

IceFloe

A Changing Landscapes game for the piecepack and piecepack pyramids

by Tim Schutz

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3-4 players - 60 minutes

Game requirements

1 piecepack

1 set of piecepack pyramids

1 candle

Paper and pencil/pen for keeping score

Story

It's the middle of the winter and Whirlpool Pond is frozen solid. You've been ice fishing, you've played hockey, you've done a lot of different ice sports and now you're looking for something new to do. How about a game of IceFloe? Never played before? Well, grab your chain saw, some spray paint, some small explosives and meet me on the pond.

First we start by spray-painting the large 5x5 grid of spaces on the ice. Then we drill a small hole in the middle of each space and place a small explosive in it. Next get your chainsaw and start cutting along the grid-lines to create the giant game board of 25 ice floes. OK, now we use the torch to light the fuse and remove the center ice floe with a "boom" and the game begins. You got a love a game that starts with a bang.

Time to play. This game is fairly easy to learn. There are 3 or 4 teams of six players. Players can jump from ice floe to ice floe, but be careful because if there is too much weight on one ice floe it might crack and into the lake and out of the game you go. Ice floes will be removed with a bang one by one and hopefully you're not standing on one when it goes, but hey you won't get hurt because the explosion is not that strong, it'll just break up that ice floe into little pieces and you'll be a little cold and wet, and out of the game. The game ends when a team has lost all of its players into the pond or all the remaining players are on one ice floe and then the team with the most points, which are scored throughout the game and have a lot to do with the size and weight of a player, wins.

Setup

The Board

You will need all of the tiles to build the board. The tiles are placed suit side up to create a 5x5 grid. The center space does not have a tile. The tiles should be placed so they follow the pattern in the diagram below. In a three-player game the four corner pieces (the #2 sun, #3 moon, #4 arms and #5 crown) are removed from the board.

2 	3 	ace 	2 	3 
4 	5 	ace 	4 	5 
null 	null 		null 	null 
2 	3 	ace 	2 	3 
4 	5 	ace 	4 	5 

Player's Pieces

Each player selects a piecepack suit and takes the 6 piecepack pyramids, the ace and number two coins, the pawn and the die that matches their suit. The rest of the coins are separated by numeric value and placed into four sets of four coins. Each set should have all four suits in it. Each player then takes one set of the four coins. Don't worry about the numeric value of the sets because the numeric value has no function other than creating sets of four coins with all four suits in it.

The Pawn

The pawn is your colored mascot and stands proudly in front of you rooting for your team. He also makes it easier to remember who is who.

Roll The Die

All the players roll their die. The highest number (5 being the maximum) wins; if there is a tie then those that tied re-roll until a winner is found. That's it the game is over, only kidding.

Placing The Pyramids

Starting with the player that won the die roll and going clockwise, players place down their "A" pyramid on the board, then again starting with the player that won the roll place down the "B" pyramid and keep going in this fashion until all the pyramids are on the board. Only one pyramid may occupy a tile at a time at this point of the game. In a three player game there should be two unoccupied tiles left after all of the pyramids have been placed. Note: This is still part of the setup of the game although there is some strategy in placing the pyramids.

The Torch

The player that won the die roll gets the candle and is the first Torch Bearer. If there is no candle available to use you can use some other flame-bearing item instead. Some suggestions, a wooden match, a lighter, a candle stick holder, etc. The candle represents the torch that is used to light the fuse on the explosives. The torch will be passed clockwise from player to player at the end of each round during the game. The player that has possession of the torch is the current Torch Bearer and starts that round and decides the

outcome of all ties during that round. There is more information in the Torch Bearer part of the rules.

Game Summary

The game is played in rounds. Each round starts with the movement of game pieces. Players then vote on the numeric value of the tile to be removed and then the suit of the tile to be removed. The tile and any pieces on it are then removed from the game. The scoring part of the round is next, however scoring does not start until the fourth or fifth round depending on the number of players in the game. Players are allowed to make comments about the current status of the game or on a tile they would like to see removed from the game, however there are some rules regarding comments please see Commentary for the rules. The round ends with the passing of the torch to the new Torch Bearer.

Movement

Starting with the Torch Bearer and going clockwise a player must either move one of his own pyramids or slide one of the tiles. See Piece Movement for the rules. Note: It is possible for a tile and any pyramids on that tile to be removed from the game during this part of the round.

Vote On The Number Value Of A Tile

Before you cast your vote this is a great time to make a comment in an attempt to sway the vote. Remember to follow the rules of commentary if you do decide to speak. The Torch Bearer should always say: "before we vote are there any comments". The players then vote on the number value of the tile to be removed by placing that number so it is the face up number on their die. The die should be concealed under a cupped hand until all the players are ready and then everyone reveals their vote at the same time. If a player accidentally (or on purpose) votes for a value that is no longer valid, his vote is void. "Oops". If there is a tie the Torch Bearer is the tiebreaker. See Torch Bearer for the rules. Players can also add weight to their vote by using the Ace and/or #2 coin. See Voting Coins for the rules.

Vote On The Suit Value Of A Tile

Once again another great time to make a comment in attempt to sway the vote and once again the Torch Bearer should always say: "before we vote is there any comments". The players then vote on the suit value of the tile to be removed by selecting that suit from one of the four identically numbered coins they have. The coin should be placed number side up to conceal the suit or can be concealed under a cupped hand until all the players are ready and then everyone reveals their vote at the same time. If a player accidentally (or on purpose) votes for a value that is no longer valid, his vote is void. "Oops, once again". If there is a tie the Torch Bearer is the tiebreaker. See Torch Bearer for the rules. Players can also add weight to their vote by using the Ace and/or #2 coins. See Voting Coins for the rules.

Remove The Tile

The tile that was voted on is removed from the game by the Torch Bearer (he is the one responsible for lighting the fuse) and if any pyramids are on that tile they are also removed from the game.

Remove An Empty Tile

Sometimes a Torch Bearer gets a little excited from the explosion of an ice floe and lights another one by accident. In an attempt to appease those Torch Bearers with little self-control it has been decided that after a Torch Bearer explodes the voted on ice floe and if there is more than one unoccupied icefloe, he may also explode one of the unoccupied ice floes of his choice if he so wishes. Translation: If there is more than one unoccupied tile at this point the Torch Bearer may remove one of his choice.

Scoring

The scoring part of a round does not start until the fourth round in a three-player game or the fifth round in a four-player game. Basically, scoring starts after everyone has had one turn as the Torch Bearer. Starting with the Torch Bearer and going clockwise each player selects one tile that is still in the game and any and all pyramids on the selected tiles score for their players. So you probably want to pick a tile that benefits you the most and score the least for the other players. See Scoring for the rules.

End Of The Round

The Torch Bearer now hands the torch to the player on his left (the new Torch Bearer) a new round begins.

Rules

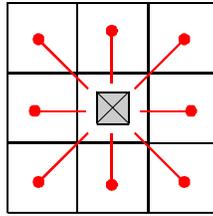
Piece Movement

A player must move either one of his pyramids or slide a tile on his turn. More than one pyramid may occupy a tile at a time, however pyramids have a weight assigned to them and if the maximum weight of a tile is exceeded then that tile and all of the pyramids on that tile are removed immediately from the game. The maximum weight a tile can take is 5. The chart below shows the weight of the pyramids.

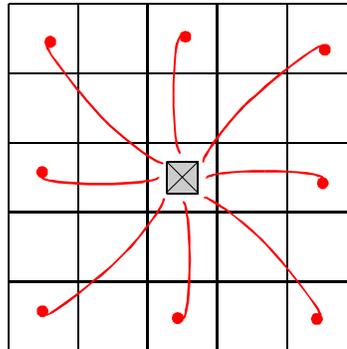
A=1
B=1
C=2
D=2
E=3
F=3

It is possible to have up to 5 pyramids on a single tile, but impossible to have two E pyramids, two F pyramids, or and F and an E pyramid on a single tile.

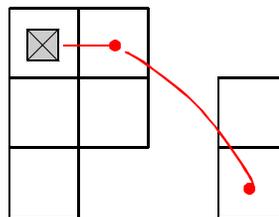
Pyramids can move one space in any of the 8 directions either diagonally, or orthogonally.



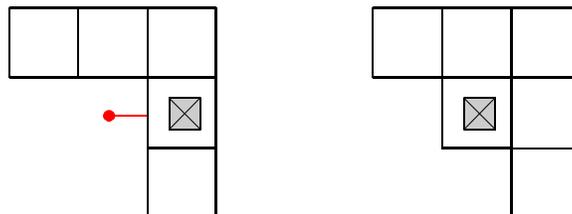
Pyramids can also move by jumping over one space to the space directly behind it in any of the 8 directions either diagonally or orthogonally and can jump over a space that no longer has a tile on it to a space that does.



A pyramid can move one or two times for a maximum of three spaces.
 Example: You move your pyramid one space to the right, and then jump two spaces diagonally down and right over a missing tile for a total of three spaces.



Tiles can slide one space in any of the 4 orthogonal directions only and you must have a least one of your own pyramids on a tile to slide it. Tiles cannot be slide outside the original 5x5 grid and cannot push other tiles while sliding.
 Example: You slide a tile with your pyramid on it one space to the left.



Commentary

During the game and before voting players are allowed to make commentary about the current state of the game or board in an attempt to try and sway the vote. There are some rules to making commentary.

You cannot:

- Mention the name of a suit, color or numeric value of a game tile.
- Mention a player's suit, color or proper name when referring to the board or pieces on the board.
- Point to, or use the words "left, right, bottom, top, center or any other directional word in an attempt to give a clear idea to everyone what tile you intend to vote on.
- Make a deal with another player to vote the same way as you.

You can speak in a way that does not break the above stated rules.

Some examples of acceptable commentary are:

- I don't know if anyone noticed but someone has some major points floating out there all alone.
- It would be nice to get an empty tile out of here.

If a player breaks the rules stated he does not get to vote until the next round. If there is any doubt about his breaking the rules then the other players vote on if he gets to vote or not. Ties are always decided by the Torch Bearer. Yes, the Torch Bearer can decide if there is a tie and the vote was on whether he gets to vote or not.

During the scoring part of a round, players are allowed to state the name of a tile or point to it to indicate that is the tile they wish to score on.

Torch Bearer

There are certain responsibilities that come with being the Torch Bearer. Of course everyone likes that they get to blow up an ice floe when the time has arrived, but it not all fun and games. The Torch Bearer also is the first player to move in a round and gets to decide the outcome of a vote if there is a tie, but he can only choose one of the choices that was actually voted on.

Example: if there were two votes for Arms and two votes for Moons he would only get to pick between Arms and Moons. Okay, so it's not a lot of responsibility and it is all fun and games.

Voting Coins

Each player starts the game with an Ace and a #2 coin. These coins can be used to add weight to your vote. *Example: It's a 3-player game and your two opponents vote to have the icefloe that you have a piece on removed. You play your #2 coin and change the vote from a 2 to 1 vote against you to a 3 to 2 vote in your favor.* A player can add either one or both coins to his vote or another player's vote, but once a player uses a coin he cannot use that coin again. An ace would add one to your vote; a #2 adds two to your vote and both coins add three to your vote. Once you add the coins to a vote you

cannot change your mind and take them back and the other players still have the option to add coins to a vote if they have any left. If you cause a tie by adding to your coin the Torch Bearer decides the outcome.

Scoring

In the scoring part of the round, starting with the Torch Bearer each player selects any one tile that is still in the game. Players are allowed to choose the same tile. Once a player selects a tile all pyramids that are on that tile scores points for the owners of those pyramids. Points are scored according to the Scoring Table and are recorded on a piece of paper.

Scoring Table

A = 1 point
B = 2 points
C = 3 points
D = 4 points
E = 5 points
F = 6 points

Scoring example: Joe selects a tile that has his F, Bill's A and Jill's A pyramids on it, Bill selects a tile that has only his D pyramid and Jill selects a tile that has her E and Joe's A. The total scores for this round would be Joe with 7, Bill with 5 and Jill with 6.

End of Game

The game ends when either a player has lost of all his pyramids or all of the pyramids still left in the game end up on one tile after the movement part of the round has ended. There is one last scoring round although it is a little different at the end of the game. Instead of players selecting a tile, they score on all of their pyramids that are still left in the game according to the scoring chart, and the player with the most points is the winner. If there is a tie then the player that is the Torch Bearer decides who the winner is and if he is not one of the players that are tied for the winner, then you can now bribe him with whatever you want. Money always works for me. If he doesn't want to choose a winner because no one bribed him sufficiently or he is afraid of the repercussions then he can call it a shared victory and feel his burden has been lifted.

Credits and Thanks

Thanks to the play-testers Chris Sjöholm, Ron Hale-Evans, Marty Hale-Evans, JT Thomas, Steve Dupree and Jason Chein. Thanks to everyone for their suggestions and comment during game play. A special thanks to Ron Hale-Evans for help in the development of the scoring mechanism which was created after the first play-test revealed a flaw in the game.

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