

Victory, Glory, Agony, Defeat!

August 22nd, 2026

Issue #1



Hither came a newsletter! Just a little something extra to fill the empty moments of your life with some loose thoughts and scattered ramblings about what I believe to be the greatest play by mail game of all time – [Hyborian War](#).

Opinions on such things vary widely, of course. There was **StarMaster**. There was **The Tribes of Crane**. Down through the ages of the 20th and 21st centuries, there have been many a different PBM game. Hundreds upon hundreds upon hundreds of them, and a wide range of different themes running the gamut, offering a vast selection that truly staggers the imagination to this very day.

Many of the greatest play by mail games of all time now lie discarded in the waste bin of history. Some still survive, and **Hyborian War** is one of those that remain with us, its legacy stretching some four full decades, now. And all this time, it has been run by the same venerable PBM company, **Reality Simulations, Inc.**, or **RSI** for short, as familiar to its players as any play by mail gaming company has ever been.

Victory, Glory, Agony, Defeat! welcomes you to this, our very first issue. We hope that you enjoy it. We trust that you will. If you don't though, then don't hesitate to raise a ruckus. After all, it might help us to improve, and at the very least, we can print your letter of lamentation and complaint, sharing what you have to say on the subject of **Hyborian War** with all of our readers, of which we have absolutely none, as I type these words in this very first issue of a newsletter that no one other than myself even knows exists (yet).

Issues of this newsletter aren't ever expected to grow beyond the space of a meager few pages, and that's at the very most. It all really just depends on whether I can find words to share and time to spare. With that said, onward now with loose thoughts and scattered ramblings about **Hyborian War**. *Enjoy!*

Changes to The Hyborian Tome Website

Home	Tome Links	PlayByMail.Net	Contact Us
Rulebooks		Victory, Glory, Agony, Defeat!	
RSI's Rulebook for Hyborian War	GrimFinger's Searchable Rulebook for Hyborian War	Hyborian War Winners List (last updated August 10th, 2026)	Newsletter (Coming Soon!)

Imperial Conquest in the Age of Conan

Now you can live the most powerful legend of them all. **HYBORIAN WAR** is a Play-By-Mail game where you control the destiny of the Hyborian Age of Conan. Aquilonia with her Black Dragon knights, slumbering Stygia gathering her wizards, the fantastically helmed armies of Kambulja in the east. Any one of these kingdoms is yours to rule, or choose from over thirty others -- unique and authentically recreated from the Conan series. The absolute gripping power of this world can be yours. Send forth your lords and generals to lead the armies of invasion. Send forth your heroes to adventure, your spies to kidnap nobles, steal secrets, and assassinate your enemies! Decree the policies of your land, giving your subjects good government or bad. Call upon your priests to speak the wisdom of prophecy and council. Command the sorcerous incantations of wizards. Indeed, the tide of war may turn upon their arcane magics. Rule and Conquer! It is an age of empire and the jeweled thrones of the earth await you.

***** Critical Files & Features *****

Order Codes for Hyborian War (HTML)	Starting Characters With Skills of Incredible Magnitude (PDF file)	Imperial-Goals-and-Victory-Conditions (PDF file)
Open Field Loss Acceptance Before Retreat (PDF file)	Brent Ross' NPK Info Spreadsheet (xls file)	Terrain Guide & Victory Compendium (HTML)
Mike Persyn's List of Imperial Troop Types (PDF file)		

HW Game Organizer Toolbox

- [Peace Treaties: Alternatives to the Status Quo \[Project in Progress\]](#)
- [Hyborian War Secret Province Goals Randomizer \(1 Province Distance\)](#)
- [Hyborian War Secret Province Goals Randomizer \(2 Provinces Distance\)](#)
- [Randomizer Script # 1 \(Assigns Players to Kingdoms\)](#)
- [Randomizer Script # 2 \(Assigns Sign-Ups to Numerical Choices\)](#)
- [Randomizer Script # 3 \(Assigns Sign-Ups to Player Numbers\)](#)

The God-Queen of RSI

[Visit the Temple of the God-Queen](#)

Hyborian War Fan Pages



The Road of Kings is the largest gathering of Hyborian War players to be found on the Internet. It is a website and forum operated by Crom (Lloyd Barron) located at:

Kingdom Set-Up Reports

Aquilonia	Amazonia	Argos	Asgard
Border Kingdom	Brythunia	Cimmeria	Corinthia
Darfar	Hyperborea	Hyrkania	Iranistan
Juma's Kingdom	Kambulja	Keshan	Khauran
Khitai	Khoraja	Kosala	Koth
Kusan	Kush	Nemedra	Ophir
Pictland	Punt	Shem	Stygia
Tombalku	Turan	Uttara Kuru	Vanaheim
Vendhya	Zamora	Zembabwei	Zingara

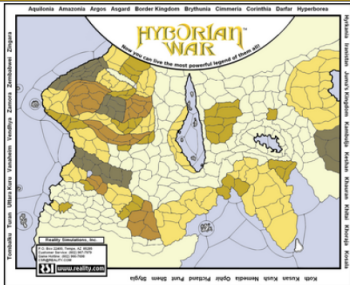
[Blank Command Sheets for all 36 kingdoms \(For issuing turn orders\)](#)

Instant downloads - Just click on the name of the kingdom above to download!
Or click on the link below to download them all in one zipped file.

[All 36 Kingdom Set-up Reports in a single zipped file](#)

War Plans

Aquilonia	Amazonia	Argos	Asgard
Border Kingdom	Brythunia	Cimmeria	Corinthia
Darfar	Hyperborea	Hyrkania	Iranistan
Juma's Kingdom	Kambulja	Keshan	Khauran
Khitai	Khoraja	Kosala	Koth



It's long overdue, but at long last, I have managed to make the rusted wheels of my efforts at maintaining a **Hyborian War** related fan site turn, again – *ever so slowly though my efforts do be!* Shifting a few things around, and adding some new stuff. If you like the site, then you'll probably fall in love with some of the changes. If not, then your thirst for waging war in the Hyborian Age may have toughened your heart and your spirit.

It's far more important that you enjoy playing **Hyborian War** than that you get excited about a website dedicated to that very same game. I promise, I won't hold it against you, if any (or even all) of the recent changes that I have implemented on the site fail to move the needle of your excitement. Thus far, the newest additions to the site are located at or near the top of the page. Some empty slots do exist, but those are mere placeholders for some additional stuff that's currently in the works. *These things take time to bring to fruition.*

Hyborian War Checklist

One very important piece of the much larger puzzle that is **Hyborian War** is the ongoing, persistent absence of a checklist for newcomers to this game. Newbies to Hyborian War lack the familiarity that experience playing the game over an extended period of time invariably brings. I think that a checklist can prove to be a boon to new players of Hyborian War, just by serving as a handy and simple reminder for them to check and make sure that they don't miss something important in whatever set of turn orders that they are working on.

A checklist of this nature should exist in a downloadable and printable format, so that the Hyborian War novice can print it out and check off each box. Such a tool in the arsenal of a new Hyborian War player can, I think, help to alleviate the stress and the worry that can naturally accompany trying to digest a lot of new rules and game mechanics. This **Hyborian War Checklist** should be something that they can fall back on and come to rely upon. I feel that it could be a tool of real and substantial empowerment to those who want to play the game and to do well at the game, yet simultaneously, also be something easy to fill out and quick to be embraced. *In a nutshell, a checklist such as I imagine for Hyborian War could prove to be a godsend to those who develop an urge to play, but don't yet know how.*

I've already begun working on just such a checklist, but a final version of it is still a ways off, yet.

Let the Gods Decide!

Hyborian War is a game of imperial conquest set in the Hyborian Age. It is a game of conquest – *a game of war* – yet, the preferred weapon of choice by players, myself included, is the exact opposite – *peace!* And the vehicle of choice to make that happen is the peace treaty.

Often, it boils down to a matter of survival. Hyborian War's design brings asymmetric warfare to the forefront of players' considerations. Match-ups and comparisons of different kingdoms quickly begin to sink in. Not all kingdoms are military powerhouses. While peace treaties do not impose military parity between kingdoms in the game, they do impose military restraint by also imposing restraint upon player choices and player decisions. You want to invade that bastard, but a treaty that you (the player) never got any real say in all of a sudden binds your hands right along with your kingdom's hands.

Kingdom survival is but one of numerous different reasons why peace treaties are resorted to in Hyborian War. Me? I'm not guided by RSI's built-in victory ranking scheme, for the very reason that I choose to not think in terms of winning or losing per RSI's way of thinking about the game. Rather, I choose to think for myself, and I choose to redefine the battlespace.

It is for the very reason that Hyborian War is a game of war that I came long ago to view peace treaties in the game as instruments of war. Certainly, peace treaties in Hyborian War are instruments of national policy. They factor heavily into the foreign relations between kingdoms, as well into the relations between players in the realm of player-to-player diplomacy. If my very first game of Hyborian War, HW-85 as Asgard, taught me anything, at all, it is that peace treaties in the game sit on par with nuclear weapons, here in the real world. All too well, I know – *and remember* – the grim and gruesome feeling of getting locked down by peace treaties - *turn after turn after turn, and entire sets of war seasons, one right after the other.*

Peace treaties in Hyborian War do not punish kingdoms. To the contrary, they punish players, and players are the ones who decide what the kingdoms get to try and do, from turn to turn to turn. Hyborian War is a game, so the kingdoms, themselves, have no actual national will. Rather, there is the will of the players, and it tends to be unilateral in nature. Players think nothing of sending their troops and their characters off to die. These are not real lives that are at stake, which makes it all too easy for players to embrace a very casual approach to it all.

The *real* challenge in Hyborian War is not the different kingdoms. Instead, it is the different players. None of the kingdoms think. All of the players do. Kingdoms don't have emotions that can be manipulated. Players do. In war, emotions can induce vulnerabilities into the equation. They provide levers that can be pulled. They provide actionable means to an end.

While my enemies pursue victory, I pursue their defeat. Only one kingdom in the average, typical game of Hyborian War can achieve victory (unlike in team games in organized games). I don't have to defeat your kingdom entirely. I simply have to impose cumulative burdens sufficient to prevent your kingdom from being the one that wins.

Personally, I don't care if your kingdom ravages my kingdom and lays waste to it. In order to do that, though, you first have to overcome the omnipresent possibility of me sending characters to negotiate peace with your kingdom. And did I mention that double-decker sandwich, that Dagwood of Peace-Making Mega Bombs, full tribute? *Yeah, baby!*

Peace treaties can try a man's patience. They get under players' skin. They make players despair. These are fine and dandy things, but what I like the most about peace treaties in Hyborian War is they also provide a catalyst that causes players to think. If you despair and give up, then you've already lost, because you are defeated where it counts - *inside*.

The Hyborian War rulebook describes the role of the player, thusly: ***Thou, however, art ageless and eternal, a spirit of war, determined to mix thy passions with those of the age until the cup of glory hath been drunk to the lees.***

If you are a spirit of war in Hyborian War, and your spirit for war gets broken, where then does that leave you? Indeed, where does that leave your kingdom? When things in Hyborian War don't go your way, what then? O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou, Romeo player to thy kingdom, Juliet?

If players whine about anything in Hyborian War, it's peace treaties. They bog the game down. What good is a game about war, when you can't wage war? When some artificial construct that the player on the receiving end gets no real say in brings weeks or months of well-laid plans to a grinding halt, you want to talk about frustration?

Frustration naturally attends the waging of war, one upon the other. Frustration goes hand-in-hand with the prosecution of war against one's enemies. Irony of ironies, it is peace that causes the most frustration in Hyborian War. But it is a frustration felt by players, not a frustration felt by kingdoms.

And for those many Hyborian War players who have waited days, weeks, months, years, and even decades for RSI to "fix" or to otherwise do something about peace treaties, how's that been working out for you? There's plenty more of that just waiting on you.

Unless, of course, you take matters into your own hands. Unless you take your kingdom's destiny in your own hands. And me, the guy who doles out peace treaties like candy, and whom has no compunction, whatsoever, about frequent and heavy resort to peace treaties in-game? I've figured out a path forward that, I think, holds considerable potential to bring relief to those players whose gaming souls feel downtrodden by peace treaties negotiated without mercy.

Let the Gods Decide! It's a script that does a lot of the heavy lifting for players. It's intended purpose is to shift players away from their longstanding reliance upon RSI's almost half-century approach to peace treaties. And because it's quasi-automated, it's quick and easy to use. What it is not is a magic cure for everything that you may hate about peace treaties in Hyborian War. What it is, I believe, is a better way forward. It's a real and genuine alternative of substance to being eternally at the mercy of Hyborian War's peace-heavy approach to the waging of war by players (via kingdoms) with one another.

Now, *Let the Gods Decide!* may not be for everybody, but it just might be something of merit. It just may be an alternative that could bring some real relief to peace treaties flying like bullets in games of Hyborian War.

Let the Gods Decide! is a script that tempers players' instinct to scratch that itchy trigger finger. In Hyborian War, players often suffer from trigger finger. They'll reach for a peace treaty and they'll reach for full tribute at the drop of a hat. Negotiate peace, first, and think, second. They'll bog the game down on a dime, without regard for their running the risk of increasing the boredom factor for other players, their fellow players.

The problems with peace treaties in Hyborian War are many, but it isn't as though there is only one way to approach the issue of how best to deal with peace treaties and their dulling effect on players' interest.

Sometimes, players get so frustrated with peace treaties in Hyborian War, that it feels like nothing short of divine intervention will ever fix the problem. *Well, at long last, the gods of the Hyborian Age seem to have heard your cries.*