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Isle of Skye
Vom Häuptling zum König

INTERNATIONAL EDITION: IN THIS ISSUE WE PRESENT 56 GAMES

UNDERWATER EXPERIMENTS

AQUASPHERE

PROGRAM ROBOTS, COLLECT INFORMATION

Playing a game designed by Stephan Feld usually means that you have many different possibilities to score Victory Points (VP) but that you also need to be ready to change your strategy according to the actions of your opponents: AQUASPHERE is no exception. Remember Captain Nemo and his submarine Nautilus from Jules Verne's book "Twenty Thousands Leagues Under the Sea"? Well, looking at Aquasphere graphics players are transported back at those times to reach a laboratory underwater in a unknown Ocean: they are part of a team of scientists that is analyzing a new type of crystal whose utilization will remain ... secret. The box is well filled with good quality components, but does not have a mounted board: instead we have to assemble 6 sectors to form a round Research Station.

(SEE PICTURE 1)

Each player will receive a personal board and a base lab. The first is used to initially stock 16 Robots and 6 mini-submarines. On this board players will also place the "programmed" Robots, ready to be used on the Station to perform actions. A reminder of "how to get Victory Points (VP)" is printed on one side of the board.

(SEE PICTURE 2)

The second is a small laboratory that should be expanded with extra sectors. Players will find those sectors on the main Station during the game: improving this mini-lab will also improve the players abilities and the final score.

Another underwater building is called "Headquarters" and is used to program the robots and to decide the turn order.

The box also includes: 6 hexagonal "center tiles", to be stacked in the middle of the Station; 30 "lab expansions", for the players mini-labs; 41 "research cards" that give ben-

efits to the players who take them; 38 "time markers" (the "money" of the game); 20 black plastic "crystals" and 15 pink wooden "octopods".

Before starting the game we have to place lab expansions, research cards, time markers, crystals and octopods on each of the six sectors of the station, following the indication of the central tile. Each sector has 8 "operative" zones:

- 6 COLORED ACTION zones where the players will send their Engineers to perform actions
- 1 CENTRAL zone that will be occupied by a "programmed" robot, and
- 1 LOADING zone where are moved the robots that finish their task.

Once everything is in place the Headquarters must also be prepared: each player place the first of his two Engineers in the entrance and, using a randomly selected "program card", the seven zones of the building are filled with one of the seven programming tiles. Two colored cubes per player are finally placed on the "0" case of the VP track. To win the game you have to gain more VP than your opponents and this task can be done basically with three different possibilities:

- (1) - Gaining VP during a round, killing octopods or using special bonuses from cards
- (2) - At the end of each round, for the control of a majority of the sectors, collecting crystals and having displaced robots on the Research Station.
- (3) - At the end of the game, after 5 rounds: but we will see it later

LIGHTS AND COMPUTERS ARE SWITCHED ON: WORK MAY START

Each player, on his turn, may execute ONE action. Then turn passes to the player on his left and the game proceed in the same way, one action per turn, until all players pass: the first to pass will be the "first player" on the next round, and so on.

There are two kind of actions:

- (a) - To program a Robot
- (b) - To activate a Robot

(a): To PROGRAM A ROBOT a player has to move his Programming Engineer on the Headquarters, starting from the ENTRANCE

Pietro Cremona

Another hit from Stefan Feld and, as usual, a very interactive game with many possible tactics

and moving inside the building along one of the possible paths: arrows printed on the basement help to remember which are the alternative. You cannot back step once you moved inside one of the seven rooms.

(SEE PICTURE 3)

Each room contains a "Programming Tile": each tile has a different icon and is used to program a Robot to do a certain job. The player who selected a room takes one of his Robots from the reserve on his personal board and place it on the related colored section: for example, if you entered a room with a disc showing an Octopod you will place a Robot on the Octopod icon (pink) of your board (and you will use it later to kill octopods). Players may have a maximum of TWO programmed Robots in their board at any time: if they wish to program more Robots they must first use or eliminate one of those already programmed.

When their Engineers reach the top three rooms of the Headquarters the players cannot program more Robots (unless they own special cards) so they may only "spend" actions on the Research Station or ... pass. In

**THIS IS PICTURE 1****THIS IS PICTURE 2**

Color codes, target groups, features, icons and GABIS are explained on page 5 and at the bottom of pages 46 and 47

the latter case the Engineer exit the Headquarters and is placed on the "next turn order" track. The first to exit will be the first to play on the next round, and so on.

(b): To **ACTIVATE A PROGRAMMED ROBOT** players need to send their Chief Engineer in one of the 6 colored cases in a Sector of the Research Station, selecting an action related to one of their programmed Robot: for example, if you have 2 robots programmed for killing Octopods and collecting Crystals you may send your Engineer in a **PINK** (Octopods) or **BLACK** (Crystals) sector of your choice. Then you will perform the action related to this color:

- Action **GREEN**: used to expand the personal mini-lab. Place the Engineer in the green case and a Robot (programmed for the green action) in the central case of the Sector eventually pushing an existing robot in the loading zone. Then take the first expansion tile of the stack and place it on your mini-lab

- Action **YELLOW**: used to take new Time Markers (TM). Place the Engineer in the Yellow case and a programmed Robot in the Central case. Then take as much TM as your mini lab allows you.

- Action **BLACK**: used to acquire new crystals. Engineer in the Black case and a programmed Robot in the center. Then take the available crystals (you may keep as many as your mini-lab allows you).

- Action **PINK**: used to kill Octopods. Engineer on the pink case and a programmed Robot in the center. Then kill as many Octopods as your mini-lab allows you.

- Action **BLUE**: used to place new submarines. Engineer in the blue case and a programmed Robot in the center. Then take your leftmost submarine from your board and place it on the first available space on the Sector, paying the requested TM. Finally mark as many VP as indicated in the Research Station central tile.

- Action **RED**: used to acquire Research Cards. Engineer in the red case and a programmed Robot in the center. Then take the first available research card of the sector and mark as many VP as indicated in the Sector's central tile

- Action **WHITE**: used to program a new Ro-

bot. Engineer in the white case and a programmed Robot in the center. Then take a new Robot from your personal board and program it as is printed on the white case of that sector (a colored icon will tell you which robot to program). This action is particularly interesting when you were unable to program the right Robot in the Headquarters

HALLO: I AM THE DIRECTOR. PLEASE FOLLOW ME AND I WILL BETTER EXPLAIN SOME DETAILS

"Unfortunately I cannot give you more information about the kind of researches that we are doing or the actual results, but I will show you some interesting details of our job". The Director of the Base said.

OK, let's follow him and let's have a close look at the Base's activities.

Each Scientist (player) has his own mini-lab (beside his personal board). This laboratory has the form of an hexagonal room with a first sector already assembled: the icons printed on the laboratory (and the ones that you will add during the game acquiring new extensions) will allow you to store a certain number of Time Markers (4 at start), Research Cards (2 at start), Crystals (2 at start) and you may kill a certain number of Octopods (2 at start). Each initial sector has a letter (from A to F) that will be used for the set-up. During the game you may try to add up to 5 extra sectors to complete your laboratory: each sector will add extra storage possibilities and/or extra letters. Particularly important are, in the first round, the sectors that add extra TM because they will give you more flexibility during the action phase. **(SEE PICTURE 4)**

While we are following the Director we are informed that it will take time to pass from one sector to another one, as all doors are hermetically closed and you need a code number to open them.

In game terms this means that you have to pay a certain number of TM to move from one sector to another: four of the doors cost 1 TM to open, while one of them cost nothing and the sixth cost 2 TM. Therefore you have to carefully plan your moves in order



40 Years for WIN

Dagmar de Cassan, Editor-in-Chief

According to the register at the Austrian National Library, the first issue of **WIN** was published on 1. May 1976 – so 2016 is our 40th volume and we should celebrate this with even more good games!

Essen seems to have been only yesterday, presenting 1338 new games, and Nuremberg is approaching fast and I am sure that we will see more than 500 new games there.

In consequence, a lot of good games will disappear from the shops without having been properly noticed.

In this we still find our work laid out. In 1976 it was difficult to get information on new games at all, and 2016 there is too much information on too many games, which makes it difficult to find the jewels among them.

This is where we see ourselves – in our reports on Games Fairs we report on all new games and then, in our reviews, we recommend those games which we like, the games that should be in your collection and should be played at your table regularly.

In our data base **LUDORIUM** you can find all those games.

Come and take a look, and find out about all those games that you are still missing out on, at <http://www.ludorium.at>

Do you like our **WIN**? Until we have caught up on our backlog, we do not take new subscriptions, you can read all the issues free of charge, see

<http://www.gamesjournal.at>.

Our games compendium, **GAME BY GAME 2016** is available as a PDF, too, see

<http://www.gamescompanion.at> ☑



THIS IS PICTURE 3



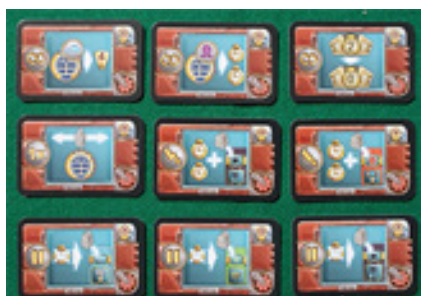
THIS IS PICTURE 4

to have the right number of TM to move and to eventually perform actions. This is one of the reasons for which I suggested to try to get early a sector that allows for extra TM to your lab. Another reason for doing so is the possibility to convert 3 TM into ONE programmed robot of your choice per round: this action is particularly strong in the MIDDLE GAME, when you desperately need a specific action but you cannot program a robot on the Headquarters.

Scientists alternate their turns using the Programming Engineer in the Headquarters to program new robots and moving the Chief Engineer in the Research Base to perform actions. This "linear" and simple concept was too ... easy for Stefan Feld and therefore he introduced a few extra rules that add interaction to the game and a further brain effort to the players.

When a Chief Engineer moves to a new sector he has to select a color for which he already has a programmed robot: then he moves this robot on the center case of the sector. If this center is empty the robot stands here, but if another robot already occupy the center it must be displaced, even if it is of the same color of the new one (this happens if you perform, for example, a second action in the same sector). The displaced robots are moved in the Loading Corridor and when the latter is full they must go back to the players boards (all but one per color). Unfortunately this will reduce the VP that the players will receive at the end of the round because only empty robot places in their personal board grant VP and only if ALSO the submarines spaces under the robots are empty. Therefore don't forget to move 2-3 submarines to the Station before placing robot Nr. 5 and the following ones.

Now I am sure that you start to be a little confused and in effect all beginners have the same question: which are the "best" robots to program at the beginning of the game? If the position of the discs in the Headquarters is favorable the best combination (in my opinion) should be: go for the Extra Expansion with TM, then use the extra TM that you were able to store to program a robot of your choice on each round and try to place Submarines 2 and 3 in the first and second round,.



THIS IS PICTURE 5

LOOKING OUTSIDE THE WINDOWS WE SEE A MARVELOUS WORLD

Being a Oceanic Research Center it is obvious that we notice a lot of movements and items underwater through the glasses of the Base. Particularly interesting are those BLACK CRYSTALS: we are not allowed to know which will be their final use but we may consider their effects on the game. In the Headquarter board we have a circular VP track, with RED LINES every 15 cases. When we get some VP we advance one of our colored cubes on this track but we are allowed to pass a red line only if we pay a black crystal, otherwise all extra VP are lost. Therefore we need at least ONE crystal per round to be able to proceed without problems. The second reason to collect Crystals is that at the end of each round they grant some VP to their owners: 1 VP with 1 Crystal, 3 VP with 2, 6 VP with 3, and so on.

We also see a number of OCTOPODS that have a very kind aspect and a promising pink color ... but are in effect another "handicap" created by Mr. Feld for our entertainment. In effect at the end of each round if there are Octopods in a sector where the central position is occupied by one of your robots you lose VP: 1 VP with 1 Octopod, 3 VP if the octopods are 2, etc. So it may be a good idea to try to eliminate those damned octopods during the round, sending your Chief Engineer in a section containing 2-3 octopods and kill as many of them as you have icons in your laboratory (the initial 2 and the ones that you eventually got with extra sections). Killing octopods will also give you some VP: 1 VP if you kill just one of them, 3 VP for killing two, etc.

During the game you have also the opportunity to acquire a certain number of RESEARCH CARDS: you may store as many cards as you have icons in your laboratory and none of the cards may be discarded, even if it is exhausted, so you have to pay high attention to your selection. Each card offers an advantage to his owner: some may be used any number of times; others may be activated only once (you decide when); others must be activated immediately; some are activated only at the end of each round. (SEE PICTURE 5)

The advantages are various but you have to select a card if it will be useful for your strategy. For example, if you decide to go for the octopods it may be useful a card that gives you 2 TM each time that you kill at least one of them; if you prefer to play on submarines you may select a card that allow you to pay half the price for each of them; if your intention is to place as many robots as you can you may take a card that will allow you to place a Robot during the end turn phase, paying just 1 TM; and so on.

Beware: at the end of each round all the TM are eliminated (those on the board and the ones owned by the players, if any). So remember to use all your TM during each round, if possible! It seems a stupid recommendation, but very often players remain with an "odd" number of TM that are not enough to make any action, so they are lost ! Hopefully before the start of the following turn you will receive as many TM as you have submarines on the Research Base (and this is another good reason for placing submarines).

At the end of each round players receive: 6 VP to the player with most robots in central cases of the Base (3 VP for ties); "x" VP for the number of Robots placed on the board (provided that the related submarines are also on the board); "x" VP for owned crystals. Finally players subtract the eventual penalties of the Octopods and the final result is the number of cases that you may advance on the VP track. Remember: if you need to cross a red line you must pay a crystal.

DIRECTOR SAYS: IT IS TIME TO EXIT THE BASE

At the end of the 5th round players make the usual calculations and then we have a final VP check where you are rewarded for your performance in the Research Base:

- You get 1-2-6-10-15-21 VP if you have 1-2-3-4-5-6 different letters in your laboratory. Please note that some of the sectors have TWO letters and therefore it is possible to get all 6 letters without having completed the laboratory.

- But if you completed the laboratory you will get 5 VP extra

- And if ALL your submarines are in the Research Base you also get 5 VP extra

- Then each TM that you still own at the game's end will give you 1 VP extra

Of course the player with most VP is the winner.

It took to me and my friends three complete sessions of gaming to understand how to play well AQUASPHERE. Please note that rules are easy to understand and the rulebook is very well organized: after the first game we only needed copies of the Research Card appendix in order to remember the effect of each card, but we never had the necessity to go back to the rules for clarifications. The problem was ... what to do ? and which strategy is the best ?

Looking at your labs may help you: all of them have a different letter and this means that players start each with a different programmed robot (for free): this may help you for the first turns, but I suggest that you carefully look at the Headquarters board. At the beginning of each turn (including the set-up) a special card is turned up and the



DISCS are placed as indicated by the card. So take a few minutes to think about the best "path" that you may follow inside this board. You always have the opportunity to get THREE programmed robots but you need to decide where to move first: if you select the left path you cannot move on the right side of the board later and vice-versa. So you need to program your moves in the round looking at the discs that you will be able to reach.

You all know the "Murphy's Law", don't you? Well you may be certain that you will never get the perfect path that you needed!!! But again I wish to remind you that if you have enough TM you may purchase a programmed robots per turn so remember this opportunity when you decide how to move.

Hopefully after the first 2-3 games you finally have a good perception of the game's flow and you may start to make your own strategy but, as it happens on all Feld's games, you must remain flexible because interactions between players is very high and someone else may do "that" move before you. So you always need a second choice plan!

We appreciated very much AQUASPHERE, but obviously this is a game for expert players and for people that really wish to deeply explore every game. Unfortunately nowadays many good games are published every year and sometimes the players try them only 1-2 times before passing to a new title and very often good games are left aside only because they are not so "immediate". If you are one of those gamers

do not go for AQUASPHERE as you need to play it at least 4-5 times to understand and appreciate it and to play competitively. ☑

Pietro Cremona

INFORMATION

Designer: Stefan Feld
Artist: Dennis Lohausen
Price: ca. 35 Euro
Publisher: Hall Games / Pegasus 14
www.pegasus.de

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
12+

TIME:
100+

EVALUATION

Development game
 Users: For experts
 Version: multi
 Rules: de en fr jp pl
 In-game text: no

Comments:
 Easily-understood and well-structured rules
 * Some introductory games necessary * Lots of interaction, so plan an alternate strategy

Compares to:
 Complex worker placement games

Other editions:
 Asterion Press, Arclight, Matagot, Fullcap Games, others are announced.



My rating:



GAMES BUYER INFORMATION SYSTEM - GABIS

STRUCTURE

Each game review also features an evaluation which can help you to find the game that best suits your tastes. The color accompanying each game title represents the USER Group. The headline also contains icons for age and number of players. The BAR in the evaluation box displays color codes for up to 10 features of a game.

USER GROUP

We have defined 4 target groups (color accompanying the head line)

Kinder:

Games for children and educational games. Adults can play in a guiding function.

Familien:

Children and parents play together, all have the same chance to win and have fun.

Freunde:

Young people and adults play together as equals

Experten:

Games with special demands on rules and playing time. Especially for game geeks

Please note for the user groups **Children**, **Family** and **Friends**: Children who love to play can be ahead of their peers! Please note that our target group "families" does not imply the classical concept of "family games"! Furthermore, our user groups can overlap. The choice of suitable games always depends on your playing partners and your fun with games!
 Games that are especially eligible for **Solo** play or for **2 players** or **Large groups** of players are marked with an icon.

FEATURES

Each game targets preferences for different features in a player, therefore each game is not suitable for each player. We have listed 10 features players note when deciding on a game. Only if a player finds his preferred features in a game he will enjoy the game. The color code marks the dominant features. Educational games train the highlighted preference.

Empty boxes: This feature is neglectable or not present
 One colored box: This feature is present, but not essential
 Two colored boxes: This feature is present and important in the game
 Three colored boxes: This feature is dominant and essential

Chance:

The game is influenced by dice, cards or any other form of random generator

Tactics:

Take decision, short-term planning, planning based on one move

Strategy:

Think ahead, long-term planning, planning for several moves

Creativity:

The player has to provide words, phrases, images and other creative efforts

Knowledge:

Cultural and educational knowledge, long-term memory

Memory:

Remember, learn by heart, short-time memory

Communication:

Talk to each other, negotiate, inform

Interaction:

Influencing each other, bluffing, auction

Dexterity:

Motor skills

Action:

Body movement, balance and reaction

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Version: The edition of the game on which the review is based

Rules: This lists the languages in which rules are available or are included in the game, often even more translations can be found on the web.

In-game text: A YES marks a game with language-dependent components that cannot be played without translation or knowledge of the language

APPARENT IDYLL

DIE BLUTIGE HERBERGE

ASSASSINATED GUEST IN THE COUNTRY INN



Sounds like the title of a C-class horror movie, but at second glance turns out to be a new release from the Belgium publisher Pearl Games, which was released on occasion of Spiel at Essen 2015 in several languages. Contrary to its renowned predecessors, for instance Deus, Bruxelles 1893,



Tournay or Troyes, the Bloody Inn is not slotted into the Frequent Player segment of games, but is absolutely suitable for casual gamers. The age notation of 14+ is probably due more to the topic than to the mechanics of the game, as the game can be played easily within an hour, even with the full complement of four players.

As you can tell from the name of the game,

Gert Stöckl

A well-working fun card game for friends and families with playing experience, with a reasonable time to play and a fresh, albeit unusual, topic.

the purpose of the Bloody Inn is not only to be a good host by housing and feeding your guests, but rather to assassinate one or the other of guests and then bury him properly and cash in on the money he carried on his person.

Usually 2 to 4 players – there is also a solo version available – are assigned one room each in the inn with a key in the corresponding color and begin the game with a 10 Franc cheque. At the start of the game each player only holds 2 Peasant cards in hand. The remaining rooms are – depending on the number of players – equipped with neutral keys.

Scheme of a round:

The starting player assigns one and only one guest to each room, represented by a card. Those guests come, besides a level of 0 to 3, with a certain sum of money, which is related to the guest level and is the main object of the game. Furthermore, nearly all guest cards command a so-called special talent and an "annex", which is a certain advantageous effect, which is triggered if you lay out the card in the course of the game. Now each player has exactly one of 5 action options, followed by a second action for each player and the round is done. The game itself ends, when the stack of cards has been dealt with twice.

The first action option is „to bribe a guest“ in order to take him up in your hand. For this action you pay a number of cards from your hand, corresponding to the level of the guest (0 to 3). If you make the payment with peasants, these are always placed into the bistro of the inn – this goes for all peasants that are used in any of the actions that are described later, too. All other guests used for payment are placed on the Exit Stack (discard pile). But should you have used a guest for payment that shows the special talent of "Bribery", which is a bundle of money, you need only to show him and can then take him back in hand. Instead of a guest you can also bribe one or two guests from the bistro, if available.

The second action option deals with the „annex“ of a guest card by adding the card from your hand into your own display with the purpose of using this Annex“ for the remainder of the game. All such Annex functions either give you money, facilitate standard action by allowing you to pay one card less or have various other advantages. Furthermore, those „annexes“ allow you to bury the assassinated guests, numbers relate to the level of the Annex. You need to dispose of the bodies somewhere, after all, preferably underneath one of your own annexes, because that earns you the full amount of money stated on the card. In analogy to the bribery action you take back in hand all cards that were used for payment showing the „annex“ talent.

This takes as to the two most important action options in the game, which only yield the intended result when used in combination: „Assassinate a guest“ and „bury a body“. Both actions need to be well planned and well prepared, as it costs up to six cards in hand to implement those action options with a guest of Level 3. You assassinate a guest by choosing a guest card in the inn (not one from your hand – and, once again, pay for him with cards from your hand according to the level of the chosen guest card. Should you use a Force of Law, that is, a police card showing a talent symbol of a weapon you take this card back in hand. The assassinated guest is laid out showing the "dead" side of the card. Burying a corpse is again done by discarding of cards from your hand. Here it is important where you bury the corpse, as the using of an opposing annex results in the splitting of the sum of money stated on the corpse between the players involved.

Finally, there is the action option of „pass“, which, contrary to its name, provides a very important effect, which is „laundering of money“, that is, swapping cash stated on the money track on the board for cheques or vice versa, done in increments of 10. It is important to know in this context that your marker on the money track, representing part of your wealth besides those 10 Franc cheques, cannot surpass 50 Francs. So you need to use the option of "pass" early enough to make sure that you can always mark your earnings on the track. If a lot of money should be forfeited in that way it hurts a lot, as usually a lot of money has cost you lots of cards from your hand.

When each player has implemented his two action the round ends with three end-of-round steps. It is important to already pay attention during the two action rounds if a Police Force is present in a room. If at the

end of the round at least one of those Policemen be present in the inn, each unburiéd corpse goes out of play and, even worse, you need to pay 10 Francs per corpse, either with a cheque or with cash from the track. And I can make a nearly failsave prophecy: If that happens to a player several times he has very probably forfeited his chance to win the game. Therefore take my advice and don't kill too many guests without properly burying them instantly afterwards.

Besides the end-of-round step of „departure, in which all remaining living guests are placed on the exit stack, which earns you a Franc for each of your own rooms, there is the end-of-round step „pay wages“, in which each card in hand must be paid for with a Franc. If you cannot pay those wages, your dearly paid-for accomplices will run off quickly.

Summary: Straightforward rules, there is an option to vary the duration from 45 to 75 minutes with the number of cards used, a new topic, a good-sized box which can easily be taken along – so what more can you want to meet your desire than A Bloody Inn? ☑

Gert Stöckl

INFORMATION

Designer: Nicolas Robert

Artist: L. Francisco, W. Santiago

Price: ca. 23 Euro

Publisher: Pearl Games 2015

www.pearlgames.be

PLAYERS:
1-4

AGE:
14+

TIME:
60+

EVALUATION

Card game
Users: With friends
Version: de
Rules: de en es fr pl
In-game text: yes

Comments:
New topic * Simple rules * Playing time to be selected

Compares to:
San Juan, Brügge and all other card games featuring cards with multiple card functions.

Other editions:
In English, French and Spanish by Pearl Games, Polish by Rebel.pl



My rating:



I WILL BUILD YOU A CASTLE

DIE SCHLÖSSER DES KÖNIG LUDWIG II

MAD OR ONLY BEAUTIFUL?

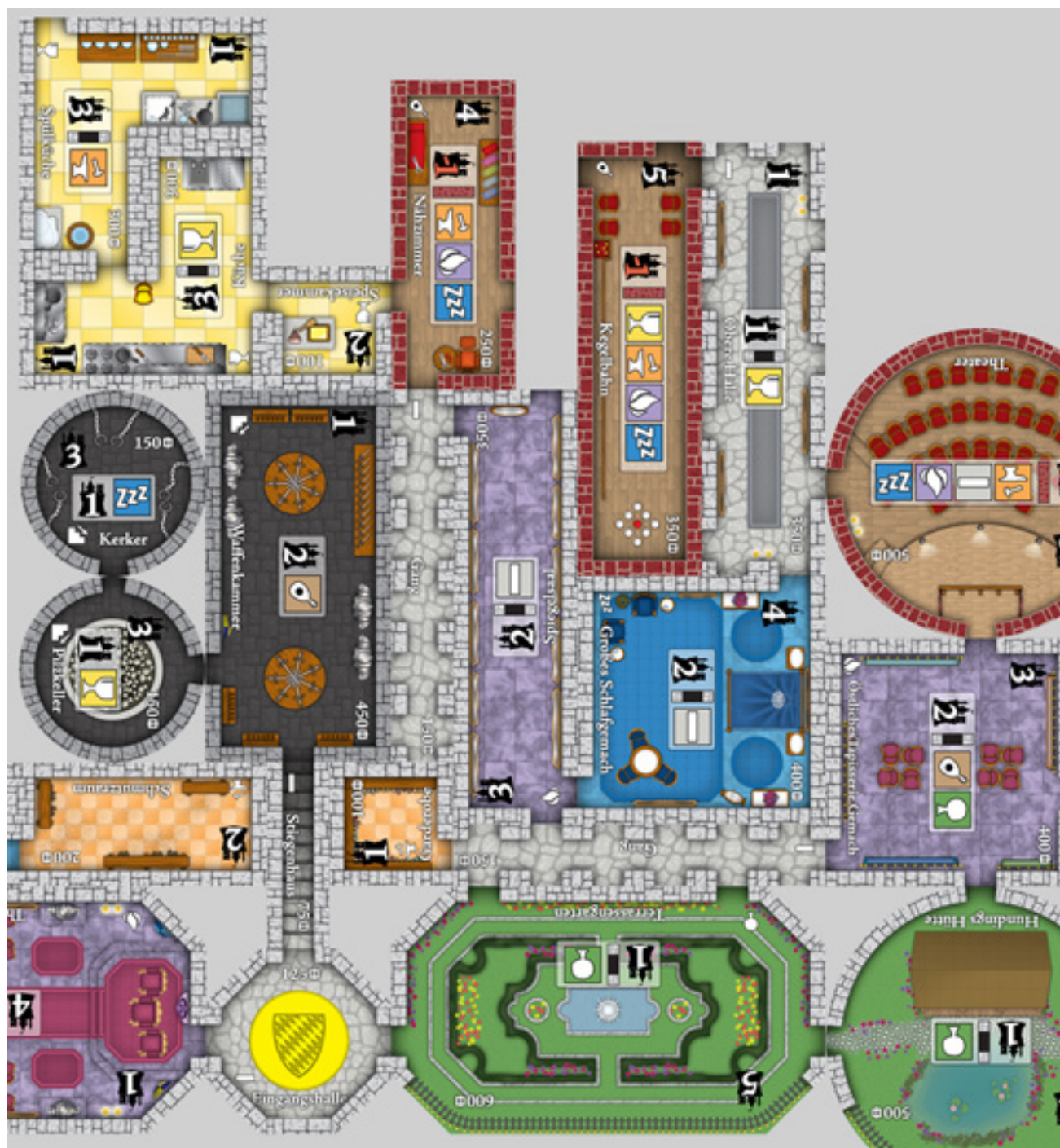


Those readers among you that are a bit advanced in years might still remember – at least in Germany and Austria – the hit by Heintje played up and down in the radio, to the chagrin of some, to the joy of others. Unfortunately, the melody has imprinted itself indelibly in my memory. I wish I could remember much more important things

that easily, too – but this is not the topic here.

Who would not love to own a castle, if we disregard the costs of up-keeping for the moment? Well, in this game by Ted Alspach we can immerse ourselves into that feeling easily. Obviously, the designer was inspired by the castles of Bavarian King Ludwig II.,

one of the most dazzling and enigmatic personalities of his time. His extravagant and luxurious urge for building has given us, after all, „Lindenhof“, „HerrenchiemseeW“ and last but not least „Schloss Neuschwanstein“, building monuments of incredible beauty, albeit having forced the national finances of Bavaria into near bankruptcy with the total building costs of more than 300 millions. In the end this was the reason for his incapacitation based on an alleged madness. But if you take a look at today's number of visitors of those monuments and the entry fees they pay, maybe the money wasn't that ill-spent after all? It took an American publisher to pick up this topic.



It is interesting, by the way, that in the title of the American edition King Ludwig is called "Mad" or crazy, while this qualifying addition has been left out in the German title, probably out of consideration for the German market.

The company Bézier Games has been

Rudolf Ammer

The title-providing topic has been implemented with great flair and offers high replay values with its many and variable options.

founded in 2006 in California by Ted Alspach, the designer of this game. He has also published games like Age of Steam, Ultimate Werewolf, Kniffel the Card Game, Mutant Meeple and Suburbia as well as expansions for Suburbia. He is also the author of more than 30 books.

But now to the game itself: 75 rooms and gardens in ten different sizes need to be developed by 1-4 players and built by them in their guise as builders. The starting point for each castle is an entry hall. There are also six stair wells and nine corridors. At the same time we also need to take into consideration four out of 24 demands of the King. With the help of bonus cards – there are 28 different such cards in the game – you can acquire additional points in order to leave the table as the victorious builder.

For the game set-up the various rooms are sorted by size and deposited on the two room game boards. A so-called score tower records the victory points of participating players. There are two types of bonus cards. With one type of cards certain types of rooms are preferred and you are awarded points for them in relation to their numbers. The other type of cards concentrates mainly on the size of rooms. At the start of the game you receive three bonus cards out of which you choose two and can then use them. At the same time four Demands of the King are selected randomly out of the total of 24 demands. Those demands award points at the end of the game or provide room sizes, exits from the castle or money. You see that you have already take quite a few things into account for the course of the game even before the game has started. 15.000 Mark are your starting capital for the game. Now seven different rooms are set out, the corresponding room cards are sorted and the rooms are assigned to a price list, ranging from 1000 to 15.000. This completes the set-up of the game.

The Starting player is given the master builder marker. This gives him the privilege to re-arrange the rooms on display so that there will be new prices for acquiring those

rooms. Now players in turn, beginning to his left, decide on one of those rooms and pay the price to the master builder! If nothing suitable is available or if you think the price is too high, because he have already depleted your finances, you may pass. This passing is rewarded with 5000 Mark from the bank. As the last player of the round the master builder has the right to buy. He must pay the price for his chosen building to the bank or he can decide to pass, too. Rooms that have not been bought are assigned 1000 Mark as additional allure. Using the room cards you determine which rooms are used to fill the empty spots in the display and the master builder marker is passed to the next player in clock-wise direction.

What happens to the rooms that have been acquired? They must be added by each buyer to his personal castle instantly. At least one door must correspond to a room already in the display. You must also take card that the castle has at least one exit. Basement rooms that you acquire may only be connect to the ground floor of the castle only by stair wells. If you cannot adhere to all of those rules when placing a room you are not allowed to acquire this room.

As soon as a room has been placed you are awarded victory points. The number of points is marked on the room cards in the top left-hand corner. Furthermore, there are symbols in the middle of each card that influence the adjacent rooms. There are drawing rooms, bedrooms and dining rooms as well as gardens, hobby rooms, utility rooms and basement rooms, and of course also connecting elements like corridors and star wells. Understandably, it is not desirable that, for instance, bedrooms are placed next to hobby rooms or dining rooms and such placements are penalized with less of points.

Rooms are considered to be completed when all doors of a room are connected according to the rules to other rooms. This brings additional privileges. Those privileges are: A double scoring in case of a drawing room, 5 extra points for a hobby room, another turn for a dining room, 10.000 Mark in case of a garden and an additional bonus card for a utility room. So, paying attention to placement can be useful.

The end of the game has been reached when the stack of room cards has been emptied. Now the Demands of the Kings and bonus cards owned by players are evaluated. An additional point is earned for each 10.000 Mark you own. In case of – a rather improbable – tie the size of the castle you constructed will decide the tie. For this

purpose, each card carries a number for the room area in the top right-hand corner.

For summary cards are included in the game to assist you with the game flow. The components are of excellent quality and nicely designed. For this my praise goes to the artist Keith Curtis. The rulebook of six pages is also straightforward, well structured and leaves no questions. Dale Yu as the editor is a renowned professional who put his mark of excellency on the job. Dale Yu was involved in creating Dominion, the solo version of Agricola and also the Fir Tree Deck. His experience was obviously well-used and valuable for the design of this game.

Due to the bonus cards and the demands of the king that vary in each game no game is similar to the previous one. The many options for scoring points also introduce lots of variation and provide the game with a high replay value and diversity. The solo version offers the opportunity to compete with a score of 50 (Jester) to 101 (King of Castle Builders). An absolutely coherent topic has been implemented in an optimum way, the game must be recommended to all fans of tile placement games. ☑

Rudolf Ammer

INFORMATION

Designer: Ted Alspach

Artist: Keith Curtis

Price: ca. 36 Euro

Publisher: Bézier Games 2014

www.beziergames.com

PLAYERS:

1-4

AGE:

13+

TIME:

90+

EVALUATION

Tile placement game

Users: With friends

Version: de

Rules: de en

In-game text: no

Comments:

Excellent components * Equally excellent rulebook * Many ways to score * Lots of variety due to varying component selection

Compares to:

Versailles and other tile-placing building games

Other editions:

Castles of Mad King Ludwig, Bézier Games



My rating:



ISLAND KINGDOMS

ISLE OF SKYE

FROM CHIEFTAIN TO KING

8+

Andreas Pelikan and Alexander Pfister have won the award „Kennerspiel des Jahres 2015“ for their game „Broom Service“. As Pfister has been very successful, too, with his game Port Royal and Pelikan was equally successful with Gulli Piratten, I was, understandably, rather curious about their new Game „Isle of Skye“.

I had the opportunity to test an early version of the game's prototype at Spiele Kreis Wien and at that point I did like the prototype very much. But let me say now, the prototype I played then was very good already, but the finished game is much much better!

Isle of Skye – From Chieftain to King is a tile

placement game for 2-5 players. The game box cover shows a guy in a kilt playing bagpipes. When you open the box you find this content: 16 Scoring tiles, 73 Landscape tiles, 5 Castle tiles, 6 Screens (only five of them are needed, one is meant for replacement purposes), 6 Discard markers (again one is intended for replacement), 1 Round marker, 1 Starting Player tile, 1 Cloth Bag and coins of different values.

Aim of the game is, as in many more games, to acquire most victory points.

The board is laid out – it is a double-sided one, one side is intended for 2-4 players, the other side for a game with 5 players. In a game of 2-4 players, six rounds are played,

in a game with 5 players only five rounds are played.

The board shows four cases, marked A, B, C and D, for scoring tiles. In each game only four tiles are used; you shuffle all scoring tiles and place four randomly chosen ones on the cases on the board. The remaining 12 scoring tiles are returned to the box and are only used in the next game.

The landscape tiles show mountains, meadows and water as well as animals, buildings, barrels of whiskey and other things.

Those 16 scoring tiles show completely different scorings and values and yield victory points for all types of landscapes and animals, buildings and other items, all of them depicted on the landscape tiles. On those landscape tiles you can find, among other things, barrels of whiskey, cows, sheep, farms, light houses as well as sailing ships.

As only four of those 16 scoring tiles are used in a game you have different options for victory points in each game. And in each round of a game only certain scoring tiles



are scored to that it is nearly impossible that the same combination of scoring will appear again in another game.

The Round marker is placed on case one of the round track. Each player takes a screen, a castle tile and a playing piece in his cho-

Maria Schranz

The game fascinates due to its relatively simple mechanisms and an extremely high replay value. An excellent game!

sen color. Each player also receives one Discard Marker and coins of value 5.

All players set up their screen and place their money and their discard marker behind this screen.

The castle tile is placed openly at some distance from the screen. You should leave enough space to add landscape tiles to the castle in the course of the game. All landscape tiles are placed into the cloth bag.

This nearly completes the preparations, you only need to determine a starting player and hand him the starting player tile.

The Starting player draws three landscape tiles from the bag and places them open-faced and exactly in front of his screen in a way that all players can clearly see those landscape tiles. Then all other players also draw three landscape tiles and place them in front of their screen. Then each player assigns - behind the screen - his Discard marker to one of the tiles and a minimum of 1 coin to each of the other two tiles. As the screen is still placed between tiles and money or discard marker, respectively, the other players cannot discern the price for the tiles or which of the tiles cannot be bought.

When all players have finished this assigning, all players simultaneously remove their screens and thus reveal which of their tiles goes back into the cloth bag and the amount of money each of the remaining tiles will cost. All players now place the tile next to the discard marker back into the bag.

Beginning with the starting player, each player in turn can buy a landscape tile from one of the other players. When a player has decided to buy a landscape tile, he pays the amount of money that the player who still owns the tile has assigned to the tile and then takes the tile and sets it aside. The previous owner now picks up the amount of coins he had assigned to the tile.

Instead of buying a landscape tile you can pass on buying.

In each round you only have one opportunity to buy a landscape tile.

When each player has bought a landscape tile or has passed, there are still landscape tiles left with some or all players together with coins assigned to them.

Those landscape tiles must now be bought

by the respective players themselves by returning the coins assigned to them to general stock.

Thus a player can acquire between 0 and 3 landscape tiles in a round.

Now all players add all landscape tiles that they acquired to their castle tile. The usual placement rules apply: Mountain next to mountain, meadow next to meadow, water next to water. Paths are the only landscape element that need not be continued. Thus you can add a meadow without path to a meadow with path.

When all players have placed their landscape tiles, a scoring is implemented. In the first round only the scoring tile on case A is used to calculate victory points. In the second round you use the scoring tile on case B, in round three you calculate points based on the tiles in cases A and C. In the following rounds, too, only certain scoring tiles can be used to calculate victory points.

At the start of a new round each player receives five money units for his income; each player who placed landscape tiles with barrels of whiskey that are connected by a path to his castle, receives one additional money unit for each barrel symbol.

Beginning with round three each player receives additional income for each player who has more victory points. This begins with 1 money unit per player in Round 3 and is raised by one money unit per player for each additional round. Therefore the player with fewest victory points usually owns most money in a round, whereby he can make the landscape he offers for sale very expensive or commands lots of money for shopping.

A few of the landscape tiles depict scrolls which, at the end of the game, also yield victory points for the symbols shown in the scrolls. When a scroll is present in a completed area (meadow, mountain or lake), this scroll is scored twice; when the area is not complete, the scroll is only scored once. Furthermore, each player scores one VP per 5 money units at the end of the game.

The captivates players by relatively simple mechanics and game flow. All the same, it offers a lot of strategic and tactical potential and also an extremely high replay value, as the next game can be totally different from the previous one and surely will do so as other scoring tiles are in play.

Due to the simple rules the game is an excellent family game which all the same can be recommended unconditionally to all experienced and frequent players, as it offers lots of playing appeal and needs quite some tactical cleverness in order to win the game. The high number of 16 scoring tiles out of which only 4 are used for an individual game results in importance for different tiles in each game, which in turn results in

completely different game play for each game and also in completely different purchase prices for the same landscape tile in different games.

The element of chance is naturally high due to the landscape tiles being randomly drawn, and yet the tactical and strategic considerations are more important for the game play.

In our games it happened very often that we played another game immediately after the first one. The time for a game, usually between 30 and 60 minutes, depending on the number of players, entices experienced players again and again to play another game instantly, due to the quality of the game.

The art by Klemens Franz is excellent and, as is the case with games illustrated by him, many elements are self-explanatory due to his graphics.

My summary: Isle of Skye can only be rated as an exceptional and excellent game, and I can only say "Alex and Andreas have delivered a worthy follow-up to their successful Broom Service and this follow-up is, in my opinion, even better than their Kennerspiel des Jahres 2015." ☑

Maria Schranz

INFORMATION

Designer: A. Pelikan, A. Pfister

Artist: Klemens Franz

Price:

Publisher: Lookout Spiele 2015

www.lookout-spiele.de

PLAYERS:

2-5

AGE:

8+

TIME:

60+

EVALUATION

Tile placement
Users: For families
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game text: no

Comments:

Excellent graphic design * Simple, easily understood rules * A good game for families as well as for seasoned gamers

Compares to:

Carcassonne as regards to tile placement

Other editions:

English edition from Mayfair Games



My rating:

AN OVERDUE FOLLOW-UP

MARTIN WALLACE

**DR. GRORDBORT'S ONWARD TO VENUS
+ MYTHOTOPIA + A STUDY IN EMERALD**

Since several years games by Martin Wallace are favorite games among our friends and are put on the table again and again. Just to name few exemplary titles – Railroad Tycoon The Board Game, Brass, or London – when those games are out on the table on our evenings in Spiele Kreis Wien there are definitely enough people who instantly want to play.

The more recently published games from Treefrog Games were unfortunately of very, very fluctuating quality: Take „A Few Acres of Snow“, for instance, a wonderful deck building game in historical setting was very often played with pleasure at the beginning – despite being a bit drawn-out – but since an unfailing strategy for winning the game became known, the interest in the game has deflated rapidly. Unfortunately, Martin has not published more games with a historical background.

Then – 2013 in Essen – „A Study in Emerald“ was published and I very well remember the answer of the designer to my question on what the topic of this game is about? He told me, that he could not really tell me, I should simply try it out. An unusual answer, but I was curious enough to buy several copies of the game – for friends, too – and then it took me more than 6 months to tackle the game. What can I tell you? After a few months we finally had – more or less – mastered the rules and up to today we play the game regularly, there is no other game that I have played more often in my life (maybe even more often than „Mensch ärgere Dich nicht“ in my childhood). But more on that later.

In 2014 I acquired „Mythotopia“ and „Onward to Venus“, Mythotopia because it picked up the game mechanics of „Snow“ and Onward to Venus because of its breathtakingly beautiful design.

In this review I only talk about the last three games I just mentioned: All are so-called deck building games – albeit, Venus, if you take a very close look, is not such a game, as the cards are discarded after using them and are not taken up in hand again.

„Onward to Venus“ is based on „Dr. Grordbort“ by Greg Broadmore and is set in the late 19th century and using the supposition that mankind has already mastered space travel and has settled the solar system. For initiated games: A Steam Punk Scenario.

Up to five players fight for control over the

planets and moons in our Solar System – the nations of England, France, Germany, Russia and the United States of America. At the start of the game you lay out planets and moons instead of a game board – round discs in a specified arrangement. Then you randomly distribute tiles on those discs. Those tiles show symbols for buildings (mines and factories), bonuses („Big Game“ = Victory Points, „Windfall“ = Money, and „draw 2 cards), or events (crises and tension). Each player receives a colored military set of cardboard markers: Space Ships, infantry and Tanks as well as four starting cards. At the start you can draw two more cards from a face-down draw pile of more than 100 cards. Those cards are „one use only“, you can have a maximum of 9 cards in hand, which usually yield „Combat Points“, but also other advantages, for instance additional movement. Finally, there are money tiles to buy units; factories and mines yield income, but money does not yield victory points.

The graphics of the cards in Steam Punk design are a feast for your eyes, as is the design of rules and tiles. But what would a space game be without Aliens? Don't worry, Alien tiles will enter the game in certain situations.

Onward to Mars

„Onward to Venus“ is played in three rounds; one round ends when the last dice is taken off the so-called pass card. Possible actions are: 1) Movement (all units of all players start on Earth); 2) claim a tile on a moon or planet; 3) acquisition of 1-2 military units; 4) Card actions and 5) pass your turn, that is, take one dice from the pass card and draw a card. The last die taken from the card ends the round; whoever takes it, is starting player of the next round. Movement allows a space ship to move across two planets or moons, maybe further with some cards, the space ship can carry infantry, but no tanks, which must be built in factories on the respective planets. Claiming of tiles: To claim a tile you must land a military unit on the planet (movement always ends in orbit around the target). Mines, crises and Tension must be

conquered in combat after landing; only landed units count towards determining combat strength. The attacker rolls three combat dice; the die with the medial result is ignored and the difference of the remaining two dice raises the defense value of the attacked tile (for instance, a mine). The attacker must achieve this value or surpass it in order to win; infantry and space ship each provide value 1, tanks 2, and this strength value can be raised further by cards. When the defense value is not achieved or the attacker deems the „price“ to be too high, he can resign and the action is forfeit. Each die features one side showing a skull of value 0! For each skull rolled the attacker loses one unit at the end of the attack.

Mines and factories of other players can only be attacked at a location with a Tension marker; in this case the defender can

Christoph Proksch und Ursula Vlk

A nicely designed retro SciFi game, with enticing design and a rather uniform flow combined with a high chance factor.

add the combat value of his units in orbit to his defense value.

„Crises“ markers are attacked in the same way, they do yield victory points. In theory, they can do devastating damage, depending on the location (for instance, attacks by Aliens), but this rarely happens as those markers are usually attacked very quickly because of their victory points yield.

At the end of the game you calculate the ranking of income – most, second-most and third-most income – for each planet and each moon. The respective victory points vary in relation to the location (Earth yields most). You also receive points from tiles you did acquire, for instance „Big Game“.

„Onward to Venus“ is a relatively simple game which takes one hour to 90 minutes to play, but is a game whose attraction diminishes after a few games, as it features a relatively high element of chance and offers little variation in its game flow. Due to its marvelous design it might be an attractive gift to a casual gamer.

Mythotopia

Mythotopia is made of sterner stuff: The deck building mechanism has been taken from „Acres of Snow“, the map on the board shows a fictitious country with mountains, plains, lakes, oceans and islands. Each province shows a number in a circle which

is the combat strength of the neutral region, and one of four different symbols, which are also depicted on the respective region cards in their top left-hand corner: Army, Food, Stone or Gold – the resource of the region. Some landscapes indicate their defense bonus for rough territory by featuring a dark shield. Mythotopia is intended for two to four players, each of whom has Village tiles of one color to mark his territories. Of course, there are additional tiles to upgrade an estate – Fortress, City, Citadel....

At the start of the game each player is randomly dealt Province cards – six cards in case of four players – which indicate where a player can set up his villages. Those cards are the starting cards of your own deck. You

Christoph Proksch und Ursula Vlk

A challenging and variable game in which tactic dominates and which offers a plethora of sophisticated details together with a varied game play for each game due to randomly distributed region cards and other elements.

also get four starting cards in your color: Army – two army and one money symbol in the top left-hand corner; Market – one money, one food and one stone symbol; Ship – one ship and one food symbol; and, finally, Build – one stone symbol. The Build card also indicates the necessary costs for constructing a city, road or fortress. As usual, you can only use one kind of symbol or one of the actions on a card showing several symbols and/or actions. Next to the board so-called victory point cards are laid out, three of them are – carrying a specified number of victory points – always in play, and there are also four more ones, out of ten randomly drawn ones. When a player meets the requirements stated on one of the cards, he make take one of the victory point tiles on the card. When one of those cards has been emptied, you cannot get victory points from there anymore! Besides this source for victory points, each province is worth three victory points. Each combat that has been fought changes, the point score of the players involved in this combat on the track at the edge of the board; if ownership of a province changes, the corresponding card is handed on, too. Contrary to this, victory point tiles from the seven victory point cards cannot be lost. Another type of card – so-called “Fortschrittskarten”, 16 chosen randomly from a total of 29 cards – are laid out openly for buying; those cards yield advantage and some of them also carry symbols in the top left-hand corner. Of course, at the start of the game, the demand for these cards is high, as they can make your deck very

much more efficient; and when they all have been taken, there is no replacement. Each player begins the game with six small army tiles (Shield symbol) and two ships; to acquire/buy more of them is a separate action. New troops are placed in your personal stack, as are those that you take off the board, for instance after a war; to re-enter them in the board demands the playing of card that carry an army symbol. At the start, each player draws five cards from his deck. In your turn you carry out two actions; for some of them you need to play cards, for instance for placing armies into your own regions; it is possible to do the same action twice, albeit not for all of the actions and there are certain action that you only can do as the first action in your turn. When all have passed, the round ends, card that were used are put on the personal discard piles and all draw five cards again from their personal draw pile (if this is empty, the discard pile is shuffled and becomes the new draw pile.)

There is an action option „End game” which only can be chosen as a first action when four or more victory point cards have been emptied and one player is in the lead. At the end of the game all conflicts in progress need to be scored – in case of a tie in a region the defender in the conflict wins – and the victory points are adjusted accordingly and all players need to check again if their current score of victory points is correct. Should it happen, that the active player is not the winner, this action cannot be implemented and the game continues, that is, the scoring of the wars is reversed. Mythotopia passes through different phases: At the start of the game everybody wants to get old of Fortschrittskarten, which always cost one gold (Do I have a province with Gold symbol? Or maybe even two?); on top of that each player needs more provinces (even in case of four players there are enough unclaimed ones at the start of the game). To have more cards with symbol in your deck you need to acquire enough new armies and ships – which in turn again demands gold. Ships enable you to attack provinces across water and give each region adjacent to water one value of strength, both for conquest or defense. Unfortunately, water, too, has borders, therefore you need more ships. Only when free room gets scarce in our phantasy continent, the conflicts and wars begin – unless there are enthusiastic war gamers playing, who force you into defense action, despite there still being so much that could be achieved before we, too, aim for regions further away. As in „Acres of Snow” some action options demand several different cards for im-

plementation, which makes everything even more difficult and puzzling. A very interesting mechanism can help: The so-called “Reserve Card”, that is held by every player, On this card the number of cards that needs to put into reserve (beginning with two) – this number increases with the number of cities you build; the city tile is taken off this reserve card and put on one of your own region, which reveals a higher number each time; this number indicates how many cards I can put into reserve. With this mechanism I can hoard cards to have more symbols available for an action, in addition to those depicted on the five hand cards. With the action “place cards into reserve” I can place one or more cards into reserve, but cards in reserve must be visible for all players.

Due to the varying victory point and Fortschritt cards as well as the randomly distributed region cards each game of Mythotopia runs a different course, as far as I know there is no dominating strategy for winning. The playing time of 90 minutes stated on the box is rarely achieved, usually the game takes a lot longer. The components are made up from card board tiles, cards and wooden game pieces as well as a somewhat gloomy game board. The rules are complete and leave no question unanswered. Mythotopia is a challenging game for experienced frequent players, tactic dominates, the conflicts are demanding and there are a lot more sophisticated details in the game, which I did not mention here.

A Study in Emerald

„A Study in Emerald” is the title of an award-winning („Hugo Award”) short story by Neil Gaiman – to be found on the web – and of a very well-made game by Martin Wallace. Monsters originating from the writings of H.P. Lovecraft, characters from the world of Sherlock Holmes, Zombies and Vampires as well as real historic personalities (Freud, Bismarck and several anarchists) encounter each other in the second half of the 19th century, They fight in two groups – Loyalists and restorationists, that is, anarchists versus revolutionaries, for domination over the whole world. The world they are fighting for is influenced since more than 700 years by the “Old Ones” (Lovecraft), at least in the short story by Neil Gaiman. The Loyalists, true to their name, support the ones currently in power, and they use whatever tool is available to

bring the „Old Ones“ into our world. The Restorationists, in turn, aim for a new world order, which results in a secret war. The box of the game's first edition is illustrated by a scene from the short story which provides the name: Blood of a murderer

Christoph Proksch und Ursula Vlk

If you are ready for unusual game play, unexpected surprises and being constantly on your toes, then you will love „A Study in Emerald“

victim in several shades of green looks like the work of an artist: „A Study in Emerald Green“. The title is also an allusion to „A Study in Scarlet“ by Arthur Conan Doyle, in which the characters of „Holmes“ and „Watson“ are introduced.

The very felicitous „Fin des Siecle“ design contributes strongly to the flair of the game, as does the addition of real historical characters.

The alluring basic idea of the game is that nobody knows who belongs to which of the both factions. At the start each player draws a card assigning him to either the loyalist or the restorationist faction, and those assignments should be kept secret. On the other hand, everybody wants to find out who he needs to fight or maybe support, because the winning conditions are very unusual:

You win, if you accrue most victory points – so far so good and standard – but if a member of this player's faction happens to be in last place, the whole faction has lost and the leading player of the opposing faction wins.

Each player is an agent (called Monday – Friday, so up to five can play) and begins with a deck of 10 cards, a number of wooden cubes for influence and wooden discs to mark property. The board shows 12 cities (Washington, Cairo and European cities), each with a spot for cards, and connections for travelling between cities. The edge of the board carries a scoring track and „Limbo“ – this is where the influence cubes are placed after being used and from where you can get them back by playing the necessary cards. A red and a green scoring track mark the advance of both factions, red is of course the color of the revolutionaries.

By placing influence cubes each player can take over cities, which earns him victory points and a card that improves the deck, can hire agents, which again brings cards for the deck with various actions, or acquire cards for free actions, monsters and various other advantages. Each player can place cubes everywhere; if you have a majority

in a city at the start of your turn, this city is yours (agent, card), cards that you thereby acquire go to your own discard pile and later into your deck.

Card symbols show bombs, cubes and money; money is needed for traveling and for acquisition of influence cubes. Bombs are used to eliminate agents, „Royalists“ or to save „Royalists“. Cube symbols that you play bring you cities, more cards and give you back spent cubes from „Limbo“. Victory points are acquired by controlling cities, by eliminating enemy agent and either eliminating or saving „Royalists“ and from various cards.

Basically, „A Study in Emerald“ is a lovely chaotic game: Not only because of the uncertainty of „Friend or Foe“, but also due to the various action cards which which you can create havoc with your opponent – if only I were sure who is my opponent?! On top of this, each game has a very unique flow, depending on the cards that are in play: Zombies, for instance, are a source of joy for the conservatives, as they enable him to quickly eliminate agents of the revolutionaries, which earns lots of victory points, but also can speed up the end of the game. „The Leopold Society“, on the other hand, deals quickly and finally with Zombies or Vampires. There is one card that allows spying on other players, another card allows you to instantly change your affiliation, cards can force players to check their mental health ... After an assassination each player must do this by drawing a face-down tile which can read „Mad“ or „Sane“. Should a revolutionary draw „Mad“ three times, the game ends; the conservatives are that mad and evil that nothing affects them.

There are actions that can give clues to the affiliation of a player, when implemented, but those actions are also a nice tool for bluffing, especially at the start of the game when there is not much harm done when directing an action at your own faction. Should I mention that there are also double agents

The duration of the game is very variable, we have played games lasting 20 minutes, but also some that took two hours. I am talking about the maximum possible fun in playing, all is possible, there are surprises amass, at one moment your strategy collapses like a house of cards, in the next one an even more perfidious opportunity arises. The only condition for a game of „Emerald“ is the willingness to be not too serious about a game – then you can derive lots of amusement even if you are about to lose. Need I mention that we often have long

discussions after a game about what would have happened if ..., what else could we have done ...

Did you ever play a game in which all can lose in theory (with the exception of cooperative games, that is)? In this game this is possible when three or four are playing. This unorthodox game is a source of many surprises, playing for the sake of playing. Hands off the game for nitpickers and players who want to maximize their score. Thank you, thank you, thank you, Martin!

At Essen 2015 a second, revised edition of the game has been published. New graphics, a revised game board and new rules are aiming to make the game somewhat easier. The rules of the first edition have not been very complicated, but the new rules promise to be more straightforward, to make the game more accessible. Of course we will play the new edition, too, but hope very much that the fun of the game has not been diminished in any way.

„A Study in Emerald“ is a game for people who want to be entertained will, provided they have a certain willingness to encounter unusual gameplay. The first edition is sold out, should you come across a copy, grab it! A game meriting the ranking of top game in its category. ☑

Christoph Proksch, Ursula Vlk





ONWARD TO VENUS

Designer: Martin Wallace
Artist: Greg Broadmore, Peter Dennis
Price: ca. 50 Euro
Publisher: Lookout Spiele 2014
www.treefroggames.com

PLAYERS:
2-5
AGE:
13+
TIME:
90+



MYTHOTOPIA

Designer: Martin Wallace
Artist: Sanjana Bajinath
Price: ca. 50 Euro
Publisher: Lookout Spiele 2014
www.treefroggames.com

PLAYERS:
2-4
AGE:
13+
TIME:
90+



A STUDY IN EMERALD

Designer: Martin Wallace
Artist: Anne Stokes
Price: ca. 50 Euro
Publisher: Lookout Spiele 2013
www.treefroggames.com

PLAYERS:
2-5
AGE:
13+
TIME:
var.

EVALUATION

Retro SciFi development
 Users: For experts
 Version: en
 Rules: en
 In-game text: yes
Comments:
 Steampunk / Retro SciFi * Rather chance-driven * Marvelous graphics
Compares to:
 Other steampunk games with territory acquisition
Other editions:
 Currently none



My rating: ★★★★★

EVALUATION

Deck building, conflict, territory acquisition
 Users: For experts
 Version: multi
 Rules: de en fr it
 In-game text: yes
Comments:
 Tactics is dominant * Lots of sophisticated details * Varying game play due to varying cards
Compares to:
 A Few Acres of Snow, other deck building games
Other editions:
 Currently non



My rating: ★★★★★

EVALUATION

Deck building, hidden identities
 Users: For experts
 Version: en
 Rules: en de + others in 2nd edition
 In-game text: yes
Comments:
 Unique mechanisms, especially winning conditions * Interesting combination of background stories with real historic characters * Very variable game flow * Absolute top game for experts
Compares to:
 First game of this kind
Other editions:
 2nd edition in English, German, French and other languages



My rating: ★★★★★

AIR ALLIANCE

CODE SHARING FOR OPTIMUM SERVICE

You are the owner of an airlines operating on international routes, using your own airplanes. Changing passenger cards are available from the Baggage Claim. Based on those cards you need to find the best route. You collect those passenger cards by moving your airplanes and thus collect points, too. Airports on the board come in different shapes and planes

on those airports are shifted or started and landing according to detailed rules.

If, at the start of your turn, you have three identical code sharing markers on your Boarding Sheet, you can form an alliance; otherwise, you begin your turn with the marker phase. If you form alliances you can use airplanes from companies in the alliance and also Non-Player



airplanes; in such an NPA alliance you have the exclusive rights to use the NPA machines. In the marker phase you place your markers on your Boarding Pass or Passenger Cards on the Boarding Pass and move your airplanes. Completing a route as stated on one of the cards will give you the card. Then Passenger cards in the Baggage Claim display are changed and Passenger cards acquired are laid out on the Boarding Pass. When the draw pile is empty, the discard pile is reshuffled and the last round begins in which you no longer can reserve passengers. After the last round you add up your miles = points on your passenger cards and score 30.000 bonus for each triplet of symbols on Economy Class cards.

In Air Alliance again a very good game with interesting mechanisms is hidden behind a very cumbersome rule – a game in which you must optimize the use of Passenger cards and rules as not every airport can be reached by every plane. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
50+

Designer: Akio Nomura
Artist: A. Nomura, A. Balazh
Price: ca. 38 Euro
Publisher: Route 11 2015
www.route11.co.jp

EVALUATION

Logistics, aviation
Users: With friends
Version: multi
Rules: en fr jp
In-game text: no

Comments:
Difficult rules hide a good game * Very attractive components * Varying game play due to manifold cards

Compares to:
Logistics and optimization games

Other editions:
Currently none



ALLIES

REALM OF WONDER



Creatures of the realm duel for regions of the realm. Five regions are laid out, players choose two of eight tribes each and, at the start of the game, draw five cards in hand from the shuffled deck. A round comprises five turns for each player. In a player turn you play one card and place it next to a still free region on your side of the region card. Then the card you

played is implemented, you use rotations and special abilities. Rotating tribal cards lowers or raises their value, but you cannot rotate them directly from highest to lowest value. Actions of the tribal cards allow changes in the card display or your hand. Region cards are always neutral at the start of the round. When both players have had their five turns, each row is evaluated for



the region cards. When values of tribal cards on both sides are the same, nothing happens. When a player has a crown on his card, the region card is rotated to point at him. When values on both sides are different, the region card is rotated towards the player with the higher value; each 90 degree rotation uses one point of the difference and when the card points at the player with the higher value, he can take it if there is a point in the difference left. After four rounds you score regions cards you won, minus castle cards, and regions on the table that point in your direction.

Allies is a basically simple game with an astonishing depth, as the options provided by cards and tribes nearly completely eliminate the chance element. Therefore the game is also of interest for more seasoned players; the rules are comprehensive, but not quickly accessible. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2

AGE:
8+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Punakallio, Wikström
Artist: Sami Saramäki
Price: ca. 15 Euro
Publisher: Mindwarrior Games 15
www.mindwarriorgames.com

EVALUATION

Fantasy, card comparison
Users: With friends
Version: multi
Rules: de dk en fi fr nl no pl se
In-game text: no

Comments:
Pretty design * Simple rules, very concisely written * Cards provide lots of strategic and tactical options * Much variety due to eight tribes

Compares to:
Card games with strength comparison

Other editions:
Currently none



AMPHIPOLIS

COLLECT ARCHEOLOGICAL FINDS



An important archeological digging site is threatened by a landslide, teams of archeologists hurry to save the finds. The board shows entrance cases and four sorting areas for mosaics, amphorae, skeletons and marble statues. The necessary number of tiles is placed in the bag and each player chooses a team of archeologists. Then tiles are drawn from the bag until

one suitable tile is placed on each of the sorting areas, surplus tiles go back into the bag. In your turn you draw four tiles and put them into the corresponding sorting areas, a landslide tile goes on one of the entrance cases. Then you take any two tiles from any sorting area on the board and display them. Now you can use one of your four archeologists – each will



give you additional tiles from different areas; but you can use each one only once in the game. When all entry cases are filled with landslide tile, the game ends. Whoever had to place the last landslide tile does not receive tiles in this round. Now all players score their finds: For a complete mosaic of four tiles of one color you score 4 points; for one of several colors 2 points. Skeletons score 6 points for a family group of two big and one small skeleton, single skeletons score 1 point. Amphorae give you 1-6 points in groups of 3 to 6 amphorae, all in different colors. Marble statues give 6 points to whoever holds most of them, 0 points for whoever has fewest and three points to all other players.

Amphipolis is a very simple, chance-driven game without interaction; some tactic is possible if you memorize the number of possible finds and keep calculating what still could be worth taking. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-4

AGE:
10+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Reiner Knizia
Artist: Tony Tzanoukakis
Price: ca. 25 Euro
Publisher: Desyllas Games 2015
www.desyllasgames.gr

EVALUATION

Collecting
Users: For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr
In-game text: no

Comments:
Very simple rules * Nearly entirely chance-driven * No player interaction

Compares to:
Chance-driven collecting games without interaction

Other editions:
Currently none



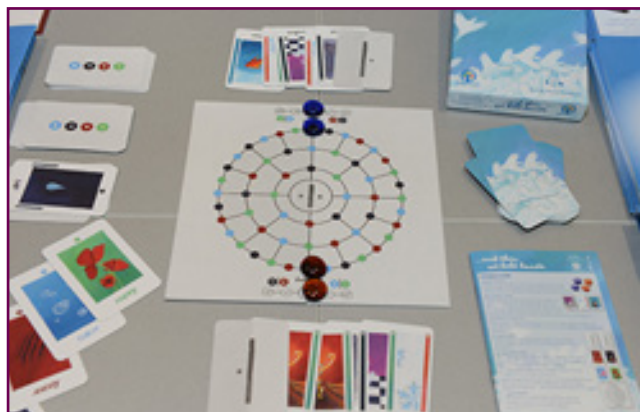
... AND THEN, WE HELD HANDS

FROM CALM VIA SAD TO ANGRY



Theme of the game is nonverbal communication and cooperation. During the game you cannot talk about the game at all. Cards show two basic emotions in two colors. Six cards per player are laid out, overlapping, only one emotion is visible. Three stacks with three objective cards are prepared, one objective is revealed. For the first eight objectives you move

in the outer ring, for the second on in the outer and middle ring and for the last stack also in the inner ring. In your turn you reveal an objective, if necessary, and then move any number of steps along the connecting lines on the board and pay for each step with a card showing the appropriate emotion, you can also use cards from your partners display. When then



your partner cannot move, both have lost. When your turn ends on a spot of the current objective's color, the objective is met and your turn ends.

After each card you play your emotional balance is adapted, for blue and green to the right, for black and red to the left. When it shows Zero you can replenish your display. When your turn ends in the other half of the board, you change your display to show the other half of the cards. To win the game both players must enter the middle case on the board in two consecutive turns and their emotional balance must show Zero on the indicator.

This is basically a game of movement optimization, emotions are only an, albeit felicitous, thematic element. The cooperation feature comes from keeping an eye on available cards, you must never hinder your partner in moving. The ban on speaking takes some getting used to, but is a successful, unusual game element. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2

AGE:
12+

TIME:
45+

Designer: D. Chircop, Y. Massa
Artist: M. Cardouat, T. Sanders
Price: ca. 20 Euro
Publisher: LudiCréations 2015
www.ludicreations.com

EVALUATION

Cooperation, optimization
Users: With friends
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: no

Comments:
Basically abstract game with optimization of movement * Ban on talking provides an entirely new feeling * Cooperation means to make sure your partner can move

Compares to:
First game of its kind

Other editions:
Currently none



BANG! THE DUEL

SHOWDOWN IN WILD WEST



Finally, Shootout for two players in a Wild West duel, introducing 24 new characters and a total of 80 cards featuring new symbols and new abilities. You control a group of gunslingers, either on the side of Law and Order or ranging with the Outlaws. You shuffle the character cards of your chosen faction and draw four of them in hand, the rest goes out of the game. The cards

in each player deck are also shuffled, separately from the character cards, and you draw five cards in hand if you play the Bandit and four if you play for Law and Order. The four characters you previously drew are shuffled again and set down face-down, two are always in play, one at the front, so to say, the other as a backup. Should one character go out of play, it



is replaced by the next one from the deck.

In general, the mechanisms from Bang! apply. You draw two cards and then play any number of your choice, even none, attack an opposing characters or strengthen one of yours. You can only play one Bang! card per turn and there are restriction for the use of action and equipment card as regards to character in front or at the back. Discarded cards go to a joint pile, so that later in the game you can also use cards from your opponent. You win, if you are first to eliminate all opposing characters.

Bang! as we know it, excellently adapted to a game for two players; if you are familiar with the universe of Bang! you will quickly get used to the new characters, new symbols and new abilities. If you are a newcomer to the Wild West you will need a few introductory games. All in all a good game, but you must like to topic to like the game. ✓

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2

AGE:
8+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Emiliano Sciarra

Artist: Rossana Berretta

Price: ca. 20 Euro

Publisher: dV Giochi 2015

www.dvgiochi.com

EVALUATION

Cards, Wild West
Users: With friends
Version: multi
Rules: en it
In-game text: yes

Comments:

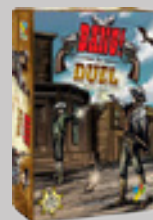
System well adapted for two players * New characters * Basic rules of Bang! apply * Joint discard stack turns draw pile for both

Compares to:

All other editions of Bang!

Other editions:

Currently none



BASTION

DEFEND THE CASTLE TOGETHER



In the universe of Berserk, you cooperatively defend, as a Mage, the Castle that is attacked by beasts, warriors, monsters, giants, other Mages and mighty and powerful dragons. You move in six different realms or landscapes – Prairie, Fire, Mountains, Forests, Swamps and Darkness – and travel to districts, receive energy from magical sources, collect mana and

learn and acquire new spells.

To defeat an attacker always needs special Mana, which you have to collect; defeated opponents give you new abilities, let you construct powerful artifacts and allow you to stage magical rituals. Depending on the scenario that you choose there are different enemies with different abilities in play, the scenarios offer everything from 32 enemies



with a total strength of 160 up to 42 enemies with a total strength of 220.

A player's turn comprises Enemy Attacks and Defender Actions. An enemy attack can come in two ways – when there are cards in the Enemy deck, the top one is revealed and placed at a wall segment. If the deck is empty, you place an enemy from the Camp at the Wall. Then you can do any action in any order from the following options: Move once to citadel or district, collect mana once from one of the sources, defeat an enemy, cast any number of spells or use any number of artifacts. Players win if they defeat all enemies in Camp and the deck of Enemy cards is empty. The Enemies win if the break into the castle from Camp.

Bastion is an elegant cooperative optimization game with a defense topic, needing different approaches in the various stages of the game and offering a very good selection of scenarios. ✓

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-4

AGE:
10+

TIME:
120+

Designer: E. Nikitin, N. Pegasov

Artist: Kvasovarov, Dulin, Shaldin

Price: ca. 25 Euro

Publisher: Hobby World 2015

www.hobbyworld.ru

EVALUATION

Fantasy, adventure, cooperative
Users: With friends
Version: en
Rules: de en
In-game text: no

Comments:

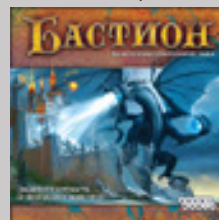
Good components * Comprehensive, well-written rules * Only small chance element * Box and card titles in Russian, rules in English

Compares to:

Cooperative fantasy defense games

Other editions:

Russian edition, Hobby World



BAUBOOM

COLLECT MATERIAL
AND BUILD AN ANTHILL

5+

Ants are building up their hills, players help them to collect building materials. The ant track on the board is filled with open-faced material tiles, that were previously shuffled face-down, according to specification, the remaining tiles are placed in the container, also face-down. The active player rolls two dice and can use an individual result or the sum of both results to

move his wheelbarrow. If you end your move on an empty case, nothing happens. A tile on the case you reached can be taken or ignored. On a case with a Lady Bird and a tile you must place the tile face-down into your wheelbarrow and also a tile from the container; when the Lady Bird case is empty you only take a tile from the container. On a case with the Ant eater



you must give back the tile that you collected last and put it into the container. If there is a wheelbarrow on the case you reached, you push it onto the next case the owner of the wheelbarrow must take the tile there. If you are back on the starting case, you empty your wheelbarrow and place tiles onto your ant hill; you begin in the bottom row, colors must correspond and you can only fill higher places when both places below are filled. You must use all tiles; if you cannot do so, you must give unused tiles back to the container and also one penalty tile from your hill for each used tile.

The other players meanwhile fill empty cases on the track with new tiles.

Bauboom is an enchanting placement and collecting game for children, which is – due to the choice of dice results and thus of your target case as well as the option to not take a tile – also a very nice family game. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
5+

TIME:
25+

Designer: Arpad Fritzsche
Artist: Gediminas Akelaitis
Price: ca. 20 Euro
Publisher: Amigo Spiele 2016
www.amigo-spiele.de

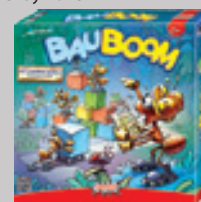
EVALUATION

Tile placement, collecting
Users: For families
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game text: no

Comments:
Series „Gut zusammen
spielbar für Groß und Klein“
* Memo mechanism due
to face-down components
in the barrow * Very nice
game for children and for
families

Compares to:
Other tile collecting and placement
games

Other editions:
Currently none



BLACK HAT

HACKING BY TRICKING

Hacking Data is the topic – a Black Hat is a soubriquet for a hacker who tries to invade systems and get out again unnoticed. The Black Hat card - which is the same on both sides to be easily recognized – is given to a player at the start and then each player receives a hand of 10 cards. Markers stand on “public Server” and Internet Café”. Whoever leads the trick, called

lead for short, plays card or several cards of the same value; all other play one card or the same number of cards as the lead, but of higher value. Who played the highest value cards of the lead's number takes the trick and moves one of his markers that is not blocked one step, and an opposing, unblocked marker in a negative spot also by one step. Other markers can be jumped



over. Tracer and Honeypot block markers. If you cannot move any marker, you draw a card. When Black Hat is played as a Joker, the lowest combination wins the trick and the winner can either take all cards of the trick or only Black Hat and as many cards as were played by the lead.

When someone is out of card the game is scored in relation to cards in hand and marker locations on the board – so sometimes you do not want to take a trick in order to avoid moving – and another round is played. When a marker is on Critical Asset or cannot move, the game ends and is scored and you win with the lowest total score.

Black Hat is an interesting game. Movement of markers on the board nicely transports the hacker flair - the FBI server gives you fewer points than an email account - and the trick mechanism offers quite some tactic; the excellent rules provide quick access to the game. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
10+

TIME:
45+

Designer: Multamäki, Klausner
Artist: John Lewis und Team
Price: ca. 42 Euro
Publisher: Dragon Dawn Prod. 15
www.arcticunion.net

EVALUATION

Cards, trick-taking
Users: With friends
Version: multi
Rules: de en
In-game text: no

Comments:
Known trick-taking mechanisms, varied by Black Hat
* Good rules with many examples * Small chance element, lots of variations from optional rules

Compares to:
Karriepoker and others for taking tricks, first game in combination with board and marker positions

Other editions:
Currently none



BLINDES HUH

BLIND HENS AND GOLDEN CORNS

10+

True to the motto that even a blind hen might sometimes find a grain of corn, players try to win the most valuable hen cards in auctions while leaving the Blind Hens to the other players, but only when those Hens do not come with golden corns, because in combination with those corns Blind Hens are suddenly quite valuable.

You sort your starting cards

by color into your display and the draw pile is prepared. The auctioneer of the round draws 3 cards and auctions them in a package. He must offer 1 or 2 cards openly, he alone knows all three cards and must make the first bid; he is not allowed to pass. Then all other players in turn give a bid, the highest bid wins the package. The winner



pays his bid to the auctioneer with hen cards taken from his display. When the auctioneer wins the round, he pays his bid with one card per player in turn, players choose their card themselves. Depending on the size of the bid a player could receive more than one card. Then the package is revealed and you sort Hen cards into your display, Blind Hens and Golden Corns are set aside face-down. On appearance of the game-end card you score for color majorities and card values in three colors as well as 5 points for pairs of Blind Hens and golden corns; a Blind Hen alone scores -3 points, a single Golden Corn +2 points. Blind Hen offers a cute and unusual auction mechanism which gives the full information to the auctioneer only, who can then try to influence the other players with his bid, so that he can keep the lovely package for himself without paying too high a price for it. ✓

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-5

AGE:
10+

TIME:
40+

Designer: Heike Risthaus
Artist: Jenny Seib, Stefan Malz
Price: ca. 12 Euro
Publisher: Ostia Spiele 2015
www.ostia-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Auction, bluff
Users: For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en
In-game text: no

Comments:
New edition * Well-working auction mechanism * Good mix of bluff and information * Four small expansions are available

Compares to:
Earlier editions of Blind Hen, other auction games

Other editions:
Currently none



BOOTY

QUARTERMASTER SPLITS THE LOOT

Pirates divide their spoils and hope for the best share. For a round, number of players times three cards are laid out, one of them face-down, players decide in turn if they want to be Quartermaster of the round or pass, the last player must be Quartermaster. The Quartermaster takes any number of cards from the middle and adds a rank marker for the turn

order in the next round. Now each player in turn decides if he accepts the share or passes; if you take it you are out of the round. When all pass, the Quartermaster must take the share, is out of play and a new Quartermaster is determined. If you take a share, you place markers on island for Might cards and adjust the commodities markers for Trade Route cards. The



remaining cards of the share are your booty and you set it aside visibly. The rank marker is placed accordingly on the table for the next round's turn order. When the draw pile is empty, you win with most victory points from treasures, relics, commodities, flags, markers on island – when all harbors of an island are occupied – and way-of-life cards as well as met targets from the Legacy cards that you were dealt at the start.

Booty is an exceedingly clever and unusual game, in which everything comes back to a yes/no decision – take a share or not; be Quartermaster or not – and outguessing your opponents on their choices. The Quartermaster alone has more decisions to make when splitting the booty, he must assess the other players – who will grab what and what must he offer to make sure to keep the share for himself. That the value of booty cards changes in the course of the game does not make decisions any easier. ✓

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-6

AGE:
10+

TIME:
60+

Designer: Alexander Cobian
Artist: A. Riley, F. Reynoso
Price: ca. 30 Euro
Publisher: Mayfair Games 2015
www.mayfairgames.com

EVALUATION

Assessing, dividing, deciding
Users: With friends
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: yes

Comments:
If not Quartermaster, you have yes/no-decisions only * Assessing other players is essential for the Quartermaster * Quartermaster decisions decide about the quality of the game

Compares to:
First game of its kind

Other editions:
Currently none



COMPLETTO

CHALLENGING ROW OF NUMBERS

8+

The game comprises 100 tiles carrying number values of 1 to 100. Each player tries to arrange, in his own row of tiles, 22 tiles with an ascending number series from left to right.

All 100 tiles are spread out face-down. Each player draws 17 tiles from stock and sets them down –face down – in a row. Then each player draws five tiles, one by one, turns them face-up and

inserts them face-up at any location of his choice into his row. You must always insert one tile into the row before you can reveal the next one. Already at this stage the tiles must be inserted in ascending order.

Then players in turn decide on one of two action options: 1) Take a tile from stock in the middle, reveal it and exchange it for a face-down tile in your

row; this tile goes into stock, still face-down. The open-faced tile must, again in ascending order, be inserted into the row, before, after or between two numbers. If you manage to place two consecutive numbers next to each other, you immediately have another turn. When the tile you revealed does not fit anywhere in your row, you must put it back into stock open-faced. This tile can be picked up by any player in his turn. When a number can be rotated by 180 degrees and is readable, you can decide which number you want to use, for instance 68 or 89. Whoever is first to arrange 22 tiles in correct order, wins the game.

If you want to play several rounds, each player notes the number of face-down tiles remaining in his display as penalty points.

Completto offers nicely varied standard mechanisms, the rotating of some number tiles and the additional turn for two consecutive numbers are nice details. ✓



DIE ARENA VON TASH-KALAR

DIE NIEDERHÖLLEN



Master Mages duel in the arena, in teams or each on their own. Three factions control individual decks of creatures to be summoned. You place pieces, so called helpers, in your color; when this results in a pattern depicted on one of your cards you summon the creature and use its effect. Then you discard the card; the creature turns to stone and can be used as part

of a new pattern - or revived by the effect of another card and used in combat. In the standard game you complete tasks for points; in the melee mode you destroy opponents and summon Legendary Creatures from their special deck.

Die Niederhöhlen / Nethervoid is a player deck that can be used, like the decks from the core game, as a Mage School. It comes with

18 creature cards, some card board markers, a track for counting points and a glass bead as a marker for the Gateway. The Gateway is a new element, a trans-dimensional portal which is used by the mages to acquire energy. Nearly all cards in the Nethervoid deck relate to the Gateway. A common or heroic creature can become the Gateway and is marked as such. If the Nethervoid player does not have a Gateway, the next creature summoned turns into the Gateway. If you then summon a creature using the Gateway, this new creature becomes the Gateway instantly. When a Gateway is upgraded to legend, it cannot be Gateway anymore. A new school and at the same time a challenging new mechanism, which has effects not only for the creature just summoned with it, but maybe also on cards still in hand. Surely a must-have expansion for players liking Tash Kalar and the duel in the Arena. ✓



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Heinz Meister

Artist: Visid

Price: ca. 16 Euro

Publisher: Schmidt Spiele 2015

www.schmidtspiele.de

EVALUATION

Tile placement game

Users: For families

Version: multi

Rules: de fr it

In-game text: no

Comments:

Standard basic mechanism

* Nicely varied details *

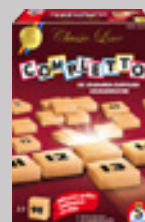
Felicitous family game

Compares to:

Europatours / 10 Tage durch Deutschland; Placement games with sequence targets.

Other editions:

Currently none



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
13+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Vlaada Chvátil

Artist: Cochard, Politzer, Murmak

Price: ca. 10 Euro

Publisher: Heidelberger 2015

www.heidelbaer.de

EVALUATION

Fantasy, Card duel

Users: With friends

Version: de

Rules: de en

In-game text: yes

Comments:

Second expansion deck *

New mechanism "Gateway"

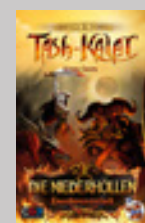
* Can be played as a Mage School

Compares to:

Die Arena von Tash-Kalar, Mage Arena and other games on mage duels

Other editions:

English edition at Czech Games



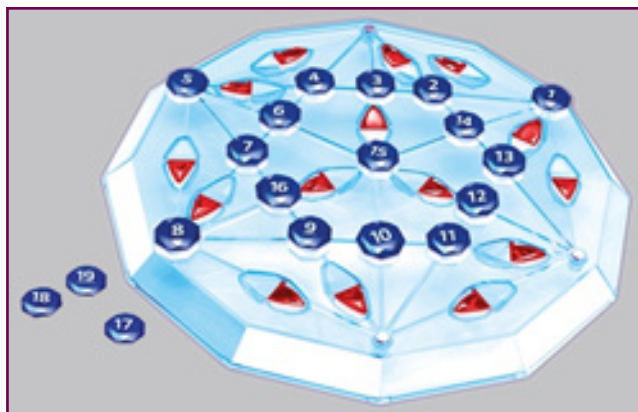
DIE KNOBELPFADE DES RATNARAJ

FOLLOW THE ARROWS



The Puzzling paths of Ratnaraj were a gift from the Queen to the King who loves puzzles and jewels. The twelve-sided game board shows 15 lines that connect the 19 positions on the board, but not all positions are connected directly to all other position. Between the positions there are flappable arrows indicating the path to the next position. At the start of a game

you turn over the empty board on its back side once and turn it back over again. This makes the arrows fall into random positions so that they determine the directions for the current game. Then you choose a starting position, place Jewel #1 there and follow the arrows to place pieces #2 to #19 in correct order. You cannot jump over or cross numbers already in place, but



there are positions from which you have a choice which path to follow, sometimes indicated by arrows, sometimes not. You can play alone or in a group. There are 32768 possible arrow positions and in 10% of them you can place 17 or 18 pieces. For a simple game you join edge points with pieces #1 to #6, you follow the arrows on the inner lines.

If you want to play in a group of several players, you choose a time frame. Then each player tries, within this time frame, to achieve the highest score. The score for a player is always equal to the number of the jewel that he was able to place as his last. Ratnaraj provides elegant, attractive puzzling fun, for solitary play or competitive play, and the rules even give a ranking: Placement of 13-14 jewels is good, 15-16 is considered to be very good, 17-18 jewels are an excellent result and if you place all 19 you may call yourself a genius. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1+

AGE:
8+

TIME:
10+

Designer: Ivan Moskovich
Artist: Anoka Designstudio
Price: ca. 18 Euro
Publisher: HCM Kinzel 2015
www.hcm-kinzel.eu

EVALUATION

Logic puzzle
Users: For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Very attractive design *
Very short and simple rules
* Sophisticated fun with logic

Compares to:
Logic puzzles with adhering to a sequence

Other editions:
Currently none



ECHT JETZT?! ODER WAS?

TRUE OR FALSE?



The game unit, a five-spiked star, works as game master. Each spike has a different color and is intended for one player. For a game you choose a color by pressing the corresponding buzzer. When all have registered their color, you press the green button in the middle to confirm the registration and to start the game.

The unit makes a statement

and you decide if you think the statement is true or false and answer accordingly, always by pressing first the buzzer for your own color and then by pressing the green buzzer if you believe the statement to be true, or by pressing the red one if you believe the answer to be false.

You begin the game with 20 points; correct answers earn you one point, wrong answers

or answers that come too late cost you a penalty of two points, the game unit administers the scores. The score can be checked during the game, at the end of each round the unit announces the score. In Round 1 the game unit decides who must answer. In Round 2 you answer if you press your color buzzer first, and in Round 3 you are allowed to press another player's color buzzer, which forces him to answer true or false, red or green. After three rounds you win with the highest score. Ties are resolved by the game unit by asking the players involved in the tie again and again until there is one winner.

Echt jetzt?! is a quiz game as many others, the statements and stories are more absurd and outrageous than in other games and the electronic unit saves us the handling of question cards and score keeping. A nice detail is the option to switch off, in later games, explanations at the start of each round. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
8+

TIME:
20+

Designer: not named
Artist: not named
Price: ca. 33 Euro
Publisher: Megableu/Hutter Trade 15
www.hutter-trade.net

EVALUATION

Quiz, reaction
Users: For families
Version: de
Rules: de fr
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Standard mechanism *
Without question cards *
1000 statements

Compares to:
Other true/false quiz games

Other editions:
Info ou intox, Megableu France



ESCAPE TRAPS

TRAPS AND TIME



Escape Der Fluch des Tempels, the real time adventure – Magical jewels in temple chambers must be activated within 10 minutes to enable adventurers to escape. All roll their five dice simultaneously and use them to uncover new chambers, enter chambers, activate stones, flee and remove blockage from dice; cooperation might be necessary. Within the runtime of the

third count-down of the sound track all need to be out of the temple.

Expansion 3 Traps includes two new modules, *Fallenkammern* and *Zeitkammern*. If you discover a *Fallenkammer*/Trap Chamber and add it to the board, you place your adventurer there instantly; those chambers – there are Moving Platform, Invocation Chamber, Cliff and Slide



Trap - have various effects which must be mastered by rolling certain symbols or discovering new passages. *Zeitkammern*/ Time Chambers introduce a time element via sand timers; if you discover a time chamber you activate it by placing the corresponding sand timer into the chamber. Within the run time of the timer you now must either resolve a task or are prohibited doing some actions. Traps needs the base game *Escape* to play and can be combined with *Quest* and *Illusions*.

Escape Traps is yet another well working and fun addition to the breathtaking adventure in real time, which now is also time-consuming; waiting for a timer to run down to be able to do something can get on your nerves! And be lots of fun, and it is better not to be able to neutralize masks than losing a die forever because you did not get into the Sacrifice chamber within a minute! Let's explore new horizons – ah – temples! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-5

AGE:
8+

TIME:
var.

Designer: K. A. Østby
Artist: Oliver Schlemmer
Price: ca. 20 Euro
Publisher: Queen Games 2015
www.queen-games.de

EVALUATION

Real Time, adventure, cooperative
Users: With friends
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Two new modules * Well-working, fun additions with new surprises * Can be combined with *Quests* and *Illusions* expansions

Compares to:
All other editions of *Escape*

Other editions:
Currently none



FALSCH GEDACHT!

THE RIGHT ANSWER COULD BE WRONG!



A slightly different quiz game – sometimes you must give a wrong answer to answer correctly. One player is quiz master and reads out five questions from five cards – he holds the cards in his left hand and takes the current card with his right hand to read a question of his choice. Then he makes the backside of the second card in his left hand clearly visible for

all players. Now all players can answer, the fastest answer or start of an answer is the answer that is scored. When the backside of Card Two shows "richtig", the expert or a green circle, you must give the correct answer to answer correctly. Should the backside of Card Two show "falsch", the Fool or a red square, you must give a wrong answer to have answered correctly. A

correct answer brings you the card for a point, for an incorrect answer you lose a point. Take care! The wrong answer must come from the right category, you cannot answer the question "which is the most frequent piece in Chess with "a die", but need to name another Chess piece! To make scoring easy you mark points won or lost by setting aside the respective card face-up or face-down. You must also pay attention to the so-called "absurd" questions, they are sometimes hard to spot when you are in a hurry to answer. For questions like "on which continent can you find Earth" there is only one correct answer, which is "falsch gedacht". The quiz master decides all disputes on correct answers or timing of given answers. If each player has been quiz master once, you win with most points.

A fun game that is not as easy as it sounds, some wrong answers in the right category do not come to mind too quickly. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-10

AGE:
10+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Cathala, Maublanc
Artist: Fiona Carey
Price: ca. 9 Euro
Publisher: Heidelberger 2015
www.heidelbaer.de

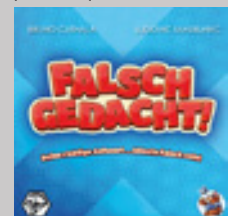
EVALUATION

Quiz, party
Users: With friends
Version: de
Rules: de en fr
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Good selection of questions * False answers must come from the right category * Team version is listed

Compares to:
Quiz games giving conditions for answers

Other editions:
French and English edition at Le Scorpion Masqué



FUNKENSCHLAG

DIE AKTIENGESELLSCHAFTEN

Die Aktiengesellschaften – The Stock Companies, the 10th expansion for Funkenschlag / Power Grid can be used with Power Grid or Power Grid deluxe and can also be combined with all other boards and power station decks. With Funkenschlag boards you use the complete board, with Funkenschlag deluxe boards you use six adjacent regions on the board. As a share-

holder you try to get control of companies for greatest personal wealth. The game begins with a Stock Round, followed by two Operation rounds, then Stock and Operation rounds alternate. The game ends after five Operation rounds. In the Stock rounds you buy and sell shares. In the Operation rounds the company presidents implement the standard five phases of Power Grid.



In the variant "Die größten Stromversorger" you want to acquire shares of those companies and will grow into the biggest one in the market and supply most cities with electricity. You play again with neutral companies. In the second variant, "Der Wettstreit der Privatunternehmen", each player owns his private company in his own color with its own shares and tries to establish his company in the market. Sometimes you sell shares in your company to enlarge your private capital or to acquire shares of other companies. There is no separate Stock round, but a new Phase 2 Share Trade is inserted between the former Phase 1 – determine turn order and Phase 2 – buy power stations, this phase Share Trade is begun by the player in last position.

A new and unusual expansion introducing a completely new facet to Power Grid, surely a must-have for all fans of Power Grid. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
12+

TIME:
120+

Designer: Friedemann Friese
Artist: H. Lieske, L. Kalusky
Price: ca. 15 Euro
Publisher: 2F-Spiele 2015
www.2f-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Auction, network formation
Users: With friends
Version: de
Rules: de en es fr gr
In-game text: no

Comments:
10. Expansion * For use with Funkenschlag or Funkenschlag deluxe * Double-sided cards with graphics corresponding to the two basic versions

Compares to:
Funkenschlag and all expansions

Other editions:
Rio Grande USA, Edge Entertainment, Spain; Kaissa Chess & Games, Greece



JA, HERR UND MEISTER

GRÜNE EDITION



This time around in the universe of Kragmorth we embody the minions of Rigor Mortis, the Dark Overlord, defeated by circumstances or heroes, who must report to the Overlord on their more or less failed missions and present the most outrageous fabrications. One of the players takes on the role of the Dark Overlord, all others are his minions.

Excuse cards in the game are the templates and providers of ideas for the stories that you tell to justify yourself, they are only played to continue the story. Some of the action cards in the game must be played together with such excuse cards, some action cards can be played by themselves. Actions, for instance, are protest, swap hand cards or force someone to dis-

card cards. In your turn you must play a cue card and then end your turn with the action card of Verantwortung zuschieben = Pass the Bucket together with an Excuse card.

The Dark Overlord has complete power and decides if your story is acceptable or if you begin to bore him, or if you did not milk the excuse for all that is was worth, in short, he has all the power and can use it as he likes it. If you are incurring his wrath you are punished with a Vernichtender Blick = Withering Glare. Should you be the unfortunate recipient of three such glares, you are out of the game. In the variant Ja, Mein Gebieter! you need to survive to the end and win the game with most excuse cards played.

This is a really cute game, it is simply fun to invent excuses, but you must love that kind of game and avoid logical reasoning or looking out for tactic; creative nonsense is the only commodity in this near-role-playing game. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
4-16

AGE:
8+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Riccardo Crosa + Team
Artist: Crosa, Navaro, Valzania
Price: ca. 20 Euro
Publisher: Truant Spiele 2015
www.truant.de

EVALUATION

Satire, fantasy, narration
Users: With friends
Version: de
Rules: de it
In-game text: yes

Comments:
New edition * Two variants, Green and Red editions * Both editions can be played individually or can be combined * Good for larger groups

Compares to:
Ja, Herr und Meister Rote Edition, other satirical fantasy card games, e.g. Munchkin

Other editions:
Ja, Herr und Meister Rote Edition



JUNGOLINO

EXCITEMENT IN THE JUNGLE

4↑

Okapi, Tiger, Hippo, Elephant, Orang-Utan and Lion are calling us into the jungle and invite us to play with them in two versions of the game. In both versions you use six mats depicting the animals and sets of cards with all animals in different colors.

In der **Memo Version** mats are placed closely together, all cards are shuffled and stacked

face down, two cards are laid out openly in a row. The active player looks at the cards, memorizes the order and then hops from animal to animal in this order; interim steps or a glance at the cards are not allowed. If everything was correct, you are allowed to add another card to the row for the next player. If you made a mistake, you must quit the game and cannot add a



new card to the display. Whoever is last in play wins the round! In a variant you can put more distance between the mats and allow interim steps and also touching mats with your hand instead of jumping on them.

In der **Tempo Version** the mats are distributed at some distance in the room or all over the flat or the house. Each player is given a set of cards of one color, shuffles it face-down and puts it on the table. Then you reveal the first card and run with the card in hand to the corresponding animal and put the card down on the mat. Then you run back to the table, turn over the next card, find the animal, put down the card, and so on. Whoever is rid of his cards first, wins.

Simple rules for a super game. Memorize, jump, memorize again – via the number of cards and the distances of the mats the game can be adapted to any group of players. And for letting of steam on rainy days you play the Tempo Version! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
4+

TIME:
10+

Designer: Reiner Knizia

Artist: Carsten Mell

Price: ca. 24 Euro

Publisher: Piatnik 2015

www.piatnik.com

EVALUATION

Movement, memo
Users: For children
Version: multi
Rules: cz de fr it hu sk
In-game text: no

Comments:

Cute illustrations * Simple rules * Easily variable via card number and mat distances

Compares to:

Movement games with targets to reach

Other editions:

Currently none



LEGACY: FIVE FAMILIES

THE TESTAMENT OF DUKE DE CRECY

1

By establishing relations with families all over Europe you want to establish your dynasty. In a total of nine rounds over three generations (2-3-4) you place markers in the Action phase on your own board for Marriage, Children, Society and loans - all for multiple use - and on the main board for title, doctor, real estate, venture, mission and donations - all available

only once. Each action offers multiple opportunities, variants and consequences; each action except marriage arrangement only concerns the current generation. At the end of the generation you get income and then honor points for prestige; after three generations you win with most prestige.

Five Families introduces four modules which can be used in-

dividually or all together with the core game. **Five Families** offers five new families which now also allow for direct interaction between players. **Birth Events** is the second module, with events relating to a new child as well as all the family, to be used starting with the 2nd generation and purposefully provided with different backsides so that you can avoid them, maybe. **Patrons** - Module 3 - introduces eight new patrons, which can be used on their own or mixed with those of the basic game. The fourth module is the solo version, with a total of 11 cards, five for Great Houses and six for the Daisy Track, for use with the Testament version of the core game Solo variant.

Five Families is a very well-working supplement for the core game of Legacy, the new family and especially the new resource favor in combination with the enhanced interaction due to trading are interesting additions to a witty and challenging game. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
60+

Designer: Trzewiczek, Walczak

Artist: R. Szyma, M. Bielski

Price: ca. 22 Euro

Publisher: Portal Games 2015

www.portalgames.pl

EVALUATION

Worker placement
Users: For experts
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: yes

Comments:

Four different modules * Can be combined any way with the core game * Favor as a new resource, trade as new interaction

Compares to:

Legacy Core Game, other worker placement games

Other editions:

Currently none, Polish edition announced



MIMIKMONSTER

MAKE FACES AND REMEMBER FACES

5↑

Geschenkwürfel are a new series of games in the Haba program – a cubic box in a different color for each topic, featuring few components and lots of fun for a very reasonable price.

In Mimikmonster you find 4 dice and 12 cards with monster faces, three faces for each kind of face, which you can use for two different games.

In game 1 you need to recog-

nize faces. All cards are shuffled and stacked face-down. The active player draws a card and looks at it secretly. Then he places the corresponding die for his neighbor and then imitates face and gesture of the monster on the card. The neighbor decides on a face on the die. When the die and the card show the same face, you give the card to your neighbor. When all cards have



been given out, you win with most cards.

In game 2 you need to find monsters. All cards are shuffled well, face-down, and then are either spread out loosely on the table or arranged in a 3x4 grid. The active player chooses a die and roll it. He takes a good look at the resulting monster and memorizes the face. Then you turn up a card in the grid. If you did not find the monster, you turn the card back over and your turn passes. If you find the monster, you imitate it and, if you are successful, take the card open-faced. When the monster you rolled is already with a player, you point it out and roll again. Whoever is first to collect one monster of each type, wins.

A game that provides exactly what the intent of the series promised – quick and easy games needing only a few components and little time to explain, but offer lots of fun, an attractive box and are well suited to be brought as a gift. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
5+

TIME:
10+

Designer: Anna Lena Räckers

Artist: Martina Leykamm

Price: ca. 9 Euro

Publisher: Haba 2015

www.haba.de

EVALUATION

making faces, memorize them

Users: For children

Version: multi

Rules: de en es fr it nl

In-game text: no

Comments:

Attractive package * Lots of fun with few components and easy rules * Nice gift

Compares to:

Grimassimix and other games on making faces

Other editions:

Currently none



MONOPOLY WORLD

HERE & NOW

8↑

Monopoly all over the world – again players worldwide voted for this new edition of a global Monopoly. 22 cities are represented on the board with one case each, combined into the familiar color groups of a standard Monopoly. Eiffel Tower, Statue of Liberty, Easter Island Statue and Sphinx are the four exclusive playing pieces.

You travel to those 22 cities and

acquire stamps or First-Class stamps for your travel passport. Regular stamps are distributed on the cases – one per city – at the start of the game. Instead of Community cards there are Here & Now cards, you are dealt two at the start and can use them at the start of your turn. You roll and move as usual; on cases with a stamp you buy the stamp or auction it. If you have



the stamp of a city in your passport you cash City Tax when another player enters this case. If you have all stamps of a color group, you get a free first-class stamp and receive double City Tax. If you roll Schlauer Tausch – Clever Exchange you can swap the top stamp in your pass for the top stamp of another player. Additional challenges come from the Here & Now cards and event cards. Whoever is first to completely fill his pass, wins the game.

Monopoly without houses and hotels; the buying and paying mechanism for cases is still around, but the exchange mechanism as a die result has quite some influence on the flow of the game – if possible I will take a stamp, if this reduces the opponent's chances for a color set, or if the opponent's stamp is bigger than mine and gives me a chance to finish the game faster, as the passport has no cases to fill, only overall room. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
90+

Designer: not named

Artist: not named

Price: ca. 33 Euro

Publisher: Hasbro 2015

www.hasbro.at

EVALUATION

Roll, move, buy and pay tax

Users: For families

Version: de

Rules: de en

In-game text: yes

Comments:

Chance of mechanisms in relation to a standard Monopoly * Nice components * Showing BuzzFeed Logo and again the Parker Logo

Compares to:

Monopoly Imperium

Other editions:

Hasbro USA



MONSTERTURM

PUSH AND CATCH MONSTERS

5↑

The tower up on the hill is about to be restored, the monsters oppose this idea and need to be caught and chased away by players.

The monsters come in four shapes – disc, triangle, rectangle and X – and all monsters are poured into the hole in the roof to land in the top level. Now each player draws a monster tile to determine the kind of

monster he should try to catch. The sand timer is turned over and all stick one of their fingers into any window and try to get the monsters into the holes in the corners of the various levels and thus get them down level by level into the basement. You may use both hands at the same time, can use all empty windows and can also look into windows – take card, collisions



might happen with heads of other players. When a monster falls out of the window, it starts again in the attic. Whoever notices that the time has run out, shouts "Take care, the monsters" and all stop.

The tower is lifted carefully and you check which monsters did end up in the basement, that is, on the table. Each player receives a trophy marker for each monster of his own on the table. Then monsters on the table are collected and put into the attic, for a new round. If you acquired 15 trophy points, you win.

So far so good and fun! At least, in theory! In reality it depends on how much you like hectic free-for-all, how well you do in feeling shapes – circle and x are fairly easy to recognize, and how well you cope with many fingers that might scratch and with heads in your way. Children have fun, their hands are smaller, but are their fingers long enough to reach the monster in the middle of the level? ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
5+

TIME:
15+

Designer: S. Luciani, A. Tinto
Artist: V. Moscon, M. Reinartz
Price: ca. 30 Euro
Publisher: Heidelberger 2015
www.heidelbaer.de

EVALUATION

Dexterity, motor skills
Users: For families
Version: de
Rules: de it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Cute idea * Pretty design *
Very unpredictably * Hectic action

Compares to:
Dexterity games using motor skills

Other editions:
La Torre dei Mostri, Cranio Creations, english edition announced



NIMMIT

THREE POINTS FOR THE BLACK SHEEP

4↑

Grabsch revised – One player is starting player of the round and quickly turns over cards from a face-down stack. He holds the stack in one hand and lays down cards with the other open-faced so that they do not overlap. While cards are laid out, all other players may take cards from the table to collect complete cows and sheep. All animals comprise three parts which you need not

collect in order, you just need to have a head, a body and a tail for each animal. Collected cards are held in one hand and with the other hand you pick up more cards. While you collect you can change the order of cards in your stack and also put cards back. When the stack is laid out, the round ends and stacks are scored. Each correct triplet of animal cards scores one point,



if you collected the complete black sheep it is worth 3 points. Parts of the black sheep in other sheep earn 3 penalty points. When each player has been starting player once or twice, you win with the highest score. In a variant all cards are heaped on the table open-faced and all search simultaneously, using one hand, cards can be placed on a maximum of three stacks at a time. A stack of three cards is turned over and cannot be altered anymore. You are also allowed to pick up single cards from other players. When all cards have been taken stacks are scored and after four such rounds you win with most points. A memo version is intended for players of ages 4+. As Grabsch and now as Nimmit this game is a nice challenge for close observation, because cows and sheep in the style of cave drawings are not easily distinguished. A bit challenging for four-year old children. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
4+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Karsten Adlung
Artist: Dennis Lohausen
Price: ca. 8 Euro
Publisher: Adlung Spiele 2015
www.adlungspiele.de

EVALUATION

Collecting cards
Users: For children
Version: multi
Rules: de en es fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Revised edition of Grabsch
* Good mix of reaction and memory * Simple rules * Beautiful, somewhat difficult drawings

Compares to:
Grabsch and other games collecting objects in several parts

Other editions:
Currently none



NITRO GLYXEROL

SHAKEN AND TAKEN

7+

The new miracle concoction Nitro Glyxerol needs to be mixed. Glyx cards in five colors are sorted by color, shuffled separately and stacked face-down, also separately. As many stop cards as there are players are set out. Each player holds five ingredient cubes, one in each of five colors, which he places into the starting order of his Myxxer. Then the Glyx formula

of the round is determined by drawing the top card from each stack, shuffling those cards setting them out openly in a row. This sequence is the goal of the round for all players. Now all shake their Myxxer to get their five ingredient cubes into the finish area of the Myxxer in the sequence indicated by the card row, while the timer runs. If you stop shaking your Myxxer



– possibly before the timer runs out – you take the lowest available stop card. When all are done or the timer has run out and all grabbed a stop card, finish areas are checked in ascending order of stop cards and you receive one or more of the cards in the row for correct cube position, albeit only the first player in turn whose cube is in correct position. If you have a higher card, you might get nothing. Also, if one cube is in wrong position, you cannot score a card for correct positions behind it. Stop card 1 gives you mice poop, which must be in front in the finish area in the next round to enable you to score. After seven rounds you win with most points on your Glyx cards.

Dexterity where hectic can be damaging – its better to have three cubes correct and an early stop card than having a mistake in position 1 or 2 and no chance on a card. Cute, fast, challenging, felicitous and great fun! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
7+

TIME:
20+

Designer: L. Borsa, A. Mainini
Artist: Alexander Jung
Price: ca. 30 Euro
Publisher: Zoch Verlag 2015
www.zoch-verlag.com

EVALUATION

Action, collecting
Users: For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Cute game idea * Nice components * Simple rules * Lots of fun

Compares to:
All dexterity games resulting in color sequences

Other editions:
Currently none



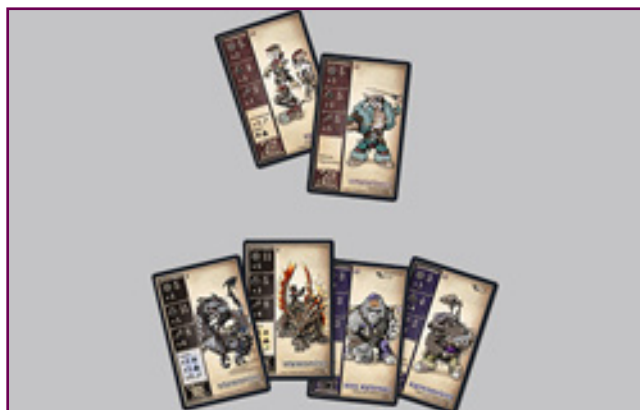
ODDBALL

KAMPF DER AERONAUTEN



High up in the clouds over the Boiling Sea a conflict rages among aeronauts in a steampunk setting, pirates on the hunt for booty versus hunters of the White Dragon empire. Each faction has its own deck and players can choose either the introductory game or the advanced game in which all cards are used. The decks prepared accordingly are shuffled,

three cards are put, face-down, at the bottom of the deck. Whoever forces the opponent to discard all cards from his hand will win. Discarding cards means that you turn them over to their back side, saving cards means turning them back over to their front side. Characters fight alone or in groups of two or three, led by the foremost card, and have 3 basis and 3 support values for



Sailing, Shooting and Entering, plus Leader Tricks and Magical Tricks as group member. You can look at your deck, but not rearrange it. A turn comprises event resolving (maybe), announcing of ability, playing of 1-3 cards and, finally, evaluating and applying effects – in case of a tie the cards played are sorted out, the initiative stays with the player. When there is a winner of the conflict, cards played are sorted out and then the ability of the winner is applied: For Sailing the winner saves two cards, for Shooting the loser discards two cards and for Entering the winner saves one card and the loser discards one, the winner takes the Initiative.

An attractive, cute card game with a small barrier at the beginning, but you get quickly used to the fast combat game set in the Oddball Universe, a game offering a high replay value due to the many options for actions and the manifold abilities of characters. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2

AGE:
8+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Nigel Pyne
Artist: Lloyd Ash Pyne
Price: ca. 10 Euro
Publisher: Pegasus Spiele 2015
www.pegasus.de

EVALUATION

Steampunk, card comparison
Users: With friends
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Set in the Oddball Universe * Steampunk topic * Lots of variations due to abilities and actions * Topic well implemented with fantastic art * Good for families with same gaming experience

Compares to:
Card games with strength comparison and special abilities

Other editions:
Oddball Aeronauts, TheMaverick-Muse



PRIME TIME

**BEST PROGRAM,
MOST ADVERTISING REVENUE**

As a CEO of a TV station you need to provide the best program and achieve the highest number of viewers and the highest revenues from advertising for each show at prime time. You hire actors, producers and writers and make up a plan for the schedule.

In a round you place three markers either on available action slots or on auction slots. Ac-

tions are implemented instantly – R&D will determine the turn order sequence for next round, Archive gives you a Repeat card, the Gold Course earns you a victory point and the Personnel department lets you lend a talent to other stations for income. Finally, the advertising department lets you place a demographic marker on a day case or change such a marker. If you



place a marker on an auction slot beneath show or talent cases, you must make a bid and place the money; if your bid is topped you take back your money, the marker stays. Auctions are resolved when all markers have been placed. At the end, you adjust the turn order sequence. Then, in seven steps, you make up the broadcasting schedule, broadcast your show and then evaluate it for demography and advertising customers. At the end of a round you earn money for demographic markers. After three and six rounds there is an award-giving session for victory points and at the end remaining money scores 1 point for every 3\$. The rules also provide a version for two players and rules for an advanced game including Issuing of Bonds and simultaneous Weekly Planning.

Prime Time offers a solid game with an interesting topic and some unusual details, especially the auction mechanisms with leaving re-using markers. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
13+

TIME:
90+

Designer: Elad Goldstein

Artist: N. Robinson, G. Vorgia

Price: ca. 40 Euro

Publisher: Golden Egg Games 15

www.goldenegggames.com

EVALUATION

Auction, placement, development

Users: With friends

Version: multi

Rules: de en

In-game text: no

Comments:

Unusual auction mechanism * Good components * Non-standard topic * Well-structured rules

Compares to:

All games offering a mix of placement and auction

Other editions:

Currently none



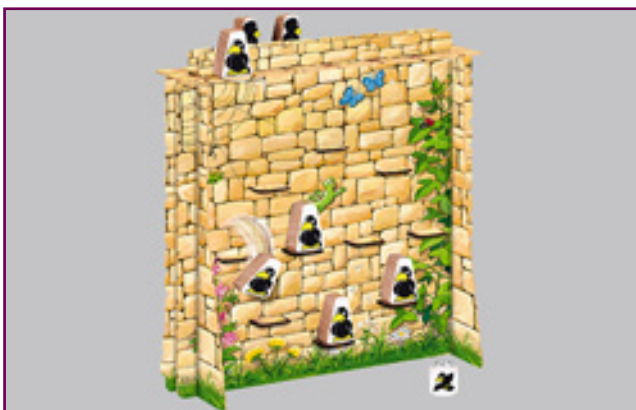
RABEN SCHUBSEN

**WHO HAS MORE RAVENS
AT THE WALL?**



Each raven defends his favorite spot at the wall and tries to push opposing ravens off the wall. Each player sits on one side of the wall. There are 10 bricks in the wall that can be moved, each player pulls five of them to his side of the board at the start of the game. 11 ravens are general stock. Then players alternate to roll the die in a way that the other player can see

the result. If you roll the White Raven, you take a raven from stock and put it on the pinnacle of the wall, this raven is safe and cannot be pushed off the wall. When the die shows a Black raven, you take a raven from stock and place him on one of your own wall pieces, if possible in a way that your opponent cannot be sure where you did place your raven. When the wall sym-



bol was rolled, the active player tries to push an opposing raven off the wall by pulling a piece of wall over to your side. If you caught a raven, your opponent must put the raven back into general stock. If you cannot pull a piece over to your side, you may place a raven instead as if you had rolled a Black raven. For the wall+raven symbol you may choose if you want to place a raven or try to push a raven off. When the last raven is placed, you win with most ravens on your own side.

This is a very nice deduction game with a strong element of riling or aggravation, offering training of concentration and observation; maybe you manage to spot or hear where your opponent places his raven – you know the possible spots for placement. And children also learn to cope with situations occurring in a game that are negative for them, like a raven toppling off the wall. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2

AGE:
5+

TIME:
10+

Designer: Marco Teubner

Artist: Antje Flad, Volker Maas

Price: ca. 20 Euro

Publisher: moses. Verlag 2015

www.moses-verlag.de

EVALUATION

deduction, guessing, riling

Users: For children

Version: de

Rules: de

In-game text: no

Comments:

Very simple rules * Nice combination of observation and deductions * Riling element trains coping with negative situations in a game

Compares to:

Die kleinen Drachenritter for opposite, vertical boards that the opponent cannot see

Other editions:

Currently none



RAUF UND RUNTER

HEAD OVER HEELS IN THE SAVANNAH!

5+

Meerkats are going out to visit friends - Carlos Chamäleon, Kurt Käfer, Willi Wüstenmaus and Jacqueline Schildkröte are waiting for them. The board is set into the box desert side up and you place your double-sided piece on one hole, meerkat without lamp above ground, meerkat with lamp underneath the board. You shuffle your puzzle parts, hole image up, and

then assemble four into a track, the others are set aside. The first part is turned over - this friend needs to be visited now. You roll a die and slide your marker 1, 2 or 3 pieces forward, but not across hedges or walls. If you did visit your friend, you set the puzzle part aside and move to a ground hole. If you are first to reach a ground hole, you turn the board over and all go on



playing with their markers on this side of the board. All that visited a friend, turn up a new one, all others take a super chip for later use. Those chips can be used to move two additional steps or roll & move again or move through a hedge or wall. Visiting - reach ground hole first - turn over board - reveal next friend - play continues in this way until someone has visited all friends and is back in a ground hole and thus wins the game. With other numbers of friends in your puzzle track you can vary the playing time.

Simply cute! The idea is funny, the double-sided figurines on top and underneath the board are fun to play with and on the cave board side you must carefully consider your path, because there is only one ground hole into which you can disappear to turn the board over again. Don't forget - never lift your marker off the board in order to not drop the bottom half of your meerkat! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
5+

TIME:
25+

Designer: I. and M. Brand
Artist: Dynamo Ltd. and others
Price: ca. 36 Euro
Publisher: Ravensburger 2015
www.ravensburger.de

EVALUATION

roll die, reach target
Users: For children
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:
Cute idea * Simple basic rules * New use for magnetic playing pieces

Compares to:
All roll & move games for basic mechanisms, new double-sided pieces

Other editions:
Currently none



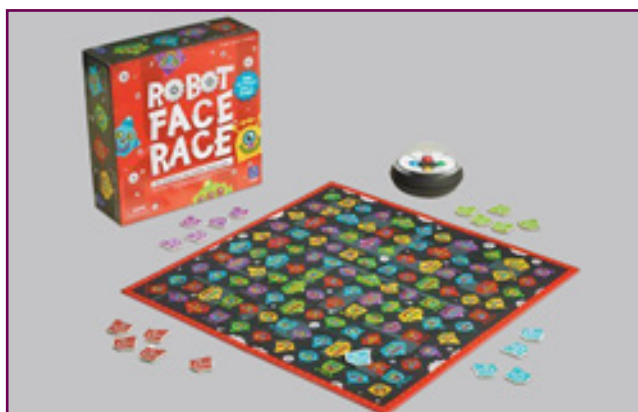
ROBOT FACE RACE

IT'S MACHINE MADNESS!

6+

A crazy inventor is constructing robots, hundreds of robots, but unfortunately he has not managed to collect the correct heads for them. Those heads need to be found and all players help the inventor to find them. The game board shows 120 different heads - those heads come in five different colors - yellow, green, blue, purple and red - and those five colors can

also appear in eyes, mouth and nose of those heads. Each player takes five robot chips in one of the four colors. The currently active player takes the Robomat and shakes it properly so that four of five possible marbles end up in the slots - one of the slots has room for two marbles. The result determines - marked by easily distinguished symbols - the four colors for the head



that needs to be found. No color can appear twice, as the Robomat only holds one marble for each of the five colors.

All players now search the board for, for instance, a purple head with read eyes, a blue nose and a green mouth. Whoever finds the head first, puts one of his chips on it. The other players stop searching and use the Robomat to check the head on the board. If it is the correct head, you can set aside your chip. If it is not the correct head, you take back your chip and must pass during the next round. The successful spotter becomes the next "inventor" and shakes the Robomat as active player. Whoever manages to discard all five of his chips first, wins the game. A super simple and super fun game, very attractive not only for children, but also for families. All you need is quick and correct observing. Any method to search is fine, provided that you are fast! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
6+

TIME:
25+

Designer: Ivan Moscovich
Artist: not named
Price: ca. 20 Euro
Publisher: Game Factory 2015
www.gamefactory-spiele.com

EVALUATION

Spotting game
Users: For children
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Cute topic * Drawings to too easily distinguished * Good family game, too

Compares to:
All spotting games featuring color combinations

Other editions:
Currently none



SARKOPHAG

AVOID THE MUMMIES
THAT HAVE WOKEN UP!

8+

Unfortunately ancient sarcophagi have been opened and you need to avoid the affectionate mummies. You receive 10 cards out of 60 in values 1 to 60, an eventual rest in case of less than six participating players is set aside. The starting player leads a card, the second player in clockwise direction decides with the card he plays if all other players after him must play a higher or

lower card than the first player. If the second card played is lower than the card lead by the starting player, all players must play a card lower than that of the starting player, but not necessarily lower than their predecessor. Whoever plays the lowest card of the round, takes the trick. But if somebody is forced – due to lack of a suitable card – to play a card that is higher than the one



lead, the trick is taken by whoever played the highest card, that is, who had to overbid the highest. In analogy, all must play a higher card when the card played by the second player is higher than the one lead by the first player. If someone cannot follow suit and is forced to play lower, the trick goes to whoever played lowest, that is, had to underbid the most. Whoever wins a trick is the one who leads for the next trick. If you lead for a trick you are not allowed to play a card with five mummies unless you hold only such cards. After ten tricks you win with fewest mummy heads on your collected tricks.

Again a nice, little, well-working card game, nothing really new, but a game that plays quickly and is quickly explained, an ideal card to take along traveling and an equally ideal game as a filler or for beginners. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-6

AGE:
8+

TIME:
15+

Designer: Michael Feldkötter
Artist: Claus Stephan
Price: ca. 8 Euro
Publisher: Amigo Spiele 2015
www.amigo-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Trick-taking
Users: For families
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game text: no

Comments:
Simple rules * Quickly explained and quickly played
* Ideal for traveling * Good introductory game

Compares to:
All trick-taking games where you need to avoid certain cards or amounts

Other editions:
Currently none



SHINOBI ASSASSINS

BLUFFING AND DENOUNCING



The Great Daimyo of all Ninja Clans is dead and his successor must be found. As Daimyo of an individual clan you want to survive to become the next Great Daimyo. A round comprises two phases – 1) assign attack and 2) resolve attacks and denounce. In your turn you attack three players to your right by placing a face-down attack card, you name the weapon and may lie,

talk or gesticulate to mask your true intentions. Then in turn players reveal two of the three cards assigned to them – in case of identical weapons the attack is successful and costs a life marker; in case of different weapons nothing happens. Then you can announce Incompetence or Plotting. If you have revealed two different cards, you can announce Incompe-



tence and reveal the third card: When all three cards are different, all three attackers lose one life marker; if not, the attacked announcer loses a life marker.

When the attacked player has revealed two identical cards, he can announce Plotting and reveal the third card. If it is identical to the two other cards, the attacked player does not lose a life marker, but each of the three attackers. When the third card is a different one, the attacked player loses two markers, one for the attack and one for the wrong accusation. If you are out of markers, you can keep attacking and denouncing, but cannot win. The last one to own a marker wins the game.

A cute mixture of card game and communication with bluff and deduction. My neighbor has marked trident twice, so maybe I won't get one? And why does my vis-à-vis wink at me, when he attacks me with a sword, or so he says? ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
4-6

AGE:
10+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Josep Maria Allué
Artist: Siscu Bellidu
Price: ca. 10 Euro
Publisher: GDM Games 2015
www.gdmgames.com

EVALUATION

Cards, bluff, deduction
Users: With friends
Version: multi
Rules: de en es fr
In-game text: no

Comments:
Standard topic * Needs a minimum of four players * Denouncing as interesting detail mechanism * Funny, plays fast

Compares to:
All games featuring bluff and false information

Other editions:
Currently none



STAR WARS REBELS

ANGRIFF DER REBELLEN

7+

Rebels versus Empire. Each player commands a GHOST space ship and confronts TIE fighters, star destroyers or even Darth Vader. Hexagonal tiles show Imperiale Gegner = imperial opponents, Verbündete = allies of the rebels and Unterstützung = support as well as three Kosmischer Nebel = cosmic nebulae. Sixteen of those hex tiles are laid out at the beginning, in four

rows with four hexes each.

Each player begins on one of the corner tiles. In your turn you "fly" from your position onto an adjacent tile and then turn over a tile that is adjacent to your new position. When the tile shows support or an ally you may take it, provided you do not yet have a support or ally tile. Tiles that you cannot take are turned back over again. When



you revealed Kosmischer Nebel, you roll the die and either receive or lose power chips or nothing happens; the nebula is turned over again. When you reveal an opponent, you can leave him in place and take a power chip or fight the enemy with a comparison of strength from die roll and additional points, making use of power chips, allies or support. Your neighbor to your right rolls for the strength of the opponent. If you defeat an opponent you take the tile; gaps in the display are filled at the end of your turn. If you cannot fill such a gap, the game ends and you win with most victory points on your tiles with defeated opponents and allies. Power chips that you have left, decide a tie.

A simple game, harmonious, with nice components and even a little tactic from the choice of fighting or taking power chips – a well-made game on the topic, best for fans of Star Wars. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
7+

TIME:
20+

Designer: S. Dochtermann + Team

Artist: Fuxbox, Andreas Resch

Price: ca. 20 Euro

Publisher: Kosmos 2015

www.kosmos.de

EVALUATION

placement, dice rolling

Users: For children

Version: de

Rules: de

In-game text: no

Comments:

Illustrations from the film *

Simple rules * Very chance-

dependent * Especially for

fans of the topic

Compares to:

Collecting tiles by compar-

ing dice results

Other editions:

Currently none



SWITCHING TRACKS

CRISS-CROSSING AMERICA

Sheep and textiles are transported across America; for doing so you must throw switches on the tracks in order to deliver goods where they are needed. Goods you deliver go to your depot and can then be used to upgrade your train or to complete contracts. Whoever completes five contracts first – they must include one each of 3-, 4- and 5-items contracts – wins

the game.

You start in a city of your choice – at the begin all players are in different regions of the board – and a train with one upgrade or three switchmen as well as one of nine offices. The active player first fills empty cities with goods or Demand Discs, can throw switches and then moves the train according to the dice value on the engine, from city



to city and past other trains. You can end the movement in a city where there is already another train. If you have room on your train, you must load up a good in a city and must, if possible deliver a good in a city, that is, you put the good and an eventual Demand Disk behind your screen. Later you can use those goods to upgrade your train – expand its range or give it more cars- or get more switchmen. Upgrading the range or new cars cost 2 goods, switchmen cost one good each, you can hire two. If you want to meet one of the 10 contracts, you discard the corresponding goods. For some contracts you can acquire offices for special abilities. All in all this is a nice logistics game, featuring pretty components. Allover, the game is not too complicated and yet offers tactic from optimum use of the various offices and – at the end – a usually tight race for the contracts and with them for victory. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
10+

TIME:
60+

Designer: Kris Gould

Artist: Mike Raabe

Price: ca. 40 Euro

Publisher: Wattsalpoag 2015

www.wattsalpoag.com

EVALUATION

Railway, logistics

Users: With friends

Version: multi

Rules: de en es fr

In-game text: yes

Comments:

Not too complicated rules

* Well suited for beginners,

too * And yet enough tactic

for a more experienced

player * Language-depen-

dent included components

in four languages

Compares to:

Railway games with logistics

mechanics

Other editions:

Currently none



TARGETS

FLICK DICE INSTEAD OF ROLLING THEM

15+

The game comprises three dice and a wooden puck of one color for each player and nine target cardboard discs in three different colors. Dice are flicked onto those discs in order to win the discs. At the start of the game any three discs are laid out, with a distance of about one dice width between them. Each player takes his dice and puts them as a tower on his puck. Those

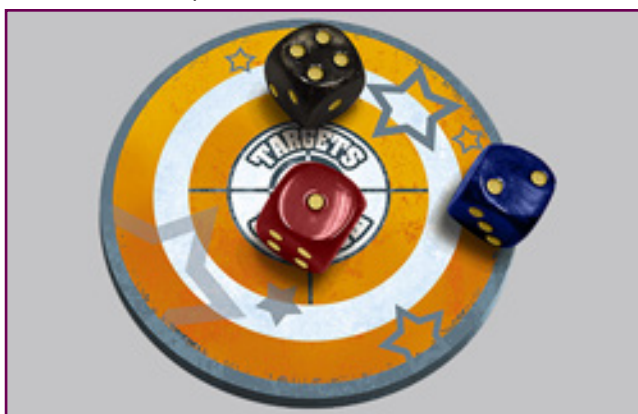
dice towers must have at least two disc width distance from the target discs.

The game is played over several rounds, in each round each player uses all three of his dice. In your turn you snip the top die in your tower and it stays where it ends up unless one of the following situations occurs: 1) Foul – the die rolls off the table or several dice fall of the tower or

the die slides instead of rolling; the die always goes underneath the puck of its owner. 2) Targets, the die touches the center of a disc and wins the disc. The die goes underneath its puck. 3) Double – if the die and another die of the same color on the table form a double, the owner can take back one of them on the tower to flick again.

If you hit discs underneath opposing pucks, you take them. When all dice have been played, discs under your puck turn into discs you won. Discs from the middle showing a pip majority in a color are placed beneath the puck of this player. For a new round you replenish the discs in the middle to three. If you have won four discs, you win the game. Variants are listed.

A nice dexterity game with rules that sound complicated, but are easy to implement in play; the game is good fun and plays quickly – nice family entertainment as a filler. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
15+

TIME:
7+

Designer: Wilfried Fort

Artist: Tony Rochon

Price: ca. 15 Euro

Publisher: Blackrock Games 15
www.blackrockeditions.com

EVALUATION

Flicking, dexterity
Users: For families
Version: multi
Rules: en fr nl
In-game text: no

Comments:

Rules sound complicated
* Yet play is easily understood * Nice, well-working, fun family game

Compares to:

Other flicking games

Other editions:

Currently none



THE BATTLE AT KEMBLE'S CASCADE

BATTLES AMONG THE STARS

The Battle at Kemble's Cascade is the adaptation of a video / arcade game into a board game. Space pilots fly their ships through space, complete missions, destroy aliens, space ships and bosses and acquire alien technology.

The scrolling screen of the arcade game is simulated by constantly changing rows of cards, there are always five rows on

display with three or four cards each. In the rounds of the game you decide if you Fight or Power Down, always with the aim to own most Glory at the end from completed missions, achievements and destroyed ships. At first you determine turn order with sensor cards, then you can – if you choose the Fight option – move one step in any direction and resolve the target card

or fire orthogonally and damage the first obstacle in the line of fire. Targets not completely destroyed get their full energy back. Ships start with Energy 5, if it drops to 0 the ship is destroyed and can be re-entered into the game. If you choose the Power Down option, you recharge energy, buy upgrades and resolve Threats. When all had their turn, the bottom row of cards is removed and a new row is added on top. Glory is acquired by completing missions, achievements and destroying ships.

All in all, this game offers a well-made simulation with a clever mix of mechanisms, albeit without the hectic of the arcade game, but with an attractive adaptation of flight maneuvers and screen scrolling. Despite the shooter theme many Glory points come from so-called Achievements, which you master for Glory. And sometimes it can be a clever move to "Die" for lots of Glory and re-enter the ship again. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
14+

TIME:
90+

Designer: A. and O. Tyland

Artist: C. Quilliams, P. Guérin

Price: ca. 23 Euro

Publisher: Z-Man Games 2015
www.zmangames.com

EVALUATION

SciFi, conflict
Users: With friends
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game text: yes

Comments:

Adaptation of a video game * Flair of the arcade nicely transported * Clever mechanism details * Good for seasoned players

Compares to:

SciFi conflicts with a shooter topic

Other editions:

English edition a Z-Man Games



TOKAIDO MATSURI

JAPANESE FESTIVALS

8↑

We travel through the feudal Japan of ancient times, following the reputed Tokaido, the old road leading from Kyoto to Edo that takes us through magnificent landscapes, and enjoying culinary specialties and unforgettable encounters. The player in last position is the active player for a turn, moves any distance and resolves the effects of the spot where he finishes his

move. When all travelers have arrived at Edo, you score for donations to temples and achievement cards for Gourmet, Baths, Encounters and Souvenirs; on the road you can acquire an achievement card for Panorama. The game includes variants for a simple game, a return journey or a more tactical arrival at the Inn.

The Matsuri expansion intro-

duces traditional Japanese Festivals to the game and can only be played in combination with Tokaido and the Tokaido Crossroads expansion.

Matsuri also introduces 16 new traveler cards which you can shuffle together with the travelers from the core game and Crossroads and then choose your traveler from three instead of two, or you can directly select your favorite traveler. When all travelers have arrived at an intermediate inn, a festival is triggered. The traveler who reached the inn first, draws two Matsuri cards and chooses one of them. The other one is put back to the bottom of the stack. The chosen card is instantly implemented, it yields advantages for all travelers or some of them. The new travelers also have unique abilities.

Matsuri is yet another exceptionally beautiful expansion, it is a pleasure to only look at the card and take your time to select your preferred traveler. ☑



TOP & FLOP

QUIZ-PARTY IN TEAMS



Players sort themselves into four to six teams of one to three players of even size. The reader of the round takes the card holder with question cards and the blank card tile; each team takes a pen, a betting board and betting chips. Players jointly choose a letter for the questions.

The question reader of the round takes the foremost question card, covering its back with

the blank card, and then reads the question corresponding to the chosen letter. The answer to each question is a number; all teams now write down a number secretly on their betting board; then all answers are revealed simultaneously and the tips are sorted in ascending order. Now all teams decide where to place the betting chips; they should go to the number that

is closed to the correct answer, but lower than the answer; you can also bet on your answer or split the chips between two answers or place them on Top & Flop.

Then the betting chips are revealed and the answer is named. Top tip of the round is the answer closest to the correct one, but lower – points are scored by the team that gave the tip and to those who did bet on it. When all answers of the round are higher than the correct one, the top tip of the round is the Top & Flop board. In round 7 you use victory points in your bet and then win with most points. But there is a snag! Victory points that you do not bet with in round 7 are forfeit!

A cute idea, the individual mechanisms are all pretty much standard, but nicely combined. You can decide to go for the „experts“ or follow your own gut feeling to accrue as many points as possible. A very nice addition to the range of quiz and trivia games. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
8+

TIME:
45+

Designer: Antoine Bauza

Artist: Naïade

Price: ca. 20 Euro

Publisher: Funforge 2015

www.funforge.fr

EVALUATION

Traveling, events
Users: For families
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: no

Comments:

Second expansion for Tokaido * Needs basic game and expansion Crossroads to play * Again exceptionally beautiful graphics

Compares to:

Tokaido and Tokaido Crossroads

Other editions:

Currently none



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
4+

AGE:
10+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Dominic Crapuchettes

Artist: O. and S. Freudenreich

Price: ca. 35 Euro

Publisher: Kosmos 2015

www.kosmos.de

EVALUATION

Party, quiz
Users: With friends
Version: de
Rules: de en es pt
In-game text: yes

Comments:

Standard mechanisms
* Unusual final round conditions * Based on Wits & Wagers

Compares to:

All quiz game with guessing at numbers

Other editions:

North Star Games



WINZIGES WELTALL

EXPANSION BY DICE ACTIVATION



Galactic colonization in 30 minutes. You choose a galaxy and can use two ships and four dice at the start of the game. Planetary cards in relation to the number of players are laid out and you choose one of two secret orders.

The active player takes dice according to the development level of his empire; dice results provide action options for activation, not all dice must be activated in a turn. You can re-roll inactivated dice at any time, one time for free, further rerolls must be paid for. To use an action option you place the die on the first free case of the command center and implement the action. When the action has been implemented, all other players can copy it for payment of one Culture unit. Possible actions

are: Move ship - land on a planet or orbit a planet; Receive resources - energy or culture - for each ship on a planet or orbiting a planet with the corresponding symbol; ; Progress at colonization with economy or diplomacy, when progress is complete, the planet is colonized; Use colony by implementing the action of the galaxy card or of one of your colonies. Transform die - set aside to inactivated dice and turn another inactivated die to the side of your choice. When someone has 21 points, the game end is triggered and you win at the end of the round with most points from planets, development level and completed secret order.

are:

The only thing that might be called standard in this game is the topic; the implementation of the game and the depth of the game as regards to tactic and the clever use of components are astonishing, even more so as the rules are rather simple and easily explained. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-5

AGE:
14+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Scott Almes

Artist: William Bricker

Price: ca. 27 Euro

Publisher: Schwerkraftverlag 15

www.schwerkraft-verlag.de

EVALUATION

Development, dice-driven actions

Users: With friends

Version: de

Rules: cz de en it

In-game text: yes

Comments:

Minimalistic box and components * Excellent game with lots of depth despite rather easy rules * Absolutely recommendable

Compares to:

Other games in the series Tiny Epic ..., games with dice-driven action selection

Other editions:

Devir (announced), Gamelyn, Giochix, REXhry



WÖRTERKLAUER

LOCK IN RED BECOMES CLOCK IN BLACK

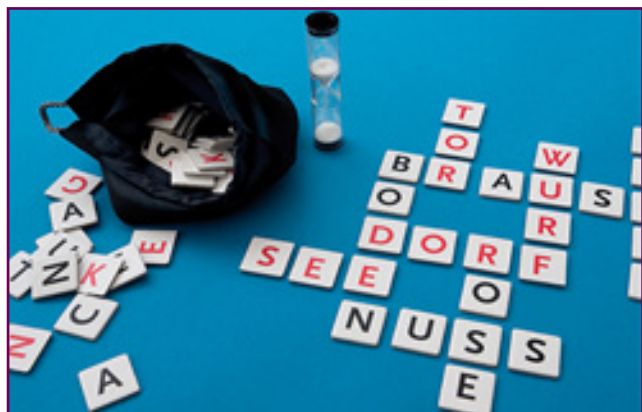


Crossword in two colors - the game features 96 double sided letter tiles, one side black, one side red. You choose a color. Players agree on a maximum size for the crossword and can use the timer for their turns. The first player draws 12 letters as general pool, if there is now vowel you set aside four letters and draw four new ones. Then he forms as many words or as

long ones as possible with letters from the pool, turned over to his color, in standard crossword manner. The other player replenishes the pool by drawing letters, again there must be at least one vowel, and then forms words in his turn, in his color. If you can, by adding one or more letters, change the meaning of a word in your opponent's color, you

turn over the word to your color. Once in a game you can use your exchange Joker and remove up to six letters from the pool, draw as many new ones and put the letters you removed back into the box.

At the end of his turn you as the active player must have at least one more letter in his color in the crossword than his opponent. If you cannot manage that your opponent has won. A challenging game with simple rules, taking over words is the central element - the rules only allow changes of meaning, simply forming the plural version of the word is not enough! The rule book gives lots of examples on how to take over words. The four sides of the box also show examples! One draw-back: the game can end very quickly when there are no suitable letters in the pool, even after using the joker. But you can play another game, because it is such fun to cleverly steal words. ☑



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2

AGE:
10+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Alex Randolph

Artist: Steffen Mühlhäuser + Team

Price: ca. 16 Euro

Publisher: Steffen Spiele 2015

www.steffen-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Crossword

Users: With friends

Version: de

Rules: de

In-game text: no

Comments:

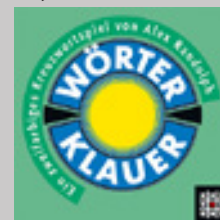
New edition * First edition Otto Maier Verlag Ravensburg, 1975 * Unusual winning condition * Game can be over quickly * Rather chance-dominated

Compares to:

First edition of Wörterkauer, other crossword games

Other editions:

Currently none



BINGO DELUXE

Publisher: Noris Spiele

6↑



The game features 18 Bingo cards with numbers in different distribution as well as numbered bingo balls and 150 markers in five colors. You take one or several bingo cards and fill the barrel with all balls. The game master turns the barrel, reads out the number of the ball that fell out and places the ball on the board. Players cover this number with one of their chips if they find the number on their card or cards. Whoever can cover a horizontal, vertical or diagonal line of numbers first, calls "Bingo" and wins the round.

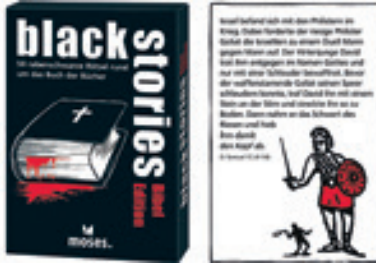
Version: multi * Rules: de en fr it * In-game text: no

Chance and reaction game for 2-6 players, ages 6+

BLACK STORIES BIBEL EDITION

Publisher: mooses. Verlag
Designer: Johannes Bartels

2↑



The story teller is called the arbiter, he reads the story on the front of the card. The other players are his people and may pose any questions, but must pose them in a way that the arbiter can answer with yes or now. The arbiter can give hints or deviate players from totally wrong assumptions. The answer on the back of the card is the only correct and acceptable solution. This edition tells 50 stories from the Bible where you can find many morbid, black-as-night stories in the Old and New Testament, from the Garden of Eden to the Resurrection of Jesus. And sometimes the stories even have a Happy End.

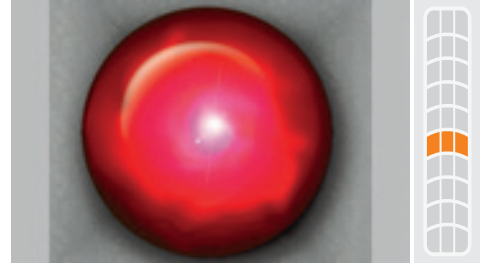
Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: yes

Narrative deduction game for 2 or more players, ages 12+

BOLA

Publisher: F-Hein Spiele
Designer: Ferdinand Hein

7↑



Small – 7 cm square – but sophisticated and elegant, featuring only 12 cards. Those 12 cards show one colored ball both on front and back side of the card; there are 24 balls in total, three balls each in eight colors. In your turn you turn over one card and are not allowed to turn back over the card your opponent turned in his last move. If you manage to reveal three balls of the same color with your card, you score one point. The first player to score five points wins the game.

Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: no

Memo game for 2 players, ages 7+

CATAN CITIES & KNIGHTS

Publisher: Mayfair Games
Designer: Klaus Teuber



20 years of The Settlers of Catan and a relaunch under the new name of Catan. Catan is threatened by Barbarians while players rival to expand a city to a metropolis using wares for new development cards. When the barbarians are not defeated, they pillage a city belonging to the player who supplied the fewest knights for the defense. This expansion for Settlers of Catan transfers many elements from the card game to the board game. As all other expansions, Cities & Knights can only be played together with the basic game.

Version: en * Rules: en * In-game Text: yes

Expansion for Catan for 3-4 players, ages 12+

SHUFFLE STAR WARS KÄMPF MIT UM LOTHAL!

Publisher: ASS Altenburger 2015

7↑



Card game with App. As Empire or Rebels you fight for territories on Lothal; if you win a battle you conquer a territory. Battles are won by comparing card strength and having the highest strength. A territory is on display, then all players put down one or two cards facedown and reveal them simultaneously – when all abilities of characters chosen correspond to the territory, the higher card value counts, otherwise the lower one. The winner takes all cards that were played and the territory; all replenish their hand from their deck and a new territory is laid out. Whoever wins four territories, wins the game.

Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: yes

Card game with App für 2-4 players, ages 7+

SMILEY DICE GAME

Publisher: Game Factory
Designer: Martin Nedergaard Andersen

6↑



Cards show 1 to 4 Smileys in six different kinds, the red Smiley as a duffer is only depicted on dice. 15 cards are stacked face-down, you turn up three of them showing a minimum of five Smileys. You roll and place at least one suitable Smiley on a card in the display or that of a player and can repeat this. If you cannot place a Smiley, your turn ends. When you have covered all Smileys on a card, you take it and lay it out open-faced; at the start of your next turn you can turn it over and thus secure it. When all cards have been taken, you score 1 point for each Smiley and you win with most points.

Version: multi * Rules: de en fr * In-game text: no

Dice game for 2-6 players, ages 6+

SPEED CUPS FAN-EDITION

Publisher: Amigo Spiele
Designer: Haim Shafir

6↑



There are cups in five colors, 24 task cards and a bell. You have one cup per color. On the task cards other images represent those cups. The top task card is revealed and, depending on the image, you line up the cups or stack them in correct order: For birds in a tree, you stack them, for cars you line them up. When you are done, you hit the bell: If your arrangement is correct, you take the card. When all 24 cards have been played, you win with most cards. The Fan Edition comprises 6 boosters with five cards each, created in national championships for Speed Cups. The cards are shuffled into the core game.

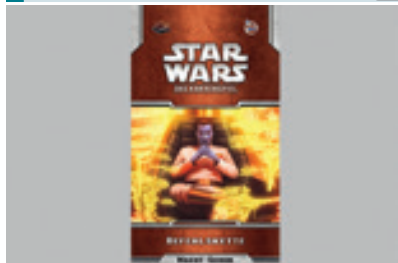
Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: no

Expansion for Speed Cups for 2-4 players, ages 6+

STAR WARS DAS KARTENSPIEL RENEGATEN-STAFFEL

Publisher: Heidelberger Spieleverlag
Designer: Eric M. Lang

2↑



Rebels vs. Empire, using objective cards with missions and player cards for units, events, enforcement and fate, five player cards per objective cards, you choose objectives. You lay out cards, attack opposing objectives and defend your own or play cards for Force. The Empire wins when the Death Star Dial arrives at 12. The Rebels must destroy three Empire objectives before the Empire wins. Renegaten-Staffel /Rogue Squadron is the third cycle of Force Packs, comprising Force Packs Startklar/Ready for Takeoff, Lockvogel/Draw Their Fire, Ausweichmanöver/Evasive Manouvers, Angriffslug/Attack Run, Befehlsskette/Chain of Command and Auf Lichtgeschwindigkeit/ Jump to Lightspeed. Version: de * Rules: de en es fr it nl * In-game text: yes

Expansion for Star Wars LCG game for 2 players, ages 10+

TELL ME VERANTWORTUNG

Publisher: Beleduc 2015

4↑



Tell Me is a new series of games that examines important topics in a way suitable for young children. Each box features six topics on five picture cards with identical color frames, presenting the safe and self-reliant behavior in emergency situations. All players together sort the image cards into the correct sequence, the backside of the cards allows for an easy self-check. Each behavioral situation is described in the booklet, cards are explained and the correct behavior is documented. The box Verantwortung comprises the topics of Consideration, Civic or Moral Courage, Self-Reliance, Helpfulness, Responsibility and Caring.

Version: multi * Rules: cn de en es fr it nl * In-game text: no

Educational game for 1 or more players, ages 4+



(Photo: Franz Svoboda - Impressions of the Spielefest 2015 at the Austria Center Vienna)

IMPRESSUM

Offenlegung nach dem Mediengesetz: Medieninhaber, Eigentümer, Verleger und Hersteller: Verein „Österreichisches Spiele Museum“, vertreten durch Obfrau Dipl. Ing. Dagmar de Cassan, Raasdorferstrasse 28, 2285 Leopoldsdorf im Marchfelde, Österreich, Telefon 02216-7000, mail-to: office@spielen.at, Internet: www.spielejournal.at - www.gamesjournal.at - Chefredakteur: **Dipl. Ing. Dagmar de Cassan**

Blattlinie: Die Blattlinie ist die Meinung aller Redakteure, freien Mitarbeitern und Gastautoren. Die Spiele zur Erstellung der Rezensionen stellt das Österr. Spiele Museum für die Dauer der Arbeit kostenlos zur Verfügung. Niemand erhält Sach-, Service-, Geldleistungen von den Verlagen. (Alle nicht namentlich gekennzeichneten Rezensionen zu den Spielen sind von Dagmar de Cassan)

English Edition Version 1.0

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Icon explanation



Solo Play



Two Players



Large Groups



Recommended Minimum Age

GABIS explanation on page 5



NEIL GAIMAN

A STUDY IN EMERALD

MARTIN WALLACE