ROCKET BEARS

THE GAME

Rule Sheet

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A resource-management game in which players compete to finish a recipe for a rocket ship before the iceberg melts.

4 players
For Ages 10+

(image from The Oatmeal)

STORY

One hot Wednesday in July, four hyper-intelligent polar bears come to the conclusion that their iceberg home will soon melt due to global warming. In order to escape the iceberg and their doom, the four polar bears decide to build rocket ships to escape the iceberg and head for Pluto, where perpetual coldness promises to comfort them eternally. In this game you play as a polar bear striving to build a rocket ship to escape the iceberg. The goal of the game is to build a rocket ship before your opponents, using the limited resources available to you on the iceberg, before the iceberg melts and leaves you homeless!
**Set Up**

At the beginning of the game, each player gets a stat card to represent their bear and four fish tokens. Each player may divide their four fish among the three stats of their bear (see Stats section) to power up. Set up the game board. It should look like this:

When the board is set up, there should be four full corners, each with 7 resource pieces and 4 fish tokens. Once the board is set up, shuffle the recipe cards, turn them upside down, and distribute between players. Each player should only get one recipe sheet, and should not show their recipe to any other player during the game. Each recipe is different, so no two players will have the same recipe. Finally, create the draw pile, with the meteorite on the bottom and three fish pieces on top.

**Stats**

Each bear has three stats that can be leveled up: Combat, Speed, and Capacity. At the beginning of the game (before players have added their first fish) all bears have a Combat, Speed, and Capacity of 1 (designated by the fish already on their stat card). The level of each stat goes up for each additional resource added to that stat (for example, a bear with three additional resources in Speed would have a Speed of four). All stats max out at three additional fish (4 points).

*Combat*: How strong the bear is in combat. When two bears engage in combat, players will roll dice to determine the outcome of the encounter (e.g. if a player has 3 points in combat, they roll 3 die in combat). Players will roll as many dice as the bear has points in combat. See **Turns** for more info on combat.
Speed: The level of a bear’s speed determines how many spaces that bear can move during its turn (although a bear may move less). A bear can move regardless of what else it’s done in the turn— for instance, a bear could move, attack, move, harvest, and then move again if it had a move stat of 3.

Capacity: The number of resources the bear can harvest in one turn. Capacity also determines how many resources a bear can steal from another player during combat (see Turns for more info on combat).

The player above has put two of their starting points into speed, for a total of three points. One point has been placed into both combat and capacity, giving the player two points in combat, and two in capacity.

BEGINNING THE GAME

Roll a die to decide who goes first. The person with the highest unmatched roll goes first, and play continues counterclockwise. After determining play order, place your player pieces on the board. The player pieces may be placed anywhere within the middle nine squares on the board, and the person going last may place their bear first (the other players place their bears in reverse turn order).

SUCCESSFUL ATTACK

During each turn, the player can do the following:

- **Move a fish from its storage into one of its stats.** Players may only do this at the beginning of their turn, and may only move one fish per turn.
- **Move their bear on the board.** The bear can move as many spots as they have points in speed (but only to adjacent squares). Players can move at any time during their turn, as long as their total movement does not exceed their Speed stat. For instance, if a bear has a Speed of 5, they could move two spaces, attack an opponent, and then move three more spaces.
- **Attack an adjacent bear.** In the case of combat, each player will roll as many dice as they have points in...
Combat. After rolling, players will divide the numbers returned by the dice by two (rounding up), and then find the sum of their roll (for instance, a roll of 5 and 4 is $3 + 2 = 5$). The bear with the highest sum wins the battle. The attacker wins if the roll is a tie. The winner can take resources or fish from the other player, equal to half of the winner’s total capacity. The losing player gets to choose what pieces to give away, but if they have the meteorite they MUST give that away first. Finally, the losing player may not give up fish already on their stat card.

- **Hunt adjacent resources.** The player can harvest as many resources and/or fish during their turn as they have points in capacity, as long as the player is adjacent to what they’re harvesting. Resources do not re-spawn after being harvested.

- **Trade resources.** Players can negotiate any trade between each other, regardless of where their bears are on the board. All trades are considered fair game, as long as both parties consent. Players can trade fish and/or resources like packed ice and seal bones. Fish points that have already been used to power up a bear may not be traded.
At the End of a Round

After each round, players roll the two ten-sided die. Using the tens value as a y-coordinate and the ones value as an x-coordinate, place a fish from the draw pile on the board (based on the coordinates given by the roll). A roll of 00 is 50, and a role of 0 is 5.

The Meteorite

If it’s the end of the round (time to place a fish on the board) and the next tile in the draw pile is the meteorite, roll both dice as usual to place it. The meteorite is a “wild card” that acts as any resource towards a complete rocketship. However, if the player is beaten in combat, the first item they must lose is the meteorite.

After the meteorite has been picked up by a player, the board begins to deteriorate as the iceberg melts. After the meteorite has been in someone’s possession for one round, the outer layer of the board melts (remove the outer ring of spaces from the board), and on each successive turn another layer melts. If a rim of the board melts away with a player still on that rim, the player dies and is out of the game. However, if there is a resource on the edge of the board that melts, it gets pushed in towards the middle of the board by one space. If it lands on the same space as a player, that player gains that resource.

When an outer ring of the board is removed, all items move towards the center of the board. Items can move diagonally in this case.

Winning the Game

A player wins the game when they have built their rocket (by completing the recipe on their card) and when they have made it all the way back to one of the middle nine spaces.