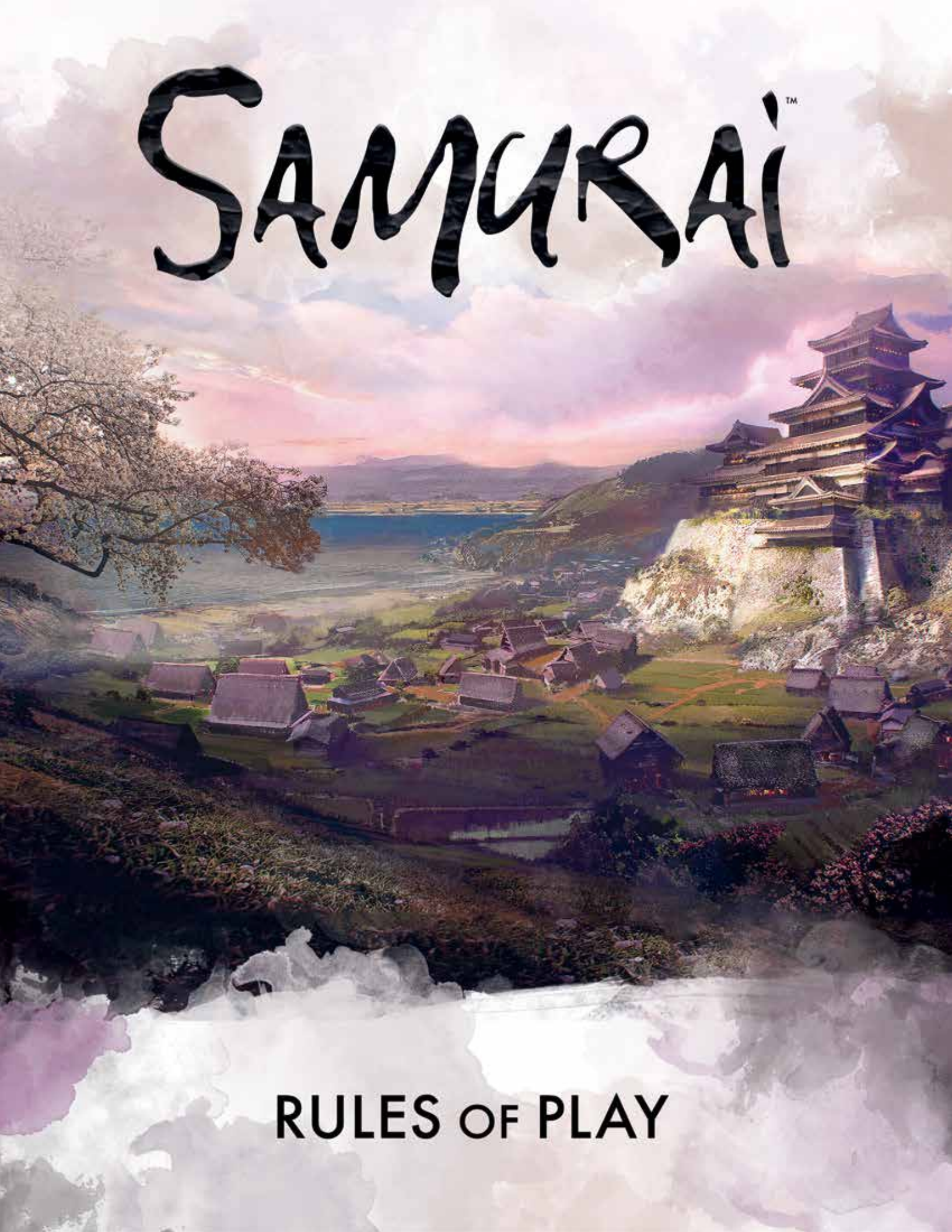
SAMURAI™



RULES OF PLAY

Introduction

It is a time of constant war and shifting loyalties in feudal Japan. Lords across the nation vie for control of three precious commodities: the loyalty of lesser lords, the land's primary sources of rice, and the very religion of the people. Throughout it all, there is one constant: the samurai.

The year is 1336. The emperor's attempt at regaining power through the Kenmu Restoration has failed. The royal family has lost all authority and has been relegated to nothing more than figureheads. The Ashikaga shogunate now holds power over Japan, but it is a tenuous thread at best. Across the country, powerful lords called daimyo have risen up and begun to claim dominion over the land and its resources. As these lords grow in power they draw samurai to their cause.

While the samurai are the necessary force needed to gain control of Japan, there are other assets the lords must consider in their conquest. The Buddhist priests hold sway over nobles and commoners alike, contributing culture and legitimacy to any ruler holding their favor. Rice has been Japan's staple food stock for centuries; whoever controls it rules the population. Finally, a lord cannot hope to gain samurai to their cause without strategic military installations.

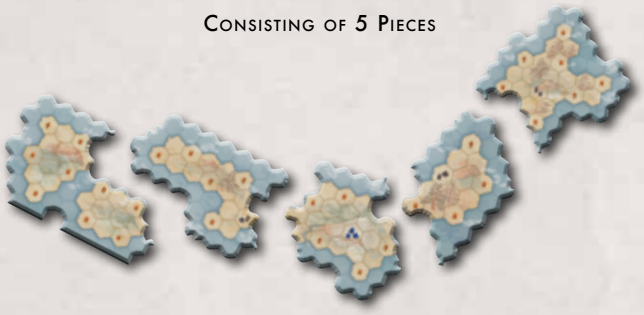
No one daimyo has ever managed to unify the samurai and, with them, Japan. As the rival lords appear ready to challenge Ashikaga, their samurai followers flock to new lords. Something innovative must be done to succeed where so many others have failed. Some new creative strategy must be devised.

The game of Samurai allows you to take the role of a daimyo just beginning ascent to power. Travel back to a Japan being torn asunder by warring clans. Prove you have the wisdom to garner the esteem of the samurai and you will unite a nation.

Game Components

1 Game Board

Consisting of 5 Pieces



39 Plastic Caste Pieces

13 Buddhas | 13 Rice | 13 Castles

4 Player Screens

80 Tiles

20 Gold Tiles

20 Red Tiles

20 Green Tiles

20 Purple Tiles

3 Leader Tokens

Game Overview

During a game of ***Samurai***, players compete over the three societal castes of Japan: religion (represented by Buddha), commerce (represented by rice), and military (represented by a castle). Players place tiles on the game board to influence settlement spaces and capture the various caste pieces on those spaces. The player capturing the most pieces of a particular caste becomes the leader of that caste. At the end of the game, the player who is the leader of the most castes wins the game.

Setup

To set up a game of ***Samurai***, follow these steps:

1. **Construct Game Board:** Construct the game board based on the number of players as shown below.

2-Player Game Board

3-Player Game Board

4-Player Game Board

2. **Create Leader Disk:** Place the three leader tokens near the game board and arrange them so they form a single disk. These tokens are used at the end of the game during scoring.

Leader Disk

3. **Create Supply:** Create the supply based on the number of players. Take the plastic caste pieces listed below and place them near the game board. Return all remaining caste pieces to the game box; they are not used this game.
   - **2 Players:** 7 of each caste piece
   - **3 Players:** 10 of each caste piece
   - **4 Players:** 13 of each caste piece
4. **Gather Tiles and Screens:** Each player chooses a player color, gathers the 20 tiles and player screen of that color, and places them in his play area.
5. **Draw Starting Hand:** Each player secretly chooses five of his tiles and places them faceup behind his player screen. These tiles form his starting "hand" of tiles and remain hidden from the other players until they are placed on the game board.
6. **Create Tile Stack:** Each player mixes his remaining 15 tiles (the tiles not chosen as his starting hand) facedown and places them in a stack beside his player screen in view of all players.

Spaces

There are three types of spaces on the game board:

- Settlement spaces are shaded tan and have 1, 2, or 3 building images printed on them.

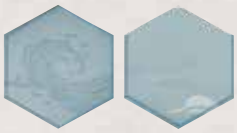
Village spaces contain one orange building.

City spaces contain two gray buildings.

The Edo space contains three blue buildings.

- Land spaces are shaded tan and have **no** building images printed on them.

- Sea spaces are shaded blue.



7. **Populate Edo Space:** Place one Buddha, one rice, and one castle piece on the Edo space.
8. **Populate City Spaces:** Starting with the youngest player and proceeding clockwise, players take turns placing one caste piece from the supply on a **city space**. City spaces cannot contain more than two caste pieces or more than one caste piece of the same type. Players proceed in this fashion until all city spaces have **two caste pieces**.
9. **Populate Village Spaces:** Continuing with the next player and proceeding clockwise, players take turns placing one caste piece from the supply on a **village space**. Village spaces cannot contain more than one caste piece. Players proceed in this fashion until all village spaces have **one caste piece**.

After all caste pieces from the supply are on the game board, players are ready to begin playing the game.

Basic Setup

First-time players may choose to simplify setup by randomly selecting their starting hands and randomly distributing the caste pieces onto the settlement spaces on the game board. When distributing the caste pieces in this fashion be sure the Edo space has three pieces, each city space has two pieces, and no settlement space has more than one caste piece of the same type.

Playing the Game

During a game, players take turns placing tiles on the game board and capturing caste pieces. When all caste pieces of one or more castes have been captured, the game ends, and players calculate their scores to determine the winner.

Turn Sequence

Starting with the youngest player and proceeding clockwise, each player takes a turn by following these steps:

1. **Play Tile:** The player chooses one tile from his hand and places it on an empty land or sea space (not settlement space) on the game board.
2. **Check for Capture:** If all land spaces adjacent to a settlement space contain tiles, that settlement's caste pieces become captured (see "Resolving Captures" on page 6).
3. **Refresh Hand:** The player refreshes his hand by drawing tiles from the top of his stack and places them faceup behind his player screen until he has **five tiles** in his hand. If there are not enough tiles in a player's stack to allow him to have five tiles in his hand, he draws as many tiles as possible.

After a player refreshes his hand, his turn ends, and the next player in clockwise order takes his turn.

Objective

The objective of ***Samurai*** is to be the leader of the most castes, which is achieved by capturing caste pieces on the board. To capture a caste piece, players must surround its settlement by placing tiles on all land spaces adjacent to that settlement. (Two spaces are considered adjacent if they share a border.)

Caste Pieces

There are three types of plastic caste pieces, one for each caste: **Buddhas** represent religion, **rice** represents commerce, and **castles** represent military. At the end of the game, the player who captured the most pieces of a particular caste becomes that caste's leader (see "Scoring" on page 6). The player who is the leader of the most castes wins the game.

Buddha Caste Piece (Religion)

Rice Caste Piece (Commerce)

Castle Caste Piece (Military)

Tiles

There are three types of tiles: **caste-specific** tiles, **wild** tiles, and **action** tiles. Most tiles have a number on the right side. This number indicates the tile's **influence value**, the amount of influence that the tile provides to all adjacent spaces. Influence values range from "0" to "4" and are used for capturing caste pieces (see "Resolving Captures" on page 6).

Influence Value

Caste-Specific Tiles

A caste-specific tile has an image of a caste piece on its left side and provides its influence to **one caste only**. The image of the piece on that tile determines which caste it is used to capture. A Buddha tile influences the religion caste, a rice tile influences the commerce caste, and a castle tile influences the military caste.

Buddha Tile (Religion)

Rice Tile (Commerce)

Castle Tile (Military)

Wild Tiles

Wild tiles have an illustration on their left side and provide their influence to **all castes**.

Samurai and ronin tiles provide influence to all adjacent settlements, regardless of which castes are present there. Ship tiles do the same; however, they can be placed **only** on empty sea spaces and are the only tile that can do so.

Samurai Tile

Ronin Tile

Ship Tile

Action Tiles

Action tiles grant special abilities when played. There are two types of action tiles: switch tiles and move tiles.

Switch Tile

SWITCH TILE

Each player has one SWITCH TILE. This tile allows the player to exchange the position of two caste pieces on the game board. To use a switch tile, the player reveals it from behind his screen and switches the positions of any two caste pieces on the game board. A player cannot use a switch tile to cause two caste pieces of the same type to occupy the same settlement space. After switching the position of the two caste pieces, he returns the switch tile to the game box and continues his turn as normal.

Move Tile

MOVE TILE

Each player has one MOVE TILE. This tile allows a player to reposition a tile that he has already placed on the game board during a previous turn. To use a move tile, a player takes one of his tiles that **does not have a fast icon** from the game board and places it on any other empty land space. Then, he places the move tile on the repositioned tile's original space.

THE MOVE TILE IS PLACED ON THE ORIGINAL SPACE OF THE REPOSITIONED TILE.

Fast Icon

FAST ICON

Each player has five tiles that have a Japanese character. This character represents the FAST ICON. A player may play one tile and **any number** of fast tiles on his turn. A player may choose to play **only** fast tiles as his tile placement for the turn.

Resolving Captures

After a player's turn, if all **land spaces** adjacent to a settlement contain tiles, that settlement is surrounded and its caste pieces become captured. (The adjacent sea spaces do not need to, but may, contain ship tiles.) Each caste piece is captured at the end of the turn in which its settlement became surrounded.

To determine who captures a caste piece, each player adds up the influence values of his tiles that are both adjacent to the caste piece and have an image corresponding to the caste piece type in question (or a wild image). The player with the highest total influence captures the caste piece, taking it from the game board and placing it **behind** his player screen in a three or four-player game, or in **front** of his player screen in a two-player game. If two or more players are tied for the highest total influence, no player captures the caste piece. Instead, the caste piece is removed from the game board and placed near it in view of all players—that caste piece does not belong to any player.

When a surrounded settlement space contains two or more caste pieces, players calculate the influence for each caste piece individually in the order of the current player's choice.

Winning the Game

The game ends at the end of any player's turn in which either of the following two conditions are met:

- There are no remaining caste pieces of one or more castes on the game board.
- Any four caste pieces have been removed and placed near the game board (see "Resolving Captures" above).

When the game ends, players calculate their scores.

Scoring

When the game ends, each player reveals his captured caste pieces. If a player has more caste pieces of one caste than all other players, he claims that caste's leader token. If two or more players are tied for the most caste pieces of a caste, that caste's leader token is set aside unclaimed. After all leader tokens have been claimed or set aside, if one player claimed more leader tokens than any other player, he is the winner.

If two or more players have each claimed only one leader token, each of those players sets aside the caste pieces from his own leader token's caste. Then, he counts the total number of caste pieces he has captured from the **other two** castes (those in which he does **not** have a leader token). The player with the most caste pieces from his other two castes is the winner. If there is a tie, the tied player with the most caste pieces from **all castes** (including those for which he has a leader token) is the winner. If there is still a tie, the tied players share the win.

In the rare case that no player has claimed a leader token, the player with the most captured caste pieces from **all castes** is the winner. If there is a tie, all tied players share the win.

Resolving Captures Example

During the green player's turn, he places a 3-Buddha tile next to a settlement with a Buddha piece. All land spaces adjacent to this settlement contain tiles, so the settlement is surrounded and this caste piece will be captured.

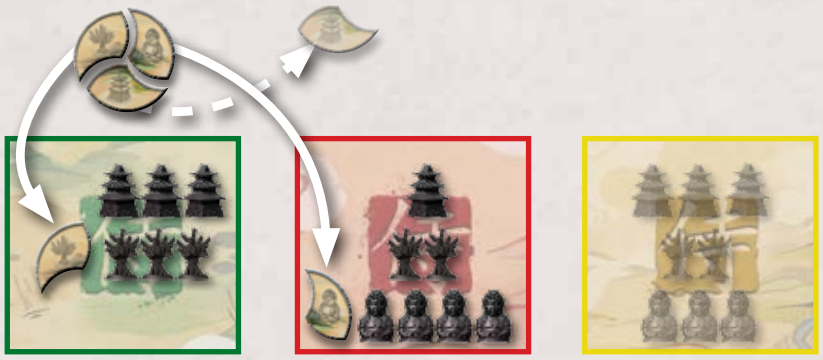
To resolve the capture, each player adds up their neighboring religious influence. The red player's 2-samurai tile provides 2 religious influence, while the green player's 3-Buddha tile provides 3 religious influence. The green player has the most religious influence, so he captures the Buddha piece, placing it behind his player screen.

Next is the gold player's turn. He places a 1-ronin tile (which has a fast icon) followed by a 4-Buddha tile, causing both adjacent settlements to become surrounded. First, the gold player chooses to resolve the capture of the Buddha piece on the settlement space to the right. He has a total of 5 religious influence provided from his 4-Buddha tile and his 1-ronin tile. The red player has a total of 3 religious influence provided from her 2-samurai tile and her 1-ship tile. The gold player has the most religious influence, so he captures the Buddha piece.

Finally, players resolve the capture of the Buddha and rice pieces on the other settlement space to the left. With his 1-ship tile and his 3-Buddha tile, the green player has a total of 4 religious influence. The gold player also has 4 religious influence, as provided by his 4-Buddha tile. Since both the green and gold players have an equal amount of religious influence, the Buddha piece is not captured and is instead placed beside the board. With her 2-rice tile, the red player has the most commerce influence, so she captures the rice piece. The military influence from the purple player's 2-castle tile is ignored because there are no castle pieces to capture.

Scoring Example

The green player has the most rice pieces so he receives the commerce leader token. The red player has the most Buddha pieces so she receives the religious leader token. Both the green player and the gold player are tied for the most castle pieces, so no player receives the military leader token. The green player and the red player are tied for the most total leader tokens (1 each), so they proceed to the next step of scoring, while the gold player is eliminated.



The green player ignores his rice pieces and counts his caste pieces from the other two castes, for a total of 3. The red player ignores her Buddha pieces and counts her caste pieces from the other two castes, also for a total of 3. Since there is still no winner, all tied players continue to the tiebreaker.

The green player has 6 total caste pieces, while the red player has 7 total caste pieces; the red player wins the game.

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