

# Eclipse “Ancient Killer” Co-Op Variant

*Credit to Red Whalen of BGG*

Two players cooperatively defeat massively powerful ancients and an AI controlled race. This is a highly challenging scenario. The Human Republic (which is effectively a rule controlled AI) gets extremely powerful quickly.

The Republic controls ships like a normal player with upgradeable schematics, and is allied with all ancients.

Setup is the most complicated bit. Once that is done, the game moves pretty smoothly.

**Win Condition:** Players win if they are able to defeat the Galactic Center prior to the end of turn 9. Players lose if the Republic takes either player homeworld or turn 9 ends without a player win.

**Components:** It is recommended you have the Rise of the Ancients expansion. Without, instead of the Ancient Homeworlds, use four placeholder worlds. Remove the Monolith and Neutron Bomb research tokens from the bag (or discard them if drawn during the game, although see **Variants**).

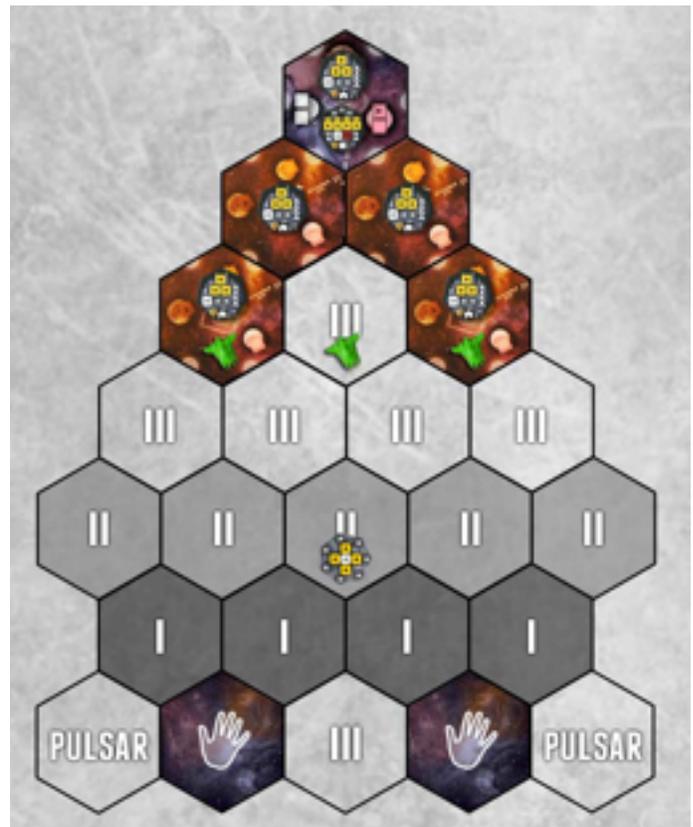
**Player Setup:** Setup the included customized character sheet for the Republic. Each player should then select a race as normal. Players cannot choose the Descendants of Draco.

Grab all the ships and nine influence disks of one color for the Human Republic. Also grab a materials marker and place it at zero.

**Board Setup:** Pull out the Ancient Home Worlds. Separate all of the hexes with ancients and hives and set them in their separate sector number piles. Grab an equal number of non-ancient infested tiles and mix them together. You should have three piles of 6 - 8 galaxy hexes.

Take the galactic center and place it at the far end of the map (row 1). Place two ancient home worlds face up in row two so that they connect to the galactic center, but not to each other. In row 3, place two more ancient homeworlds face up, with a sector III tile in between, face down. Row 4 will contain 4 sector III tiles face down. Row 5 will contain 5 Sector II tiles face down, and also place the Galactic Center Defense System on the center hex. (At this point, it should look like a pyramid, with the galactic center on the top). Row 6 will contain four Sector I tiles face down. Row seven will contain 5 hexes: the two homeworlds of either player, separated by a single face down sector III hex in between, and the Pulsar systems face up on either side, connecting to either homeworld (or, instead, place two random Sector II tiles face down).

There will be seven rows of hexes, and it will rather look like a fish when all is said and done. On Rows 1 - 3, place one random ancient cruiser. On row 1 (galactic center), also place the Ancient



Dreadnaught. If you do not have Rise of the Ancients, grab a fourth player color, and use one dreadnaught on row 1, one cruiser each on row 2, and one starbase each on row 3 (this will be much, much tougher).

Additionally, place one interceptor one each tile of row 3.

## Game Play

Player turns will progress as normal, except that the players are in an alliance. They may not attack each other, and they may join each other in battle. Same amount of tech draws each turn.

After all players have passed, it is the Terran Republic's turn. Battles happen after the end of the Terrain Republic's turn.

- 1) Roll 2D6, and add that amount of materials before the Republic takes their actions.
- 2) Roll 1D6, and use that may influence disks this round (a total action pool). If the Republic has researched Advanced Robotics or Quantum Grid, add the additional influence disks, to a maximum of nine. Sometimes (at the beginning), the Republic will only be taking 1 - 2 actions; the game will still be sufficiently challenging.

The republic will follow a pre-determined action sequence, but will skip steps that would be wasted (such as, if the Republic has 2 materials, skip build; if all ships are pinned, skip move).

- **1st action** is always *RESEARCH*. Grab one random technology from the bag and add it to the appropriate tech track. If a rare technology is chosen, place the tech in the track with the fewest number researched. Some technologies are useless, but they should still be added to the tech track. The artifact key will award 25 materials one time.
- **2nd action** will be *UPGRADE*. Add two upgrades, with preference given to ships that are presently on the board. The Republic prefers to upgrade as follows:

(1) Cover Empty Spots	(5) Drive
(2) Replace Existing Guns	(6) Shields
(3) Additional Hull	(7) Source
(4) Computers	

Players will decide on what is placed, taking turns between placed upgrades, Ships will always upgrade in sequence, making optimized builds. Once optimized, the builds will only change to counter player designs.

- **3rd action** will be a *BUILD*. The Republic will always build biggest affordable ships first rather than focusing on using all available builds, but is still limited by the ability to produce limit of 2. If Nanobots was researched, the Republic may build three ships. Roll a d6 for every built ship, which should correspond to each sector of rows 1 - 3, and that is where the ship is placed.
- **4th action** will be *MOVE*. Move three ships that are closest to the players. Roll for which ships, if necessary. If there is some confusion about which route to use, roll to determine. Republic ships will move in a bunch if able, but if one set is able to outdistance another (due to a better drive), they will. Ancients and Republic are allied, so the Republic ignores the ancients for movement.
- **Action 5 - 9** will *repeat* in the following order: *Upgrade, Build, Move*. If nothing else can be accomplished and the Republic has left over influence disks, award the Republic materials equal to the number of influence disks times 5 and end the Republic's turn.

## Combat

The Republic follows normal ancients combat rules. Republic also controls the ancients for the purposes of combat. Do not distribute reputation taken for completed rounds of combat.

## FAQ

**Q:** What happens if the Republic gets a duplicate technology?

**A:** *Duplicate techs are discarded, and they draw until they got a non-duplicate.*

**Q:** Can Humans move through unexplored hexes to attack the players?

**A:** *The Republic can move through unexplored hexes, but may only use wormholes once the hexes are explored. As a variant, you may bar this rule to make the game easier unless the Republic has a Tachyon Drive (or better) on their ships. Even then, they may only move through 1 unexplored hex per movement activation.*

**Q:** Do the face up world in rows 1 through 3, count as explored for the players?

**A:** *Yes, the only unexplored hex is in the middle of row 3. The players may move freely between Republic explored hexes, even using certain movement technologies.*

**Q:** Can players explore outside the board setup? (e.g., make a short cut around the tough defenses)

**A:** *No.*

**Q:** When players are determining Republic Upgrades, what is an “optimized build”?

**A:** *Optimizing during Republic upgrades is simply the act of upgrading parts in sequence, as balanced as possible. For example, if the Republic has necessary power technology for faster drives, they will add power and those drives until fully “optimized.” However, if they only had the faster drives, without power, they would not try to add them at the expense of other parts or “unbalanced” ships.*

*That said, there will often be choices to make when placing upgrades that may not make sense for Republic ships, such as placing available shields when the players are not using computers. In these cases, always remember that the main rule for Republic upgrades, is optimize to counter player ships.*

## VARIANTS

### **Monolith and Neutron Bomb Bonus**

In this variant, put Monolith and Neutron Bomb technology tiles back in the bag. If either of these tiles are drawn, on the Republic step or the normal technology shuffle, immediately discard them. Drawn Neutron Bombs add 1 material to the Republic. Drawn Monoliths add 1 to each players’ resources (all three).

### **Monolith Resource Markers**

In this variant, put Monolith technology tiles back in the bag. If the players draw them, they are allowed to build Monoliths, which give them 1 extra resource of their choice during the upkeep phase. This extra resource must be applied **after** bankruptcy is determined, and influence discs are returned to the track. You may still only build one Monolith per tile, and if the Republic takes over the tile he destroys the Monolith and gets his bonus as if he built one.

If the Republic draws the Monolith tech, he can build Monoliths. He will only ever build one Monolith a turn. Instead of building one and placing it as a player, he instead destroys one enemy ship that is on a tile with one of his Dreadnoughts. He always destroys the largest enemy ship. If he has no Dreadnoughts, he won’t build any Monoliths. He will only build Monoliths even if he has the technology when he has more than 50% of his total ship pool on the board.

### **Exploration Cancel**

Instead of having players explore the unexplored tiles, they are automatically able to see every adjacent and explorable hex. Players use the Influence action to take control of hexes, which must still be done using the standard rules of adjacency.

No other changes occur in this variant (except, obviously, you need not worry about the Republic moving through unexplored hexes).

## Reputation Token Exchange

In this variant, you give out Reputation tokens for completed combat phases. Follow the normal rules for giving out tokens. When used (see below) they are discarded, not put back in the bag. Using tokens can be done at any time without any action requirement.

These tokens are not used for points, but their value has various purposes. There are five different versions of this variant. You may mix and match any of them per your choice upon game setup.

- **Resources:** You may trade the token its value to gain that much resources. Double for science.
- **Roll Assistance:** You may trade the token to re-roll its value as a corresponding number of dice. So a 3 tile would allow to re-roll 3 dice.
- **Action:** You may trade a total of 4 points worth of token value to receive a free action on your turn. If you need to trade more than 4, such as trading a 3 and a 2, you do not receive any additional bonus. The free action is just as if you placed an Influence disc from the track, to the corresponding action. You cannot use this to claim territory, as that requires a real disc.
- **Republic Growth:** The Republic gains tiles as well. He receives the same effect of the chosen variant(s) the players use. He always attempts to use all his tokens as fast as possible, focusing on the free Action.

## Development Use

If you have Rise of the Ancients, you may use Developments in this scenario. To do so, place them out as you normally would for a three player game. The Republic may buy them during his build phase, if he has spare materials and it would suit him to purchase. Typically, the Republic will not choose to do so unless it offers an extreme advantage. For the Republic, if a development costs resources other than materials, he may supplement the others with materials at a 1 -> 1 ratio.

## Insanity Mode

In this variant, there are four different sub-variants that can be used separately or together to make the game more difficult

- **Galactic Defense:** Move the Galactic Defense System to the Galactic Center and put 2 Ancient Interceptors where the GDSC used to rest. If you have the alternative GDSC from Ship Pack one, you may instead place one in both places. They fight along side all ships in their sector.
- **Republic Resources:** Republic gains 2D6 + 2 resources instead of 2D6.
- **Republic Power:** All Republic ships gain +1 miscellaneous power.

## 3-4 Player Mode

To play with three or four people, replace lower tiles with home tiles according to those races, increase the size of other rows, and increase the potency of the Republic. The steps for these are based on how many players are being added. In either case, continue to draw technology tiles as if only two players were playing, making the choice for whom gets what technology much more scrutinized.

### Three Players

When playing with 3 Players, replace the III hex at the bottom of the board with the this players homeworld. In addition, add one I hex to each side of the row with I's (row 6).

Concerning the Republic, they gain +2 materials on top of their normal roll, start with an additional interceptor in any of the tiles in row 3, and may build a maximum of 12 interceptors. Supplement their interceptor supply from a different, unused color.

### Four Players

When playing with 4 Players, replace the two Pulsar hexes with player three and four's homeworlds. In addition, add one I hex to each side of the row with I's (row 6), and add one II hex to each side of the row with II's (row 5). You may replace the added II hexes with the moved Pulsar hexes, if desired.

Concerning the Republic, they gain +4 materials on top of their normal roll, start with an additional 2 interceptors in any of the tiles in row 3, and may build a maximum of 12 interceptors, and 6 cruisers. Supplement their interceptor supply from a different, unused color.