

# **Thurn und Taxis**

**By Karen and Andreas Seyfarth**  
For 2 to 4 players, ages 10 and up

A Rough Translation by Christine Biancheria

## **PLAYING MATERIALS**

- 1 Game Board
- 80 Wooden Houses (Postal Branches) (20 in each of 4 colors)
- 4 Company Cards
- 20 Coach Cards (4 each of values 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7)
- 66 City Cards (3 each of 22 Cities)
- 30 Bonus Tiles (4 7-Routes, 3 6-Routes, 2 5-Routes, 4 Outside of Baiern or "Ausserhalb Baiern," 4 Baiern, 3 Baden, 3 Wurttemberg/Hohenzollern, 3 Schweiz/Tyrol, 3 Bohmen/Salzburg, 1 "Spielende")
- 4 Summary Cards
- 1 Rules Booklet

## **PREPARATION**

- Place the board in the middle of the table.
- Sort the Bonus Tiles and place them faceup on the board on the spaces marked accordingly, in ascending order with the lowest numbered tile on the bottom.
- Shuffle the City Cards to form a facedown draw pile, then draw the top six and place them faceup on the corresponding six spaces on the board.
- Sort the Coach Cards by number and then place them in order along the top of the board as shown.
- Each player takes the 20 Branches (houses) of one color along with a Company Card of the same color and a turn summary card.
- The youngest player begins.

## **THE OBJECT OF THE GAME**

Each player builds a postal network. To this end, players attempt to cleverly establish postal routes by building as many Branches (houses) in the Cities on the board as possible and to gain valuable Coach Cards and Bonus Tiles. Postal Officers stand ready to assist the players in their endeavors. The game ends when one player either obtains the Coach 7 card or has built all of his or her Branches. When either condition is met, the round is played through to the end, and the game is over. The player with the most victory points wins.

## **GAME PLAY**

The starting player begins, and the other players follow in clockwise order.

On a turn, each player carries out the following actions **in order**:

1. The player **must** draw a City Card.
2. The player **must** play a card into his or her playing area.
3. The player **may** complete his or her Current Route and score it.

Additionally, a player may call upon the services of **one** postal official during a turn. When a player is finished, the next player in clockwise order takes his or her turn.

### **1. Drawing a City Card**

The City Cards show Cities on the board. The player must take either a faceup City Cards from the board or a facedown City Card from the top of the draw pile. If the player takes a card from the board, it is immediately replaced with another from the draw pile. If the draw pile ever runs out, the discard pile formed during the game should be shuffled to form a new one.

*Assistance of a Postal Official in this Phase:*

***Postmaster (Postmeister):*** By calling on the assistance of the Postmaster, the player may draw a second card from either the faceup selection or the top of the draw pile. If the player has no cards at the start of his or her turn, then the player **must** play the Postmaster card to draw two cards (note that, in the first round, this will be the case for each player). Once the player has used the services of the Postmaster, he or she cannot call upon any other postal officials during the same turn.

***Bailiff (Amtmann):*** If the player is not satisfied with the faceup City Cards on offer, the player may call on the assistance of the Bailiff to clear the faceup cards from the board (before he or she draws any) by placing them in the discard pile and then refilling the six faceup slots from the draw pile.

## 2. Playing a City Card

A central element of the game is the establishment of postal routes. The player must play a card from his or her hand by placing it on the table in his or her playing area to either start a new route or add to the player's existing one. City Cards are placed next to each other in a row and form the player's Current Route. A player may only start a new route if the player has no Current Route in progress; in other words, each player may only work on one route at a time and may only start a new route after completing the Current Route. When adding to a Current Route, the player may only place a card to **the left or the right** of his or her Current Route cards. No branching off is allowed. Furthermore, the new City Card must fit into the Current Route.

To recap, in placing a card, there are two possibilities:

- (i) The player has no cards in their playing area, and so the player plays a card from his or her hand and starts a new route, or
- (ii) The player already has one or more City Cards in his or her playing area (i.e., a Current Route), in which case he or she simply adds a card to the left or right of the current route, making sure that the card **fits in**.

If a player cannot or chooses not to do perform one of these actions, the player must discard his or her entire Current Route and begin a new one using a card from the player's hand.

A card **fits in** to the Current Route when the City on the card has a **direct** connection by road to the City on the City Card next to which it is placed **and** the new City is not already in the Current Route.

Accordingly, a player **may not**:

- Play a card into his or her Current Route if the City on it does not have a direct connection to the City on either end of the Current Route;
- Play a card into the middle of the Current Route;
- Rearrange the Current Route in any way; or
- Play the same City Card a second time into a Current Route.

*Note: The color of the city indicates the region to which it belongs and has no meaning in determining whether a card can be played into a route.*

*Example: A player has a row of cards in the following order: Carlsruhe, Stuttgart, Nurnberg and Regensburg. Innsbruck has no direct connection by road to either Carlsruhe or Regensburg and so the player could not at*

*this time add an Innsbruck City Card to either end of his Current Route. The player also is not permitted to place a Wurzburg card between the Stuttgart and Nurnberg cards even though there is a connection to those cities because the Current Route cannot be rearranged; nor could the player add another Stuttgart card into this same route.*

**Assistance of a Postal Officer in this Phase:**

**Coachman (Postillion):** *Players may call upon the Coachman during this phase to play a second card on a turn (as long as the second card can be legally placed).*

### 3. Completing a Route

A player may complete his or her Current Route as long as it contains **at least** three City Cards. Whenever a route is finished, the player takes the following steps:

- a. Place Branches;
- b. Take Bonus Tiles, where appropriate;
- c. Draw a Coach Card, where appropriate; and
- d. Discard City Cards and excess hand cards into the discard pile as set forth below.

#### a. Place Branches

The player has two choices for placing Branches in cities **which are part of the route** that is being completed: **either** the player may place one Branch in one city of each region in his or her Current Route **or** the player may choose one Region of the Current Route and place one Branch in each City in that Region.

*Note: The regions and the cities on the board and on the cards are indicated by color.*

*Example: the player finishes the following route: Sigmaringen, Stuttgart, Nurnberg, Regensburg, Ingolstadt and Augsburg. He or she places one Branch in one city of each region through which the route passes (see picture on Page 3): In the region of Hohenzollern, the player places one Branch in Sigmaringen; and in the region of Wurttemberg, the player places one Branch in Stuttgart; and in the region of Baiern, the player places one Branch in one of his four Bavarian cities (such as Ingolstadt, for instance, in which case he could not then also place a Branch in Nurnberg, Regensburg or Augsburg).*

*Or the player places one Branch in each city of one region on his route. For instance, the player in the above example could place a Branch in each of his cities in Baiern: Nurnberg, Regensburg, Ingolstadt and Augsburg. In this case, the player could not place a Branch in Sigmaringen and Stuttgart.*

*Note: A player is allowed to play a City Card into a Current Route even if the player already has a Branch in this City from a previous round. In this case, the player could play the card but would not be allowed to add a second Branch there. A player may, however, place a Branch in a city which contains Branches of other players.*

**b. Take Bonus Tiles**

After placing Branches, the player checks to see if he or she has met the conditions for obtaining one or more bonus tiles. The player then places each collected tile facedown in his or her playing area.

*Bonus Tiles for Route Length*

Whenever a player's route contains 5, 6, 7 or more cards, the player takes the top Bonus Tile from the corresponding pile. If there are none remaining, the player may take a Bonus Tile for the next shortest route for which a tile is still available. (In this manner, it would be possible to make a route of 8 or more cards and still collect a bonus tile.)

*Bonus Tiles for Regions*

When a player has Branches in each city in a single region or all cities in two related regions, he or she may take the top Bonus Tile from the corresponding stack of bonus tiles. Note that these Branches need not all have been placed during the completion of a single route; the Branches making a player eligible for a bonus tile may have been placed through completion of different routes.

To take the "Outside of Bavaria" Tile ("Ausserhalb Baiern"), the player must have at least one Branch in every region outside of Baiern. The player may still take this tile if he or she also has one or more Branches in Baiern itself.

*Note: If the player is eligible to take a Bonus Tile for Regions but there are none left, the player does not get a Bonus Tile.*

*Note: A player may only take a Bonus Tile one time for any given Region or Region Combination.*

*Note: If a player does not have enough Branches to place in a city to obtain a Bonus Tile, then the player simply does not get that Bonus Tile.*

*Example (top of Page 4): By completing a new route, a player establishes Branches in the cities of Sigmaringen and Ulm. The player already has a Branch in Stuttgart, and so now, the player has Branches in all three cities of the regions of Wurttemberg and Hohenzollern and obtains the Bonus Tile from the top of the corresponding stack.*

*Bonus Tile for Game End*

The player who, through his or her actions, causes the game to end (by taking the Coach 7 card first or else placing the last of his or her Branches) takes the Bonus Tile marked “Game End” (“Spielende”).

**c. New Coach Card**

If the player’s completed route contains at least as many cards as the number of the next available Coach Card (in ascending order), the player may take that Coach Card. A player may not skip over a coach size to take a higher Coach Card.

*Example: A player finishes his first route in the game with three City Cards and obtains a Coach 3 card, placing it on top of the player’s company card. The player later finishes a second route containing five City Cards. This time, the player takes the next highest card, the Coach 4 Card, and places it on top of the old Coach 3 card. The player’s third route contains only four City Cards, and so the player does not get a Coach Card this time. To take the Coach 5 card, the player would have to complete a route with at least five City Cards in it.*

*Note: For purposes of taking Coach Cards, the placement of Branches is irrelevant because it depends only on the number of City Cards in the completed route.*

**Assistance of a Postal Officer in this Phase:**

***Wainwright (Wagner):*** *By calling on the assistance of the Wainwright in this phase, the player may take the next available Coach Card if the player’s completed route is short by up to two cards. Example: A player already possesses the Coach 6 Card. The player now completes a route that contains only five City Cards and uses the assistance of the Wainwright to take the Coach 7 Card.*

**d. Discarding City Cards**

The player places all of the City Cards of the completed route onto the discard pile **and** reduces his or her hand down to at most three cards of the player’s choosing. The excess City Cards are also placed on the discard pile. On the player’s next turn, he or she starts a new route.

## **GAME END AND SCORING**

When one player has either obtained the Coach 7 card or places the last of his or her Branches on the board, the current round is played to its end (until the player to the right of the starting player has finished the last turn), and then the game is over. Now, the players calculate their victory points.

Victory points consist of:

The value of the player's highest Coach Card, **plus**

The value of the player's Bonus Tiles, **minus**

The number of Branches remaining in the player's playing area (that have not been placed on the board).

The player with the most points wins. In case of a tie for first place, the player among them wins who took the game-ending Bonus Tile or, if none of them did, then the player who is seated closest to that player in clockwise order.