TIME AGENT
Rules of Play and Reference

1. INTRODUCTION

Time Agent is a game of time travel for 2-6 players, ages 12 to adult, set in an imaginary universe. Each player plays one or more of six galactic races attempting to alter events in the past in order to reshape the present to their liking. The game ends when the technology Time Travel is destroyed. The winner is the player with the most victory points.

2. COMPONENTS AND CONCEPTS

A complete copy of **Time Agent** includes:
• 16" x 22" game board
• 360 die cut counters (1 sheet of 240 and 1 sheet of 120 counters)
• 95 die cut hexagonal tiles (2 sheets)
• 6 Racial Information/Play Summary cards
• 6 Reference Cards
• 55 colored Time Reversal disks
• 2 six-sided dice
• 2 Let's Play! rules introduction sheets
• 1 four-page Galactic Guide/Player's Notes/Planning Map
• 1 four-page Rules folder (what you're reading)

If any items are damaged or missing, please write:

TimJim/Prism Games
Attn: Time Agent
1010 El Camino Real #140
Menlo Park, CA 94025

2.1 The Board

The playing board consists of two main areas:
• The "cone of time" representing the past, upon which 95 tiles depicting the past will be placed facedown during setup. During the game, players will maneuver their agents and squads to explore and control these tiles.
• A status display area in which are located 36 Status Indicators, summarizing the events and technologies in the game. Each status circle is surrounded by 12 numbers, indicating the effects of reversing/unreversing an event or connecting/disconnecting a technology. The solid black numbers represent resources and victory points that each race already possesses at the start of the game. These are **lost** when events are reversed or technologies Disconnected. The outlined numbers represent resources and victory points that are **gained** when events are reversed or technologies Disconnected; thus, they represent opportunities available at the beginning of the game.

The cone of time is an abstract representation of the passage of time, extending from the original inventions of seven critical technologies in the past to the present. These original inventions are printed on the board. The cone is divided into 15 setup zones, containing hexes. At the start of the game, the tiles for each zone are mixed and placed facedown on the appropriate hexes.

In addition to these two areas, the board also contains a track used to mark the current Victory Points (VPs) and Resource Points (RPs) for each of the six races in the game; boxed areas for each race's agents, squads, time machines and current treasury; several cost summaries; two event keys; a player order track; two arrows indicating the costs of traveling back into the past; and two facing guides for determining randomly the initial orientation of tiles when they are first flipped faceup.

2.2 Tiles

The 95 tiles placed facedown on the cone of time during setup depict the past. Each tile illustrates the dissemination of several of the seven critical technologies by color-coded paths. Some tiles also have printed legends designating the occurance of Events or Inventions in the past.

Inventions represent additional sources of the same technologies as the seven original inventions printed on the map, and are associated with the color coded paths. Events, unlike inventions, are **not** associated with these paths.

2.3 Playing Pieces

Each race has two different types of operatives it can send back into the past:
• Agents, which tend to be good at staying hidden from other races.
• Squads, which tend to be good at searching out and attacking operatives belonging to other races. Squads cost more to buy initially and are more expensive to move into the past.

Each race also has three informational counters — one used to mark the race's current resource points; one to mark a race's current victory points; and one used to indicate when the race will act in a given turn.

In addition to the racial counters, there are three other counter types:
• Time Machines. Each race starts with one or more time machines and may buy additional machines. Each turn, a time machine may be used either to maintain an operative already in the past; to send an operative back into the past; or to research (peek at) facedown tiles in the past.
• Galactic Credits. Each turn every race receives income in galactic credits equal to its current resource points, which may be spent on purchases and various game actions. Galactic credit counters are treated as money and players may freely make change when spending them.
• Event Altered Chits. These chits are used to mark which events or technologies have been changed during a player's turn.

2.4 Playing Aids

Two sets of cards are provided as playing aids:
• Racial Information/Play Summary Cards. The front of each of these cards illustrates and briefly describes one of the six races and its key objectives in the game. The backs are common to all six races and summarize the sequence of play, setup information, agent and squad characteristics, costs, and scenarios for fewer than six players.
• Reference Cards. The front of these cards summarizes the events and technologies in the game, presenting in tabular form the information in the map status display area. The back of these cards lists the combined odds of both finding and eliminating an opposing agent or squad for various mixes of attacking units.

2.5 Terms

Active Player: The player currently taking his or her player turn.

Operative: An agent or squad belonging to a race. One time machine is required to send each operative into the past or, once there, to maintain that operative in the past.

Technology: One of the seven technologies whose dissemination through time (represented in the game by color coded paths) has been tightly controlled. Races gain and lose Resource Points and Victory Points as technologies are Connected and Disconnected. Technologies propagate only through certain map zones as indicated on the map. (Exception: Time Travel (red) propagates through all map zones.)

Event: One of the 23 major events which have shaped galactic history. Events (located on tiles) may be reversed or unreversed by sending operatives into the past to do so. Races gain and lose Resource Points and Victory Points as events are reversed and unreversed.

Invention: Either one of the seven "original" inventions printed on the mapboard or one of the eight "secondary" inventions located on tiles. Each invention is associated with a specific technology. Inventions are reversed and unreversed like events but only affect Resource Points and Victory Points if a given technology becomes Connected or Disconnected as a result of the invention being reversed or unreversed.

Technology Status: Each technology is always in one of two states: Connected or Disconnected (as explained in section 9.6). In some cases, due to facedown tiles, technologies will be presumed Connected when in fact they might not actually be Connected. At the beginning of the game, all technologies are presumed to be Connected.

Time Travel technology: One of the seven technologies. When the technology Time Travel is Disconnected, time travel into the past is no longer possible and the game ends. If Time Travel is ever presumed Disconnected (see 9.6), all facedown tiles are flipped up and oriented to determine whether Time Travel actually is Disconnected or not.

Timestream: One of the six color-coded "spokes" on tiles which make up technology paths. Each spoke contains either one technology; one technology plus Time Travel (red path); or just Time Travel. Note that white represents the absence of a timestream.

Technology Path: If a path of connected timestreams can be traced from an unreversed invention to that technology's Status Indicator, then the technology is considered Connected. When tracing paths, assume that the technology connects through all facedown tiles, provided they are in map zones that the technology propagates through (see board).

Time Reversal Disk: The transparent red disk placed on event or invention legends to indicate that the given event or invention has been reversed and on Status Indicators to indicate that an event has been reversed or a technology has been Disconnected.

Movement to the Past by Time Travel: Movement of an agent from the Present to any tile in the past, paying the cost indicated on the board. Squads pay 5 credits more than agents when moving into the past.

Movement within the Past: An operative already in the past may move at no cost from tile to tile along a path of connected timestreams belonging to a single technology.

Opposing Operative: An operative who has declared opposition to the active player in a specific tile during the Check Status step. The active player may not alter an event or invention nor rotate that tile if any opposing operatives remain during the Alter Event/Timestream step.

3. SETUP

Unfold the playing board. Shuffle the tiles for each zone facedown and place them on the hexes in that zone. (Note that the orientation of facedown tiles does not matter since their faceup orientation is determined when they are flipped over.)

Place the galactic credit counters, time machines, event altered chits and time reversal disks near the board for easy access.

If fewer than six are playing, consult the play summary card to determine which races are in the game. Shuffle the racial information cards facedown and draw to determine which player is playing each race.

Each player takes a reference card and the appropriate counters. If copies of the planning map have been made, every player should take one; otherwise players will need paper to take notes.

Place each race's RP and VP markers on the appropriate spots on the resource/victory point track. Place the player order markers on the player order track in decreasing VP order: Buralti, Veneb, Human, Fiolli, Roo, Zytal. Each race begins play with time machines, agents and squads as specified in the setup chart; place unused operatives near the player. Races begin with no galactic credits.

4. SEQUENCE OF PLAY

Time Agent is played in rounds. Each round consists of 5 phases:
- Receive Income
- Reset Time Machines
- Determine Player Order
- Headquarters Phase (performed simultaneously or in player order)
  - Maintain or Return Agents/Squads
  - Purchases
  - Research Past
- Player Turns (performed in player order)
  - Move Agents/Squads
  - Check Opposing Agent/Squad Status
  - Search
  - Combat
  - Alter Events/Timestreams
  - Check Technology Paths
  - Update VPs/Resource Allocations

After all players have finished their player turns, begin another round of play. However, when Time Travel becomes Disconnected, play **immediately** stops. Final technology status is then determined for all technologies; VPs are adjusted; and the player with the highest VP total wins.

5. RECEIVE INCOME

Each player receives income in galactic credits equal to his or her race's current resource points. These are added to any credits left over from previous turns in the race's treasury.

5.1 Galactic credits are **not** gained or lost when a race's resource points rise or fall during a turn (due to events being altered or technologies being Connected or Disconnected). Changes only affect **future** income.

6. RESET TIME MACHINES

All facedown time machines in the game are flipped faceup to their printed sides to indicate that they are once again available for use.

7. DETERMINE PLAYER ORDER

Starting with the player with the **fewest** VPs, each player picks when he or she will go in the player order for that turn, indicating this by placing his or her turn marker on the player order track.

7.1 If two or more players are tied in VPs, roll dice to determine which player will pick first.

7.2 First Turn Rule — On the first turn (only), players take their turns in decreasing VP order: **Buralti, Veneb, Human, Fiolli, Roo, Zytal**.

8. HEADQUARTERS PHASE

In player order, each player performs the following three steps. (If desired to speed play, players may conduct headquarters phases simultaneously. However, any player may request that all players going earlier in the player order complete **all** of their headquarters phases before the requesting player performs any part of his or her headquarters phase.)

8.1 Maintain or Return Agents/Squads

For each agent or squad in the past, the owning player must either return them to the present or flip over a time machine to maintain them in the past. One time machine is required to maintain each agent or squad in the past even if several operatives are located in the same tile.

8.11 Operatives may be brought back to the present (by not maintaining them) from any point in the past, including original invention spaces.

8.12 There is no cost in galactic credits for maintaining an operative in the past (beyond the implicit cost of using a time machine to do so).

8.2 Purchases

Each player may buy additional time machines, agents or squads from the bank, paying 25, 3 or 5 galactic credits respectively, placing these tokens in that race's box on the map.

8.21 The number of counters (agents, squads and time machines) provided should be sufficient for most games; however, this should not be considered a limiting factor on any race's actual purchases. Make extra counters if needed (use the back side of some unused counters).

8.22 Once purchased, there is no additional upkeep cost for agents, squads or time machines. Units may not be sold back to the bank.

8.3 Research Past

After purchases, a player may research the past. For each time machine a player chooses to use for this purpose, he or she may look at up to three facedown tiles, paying 1 credit per tile inspected.

8.31 A time machine used to research the past may not be used for anything else that turn (flip it over to indicate it has been used).

8.32 Researched tiles are paid for and inspected sequentially. (A player may pay for and inspect one tile before deciding which tiles, if any, to inspect next.)

8.33 The orientation of facedown tiles is irrelevant (since they will be randomly rotated when they are flipped faceup).

8.34 Players may take notes on tiles they have looked at. Recording a tile's zone and time travel cost is sufficient to identify any tile uniquely except for the tiles in the outer two rows of zones 4a, 4b and 4c; these can be distinguished by the "*" beside one of these rows (see board).

Alternatively, players may wish to copy the planning map provided and make notes directly upon it.

8.35 A player may freely reinspect tiles he or she has previously seen.

9. PLAYER TURNS

In player order, each player performs **all** the following steps:

9.1 Move Agents/Squads

The active player may move operatives into the past from the present and may move each agent or squad which they previously maintained in

the past (during the Headquarters phase). These two forms of movement are different and a given operative may **not** combine them in the same turn. A player may, however, freely alternate the two types of movement (using different operatives) during the movement step.

Movement into the Past

For each operative moved, the active player flips over an unused time machine, pays the appropriate cost in credits to travel to a specific tile in the past (as indicated on the board), and moves the agent or squad to that tile (see example 1).

If the tile moved to is facedown, the player flips it over and orients it by rolling a die and rotating the tile so that the edge with the heavy black border matches the number rolled as indicated by the Facing Guides printed on the board.

9.11 Squads cost an extra 5 credits (beyond the cost printed on the board) to move into the past.

9.12 This method of travel may be used only to move agents or squads from the present into the past. It may not be used to shift an operative from one tile to another within the past.

9.13 It is not possible to move directly from the present to one of the seven original inventions printed directly on the map. An operative moving to one of these seven spaces must do so from an adjacent tile in the past, as described below.

Movement within the Past

The active player may move each agent or squad that began the movement phase within the past to another tile within the past by moving the operative along a specified timestream. There is no cost in credits to move agents or squads within the past.

To begin movement, the player states which timestream a given agent or squad is moving along. The agent or squad may then be moved from tile to tile provided that the color-coded timestream the operative is moving along is present at the edge of any tile that the operative is **leaving** and present at **both** the entering and exiting edges of any tile that the operative is moving **through** (see example 2).

An operative leaving a tile along a given timestream (which **must** exist at the edge being exited) may **enter** the adjacent tile even if the timestream that the operative is moving along does not exist at the edge of the tile being entered. Thus, an operative may always move to any tile directly adjacent to the one the operative started on (see example 2).

9.14 If an agent or squad enters a facedown tile, the tile is flipped over and oriented as described above. The operative is then placed on that tile, ending movement.

9.15 White paths represent the absence of any technology and may not be used for tracing movement. A Disconnected technology (see 9.6) **may** still be used for tracing movement.

9.16 No agent or squad may enter or pass through any of the 13 technology Status Indicators in the **present** (which are linked to the cone of time by timestreams for the purpose of tracing Connected technologies, as described below).

9.17 An agent or squad may enter (but may not pass through) one of the seven original inventions printed on the map, provided that operative began the movement phase on a tile **adjacent** to the invention.

9.18 An operative starting movement on one of the seven original inventions may exit that space along the appropriate timestream and continue movement normally.

Note that the result of one agent or squad's movement (by flipping over a facedown tile) may affect the movement options available to another operative already in the past.

9.19 All of one race's movement must be performed **before** any status checks, search, combat or altering of events and timestreams. In particular, this implies that an operative may **not** rotate a faceup tile in order to allow another of that player's agents or squads to move through that tile on that same turn.

9.2 Check Opposing Agent/Squad Status

Before altering an event and/or a timestream in a tile, a player must eliminate all opposing operatives in that tile. The Check Status phase is used to determine whether agents or squads belonging to other players are opposing the active player or not.

The active player may ask each player who has agents or squads in any tile where the active player has an operative whether that player is opposing them in that tile. The player asked must answer either "Yes" or "No". The player's answer applies to all operatives that the player has present in that tile.

This process is done one tile at a time in whatever order the active player wishes. When operatives belonging to several players are present in a single tile, the active player may ask those players in any order whether or not they are opposing the active player.

9.21 A given player may state that his or her operatives are not opposing the active player in one tile while opposing the active player in another tile.

9.22 Opposition applies both to altering an event in the tile and to rotating the tile. A given player either opposes both of these activities in a tile or neither of them.

9.3 Search

The active player may search for every agent or squad belonging to other player(s) in a tile with **each** agent or squad that the active player has in that tile.

To search for a given operative, the searching player rolls a die and adds the search value of the agent or squad doing the search. The player owning the unit being searched for rolls a die and adds the hiding value of the targeted unit. If the active player's total is greater than or equal to the target player's total, the target is found. If the active player's total is less than the target's total, the target is not found by that searching unit (see example 2).

9.31 The active player may search for every inactive operative with each agent or squad the active player has in that tile. If a target is found by any searching unit, it is found by **all** active operatives in that tile (even those that previously failed to find the discovered unit).

9.32 A unit found by search is only discovered for the remainder of the active player's turn. It must be found again on subsequent turns.

9.33 Only operatives belonging to the active player may perform searches. Thus, one race may not perform searches for another race.

9.34 A search may be performed whether or not the operative being searched for "opposed" the active player in the Check Status step.

9.4 Combat

Each agent or squad belonging to the active player may attack **every** agent or squad discovered in that tile by the active player during the preceeding Search step.

Each attacking unit attacks each defending unit individually; units may never attack together or combine their attack or defense strengths.

Attacks are performed one at a time by the active player. The sequence of attacks is entirely up to the attacker and is not specified in advance.

To resolve an attack, the active player rolls a die and adds the attack value of the attacking unit. The defending player rolls a die and adds the defense value of the defending unit. If the attacker's total is **greater** than the defender's total, the defending unit is eliminated. If the attacker's total is **equal** to the defender's total, **both** the attacking and defending units are eliminated. If the attacker's total is **less** than the defender's total, there is no effect (see example 2).

9.41 Attacks are resolved tile by tile in whatever order the attacking player desires.

9.42 Attacking is strictly voluntary. One unit in a tile may attack while others do not; a unit may attack some defending units while not attacking others.

9.43 If there are multiple attacking and defending units in a tile, the attacker may freely mix and resolve in any order successive attacks by different operatives on the same defending unit or successive attacks by a single operative directed at different defending units. Attacks are resolved sequentially, however; thus a given attacking unit may not survive (if eliminated due to a tie result) to attack every defending operative in the tile.

9.44 The status of a discovered operative (opposing or not) has no effect on combat.

9.5 Alter Events/Timestreams

After the Combat step, if there are no opposing units in a tile or printed original invention space, the active player may pay credits to alter an event or invention and/or rotate the tile (in order to alter its timestream connections). If there are any opposing units in the tile, the active player may **not** do either of these activities.

The cost of rotating a tile by any amount is 3 galactic credits. The cost of reversing an event or invention is printed on the event tile or space. After the active player pays this cost, place a red time reversal disk on both the event tile or space and the associated Status Indicator.

9.51 A reversed event or invention may be reversed again, paying the same cost and removing the time reversal disks from the event or invention and the Status Indicator.

9.52 Players controlling unopposing operatives in the tile may choose to split the costs of altering an event and/or rotating the tile in any mutually agreeable fashion at the active player's option.

Tiles and events are altered one at a time and the effects of doing so take place **immediately**. However, this can be ignored unless the technology Time Travel becomes Disconnected (see below). Thus, for convenience, checking technology paths and updating RPs and VPs are done separately after all events and timestreams have been altered. Event Altered chits may be placed to keep track of which events have been altered and which technologies have been Connected or Disconnected during a player's turn.

9.6 Check Technology Paths

After any invention is altered or a tile is rotated, one or more of the seven technologies may be cut off from or reconnected to the present. With the exception of the technology Time Travel, the effects of doing so may be ignored until a player is done altering all events and timestreams.

Each of the seven technologies is presumed to be either Connected or Disconnected at every point in the game. Technologies are assumed to be Connected at the start of the game. The game ends when the technology Time Travel is Disconnected.

A technology is considered Connected if a path of connected timestreams for that technology can be traced from at least one **faceup**, **unreversed** invention of that technology to that technology's Status Indicator in the present. Otherwise, the technology is presumed to be Disconnected. **Important:** Time Travel has seven Status Indicators and is considered Connected if a path connects to **any** of them.

When tracing technology paths, assume that all facedown tiles automatically connect that technology, provided that these tiles are in zones that the technology propagates through (see example 3).

Note that a technology presumed to be Connected (due to facedown tiles forming part of the connecting path) may actually be Disconnected when those tiles are flipped up and oriented. Similarly, a technology presumed to be Disconnected (due to its invention being reversed) may actually be Connected once its secondary invention is flipped faceup.

When a technology's status changes from Connected to Disconnected or vice versa, place or remove a time reversal disk on that technology's Status Indicator. For Time Travel, place or remove time reversal disks on each of its seven indicators as needed.

9.61 If at any point Time Travel is presumed Disconnected (but may still be Connected when its secondary inventions are flipped faceup), **immediately** flip up and randomly orient **all** remaining facedown tiles. If Time Travel is then Connected, continue play.

9.62 If at any point Time Travel is actually Disconnected, play **immediately** stops. Update VPs for any pending altered events. Then, for each technology, start flipping up facedown tiles (and randomly orienting them) until the technology either is Connected or Disconnected. Adjust VP totals to reflect any changes and determine who won the game.

9.7 Update Victory and Resource Points

At the end of each player's turn, adjust Victory and Resource Points for any events and technologies that were reversed/unreversed or disconnected/reconnected. (To simplify bookkeeping during the first few turns, players may elect to make these adjustments at the end of the entire round, instead of after each player's turn.)

If an event or technology was reversed or disconnected, **subtract** the associated solid numbers and **add** the outlined numbers for that event or technology.

If an event or technology was unreversed or reconnected, **add** the associated solid numbers and **subtract** the outlined numbers for that event or technology.

If Event Altered chits were used to mark newly altered events and technologies, remove these chits after performing adjustments.

To check a player's VP or RP total during the game, add up the relevant **solid** numbers for all unreversed events and Connected technologies (those **without** Time Reversal Disks on their Status Indicators) plus any **outlined** numbers for all reversed events and Disconnected technologies (those **with** Time Reversal Disks on their Status Indicators).

10. WINNING

When Time Travel is Disconnected, the game ends. Determine the final status of the six other technologies and adjust VPs as needed. The player with the highest VP total wins. In the event of a tie, all involved players win equally.

11. ETIQUETTE

11.1 A player's treasury, current resource and victory points, available agents or squads and current status of time machines are public information. Players may trade any information they wish; however, neither facedown researched tiles nor a player's written notes may be shown to other players. Players are not required to be truthful when trading information. Players must abide by their stated declarations of opposition or non-opposition made during a Check Status step.

11.2 Deals between players are not binding. Time machines and galactic credits may not be transferred in a deal nor given away. One player may not make purchases for another player with the exception of joint expenditures to alter an event and/or rotate a tile when several players have operatives present in the same tile (see 9.52).

12. VERSIONS FOR 2-5 PLAYERS

Time Agent may be played with fewer than six players. The four and five player versions are identical to the six player version except that fewer of the races are played. Several scenarios have been provided (with and without the Buralti race) since the character of the game changes considerably when the Buralti are not in it.

In the two and three player versions, all six races are played, with each player playing multiple races. Players play each race separately, maintaining multiple treasuries and taking separate turns within the player order, with the exception that any information gained by one race when researching the past is considered available to all other race(s) being played by that player. When the game ends, the winner is the player with the highest **combined** victory point total.

GALACTIC GUIDE

The information below is not needed to play the game but is provided as background material to augment the racial descriptions and motivations presented on the six Racial Information Cards.

Events

Events represent single acts or inventions which have had such immediate, lasting and general effects, that it is only possible to reverse these results by undoing the events themselves.

Black Hole Energy (zone 1b)

A means of generating energy from black holes, this technology threatens the philosophical retreats of the Veneb while being of tremendous interest to the Fiolli.

Buralti Civil War (6b)

Towards the end of the Buralti drive for galactic power, a civil war broke out among the Buralti which gave a respite to the defeated Zytal and Roo and slowed Buralti expansion.

Buralti Expansion (2b)

The Buralti, in addition to solidifying their hold on the galactic core, have also pursued a policy of continual expansion, limiting the opportunities for other starfaring races.

Cloning (7a)

The ability to completely clone adult organisms, this technology enabled the Roo to survive the aftermath of the Great Plague.

Destroyed Worlds (4b)

In return for aiding the Buralti in the second Zytal-Buralti War, the Fiolli gained the right to destroy the defeated Zytal worlds and feed off the resulting rare emissions and energy.

EtherCom (6a)

Essential to the Buralti for maintaining their grip on galactic power, this technology of instantaneous communication across light year distances is used by all major starfaring races except the Fiolli, who communicate by Tachyon transmissions from exploding stars.

Fiolli Alliance (1a)

This pact between the Fiolli and Buralti averted conflict while leading to the destruction of the Zytal worlds. Seemingly advantageous at that time it was concluded, the pact has since proved overly restrictive to the Fiolli as it protects all non-Zytal worlds from destruction. To the distress of the Veneb, the Fiolli have since sought other means to slake their endless thirst for more energy, including feeding on black holes.

Free Traders (5a)

The Free Traders are nomadic spacers who owe allegiance to no world or race. Arising after the first Zytal-Buralti War, they displaced the Zytal as the galaxy's premier merchants. The Humans rely on the Free Traders as a black market source for many galactic technologies.

Great Plague (4a)

The plague which almost destroyed the Roo and greatly weakened the Veneb and Zytal. It paved the way for the Servants Revolt and the subsequent rise of the Buralti.

Human-Buralti War (5b)

Following the Kyril defeat, Human expansion was checked by this short, swift war.

Human Limits (2b)

Limits imposed on Human expansion following the Human-Buralti war. While primarily imposed by the Buralti, these limits have been supported by many races fearful of Human designs upon their worlds.

Kyril Ambush (7b)

The Kyril, a xenophobic race from the galactic fringes, secretly probed the starfaring worlds for generations before launching a sudden attack which nearly succeeded in conquering the galaxy before it knew it was at war. During the ensuing Kyril War, the Humans, located far from the major battlefronts, were able to expand without being detected.

Kyril Defeat (4c)

The recent defeat of the Kyril has solidified Buralti control over the galaxy, strengthening their efforts to harry Zytal survivors; limit the growth of the emerging Humans; and force the Fiolli to obey the restrictions of the Fiolli Alliance.

Replicating Robots (3a)

The key to exploration of the vast galaxy, replicating robotic probes were captured by the Fiolli and transformed into their corporeal servants. This greatly increased the Fiolli's ability to interact and compete with other starfaring races. Replicating robots also compete with Gene Crafted creatures to perform specialized tasks, diminishing their value.

Roo-Buralti War #1 (4a)

Already ravaged by the Great Plague and devastated by the Servants Revolt, this defeat effectively ended the Roo's military reign of power.

Roo-Buralti War #2 (4b)

A last, desperate attempt by the Roo to regain power, this war ended with the Buralti seizing control of most Roo worlds.

Sentient AIs (3b)

This recent Human development, sentient AIs capable of truly independent thought, is of great philosophical interest to the Veneb. The Fiolli would prefer this event undone, as renewed Veneb philosophical inquiry tends to confirm the Veneb program of retreat into black holes.

Servants Revolt (2a)

The Buralti led this revolt of client races, originally raised to sentience by the Roo, against the Roo. Combined with the effects of the Great Plague, this led to the Roo's decline and Buralti's rise as galactic rulers.

Talki SuperNova (1a)

The destruction of the Talki system and neighboring stars was induced by the Fiolli and brought them to the attention of the Buralti, who had inhabited several worlds in the Talki region.

Veneb Philosophy (6a)

Freed by the Servants Revolt, the Veneb divided into two factions. One advocated using Veneb scientific expertise to gain power. Another advocated a program of philosophical contemplation. The latter won, removing the Veneb from the ensuing struggle for power among the Roo, Zytal and Buralti. The Fiolli, desiring the black holes which the Veneb have retreated to, would prefer that the former had prevailed.

Zytal-Buralti War #1 (4a)

This war pitted the newly powerful Buralti (following the Servants revolt and Roo-Buralti War #1) vs. the weakened Zytal (following the Great Plague) to determine which of these two would become the successor to the Roo. After a climactic space battle which the Buralti barely won, the Zytal's position as galactic merchants was crippled, though they still possessed many worlds.

Zytal-Buralti War #2 (4b)

The second war between the Zytal and Buralti again saw the Buralti triumph narrowly, with the aid of the Fiolli following the Fiolli Alliance. It was followed by the takeover and destruction of most of the former Zytal empire by the Buralti and Fiolli.

Zytal-Buralti War #3 (4c)

The final war between the Zytal and Buralti was an easy victory for the Buralti, culminating in the siege and destruction of the Zytal homeworlds.

Technologies

While some of the events above include inventions and technologies, the technologies listed below are critical technologies whose dissemination has been tightly controlled down through time. Thus, these technologies are vulnerable not only to having their original inventions undone but also to having their dissemination paths broken. These technologies are, however, the product of considerable research and development. Thus, even if their original inventions were to be reversed, it is possible that the once-forgotten secondary inventions of these technologies would become integrated into these dissemination paths, replacing the original inventions.

Anti-gravity – zones 1 & 2; secondary invention in zone 1a.

Anti-gravity is used by the Veneb to maintain their philosophical retreats in black holes and by the Fiolli to tap the energies of stars.

Gene Craft – zones 1, 2 & 3; secondary invention in zone 2a.

Gene Craft is the specialty of the Roo, who have raised many races to sentience while genetically manipulating other races for specialized tasks. The Zytal have used Gene Craft to maintain species diversity in the face of their drastically reduced numbers.

Cold Fusion – zones 3 & 4; secondary invention in zone 3a.

Cold Fusion provides cheap, plentiful energy in small quantities. As such, it is vital to all expansionistic races. Cold Fusion emissions can't be absorbed directly by the Fiolli, but do power their replicating robots.

Time Travel – all zones; secondary inventions in zones 2a and 6a.

While always a speculative possibility investigated by many races, the Zytal were the first to refine Time Travel and systematically use it to raid resources from the past. The two secondary inventions reflect scientific investigations performed by the Veneb in conjunction with research into Force Fields and the discovery by the Roo of a race biologically capable of limited time manipulation.

Hyperdrive – zones 4 & 5; secondary invention in zone 5a.

Hyperdrive, the ability to travel at faster than light speeds, is essential for the Buralti to maintain effective military control over the galaxy and is generally useful for any starfaring race bent on expansion.

Force Fields – zones 5, 6 & 7; secondary invention in zone 6a.

Force Fields have many combat uses and are particularly important to the Fiolli, who use them to destroy stars and worlds in order to feed off the resulting energy emissions.

Rejuvenation – zones 6 & 7; secondary invention in zone 7a.

Rejuvenation technologies are of great interest to both the comparatively short-lived Humans and to the Veneb, who use them to prolong the lives of their greatest philosophers.

Galactic Time Line
(calculated from present (FP))

circa -5000 FP Heyday of the Galactic Federation
Roo and Zytal rule galaxy together, served by Veneb and Buralti.

-49?? FP First experiments in Time Travel undertaken

-4800-4600 FP Hyperdrive and Cold Fusion perfected
Galactic travel and settled galactic area greatly increase.

-4545-4541 FP Great Plague sweeps galaxy

-4492-4481 FP Servants Revolt
Following these events, most Roo Gene Craft knowledge is lost.

-4492-4432 FP EtherCom, Cloning and Force Fields perfected

-4423-4419 FP Roo-Buralti War #1 ends in Buralti victory

-4406-4367 FP Zytal-Buralti War #1 ends in Zytal defeat
Following these wars, the Buralti begin to consolidate their power.

-4388-4100 FP Rise of the Free Traders

-4326-Present Use of Replicating Robots to explore galaxy

-4200-4100 FP Gene Craft knowledge reassembled by the Roo

-4150-4000 FP Rise of Veneb Philosophy
Program of contemplation and retreat to black holes begins.

-4138-4107 FP Roo-Buralti War #2 ends in Roo defeat

-4000-3500 FP Veneb investigate Rejuvenation and Anti-gravity

-38?? FP Fiolli discover and alter robotic star probes

-3761 FP Zytal-Buralti War #2 begins

-3722 FP Talki SuperNova explodes
Fiolli are discovered by the Buralti.

-3716 FP Fiolli Alliance

-3715-3685 FP Destruction of Zytal Worlds

-3691 FP Zytal-Buralti War #2 ends

-3620-2420 FP Buralti Expansion is unchecked

-3109-3082 FP Zytal-Buralti War #3 ends in total Zytal defeat

-2420-1931 FP Buralti Civil War
Buralti Expansion is slowed.

-1671 FP Kyril Ambush starts Kyril Galactic War

-1137 FP Black Hole Energy is first demonstrated

-327 FP Human expansion begins
Due to the Kyril War, Human expansion goes unnoticed.

-22 FP Kyril defeated

-20 FP Human-Buralti War ends in Human defeat

-18 FP Limits imposed on Human expansion

-9 FP Sentient AIs traded to Veneb for technological help

-3 FP Zytal begin to reshape past using Time Travel...

PLAYER'S NOTES

Time Agent is (appropriately enough) a game of timing. To win, you must position yourself to simultaneously cut off the technology Time Travel while also altering events to so that your race ends the game with the most victory points.

Cutting off Time Travel

To both cut off Time Travel and win with no advance preparation is difficult since typically (except in 2 or 3 player games where players control several races) no player controls the 10 or so operatives needed to do so in a single turn. This implies that Time Travel must be cut off over several turns, which introduces a tactical dilemma: How do you move the game towards ending without simply paving the way for another player to win?

There are four basic techniques to keep this from happening:

• **Maintain a commanding leads in VPs** — If you're sufficiently far ahead in VPs, you needn't worry about other races cutting off time travel; if they do, they're simply handing you the game. Maintaining a commanding lead is hard since the VP leader is an obvious target and attempting to defend all of one's key events is usually a tremendous drain on resources (operatives, time machines and credits).

One variation is to maintain a slim VP lead (reducing the likelihood that you become a target) and to post agents on key "swing" events that other races need to alter to win, thus hindering them from easily vaulting past you in VPs while they're busy attempting to cut off time travel.

• **Plan to win by proving your technologies** — The VP totals at the instant time travel is cut off can be misleading, since many of the technologies which are presumed to be Connected may in fact turn out to be Disconnected when the facedown board tiles are actually flipped up at the end of the game.

At the beginning of the game, each technology (except time travel) is ~50% likely to be connected. However, during the process of cutting off time travel, the odds that a technology actually is connected often drops down to 10-30%.

One strategy, particularly for the Fiolli, Roo and Veneb (races which rely on a few key technologies for large numbers of VPs), is to "prove" their technologies by sending operatives back in time to create definite paths of connection for them. Having done this, these races can strive to keep just behind the leaders in overall VP totals, hoping when the game ends to slip into the lead on the strength of their connected technologies.

This strategy can sometimes backfire. Making connection paths visible both draws attention to the fact that the technology is connected and makes it easy for another player to figure out how to disconnect it. To counter this, consider stationing operatives on critical tiles near the present (which are most vulnerable to disruption) to ensure that your technologies stay connected.

• **Maintain control over time travel connections** — Time travel (like any technology) can be cut off in three basic ways. Its inventions can be reversed; it can be disconnected by rotating tiles deep in the past near its invention; or it can be disconnected by rotating tiles in the recent past where the technology "exits" into the present. Many games end with time travel being cut off near the present, since these tiles tend to be readily accessible.

Stationing operatives on several of the "exit" tiles for time travel allows you the option to disconnect time travel when you want to, while keeping it connected so that another player doesn't win prematurely. This requires several operatives, but can dramatically increase the number of operatives needed by another race to cut off time travel (since several squads are usually needed to clear a tile of opposing operatives).

This technique can be particularly useful when your race is far behind in VPs and the leaders are attempting to cut off time travel.

• **Cut off time travel in unsuspected ways** — Since many games end with time travel cut off near the present, attention tends to focus on the nine tiles through which time travel emerges into the Present. Six of these tiles (in zones 1-3 and 5-7) are easily rotated to cut off time travel. The three tiles next to the time technology status indicator in zone 4c are harder to cut off; often their adjacent tiles will need to be rotated as well. Sometimes, time travel can be Disconnected by reversing the original invention (an expensive but not impossible task) or by rotating the three "entrance" tiles for time travel in zone 4a. If coupled with cutting off time travel's access to the present in zones 1-3 and 5-7, time

travel stands a good chance of becoming Disconnected, even when both of its secondary inventions are flipped faceup along with all other tiles after its primary invention is cut off or reversed.

The Buralti can threaten to do this by simply saving their income for the first several turns. If the Roo and Zytal do not take steps to ensure that several squads can get to the rear of zone 4a (to kill the Buralti operative which must spend a turn adjacent to the original invention before moving to that space) the Buralti can plunge the game into "sudden death overtime" on turn 4.

This tactic may not result in a Buralti win if Time Travel remains Connected, since the other races will then try to strip the Buralti of their VP lead and know exactly the location of all the events that need to be altered. However, this technique may work if the other races fail to immediately reduce the Buralti VP total and the Buralti either reverses or disconnects Time Travel's secondary invention(s) during the next round.

Races such as the Zytal or Roo, who tend to send operatives into zone 4a, can often cut off time travel by rotating the entrance tiles for Time Travel (presumably after altering several of the key events in zone 4a to become the VP leader). If the race attempting this has also located the secondary inventions of time travel in zones 2a and 6a and has the 50 or so credits needed to send an agent back and reverse one of them (whichever appears most likely to be Connected) before cutting off time travel, this tactic may succeed spectacularly.

Winning via "Swing" Events

Swing events are ones which benefit your race and hurt most, if not all, other races. Usually, attempting to alter swing events during the game is a waste of resources since one of the races you've hurt will simply switch it back. However, since the game ends immediately when time travel is Disconnected, altering a swing event just before cutting off time travel can enable a race that doesn't appear to be winning to suddenly vault into the lead.

Key swing events for each of the races are:

Buralti — Buralti Expansion, Great Plague, Kyril Defeat and Servants Revolt (after these events have been reversed by other races).

Fiolli — EtherCom (and Veneb Philosophy if it hasn't been reversed by the Veneb).

Human — Kyril Ambush (after it has been reversed).

Roo — Fiolli Alliance (after it has been reversed) and Replicating Robots.

Veneb — Veneb Philosophy (after it has been reversed) and Black Hole Energy.

Zytal — Free Traders and Destroyed Worlds.

Occasionally, it will seem as if no progress is occurring in a game where players are doing a good job of keeping each other from getting a substantial VP lead while also preventing Time Travel from being cut off. While a stalemated game is theorectically possible, the constant introduction of more credits into the game from income and the resulting increase in time machines and operatives should gradually make it possible for a race to both alter a few key events and to cut off Time Travel in a single turn. In playtesting, very few games ever ended in stalemate. Those which did involved beginning players who did not realize how fragile Time Travel actually is and focused on trying to get a sizable lead in VP totals instead of winning via swing events.

The Board

At first blush, there may not appear to be that much "terrain" on the mapboard since operatives can be sent anywhere on the board. This isn't true.

Although operatives can be arbitrarily yanked back to the present from any spot in the past (during the HQ phase) and then, during movement, sent to any tile in the past (except original inventions), the cost of doing so is very high when the new destination is located far in the past. In particular, sending multiple squads into the deep past to clear a tile of opposing operatives and reverse a critical event can often cost 70-150 credits.

For this reason, faceup connected timestreams that allow operatives in the near past to travel to tiles far in the past can be valuable to any player who is set up to use them (by already having several operatives on these timestreams in the near past). Since agents may not both travel back to the past and travel along a timestream in a single turn, this setup/move process takes at least two turns to execute.

Long chains of connected timestreams tend to arise by two methods; either by a race proving a technology or by the Zytal and Roo building a long chain of time travel paths in zone 4 in order to cheaply get operatives from zone 4c back into zones 4b and 4a (where many of the events these races wish to alter are located).

While this "time travel highway" is a boon to both the Roo and Zytal early on, it may prove their undoing in the end game. Another race, such as the Buralti, may use it to suddenly flood the 4a zone with operatives, sending them to unreverse events altered by the Roo and Zytal and to cut off Time Travel near its original invention. To counter this, the Roo or Zytal should consider breaking this path in zone 4b at some point (by rotating a crucial connecting tile).

Agents and Squads

The high cost of shifting operatives about in the past underscores the importance of having the right operatives at the right spot. Each race's operatives (agents and squads) are different. Generally, agents are better at hiding. Thus, agents are good at defending a tile from being altered by opposing other players' operatives and then surviving the subsequent search and attack steps. Squads are better at search and attack. Use squads to clear tiles of opposing operatives.

As a rule of thumb, it takes at least two squads (or a Buralti agent/squad team) to have an ~60-90% chance (depending on the races involved) of eliminating an opposing operative (see reference card).

Since squads cost more to build and send into the past than agents, players tend not to build them before open conflict breaks out. However, paying extra to place squads in the past during the early game (when operatives tend to be placed in the recent past) may prove to be quite cost effective later on (compared to the cost of replacing an agent well in the past with a squad).

Buralti — your operatives are the most complementary ones in the game when attempting to search and destroy; your agents can search and your squads can destroy. Together, they are comparable, if not better, than most pairs of squads fielded by the other races. Separately, alas, they are much weaker.

Fiolli — both your agents and squads have excellent defense; however, your squads are considerably better at search and attack. You should consider buying squads whenever possible.

Human — your units, while possessing reasonable firepower, are not very good at hiding in past galactic society and thus are vulnerable to attacks. Be wary of starting a fight; if you do, stay on the offensive.

Roo — your operatives (befitting your Gene Craft skills) are extremely specialized. Your agents are very hard to find and your squads are very good at search and destroy missions. You will need to field both in order to meet your goals.

Veneb — your operatives are hard to find and kill but are poor on offense. You will often need 2-3 squads in order to have a good chance of clearing opposing operatives from a tile.

Zytal — while your agents are the best all-around **agents** in the game, don't overly rely on them. Your squads are quite good at search and destroy missions.

Player Order

During the early game, player order tends not to be very important; generally, you should try to go as late in the turn as you can. However, once open conflict has broken out or one race is close to winning, player order becomes important.

During conflict, a player going first may be able to eliminate maintained operatives belonging to other players; effectively depriving those players of both operatives and the use of their time machines (since the machines were used that turn to maintain operatives that did not get to act). Alternatively, a player going later has the advantage of seeing what other players have done and responding to their actions with whatever operatives that player still has available.

One consequence of this is that a player going late in the turn order who has weak operatives in the field should consider returning operatives from the past to the present during the headquarters phase.

When a player is very close to winning, going first can be extremely valuable. By carefully maneuvering to be able to both cut off time travel and alter enough key swing events to become the final VP leader, the player with fewest VPs (who chooses first when to go in the player order) can simply go first and win before the other players can react. Any player who can pull **this** off has mastered the art of timing!

Time Agent Planning Map

Time Travel Costs (+5 if Squad)
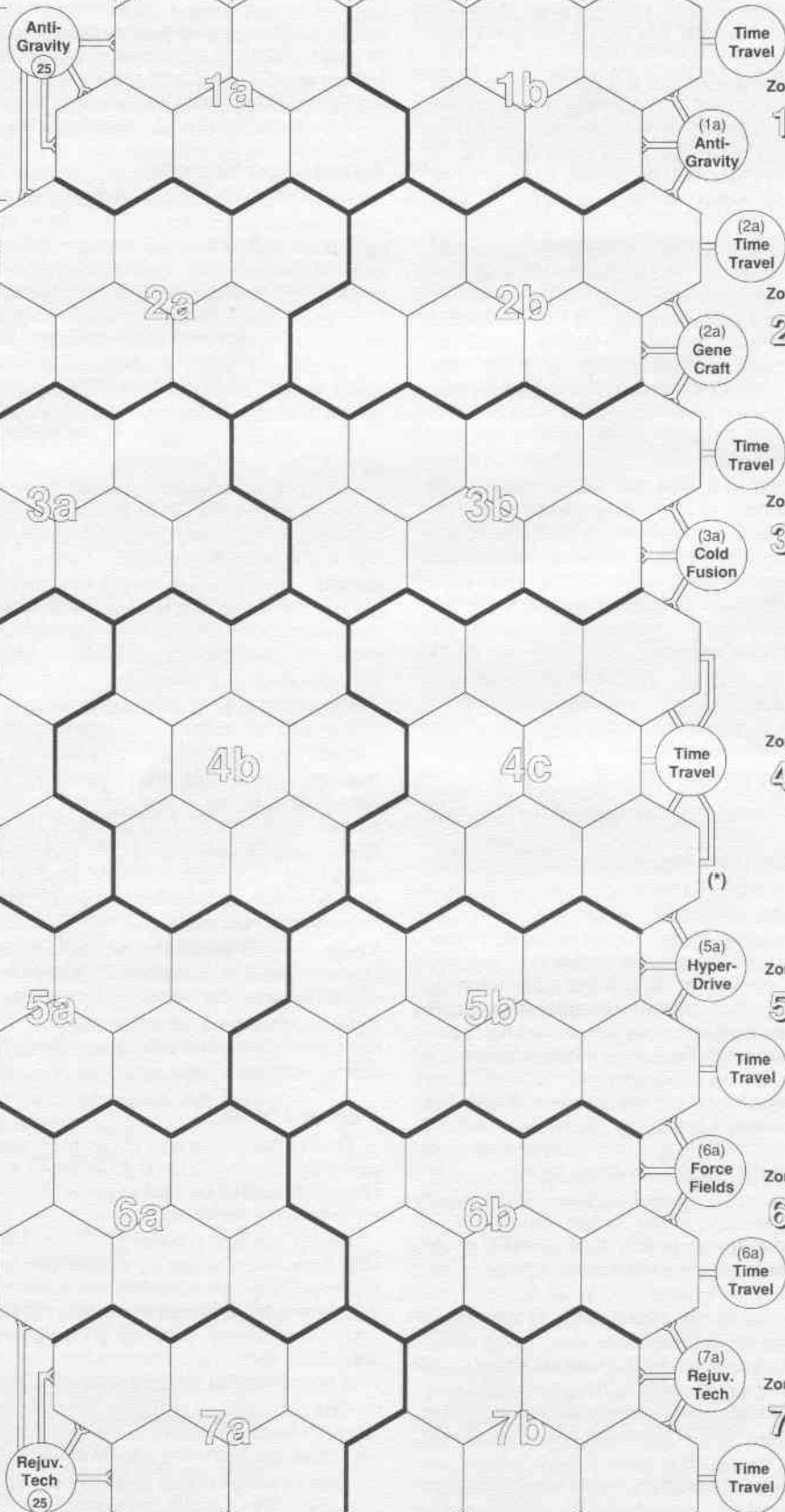
The Past | The Present

← 75 – 65 – 56 – 48 – 41 – 35 – 30 – 26 – 22 – 18 – 15 – 12 – 9 – 7 – 5

Zone	Event	Cost
1a	Fiolli Alliance	5
1a	Talki SuperNova	5
1b	Black Hole Energy	15
2a	Servants Revolt	15
2b	Buralti Expansion	20
2b	Human Limits	25
3a	Replicating Robots	25
3b	Sentient AIs	10
4a	Great Plague	5
4a	Roo-Buralti War #1	5
4a	Zytal-Buralti War #1	5
4b	Destroyed Worlds	10
4b	Roo Buralti War #2	10
4b	Zytal-Buralti war #2	10
4c	Kyril Defeat	25
4c	Zytal-Buralti War #3	15
5a	Free Traders	15
5b	Human-Buralti War	15
6a	EtherCom	20
6a	Veneb Philosophy	10
6b	Buralti Civil War	5
7a	Clone Tech.	15
7b	Kyril Ambush	5

Zone 1 — Anti-Gravity 25 — (1a) Anti-Gravity — Time Travel

Zone 2 — Gene Craft 25 — (2a) Time Travel — (2a) Gene Craft

Zone 3 — Cold Fusion 25 — Time Travel — (3a) Cold Fusion

Zone 4 — Time Travel 75 — Time Travel — (*) — (5a) Hyper-Drive

Zone 5 — Hyper-Drive 25 — Time Travel

Zone 6 — Force Fields 25 — (6a) Force Fields — (6a) Time Travel

Zone 7 — Rejuv. Tech 25 — (7a) Rejuv. Tech — Time Travel

Time Travel Costs (+5 if Squad)

← 75 – 65 – 56 – 48 – 41 – 35 – 30 – 26 – 22 – 18 – 15 – 12 – 9 – 7 – 5

The Past | The Present