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YouTube

Reading a Turn Report (Old Style and needs to get updated a bit): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MdsoIw7NSCA>

Mapping: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vlnPX3DjerY&t=1s>

Question

Which is the best sort of hex for a new player to look out for?

0437 response

In my opinion there are two hexes that a new player should look for:

- a) a good hunting hex (Jungle, Jungle Hills, Deciduous Forest or Deciduous Hills are all good options, with Conifer Hills a slightly worse alternative), which can also be their source of logs, preferably with a river, lake or ocean adjacent
- b) a good herding hex, which is Prairie.

These should be adjacent to each other, so that you can share stuff between them, once you have built a meeting house.

This assumes that the Clan has got at least 1 extra in Diplomacy skill, so that it can split into herding and hunting Tribes, which it certainly should do.

Jungle or Jungle Hills are better hunting in Winter, but bad weather usually makes Winter Hunting poor returns anyway. Deciduous and Deciduous Hills are slightly better hunting overall in Summer/Autumn.

Good hunting and decent herding will set up the Clan to survive the early years.

Longer term it is entirely possible to feed the clan just from herding or just from hunting (or indeed from more advanced techniques such as baking bread), but new clans are advised to have a dual strategy with most food generated from hunting while their herd increases in size.

Once food security is established, and when the clan has a wider range of skills (Diplomacy to expand the number of tribes and hence skills that can be learned is important for this), the next stage of hexes to find are those which will supply metal (ideally iron, alternatively copper+tin for bronze) and coal (alternative path is to develop high levels of forestry and make charcoal).

With this in mind, if your hunting and herding hexes can be at or near a source for metal/coal, that will be helpful down the track.

Remember that it may be possible to get some or all of your materials by establishing connections with other players nearby. For instance one of you could mine coal while the other mines iron and then you exchange for mutual benefit. Or perhaps one does the mining while the other does the refining. Many combinations are possible, if you can find reliable allies around you (which is also beneficial for other reasons).

Osman of the Kayi

0421 response

Forested hills with coal, or coal nearby. Forested for log/bark production, hills for defense, and coal for production. Later on, as the player considers adding a village element, an ideal location would be the same, with iron and coal close to hand.

GM response

The vast majority of players will try to build a Village as early as possible (making Eng an important skill) - so they can Refine metal in order to make tools and weapons. The selection of a good Village site is a bit tricky - so you go with what you know now or do you wait to look around further for the garden of Eden? If it was me I would look at 4 criteria: access to Iron Ore, Coal, Forest and water (river or Ocean) so eventually you can trade to further away areas . If you can find forest that also gives Coal or Iron Ore so much the better. If there is no Iron ore around you will need Copper ore and Tin ore so you can do Bronze. That is a simple plan and if there are two of you, you can split the duties - eg one goes to the Coal and the other to the Iron. To achieve this means moving your Elements around and open up new mapping - AND, if so inclined you can share maps.

What are the best skills to develop as Primary attempts early on? What about Secondaries?

0401 response

My advice to a newcomer would be to ensure that each tribe has a primary that's from group A and a secondary that's from group B or C, or vice versa: a primary that's from group B or C, and a secondary from group A.

Best primaries:

Diplomacy, Hunting, Herding, Leatherwork, Woodwork

Best secondaries:

Forestry, Mining, Skinning, Administration, and Engineering if planning on going for village right away, otherwise probably Scouting or Seeking.

My more specific advice would be:

1. for the first tribe to take Diplomacy as the primary and Hunting as the secondary.

2. each subsequent tribe, take one of the following group A skills as primary:
Herding, Leatherwork, Woodwork, Forestry, Mining, Skinning
3. and take one of the following group B & C skills as their secondary:
Administration, Scouting, Seeking, Leadership
- 3B. if planning on going for a village right away, then add these to the list of B & C skills: Engineering, Economics, Farming - note that to allow more of your tribes to be mobile, I would recommend splitting those 3 skills between 2 tribes, as you will not want a mobile tribe to have those skills.

0409 response

Hunting and mining as primaries, admin and diplomacy as secondaries.

0123 response

I would aim for a 3 Tribe base and to get there you need Dip3. From there:
for a 3 Tribe base you need dip3 to get there

Main Tribe

Primary Hunt or Herd then Min

Secondary Adm 1–4, then Arc

2nd tribe

Primary For 1–4 then SGB to 6/3/3

Secondary Adm 1–4 then Eng

3rd tribe

Primary Qry

Secondary Adm 1–4 then Ref

Or some similar mix – priority is food and then basic resources (bark, timber) but keep an eye on the longer term heading for Ref10 and Qry10. Very hard to juggle the priorities...

0421 response

For a nomadic clan, Mining, Herding, Hunting, Weaponmaking, Armormaking, Forestry, Mobilisation, Leadership....maybe Security and Scouting?

If the clan has any thoughts of putting down roots, Engineering, Refining, Quarrying,

0500 response

Best Early Skill Attempts

To aid in exploration a regular element is very useful - Admin 2. This will help you find resource hexes.

Diplomacy allows you to split off subtribes, each of which can develop their own skills. This immensely increases your ability to pursue a wide variety of activities. It also creates a lot of work for the GM and results in higher costs when the free period ends. Be realistic about what you can support. On the other hand if you do not provide

a subtribe with any of your original tribes skills at creation and later reabsorb it, you will have lost nothing.

Economics. The Fair will be a useful source of goods and silver, especially in your early years. Unfortunately it helps a lot to know your future development plans early on as the simplest method of taking part is to get a tribe to Eco5. A village with a trading post needs Eco4 and will eventually have more use for this skill than a tribe.

Forestry/Tanning/Skinning/Gutting/Curing amongst others can only have 10 people assigned per skill level. These are all important to provide you with the raw materials that you will need in order to employ other skills.

Winter is a terrible time for hunting and herding - you need to prepare for the "Industrial Winter" the opportunity cost of producing food instead is the lowest. The following are especially valuable as you can assign unlimited people to activities associated with these skills:

Woodwork 1 allows the manufacture of clubs - this is best done in forest/jungle where no logs are required.

Weapon Making 1 in the appropriate terrain lets you make shafts that can be turned into spears and staves that can become bows.

Leatherwork for slings, armour and backpacks, ropes and saddlebags

Once you can partake in the Fair, it could be worth slipping an attempt or two into TriBall - this will reward you with some extra earning capacity. There are also regular TriBall competitions with worthwhile rewards, although these have become rather competitive and now require high skill to compete in.

In your first year, when you cannot be attacked and therefore have no need to assign defenders, you will have plenty of hunters. Once you need to defend yourself and have many alternate labour demands, you will need more efficient food gathering. Hunting is the simplest/most direct solution - the sooner you can add a level or two the better, the more you go on the more better hunting will free up large slabs of your workforce. Herding is another way to boost food production, although large herds require lots of herders.

Primary or Secondary

You have twice the chance of getting your primary skill attempt than your secondary. In general this is best used for the skill you consider most important or which are attempting the higher level. Early these are largely group A skills except for prospective villages that another unit in your clan is feeding.

The thing is, you can also qualify for a third skill attempt. BUT. It costs silver (the higher the level attempted the higher the cost). The third attempt is at the same low chance as a secondary attempt AND the third attempts must be from Group A.

As the penalties for attempting more than one skill from the same group in a turn are prohibitive, the opportunity cost of doing this is high. And the cost in silver for a young tribe too high to do often other than for low level skill attempts.

However, if you have a tribe (more likely village) that wishes to develop skills predominantly from Group C or B and to also get started on some Group A skills, this can impact how you develop your skills.

0489 response

Players will need to make an early determination for the clan and their time in game. They must decide between a larger clan that costs more or a smaller clan that is more affordable. This decision determines the future choices:

Large Clan (Wide focus)/

Primary/ Diplomacy 1-5

Secondary/ Fishing

Once diplomacy is at 5, shift fishing to primary and add mining as secondary

Small Clan (Narrow focus)/

Primary/Food production (fishing or hunting short term)

Secondary/Skill used for focus of clan such as mining, herding, etc.

Food production is paramount to the growth and survival of your clan.

0412 response

Best Primary skills:

Herding

Hunting

Diplomacy (level 5)

Best Secondary skills:

Administration (Lvl 4)

Metalwork (lvl 4)

Woodwork (lvl 3 - wagons)

Forestry

Engineering (lvl 3 - moats)

Weapon Making (lvl 8 - arbalest)

Combat skills after turn 6 so you're ready for loss of immunity.

0437 response

Overview

There are three key limitations in TN:

- 1) population
- 2) skills
- 3) resources.

Clans can find resources (at least for most common types) by searching and/or trading (with other friendly Clans or with NPC/Fairs). Though it may take time and effort (and possibly a willingness to relocate), typically tribes will be able to access sufficient raw resources for most purposes (NB this was not true in some earlier

incarnations of TN). Where raw resources are lacking, it is sometimes possible to find or make substitutes (e.g. charcoal for coal, brick for stone, etc).

Population growth is largely a matter of time, although higher Morale has a small effect and some special hexes (as well as some Research topics) give population growth bonuses. Recruits through Seeking and through establishing political control are other avenues to enhance population growth. Mercenaries can act as Warriors and hirelings and slaves can act as workers, effectively increasing the available population.

Skills are the key limitation over which Clans have the most influence, through their choice of skills attempted over time. Skills also have the capacity to offset (to some extent) deficiencies in other areas (e.g. by allowing skill-based solutions to resource shortages, or by making available workers more efficient at their tasks). Deciding on a Clan's skill strategy is a large part of deciding what sort of Clan it will be.

Skill categories

In TN there are a wide range of skills. These skills can usefully be categorised into five groups:

Organisation (e.g. Diplomacy and Admin)

Research only

Cultural (e.g. Music)

Combat

Production, which can further be divided into:

Input limited (e.g. Quarrying)

Output volume variation (e.g. Mining, Hunting)

Output qualitative change (e.g. Engineering, Weapon Making).

Some skills have elements of more than one category, for instance Forestry is primarily a volume limited skill (10 workers per skill level), but has a qualitative element in that Forestry 5 enables making charcoal (a coal substitute) from logs with a Charhouse.

Some skills do not fit easily into any of these categories, the most important being Economics. This is critical for providing access to the Fair at L4 with a trading post or L5 without a TP (though there is an alternative path through Diplomacy L7 plus TP).

Research-focused skills are most relevant to highly experienced Clans, who are beyond the scope of this note.

Cultural skills' main benefits currently are the Morale boosts and generate income at Fairs (although there are efforts underway to add more flavour and benefits to these skills).

My knowledge and experience is too limited for me to provide a proper discussion of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the various combat-related skills.

This note therefore considers:

Organisation skills and general strategy issues

Production skills.

Organisation skills

These skills determine what options you have for organising your Clan. In particular, Diplomacy determines how many Tribes you can have and Admin (for each tribe) determines how many additional elements that Tribe can have.

Additional Tribes allow additional skill attempts, as each Tribe has its own skills inventory. This is a very important part of a Clan's skill strategy. From a skills perspective, the more Tribes (and hence skill attempts) the better, though there are some caveats: for instance splitting skills across tribes may mean Joint Projects are needed for some structures.

The main downsides of splitting the Clan are:
the additional vulnerability to enemy action
the extra real life cost of more Tribes.

When a Tribe splits from its parent Tribe, it may receive skills from its parent (which correspondingly loses those skills). This is the only time that skills transfer between Tribes, so you should use it judiciously. A common early tactic, for instance, is to allocate skills between the original and the second Tribe so that one has the skills associated with Herding and its by-products (e.g. Skinning, Gutting, Boning, Tanning, Curing, Bone Working, Leather Working, etc) while the other has the skills associated with Hunting and being in rougher terrain (e.g. Forestry, Woodworking, etc).

You should avoid having the Diplomacy Tribe also target another important Group B skill. Therefore, it may be advantageous for the Diplomacy skill to shift on creation of a smaller tribe, where Admin skill (another Group B skill) is less important and can therefore wait at least until after Dip5 is reached (and possibly never be pursued in that minor Tribe).

General strategy

It is useful to plan skills with each Tribe having a primary skill focus (that will be its primary skill attempt most months) and a secondary skill focus that is in a different Group (to avoid the additional penalty on success chance for attempting more than one skill in the same Group).

Once the Clan can trade at the Fair (and/or has some other access to a steady flow of cash), then it is usually advantageous to have each Tribe do a primary and a secondary from Groups B and C, plus a Teacher for Hire skill from Group A, as this maximises the number of skill attempts per month. Sustaining a rate of 15 skill attempts per month is a reasonable goal, if you are looking to enhance your clan's skill base.

There is an underlying presumption in the discussion of Production skills below that the Clan has pursued some Diplomacy, so that it has multiple Tribes.

Production skills

Input limited skills

These skills have linear benefits below level 10, so that three tribes each with L2 will have the same aggregate production capacity as one tribe with L6. Because of the increasing difficulty of learning skills by level, it is usually easier to achieve a moderate level of capacity for input limited skills by obtaining the required skill levels across multiple tribes.

In the long term, it is more efficient (at least for skills where large volumes will eventually be required, e.g. Refining) to pursue these skills in a single Tribe, which targets getting to L10 and hence having output volume only limited by workers applied (up to the hard limit of 10,000 workers in a skill per hex). However, the average time for a Tribe to go from no skill to L10 is nearly 27 months of primary skill attempts. This is such a long lead-time that it will often be advisable (even within a L10 strategy) to supplement the Clan's skill capacity using other Tribes in order to generate sufficient output for immediate needs.

Many input limited skills can be enhanced by using tools (e.g. adze for Forestry, mattocks for Quarrying, etc) or by ancillary skills (e.g Milling enhances Baking). Obtaining the relevant tools (by trading or by developing Metalworking) is therefore a key part of production strategy.

Output volume skills

The change in output quantity per worker by level is not necessarily linear for these skills, though most seem to fit this pattern. Because these skills improve efficiency (output/worker, rather than number of workers), they can be used to overcome limited numbers of available workers (by using less people to produce the same output) or to deal with resource limits (by producing more per turn with a fixed number of workers). One exception is Herding, where improved skill enhances output (herd growth), but cannot be used to employ less people for the same number of animals (although there are Herding research topics that do allow this).

Obviously, because the number of workers used is not limited for these skills, it usually makes sense for only a single tribe in each clan to pursue these skills. In planning skill allocation between tribes, you should consider how you will deploy these skills (since only one tribe will have each of these skills). For instance, Mining and Farming are geographically based and each use a specific type of hex (Prairie or Grassy Hill for Farming; mineable resource for Mining, which appear only on hills and mountains, except for Salt). Therefore putting both Mining and Farming in the same tribe would run a high risk that the tribe will need to be different places at the same time. Because of the limitations on the size of elements (each must be smaller than the main Tribe), it is advisable to restrict unlimited input skills within each Tribe to those which can all be done in the same place. For example, Weapon Making and Hunting are both well suited to work in a Forest/Jungle hexes; similarly, Herding and Farming are both well suited to work in Prairie/Grassy Hills hexes.

As for input limited skills, tools can significantly assist production using output volume skills, enabling the same production from less people. For these output volume skills, however, you can just throw more people at the problem in order to achieve a target output. Furthermore, the number of usable tools may be very large (e.g. 10,000 traps for 2,000 hunters), limiting the attractiveness of buying tools for these skills.

Output quality skills

These skills allow a tribe to produce different types of goods depending on skill level, e.g. Metal Working, Weapon making, Stone Working, etc. I would consider Engineering to fall into this category – the difference being that the output goods are structures, not moveable goods. The goods produced at higher skill levels tend to be more valuable or useful.

As noted above for output quantity skills, generally only one tribe in the clan needs to develop any of these skills (there is a partial exception noted below for construction related skills). However, because these skills are generally independent of terrain, there is more freedom in deciding how the Clan allocates these skills between tribes. Certain skills do fit well together; for instance having a Tribe capable of doing most building without needing joint projects will simplify construction (as well as being more efficient with workers). Therefore having your Engineering Tribe pick up Woodworking skill makes sense (some Stoneworking skill as well may be worthwhile, even though it may not be the primary Stoneworking Tribe, since both are Group C skills).

A key part of your skill planning is to consider what skills you need and to what level in conjunction with your other skills and overall clan strategy. For example, a nomadic clan may want Weaving L3 to make rope from gut and bark as well as snares from rope; a settled clan might only want Weaving L1 to make rope from cotton in order to build mills.

Conclusion

A Clan's skills define its capabilities, so target skills to suit the type of Clan you want to be.

More Tribes = more skill checks, so Diplomacy is an important part of your skill strategy. Multiple Tribes also have some down sides (RL cost and increased vulnerability to attack).

Thinking ahead about sensible skill allocation and targeting for each tribe can avoid wasteful situations, such as:

key skills that you wish to pursue to high levels are both in the same Tribe (especially if they are both in the same Group)

a Tribe has key skills at high levels, but they can only be used in incompatible terrain types.

If you want to increase skill attempts beyond having five Tribes, there are some options:

Diplomacy research topic for Extra Tribe; and

International tribes, by doing international city missions and getting Understanding skill.

Players should note, however, that International tribes have some significant limitations. In particular, they tend to be limited in size (their people are acquired through use of related commodity) and cannot transfer people (warriors, etc) to/from the regular tribes in the clan.

0254 response

The newbie tribe will want to develop Diplomacy Skills (more Tribes = more Skill Attempts) and Administration Skills (more units = more exploration), almost immediately. You will be looking to Explore/Scout for Resources (Mines) and valuable Terrain (Trees, Water, Rivers - remember that Rivers/Lakes/Oceans can later serve as transportation pathways).

Feeding all your people (Provs) will be an early high priority. There are several ways to accomplish this, but early on it's all about Hunting and Herding. Efficient Hunting requires Traps, which takes time to acquire/develop, but developing your Herding Skill can significantly impact the growth of your livestock as a source of food. During early Clan development, you will likely develop "weight problems", where you are unable to move around with all of your resources, because they are, collectively, "too heavy". There is a tendency, at this point, to think, "Since I cannot move everyone around, I might as well build a Village." This is a flawed way of thinking, as your chosen Village location may be less than ideal and you will limit yourself prematurely. A second thought is typically, "I will build Wagons to transport my resources", which is better, but not ideal - at least in the long run. What you

would really like to do is breed Horses (and Elephants) and use them to carry Weight. Horses/Elephants also improve your Scouting range. So, while you will certainly need to build Wagons, you should do so in a conservative fashion and really look towards your livestock, while continuing to explore.

As you resolve your Provs/Weight issues, you will next likely need to create a Village (by building a Meeting House). There are several facets that your first Village will require. You will want this Village to have reasonable access to forest (terrain), so that you can chop logs. You will also want reasonable access to both Coal and Iron Ore (mines), so that you can eventually Refine Iron. This means you will need the Forestry Skill (to chop logs for your Village buildings), the Engineering Skill (to build the Village buildings), the Mining Skill (to mine Coal and Iron Ore) and the Refining Skill (to Refine Iron).

Once your Iron production is underway, you will be able to create Iron Tools, which will improve your Hunting, Forestry and Mining yields, as well as build Armor and Weapons. You will have now arrived at a new phase, where you can contemplate what direction you would like your Clan to take.

GM response

As 0123 says though it is hard to juggle priorities. Eg skills like Economics, Research and Politics are essential for the long term and the quicker you get to Lvl10 the better. But it would be a brave player indeed who starts aiming for 10 in these skills within the first couple of years of play.