

Diplomacy

Being an island GB can get away with no diplomacy at all and just put effort into any direction in the colonies. Getting a toehold in Europe will be difficult, however, and everyone will try to keep you out. Mentioned more in the Strategy section, GB in Europe is essential for a successful endgame. To play a 'classic' GB, diplomacy is essential. Played competently GB can generate a fair amount of Louisdore, which can be used to support allies and/or sow dissent. Thus one can engage with all the other countries, without actually having to provide direct support, if that's not what you want. At a minimum, GB should engage with France, Spain and Portugal and, to a lesser extent, Holland. These are the other players in the colonies and early de-conflicting can be of great benefit.

Economy

It is possible to take a longer and slower route to maximising your economy with GB. One reason for this is that you will want to consider laying down as much population as possible, in order to generate more Louisdore per head than any other country. With the cost of GB's navy, you will probably be building troops slower (and perhaps expensive troops) and thus the Ec Pts requirement can be lower (and all the facilities that go into producing them). Eventually, however, you will end up with all of the GB & Ireland land, less a few mountains, full of production sites. As the islands are reasonably secure from attack, this is where you will want to concentrate your sites. However, do not forget the essentials; once April 1808 is upon you (the turn labelled March 1808), start thinking about Food and Estates. Make sure you have enough food for the first, and then second, winter! Assuming your navy remains large, you will also need enough Vineyards, which is the only site you cannot have in GB itself.

Don't forget Trade when playing GB. With a domination of the sea it is possible to trade anywhere for a fair amount of profit. Think of even 'giving' trade cities (in the colonies you dominate) to other countries in order to generate trade differences. Sea-borne trade will mostly concentrate on the Ores and Ec Pts, plus Wine, if it's spare.

Brigades

Most of the GB troops are useful. Even the Militia can be used for defending the homeland as they are likely to outnumber the opposition just landed, before the navy then destroys their troopships. They can also be used to drop sacrificial land-grabbers anywhere in the world! Brigade size can be an interesting choice. Do you go for smaller brigades that can more easily fit on ships (pretty useful in the colonies)? Or larger ones, because you can only load/unload so many per turn? Personally I have always remained with a mix of forces, which are fairly historical, and more useful in tactical battles. However, GB will do most of it's fighting in the early years as mathematical, so this must be borne in mind.

Ships

GB's navy is essential and should not be traded away for short-term gain. It ensures the defence of the country from any early interloper and very few mainland powers will try to land early. Even if they 'gang' up, they risk losing their navies and a lot of men. Other mainland powers will be quick to exploit this – sow that dissent! In the early turns you are likely to spend a fair amount of time getting your navy together and organising them. My current favourite is to organise them by speed (MP), rather than 'historical' as this allows more efficient troop carrying. One tactic is to buy another navy – Russia's if you can get it (or half of it). This is expensive though and the effect on the economy is significant. The navy will spend most of its time ferrying troops to the colonies at first, but don't forget to leave enough to defend and/or strike opportunistically – more later...

Colonies

GB cannot ignore the colonies! On the other side of the coin, however, it can dominate them entirely. Whilst it is worth maintaining a reasonable presence in the Caribbean, it is in the Far East that most of the map can belong to GB. Over time, the colonies can generate a lot of income for GB, which can then fund a future in mainland Europe. Early on, it is quite possible, if not desirable, to

knock some players out of the colonies entirely. Ownership of mines seems to dominate as these things generate the most trade and some will eventually support a full military economy. One limitation to bear in mind is that you can only build 2 brigades in the colonies every turn. Thus early and continuous building is the way to go to generate large forces.

Strategy

GB can choose to go all 'colonies' and ignore Europe entirely. This will not make you popular with those countries once they're organised and you will have to fend off attacks. GB, however, is probably the only country where complete isolation can work, with only Morocco a lesser second. You could aim to dominate the colonies entirely; have a navy that could not be beaten; and plan to be one of the last 3 standing; all without talking to anyone!

If you want to play as part of the whole, however, a route into Europe must be found. Once GB is ensconced on the continent they will have a fairly secure base from which to operate; thus most other countries will try to prevent this. GB can make a great ally to another power, or two (three can share the win, don't forget), and so they may well let you land in secret. Do not underestimate the time it takes to ship an army to the continent. At an average of 8 brigades per turn, it will take nearly a game year to get a reasonable army across. Building brigades in Europe may be possible later in the game, but the cost is prohibitive. Given that you can indeed ship as many as you can build, this is probably not necessary.

Remember to keep at least some troops at home (even while they train) and at least one general, otherwise you could possibly suffer some losses as someone goes for a sea-borne invasion, even against the odds.