

Hold Your Breath

--Rules and Rambling--

Back Story:

This is the final chapter in the "Get Bit" Casual Trilogy by Mayday Games. Don't panic! You don't need to know ANYTHING about the first two games in the series to play Hold Your Breath! (HYB). We only mention them to arouse your curiosity and trick you into buying them both as well! OK, so we are revisiting the dumbest pirates known to man. They have been kicked off the ship by their captain in "Walk the Plank", chased by sharks in "Get Bit" and now they face their final challenge. In HYB each player assumes the role of a pirate treading water in the ocean. These brilliant tacticians have decided to play a game of "Hold Your Breath" to see who is the toughest pirate, because you know, what else are you gonna do in the middle of the ocean facing certain death?

Front Story:

The game is played in two rounds. In the first round each player may dive deeper, providing they have the "Swim" and "Air" cards to do so. Players press their luck each turn since it is the pirate who dives the deepest in round one AND resurfaces in round two who is the winner. What about the losers? Who cares, they are losers. But if you really want to know... well they dove down and ran out of oxygen before they could resurface, so now they are just "resting" underwater until the next game, ok? But we digress... So, players can play "Panic", "Shark" and other nasty cards on the other players, slowing their progress. In the second round each player struggles to reach the surface before they run out of air and therefore decide to take a rest (aka LOSE). Most of the pirates may not make it back to the surface, but the one who makes it back alive AND dove the deepest is the winner. Be careful though, if you dove the deepest in the first round you will surely have the toughest time getting back to the surface since A) you swam the deepest and B) no one else wants to see you make it back alive. Sounds like heap-big-family fun huh?

Over Story:

Players: 2-4

Ages: 6+

Time: 10-15 minutes.

CREDITS

Game By: Christopher Urinko & Daniel Jenkins

Components

- 1 Dive Deck, 68 cards
- 4 Pirate Tokens
- 4 Anchor Tokens
- 1 Depth Board
- Rulebook

Hold your Breath! is played in 2 rounds: the Descent and the Ascent. Play is identical in each round, except, as you might have guessed, in the first round the player is swimming down into the depths, and during the second round the player is racing back to the surface. Each round ends when all cards have been drawn from the Dive Deck.

First Round: The Descent

Setup

Shuffle the Dive Deck and deal each player 5 cards. If you can't figure this out without futher elaboration... well tough.

The Starting Player is the one who is the most recent victim of an involuntary soaking. Hint: If the soaking occurred very recently, don't forget a towel and a friendly reminder that the Dive Deck is not, in fact, waterproof. <shameless plug> We recommend some nice Mayday Brand Card Sleeves to protect your cards, no we REALLY DO! </shameless plug>

<<Insert diagram of four player setup here>>

1. Dive Deck
2. Discard Pile
3. Player 1 Hand
4. Player 2 Hand
5. Player 3 Hand
6. Player 4 Hand

Player's turn during the Descent

A player may play some/all of his cards each turn and in any order he wishes. Air/Swim cards may be discarded for their air/swim value or for their "action" icons at the bottom of each card. See the "Action Card Effects" descriptions at the end of the rulebook for details on these actions. A player will dive down an additional depth each turn based on the lesser of combined air/swim cards discarded each turn. For example if Elizabeth discards 2 "5 value" air cards (the ones with the bubbles on them) and one "10 value" swim card (see the swim fins in the upper left corner of the card? Yeah those), she will move her pirate token 10 feet further down the Depth Board for her turn. She may also play other action cards as she sees

fit and play any Panic/Shark/Wild cards on other players. If Elizabeth does not have at least one air card to play during her turn, she must lay down one of her cards face down in front of her as a "Panic" card since she couldn't breathe at all this turn and her pirate is now really stressing out, what with death looming nearer and all. Any Panic/Shark cards in front of a player are in his "Swim Pile" and must be cleared out before a player can proceed to discard more air/swim card combinations to swim on.

<<Insert image of the Pirate moving down the Depth Board>>

Once the player has played all desired cards from his hand, remaining cards may be kept or discarded to the Discard Pile. The player's hand is then replenished from the top of the Dive Deck, to a total of five cards. Once the player's turn is complete, the player to the left commences the next turn.

Play continues until the deck runs out or until all players get sick of the game and leave on their own. In this case the last person to leave the table is the winner, but really you're all losers since it is only a 10-15 minute game, have some patience!

Ending the Descent

When a player cannot fully replenish his hand, he draws as many cards as he can. All players take one last turn, ending with the player who got jipped and couldn't replenish his hand. Each player finishes the Descent Round by placing his "Anchor" token on the Depth Board right there with his player tokens. This is to remember who dove deepest, you are really stupid pirates after all and may otherwise forget!

Beginning the Ascent

Any Shark or Panic cards in the player's Swim Pile remain in place for the Ascent round. Before a player's Ascent can begin, Panic cards must be cleared with a Calm card, and the Shark cleared with a Calm card, or the Kraken (see Action Card Effects below).

Shuffle the Discard Pile to create a new Dive Deck, and deal five cards to each player, sound familiar? It's just like the Descent Round only you're going up now!

The player who swam to the shallowest depth goes first. In the event of a tie, tied players should call each other "lily-livered, scurvy dog" or other pirate-themed insult (keep it clean maties, this is a family game to the death after all!) and settle in for a rousing bit of Rock, Paper Scissors. As the name might suggest, the goal of the Ascent is to swim back to the surface, or just like most video games these days, the object is "not to die"... but no pressure!

Player's turn during the Ascent

Play proceeds exactly as it did in the Descent, except Swim cards propel the diver up, rather than down.

<<Insert Ascent Round setup diagram>>

1. Dive Deck
2. Player 1 Hand
3. Player 2 Hand
4. Player 3 Hand
5. Player 4 Hand
6. Player 1 Swim Pile
7. Player 2 Swim Pile
8. Player 3 Swim Pile
9. Player 4 Swim Pile
10. Panic Card on Player 1's Swim Pile
11. Player 2's Swim Pile
12. Player 3's Swim Pile
13. Player 4's Swim Pile
14. Discard Pile

If a player with a shallower dive returns to the surface early, play continues as usual since that player may continue to discard, draw, and/or play Panic or other action cards on opponents as normal. Hint: Did you dive only 5 feet? Play/Discard all 5 of your cards each turn to hurry along the deck turnover and drown out the other players. But 5 feet really? Come on now, where's the fun in that? Still, preventing deeper divers from returning to the surface can possibly achieve a victory for a shallow player, I mean a player who is very shallow, I mean who didn't dive very deeply. (Insert evil laugh, if desired you shallow diver types.)

Running out of Cards

Once the last card is drawn from the Dive Deck during the Ascent, all players receive one final turn, ending with the player who couldn't get their 5 cards at the end of their turn, you know, just like in the Descent round.

Reaching the Surface and Determining the Winner

- If the player who swam the deepest gets to the surface, the game ends and that player wins, all the other players will lose face since they didn't sufficiently beat that player down and really they should have known better.
- If any number of players ties for dive depth, the first player of that group to break the surface first wins.
- If no player makes it back to the surface before the Dive Deck runs out, the winner is the player who dove and swam the greatest total distance down and back. In this scenario, a Shark or Panic card still hindering a player's diver each count as -10 towards that player's total distance. Oh... its all mathy, huh?

Icons

<<Insert Air icon>> *Air Card*: Provides enough air to swim either 5 or 10 this turn.

<<Insert Swim icon>> *Swim Card*: Provides enough effort to swim either 5 or 10 this turn.

Action Card Effects

A player may use a card's Action Effect, rather than playing it as an Air or Swim Card.

<<Insert Draw icon>> *Draw Card*: The player draws another card from the Dive Deck and may play it on that turn. Multiple Draw cards may be played per turn.

<<Insert Discard icon>> *Discard Card*: Choose an opponent holding 5 cards. Randomly pick one card from that opponent's hand and put it in the Discard Pile. A player may play multiple Discard cards per turn, but only against a player with 5 cards in hand.

<<Insert Calm icon>> *Calm Card*: A player may play this card to remove a Panic card from himself.

<<Insert Panic icon>> *Panic Card*: Play this card on an opponent not already hindered by a Panic card. A Panic card stops a diver's progress and must be cleared by playing a Calm card before that player can play more Swim cards. If a player cannot remove a Panic, an Air card must be discarded each turn until the Panic is successfully removed. A player may play multiple Panic cards per turn, but only against players without Panic cards in front of them.

<<Insert Kraken Icon>> *The Kraken*: The Kraken can be played to remove the Shark from any player. Alternately, the Kraken card may be played to force all players with 5 or more cards in their hands to discard 1 card. Tough as it looks, the Kraken is very single-minded and can only perform one action at a time.

<<Insert Shark Icon>> *The Shark*: Play the Shark on any opponent, even if that opponent is already suffering under a Panic card. The Shark acts as an additional Panic card, and may be cleared in two ways: 1) the afflicted player can play a Calm card, moving the Shark onto another player, or 2) any player can play the Kraken card for the specific purpose of clearing the Shark and sending it to the Discard Pile.

<<Insert Dolphin icon>> *The Dolphin*: The Dolphin card acts as a Wild and may be played as any one type of the following cards: Air 5 or 10, Swim 5 or 10, a Discard, a Panic, a Calm, a Draw, a Shark or a Kraken. (Apparently Dolphins are so cute that we let them get away with more than they should. But don't hate them because they're beautiful, hate them because they can morph into a Kraken! Life's not fair, is it? Just ask the First Player who probably doesn't think the opening position to be much reward for that involuntary soaking.)