

1919 Pittsburgh - Role Sheet

Name: *Charles Strophel*

Allegiance: *Anti-Strike Faction*

Role Context

You are a 45-year-old white iron miner, working a twelve-hour day, seven days a week in the Birmingham mills. Having spent the last thirty years in the steel industry, you hated the twelve-hour day. But fear kept you at work. Although there was general support for the demand for striking, workers still remember the 1892 strike and would not take any chances. You know that the United States had enough resources to starve out workers, and that the company had spotters to identify strikers and union activists. Consequently, the steel company could withstand a long strike and they would punish strikers by firing them or demoting them to a lower-paying job. You also knew that the skilled workers were easily replaceable (by bringing in strikebreakers). To organize the steel mills the workers needed outside help but you are not optimistic about any such aid.

Motivations

You are reluctant to join the strike for several reasons. Firstly, you identified with anti-radical opinion and saw the strike as the work of subversive agitators. Secondly, there is the fear of losing your job if you participate. Homestead looms large in your memory, having been at that strike back in 1892 and kicked out of the mills for organizing activities. Now, you are too old to lose a job and find a comparable one. Having worked in the mills for so long you know that anyone who had worked in the mills for a short time could easily master the most skilled work. You remember how the strike against wage reductions had failed and how after the Carnegie Company subsequently 'punished' the men by introducing the twelve-hour day. As such you choose to continue to work even during the earlier Steel Car strike in McKeesport in 1909.

You do not think that unions or strikes were the way to improve working conditions. In time, the eight-hour day, as it spread throughout the United States, would come to the steel industry as well.

Play Guidelines

Round #1

- Believing that a Strike is too desperate of a measure, you support this, more peaceful, alternative of a Resolution.
- Get to know as many of the indeterminates as possible, some might have beneficial information that will aid in your cause.

Round #2

- Challenge the pro-strike faction to explain why the strike should continue given past precedence.

Round #3

- In the event a strike was voted against, discuss with workers and attempt to keep a hold on public opinion.
- In the event a strike is approved, double down your efforts, to convince workers to return to work.
- Some workers may be fired at the start of this round. Should this happen, a private message with instructions will be delivered to you.

Victory Objectives

Round #1 Victory

Your Faction has a clear Round #1 objective, to get the Resolution to Demand Collective Bargaining, Better, Pay, and Shorter Work Days passed, so that things may not escalate any further.

Complete Victory

Your Victory in the game is directly related to the success of the strike. A complete Victory will see you win Round #2, and then maintain your majority in Round #3.

Partial Victory

Partial victory may also be obtained if you lose the vote in Round #2 but manage to achieve the 50% majority vote in Round #3, thus seeing no Strike occur at all in Pittsburgh.

Important Sources

- Source 3.5 - “BLOOD IS SHED.:
Fierce Battles at Homestead.
Pinkertons Met and Repulsed.
Twenty Men Are Killed in the
Fight.”
- Source 3.9 - “Tube Plant Employers
say Italians are Causing the Strike.”
- Source 3.11 - “Steel Workers on the
Question of Striking.”
- Source 3.12 - “A Steel Worker
Writes to Fellow Workers.”