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INTERNATIONAL EDITION: IN THIS ISSUE WE PRESENT 56 GAMES

DA VINCI ODER BOTTICELLI?

FLORENZA

Real artists at work!



It is always a pleasure to talk about a new game, especially if it comes from a new designer and a new publisher. If you also know that the designer team is made of gamers and the new release is a gamers' game the interest really reaches a peak.

So I was really happy to approach Placentia Games in Essen, after a long exchange of e-mails, trying to get to try the game during the fair.

Of course it was impossible and Florenza got sold out during the Spiel. I got my copy some week later.

The game is really a gamers' affair and it takes somewhat more than 30-40 minutes to explain the rules. Players are heads of the most important family in Florence during the Renaissance. The goal is to get the most victory points (prestige points) by commissioning famous artist to create works of art.

Works of art do need resources and money for those resources and the artist asks for money, too! You have to construct buildings in your district and deploy your workers to acquire the money and resources needed. You can commission works of art, both in your district - you are the only one allowed to do that - or in the City of Florence, competing with the other families: you have to remember that resources and money are not the goal of the game but just tools to achieve your goals.

Every player starts with a district board, a reference sheet explaining all the buildings (costs and benefits), workers, markers, family

crests and an initial nest egg of 300 Fiorini (money) and 1 resource of each kind. Finally every player has to decide on the 2 buildings he wants to start with. For the first game the designer suggests a nice mix and I think it is a wise choice to accept this little help since it is not easy at all to have an idea of what is going to happen and what you will need just from the rules.

The game is played in 8 rounds and each round goes through 9 phases but in the first round the phases number 1, 2 and 3 are skipped.

The players collect income, decide what the workers are going to do and then set the workers to work. Finally, the artists do their job and the turn ends. Of course it is not as simple as that and we will go into details later.

In phase 1 players collect income: there is a fixed income that could be increased by some benefits gained by complete works of art. It could be that works of art will give also influence on the Church or the Captain of the People.

In phase 2 and 3 Captain of the People and the Bishop use their power to secure an artist (Captain) or convert a worker (bishop). Captain of the People and Bishop are elected in phase 8 and one of the benefits of these offices is to be player 1 and 2 in the turn sequence.

Phase 4 is where the game is actually played.

Players alternate in using their workers (4 each round in the beginning) to construct workshops, use workshops, hire artists, deal with the market or donate to charity. In this phase players just decide what to do but everything is resolved in phase 6. Since every workshop can host one worker it is important to secure the one able to give you the resources you need. Is also important to quickly build the workshop you want to have in your district since using other players' workshops is expensive (you give to the owner 1 victory point) and there are 2 or 3 of each kind of some workshops but also a lot of unique workshops. It is also important to commission works of art quickly to be able to hire the best artist, because you get the artist as soon as you place the worker on the work of art. Actually everything is important and you need to do it in the right time and before other players do it: That IS the game and I think it is really well done since you are always in doubt about what would be the best action to choose, when to do it and you do not have that many actions.

In the first turn you have just only 4 workers but you can get more in the following rounds with some buildings or completing some works of art. Workers are important (they stand for the actions you can do in your turn) but having more workers than others doesn't mean you are going to win for sure. If you need more workers you can donate to charity (actually paying money to have more actions).

Phase 5 is the Market phase: Players with workers in the market are allowed to buy one resource, to sell one resource and to exchange two resources for one other. Sometimes this is the only way to get a resource needed for a work of art and/or a workshop.

In Florenza there are 6 types of resources: Wood is important for building workshops, marble is used in a lot of works of art. Other resources are: Gold, metal, textile and spice. In phase 6 the actions in the districts happen. To have built a workshop is not enough to benefit from it; you also have to activate it with one worker. It is also important to remember that other players can use your workshops. The workshops in the district are numbered and activated in that order. That means that a worker placed in the place number 1 in one district will complete its action before any other worker placed in place



number 2 in any district.

This is a really important feature of Florenza since in phase 4 you just commission the works of art but they are actually only completed by spending the resources in phase 6 and in a specific order. This means that you need a good planning strategy also for the

Andrea "Liga" Ligabue

I like this game, it is well-connected to the topic, features lots of interesting and interacting mechanisms, and the randomness of the prestige points earned by a work of art is only a small irritation.

order in which you set up the workshops in your district.

In phase 7 the works of art are completed: You have to pay resources and money for the work of art and for the artist. Works of art give players the main part of their victory points in the game. Every artist is competent in one or more of three categories and you need the right artist for the work of art you commissioned: You need a painter to make a painting and a sculptor to make a sculpture! To complete a work of art you need to roll a die to determine the quality of the artist's performance: every artist can give more or less points, depending on his ability and the roll of the die.

The number of artists available in Florence each round is fixed, depending on the number of players. Every artist will be in the game only for a fixed number of rounds and new artists will appear in the following rounds. Which artists appear and when they will come into play is something that will change from game to game and is a factor that can really change the game.

Phase 8 is about the election of the Captain of the People and the Bishop. The mechanism for these elections are really well done: The player with the most prestige points will be the Captain in the next turn, will get prestige certificates representing victory points equal to his amount of prestige points and has then to set his prestige point marker back to zero. That means that the role of Captain will move from player to player in each turn. The office of Bishop will go to the player with most influence points for the Church. Being elected bishop twice in a row gives you the role of Cardinal, which scores you a lot of prestige points but sets back your amount of Church influence points to Zero. Phase 9 is about all the management staff needed to complete the round.

At the end of the 8th round the player with more prestige from adding prestige points and prestige certificates will be the winner. There are also few points to be earned from

money and resources left over.

Florenza is a really deep game with a lot of different mechanisms mixed together well. A lot of nice ideas have been well connected to the topic. The artwork of the game and the components are excellent. The fact that only a few artists from the artist deck are used in every game gives the game a high replay value.

I have only a small problem with the randomness in the number of prestige points gained by an artist completing a work of art. I'm sure it is nice to have a bit of randomness in the game and the way it is implemented is also really well connected to the theme, but in a game where sometimes you win or lose by a margin of 3-5 prestige points a really unlucky sequence of dice rolls could be really hard to overcome.

Anyway, despite this, my opinion about this game is really positive: I enjoyed all the games played and I'm looking forward to playing it again, as there is something new and something additional to learn about the game and new strategies to try, too. I'm sure it will get a position in the gamers games heaven.

Andrea „Liga“ Ligabue

FLORENZA

Designer: Stefano Groppi

Artist: I. Zoni, V. Gobbi, D. Zurla

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 60,00 Euro

Publisher: Placentia / Heidelberger 2010

www.placentiagames.it

EVALUATION

Resources management game

For experts

Allocate resources, plan work

Comments:

Very beautiful components
Featuring historic persons, authentic workshops and professions from the Renaissance
Chance element from the allocation of prestige points from works of art

Compares to:

The Princes of Florence and other games with resources management and worker placement

My rating:



PLAYERS
2-5

AGE
14+

TIME
150+



40 Lines for Meeples

Dagmar de Cassan, Editor-in-Chief

„What shall we play today?“

A very favorite and very common question at the start of a comfortable games evening, but a question with an element of surprise – it can be surprising how tastes can differ! Everybody will immediately name his latest discovery or will enthusiastically report on a game that is just about to arrive.

The diversity of the games community and games is mirrored in the games and one can be grateful that the industry has taken note of this and offers lots of good games to the market.

That we all want to play something special is inherent in our hobby, we play in the way that others read books, watch films or go to the theatre, we play games as part of our culture.

Our Journal WIN tries 12 times a year to convey this variety to you, we are sure that this issue will offer something for your taste, too. For a survey of the new releases presented at the International Toy Fair at Nuremberg we have published a special issue, therefore in February there are two issues of WIN. Did you take a look at this special issue? We report on 653 games and are sure that we will have enough material for the next issues of WIN for everybody, it will be a good year!

If you like our WIN: The English version is available as PDF for free download under <http://www.gamesjournal.at>

And we do more than publish a Journal: We are the Foundation Spielen in Österreich. Visit our web-site. Take a look at our Games Companion 2010 and get the new Games <http://www.gamescompanion.at>

BUILDING TOWERS IN OLD FLORENCE

FIRENZE

Well-known mechanisms well recycled

Firenze was published 2010 by Pegasus Spiele and is, besides Nuremberg, published by Huch & friends, the new opus by Andreas Steding, who produced a surprise hit – at least for me – in 2009 with his Hansa Teutonica from Argentum Verlag. For all those who are familiar with Hansa Teutonica this will be sufficient to get them interested in Firenze. All others should go on reading all the same.

Players are taking on the guise of Patrician families in medieval Florence. Aim of the game is to build the most magnificent dynasty towers to acquire the most prestige. To do so you acquire action cards with new building blocks, you build towers and either score them or tear them down again. All this does not sound very innovative and it is not innovative. If you have been playing a few board games you will not be surprised by a new mechanism here, but the combination is new and very well done.

Players alternate in their turns, in each turn you implement 6 phases, some of which are optional, all others are compulsory.

Phase 1: Take card and blocks

On the board there is a display with 6 cards. The cards come into play randomly. On each card entering the game 4 blocks are placed. These blocks are drawn from a bag and have different colors, the allotment of colors is different, white blocks are the most prevalent,

the purple one are most scarce.

The cards themselves are very different, too. There are cards with a one-time valid effect, cards with permanent effects or cards simply giving you victory points for the final scoring; they can be positive or negative.

In your turn you must take a card with all blocks on it. The first card in the row can be taken for free, all others must be paid for. You

Markus Wawra

Firenze is a nice game of building and acquisition with some strategic and tactical depths based on relatively simple rules. Add to this nice and high quality components, and you have all requirements that a modern board game should meet.

pay by placing one block from your personal stock onto each card in front of the card you want to take, provided you have the necessary number of blocks.

This mechanism very elegantly evens out the different values of the cards. On bad cards normally a great number of blocks accumulate, good cards are bought expensively.

In any case, in this mechanism the attraction of the game is manifest. The decision which card to take with which blocks makes it highly interesting, but an element of chance is inherent in it, too. The right combination of cards and blocks at the right moment can decide a game when action is running high. Most of the time the color of the blocks is

more important than the card itself, but to understand this correlation you must know the rest of the rules:

Phase 2: Swap blocks (optional)

After taking a card you have the opportunity to exchange three blocks from your personal stock for one block from the display. Of course, this is expensive, but sometimes necessary.

Phase 3: Build towers (optional)

The blocks you collect are not only used for payment on cards, but – much more important to build towers with them. A player can with nearly any number of blocks build any number of towers or expand them. But the number of newly built blocks must be paid for, too. If you use one or 2 blocks, it is free of charge, 3 blocks cost you one block, which is put into the bag from your stock, building 4 blocks costs you 3 blocks for the bag, 5 blocks have a price of 6 blocks and 6 blocks a price of 10 blocks, all go into the bag with the general stock of blocks.

A tower can only be built with blocks of one color, but can have any number of blocks and you can also build two towers of the same color.

Phase 4: Tear down ruins

Towers, that you did not touch in this round, that are towers that were not expanded or



not newly built in this round, must be torn down again. The blocks from a torn-down tower go half (rounded down) into your stock and half into the bag. Of course tearing down a tower should be carefully avoided and requires careful planning over several rounds.

Phase 5: Score towers (optional)

Towers built can be scored. This earns the builder/owner prestige points. The blocks of a scored tower go back into the bag. But you cannot score any tower just standing around. On the board for each color a tower is depicted showing levels 3-8. Each level shows a the number of victory points a player will receive when scoring a tower of this height and color. The higher a tower and the scarcer the color the more victory points you score. Then the player places a seal of his color onto this level. A tower corresponding to a level with a seal cannot be scored anymore. At the start of the game a number of neutral seals is distributed on the towers, how to do this is decided by the players.

In addition to this there are special building orders placed on certain towers. This enhances the value of the level, but the special orders must be filled in sequence of their numbers. This variable set-up of the game enhances the appeal to play again and enables experienced players to push or tone down certain strategies.

When a player has spent his last seal the end phase of the game begins. This player scores 5 points for placing his last seal, then all other players have one more turn and then the final scoring happens.

Phase 6: Check limits

At the end of turn players may not have more than 10 blocks in their personal stock and no more than 5 cards in play, a surplus must be discarded.

Endwertung

At the end of the game a final scoring is taking. For each color you check which player has built the most towers of this color, marked by seals on the board. If you did build the majority you score additional points; in case of a tie the highest point in the color decides. Again rare colors score more points than the more frequent ones. Then the points yielded by cards are scored and the player with the highest total of prestige points has won.

Fazit

The game offers the classic virtues of the so called "German Board Game", enough strategic and tactical choices to continue to

be of interest, with rules that are relatively simple and straightforward. I enjoy especially the mechanism for choosing the cards and blocks. It has been already been used in Vinci or Small World, but is used much more consequently here, because you must take a decision each round: it also leads to much more complex considerations here, as you must take into account the advantage and ability of the card, the number and color of the blocks and possibly resulting advantages and disadvantages for the other players.

The duration of the game of one hour is within normal limits. The game is intended for 2-4 players, and it can be recommended without reservations for all number of players, whereby games for 2 are naturally more tactical and less chance-driven than games of three or four. The components, too, leave nothing to desire, the quality is fine, the art is nice, as one can expect from Michael Menzel, and the wooden blocks are nice to touch and can be stacked easily.

If you like all that you should take a closer look at Firenze, in my opinion it is one of the highlights of the vintage.

wn Markus-Wawra@spielen.at

FIRENZE

Designer: Andreas Steding
Artist: Michael Menzel
Title ger.: ident
Price: ca. 35,00 Euro
Publisher: Pegasus Spiele 2010
www.pegasus.de

EVALUTION

A game of acquisition
 With friends
 collect blocks, build towers

Comments:
 Interesting selection mechanism
 High factor of interaction, sometimes deciding chance element
 Lots of tactics, some strategy
 Nice components

Compares to:
 Thurn und Taxis, Vinci, Small World

My rating:



PLAYERS
 2-4

AGE
 12+

TIME
 45+



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 colour accompanying each game title represents the *Target Group*. The headline also contains information on age and number of players. The *BAR* in the evaluation box displays colour codes for up to 10 features of a game.

TARGET GROUPS

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

Children:

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

Families:

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

Friends:

Young people and adults play together as equals

Experts:

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

Games that are especially eligible for *Solo play* or for 2 players or *Large groups* of players are marked with an icon. Please note for the target 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 target groups can overlap. The choice of the suitable games always depends on your playing partners and your fun with games!

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 colour code marks the dominant features. Educational games train the highlighted preference.

Chance:

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

Tactic:

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:

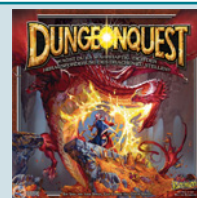
Body movement, balance and reaction

Colours in the Bar

Empty boxes: This feature is not present or minimal
 One coloured box: This feature of the game is present, but not essential
 Two coloured boxes: This feature is present and important in the game
 Three coloured boxes: This feature dominates

HART, HARDER, DEAD!

DUNGEONQUEST

Only pertinent for very courageous heroes!

Be warned in advance! You only may go on reading if you are one of the most gallant warriors, on of the most courageous amazons or one of the most gifted mages. If you enter the Dragonfire Dungeon you must be prepared not to come out again. Ah, bah! If you are in the Dragonfire Dungeon, you will most probably die there. And probably really, really fast. Maybe even already on the first tile that has been laid out. Kaboom and there you are! Dead! But let's start slowly and at the beginning.

DungeonQuest was first published in 1985 under the title of Drakborgen in Sweden. A few months later it came out in Denmark and Norway. In 1987 a very pretty version was published for the English-speaking market by Games Workshop and in 1990 a less pretty version was done by Schmidt Spiele under the title of Drachenhort in German. In the meantime, a good 20 years later, Fantasy Flight Games has taken this classic game that was one of the cofounders and cornerstones of the genre of dungeon crawl

games, has completely overhauled its graphics and design, revised the contents and has republished the game. And, as it were, on the go, they have transferred the stage to the Fantasy Universe of Terrinoth, where the games Runebound, Runewars and Descent from the same publisher take place, too. Advantage for the publisher: A successful topic and therefore reuseable illustrations. Advantage for the players: Fantasy Flight Games has been so kind as to pack the necessary additional component into the box so



that you can use the characters featured in DungeonQuest also in the other Terrinoth-Games. Of course, some really evil-minded person could now say that DungeonQuest is the most expensive character expansion of all times. It is strongly recommended not to do so, because otherwise you could incur the penalty of a forced holiday in the Dragonfire Dungeon.

The game itself is surprisingly and likeably simple, despite the copious rules that are typical for the publisher and let you suppose the contrary. You draw a tile or a card – implement the instructions – that's it! One could conceive of the idea that we play a kind

Klemens Franz

DungeonQuest is charming, because it totally encompasses chance and catches the unpredictability of dark dungeons very well. Using the original rules can only be recommended to hardened, frustration-proof gamers.

of underground Talisman. That is, a kind of game in which simple rules combined with coherent components and harmonious texts result in a very lively game on the table; a game where you are concerned less with the mechanics and mechanisms but with enacting a story. And that is true for this game too, as long as we play along. If our hero sticks his spoon into the wall too early, we as his players are damned to watch and maybe now and then play a card for a monster in combat. As an alternative we could use a rule variant and could revive our hero. But somehow we are in the middle of the game, again, so back again to square 1:

We start in one of the four corners of the board comprising 10 x 13 squares. Those corners are the entrance gates into the dungeon, belonging to a Dragon by the name of Kallandra. And as befits a big and fire-spouting aurian, the middle of the board features a big and well-filled treasure vault covering two squares. This treasure vault we want to reach at any cost, because we are lured there by gold, jewels and magical potions. By the way, the dragon is still asleep. Always supposing that we managed to reach the treasure vaults alive, have grabbed enough and gotten out again without damage and without waking the dragon we should hurry to get back. Only if we manage to reach one of the exits (formerly entrances) alive before dusk is falling we have survived the game! The winner will be who has secured the most valuable booty. In many of the games that won't be anybody, the chance to survive is rumored to be somewhere in the 20% range and that is at least higher than in the first edition of the game. That should put us at ease! Whoever among us has enough courage and on top of that is the active player, too, can choose one of two possibilities: You can

either search the square where we are at the moment by looking at a SEARCH card or you can move to an adjacent square. If we do that, we draw a dungeon tile, place it next to the square we stand on, move our hero to the new tile and implement the instruction on the tile. And here a huge amount of diversification comes into play: There are – well-fitted to the topic – tiles with cobwebs, tiles with falling grids, tiles with revolving rooms, tiles with crumbled walls, tiles with deep caverns, tiles with traps and so on and so on. Besides rolling dice for several attributes using a six-sided die we must draw a card after entering the room. And there are lots of these cards. We have already encountered the SEARCH card. Furthermore, there are cards for dungeons, cards for dragons, cards for treasures, cards for traps, for doors, for graves, for bones and for catacombs as well as so called power and combat cards for use in combat. On the cards themselves you can find items (Gold), monsters (combat), attribute tests (nasty) or traps (nasty to deadly), an order to draw a card or nothing. If you have lost track now, it doesn't matter, basically, as stated above, you place a new tile, implement its instructions, maybe draw a card and follow the card instructions.

Unless there is combat: in this case the game drastically and unexpectedly changes its rhythm. Fantasy Flight Games has thrown out the combat system of the original and replaced it with a cute card-combat mechanism. We can counter-attack and use deadly shoves, or one of our special abilities can turn around the combat the we already have lust! The decision on win or lose is not decided by our abilities, but by the amount of luck that comes to our assistance when drawing a card. This is a pity, because especially when playing a 3- or 4-player game the combat system takes out a lot of momentum from the rather amusing dungeon explorations. Meanwhile, Fantasy Flight Games has recognized this as well, and is offering two new and one old version for download from the website.

Should we have reached Kallandra's vault despite all the opposition we met then we may draw treasure cards in each turn, but should take care not to be too greedy. First, because the probability of Kallandra waking up gets stronger with each draw (yes, correct, you might draw a dragon card) and might be rather grumpy. And second, because we should try to get out of the dungeon on time.

DungeonQuest doesn't make it easy for us. If you are unlucky you draw a trap on the first tile which kills you when you do a bad roll. If you are unlucky you encounter a monster and have bad cards in combat. If you are unlucky you wake up Kallandra immediately

and lose life points continuously. If you are unlucky you do not manage to light your torch. If you are unlucky you die because you do not find a secret door and remain locked in. And this exactly is the appeal of the game. If we know what expects us it is rather fun to challenge chance! You curse, you laugh. One man's bad luck is another man's good luck. If one of us, heavily laden with gold and jewels, springs a deadly trap shortly before the exit this might cause the other players to smile. In DungeonQuest threats and failure are the main principles and the core of the game.

DungeonQuest could have been a rather nice and entertaining dungeon crawl. If you do not mind house rules you can defuse the game. Maybe traps that are deadly according to their text could only be half-deadly, maybe dead adventures could be resurrected for a penalty of 500 gold. Maybe you need not fight a monster to the bitter end, but can turn heels after one round. Maybe the attributes of the heroes could be a little bit higher as not to incur such frequent failures in the dice-tests.

But maybe then it would be a game among many. In its normal guise it is a cruelly malicious experience in the right group of players.

wn Klemens.Franz@spielen.at

DUNGEONQUEST

Designer: Jakob Bonds

Artist: verschiedene Grafiker

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 50,00 Euro

Publisher: Fantasy Flight /Heidelberger 2010

www.hds-fantasy.de

EVALUATION

Dungeon Crawl with cards

With friends

Move, roll dice, fight

PLAYERS
1-4

AGE
13+

TIME
30+

Comments:

Excellent components and art
Very high chance element
Early demise from the game is possible
House rules are recommended
Bonus components for other games
Rules for solo play

Compares to:

Drakon, Hero Quest, Descent

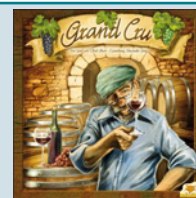
My rating:



WINE CUBES & CO

GRAND CRU

Harvest wine cubes from the vine tiles



The harvest of the „Wine Autumn“ 2010 is rumored to have yielded very little fruit due to the weather. The „Game Autumn“ 2010, on the contrary, has produced four economics games on the topic of wine making: There is „Grand Cru“ from eggertspiele, and then „Vinhos“ (Huch & friends with What's your game), „King's Vineyard“ (Mayday Games) und „Toscana“ (Aqua Games). As an earlier game on this topic I can only recall „Vino“ (Goldsieber 1999). „Grand Cru“ has been accorded a complexity level of 3, represented by four foxes' paws. This is true if you allow for the restriction that there can be even more complex games with a marking of five or six paws – which would definitely be the case for the competitor „Vinhos“, which surely qualifies for that category.

The basic mechanism of „Grand Cru“ really is very simple, even a little trite: We buy vine tiles which are available in five varieties/colors, and which yield a production of 1 wine cube in each round, a round equals one year in the game. After harvesting these wine

cubes – or „gleaning“ them as we say in German if we are enologically informed – we can sell those cubes, which earns us the money that will decide the game. Several special abilities and actions contribute diversity and appeal for the game, but are a bit confusing in the first game of Grand Cru.

A beautiful element of the game is the variable number of rounds played and the variable number of actions per round. At the start of the game all players are provided with just one personal game board, which shows a small vineyard for the tiles and a few barrels for storing the wine cubes, otherwise and moneywise we are bankrupt. In consequence, we have to take out a loan for starting capital. The game ends immediately if one player manages to pay back all his loans, which does not necessarily mean that he has won. Another end-of-game condition is that one player goes bankrupt because he cannot take out an additional loan to pay interest on his loans. You cannot accrue a debt of more than 77 Franc in total – yes, in this

game we really still, or may we say, again, use Franc to calculate our accounts. The applicable number range of 100 – as elementary school teachers are wont to say – offers a nice transparency for your calculations, you need not trouble your wine-fogged brain win numbers ending in a lot of naughts, but can concentrate fully on the strategies that you want to use or that you can use. Your first consideration must be the compulsory paying of interest in each round. 3 to 13 francs do at first not sound like a huge amount, but for your micro-loans this sums up to an interest rate of between 17 and 43 % per year. But your yearly income is rather meager in the first rounds. So in those first rounds you often face the tough decision that you need to take out another loan simply to be able to pay your interest, which of courses rises your interest dues in the next year. This being constantly worried about your business existence results in a very tight, peculiar feeling of being driven, you could compare it so some kind of tunnel vision.



The mechanism of buying vines and the so called operation tiles has been given an interesting solution, too: I can either buy a tile for 7 Franc, which is really rather expensive, as you normally need more than one tile – or I try to get them for a special price between 1 and 6 Francs. But this carries the risk that another player is ready to pay a higher price for the tile which I do want to acquire and thus I either do not get the tile or must pay a higher price than initially planned for, after all. At the first moment, this seems to be yet another cumbersome and brooding-prone auctioning mechanism, but in reality it is a very nice innovation: Each offer or each following consecutive rise costs one more action in addition to the one action later maybe needed for the yet not-guaranteed buying action. Maybe it is therefore better to buy for 7 Francs immediately because you can hold

Harald Schatzl

The game mechanisms of Grand Cru impress with inventive elegance, some animating originality and peppery moments, but can leave at the finish a slightly uncomfortable bitter aftertaste as regards to the „feeling“ of the game; the somewhat unbalanced relation of price and components get more balanced with quantities of wine consumed.

on to other actions A round – representing one year in the game – can, depending on the strategy chosen by your opponents, end already after only four actions! Too much fiddling around on the buyer's market can easily cost you harvesting of grapes and selling of wine cubes.

This cute and inventive buying mechanism has its down-sides too: First, in some rounds an automatism without interaction can appear, resulting in each player buying his tiles for 1 Franc each. Or strategists playing "clever" can feel treated in a random way due to a somewhat irrational ways of playing by another player: For instance, Player A wants to buy the red vine tile for 1 Franc, Player B want so seem less greedy and wants to buy the purple vine tile for 3 Francs. Despite knowing this, Player C does not rise the price for the red vine but that of the purple one. Player D is not interested in all this at all; he prefers to sell wine cubes. And the result: Player A acquires a red tile extremely cheap; Player B gets nothing and even loses an action without being compensated or having a chance to avoid this.

The designer has a tolerant attitude towards and an open ear for house rule variants. At the beginning there was a lively discussion on the net whether the game might not be "broken" due to the minimum possible four actions per round, because a player could deliberately try to ruin the strategies of his opponents. This opinion was countered with the argument that the others can avoid this by simply paying more attention to this

player and deny him the possibility to acquire certain operation tiles or if you could acquire them then only for the maximum price of 7 Francs. During this dispute the designer noted that you could easily play with a minimum of five or six actions per round if you deem that to be more feasible. My contribution to this was the suggestion that you could be given one point on the prestige track as compensation for each overbidding when buying or for each being thrown off the auction table, as these points on the prestige track can be used at the end of each rounds to implement certain special actions – comparable to many worker placement games.

The author called this suggestions „very interesting“, but neither he nor I have ever tried it out. I have to offer two more suggestions, which I believe to be useful: For using the tile „plentiful harvest“ you should have to pay 2 Franc instead of only 1 Franc, and in the final scoring the evaluation of the sellable, already ripened wine cubes should yield not only 1 Franc but bring in half of the current sale price, rounded down.

A considerable amount of interaction is possible too, when selling wine cubes: The current sale prices for the five colors are taken from a joint rate table for all kinds of wine and fall by 1 Franc per color for each sale. On the other hand, rising the price is simple and can be done in a separate action of your own. This of course then primarily benefits another player who wants to sell wine of the same color immediately after you have done so and is able to do so. At the same time by doing so he lowers "my" price again. This can result in groups that play "uncooperatively" in that nobody rises prices ever as not to give benefits to other players – and the consequence of this are lower income obtained from sales and a distinctly longer time of play or even somebody being bankrupted by this. A positive flair is created in the game due to the fact that possible action (besides the actions buying there are actions for harvest, rise of prices, selling and special actions based on function tiles) can be combined in any sequence of your choice so that literally no down-time should be generated – similar to the rondell games designed by Mac Gerdts (see WIN January 2011). In Grand Cru however, it is important, too, not only to use your money efficiently but also the actions in each round.

Besides a possible monotony in the last third of the game the game components did make a not too favorable impression: Wine cube is a beautiful creation as far as words are concerned, but the cubes themselves remind me more of the nameless cheap brands that you can buy in tetra-packs in the supermarket than of a good Claret, and, by the way, grapes are rounded, not square. And the rest

of the components has been done in a "just working" way, not very caring. And in addition to this, some of the mechanisms do not really go well with the topic (for instant the ruinous interest rates for the micro loans, the underbidding of buying prices for vines, the harvesting of grapes in spring, the rather arbitrary price rises for sales. Some humor and the courage to stay ugly might have been better – the title could have been "Leprous Bottom Shelf Hooch" and we might have produced the cheapest possible wines for Tetra-Packs for the discount markets to have escaped or precarious monetary situation at the end of the game. And instead of the special edition in a wooden box the publisher could have offered a 5-litre tetra-pack.

More cubes are coming

Finally I have to mention the little expansion published by the Austrian Games Museum; with the tiles "Heuriger" and "Gemischter Satz" Viennese local flair comes into play; consequently the wine cubes should then be renamed to Grüner Veltliner, Riesling, Zweigelt, Blauburgunder and "lila Pause".

wn Harald.Schatzl@spielen.at

The Games Museum has a few expansion from the SPIEL 2010 on stock.

GRAND GRU

Designer: Ulrich Blum

Artist: Alexander Jung

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 35,00 Euro

Publisher: Eggertspiele 2010

www.eggertspiele.de

EVALUATION

Economics game

With friends

buy and use tile

PLAYERS
2-5

AGE
12+

TIME
90+

Comments:

Variable number of rounds and actions, variable time of play
Inventive buying mechanism
Topic slightly off
Partly dissonant mechanisms
Components rather simple and uncared for
No summary of play

Compares to:

Puerto Rico and Cuba for harvesting off tiles; all worker placement games for the „Wine Festival“ special actions

My rating:



UNION VS CONFEDERATES

BLOCKADEBRECHER

in the American Civil War 1861-1865


The War of Secession (also called American Civil War) is the military conflict that raged from 1861 to 1865 between the Southern states in the Confederation that had left – seceded from – the Union of The United States and the Northern states that had remained in the Union.

The industrialization of the Southern States was less advanced than the industrialization of the north. The factories in the northern state of Massachusetts alone produced more goods than all of the factories in the south. The newly founded Confederation was therefore forced to import goods necessary for warfare from abroad and to export cotton for them. To cut off the South from those important sources of supplies and finances the United States, corresponding to the plans of General Winfield Scott, already imposed a blockade of the Southern coast late in Spring of 1861. This was a big challenge for the US Navy, because it had to block a coast stretching over 3.00 miles and 10 big harbors with their few ships.

So much for the historic background on the

game Blockadebrecher aka Blockade Runner. I did discover this game at Essen during Spiel and I was fascinated by the board in the shape of a map and the extra, small wooden box that was filled to the brim with natural stones and handmade game components. The square stone pieces come in four colors: See-through white for cotton, reddish-brown for war materials, black-brown for tobacco and black for goods from the black market. The ship symbol printed on cardboard with their corresponding ship cards and colored markers showing the owner of the ship as well as markers for defense of the harbor and the blockades have been hand-crafted by the designer of the game. If you like hand-crafted components you will like Blockade Runner, for sure.

What is featured in the game „Blockade Runner“?

2-6 players take up the guise of blockade runners that either want to support the Confederates or simply want to make profit from the war. At the start players only own a few ships which they use to export cotton and

tobacco from the Confederate Harbors to the island harbors of the Caribbean. These trips are not without dangers, as you will see, because there is a war going on and in war a certain risk is attached to earning money and

Erwin Kocsan

Unfortunately my first enthusiasm for the game of Blockade Runner did not last long. The game did not deliver what it had promised on first sight. Alternative rules and card updates are available in the expensive luxury version of the game.

making profits.

In the game this permanent danger of ships being destroyed is pictured by round blue markers (blockade markers with a ship symbol) in the harbors.

To which destination must the goods be transported?

Goods from the Black Market and war materials are transported from the overseas harbors (there are 6 of them) to the 20 harbor towns along the coast of the southern states. I have noted in the games with my friends that it is



Bild 1

important to start with a minimum of one ship from an overseas harbor immediately at the start of the game, because there are no blockades in overseas harbors. You can rather safely buy up black market goods for the price of 5.000 \$ and make a profit of 200% when selling them in your destination harbour. But you should not forget to transport at least one kind of war material, because the delivery of war materials has a big influence on the blockades!

The influence on the game happens in the following way: Based on the number of war materials (red pieces) a certain number of harbor cards is drawn which start a blockade in the harbors. The basic rule is: The more war materials are delivered to the harbors by all players the less is the influence on the blockades. In other words, the more goods, the less harbor cards and attacks.

When does an attack on a harbor happen?

The last card that was drawn determines the city which sees a harbor attack. In this harbor the union blockade is enlarged by 2. When the new value is higher or equal to the defense value of the harbor, the harbor is closed. All ships in the harbor now must make a dice test to be able to evade the blockade. When the dice test is successful the ship may make a free move with normal speed.

When a ship starts in a zone blocked by the Union it must also undergo a dice test. You

determine the total value of the ship: Speed + harbor defense value plus eventual bonus cards. When the ship is empty this gives it a bonus of +1. From this value you deduct the value of the Union blockade marker. Then the player roll two dice. When both numbers are higher than the calculated ship value the ship sinks with all hands and goods on board. In each harbor there is a red marker for the harbor defense. This is faced by the blockade marker. For harbor defense you also take into account the speed of the ship and maybe a bonus card. The rules offer an example including a picture.

How is a round played?

At first the Union has its actions: 1. The Blockade, 2. The attack on a harbour, 3. The conquering of inland cities, and 4. The Squadron of the High Seas. This squadron attacks ships out on the open sea. Its owner must pass the dice test to save his ship.

You must take into account the actions of the Union, but also take care of managing the goods: Each year the price of tobacco, of cotton and of the black market goods rises by one level. Players choose 4 actions from several possibilities for actions to reach their goal of the game. These actions are Loading Goods

Unloading of Goods in the harbor

Moving the ship from the harbor into a sea region or within a sea region

Play an action card

Ship auction

Transport goods on track

In a turn players can implement four of the above listed actions. The player who has delivered the majority of war materials will be able to implement one extra action in the next turn.

So, what makes the game interesting or what special points did I note?

First, it is interesting how the turn sequence is determined. In the first move this is randomly assigned, in all other move the freight capacity of the ships decides.

The game comprises one main mechanism which keeps a certain tension in the game. At the start of each round you draw city cards, in this city or cities the blockade value of the Union is enhanced by 1. The last card or cards drawn determine one more cities where an attack happens. I have mentioned already, all ships in those cities/harbors are involved in this attack and must make a dice test when they want to move.

In one of our games it happened to a friend of mine that he lost all ships in the 1st round in this way and did not have money to bid for a new one in the auction. But it was not GAME OVER for him, but the rules state that the player receives 5.000 \$ and the cheapest possible ship and can start afresh.

But we have noted that this situation is not very satisfactory and have ended the game all the same: What did we learn from that:



Bild 2

Bild 3



Start your game by transporting goods with your ships from overseas harbors, where there is no blockade.

The transport of goods out of the coastal towns of the confederates is relatively remunerative and facing a profit of more than a 100% one tends to get a little careless as regards to the safety of the ships. But, do not forget, you could enhance the defense of the harbors, at a cost. There is a rule that adds 5.000 \$ to the defense pool for the harbor with every card that is played, but in most cases a player must also invest his own money, because defense costs are very high!" Another special feature of the game is the price mechanism when delivering goods: When a certain number of goods has been delivered and the box for delivered goods is full, the price that you earn when selling drops by one level. If you remember that the margin of profit for black market goods was 200% at the start of the game this mechanism becomes clear and does exactly mirror the principle of supply and demand.

On the other hand the prices for tobacco, cotton and the black market goods rise by one level. When a certain kind of goods has not been delivered within the last year, the price rises by two levels.

In the 2nd round, that is the 2nd year of the blockade, the Union enters the action with the already mentioned squadron of the high seas. That means that ships out on the open seas cannot operate their transports free of

danger! Each ship must pass a dice test any time it enters, crosses or leaves a sea region with a blockade marker to be able to evade the squadron of the high seas.

The picture shows the board at the start of the game with the goods (black and white markers) in the coastal towns and inland, as well as the components for 6 players and – to the right – the blue blockade markers as well as the red markers for harbor defense.

(see picture 1)

Who does the situation present itself on the board when goods are delivered?

(see picture 2)

Both ships have one war material each on board and must reach a coastal town, starting from an overseas harbour, with one move, if possible. The speed of both ships is "3", therefore both ships can move 3 steps. In the background you can see a blockade marker, therefore the destination harbor is in visual range.

In the next picture you can see the six blue blockade markers distributed onto the towns. The value of the blockade markers is 1 or 2, due to an attack on a harbor in Panama City. This town was conquered and the harbor was closed. No ship can load goods in this town or transport goods on tracks through the town. The blockade cards that have been drawn are displayed on the board to denote which cities are involved in the blockade and which are not. To the right on the board you

can see the brown price track with the box for tobacco that was delivered. The box can only hold 2 goods. The goods are delivered, as already mentioned, to the overseas harbors with the symbol of an anchor.

(see picture 3)

When ships are continually delivering goods, when will additional goods be available?

When all goods have been taken out of their box the box is filled again. That will mean for some ships, that life tends to punish latecomers.

After several rounds of the game I have asked myself the question whether the action cards, which can be played during player action do really enrich the game in any way? In some situations they can be of some assistance, but most of the time the catastrophe comes out of the blue and that it is usually too late to fend it off by playing a card.

My opinion on the game: The author has managed rather well to transport the war topic and the historical events of the period 1861 to 1865 into the game, but the real appeal of the game remained hidden from me and friends. So I probably will leave this game that I did by with a lot of enthusiasm at Essen, in the cupboard.

wn Erwin.Kocsan@spielen.at

BLOCKADEBRECHER

Designer: Alex und Patrick Stevens

Artist: Patrick Stevens

Title ger.: Blockade Runner

Price: ca. 35,00 Euro

Publisher: Numbskull Games 2010

www.numbskullgames.com

EVALUATION

Transport and trade game
With friends
Assess risks, buy transport, sell

PLAYERS
2-6

AGE
12+

TIME
90+

Comments:

Nice handcrafted components
Cooperations could be played
Background story nicely transferred to the game

Compares to:

All games where decisions are taken by roll of a die

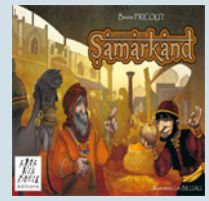
My rating:



CARPETS, JEWELS, SPICES

LE MARCHÉ DU SAMARKAND

Dutch auction in the Orient



Samarkand, legendary trading post and crossroad of the old oriental trading routs, city of palaces and bazaars and setting for already many more games. This game takes us to the Bazaar of Samarkand, we want to sell our goods for the best possible price, and in the end not only our earnings are scored but what we have bought will also be evaluated. Because the things we bought are intended as a gift for our wives and to avoid squabbling in the Harem you must pay attention to having enough for all to bring home! To be able to transport everything back in comfort you should acquire enough camels!

Dagmar de Cassan

My compliments to the designer! He has managed to capture the fraught atmosphere of an oriental souk with very simple means!

Each player is randomly assigned all goods of one category, so one player sells only spices, the other only carpets, and so on; in a three-player game a fourth good is added and sold by the bank – so there are always at least four goods in play in any game. You receive a starting capital of 15 dirham and you place it behind your screen, nobody needs to know how much money you have. The so important camels are shuffled and stacked face down, then the top camel is turned up. The number on the card indicates the number of goods this camel can carry. Finally, one player is given the role of Master of the Souk, he directs the auction and the role goes in clockwise direction to the next player at the start of a round.

Now we can start. Each player chooses one of his card and places it face-down on the table. When all players have made their choice the cards are revealed and the auction begins. The auctions are the core of the game and are enacted as a Dutch auction starting with the highest price and then lowering the price continuously. Why Dutch? Because, this is the method used to sell the flowers on the flower Market in Aalsmeer. The Master starts counting at 10. The price is valid for all goods on show and also for the current camel. He counts down and if you want to buy a camel or a ware at the price just named you call "stop" and point to the ware of your choice. You pay the price to the seller and lay out the card open-faced in front of yourself on the table. The Master can take part in the sale and call stop himself.

When several players call a halt to the auction

simultaneously, all players involved point to the card of their choice. When all want different cards, each pays the price to the respective seller and takes the card. If more than one player wants the same card a so called "trade dispute" happens. When the Master is involved, he receives the card due to the respect for his office, pays the price and the auction continues. If the trade dispute does not involve the Master, the disputed card is set aside and all involved in the dispute pay half of the price, rounded up, to the seller, so for 5 dirham he would receive 3 dirham, but from each prospective buyer. When the disputed ware is a camel, this is not set aside but reshuffled into the stack. Camels are paid for to the bank and are placed behind your screen. When a camel is bought a new one is turned up if there are wares left and the price is not down to 0, or at the start of the next round.

A player can make multiple buys in a round, but not his own goods. If you do not have enough money to pay for a ware, you pay a penalty of 1 dirham to the bank for needlessly interrupting the auction. When the price is down to 0, goods that have not been sold in this auction go out of the game.

After 10 rounds the game is scored:

First, the money is counted. If you have the most money you score 5 points, the next-richest player scores 3 points and the third-richest player still scores 1 point. In case of tie all players involved in the tie score. Then the transport capacity is checked. All players reveal their camels and check the number of cards they hold against the sum of numbers on the camel cards. Any surplus goods that cannot be transported are discarded. But take care! You pay a penalty of 2 dirhams for each unused place when you have free capacities on your camel. Then each player checks his cards for the fewest goods of a kind and sums the points on the cards of this ware; in case of a tie in the number of cards he can choose which good to score. Finally, you score points for all cards of the same value (not color!) if you have more than one: You score 1 point for 2 cards, 2 for 3, 4 for 4, 8 for 6 and 16 for 6 or more.

This brings me to the only thing I have to criticize, the scoring is not explained very clearly in the rules, but you can manage to work it out. And, of course, you win if you have the most points.

A very well-done game with an interesting

mix of mechanism, despite the rather simple rules it is not really a family game, because you must keep an eye on a lot of things: Have enough but not too much transport capacity, because a surplus in transport capacity costs you money twice, first for the camel and then the penalty for too much space – and then you should buy few but expensive goods to score but always at least two goods to score for that again – so think carefully about when to call a halt – but then, do not dally because the Master counts in normal speed and waits for no one!

win Dagmar.de.Cassan@spielen.at



LE MARCHÉ DU SAMARKAND

Designer: Alain Fricout

Artist: Loic Biliau

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 20,00 Euro

Publisher: Krok Nik Douil 2010

www.kroknikdouil.fr

EVALUTION

Auction game
With friends
auction, transport with camels

PLAYERS
3-5

AGE
8+

TIME
30+

Comments:

Beautiful components
Scoring rules not well formulated
Components are language-independent
German Rules on the website

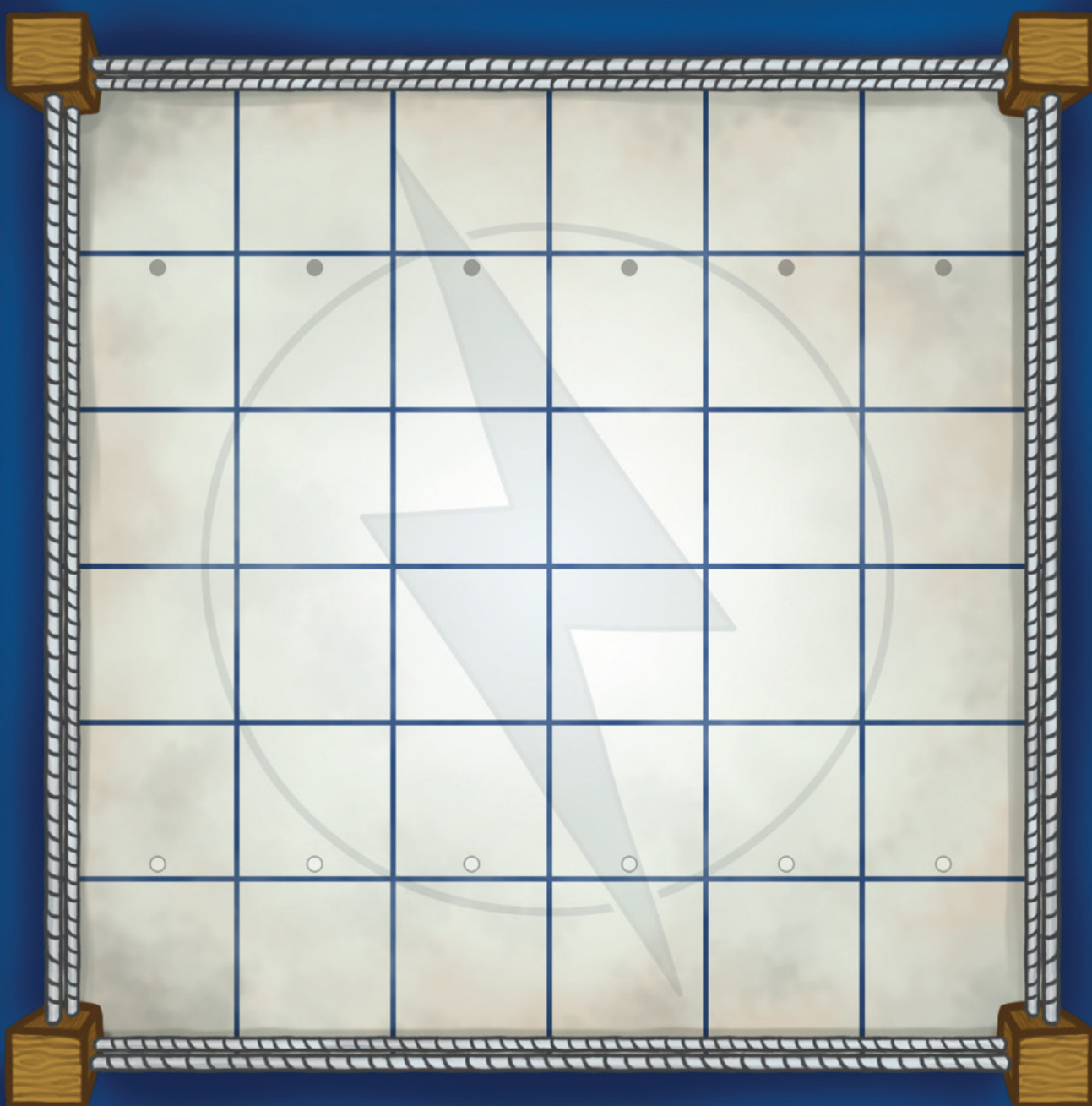
Compares to:

Die Kaufleute von Amsterdam or Kuhhandel Master for the auction method

My rating:



CLINCH



The Game in **WIN** by Designer **Reiner Knizia** and artist **Andreas Resch**

CLINCH

Produced in cooperation with the Austrian Games Museum

An enthralling tactical game for 2 players, ages 12 and up

Game components:

6 white and 6 black pieces (Chess pieces or Halma pieces)
12 white and 12 black markers (Checkers pieces or chips)
1 game board (enclosed sheet)

Idea:

To get rid of 12 pieces cannot be too hard. Without an opponent it would be very easy, but he has the same ideas and conflict is the result. Botheration! Some pieces have come back again. So move the right piece and show your opponent how to do it. Now he has some of his pieces back and the clinch continues! Have Fun!

Set-up:

One player takes the white movers and markers, the other the black ones. You determine a starting player, both players keep all markers at the start of the game, the pieces are placed on the second row on each player's side of the board. Now the clinch begins.

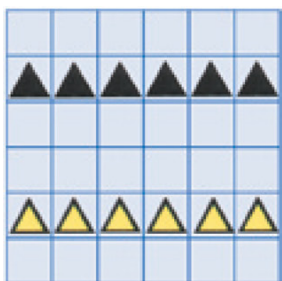
Game play:

Both players alternate in making a move. In your turn you first move one of your pieces either horizontally or vertically, not diagonally, over more than one square as long as you do not enter or jump over a square with another piece on it. You must make a move and cannot pass. After moving a piece you mark all squares it has entered with a marker of your color, including the square where the move started. The square where the move ends remains free.

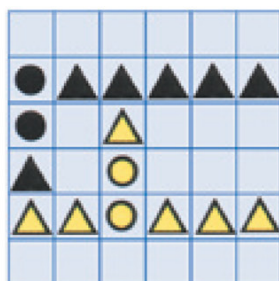
The markers entered on the board during the game do not influence the move of the pieces. If you cross a square that already has one of your markers you leave it there, no second one is added. If you cross a marker of your opponent you return it to him and replace it with one of your own. If there is a marker on the target square of a move it is returned in any case, even if it is one of your own. The pieces therefore always sit on free squares, all other squares are free or taken by a marker.

Aim of the game:

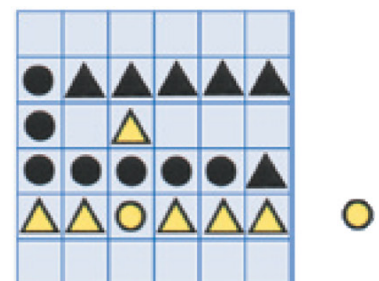
The game ends immediately when a player has placed all 12 of his markers on the board. He wins the game and scores the number of pieces his opponent has left.



Pic. 1 – Starting position



Pic. 2 – before the move



after the move - 1 piece returned

AGENT DOPPELNULL

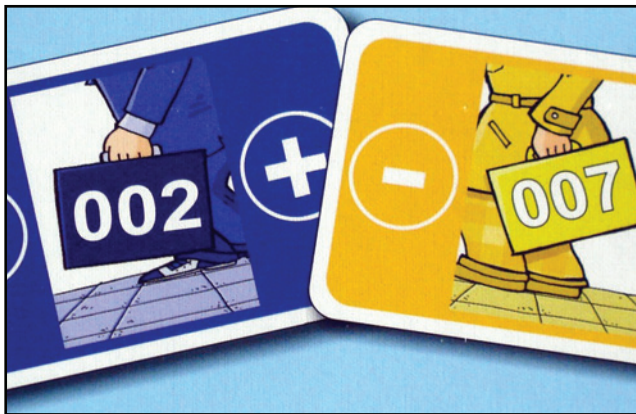
2 DOUBLE AGENTS IN DUEL



Agents on a mission, both in the same region, this can only result in a duel. By combining and remembering the agents of the opposing team must be unmasked. One player receives 10 blue double-naught agents, they are numbered from 000 to 009, and also 10 yellow cards with the same numbering. The other player receives yellow agents

and blue cards, respectively.

Each player sets up his agents in a row, the numbers facing the owner. Then he takes three agents out of the row of the opponent and sets them aside without looking at their numbers. Now each player shuffles his cards and stacks them face down. The first seven cards are then turned up and placed in front of



the opposing agents. The rest of the cards you take up into your hand. Each player now places his agents on the cards. When his number is higher than the number on the card he is placed on the plus marker, when his number is lower he goes onto the minus marker. If his number is the same as that on the card this agent has been unmasked and is laid down flat on the card. The player of the yellow agents starts; in his turn you play one of your cards onto any opposing agent and take up the card already there. Your opponent places the agent on the new card. When an agent has been unmasked you have another turn. You win if you manage to unmask all opposing agents.

Using a topic that is fascinating for children and using simple basic mechanisms you can train basic logic along the lines of "the agents is on the minus marker of card 5, so card 3 might work to unmask this agent" – fun to play and good training!

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2

AGE
7+

TIME
45+

Designer: Wolfgang Dirscherl

Artist: Thies Schwarz

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 15,00 Euro

Publisher: IQ-Spiele 2011

www.iq-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Educational game on planning
For children
position agent, make deductions

Comments:

Good combination of mechanisms
Nice topic for children
Simple rules
Trains concentration, logic and memory

Compares to:

Stratego for the set-up of the agents, otherwise first game of its kind



ANIMAL UPON ANIMAL

BALANCING BRIDGE

5+

If you are the one who stacks the animals best on the Hanging Bridge and are the first to fill all your orders, you win the game. The game box is separated into four valleys, a Hanging Bridge is crossing them. Along each side of the box animals are lined up, players choose where to put which animals, and finally, you receive three secret orders.

You roll the die: For the symbol of one of the valleys you take an animal from this side of the box and place it either directly onto the bridge or on an animal already on the bridge. For the question mark you can choose an animal. If you roll the bridge symbol you relocate an animal on the bridge. If only the crocodile is on the bridge you may place an animal

on the bridge. A new animal for the bridge must always touch another animal already on the bridge. You may only use one hand for stacking. When three animals shown on one of your order cards touch each other on the bridge, this order has been filled and is discarded. This can also happen in another player's turn. If you topple the bridge you must take another order, but can still fill an order if the necessary animals are still on the bridge. The animals that tumbled down remain in the valleys. From now on you can take an animal from the valley when you roll the symbol. If you fill your last order, you win.

Balancing Bridge is a very lovely and well-made extension for the series of Animal upon animal. Klaus Miltenberger manages to vary the basic topic and mechanism excellently, design and components provide the rest for a marvelous game that is fun to play again and again.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-4

AGE
5+

TIME
20+

Designer: Klaus Miltenberger

Artist: Michael Bayer

Title ger.: Tier auf Tier

Price: ca. 25,00 Euro

Publisher: Haba 2010

www.haba.de

EVALUATION

Stacking game
For children
Stack animals

Comments:

Continues the Animal upon Animal series - Very beautiful design and components - Wooden animals
Box used as board

Compares to:

All other games in the Animal upon Animal series



ANTIGUA

ISLANDS IN THE WIND

9+

Once again ships are roaming the Caribbean on the search for treasures; they all want to hire the best crew to guide the ships among the islands and to collect treasures.

Ocean cards are laid out in a grid, the box is set next to a corner to function as a counting aid; each player has a ship, the office cards are laid out and assigned a pi-

rate randomly. Each player now receives one crew card in the current color of the Mate office, three crew cards are turned up. The ships start at the border of the grid, the body points to their owner. In your turn you choose two different offices or twice the same and use them: Mate – he hires crew, you take a card from the stack or from the display;



Helmsman – he steers the ship onto an adjacent ocean card, one step more per helmsman in the crew; Navigator – he finds a treasure if he is in the crew and the card under the ship turns up an island, then he goes out of the game; Gunner – he attacks other ships on the same ocean card; Officer – he re-assigns offices, must be in the crew for that, is discarded and you swap two pirates in front of the office cards. When the game box comes back to the start – it moves one step for every attack – or when after a final game phase only two ocean cards show water the game is won by the player with most treasures.

Antigua is a pretty game with a well-known topic and many interesting mechanisms, especially the color assignment of the offices. It is also rather unpredictable and therefore driven by chance. Do have a red navigator, my predecessor changes offices and red is suddenly mate, plan underwater, goodbye treasure!

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-4

AGE
9+

TIME
45+

Designer: Ulrich Blum

Artist: Alexander Jung

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 9,00 Euro

Publisher: Adlung Spiele 2010

www.adlung-spiele.de

EVALUTION

Card game
For families
Use cards for best crew

Comments:

Well-known topic
Minimalistic package
Attractive, interesting mechanisms
Unfortunately rather unpredictable

Compares to:

All games on pirate treasures



ARLECCHINO

THREE YELLOW TRIANGLES – MOVE THREE TIMES!

6+

The inventor of Blokus presets a new game idea in his own new company: A placement game featuring squares that are split into four triangles. Some of the squares feature four colors, some three, some two and some only one. One piece is not split into triangles but into squares, two black and two white. There is a total of four colors present in ir-

regular numbers on the pieces. Each player chooses a color and tries to keep as many pieces showing his color on the board to the end of the game. All pieces are randomly placed into the grid. As a first move you take the black+white piece off the board. In your turn you must move a minimum of one piece showing a segment of



your own color. You can make as many moves as there are segments of your color on the piece, but at least one. Possible moves are to move to a horizontally or vertically adjacent square or to jump over a horizontally or vertically adjacent piece onto a free square behind it. The piece that you jumped over is taken off the board. Those two moves can be combined in any way but: You must remove at least one piece in your turn, if you cannot do so you must pass your turn. You cannot move that your piece comes back to the square it started from, unless the monochromatic piece makes four moves. If nobody can move anymore the game ends and the winner is the player with most segments of his color left on the board. Bernard Tavitian seems to be a guarantee for exceptional, easy-looking games with incredibly simple rules that turn out to be challenging and interesting when played. This is another one of these games.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-4

AGE
6+

TIME
20+

Designer: Bernard Tavitian

Artist: not stated

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 23,00 Euro

Publisher: Lud Editions/Asmodee 10

www.asmodee.de

EVALUTION

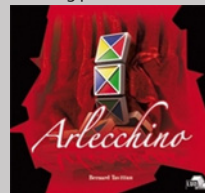
Placement game
For families
Move and remove pieces

Comments:

Simple rules
Many different possibilities
Beautiful design
Multilingual rules

Compares to:

Rolit for multi-colored, abstract placement games with jumping over and removing pieces



BANANA BALANCE

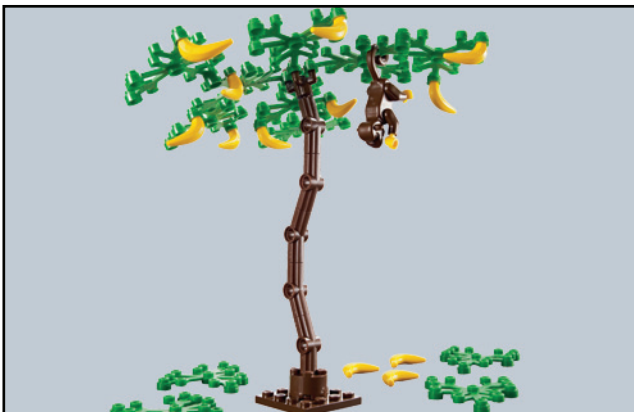
**HARVESTING BANANAS,
NOT FELLING TREES!**

6↑

We are in the jungle, the banana plants have changed into palm trees, but that is not our problem, which is the harvesting of the bananas. This is a tree in a game and because he wants to play too, he is sprouting additional leaves and bananas while we try to harvest the bananas. The little monkey is assisting us in the harvest.

At first we assemble the tree: at the beginning he features four leaves in its crown and one banana on each of the leaves. Then the dice is given two brown, one yellow, one green and two yellow + green sides.

In your turn you roll the die: For a brown result to place the monkey on a leaf with a banana and then take all bananas off this leaf.



When there is no banana on the tree you hand the monkey to another player and receive one of his bananas. For yellow you place a banana on the tree, if all bananas are already on, you do the monkey move. For green you put a leaf on the tree, when all are already on you do the monkey move. And for the two-colored side you put a banana and a monkey on the tree.

In your turn you may hold the palm tree, turn it or lift it. When you have made your action you must let go of the palm tree. When the monkey falls off the tree you give him a banana for the stock and say I'm sorry. When the tree remains upright, your move ends. When the palm topples over, the game ends and you give all bananas to the monkey. When all bananas are harvested or the tree topples, the player with most bananas wins. A fun game and not as easy as it looks, but lots of fun demanding an eye for balance and offers room for your own ideas on how to play it.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-4

AGE
6+

TIME
10+

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 15,00 Euro

Publisher: Lego 2011

www.lego.com/legogames

EVALUATION

Collecting and dexterity game

For families

Roll die, attach banana

Comments:

Standard topic - Fantastically implemented with Lego pieces
Very simple rules
Rules offer three versions
Good for children and families as well

Compares to:

Other Lego games and all dexterity games.



BOGGLE KARTENSPIEL

CARD ON CARD FOR WORD FROM WORD

8↑

Boggle is a well-known game, you have a tumble of letters and must form words with these letters. In this game this mechanism is used for a card game. The game comprises 55 letter cards, each has a different letter on both sides; the corners of the cards show both letters. The game is started with a correct four-letter word, which is

laid out by one player with cards from the stock. The remaining cards are dealt evenly to the players.

On a signal all begin to play at the same time and always place one letter card from their hand on one of the cards on the table so that a new word is formed. You call out the new word; the other players can veto your word. Basically,

each word is correct in each of its grammatically valid form, as listed in the Duden. Names that are listed in the Duden, are valid, too, word from other languages or abbreviations on the contrary are not allowed. The same word can be used more than once in the game, but you cannot place the same letters onto each other. Empty cards are jokers, you name the letter it is supposed to replace, this is valid until the joker is covered with a card. When you can play your last card you win the game. If it is not possible to form a correct word earlier in the game the player with the fewest cards still in his hand wins the game.

In this card version you do not use a mixture of letters, the letters offered are reduced to a word with four letters, the placing of the cards on top of each other reminds me of the sister game Topwords – but the card game is a cute version for all fans of word games, good for travelling and a good vocabulary training.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-4

AGE
8+

TIME
15+

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 6,00 Euro

Publisher: Hasbro 2010

www.hasbro.de

EVALUATION

Word placement game

For families

Form words with cards

Comments:

Standard mechanism
Starting set-up with a word, not a letter tumble
Good for travelling
Good vocabulary training

Compares to:

Boggle, Scrabble and especially Topwords



BUZZ IT!

**ANIMALS OFTEN RUN OVER,
STARTING WITH Z**



Buzz it, a new game in the series of Games in a Sack. Each card in the game suggests two different topics, one is a so called „normal“ one, the other is a so called „wicked“ one. The wicked ones can be funny, embarrassing or simply eccentric, the normal ones are rather knowledge-based or fit for daily life. For each player in the game you draw three cards

from the stack, shuffled and set out for use. One player is named Buzz-Master of the round. He draws the top card from the prepared stack and decides on one topic depending on his mood or the mixture of the group. He reads out the chosen topic and presses the buzzer to start the round. His left neighbor must give a correct answer, if he can



do so the Buzz-Master presses the buzzer button and game passes to the next player. If you do answer in time you trigger the buzzer and you receive the card. When all prepared cards have been played the player with the fewest cards wins the game.

The Buzz-Master decides whether an answer is correct or not, he can also announce limitations for the answer, for instance „no answers that relate to TV shows“ or demand that answers start with a certain letter. „Normal“ topics on the card could be „What would you be first if you win at Lotto“ or „Good intentions for the New Year“, wicked ones could be „What you catch when on holiday“ or „locations unfit for a bout of dysentery.“

This is real fun, works well in groups that know each other and in randomly assembled groups. The Buzz-Master has a lot of responsibility for the game – when in doubt be generous and accept creative over correct.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
3-12

AGE
12+

TIME
45+

Designer: Knizia, Mayer, Scharnitzky

Artist: not stated

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 20,00 Euro

Publisher: Asmodee 2010

www.asmodee.de

EVALUTION

Game of knowledge for parties
With friends

Answer questions, solve tasks

Comments:

Series „Game in a Sack“
Funny version of association and quiz mechanisms - A normal and a wicked question on each card

Compares to:

Other quiz and party games with a time limit for the answer or with a buzzer



CACHINAS

**THE MOST BEAUTIFUL
MARBLE GAMES!**



As a joint project of Grubbe Media and the SOS Kinderdörfern a series of games is published under the label of Edition SOS –Kinderdörfer Spiele aus aller Welt. All boxes in the series offer game classics in a uniform presentation, all of these games are played all over the world, but can be assigned – for one reason or another – to one specific coun-

try. Marble games – where are they not played by children? In this edition within the series the marble games are assigned to Bolivia.

In earlier times the throwing games were played with beans or stones, later came marbles made from burnt loam and today mostly glass marbles are used. These glass marbles were



invented in the middle of the 19th century and were produced in Thuringia for the first time. The instruction booklet offers lot of different versions. The material is included in the shape of one big and 20 small glass marbles. Also included is the marble wall and rules for it. All four sides have been given a different design and can be used alone or in combinations. The rules also cite information on curia for marbles, so on a marble museum, and the rules also give tips how to throw marbles well.

As in all other games of the series – which finally will feature 20 different titles – you encounter old familiar and well-loved games in new and old versions, learn a lot of their history and some curious facts about the world of the colored glass marbles, which have been around for all of us all our lives. As in all games in the series in Cachinas, too, the rules of the game have been kept as near as possible to the original local version of the game.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
1+

AGE
4+

TIME
10+

Designer: Klassiker

Artist: agenten.und.freunde

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 15,00 Euro

Publisher: Grubbe Media 2010

www.gruppemedia.de

EVALUTION

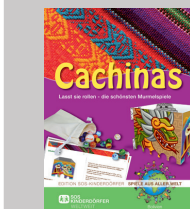
Marble games
For children
Roll or throw marbles

Comments:

Edition SOS –Kinderdörfer Spiele aus aller Welt - Very beautiful edition
Classic game mechanism in many versions

Compares to:

All games in the series for the basic goal, otherwise all marble games



CAT & CHOCOLATE

CHOCOLATE AND A CAT AGAINST DROWNING

You are a secret member in one of two teams and find yourself in a spooky old mansion that needs to be explored and where atrocious things happen. This mansion must be explored and you must survive the most incredible incidents, but the others have seen a few things, too, and do not accept half-hearted tries to escape or uncreative solutions.

Each player is randomly assigned three items. In your turn you draw an event card, maybe a wall tumbles or a poisonous spider bites. Then you use 1-3 items from your hand to protect yourself against this event. The number of items you can use is set by the number shown on the backside of the next event card on the stack. You must use what



you have in hand and need to explain fast and convincingly, why a lipstick protects you from tumbling down the stairs, because the other players vote if you managed to save yourself. If you win the vote you receive the card as a bonus points. If you take too long to come up with a solution or in between you automatically receive a negative vote and no cards. Items that you used are discarded and you draw new cards. At the end of the game the teams are revealed and add their bonus cards depending on the number of players, the better team wins.

This is a fantastic and very bizarre game, I do not really know why you must carry a mannequin to explore a spooky mansion, but she might help when the drawing room furniture attacks, and if not, then maybe against an attack of homesickness in the attic! Cat & Chocolate is definitely not a game for every group but fun with the right people.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
3-6

AGE
8+

TIME
20+

Designer: Ryo Kawakami

Artist: Kabayama, Mutsuki

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 12,00 Euro

Publisher: Qvinta Essentia 2010

<http://japonbrand.gamers-jp.com>

EVALUATION

Party game with cards
With friends
Offer creative solution, vote

Comments:

Very cute idea
Simple rules
Cards in English and Japanese
Not easy to find

Compares to:

First game of this kind



CORNUCOPIA

PLENTY OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

8+

Players are faced with a plethora of fruit and vegetables and need to fill baskets with it. One basket will only accept five pieces of the same kind, the other four baskets either accept five pieces of kind or five different pieces. You form a grid from five basket cards laid out horizontally and 6 stacks of bidding cards vertically and place a starting "seed-

ing" according to the rules into the grid. In your turn you turn a bidding card by 90 degrees and thus make your bid by denoting with the cards how many cards you will draw from the stack to complete a basket. The other players have 10 seconds to place 1-3 blue chips on their indicator for yes or no. Then you turn up one card after the other up to

the amount you did bid and place each card into a row to make a basket of identical or all different pieces. When a basket is filled your move ends, even if you could draw more cards. If you did fill a basket you receive the bidding card and the coins depicted on it, the other players take blue chips equal of the amount that they did bid if they were successful. If you only draw cards that you cannot place or to have not filled a basket at the end of your turn costs you chips. At the end of the game you score for chips and card combinations of rows or groups made up from the bidding cards.

This is a nice little quick game with some tactical finesses, to take 6 cards earns you few coins but surely a full basket. 4 is the safe middle, or rather take more and not lose a coin? Most of the fun is in bidding on the other players. At the moment the game is only available in English.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-4

AGE
8+

TIME
60+

Designer: C. Rossi, L. Tarabini

Artist: Soued, Binkele, Greyson

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 26,00 Euro

Publisher: Gryphon / Fred 2010

www.freddistribution.com

EVALUATION

Game of placement and auction
For families
Bid for cards, fill baskets

Comments:

Very attractive bidding mechanism
Some tactics possible - At the moment only available in English
Betting keeps all players involved all the time

Compares to:

Cardcassonne and other games to secure or complete rows of cards



DAS KROKODIL-SPIEL

**DUEL BETWEEN CROCODILE
AND BOATMAN**



In the middle of the Eighties Noris-Verlag published a series of exceedingly beautiful family games, all invented by the brothers Johann and Michael Rüttinger. The series was headed by the famous Magician's Trilogy and Das Krokodil-Spiel was part of this series. Noris has re-published these gems in 2010 and they still pass the test of time.

Das Krokodil-Spiel is a game for two players, boat versus crocodile, both players start the duel in the middle of the river. There are four lanes in the river. The two crocodiles are placed on the two middle lanes, the boat one of the middle lanes. The boat player starts the game. He holds the four cards depicting the lane numbers and chooses a



card secretly for the lane where he wants to move and places the card below the other cards. Then he places his boat and can bluff, he need not place the boat into the lane where he wants to move and has chosen the card for. Then the crocodile player places his crocodiles into two lanes of his choice. Then the bottom card is revealed: When the boatman has chosen a row that is not blocked by a crocodile he moves his boat one step forward towards the crocodile base line. If the boat is blocked by a crocodile the crocodiles advance one step and the boat must retreat one step. By the way, the boatman looks at the card first and only needs to display the card if he is not blocked. If you manage to reach the opposing base line you win the game.

After more than 20 years Das Krokodil-Spiel still has its appeal not least because of the pretty nostalgic design, the bluff mechanism still works very well and is fun, too.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2

AGE
8+

TIME
20+

Designer: M. and J. Rüttinger

Artist: not stated

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 15,00 Euro

Publisher: Noris 2010

www.noris-spiele.de

EVALUTION

Placement game
For families
Move boat, close line

Comments:

New edition in the Premium line
Original design
First edition 1987
Good bluffing mechanism

Compares to:

All games for two with the aim to reach the opposite base line



DER FORMEN-KOBOLD

RECOGNIZE SHAPES FROM DAILY LIFE



Support and boost by playing games is the motto of the series of educational games under the label „spielend Neues lernen“, personal and factual basic abilities are meant to be trained, the contents are based on current curricula.

To be able to recognize geometrical shapes is one of the basic abilities for spatial perception and

mathematical understanding. Der Formen-Kobold offers different ways to play based on the story that Flix the Imp has been wielding magic and has made everything not only disappear but splitting in two by doing so.

In the introductory game you only use the shape parts, shuffle them and try together to put them together again.



In the game **Formen-Finder** complete items are laid out and the shape cards are stacked with contours showing. Flix stands in front of one of the stacks, From this stack you take the top card and look for the item with these contours. If you manage to find it, you may take the card and the item and place Flix in front of another stack.

Memo-Kobold-Wettlauf: The shape cards and Flix are laid out in a square grid, three shapes are put together. Then in turn players turn up cards, if the contours fit one of the complete shapes prepared you place this shape onto the card and add a new shape to the display. When no prepared shape fits the card, Flix moves one step. When all cards are covered with a shape before the imp returns to his card all players have won together.

With simple mechanisms the child trains assigning, spatial thinking and abstraction, a school satchel can be represented by a simple rectangle.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
1-4

AGE
6-3

TIME
15+

Designer: Marco Teubner

Artist: Lindley Karin

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 12,00 Euro

Publisher: Ravensburger 2011

www.ravensburger.de

EVALUTION

Learning game
For children
Recognize and complete shapes

Comments:

Series: spielend Neues Lernen
Topic nicely implemented
Mechanism fits the topic well
Trains abstract thinking
Two ways to play

Compares to:

Colorama and other games featuring shapes



DIE KLEINEN ZAUBERLEHRLINGE

DO NOT STUMBLE WHILE CARRYING THE POTION!

5↑

The little apprentices of the Magician brew magic potions using ingredients and fire in this fantastically beautiful game. Each player has his apprentice in his corner of the board, complete with a magic wand and one ingredient of each kind. In your turn you place your magician on your starting spot and place one ingredient into the

bowl. Then you use the wand to push the apprentice towards the cauldron of this color. If the apprentice reaches the magic spot in front of the cauldron the apprentice throws the ingredient into the bowl on his own. If you lose the ingredient on the way or if you do not hit the cauldron, the move ends. You should try to memorize where your appren-



tice stumbled to avoid this spot in your next try.

If you have placed all ingredients into the cauldron you may take the fire ball, bring it to the fire place and try to light the fire. If someone has placed all ingredients you may load two ingredients into your bowl while the fire is not lit. To light the fire you put the fire ball into your bowl and move the apprentice to the fireplace. At the fireplace the apprentice throws the fire ball onto the fire. If the fire now springs up you have won the game.

A magical game with all magic due to the equipment and the effects, magnetic stumbling traps on the board, a magic and magnetic tilt effect for the bowls of the apprentices and a fire springing up due to the weight of the glass marble – simply fabulous! The mechanism in this case is really not important, it only comprises memorizing the traps and pushing the apprentice! The effects are the game!

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-4

AGE
5+

TIME
25+

Designer: T. Daum, V. Leitner

Artist: Rolf Vogt

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 40,00 Euro

Publisher: Drei Magier/Schmidt 10

www.schmidtspiele.de

EVALUATION

A game of memory and dexterity
For children

Carry ingredients to the cauldron

Comments:

Very beautiful components and design - Fascinating mechanism for children
Für Kinder faszinierender Mechanismus - Good mixture of memo and dexterity game

Compares to:

First game using this combination of mechanisms



DIE SÄULEN DER ERDE

**THE CARD GAME
DAS KARTENSPIEL**

10↑

A trick-taking card game on the bestselling book and game: Each player tries to win his own craftsmen, corresponding raw materials and other positive cards. These raw materials can be changed into victory points by your own craftsmen. The different cards have values, craftsmen are assigned colors which are allocated to players,

raw materials and special cards are neutral. When the cards have been dealt, you try to acquire missing cards by winning tricks. Each hand is lead by the player holding Lady Aliena, but he need not lead with her. Each player plays one card. In general, the highest card takes the trick. When this card is a craftsmen card the trick is given to the

player with this color, regardless of who made the trick. When the highest card is a neutral card or an advantage card, the player who made the trick gets the trick. If there are several cards of the same value the card played last is the highest card. When the king takes the trick, the trick is set aside. At the end of the hand you set aside cards in other colors than your own, black cards bring you the corresponding resources and then you can use each of your own craftsmen in the tricks to change raw materials from the tricks into victory points, each craftsmen himself is worth a point, too. Neutral cards in your tricks do cost you points. If you did not make a trick you receive the king's trick, advantage cards remain with the players. After 9 or ten rounds the player with the highest score wins.

This game is a good mixture of luck with cards and planning, you can do a lot with craftsmen not your own and create a few surprises.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
3-4

AGE
10+

TIME
30+

Designer: Michael Rieneck

Artist: Michael Menzel

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 8,00 Euro

Publisher: Kosmos 2010

www.kosmos.de

EVALUATION

Trick taking game
For families
take tricks, use cards from tricks

Comments:

Only topic from the board game
Mechanism is a simple trick-taking one - Depends on the chance factor of card distribution

Compares to:

First game with this combination of mechanisms, basically all trick-taking games



FREEZE

SCHOOL? TEACHER OR DIRECTOR? 1 OR 2?



The situation is set in an improv theatre: you play several short scenes until someone has scored 16 points. Each player starts with a score of 1 point. Four of the players are actors, the others are all spectators. 2 sets of ranking cards 1-4 are shuffled, sorted and dealt according to exact rules, after this each actor has a secret rank, one ranking card is

visible. A situation card is drawn and the die determines the situation that actually will be enacted. Each actor decides for himself how he could play the rank they were given in the situation they have to present. If you have rank 1 in a school you could portrait the director. The actors play out the situation over 45 seconds and the spectators try to find out



who has which rank and where the scene takes place. Then all guess at the situation, a correct tip scores 2 points. If an actor gives away rank or situation all others score one point without guessing. Then the die is rolled to determine the rank that must be guessed. All players including the actors point to the person whom they believe to have this rank. If you hold this rank you must point to yourself. Depending on the situation there are exact rules who must point which hand and whom or where. Then the points are allocated according the specific rules. For the next scene three actors leave, three spectators become actors.

I am tempted to say, a typical Andrea Meyer game! Exciting basic idea, witty implementation, some like it, some hate it, but is is always a challenge and if you manage to get "into" the game it is lots of fun, and interesting, too!

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
5-10

AGE
10+

TIME
var

Designer: H.-P. Stoll, A. Meyer

Artist: F. Bertrand, S. Wagner

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 30,00 Euro

Publisher: Bewitched Spiele 2010

www.bewitsched-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Game of acting / improvisation

With friends

Play a role, guess at position

Comments:

Good basic concept

Good for larger groups

Not a game for everybody

If you manage to get into the game it is hilarious

Compares to:

First game of this kind



HIT THE HAT

GRAB THE RIGHT HAT!

4+

Colorful hats in different shapes and with different patterns and borders must be found. There are hats in three shapes, there are some shaped like a floppy beach hat, some formed like baseball caps and some like a top hat. Possible patterns are dots, flowers, stripes, hearts, colored dots or spots similar to a turtle carapace. And to top this off, the hats have

different borders, either green or pink. Could give you same ideas for a carnival party! Now you roll three dice, one determines the kind of hat, the second the pattern of the hat and the third one determines the color of the border. There is always only one hat that fits all criteria. If you are the first to spot the correct hat, you grab it! Grabbing means you



hit it with the suction cup at the end of the plastic stick – if possible with only enough force to pick up the hat and not breaking the stick. If you have managed to grab the correct hat you receive a chip for a reward. If you are the first to collect 6 chips you win the game.

For younger children you can build up the game in steps and start with one or two dice only, then there are several hats fitting the criteria.

For a family game parents can search for all three criteria and children for only two of them, they can choose which ones or can determine the criteria before the game, maybe border color and shape.

In any version this is a very nice very simple variation of a well-known mechanism. Children love the sucking-cup mechanism and the stick but are sometimes too enthusiastic in hitting a hat with it, so that it will not stick.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-4

AGE
4+

TIME
15+

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 20,00 Euro

Publisher: Piatnik 2010

www.piatnik.com

EVALUATION

Reaction game

For children

Roll combination, find hat

Comments:

Nice components

Sticks are not very stable

Version of a well-known mechanism

Compares to:

Monstopia and other games on finding combinations



IM BANN DER MUMIE

DIG UP TREASURES, FIGHT THE MUMMY

16+

Lost in the valley of the dead Pharaoh you hunt for treasures of the one cursed for eternity. Never ever someone has escaped the curse of the deadly mummy. Unmentionably dreads lurk hidden in the sand. Already you can feel the bane of the mummy! One player embodies the mummy and the others try to gather as many treasures from

the mummy as they can.

Players embodying treasure hunters can break the curse of the mummy when they manage to dig up the sarcophagus, the mummy player wins if he can hinder them to do that. When the players win together, among them the winner is who has the highest reward from the collected treasures. The Terror



of the Mummy rises with every confrontation she wins, but the mummy herself gets weaker with every excavation, because excavation decreases her Evil Powers. So the players must cooperate to win early fights against the strong mummy and so weaken her. The rounds of the game comprise the 4 phases of preparation, planning + playing action cards, implementation with use of action cards and market phase with equipment and assisting forces. The mummy always follows a different set of rules to that of the treasure hunters. A game fully incorporated into the tradition of the „Black“ series, you have to like this topic and the illustrations – if you do then you will have fun with the game. The growing terror of the mummy coupled with the fading of her powers and the resulting necessary cooperation are interesting details. When you have familiarized yourself with the rules the game plays easily and smoothly, but due to its complexity a game takes some time to play.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
3-5

AGE
16+

TIME
90+

Designer: Henning Poehl

Artist: Markus Bülow

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 16,00 Euro

Publisher: Sphinx Spielverlag 10

www.sphinxspiele.de

EVALUATION

„Black“ card game
With friends
Complex mechanisms with cards

Comments:

Only for fans of such topics
Rather complex rules
Interesting mechanism details
Gaming experience necessary

Compares to:

Other games in the black series



KAKADOO

SILENCE FOR RED!
AND FOR THE LION?

8+

Kakadoo is part of the new Fun series from Amigo. It is card discarding game where noise and turbulence are guaranteed, because if you play a card you must make the corresponding noises, unless ...

But let's start at the beginning. You are dealt 8 cards. In your turn you play a minimum of one card, either of the same color or

the same animal as shown on the top card of the discard pile. If you play several cards you must play all of one kind. Different colors are possible, but you must make the correct noise for each card. Noises are simple, always the usual ones for an animal, a Moo for the bull, Baa for the goat and so on, but take care when a fish or a lion or a red card appear! If

you play a lion you must greet him with „Hallo, Your Majesty“, but when the lion is a red one you must get up from your chair as well. All other red animals do not like noises, you must remain silent when playing them. Fishes can be used for all colors and have no special, you can play any card following a fish. If you discard a donkey you start a donkey round – all players must play a donkey, if you cannot do so you draw a card, as you do anytime if you do not have a correct card to play. The cockatoo causes the next player to lose his turn.

If you make a mistake you draw 4 cards from the pile. If you manage to have only one card left you must announce this with „last card“. Mistakes must be claimed by other players for you to incur the four-card penalty. Fast, funny, always good, and nicely revised, illustrated and packed! Kakadoo absolutely fits the series motto, a Fun Game.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-10

AGE
8+

TIME
20+

Designer: Haim Shafir

Artist: Andreas Besser

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 8,00 Euro

Publisher: Amigo 2011

www.amigo-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Party and reaction game
For families
React correctly to animal cards

Comments:

Revised new edition of Cocotaki
Part of the new Fun Series
Simple set of rules

Compares to:

Cocotaki and other reaction games



LAST CALL

THE BARTENDER GAME

A game on bartenders, bottles, drinks and thirsty guests! The bar is full, but the bartenders are capricious, they only prepare a drink if the correct bottles are placed in front of them.

At the start of the game the six bartenders are laid out and each receives all bottles of one kind. Each player gets a card of each kind of drinks and a coaster to

mark his bar. The corresponding bar markers are lined up randomly.

The dealer of the round deals cards to the bartenders; these cards are used to move bottles. If you want to move a bottle you call "order". The dealer stops and you move the bottle of your choice from one bartender to the other. The cards in front of

both bartenders involved in the switch are discarded. If a bartender has three cards sitting in front of him he is deemed to be a "wild" barkeeper, you can give him a bottle anytime or take one from him any time, too. When two or more players call "order" at the same time, the ranking of the bar markers decide – if you are placed higher you move the bottles. If four cards are sitting next to a bartender they are discarded automatically. When a barkeeper has the right bottles, you play a Drink card and must take an ice cube for each surplus bottle on the barkeeper not needed for your drink. If you have made all your drinks you call „Last Call“ and quit the game, the others must finish their drinks. The winner is the player with the fewest ice cubes.

Last call is a simple shunting game, albeit a different one, funny, turbulent and noisy and you must take care not to miss a chance to prepare one of your drinks!



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-5

AGE
12+

TIME
90+

Designer: Kris Gould

Artist: Q. Hoover, M. Raabe

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 28,00 Euro

Publisher: Wattsalpoag 2010

www.wattsalpoagames.com

EVALUATION

Placement game
With friends
Switch bottles to complete recipe

Comments:

Funny topic
Very pretty components
Turbulent flow of the game
German rules
Available in Europe

Compares to:

First game with this combination of topic and mechanisms



MÄUSEZOCKEN

DICE FUN FOR CUTE CATS!

7+

Players are cats and want to catch mice and if necessary they will catch each other's mice. The mice are placed on the table, each player receives a cat's head for a board and places it numbered-side upside on the table. In your turn you can either try to roll the dice for mice, or end your turn and catch all mice that you did roll for.

The sides of the dice show 6 different colors, white is a joker for each color. You roll both dice – if you roll different colors you take one mouse of each color and set it in front of your board. You can waive the right to take one of the mice, but you must take one mouse. If you roll the same color twice or a color + joker you take two mice of the color. You can

also choose to take the mice off the board of other players, and again you can waive the right to one mouse.

Sounds simple, but here is the catch – you must not take mice of one color twice in your turn. If you cannot take a mouse after your roll, you must give back all mice in front of your board. If you end your turn voluntarily you place the mice in front of your board on the board and have caught them.

If there are fewer than five mice left in the middle the game ends and is scored – depending on their color a mouse is worth 5 points, if it is red, to 1 point, if it is a blue one. And then there is the risk-game: If you can place one mouse per color in front of your board you have caught them automatically and can continue your turn normally afterwards.

This is a funny, simple, nice game for beginners, for families with younger children or for children to play alone.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-4

AGE
7+

TIME
20+

Designer: Reiner Knizia

Artist: Alexey Kuznetsov

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 10,00 Euro

Publisher: Sirius / Hutter 2010

www.hutter-trade.com

EVALUATION

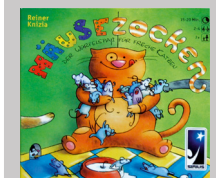
Dice game
For families
Roll the die, collect mice

Comments:

Very pretty mice figurines
Handy package
Very nice, individual art
Also good for children to play alone

Compares to:

Can't Stop; other collecting game with dice



MECANISBURGO

MUTANTS ON MARS



Mecanisburgo is the Megalopolis of a united Europe in a parallel universe where robots, cyborgs, humans and artificial intelligence live in a world that is powered by extraterrestrial energy sources. Terror, social strife and rivaling mega corporations create many problems. Players are CEOs of MegaCorporations sending their representatives into the regions

of Mecanisburgo to control them or enter negotiations there to draw profit from the regions. Each move comprises several phases: Deploying of your powers, evaluate situations and end of turn or finale. If you accrue the most victory points or make one of the special profits you win the game.

Mutants on Mars is the second

expansion for Mecanisburgo following Mecanisburgo: Moon & Ceres: The MegaCorporations carry on their programs of expansion and take the conflicts with them into space. The expansion introduces a new board for Mars and two new factions, called Metaluna and The Free Mutants League. The Free Mutants League has a winning condition totally different from those of the other factions. The Free Mutants League wins the game, if the city is destroyed. Furthermore, the expansion holds 55 new cards and the components for a 7th player. In is unusual that the expansion can not only be combined with the first one, but can only be played when combined with the basic game and the first expansion.

If you did like Mecanisburgo – and lots of people did like it – you will be interested in this push for new territories – the new winning condition of the Mutants provides additional challenges.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-7

AGE
14+

TIME
180+

Designer: Servando Carballar

Artist: V. Gomez, G. Carballar

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 16,00 Euro

Publisher: Gen X Games 2010

www.genxgames.es

EVALUATION

Resources management game
For experts
Complex set of rules

Comments:

Expansion - Can only be played together with the basic game and the 1st expansion - Rises complexity by one more player and 2 new factions

Compares to:

Planet Steam and other complex resources management games



MOBING

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE BOARD

Your career goal is to be the boss of the company, but all players have the same goal and that means conflicts are unavoidable, and you will solve with methods that are not always fair to get ahead of the competitors. Each player receives 12 lobby cards of a color, you select three of them for your first cards on hand, the others are your draw

pile and can be sorted according to your intentions. Finally you draw 3 cards from the mobbing stack on the left side. You play one or two cards, Lobby and Mobbing cards in a mix of your choice, and draw two cards. You use the lobby cards to gain influence on a member of the board and thus secure his vote. The mobbing cards

are used to improve your own references and to weaken those of others. Mobbing cards are played openly on other players, are named and must be visible at any time. When the card "the boss has died" appears for the second time the game ends and is scored. Alternative game endings are drawing of the last mobbing card + one more round or the limit of 6 cards is reached for all members of the board. For scoring you first add up your references, when the result is negative or 0, you are out of the game. Then the lobby value for each member of the board is calculated for all colors, if you have the majority the vote of this member is yours – you need one vote and a positive reference to be elected boss, in case of a tie the reference decides.

A game that is disturbingly realistic (bad references turn to good ones when the boss dies), mercilessly funny, also in the drawings, and provides rules for variants for training. Do you need more succeed?



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
3-6

AGE
12+

TIME
45+

Designer: R. Gottlieb, F. Stark

Artist: F. Stark, T. Heidolph

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 15,00 Euro

Publisher: Heidelberger 2010

www.heidelbaer.de

EVALUATION

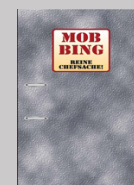
Card placement game
With friends
Use cards to purpose

Comments:

Topic satirically developed
Funny illustrations
Simple mechanisms
4 variants

Compares to:

First game on the topic, mechanism-wise all cumulation game with card interaction



MONSTER UNTERM BETT

CAR FRIGHTENS TWIN-HEADED BIRD



Little Ben is afraid of the nasty monsters under his bed. Fortunately for him, all proper monsters have to adhere to a code of honor and need to be afraid of one specific toy.

The sun rise card is placed on the table and covered with the monster cards showing the child in bed, this makes up the bed that the monsters are cir-

cling. All toys but the Old Sock and the Hares Foot are placed face down on the table and so are the three time cards, the cupboard is placed somewhere near. A first monster is turned up and placed next to the bed. Then you turn up a toy – if it is the toy that frightens the monster near the bed the monster is placed under the cupboard. If



it was the only monster next to the bed a new one is turned up. If you turn up the wrong toy, you must turn over a time card. When the third time card is turn over, all are turned back again, but a new monster is courageous enough to crawl out from under the bed. When the sun appears because all monster cards are gone, all players win together because all monsters still next to the bed speedily flee from the sun. But when four monsters are assembled around the bed, the monsters have won. In a variant you can use only two of the time cards or shuffle Old Sock and Hares Foot into the toys, for both special rules apply. For the version featuring the Twilight Twoegged Twin Monsters you must find both toys they are afraid of to chase them away. Basically a simple memory game, but the topic of monsters under the bed is enchanting and turns it into something special, and the time factor is a challenge, too.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
1-5

AGE
5+

TIME
10+

Designer: Antoine Bauza

Artist: Heiko Eller

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 9,00 Euro

Publisher: Heidelberger 2010

www.heidelbaer.de

EVALUATION

Cooperative game
For children
Turn up the correct toy

Comments:

Exceedingly nice topic
Very pretty drawings
Simple memory mechanism
Challenging due to the time factor

Compares to:

All memory games



MURDER MYSTERY MANSION

A PUZZLING MURDER GAME



In the very beautiful old mansion murder has happened and players are asked to solve the case. To do so you need to first set up the 3D mansion, on top of a kind of staircase that works as a deposit for the case cards, the pegs for marking your score are set at the bottom of the stairs. The cards are sorted by categories – there are suspects, weapons/

methods used, motive and scene of the murder. In each category there are 6 different choices on double-sided cards: Suspects – Dagobert, Eugen, Robert, Adelheid, Verena, Liliane; Weapons/ Methods – Push off a staircase, Knife would, poison, gun electric shock, snake; Motive – Money, Jealousy, Power, Fame, Love, Revenge; Scene of the Murder



– Cupboard, Bathroom, Garden, Kitchen, Billiard Room, Bedroom. Team A secretly chooses a card from each category and places it into the slits at the back of the house, this is the current case. Team B chooses one card per category from the remaining cards and places them into the slits of the corresponding colors. Team A then tells who many categories are correct, but does only tell the number of correct choices, not which ones are correct. This is repeated till the case is solved. Depending on the number of steps remaining you score points and move your marker upstairs. Now the other team gets to solve a case. This is repeated till one team reaches the top of the staircase and wins the game. An enthralling game, attractive components and a well-known mechanism: The abstract mechanism first used in Mastermind has been elegantly transferred into a murder hunt, still provides good training for logical thinking.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2+

AGE
8+

TIME
30+

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Title ger.: Mord im Mondschein

Price: ca. 26,00 Euro

Publisher: University Games 2010

www.universitygames.de

EVALUATION

Game of deduction
For families
Pose questions, evaluate answers

Comments:

Game for Two or two teams
Very nice components
You score depending on the number of guesses

Compares to:

Mastermind



MY VERY FIRST GAMES

GITTI GIRAFFE



My Very First Games is a special series of games intended for infants and toddlers, with special demands on the components and for the games idea. Infants should be able to play freely with the components using them as toys and play very simple first games adhering to rules and thus train the understanding of rules and adhering to them. The

game also is a good training for hand-eye-coordination and motor skills.

To prepare the game the trees are laid out and the feeding cards are placed on them. Gitti Giraffe is put next to one of the trees; one of her wheels should touch the trunk. Gitti at the moment has a very short neck: one block sits on the body and the

head on the block. In your turn you roll the die. If you roll a color you take a block of this color, or any block if you rolled a star. Gitti's head is picked up, the block is placed on the body/neck and the head is put back. Then Gitti is slowly rolled to the next tree. If all blocks stay in place you are rewarded with a feeding card. If one or more blocks tumble off the fallen blocks are put with the others on the table and Gitti is moved to a tree to start the game anew. If blocks did remain on Gitti, they stay there. When all feeding cards have been handed out, the winner is who can lay out the longest row of feeding cards. For older children you can lengthen the distance between the trees and make them turn Gitti before pushing her across. A simple game with marvelous components, exactly what the series specifies – a well-made introduction to the world of games rules for a toddler.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
1-4

AGE
2+

TIME
10+

Designer: Evelyn Kopp

Artist: Evelyn Kopp

Title ger.: Meine ersten Spiele

Price: ca. 28,00 Euro

Publisher: Haba 2010

www.haba.de

EVALUATION

Stacking game and toy
For children (infants)
Follow simple rules, stack blocks

Comments:

Game and toy at the same time
Trains first comprehension and acceptance of rules, motor skills and hand-eye coordination
Can be used for free play

Compares to:

Other games in the series of „My very first Games“, all stacking games for toddlers



PENTA

USE PARTS TO COVER AREA

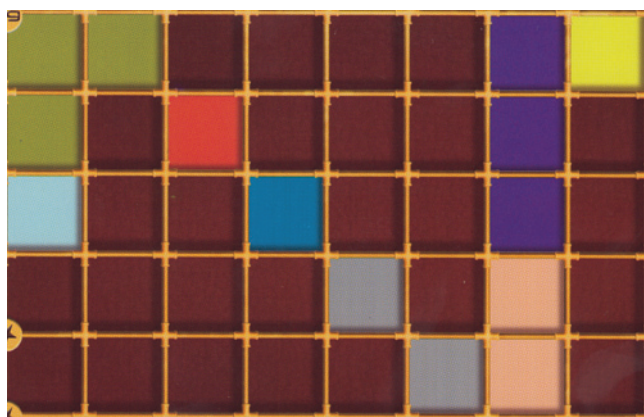


Logic puzzles are going through a boom time at the moment, so Schmidt also offers something for this range. Penta is a placement game featuring geometrical shapes, the topic is to cover an area according to task cards. 14 Penta tiles differ in shape and color. All of them are made up from squares and there are tiles made up from three, four or five

squares. The 30 double-sided puzzle cards are sorted into three levels of difficulty. Each of the puzzles features an area showing colored squares, the areas vary in size and the number of colored squares in them. To solve the puzzle you must cover the squares with tiles of the same color and fill the area completely. No tile may protrude out of the

given area and the whole area must be covered without gaps. Each of the 60 puzzles has a distinct solution. The solutions are given at the back of the rule book. For some puzzles it is necessary to place tiles to fill the area without colored squares for these tiles being present in the area, you have to work out which ones.

The puzzles are challenging and reduced to the basic features of pure solitary logic; there are no other players, no victory conditions, no time limit, no reward for solved puzzles except the satisfaction of having solved the puzzle! Pure abstract fun in thinking, turning and revolving the colorful tiles and when you begin to think “this is not working” suddenly you see the solution! The tin is very practical, you can leave the puzzles in the tin and keep the tiles in the lid, so you can play on very small space and especially well when travelling.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
1

AGE
8+

TIME
var

Designer: Reiner Knizia

Artist: not stated

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 7,00 Euro

Publisher: Schmidt Spiele 2010

www.schmidtspiele.de

EVALUATION

Placement and logic game
For families
Place shapes

Comments:

Pure logic puzzles
Trains spacial thinking
Puzzles need different numbers of tiles - Good for travelling due to handy packing

Compares to:

Katamino, Ubongo and other placement games



PIPELINE DUELL

RACE FOR THE LINE



Pipeline Duell provides a challenging and enthralling game on building a pipeline that must run from the bottom to the top of the grid. At the same time you must place the pieces so that your opponent is blocked from reaching the top. The game board is vertical and made up from seven rods of identical length. The playing pieces feature parts of the pipe-

line on both sides; sometimes the same parts, sometimes different parts. There are straight parts, crossings, T-pieces, angles and blockers.

In your turn you draw a tile from the bag and look closely at both sides but so that your opponent cannot see the tile. Then you insert the tile between two of the rods. You should con-

tinue your own pipeline and you should strive to construct several branches of your pipeline leading upwards so that you have an alternative in case your opponent blocks you. These blockades are beastly, because you must bypass them. If you are the first to finish your pipeline you win the game. If both manage to do so at the same time you win with the shorter connection, made up from fewer tiles. The winner can also be the player who can successfully block the other player in a way that the opponent cannot continue his pipeline.

With this version of a well-known principle Noris provides an interesting alternative: You can try to remember what you have placed for your opponent but depend largely on the luck of the draw for your own plans. In any case, this game is a nice fun game for the whole family in a very practical and attractive variant – the base for the grid is used to store the tiles and rods between games.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2

AGE
8+

TIME
20+

Designer: Daniel Meyer

Artist: not stated

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 25,00 Euro

Publisher: Noris 2010

www.noris-spiele.de

EVALUTION

Placement game
For families
Continue your line, block others

Comments:

Well-known mechanism
Very nice variant
Attractive and practical components
Minimalistic rules

Compares to:

Pipeline, Piatnik, and other games where you form a continues line



POWER GRID

RUSSLAND/JAPAN

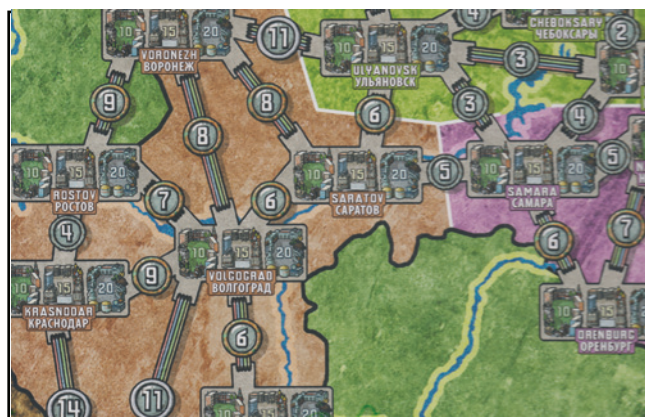
Each player represents a corporation producing electricity in power stations and powering cities via an electricity network. During the game you auction for power stations and buy resources for electricity production while expanding the network to power up more cities. A round has 5 phases: Determine sequence of play, buy power

stations, buy resources, building and bureaucracy, which comprises earning money, new power stations and new resources for the market. if a player in phase 4 has connected a minimum of 20 cities, the player with the most connected cities wins.

Russia: The number of power station offered is limited, the exchange rules for outmoded

power stations are not valid. The smallest power station on the market is replaced as soon as one player passes; but if all players pass it stays. It also remains in place when its number is smaller or equals the number of cities owned by the player with the most cities. At the start of level three the smallest power station is taken off the market together with card Level 3, 4 power stations remain that all can be offered.

Japan: You can own two separate nets, in round 1 you may connect a maximum of two cities to start a network, for the first house in each network you must start in Kukuoka, Kobe, Osaka, Sapporo, Tokyo or Yokohama. If you start a network later, you must start them in these cities, too. From level 3 on you can use the spot for a third connection. For both versions there is a special resources supply table. Two expansions in the usual good quality with interesting changes, if you do own Power Grid you will want Russia/Japan.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-6

AGE
12+

TIME
90+

Designer: Friedemann Fries

Artist: Maura Kalusky

Title ger.: Funkenschlag

Price: ca. 10,00 Euro

Publisher: 2F-Spiele 2010

www.2f-spiele.de

EVALUTION

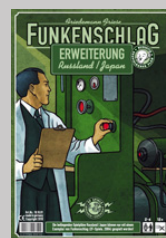
Resources management game
With friends
Build a network of power station

Comments:

6th expansion for Power Grid
Only playable with the basic game
Special resources table - Comprises shrinkwrapped board and rules

Compares to:

Power Grid and all expansions



ROSENKÖNIG

WHITE ROSE FIGHTING RED ROSE



York versus Lancaster in a struggle for power in England between 1455 and 1485, War of the Roses, named for the conflict represented by the white rose in the York coat of arms against the red rose in the Lancaster coat of arms. Players each control one of the dynasties and try to control as many areas as possible. The contested realm is represented

by a 9x9 grid. The crown piece at the starts sits on the central square of the board showing a compass rose. Players move the crown piece by playing power cards and mark the square reached with a power marker in their own color.

The power cards define possible directions for moving the crown and possible distances, too; each

player has a display of five open cards. You can play a card and move the crown; the move can only go over free squares. As an alternative you can draw cards up to a hand of five or play a hero card with a power card, this allows you to switch a marker of your opponent to your own color.

You must make a move unless none is possible. If nobody can move anymore or draw another card or when all power markers have been used the game end. Then both players count their areas made up from squares adjacent via edges. An area has a value of (number of squares)², you add the values and win with the highest score.

Despite its minimalistic rules Rosenkönig is a highly tactical game, all information is visible and you plan to a certain degree despite the chance element of drawing cards. For me this is the best game in series second only to Lost cities, it merits the new edition in the beautiful tin.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2

AGE
10+

TIME
40+

Designer: Dirk Henn

Artist: Donner, Steiner, Stephan

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 20,00 Euro

Publisher: Kosmos 2010

www.kosmos.de

EVALUATION

Abstract placement game for 2
With friends
Place pieces

Comments:

New edition in the series Klassiker für Zwei - Originally published as Texas, db-Spiele - Good mixture of planning and some chance - Simple rules
Many tactical possibilities

Compares to:

Alcazar and other games where cards determine the use of pieces



SCORPIO

A QUIZ LIKE NO OTHER



Beneath this promising headline you find underneath the box cover, featuring a scorpion, components that are familiar from other games, a timer, question cards and a board. If you take a closer look at the timer you see that it features four buttons in the color of the markers, each team is assigned one of the color. Now you agree on a time credit

for the teams and mark these credits on the timer for each team. You should choose the credit according to the experience of the players, but keep it tight to keep up the tension at the end of the game.

A question is posed to the first team. Then the timer is started and stopped immediately when the question is answered or the

team passes. For a correct answer the marker of the team is moved ahead. If the answer is wrong the next team can answer, without using the timer, but the answer must be given come instantly. A solution is correct when it contains the boldly printed part of the answer on the card. The markers of the teams start at the claws of the scorpion and move to the sting. When a team has used up its time credit it must quit the game. If your team reaches the yellow spot at the sting, the team must answer all five questions on a finish card within the time credit left on the timer.

The basic mechanism is a standard one, the questions are challenging but answerable, the idea with the timer is a good one – so we can agree with the announcement from the box cover, also due to the conspicuous, elegant and beautiful design. A tip at the end – the teams should be balanced for age, experience and level of information.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
4-16

AGE
12+

TIME
45+

Designer: Paul Catty

Artist: Klemens Franz

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 34,00 Euro

Publisher: Piatnik 2010

www.piatnik.com

EVALUATION

Quiz game
With friends
Answer questions in time

Comments:

Very elegant graphics
Difficult questions
Well-known basic mechanism
Time factor as an interesting detail

Compares to:

Other quiz games



SEDICI

16 TILES



Sedici – 16 in Italian – simply is the number of the square tiles in the game. If you split a square into 8 triangles and color in these triangles one by one and in all possible combinations you end up with 16 different square pieces, which are the playing pieces of this game. Sedici shows all possibilities to combine this square tiles in a grid of size 4x4.

When doing so you must always place white next to white and black next to black in a congruent way, the grid size of 4x4 may not be exceeded or changed. Solutions featuring several distinct areas are rather simple to make up. It gets more difficult if an area must be cohesive and when both areas should be completely cohesive it is fiendishly

difficult.

In a game for two players each player receives 8 tiles, one player gets the tiles that are mostly white, the other gets the tiles that are mostly black. The two tiles half white half black, one diagonally split, the other orthogonally, are assigned to players randomly. Both players place a tile alternately by adhering to the basic rules, and always with one edge touching a tile already placed. If you cannot place another tile you have lost the game. In a variant you can assign the tiles to players randomly.

This is a solitary game, but also a working challenge for two on their capacity of abstract and geometrical imagination and it is elegant and beautiful, too, the big tiles are nice to the touch. The designer has some advice for you: Leave gaps when placing tiles that only can be filled by one of your tiles. But that is already master level.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
1,2

AGE
8+

TIME
20+

Designer: Niek Neuwahl

Artist: Steffen Mühlhäuser

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 17,00 Euro

Publisher: Steffen Spiele 2010

www.steffen-spiele.de

EVALUTION

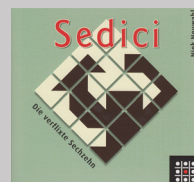
Abstract placement game
With friends
Place tile according to puzzle

Comments:

More „think“ than „game“
Can be played by two
Beautiful components

Compares to:

Tangram und Spiele mit
Flächenfüllung



SPLITS

SIMPLE AND STRATEGIC!



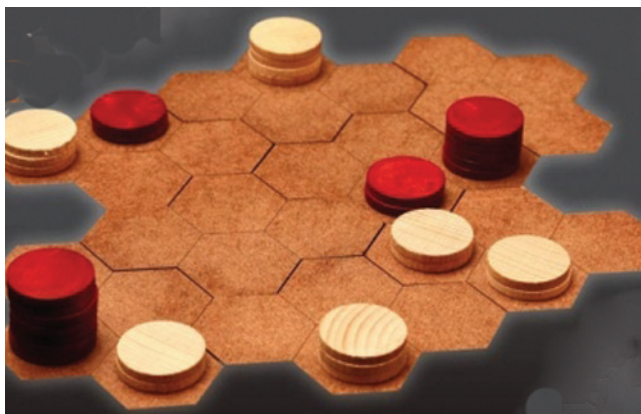
Jactalea – for some time that did mean games with a board made from leather or chamois leather, with the components rolled into the board for packaging. Times change, Jactalea changed and the packages changed, now Jactalea games come in boxes and the long-announced Splits has now been published. Splits is an abstract game, and

as in all Jactalea games the principle is easily explained: Besiege the opposing towers and block their movements. In this game the board is made up from several parts, each of the players receive four of the 8 parts – each comprising four hexagons – and alternate in placing them. Newly placed board parts must touch one already placed

at some spot.

Then both players stack their 16 discs and place them on a edge spot of their choice. White starts the game and splits his stack. The top part of the stack is placed on an empty spot as a new stack. Then Red follows suit and then both players alternate in moving. In each turn one of their stacks is split and the top part moved. The rules are: At least one piece must remain in place and at least one piece must be moved. The movement is done straight ahead over one of the edges of the starting spot and as far as possible or as far as you want. The move ends in front of an obstacle or the border of the board. When a stack is blocked in all directions it cannot be split anymore. When a player cannot split any of his stacks he has lost the game.

So simple, so elegant and not easy at all – and due to the modular board you cannot optimize a winning strategy except: Don't let yourself get blocked, but block your opponent.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-

AGE
8+

TIME
20+

Designer: Francesco Rotta

Artist: not stated

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 25,00 Euro

Publisher: Jactalea 2010

www.jactalea.com

EVALUTION

abstract position game
With friends
Split stacks, move top part

Comments:

Simple basic mechanism
Modular board
Purely abstract game
Only for 2 players
Rules only in French

Compares to:

Other abstract games for 2
with a blocking mechanism



STICH-MEISTER

RULES ONLY VALID FOR ONE ROUND

At the start of each round, players determine the rules by playing rules cards – trump rules, scoring rules and changes to the basic game rules. Then you play as many tricks as players have cards in their hand. The basic rules state that you must follow suit but need not trump and, each trick is worth one point. There are three different kinds

of rules cards: The Rules cards for trump rules determine trump color and trump cards, the rules for the game mechanisms change – when played – the basic rules for the round, if there are several basic rule cards they are implemented or taken into account according to their number. The rules cards for scoring change the value of a trick



and can hand out plus or minus scores for single cards.

The cards are dealt to players and each player receives three rules cards. Each round comprises four steps: Choice of rules cards – determine trump – trick taking game – scoring of tricks. The trick is always won by the highest card. Trump cards are higher or lower either due to the number of rules cards that apply to them or due to the low number on a rule card that applies to them.

Tricks that you win are placed with you. At the end of the round the tricks are scored according to the currently valid rules. When as many rounds have been played as there are players in the group the player with the highest score wins.

Absolutely not meant for the casual player, you need appreciation for cards, a good short-time memory and lots of concentration and attention – but it is a tidbit for dedicated card players, in the tradition of Mü.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
3-5

AGE
10+

TIME
45+

Designer: Friedemann Frieze

Artist: Lars-Arne Kalusky

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 8,00 Euro

Publisher: Amigo 2010

www.amigo-spiele.de

EVALUATION

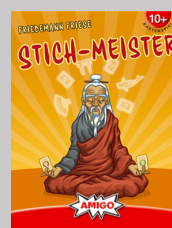
Trick taking card game
With friends
Take tricks, change rules

Comments:

Experience in game play, good short-time memory and appreciation for card games is necessary. Additional difficulties due to unusual card values and symbols

Compares to:

Mü und Mehr, Fluxx



STRONGHOLD

UNDEAD



Stronghold is a 2-player-game, defenders of the fortress fight against attackers. If you like, you can also play the game with four players, but it is best with two. In 10 rounds there are six phases each, then an attack happens, attacker and defender alternate in turns, the defender receives time markers from the attacker which he must use up to prepare his de-

fense. If the attacker can break through a section of the wall the game ends and the player with the majority of fame points wins. If not, another turn begins.

Stronghold Undead is an expansion for Stronghold. The expansion tells the story of a new attack on the fortress that must be warded off to save mankind. The attacker this time is an army of

Undead, lead by a mighty magician, and this army is supported by ghosts and vampires. The defenders this time do not fight for fame, but for preserving the fortress.

This version is played over eight rounds, with each round that the defenders survive the magician gets weaker, but he tries to replenish his strength from his own resources and from defeated defenders. The expansion features 24 new attack actions and 6 new buildings for the defender, priests are new heroes and there are new rules for Fear, Debates in the Command Council, the Altar of Death and the new Priest heroes.

Just as the basic game this expansion, too, demands a lot of gaming experience, intensive study of the rules and patience for a long duration of the game. Therefore you should be familiar with the basic game, but then it can be recommended and makes for a fantastic and interesting as well as very challenging game.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2

AGE
10+

TIME
90+

Designer: Ignacy Trzawiczek

Artist: M. Gandzel, S. Maniak

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 25,00 Euro

Publisher: Portal Publishing 2010

www.portalpublishing.eu

EVALUATION

Position game with fantasy topic
For experts
Complex set of rules

Comments:

Erweiterung
Can only be used with the basic game
Experience in game play necessary
You should be familiar with the basic game - German rules included

Compares to:

Stronghold basic game, other complex games with a fantasy topic



TIPTOI

MAGORS LESEZAUBER



Shortly before the magician's competition the wicked Raven has stolen the tasks from Master Magor. Players assist Magor to catch the thief and support him in solving his tasks. According to the slogan "hear sounds, do words by magic" players look for letters, make up words and solve puzzles in different levels of difficulty. This trains to recognize

letters, assign sounds and also first reading abilities. The tiptoi pen guides players through the tasks and offers support in reading and talking with its very precise voice output.

You move your marker in any direction over a distance of 1-3 steps and touch the star with the pen – depending on the strength of the crowing you can

guess the distance of the raven. If you did find the raven you may try to solve the task. To do so you tip the pen on the task, the pen now explains the task. If you did solve it may keep the card. If you could solve most of the tasks you have assisted Magor best. If you play on or own in the solitaire version you must solve three tasks to help Magor.

At the center of this game, as in all tiptoi games, is the pen, it offers tips and hints then you touch the info sign and explains the rules. It can also repeat the last statement, you can just look around the game to get to know what is in the magic book or what is stowed away in the cupboard – it is sufficient to touch something and the pen offers the corresponding information. Depending on how you use it the pen is a marvelous source of information or a learning aid or a game master who explains the game, gives information and sets the tasks.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
1-4

AGE
5-9

TIME
30+

Designer: Kai Haferkamp

Artist: G. Gianluca / PlumPudding

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 20,00 Euro

Publisher: Ravensburger 2010

www.ravensburger.de

EVALUATION

Educational reading game

For children

Solve tasks by reading / listening

Comments:

Pen not included
Software available for download
Good for learning by playing
Supervision recommended for pre-school children

Compares to:

Schloss Silbenstein and other educational reading games, all tiptoi games



TRIUMVIRATE

STRUGGLE FOR POWER IN ROME



With the crossing of the Rubicon river by Caesar the struggle for power in Rome turns into civil unrest. You represent one of the noble families in Rome that try to influence the power struggle. There are 27 cards in three colors – representing the three members of the triumvirate, Red represents Caesar, Yellow represents Pompeius and Black represents

Crassus. In each color there are 9 cards, values 0-8, made up from three kinds of cards – Mob has value 0, vales 1, 2, 6 and 8 are the senators and 3, 5 and 7 are the legions. Only the legions score you points at the end of the game, the mob has a special function. At the beginning all cards are shuffled and you are dealt 11 cards, the rest is not used in the

hand. You must follow suit if possible, but the higher card tricks, even if it is of another color. The mob trumps each value of another color. When three tricks have been won in one color the hand ends and a consul of this color is placed on the scoring board. Now you can, if you want, discard one of your hand cards as military support. This card is placed next to the scoring board and is out of the game. You can place 1 card for support in a round and only 3 in total. Cards in hand are kept for the next round. If there are three consuls placed in a color the Triumvir of this color is elected emperor. The support cards are revealed and the winner of the game is who has supported the emperor with most legions in his color.

An altogether very unusual game with unsuspected depths, due do the irregular rounds you must rethink your approach. It does not matter who takes the trick, the color is important, and your support for this color!



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2

AGE
13+

TIME
30+

Designer: Travis Worthington

Artist: L. Francisco, P. Vergani

Title ger.: Triumvirate

Price: ca. 15,00 Euro

Publisher: Indie Boards and Cards 10

www.indieboardandcards.com

EVALUATION

Card trick-taking game

With friends

Take tricks

Comments:

Unusual combination of mechanisms
Varying number of tricks in a hand
Color of the tricks is important instead of who makes them

Compares to:

First game of this kind



TRIVIAL PURSUIT STEAL

KNOW IT OR STEAL IT!



Trivial Pursuit in the guise of a pure card game! Instead of wedges you collect cards. Each player is dealt five action cards that he can look at but keeps them secret from other players. In your turn you draw an action card and then play a card from your hand. If you play a colored knowledge card a question is read to you from the

question stack, of course in the category that you played the card for. If you answer correctly you keep the wedge card. With a steal or double steal card you can steal one or two wedges cards from another player, he in turn can fend this off with a block card. If you pick up the buzzer card before the active player gives his answer, you can,



if the player gives the wrong answer, take over the question and answer it yourself. But if you answer wrongly, too, you must give one of your wedges card to the player you did buzz. If you play a joker wedge card, you choose the category yourself. You may answer a question from the yellow category, lay out the card and then later use it to replace a pink wedge card to win the game. If you own 6 wedge cards in 6 colors you win the game. In a quick-play version you only need to collect 4 wedge cards in four different colors.

Trivial Pursuit to go – a game that you can take anywhere and play anywhere, there are enough questions for a long journey in there and the basic mechanism has been very cleverly preserved – stealing the wedges can shorten the playing time considerable and saves questions for the next trip! And of course you can use the mechanics and the cards on any other set of cards from Trivial Pursuit.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2+

AGE
16+

TIME
20+

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 6,00 Euro

Publisher: Hasbro 2010

www.hasbro.de

EVALUATION

Quiz- and Trivia game
With friends
Answer questions

Comments:

Practical format - Game mechanisms cleverly transferred - Action cards make game more dynamically

Compares to:

Other editions of trivial pursuit



TROLLAND

ALLUSIONS ON A CLUB

Trolland is - not really surprisingly – the homeland of the trolls and of course so beautiful that other races want to settle there. And that – again not surprisingly – creates a lot of problems. What troll wants to be forced by some foreign newcomers to eat cooked meat and to smell good? Players are chiefs of troll clans and want to chase off as

many immigrants as possible to become head of the homeland security.

So - at first we place bonus cards, cart cards and a runway with 5 exiles without a troll. Then we receive 5 cards. We look at our cards, choose two of them and lay them down. Then in turn all species are called for and turned up, if you have them in your two

cards: First all trolls, their special abilities are enacted in the sequence of card numbers. Then in turn Miehtzen, Menner, Älfen, Zwärgä and Gobs are called, turned up and sorted into the carts in increasing order. Carts carry 1-3 cages for 1-4 exiles. Each cage can only hold persons of one species and the cages on a cart must be filled with different species. Cards that you must keep because you cannot place them following these rules are placed into a refugee camp and score minus 2 at the end. A full cart leaves the country. If you placed the last card there you receive the cards as a reward. When all cards have been used the player with the highest score from bonus cards, suitcases, pets and medals as well as caught trolls wins the game.

Seems to be a bit of an intellectual procedure for trolls, you have to do a bit of thinking to get some points, but it is fun and I can always place my hopes on the troll king ..or better not?



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-5

AGE
14+

TIME
45+

Designer: Bruno Cathala

Artist: Olivier Fagnère

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 20,00 Euro

Publisher: Ludocortex 2010

www.ludocortex.com

EVALUATION

Satirical card placement game
With friends
choose cards, place them

Comments:

Cuttingly satirical - Very witty implementation - Rather simple rules
Some considerations necessary all the same

Compares to:

6 nimmt! for placement according to number values low to high, all games with set formation



ZOMBIES!!! 7

SEND IN THE CLOWNS!

Send in the clowns! The circus has come to town! The seventh expansion for Zombies!!! Brings the circus along and with it the most gruesome thing there is, zombie clowns! And as clowns always do have their own laws there is a new victory condition for this expansion: You must make your way to the circus tent, grab a Clownmobil and leave the circus

area via the cashier box tile. You can use this expansion as a stand-alone game or as an expansion for the basic game. The rules of the basic games are amended by additional rules, especially for where and when you can use the new board tiles. The cashier box victory condition is applicable when the game is used alone; if you combine it with the basic



game you must - after quitting the circus area - still reach the helicopter landing stage or eliminate 25 zombies or zombie clowns to win.

Zombie clowns can only move on Zombies!!! 7 board tiles, normal zombies on the contrary cannot enter tiles from Zombies !!! 7. If you die in the circus area you start afresh in the horror show area. From the rules point of view the Clownmobil is a weapon or equipment, respectively. It gives its owner +2 for each movement roll from the turn after the turn when it was acquired. This also applies for movements outside the circus area as long as you own the Clownmobil.

Just like the basic game and all other expansion this expansion, too, is only meant for fans of the genre. If you have wanted all your life to throw the metaphorical cream cake you can do so now, as I said, metaphorically, it can also turn out to be mineral water or a stuffed animal.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-6

AGE
16+

TIME
60+

Designer: Todd Breitenstein

Artist: Dave Aikins

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 13,00 Euro

Publisher: Pegasus 2010

www.pegasus.de

EVALUTION

Satirical Fantasy adventure game
With friends

Use cards, fight zombies

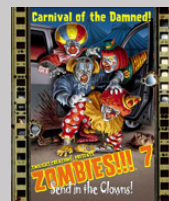
Comments:

Only for fans of horror films and black humor

Topic implemented satirically
Stand-alone or expansion, at your choice - New victory condition

Compares to:

Zombies!!! basic game, Last Night on Earth



ZOOLORETTO BOSS

GOOD EMPLOYEES,
GENEROUS SPONSORS

10+

You own your own zoo and score points for visitors if you collect the best animals and invest in expansions for your zoo. The game is played in rounds. You must either place a tile onto a transport cart or take a transport cart and pass for the round or implement a money action. If you take a card you must place the tiles into enclosures follow-

ing stringent rules. Money actions are refurbishment, buying or discarding a tile or expansion of the zoo. When the first tile of the final stack is turned up, the round is finished and the game scored. Full enclosures earn you the high score. If one tile is missing you score the lower number. If more are missing you score one point per animal if there is a

vending stall. Vending stalls earn you 2 points for each kind of animal, but score -2 when they are placed in the barn. Each kind of animal in the barn also incurs a score of -2.

In this expansion, too, you score for visitors or expansions for the zoo and take care of good employees and sponsor money. The rules of the basic game apply, supplemented by new rules and components. There are: an office board, a sponsor enclosure, donations, employees and the offer board. Employees are placed on the office board, money and donations are not interchangeable. If you fill the sponsor enclosure you receive a donation and points from stock. Employees either bring in donations or points depending on their location on the office board.

As on each expansion for Zooloretto there is only one comment you can make on this one, too: well-made, works, is fun and a must-have for all fans of the game.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS
2-5

AGE
10+

TIME
45+

Designer: Michael Schacht

Artist: Design Main

Title ger.: ident

Price: ca. 18,00 Euro

Publisher: Abacusspiele 2010

www.abacusspiele.de

EVALUTION

A game of collecting / placement
For families
Place animal tiles

Comments:

Only for use with the basic game
Can be combined with other expansions

Compares to:

Aquaretto, Zooloretto



AGRICOLA THE LEGEND*DAIRY FOREST DECK

Designers: Yu, van der Pijl, F. Girke, Burkman, H. Girke, Kennard
 Publisher: Lookout Games

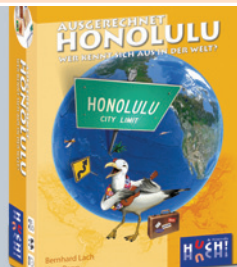


Agriculture in the Middle Ages – huts are enlarged and renovated, acres are ploughed, tended and harvested. In 14 rounds 4 phases each are played: Start of the round + round card, Stocking with new resources and animals, working time with actions (enlarge living space, progeny, agriculture and livestock) and homecoming, intersected by 5 harvest times with fields, alimentation + begging and progeny. With the highest score at the end you win. The expansion features 24 cards, 12 x event, 3x education, 4x acquisition and 5x action, all relating to the forest and with a fairytale background.

Expansion for Agricola for 1-5 players, ages 12 and up

AUSGERECHNET HONOLULU

Designers: Bernhard Lach und Uwe Rapp
 Publisher: Huch & friends



After regional editions we now get an international one! Wladiwostok? East of Abu Dhabi? Honolulu south of San Francisco? And who knows Ouagadougou? And maybe knows where it is? You draw a card and decide where to place it, north-south or east west of the starting card, and between cards if necessary. Then the others can doubt, the current card is then checked against the adjacent card. Who is correct gets a chip form the other one. For intermediate scorings players bet how many cards are placed wrongly. If you guess correctly you get 2 chips. At the end the player with the most chips wins.

Geography placement game for 2-6 players from age 10

ERWISCHT! ZUSATZKARTEN

Designer: Christian Lemay
 Publisher: Heidelberger Spieleverlag



A game within a game for all occasions! You receive a card and decides if and when to enter the game. A time span is fixed and then you try to execute all three tasks on the card in front of witnesses. If you have completed the task you wait 30 seconds and name the task. If you believe that someone else just completed a task you call "Gotcha" and name the task. If you are right, the player cannot score this task. At the end of the game all add their scores and name witnesses, if necessary. The expansion offers 87 new absurd missions, like "stumble and complain loudly about the sticky floor!"

Expansion for Erwischt! for 4-50 players, ages 12 and up

HOT WHEELS MEMORY

Publisher: Ravensburger



For a long time, Hot Wheels has been a synonym for small dainty miniature cards and many toys related to them. Now Hot Wheels appear in a memory game. On 38 pairs of tiles the show off their power: Mega stunts, fantastically fast races and cool designs. To bring these designs to even better advantage, the tiles are printed on silver foil. Game play follows the standard rules for memory: You turn up two cards from the random display on the table. If you uncover a pair, you keep it and have another turn. If you uncover different images, both are turned over again.

A game of memory for 2-8 players, ages 4 and up

LAURAS STERN MEMO

Publisher: Schmidt Spiele



Lauras Stern and Laura are two favorite license characters in a very nice story. Now all fans of Laura can play with those cards, all her friends can be found on the 48 cards, even those from her adventures in China, all are packed in a beautiful tin. Game play follows the standard rules for "memory": You turn up two cards from the random display on the table. If you uncover a pair, you keep it and have another turn. If you uncover different images, both are turned over again.

A game of memory for 2-8 players, ages 4 and up

LUPUSBURG

Designer: Domenico Di Giorgio
 Publisher: dV Giochi



Lupusburg - a new chapter in the history of Tabula! The little village of Tabula has become a rich town, but still the werewolves prowl the streets at night and a new danger is looming – robbers! During the day the mayor strives for law and order, but of course, he could be the werewolf! In this version of the game for up to 8 players the werewolf must transform all citizens or the citizens must slay the werewolf, but there are secret missions for the players, too. When the human beings win, they score points for surviving characters, for characters in houses, for accomplishing the secret mission and for correct guessing of the werewolf.

A party deduction game for 4-8 players, ages 8 and up

MUNCHKIN BOOSTER FAIRY DUST

Designer: Steve Jackson
 Publisher: Pegasus Spiele



Munchkin: Feenstaub – Fairy dust is the first in a series of Munchkin mini expansions packed in a booster. This expansion can be used with all theme boxes of Munchkin and contains 15 new cards. This was long overdue, because you want to acquire a few tools fast without too much trouble. But if you are unlucky you end up with the Good Glitter Fairy which insists on having her way instead of doing good deeds, and with rather unlike methods at that. Oh, and despite having the looks of it – Munchkin: Feenstaub is not a collectible card game, the cards are the same in all packs!

Expansion for Munchkin for 3-6 players, ages 12 and up

TOP TRUMPS SPECIALS STAR TREK

Publisher: Winning Moves

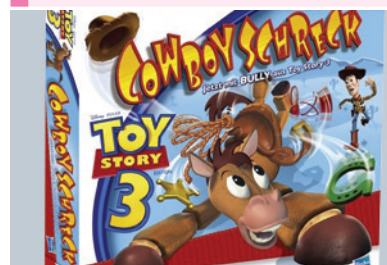


Choosing your card's best attribute, beating (trumping) your opponent's card, and winning the cards played in the round – already a Classic! Cards are dealt evenly to all players. The active player chooses an attribute on his top card (no shuffling of the deck!) and calls out the corresponding value – all other players check their cards for the value of this attribute – the player with the highest value gets all cards of this round. In case of a tie cards go on the table and the winner of the next round receives those too. Themeset: Specials Star Trek

A card/quiz game for 2 or more players from age 8

TOY STORY 3 COWBOY SCHRECK

Publisher: Hasbro / MB



The mule must be packed with all those things a cowboy deems necessary, from guitar to dynamite, from hat to teapot. The first player puts the saddle on the back of the mule. All place items in turn. Each item must touch the saddle, nothing can be put over head or ears or tail, and you may not touch or hold the mule while loading something. If you drop something or the mule kicks you must quit the game. After kicking it is prepared again for loading, and this goes on until only one player is left or until one player loads the last item onto the mule without the mule beginning to kick.

Action- and dexterity game for 2-4 players, ages 4 and up

HUGO KASTNER RECOMMENDS

TARGUI

Nomadic treks with camel herds



Dear Reader! „Targui“ ist „Risk in the Desert“ – with this sharp and precise short comment Bruno Faidutti did summarize the strategic Tuareg conflicts over villages, oases, sand dunes, mountain regions, hills and salt-mines. The salt sea alone remains taboo for all and is – if anything – an obstacle in the wide-ranging greedy roamings for booty. And „Targui“ comes in garbed in politically correct disguise, you do not eliminate soldiers, but camels, and not countries are conquered – pardon me, freed, but terrain regions. During the eighties most German game publishers were forced – due to publicity consideration – to avoid an obvious conflict or war topic. One of the results coming from the thus necessary selling strategies, cleverly adapted to pacifistic philosophies, is the object of my ruminations: „Targui“. And despite its topic and the conflict simulation remindful of „Risk“ this game has more than earned its membership in the „Hall of Fame“, because it has some huge advantages over the famous predecessor, as you will realize when reading this „Highlight“. Did I spark your interest? Then wend you way to the Austrian Games Museum at Leopoldsdorf, where you can immerse yourself into the authentic „Desert Feeling“ of the game. Website: www.spielen.at

This time the light of my lamp illuminates a characteristic desert landscape with all features that contribute to the attractions of the North African habitats. Ben van Dijk and Wil Dijkstra have given the dice-based conflict mechanism, known and proven in „Risk“, a very coherent background that provides lots of atmosphere and ambiance to the game. And there is another bonus feature: The starting situation on the 7x7 grid

varies from game to game, all games begin in a new way. Fate cards, that were well balanced by the designers and a tricky mechanism that allows multiple turns of one desert combatant (Faidutti calls it the „management element“) introduce dynamics into the game, and this despite the fact that the roamings of the camel herds – representing the resources of the Bedouin tribes – are don quickly and easily during the game. Stultifying consideration periods are rare, instead of this you get a very resolute rolling of dice for key positions in the landscape. These aggressive tactics are necessary when a region you want to target is occupied by an opponent. Depending on the topographical features the chances for success are very varied depending on specific strategic bonus values – for instance from oasis or dune. Furthermore, some landscape types ensure the economic results that are necessary for success in the end. In this feature, too, you immediately sense the clever ideas of the designer team to introduce a balance between battle strength and proceeds. Another contribution to the fun in playing this game is the possibility to buy more camels. If despite all this you end up among the losers of the conflict you can reasonably attribute this to fate in „Targui“. These fate cards – one is introduced in each round – sometime wreck havoc among your best-laid plans, and thus mirror the uncertainties in a gamers life. More than one thing in the end turns out to be a fata morgana!

Comments to: Hugo.Kastner@spielen.at

Homepage: www.hugo-kastner.at



TIP #61

Designer: Ben van Dijk / Wil Dijkstra

Price: ca. 30,00 Euro, out of print

Jahr: 1988 (First edition)

Publisher: Jumbo

www.jumbo.eu

PLAYERS

2-4

AGE

12+

TIME

120+

● Strategy/Tactic ● Info+ ● Chance

All actions are enacted in the open, but due to the fate cards as well as due to the die and the movement mechanism which is as elegant as it is incalculable a certain element of chance is introduced into the Bedouin conflicts. This for me is positive as it helps to avoid long periods of consideration and reluctantly taken decisions.

HUGOS EXPERTTIP

For four players I can strongly recommend a team version which we have tested extensively in our gamers group: All rules of the strategic-tactical desert conflict are in play without restriction, but we add a small detail: If a village is conquered by an opponent and then re-conquered by your partner, you place 10 camels of the former owner into the village spot as a basic force. This neat little trick forces the partners to take even more strategic possibilities into consideration than are normally necessary and this also takes away the frustrating king-maker syndrome.

HUGOS FLASHLIGHT

The dice rolling actions in the game will remind some players of Encounters of the Risk Kind, but Targui clearly demands more strategic considerations. This is first due to the different kinds of terrain and rest stops, like village, oasis, dunes, mountains, hills, salt-sea and saline and also due to a special mechanism that sometimes enables series of moves. In spite of that Targui is not at all a thinking game, despite the very variable starting positions. The Jury for „Game of the Year“ when placing the game on the list of selections 1988: „Incredibly challenging for fans of strategy and tactics.“

PREVIEW:

TOP RACE

Strategic Bets & Clever Wins

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, Telefon 02216-7000, Fax 02216-7000-3, mail-to: office@spielen.at, Internet: www.spielejournal.at - www.gamesjournal.at - Chefredakteur: **Dipl.Ing. Dagmar de Cassan**

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Icon explanation



Solo Play



Two Players



Large Groups



Recommended Minimum Age

GABIS explanation on page 5

