic. It could be made quicker if both players or teams roll their chosen die and move the ships at the same time instead of being turn-based. This keeps the pace up and adds some increased strategy. For instance, what happens if you move and block another player's movement at the same time?

The most valuable lesson I learned from this assignment came in the prototyping which was not actually a part of the class assignment. Prior to prototyping this game, I pondered it for 2 days and thought I had a solid design free of problems. After prototyping, I made rule clarifications and learned that more constraints or more complex rules do not necessarily make a game more fun to play.