

win

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INTERNATIONAL EDITION: IN THIS ISSUE WE PRESENT 58 GAMES

TYCOON IN 5 EPOCHS

INDUSTRY

From Bricks to Computers


In 2003 a game called Industria by Michael Schacht was published at Queen Games, a mixture of auction and efficient use of money and resources, factories, technologies or bonus tiles.

2010 the game was picked up by Ystari, edited and published again under the name of Industry.

Again, you guide an industrial empire through five epochs, from the gravel pit to the robot factory, you represent a dynasty

and build factories, acquire route and shipping lane contracts for bonus points. At the same time you need to auction off factories and technologies as profitable as possible to earn good money – money is scarce in this game – or secure the most lucrative items for yourself.

A round in the game comprises 5 Phases, which are always completed by all players before a new phase begins. After each 3rd or 4th round in case of four or three players a change of epoch takes place.

In Phase 1 – Income – you simply receive 1 Taler.

In Phase 2 new area markers are drawn, 1 per player, and displayed, for a marker with a Taler symbol you receive 1 Taler from the bank. Phase 3 takes to the core mechanism of the game, the auctions: The starting player of the round is the auctioneer, he chooses an eligible = available field and names it. A field is eligible when it is situated at the intersection of the epoch marker line and the area marker column. Starting with his left neighbor each



player makes exactly one bid, each bid must surpass the previous one or you must pass. When all have bid or passed the auctioneer decides if he wants to buy himself or leave the bid to the highest bidder. If he takes the money he remains auctioneer and auctions the next field. If he takes the field, he pays 1 Taler in turn to each player until the sum of the highest bid is paid, and remains starting player. If nobody makes a bid, the auctioneer gets the field for free, but must take it. In both cases the next player is the new auctioneer. The new owner of the just auctioned field

Dagmar de Cassan

For once, an auction game that I do like! The mechanism of the auction has been vastly improved as compared to predecessor Industria!

places one of his markers there, showing the clock.

When all available fields have been auctioned, Phase 4, development, starts. In turn you can develop two undeveloped fields by paying the construction costs. Technologies are free, some fields demand discarding of resources. Those you can get from a joker, from your own already developed factories or from buying from the bank for 1 Taler, the bank only offers resources from previous epochs. For a field that has been developed you turn the owner marker over and – maybe – receive victory points; for factories only if you develop them in the same epoch in which you acquired them. Technologies must be developed in the same epoch and bonus fields yield victory points at the end of the game. If you developed bank or stock exchange costs are lowered by 1 more Taler.

In Phase 5 the marker for the starting player goes to the next player. When all spots of an epoch have been auctioned, there is a change of epoch and new resources become available from the bank. Once in the game you can take out a subsidy of 3 Talers, but this costs you 5 victory points at the end of the game.

When all epochs have been played, you receive victory points for certain combinations of factories and technologies, money, unused joker cards and bonus tiles. The player with most victory points wins the game.

The most interesting question is, what is different as regards to Industria? First of all, the tiles representing opportunities to be auctioned have been changed into fields on the board that are marked with ownership markers, and you may only develop two fields per turn instead one from each category, in any order. And foremost of course, the mechanism of the auction itself: In Industria the

auctioneer got the item for free if you chose to take it himself, in a variant he only paid half of the highest bid.

And this takes out that what I liked least in Industria – the free access to good opportunities for the auctioneer. Now the auction is challenging and must be considered carefully, because the auctioneer chooses last and know what the cost will be for acquisition and whether- especially in case of a technology he will be able to develop – especially when others raise the bid for an interesting field.

Unfortunately this plus is accompanied by an acute minus, which is the – let's keep polite – rather difficult game board. It is beautiful but very confusing and to find out, how the technologies and factories connect to yield bonus points very nearly is a game within the game.

But that is not essential in contrast to the improvement due to the change in the auction mechanism, the game for me is better and more interesting – Industria was a good game, Industry is an excellent game!

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40 Lines for Meeples

Dagmar de Cassan, Editor-in-Chief

The choice to give your own opinion in your own name is often lost in the world-wide web. The contributors in WIN state their opinions and review games independently and fair. Each monthly issue is put together with the help of more international reviewers: Andrea Ligabue and Pietro Cremona from Italy, Greg J. Schloesser from the United States, Stefan Olschewski from Germany or Monika Dillingerova from Slovakia, to mention just a few. We want to be the international platform for opinions on games. Therefore we have amended our evaluation system and have added new definitions:

VERSION: This is the copy of the game that was the basis for the review

RULES: Here we list the languages of rules included in the game or easily available for the game, very often you can find additional translations on the net.

IN-GAME TEXT: Most games feature language-independent components, rules are sufficient. A "yes" in this category marks a game with language-dependent components, they can be multi-lingual or not; the game cannot be played without knowledge of the language or assistance in translation.

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<http://www.gamesjournal.at>

This also goes for the German PDF edition of WIN, a subscription is valid for both editions, please check <http://www.spielejournal.at> In May there is a WINxxL too, please check page 7 and our website for more information.

INDUSTRY

Designer: Michael Schacht

Artist: Stéphane Poinot

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 32 Euro

Publisher: Ystari 2010

www.ystari.com

EVALUATION

Auction game
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de en fr
In-game use of language: no

Comments:
Revised new edition of Industria
Very confusing graphics of the board
Rules much more interesting

Compares to:
Industria and other development games with auction mechanisms

Alternate publisher:
none

My rating:



PLAYERS:
3-4

AGE:
10+

TIME:
90+



HELP FROM THE GODS

OFFERINGS

Cows for Zeus

Athens against Sparta, the war is raging on sea and on land and on top of this a horrible plague is pestering people. They need help from the heavens and hope to receive help by offering sacrifices to the gods. Animals must be acquired from the Peasant, must be cleaned and decorated with the help of the Water Carrier and the Flower Carrier and led to the altar by the Temple Guardian.

At the start of the game you place your marker at the bottom of the scale of all seven characters – Peasant, Water Carrier, Flower Carrier, Temple Guardian. Priestess, Briber

and Guardsman – and then you move your marker forward one step for three persons of your choice, these are the ones with which you start the game.

Game play comprises rounds of 4 phases, auction, bribes, sacrifices and revenue.

Auction: Each player has one auction turn. For this you choose two person tiles and bid a least 1 Drachma, the others can raise the bid or pass. If you win the bid you move your markers one step forward in the scales of those persons. If another player then the ac-

tive one wins the bid, the active player again chooses 2 persons and bids. The winner of the previous bid must pass. When 3 pairs of persons have been auctioned in this way or when the active player wins his auction, the next player becomes active player for his auction turn. The active player can relinquish his auction turn and pass.

The top position in a person scale can only be occupied by one player, if you go to the top, you move down a marker already there by one position.



Bribes: If you have a marker in an active position with the briber you can, beginning with the player whose marker is highest in this scale, bribe an opponent's person, if you have more Bribers than the opponent has Guardsmen. You move your marker forward by one position in the scale of this person and move your opponent's marker one position backwards. One player can only be bribed once in

Dagmar de Cassan

Offrandes by all means is a game that is worth a try! If you like auction games, you will love Offrandes.

a round. Persons of a player in top position there can only be bribed by a Briber in top position.

Sacrifice: All players now offer sacrifices to the gods. You determine the kind of animal depending on your position with the farmer, take a number of animals according to the position with Water Carrier and Flower Carrier, chose an Alter according to the Temple Guardian scale and place your marker on this alter, another marker there is replaced and given back to the player. To be able to offer a sacrifice at an altar already taken you must sacrifice the same number or more of the same or more valuable animals. In this way you can also use an altar taken by yourself for a second time. For each sacrifice you immediately score points, number x value of the sacrificed animals plus points according to the location of your marker on the Priestess scale. Those Priestess points are scored even if you do not make a sacrifice.

Revenue: At the end of the round you receive 10 Drachmae and can keep eventual rests from previous rounds, but you cannot own more than 25 Drachmae.

When a sacrifice has been made at least once at each altar or a player tops the score of 100 points the altars are scored and the player with the highest total score wins the game.

Offerings is a beautiful game, a well-made game, an interesting game. No but? No not really, with the exception of a few small remarks. One is the handling of the marker discs on the scales of the different persons. You must take exceptional care not to relocate or shift markers, any other way to mark the positions would have been better, because most of the action happens on those scales. A feasible solution would be that in addition to marker you note your positions on a piece of paper, 7 columns where you note down the number of your position. Another question, but really a question only: Why three game boards? The only reason I can fathom is that you can adapt the game more easily to different table sizes, there is

no reason for three boards in the flow of the game. But this brings me to the big positive aspect of the game: Each player as the active auctioneer has the means to raise the price for persons and choose the sequence in which he auctions them. And as you cannot afford to totally ignore one of the characters, you must use your money carefully and plan well in which order you bid for persons, especially as regards to the one-marker-only rule at the top of the character scales and at the alters. This takes me to a feature that is not to every player's taste – the order of play, which strongly influences my plans. It is important if I am last in being the active player and the others have spent most of their money or if I am the first to consider what I want to do! And the priestess is another feature on which opinions differ. At the start, the points she has to offer in the Sacrifice Phase without one having to make a sacrifice seem very enticing, but concentrating on her can cost valuable points elsewhere, so one should not spend too much money on her. But do not underestimate the power of the Briber, he can massively influence your score. All in all the game offers challenging interaction in a very alluring setting.

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OFFERINGS

Designer: Cédric Lefebvre

Artist: Pierô

Title de: Offrandes

Price: ca. 35 Euro

Publisher: Ludonaute 2010

www.ludonaute.fr

EVALUATION

Auction game
With friends
Version: en
Rules: de en es fr nl
In-game use of language: no

Comments:
Another unusual auction mechanism
Auction is the dominant game mechanism
Game order heavily influences the game
Very attractive game design

Compares to:
Basically all auction games, auction mechanism is new

Alternate edition:
Offrandes, Ludonaute

My rating:



PLAYERS:

3-5

AGE:

13+

TIME:

90+



GAMES BUYER INFORMATION SYSTEM - GABIS

STRUCTURE

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

TARGET GROUPS

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

Children:

Games for children an 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 color 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

Colors in the Bar

Empty boxes: This feature is not present or minimal
One colored box: This feature of the game is present, but not essential

Two colored boxes: This feature is present and important in the game

Three colored boxes: This feature dominates

PORTUGUESE WINE GAME

VINHOS

Export, Sales or Wine Tasting Fairs?

2010 was the Year of Wine, at least when looking at new releases at Spiel in Essen. For me, the most interesting of all those wine games is called Vinhos, meaning wine in Portuguese, and was published by a small Italian company by the name of What's Your Game? This publisher first got my attention a year before with their game of Vasco da Gama. I did not expect that an Italian publisher, after releasing a game on a Portuguese seafarer, will publish a game on Portuguese wines, but maybe someone at the company has a soft spot for this country in southwestern Europe, and the game definitely does not suffer from it.

That the topic is Portuguese and not Italian wines is probably due to the designer of the game, Vital Lacerda, who is Portuguese. His name was totally unknown to me before, but that's quite understandable as his only other published game so far has been a Map of Portugal for the game Age of Steam. Players are taking on the roles of wine makers and try to market their brand in the country itself and abroad.

Vinhos is played in 6 rounds = Years. Each round comprises several phases. At the end of rounds three, five and six Wine Tasting Fairs are held, where players need to present one kind of wine each.

Each round starts with a weather forecast for the coming year, made by turning up a randomly chosen tile. This weather forecast influences the quality of the wine you will harvest at the end of the year. Furthermore, the tile shows the current preferences of the managers, more on the consequences of this later, and it also causes the markers on the scale to be moved for some characteristics. This is followed by two action phases in which each player has one action each. There are nine different actions arranged in a grid of 3x3 squares. Each player has an action marker moving in this grid enabling him to execute the action of the square reached by the marker. Moves into an adjacent square are free, diagonally adjacent square are also considered to be adjacent. Movements exceeding this distance cost 1000 Bagos. You cannot pass to move. For each action marker that has already reached the target spot you

must pay 1000 Bagos to each owner.

The actions you can execute are acquiring of vineyards or cellars. Wineries or Enologist, all of these in one way or another either improve the quality of your wine or allow its production. Furthermore there is the Banco do Vinho enabling you to shift money between your account, investments and cash – a more detailed description of those possibilities would go beyond the scope of this review! Then there are Sales - enhancing the balance of your account depending on the quality of the wines sold, Export - functioning similar to Sales, but earning you victory points instead of money, Hiring Wine Experts – bringing you small advantages during the game or being useful in Wine Tasting Fairs, and finally Passing. When you pass you can choose a new position in the sequence of play, which is valid from the next round on, and – if you want to do so – you can present a wine for the next Wine Tasting Fair.

You can only present one wine at a Wine Tasting Fair.

For a Wine Tasting Fair you choose a wine and determine its value, which depends on the number of wine experts you can put up in the next Fair for this wine. Then you choose a free Fair square. Each Fair square determines two of four characteristics. Depending on how far the characteristics have advanced on the characteristics scale you score Fair points. Furthermore, in the next Wine Tasting Fair you can only put up wine experts of the corresponding characteristics (there are four different wine experts corresponding to the four different characteristics). Each Fair square also earns you a bonus, which can be either money or Fair points or a wine expert. Finally, you need to check the current demands of the managers depicted on the weather tile and compare them to the wine presented at the Fair. If a manager is happy with your wine you can place a barrel there. Each manager allows 5 different advantages. Before, during or after one of your actions you can discard any wine to use an advantage of a manager, provided you have marked him with a barrel that you can move. The manager advantages can give you additional actions or victory points for several items you own, but when you have moved your barrel onto a spot for victory points you cannot move it anymore.

After the action phases it is time for upkeep. Each enologist costs you 1000 Bagos, Fur-



thermore, you are paid money for investment made, or you need to pay debts that you incurred.

Then the wine ages. Each wine you own is moved one step to the right. When there is no room to the right, the wine has turned sour and must be discarded. This is the point

Markus Wawra

I like complex development games offering lots of choices and I do not care if a game takes up to four hours, so I like Vinhós, too, because in that league it is one of the best.

where a Cellar can help. It allows longer storage time and enhances the value of aged wines.

At the end of the round – when applicable – the Wine Tasting Fair is implemented. All players simultaneously can put up wine experts within the limits mentioned earlier. Each wine expert earns the number of points corresponding to his characteristics position on the scale. Then you check who has most Wine Tasting Fair points and victory points are awarded according to the ranking. At the end of the game you can use wines remaining in your possession for manager action. Then you score victory points for managers, money in your bank account and wines exported, according to a majorities scheme which I need not go into in more detail here. If you then have most victory points, you have – not really surprisingly – won the game.

You will easily have come to the conclusion, after this short summary, that Vinhós is not really a game that is easy to learn. You should plan 45 minutes for explanations for your first game, if you have someone at the table who can explain at, if you need to read the rules yourself, you should plan more time. If you have mastered that initial barrier, you are rewarded with a very good, well-designed and well-planned game. Its biggest advantage is its biggest disadvantage, too. Vinhós offers a plethora of possibilities to score points and thus several strategies one can try and in consequence offering a high enticement to play again. But, these many options also make optimizers take ages to figure out their moves, resulting in long down times and playing time. Especially the last round and the end game issue an invitation to start calculating, especially as results are usually rather close. Thus, the overall playing time depends very much on the players, but rises in dependence of the number of players anyway. Two to four can play; my impression has been that the game has been optimized for four players. Even for two players there are no rule changes or limitations on the available components. In consequence, in a two player game you rarely encounter any limitations, but in a

four player game it can happen that components become scarce and you must pay your fellow players regularly for actions. The game for three players is situated somewhere in between those two extremes, which does not mean that the game for two or three does not function well.

There is nothing whatsoever to criticize in the components or the graphic design of the game. Highlight among the components are the wooden wine barrels, the majority of components is made up by pretty and functional card board tiles, more than 200 of them all in all. Ziploc bags in sufficient numbers, to my delight, have been included in the game.

If you want to gripe or grouse, then you could criticize the colors chosen for the regions, which are somewhat similar and sometimes too similar. During play itself this does not matter at all, you just have to pay attention in the preparation phase of the game.

The extensive rules, too, have been made up in model fashion, well structured, clear and leaving no questions unanswered.

All in all, in a nutshell, Vinhós is an excellent game for fans of complex game that can easily keep up with the landmarks of the genre, Agricola or Le Havre.

win Markus Wawra

VINHÓS

Designer: Vital Lacerda

Artist: Mariano Ianelli

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 35 Euro

Publisher: What's Your Game? 2010

www.whatsyourgame.it

EVALUATION

Development game
For experts
Version: de
Rules: de en fr it
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Many rules, many possibilities
Lots of strategies to try
Beautiful components
Well-structured rules
Long playing-time

Compares to:

Agricola, Le Havre

Alternate publisher:

none

My rating:



PLAYERS:

2-4

AGE:

12+

TIME:

90+



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NEW IN MAY 2011

For many years the Games Museum has been publishing not only journals and other publications, but also Goodies for popular games, which we hand out for free in Essen and Vienna. The most popular of these goodies so far has been the Terry Pratchett Disc World Scenario for „The Settlers of Catan“.

Each week we still receive inquiries from all over the world for these goodies. Up to now we have asked for a stamped self-addressed envelope, because the Goody itself is a gift of the Games Museum.

After lots of inquiries and suggestions from friends we now want to make it easier for all interested gamers to be able to acquire those goodies easily and worldwide: We offer a combination of one issue of **WIN The Games Journal** and one Goodie for the price of 5 Euros for postage and packing. **WINxxl**

Therefore, starting with March 2011, each month there will be such a **WINxxl** edition, which comprises the password for this month and a given goodie from stock. Check www.gamesjournal.at

WINxxl 423 comes with the expansion for **GRAND CRU** from Eggert Spiele „Heuriger“ und „Gemischter Satz“! (only available in German language) Who does not have it yet?

WIN The Games Journal is available as PDF edition for 6 Euros for 12 months.



FROM INSECTS TO MAMMALS

DOMINANT SPECIES

Who survives the food chain?



Introduction from the rule book:

90,000 B.C. — A great ice age is fast approaching. Another titanic struggle for global supremacy has unwittingly commenced between the varying animal species.

Dominant Species is a game that abstractly recreates a tiny portion of ancient history: the ponderous encroachment of an ice age and what that entails for the living creatures trying to adapt to the slowly-changing earth.

Each player will assume the role of one of six major animal classes—mammal, reptile, bird, amphibian, arachnid or insect. Each begins the game more or less

in a state of natural balance in relation to one another. But that won't last: It is indeed "survival of the fittest". Through wily action pawn placement, players will

strive to become dominant on as many different terrain tiles as possible in order to claim powerful card effects. Players will also want to propagate their individual species in order to earn victory points for their particular animal. Players will be aided in these endeavors via speciation, migration and adaptation actions, among others.

All of this eventually leads to the end game – the final ascent of the ice age – where the player having accumulated the most victory points will have his animal crowned the Dominant Species.

But somebody better become dominant quickly, because it's getting mighty cold....

As the game was only available in English language at the time of this review I stick to the English keywords used on the board, which should make things a bit easier.

As GMT Games is mostly known in Europe for its Conflict Simulations Games Twilight Struggle, Paths of Glory and Commands & Colors, I should mention that the company already did produce some Euro-style games before publishing Dominant Species; one of them is Manifest Destiny, which is barely known in Germany in Austria. All those games are connected by a common element: The use of "strategy cards" keeps the game interesting and diversified, so also in Dominant Species, where the cards are used for a completely different but again very essential aspect of the game ... but more on that later.

Game play:

Players are representing a class of species and try to adapt them to their environment in the course of the game, at the same time trying to adapt the environment to the survival needs of their species. Players discover new territory in the shape of hex tiles and must cope with the ongoing encroaching of ice, represented by Tundra tiles.

As is typical in the animal kingdom species are arranged by a Food Chain, which remains unchanged throughout the whole game. Mammals before reptiles, birds, amphibians, arachnids (spiders) and insects, always resulting during the game in advantages for the species higher up in the chain when tiles are scored.

But, how are the animals fed? The game designers found a very reasonable implementation for the assignment of six different element types (food or resources) to the individual species, at least at the start of the game (pre-set starting elements on the „ani-

mal" display): Meat for mammals, sun for reptiles, seeds for birds, water for amphibians, larvae for arachnids and grass for insects.

Members of your own species can only survive on hex tiles (see survival in the reset phase), which are bordered by at least one element of their own animal display.

What is dominance?

Finally we reach the point where we can ask, what is a dominant species?

Dominance is resolved separately for each single hex tile, you only take the directly adjacent elements into account. Each type of element which corresponds to an element of your own animal display, is added in the following way to calculate the dominance value:

The number of elements of one type on the hex tile is multiplied by the number of elements on your own animal display. The dominance on a hex tile changes immediately and directly through the effects of a corresponding action-

When there is a tie in the dominance values there is in fact no dominance. Which also is the case for a dominance value of Zero, for instance in the case of mammals which can support one of their own without corresponding resources.

The board is separated into two distinct regions:

The Action Display
The Map / Earth

1. The Action Display

On this you play, direct, win and lose.

Planning phase:

First you determine in the right part of the board, the action display, what you want to do and when you want to do it. This area has been initialized before the first round of the game by drawing element chips randomly from a bag and placing them on each of the squares showing a leaf.

In sequence of the playing initiative the action markers are placed one by one onto free „eye" spots, with each action area offering only a limited number of places, so the motto is "First come first served"! When all action pawns (in short AP) have been placed by all players, the actions are executed in turn, that is from top to bottom and from left to right



within the separate regions.

You can only mark an action for execution when you really can implement it, with one exception: Blocking of initiative to become the starting player of the next round.

Execution phase:

To execute an action you must have one of your own APs on an "eye" spot in the respective area. Here comes a short description of the action areas in the sequence of their execution. A player removes his AP and executes the action immediately:

Roman Heinzinger

A very beautiful game on Earth's development, a real-life simulation of conditions long gone-by! Darwin would have loved this game.

1. Initiative

The Planning Phase is done in reverse order of the food chain; the insects begin, mammals are last. You swap the position of your species' initiative marker with that of the animal immediately to the left and thus moving one step ahead in initiative. This could be one last desperate action to be able to react.

2. Adaption

An element still present in this area is placed on your own action display and thus your species adapts to the environment. You may not place an AP if your own action display is full. This can change the dominance on several spots on the map.

3. Regression

(see also reset phase, is not done in the first round)

If present, you would have to remove elements in place here, several if necessary, from your action display. By placing of an AP you can fend off such a regression, two identical elements in this area can be deflected only by placing two APs.

The advantage for snakes here is a free AP.

At this point, too, the dominance on several spots on the map could change.

4. Abundance

An element that is still present in this area is relocated on a free corner spot between three hex tiles on the board to adapt the environment.

Now dominance on spots adjacent to the newly placed element could change.

5. Wasteland

(see also reset phase, is not done in the first round)

One of the elements present in this area is removed. Elements that have a counterpart to a Tundra square on the map are removed from the map. This happens automatically. Here, too, the dominance in squares adjacent to elements that just have been removed could change.

6. Depletion

(see also reset phase, is not done in the first and second round)

You must remove an element from the map that corresponds to an element in this area. Here, too, the dominance in squares adjacent to elements that just have been removed could change.

7. Glaciation (see reset phase)

If your AP is left-most in this section, you decide in which direction the glaciation = covering of a hex by a tundra hex is continuing. Glaciation can only happen in non-tundra tiles that are adjacent to at least one tundra tile. All animals are temporarily set aside, a tundra tile is placed. Then one animal of each kind that was present is put back on the tile, the others go back to the "gene pool". Then you score victory points in relation to the adjacent tundra tiles. Should an element be surrounded by three tundra tiles it is removed immediately from the map. This again could change dominance in neighboring tundra tiles.

8. Speciation

In relation to the element shown next to the action area you must choose one element on the map and may place animals from the gene pool on the three adjacent hex tiles up to the maximum number of animals possible for that type of hex, regardless if there are already animals of your own or other species on this tile. Spiders have the advantage to place another animal in any hex tile after speciation is finished.

9. Wanderlust

You choose one of the three open hex tiles and an element and place together on the map next to an already existing hex tile. The number of adjacent hex tiles is the basis for scoring victory points according to the scale. Then animals wander into the directly adjacent tiles in order of the food chain.

This again could change dominance in neighboring tundra tiles.

10. Migration

For each AP you move an animal one step up to the value printed next to the spot. Advantage for birds is to move two steps.

11. Competition

Depending on the location of the AP you can remove an opposing animal from up to two tiles, but you must have one of your own animals in the tile which „kills“ the opposing animal. These killed animals are not put back into the gene pool.

The arachnids are allowed one free kill in any tile before actual competition.

12. Domination

Choose a spot for scoring. The allocation of victory points is done in relations for the tile, see scale in the left area; sequence is determined by the number of animals, in case of a tie by the food chain order. Then the "dominant" player, marked by the cone of his color,

chooses a "dominant card" and executes it immediately.

13. Reset phase

Animals that cannot survive become extinct, they are not put back into the gene pool. For the survival scoring majorities are determined for animals on Tundra tiles. The number of Tundra tiles on which those animals are located is the basis for the victory points according to the scale in the left bottom area. The mammals can keep one of their own animals alive without the necessary resources. Reset means that the elements from the areas of regression, depletion and Wanderlust are removed, the others are moved down one action area according to the arrows and the now empty spots marked with leaves are filled again with elements randomly drawn from the bag.

The sequence of the action areas is very well chosen and logical, as a plan for the round only begins to emerge during the planning phase. To determine the move in advance is absolutely impossible, as in Agricola, as actions are available in a limited amount and thus are maybe not available next time.

2. The Map / Earth

Somewhat abstractly depicted, earth is in-

Continued on page 11

DOMINANT SPECIES

Designer: Chad Jensen

Artist: C. Jensen, R. MacGowan, E. Williams

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 59 Euro

Publisher: GMT Games 2010

www.gmtgames.com

EVALUATION

Development game
For experts

Version: en

Rules: en

In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Well-working mechanisms
Lots of Interaction
Varied game play
Very well structured rules
Long duration
Felicitous abstraction

Compares to:

First game of its kind

Alternate publisher:
none

My rating:



PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
12+

TIME:
240+

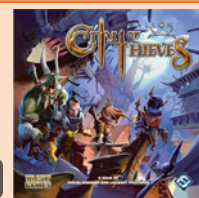


I'M AN OLD COWTHIEF AND I LOVES MY BEEF!

CADWALLON - CITY OF THIEVES

Ki Yi Yippee Yippee Yaa!

10↑



Dear children, do NOT break into other people's houses, do NOT crack open jewel boxes, and do NOT burgle whatever you can get – that is against the rules! Except, of course, in "Cadwallon – City of Thieves" – it IS the rules there. In this game, you lead a gang of four thieving characters, in most cases – very politically correct – equally composed of males and females.

Playing pieces – finely detailed, unfortunately all in plain grey plastics, although it is easy to distinguish your gang by their coloured stands – are moved on the equally nice looking game board representing a shabby town's quarter. They may enter buildings through doors or windows to do their job: looting! Whoever gains the biggest loot (toy coins, called "Ducats", because there is a Duke in Cadwallon) in the end (usually after round seven) and carries the money out of town into safety, wins.

In order to increase the complexity of the game – since all characters have equal statistics (four movement points, two six sided dice in combat, four intelligence points to help opening padlocks) and one special ability or attribute of their own (for example, one thief is more skilful while stealing, another one better when haggling over their share

with the guild of fences) –, there are some additions to the basic game mechanism. Each gang starts out with seven action points to spend in each round, disposable as you wish (or rather see tactically appropriate). Every character may move once and perform one single action (steal, fight) each turn. In addition, if possible, they may enact their special skill or ability. Some of these have to be paid for (with action point markers) – there is such a point expensive character in every gang. Each gang have at their disposal a hand of action cards (so called Arcana-Cards), one drawn at the start of each of your turns. You may almost always, even during another player's turn, play some or even all of these cards (exception: during combat only one card per player taking part in that fight). These Arcana-Cards may have an effect in combat or allow characters to walk through walls or yield some similar actions.

Before each game you choose a scenario to play. The matching cardboard sheet states the most important basic rules for that set-up – e. g., will the city militia be involved, molesting the gang members? How many rounds does this particular scenario last? Will all the exits be open at the end, or will there be some barriers to prevent the way out?

There are eight different sheets. No additional scenarios have been released to date, not even on the internet, although there are some new advancement rules as well as a handful of new action cards. In addition, the gangs may or have to fulfil scenario specific tasks – steal the duke's treasure, prevent an Undead invasion in the Night of the King of Ashes (probably similar to the Alpine tradition of the Perchtenlauf, only less creepy and less alcohol involved), or maybe rescue the duke's daughter from her captors.

"Cadwallon – City of Thieves" is set in the adventurous fantasy world of Rackham's role playing games, a big and prosperous city, not (not yet) involved in the war of Rag'narok, ravaging the land. All the looting parties haunt the same, rather shabby quarter of that city. The game components of "City of Thieves" are for the most part excellent, the games rules are short, precise, feature lots of fine pictures and sufficiently explanatory examples of game play and are quite easy to learn (although there is, as has been said many times before with many other games, a pitiable lack of structure and indexing). The balance between strategic planning possibilities and random effects is rather good, maybe with an oh so slight tip to the



random effects due to card drawing. Actually, this game could work well, some of the scenarios sound interesting, even intriguing. Unfortunately the basic situation and task stay the same for all set-ups: stealing treasure from buildings (almost in every scenario you know what is inside from the beginning), and in the end the gang having secured most Ducats win, even if they lost a gang mem-

Martina, Martin und Marcus

Exquisite game components and intriguing scenarios fail to combine into exciting game play, even though most of the necessary requirements are present.

ber or two. This puts a limit to any ambition to play "Cadwallon" over and over again. At the latest when one has played all eight scenarios once (that is, if one remains interested that long), it will not be very tempting to take the game from the shelf once more. In fact, even now there is no ambition left to think about bringing forth our own set of house rules to enhance game play. The main reason to go for this game at the moment is to get the hands on the beautiful miniature models inside. Hopefully the game's designers Bernard (Affenparty, Jumbo 2003) and Pouchain (Okko, Asmodée 2008) will launch some reasonable adjustment rules in the near future.

WIN Martina & Martin Lhotzky
Marcus Steinwender

CADWALLON – CITY OF THIEVES

Designer: Pascal Bernard, Laurent Pouchain

Artist: Miguel Coimbra, Nicolas Fructus et al.

Title de: Cadwallon City of Thives

Price: ca. 45 Euro

Publisher: Truant Spiele 2010

www.truantspiele.de

EVALUATION

A game of position and acquisition
For families
Version: de
Rules: de en es fr it
In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Beautiful components
Similar game flow despite different scenarios
Playable already at ages 10+

Compares to:

Schätze des Dunklen Turmes

Alternate edition:

Cadwallon Stadt der Diebe, Truant Spiele

My rating:



PLAYERS:

2-4

AGE:

12+

TIME:

60+



DOMINANT SPECIES

fluenced either by actions on the Action Display or directly by Dominance cards. The game develops slowly – new land areas are explored and the Tundra is expanding, resources evolve and wane, generations of species roam the earth, fight each other and are slowly doomed due to the expansion of the glaciers. The game board is getting rather confusing, as for instance birds due to migration can change their habitat rather fast.

The end of the game comes with the use of the Ice Age Card. The remaining dominance actions are implemented. In addition to scoring the Ice Age Card for victory points according to the left bottom scale in relation to the number of dominated squares each square is scored one last time.

All that doesn't sound too dramatically, but it is; the devil is in the details. Dominant Species is definitely not a fun family game, and to capture the entire scope of options might not be possible before you've played your tenth game.

It's not only made up of some EuroGames-typical elements such as Worker Placement but also of a die-hard COSIM factor.

On the map the heat is on! The coveted areas „Sea, Wetland and Savanna“ are always contested, and to dominate or at least to be represented on these areas is of „long term importance“ in any case, as you would not want your opponent to acquire a „Dominance Card“ for free or to let him have valuable victory points?

Here, then, you can see the advantage of being in front of the foot chain, those species usually participate in scoring without lots of effort, which in turn leaves them some resources for their own further development. Nor should one never be sure of one's dominance, even if the areas are as well protected as possible, the next disaster usually doesn't take long to arrive. You should always keep an eye on the cards, for example the evil „Blight“ cleans out all resources on a hex tile. There really is a constant up and down in who is currently grabbing the bad end of the stick. And yet, you should not forget to aim for victory points!

Time and again elements arrive ill-timed in the areas of „adaptation“ and „Abundance“. Should an opponent be before you and grab the advantage, you will have your hands full with the containment of a possible disaster in subsequent rounds. To have a realistic chance to react to those imponderabilities is only possible in two-player games, and this is the version where Dominant Species really has a lot to offer. For two players, the game really

Continued from page 9

gets somewhat predictable as it makes do without any use of dice and thus can be put on the same level as the tactical games such as Le Havre and Agricola on the same level.

The only drawback is the disproportionately long duration of the game, which should not be an issue for hard-core chess-players, but the six-player-game will turn into torment even for the hardened ones. You are not taking part in the game anymore, most of the time you will wait and do not have too much direct impact on the game, which means, that the game depends on the confused decisions of the players ... but could it be that I have not yet understood the game properly? That is why I prefer playing Dominant species only as a two-player-game. One can make the game more difficult by agreeing beforehand on the number of players, and for example only choose one race per player; the game will still be playable comfortably in a time span of 120 minutes. To keep the two-player game somewhat fair, we have also agreed to use a chess clock, which has contributed significantly to the game play and the maintenance of fairness.

A big plus should be awarded to the game for the well-structured set of rules. No comparison to Paths of Glory or Twilight Struggle, which still adhere more to the complicated structure of old COSIM games. No more of this here. The game is described by the flow of the game, clear graphics make it easy to understand.

A beautiful game through the development of the earth, it creates a life-like atmosphere of the prevailing conditions; Darwin would certainly have had fun with this game! Dominant Species is, for the time being, my favorite game because it impresses by its wonderful abstraction of the subject and provides – for me as a chess player – enough power and complexity, which can be continuously explored.

WIN Roman Heinzinger



HAMBURG IN THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

MERKATOR*Merchandise for wartime enemies*

What connects Hamburg and the Thirty Years' War? I was not aware of the fact that Hamburg was experiencing an economic boost in those times. Hamburg was the source that supplied the warring parties with goods. Okay, there is a harbor and a merchant can travel by ship to other countries to close deals and buy goods. Therefore I ask myself if the designer wanted to hint at the start of the era of trade wars?

Travel and acquisition of goods

Not the sale of weapons, but travelling is the central topic of this game. Travel destinations are countries in Europe, offering a different range of goods. The countries are connected to each other. Starting from a destination you use one move to reach any other country and acquire the goods available there. All in all 16 kinds of goods are on offer, two in each country. Goods are represented by 8 different kinds of goods markers, each marker can be used twofold. The goods you acquire result in delivery contracts. Each contract has a definite value, ranging from 1 to 14. If you fulfill a contract, you receive another contract with a value higher by 1 than the previous contract.

Buildings

In addition to the contracts players can set up buildings, which are paid for by the contracts. Money itself is only used to supply change and in reality is not really necessary. There is a building card in the game which is – due to a printing error – too powerful: The “Alsterhaus” earns you one point per goods marker, but should read “each kind of goods” instead of “each goods marker”, which makes this card less powerful.

Game Board

The game board shows eight main destinations with eight containers of goods markers and four minor destinations. Each main destination is connected to two or three other main destinations – simple lines – and shows a colored goods marker and two time symbols, which you either receive when you are travelling there, and must pay for when you are co-travelling to this destination.

(picture 1: The Map)

Game Set-up

Each of the goods boxes holds about 40 goods markers. One goods marker each is placed in the eight main destinations. The time board next to the game board is set up with the time markers, depending on the number of players up to 28 markers are laid out. Each player receives a personal “Office” board to store his goods and a summary tile showing scores as well as a supply tile. The supply tile lists the main destinations with the two goods available in each destination. At start you are dealt a contract of values 2 to 5. There is no money for players at the beginning, instead of money you receive time markers; the amount depends on the number of players. And, finally, you are dealt two bonus cards giving you additional goods if you travel to these locations.

(picture 2: The Set-up)

Contracts

Contracts are sorted by values 1 to 14 and are stacked open-faced in several stacks.

(picture 3: Contracts)

Bonus cards and buildings

Four cards each, featuring bonuses and buildings, are laid out, the rest is stacked.

Game Turn

A game turn comprises four different parts, which are executed in given order: Investments, travel, fulfill contracts and co-travel. In a nutshell, that means, that a player goes to a destination of his choice, takes goods their and uses them to fulfill contracts and/or set up buildings. Other players can join him and travel together with him and fulfill contracts, too. The chief traveller is paid by co-travellers with time marker. Co-travellers reap the same benefits as the chief traveller, the active player. This probably is the most interesting feature of the game which keeps it challenging.

Distribution of Goods

After each trip new goods markers are set out in the main destinations of the board. The main destinations only receive markers of their own color. When the destination of a trip is a main destination, afterwards all destinations connected to this destination receive a goods marker of the main destinations. When the destination of the trip has been a minor destination each main destination receives one goods marker if the main destination already holds the number of goods marker stated on the minor destination.

Fulfilling of Contracts

If a player holds the goods which are listed on one of his contracts he takes those goods out of his office, discards them to the appropriate box and receives a new contract. He cannot choose a new contract, but receives the top one from the appropriate stack.

Investment

If you own more than five contracts and receive a sixth one, you must invest in buildings or bonus cards in the next round. Investments are voluntary while you own five contracts or less. Surplus money is returned in the shape of coins. Money only enters the game in this way. As already mentioned, I think money is not needed in the game at all, the game needs now brush-up, and furthermore money has no importance in the outcome of the game and does not score you victory points at the end of the game.

Time Marker

The time markers, on the other hand, have a certain importance for the outcome of the game and are necessary if you want to join a traveler to co-travel. Furthermore, some destinations can only be reached if you pay the necessary time markers. With the exception of a trip to Spain and to minor destinations each trip earns you one or two time



picture 1: The Map

markers. Every time when a player starts a trip the marker is taken off the board and is now owned by the main traveler. Co-travelers do not receive time-markers, but pay time-markers to the main traveler for travelling with him. Each time, when the last marker is taken from a row; this results in loss of goods from a depot or storage location which influences all players. Players who have goods in

Erwin Kocsan

Merkator for me is one of the „99“ games, which have a fixed place on the shelves in my games collection.

those storage locations or depots must discard one goods marker.

End Phase

As soon as a player fulfills a contract with a value of 10 and receives the card „Peace of Westfalia“ or when the last time marker is taken off the time board the end phase of the game begins, each player has one more turn. In this round you need not invest and the time markers are taken from the general supply.

This end phase is followed by the scoring. First, the five most valuable contract cards are placed on your office, the rest next to the office board. You receive one victory point each for the value of the contracts on the office board, and ½ victory point for all contracts next to the office board (no rounding up or down!). Furthermore, all players score victory points from their building and add them to the contract score. If you then have achieved the highest score you win the game. In case of a tie the higher number of time markers decides the winner.

One more question

Besides the note, that money is not really necessary to keep up the interest in the game I must ask the question „Why the differentiation between main and minor destinations?“ The varying distribution of goods to the locations could also be done following another point of view or suggestion: As soon as a destination holds three or more goods,

you automatically place two more goods on all other destinations. This would somewhat even out distribution of goods to main destinations and the board would be even more clearly arranged than now.

Evaluation

The rules are short and precise. This enables you to grasp the game quickly. The design, too, follows the necessities for clear presentation and usefully complements the text. The number of components is manifold and the arrangement of components on the board is clearly structured and attractive. A note of praise is due to the storing of the goods markers in the boxes.

The topic of „Supplying the warring parties in the Thirty Years' War“, embedded in a historical context, seems to me to be a bit far-fetched as regards to the flow of the game. The main mechanism of „exchanging goods for contracts“ seems a bit worn-out and copy-cat at first glance. But due to the mechanism of Main Traveler, Co-Traveler and bonus contracts the game remains challenging and varied. The game offers active choices of what to do for all players in each phase of the game, so I have to rank it as „well-done and felicitous“.

The buildings are nondescript and at first glance are not considered to be as important as they turn out to be and as their value influences the outcome of the game. Very often the buildings are providing the difference between winning and losing the game!

Players who like a solitaire game will find that the game provides an interesting way to spend time to find strategies to achieve 60 points.

The tips for a smooth flow of the game and the variants provide challenges and variation even after a few games.

For me Merkator is a game to be played with friends, maybe even in a family with some gaming experience; my 77 years old mother likes to play it, with an emphasis on those strategic possibilities: Focus on the bonus cards at the start of the game, choose your

building cards well in relation to the goods in your office or the on the bonus cards, and try to achieve a somewhat broad selection in acquiring the goods.

wn Erwin Kocsan



picture 3: Contracts

MERKATOR

Designer: Uwe Rosenberg

Artist: Klemens Franz

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 40 Euro

Publisher: Lookout Games 2010

www.lookout-games.de

EVALUATION

A game of trade and logistics
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game use of language: some

Comments:

Good rules
Practical components
Very well-working solo version

Compares to:

Basically all games on goods acquisition and exchange, the co-travel mechanism is new

Alternate publisher:

none

My rating:



PLAYERS:
1-4

AGE:
12+

TIME:
120+



picture 2: The Set-up

COMMERCE AND ARTISANS

NORENBERC

In the medieval town of Nurnberg



Andreas Steding is a well known game designer and he usually produces games for expert players so it was with high expectations that I opened the box of Norenberc, finding it filled with a lot of materials, but ... no game board!

Instead we find 6 small heavy cardboard tablets reproducing artisan houses of the medieval town of Nurnberg (known also by the original name of Norenberc). Each "house" belongs to a Guild and shows, on the ground floor, four artisan shops, one storehouse for the produced goods and one insignia. On the first floor we find also four rooms for the future guests of the Guild. In each game we will use a number of Guilds based on the number of players: with five players, for example, we will use all 6 Guilds; with three players only Guild 1 to 4, and so on.

Each Guild has a small deck of 11 artisan tiles and a reserve of 12 goods (made with pretty shaped colored wood): each "tile" shows a picture of the artisan, a VALUE (ranging from 2 to 7) and the Guild Insignia (a yellow BEER for the brewery, a pink PASTRY for the bakery, a brown BOOT for the shoemaker, a white PAPER for the printing house, violet SCISSORS for the tailors and an orange HAT for the hatter's shop).

Each player get a small deck of 6 cards (one for each Guild), 8 agents (colored wood figures), a two faces disc (that shows a Agent on the front and the "moon" on the back), 25 Talers (coins with value of 1, 3, 5 and 10) and a coffer (a small carton board used to hide the player's money and to count the Victory points at the end of the game).

The game starts sorting randomly 5 artisan tiles for each Guild and putting them on the ground floor shops: one on the first shop on the right (this will be the Guild Master of the first turn), one on the second shop, one on the third and two on the fourth shop. Then all the goods are placed on the Guild's storehouse and each player receive one good from each Guild. Finally four "coat of arms" tiles (showing the Guild's insignia) are placed on the house. The unused artisan tiles are placed on side for future use (but I suggest to use a small cloth bag to keep all the available tiles as they will randomly selected during the game).

We also find in the box 26 "citizen" tiles and four "prestige" coat of arms: the citizens are a sort of bonus that will help the players during the game (i.e. giving you an extra Agent or some extra money, or allow you to take goods from other players, swap artisans, etc.) or will grant extra points at the game end.

They are divided into three categories: tiles to use immediately (with a white star on red disc), tiles to use at the end of the turn (with a moon symbol) and tiles to use at the end of the game (with a sun symbol).

You mix the 26 citizens together with the unused artisans (thus the utility of the bag) and randomly pick up THREE tiles for each Guild, placing them on three of the first floor rooms, starting from right and proceeding to left. Each room has a pictogram that explains how to invite this citizen to join you during the game (more on this later). The unused tiles are placed aside (or on the bag) for later use. Finally you place one of the four "prestige Coat of Arms" in the Guild that has the Master with the higher value.

There are different possibilities to win the game, but in general you should try to have a majority in more than one Guild, if possible, and a good collection of coats of arms. Extra points are assigned to the richest players, or to the players that own at least one artisan per guild, or from bonuses granted by some citizens.

Randomly decide the "play order" of the first turn and mark this with colored wooden cubes (one for each player) placed on a special rack printed on the first Guild board (the brewery). All the players initially get four Artisans while the remaining four are placed aside to be assigned (possibly) later in the game. They also keep one card for each Guild from their initial deck (the unused cards are putted back in the box).

Now all the player make their "planning" for the first round of the first turn (the game last four turns, divided in a variable number of rounds). In practice they select one or more cards and they place them (covered) on the table. When all the players have placed their cards Guild 1 (brewery) is checked: all the brewery cards are revealed and, in play order, the players place one agent on the card and make one of the following four actions:

- You may select the SALE action and thus sell any number of goods to the Guild: you multiply the number of goods by the Master's value and you get the total in Talers. The goods must be of the type produced by that Guild.

- You may BUY up to THREE gods from the selected Guild: you multiply the number of goods by the Master's value, you pay this amount in Talers and you take the goods in front of you so that the other players can see



them.

– You may also invite one of the guest citizens of the selected Guild: you pay the number of goods shown on the pictograms under the selected room and you take the citizen. Then you may move your turn order cube and place it on top of the rack, pushing down the other cubes. Finally you get a number of Talers that is equal to the number of agents already placed on this Guild. This action is a very important move as you may “invite” a citizen in one Guild just for the purpose of be-

Pietro Cremona

A pretty, well-working game that allows several strategies for winning, also suitable for families.

ing the first to act in a following Guild. Sometimes it happens that if you arrive too late you cannot find any good to purchase and thus you risk to lose a move (and an agent) – You may also pass and do nothing. Whatever is the action that you decided you must place your agent on the selected Guild (even if you pass). Then you take back your card and you place it with the other in your hand. All the Guilds are “checked” in this way and all the players use their Agents to perform one of the above actions. Then the round is closed and all the players that still own one or more agents may start a new round (again with a planning phase, followed by the agents’ placement, etc.).

When the agents of all the players have been used the turn is over and the game stops for a few minutes for a sort of “administration” phase. You check again all the Guilds (starting from number 1: brewery) and you assign the Master artisan, together with a coat of arms, to the player who owns the majority of goods of this Guild. If a Guild has also a special coat of arms the winner of this Guild takes it, too. Then all the agents are taken back and the players receive 3 Talers of taxes. The artisans on the ground floor are moved one place to the right and thus you determine the new Masters of each Guild. Finally you move to the left all the “guests” in the rooms and you fill the empty rooms with new guests (citizens or artisans) taken from the common reserve (the famous ... bag).

It is very important to decide on a strategy from the beginning because it is very difficult to change it after first turns: so if you were able to get the majority in a couple of Guilds you may decide to insist on those Guilds in order to be certain to add new artisan tiles to your reserve and thus win the final confrontation or to change your target in order to collect extra coats of arms and try to get at least an artisan per type to qualify for the special bonus at the end of the game.

The amount of money that you have is quite limited and you have to carefully decide where to invest; remember that you always see who will be the next master in each Guild and this should guide your decisions. Let’s suppose that the actual Brewery Master has a value of “2” while the following one has a value of “6”: if you buy three goods now you spend only 6 Talers and you are already on the way of getting a majority on this Guild. In the next turn you may sell the same three goods for 18 Talers (as the new Master has the value of 6) and then invest this money in another Guild. Usually all the players try to buy the cheapest goods and thus the same Guild is selected immediately, so sometimes it is necessary to diversify your purchases in order to target the majorities, also if this means to spend most of your money.

Another possibility to get a majority is to buy a certain kind of good from another Guild. This is possible because when you invite a guest you may pay the fee with different goods and these are placed in the storehouse: the cost of all the goods of each Guild is determined by the actual Master so it happens very often that you may find a cheaper good in a different Guild.

Some citizens and/or artisans grant you a new Agent: if you can gain this tile (either inviting it from a Guild or winning the majority in that Guild) you receive an extra agent that you may immediately use. So always keep an eye on all the rooms in search of those guests and be prepared to pay the requested fee: plan in advance how to be the first to play in that Guild and remember to verify that you have the right number of goods to invite the guest. Most of the fun in this game is to bypass an opponent arriving first in a Guild and deprive him of the selected target (either inviting an interesting guest or buying all the remaining goods).

In one of our games a player was able to get all the extra Agents at the end of turn 2 while the others players had only 5 or 6. On turns 3-4 he had a certain number of goods in stock and was able to win the game playing one card only per round and “passing” each time (in order not to spend money); then, when all the others players finished the agents he planned carefully the last rounds selling goods to get as much money as possible and winning majorities with only 1 or 2 goods. In effect he simply looked at the opponent’s stock and played on the Guilds where it was possible to achieve a majority at the minimum cost. In the following games everybody hunted the special tiles with the extra Agents so this kingmaker strategy was no longer possible.

At the end of turn 4 a final Victory Point (VP) phase is done. Players turn over their coffer (showing a VP track), take the turn order cube

and use it to mark their points. Look first at the citizens bonus (some of them just assign 2-3 VP extra, other add VP if you arrive second or third in a Guild, etc.) then total value of artisan points for each Guild (just add the value of all the artisans of this Guild that you own) and assign 5 VP to the higher value, 3 to the second and 1 to the third.

If you get 30 value points or more in a Guild you get extra VP.

If you have at least one artisan of each Guild you get 5 VP

If you are the richest players (total number of Talers) you get 5 VP

Finally you look at how many different coats of arms you collected and you get extra VP accordingly (i.e: 0 VP if you have only 1 or 2 coats of arms, 9 VP if you have 5, 20 VP if you have 7 or more, etc.) The player with most VP wins the game

We enjoyed this game and we went back a few times to it to try different strategies: so we may frankly suggest NORENERC to clubs, newbies or even in family because it is not so difficult to explain and to play it, but even if it is a very good game that we will play again in the future, after the excellent HANSA TEUTONICA we expected a little more from Norenberc.

wn Pietro Cremona

NORENERC

Designer: Andreas Steding

Artist: Joshua Cappel

Title de: Nürnberg

Price: ca. 45 Euro

Publisher: White Goblin 2010

www.whitegoblingames.com

EVALUATION

Resources Management
With friends
Version: en
Rules: de en fr nl
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Good Components
Topic and mechanisms go well together
Easy to learn and explain
Also good for families

Compares to:

All resources management games

Alternate publisher:

Nürnberg, Huch & friends

My rating:



PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
12+

TIME:
90+



CATAN HISTORIES:

SETTLERS OF AMERICA

Trails to Rails


The **Settlers of Catan** juggernaut continues to roll. Designer Klaus Teuber has continued to utilize and adapt mechanisms present in the ground-breaking **Settlers of Catan**, producing new games wherein elements of the parent game are recognizable, but mixing in enough new ideas and concepts to give the games a fresh feel. Many of these ideas were born in early spin-offs and continue to be modified in subsequent creations.

One of Teuber's innovations in the series is the "Catan Histories" series, which utilizes Settlers mechanisms in historical settings. The latest in the series is **Settlers of America**, which is set in the United States during the 19th century. The massive migration westward has begun, and the push is on the verge of exploding with the expansion of the rail system. Players are challenged to send forth their settlers, establish new towns, and link their rail networks to opponents' cities so their goods can be delivered. The first player to deliver all eight of their goods (ten in a three-player game) becomes an American dynasty and wins the game.

As can be expected, Settlers of America has much in common with Settlers of Catan and

many of its offspring. There are production rolls to begin each player's turn that may – or may not – produce resources. Players can trade these resources with each other in efforts to build various items and found towns. The infamous "robber baron" stands ready to block production and steal resources. Yes, the game has a familiar feel.

However, there are significant differences. Players now build settlers, trains and rail lines. Resources are required to send these settlers forth, who then settle new towns. Resources in the east are gradually depleted, forcing players to move westward. Rail lines connect a player's town to those of opponents, where goods are delivered. Victory points aren't earned. Rather, victory goes to the first player to deliver all of his goods.

Let's look at the phases of the game in a bit more detail.

Production Phase.

This is identical to that found in most Settlers games. Dice are rolled, and all areas depicting that number produce resources for players who have a town adjacent to that area. If a "7" is rolled, the robber is moved by the active

player to an area, which allows him to steal a resource from an opponent and blocks further resource production from that area until the robber is subsequently moved. In addition, all players in possession of more than seven cards must discard half, which prevents hoarding.

One of the frustrations expressed by some Settlers players is the luck factor involved with the production rolls. It is possible to go numerous turns without receiving a resource. Teuber has integrated a popular variant by awarding a gold coin to players who do not receive a resource when the production dice are rolled. Coins can be used to purchase resources and pay rail line fees. This works well and reduces some of the pain when luck isn't going your way.

Action Phase.

Players may trade resources, buy development cards and build. This phase operates similar to the original Settlers, but players may perform these actions multiple times and in any order they wish. What is built, however, is different.

a) Settlers are required to construct new



towns. Resources must be extended to construct and move them. When a settler reaches a town site, it is removed from the board and a town constructed. Each town is paired with a good, which becomes available to be moved when the town is constructed.

b) Trains are required to transport goods to opponents' towns. First, however, a player must construct rail to connect his cities to the cities of his opponents. These are con-

Greg J. Schloesser

Trails to Rails is an excellent mixture of elements based on Settlers of Catan and elements taken from railway games, needing a good balance of all possibilities and good timing. (Also on www.boardgamegeek.com)

structed in a fashion similar to roads in Settlers. Players pay resources (coal) to move a train. When a train reaches an opponent's town that doesn't already contain a good, he may place one of his goods there. Remember, players must construct their own towns in order to make goods available, so players must pay attention to both tasks.

Borrowing from other train games, when a player moves his train across another player's rail lines, he must pay that player a gold coin to utilize the route.

c) Development cards convey benefits to a player, including free resources, extra movement, etc. Since the game is won by delivering all of one's goods, there are no victory point cards present in the deck.

Note that resources must also be spent to move settlers (grain) and trains (coal). Early in the game, grain is important to construct and move settlers. As the game progresses, however, other resources – particularly coal – become more vital. Ideally, as in the original Settlers, players should construct their towns in a fashion that maximizes their chances to receive all types of resources. This, of course, creates some keen competition for favorable town sites.

Players each have two settlers and two trains available. Players begin with one of each on the board, as well as three towns. Since a settler is removed when it reaches a town site, these must be rebuilt regularly. When built, a train or settler can be placed at any of a player's towns. When placing settlers, it is important to keep an eye on lucrative expansion routes and potential resource production. Trains should be placed in areas where they can reach opponents' towns quickly in order to deliver goods.

As players migrate west and found new

towns, resource numbers are removed from their locations in the east and moved west. While this doesn't completely deplete eastern areas of potential resources, it does provide an incentive to continue the westward push. This mechanism is somewhat similar to that found in **Settlers of the Stone Age**.

At the conclusion of each player's turn, every player gets the opportunity to build. They may not move settlers or trains – just build. This is a mechanism found in the five-to-six player Settlers expansion. This does help speed-up the game, as player construct items quicker and are less susceptible to losing cards if the dreaded "seven" is rolled.

As mentioned, the ultimate goal is to be the first to deliver all of your goods. This is accomplished by constructing rail lines to link your town to opponents' towns and then moving your train to those towns to deliver goods. Of course, in order to make these goods available, you must first construct towns, which requires the construction and movement of settlers to available town sites. So, there are a lot of factors to keep in balance.

While it has many similarities and familiar mechanisms to its ancestors, Settlers of America has enough new twists and concepts to give it a fresh feel. Players must be adept at balancing all of the different aspects, and there are important timing considerations. The ability to bounce back and forth between the different actions – building, trading, moving – allows players wide creative latitude and provides ample opportunity for clever play. All of these are big pluses and would appear to make this new version one of the best in the series.

There is one significant drawback, however: time. Every game I've played has lasted three or more hours. That's simply too long. The game tends to drag as players wait to amass the needed resources. Plus, there are so many steps required to ultimately deliver a good, and players must deliver eight to win the game. That takes time – too much time. Mind you, I play and enjoy many games that have a duration of three hours or more. However, what I seek in longer games is continuing excitement and progressive development. The excitement should continue throughout the game, without a déjà vu feel from turn-to-turn. With Settlers of America, that feeling begins creeping in as the second hour is approached. As is, it is about an hour to long. There is an abundance of excitement and tension in the early and latter stages, but the middle stage tends to drag.

I am sure there are other groups that can manage to play the game in two hours or

less. I am impressed, as we have not been able to come near that time frame. I've played with thousands of folks from around the world, and I don't find our group particularly slow. I can't blame it on our group. As structured, Settlers of America is simply too long. The next time we play I plan on removing one or two towns and goods from each player. This should knock off some time, but likely at the expense of not fully developing the board. We'll have to see. If this change does not significantly reduce the time it takes to play the game, I fear that in spite of its interesting mechanisms and fresh feel, Settlers of America will fade into obscurity. That would be a shame.

wn Greg J. Schloesser



SETTLERS OF AMERICA

Designer: Klaus Teuber

Artist: D. Cochard, P. Fenlon, H. Lieske, M. Zug

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 40 Euro

Publisher: Mayfair Games 2010

www.mayfairgames.com

EVALUATION

Resources management game
With friends
Version: en
Rules: en nl
In-game use of language: yes

Comments:
Familiar elements combined with a new twist
Middle game takes too long
Good mix of mechanisms

Compares to:
Settlers of Catan, Settlers of the Stone Age and also logistics and track building games

Alternate publisher:
none

My rating:



PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
10+

TIME:
90+



БІРІБІ

БІРІБІ

von Harald Høns
WHITE CASTLE
GAMES



The Game in WIN by designer and artist **Harald Havas** (www.havas.at)

BIRIBI

Produced in cooperation with the Austrian Games Museum

A tactical game for 2 carpet makers, ages 12+

Game components:

5 identical coins per player and 1 game board (components sheet enclosed).

Game idea:

Aim of the game is to get as many coins as possible to the last opposite square.

Game preparations:

5 coins for each players are placed on the starting positions.

Game play:

Players alternate in taking turns. Each player moves one of his coins per turn, only straight or diagonally forward. You must move a coin. If you cannot move (a very rare event!) you must pass a turn or your turns until you can move again.

Biri and Biribi:

- opposing coins are conquered and are placed under your own (=Biri)
- the coin that has conquered cannot conquer another opposing coin, but can be conquered by an opposing single coin, This conquering coin is placed on top (=Biribi).
- A Biribi can neither conquer nor can it be conquered.

What changes?:

- The formation Biribi moves two steps per turn.
- Biribi moves three steps per turn, straight or diagonally ahead, it can jump over other coins.

Game end:

- A formation reaching the opposing end is separated into conquered and your own coins. Your own score one point each – when all coins have reached their target you count.
- If you got through the most coins, you win.
In case of a tie you play again.

For more information on the artist

Harald Havas see <http://www.havas.at>



1655 HABEMUS PAPAM

BUY VOTES WITH GOLD

The Pope is dead! Players are cardinals and want to be elected pope and also receive 2 tasks at the start of the game. To reach their goal they bid in each round for the most valuable cards in the display, using gems. Those cards offer the different advantages: Cardinal cards earn you one vote each; Political powers offer additional votes and money with Fa-

vor; action cards help with bids and earn you gold from your fellow players. The Camerlengo is a non-eligible cardinal and responsible for electing a pope, supplies gems and decides ties in bids. Each round of a maximum of 18 rounds comprises revealing cards, the option to play an action card, bidding 0-3 gems and taking a card. Action cards



are played simultaneously and face then and are then revealed simultaneously and implemented, starting with the Camerlengo. The bids are valid for the top card of each stack and the Camerlengo Card. In case of a tie in the number of gems in a bid the more valuable gem decides the bid, in case of an identical bid the seating order in relation to the Camerlengo. Players choose a card in sequence of their bids. The card „Black Smoke“ assigns additional money to each Cardinal with the corresponding symbol and you discard one of your cards face down. The card „White Smoke“ signals the end of the game. At the end of the round gold is given out one more time and then votes are counted from cards and gold.

An elegant fast card game that can be absolutely recommended, it gets more and more interesting the better you know the values and effects of the cards, a game with lots of depth and short duration.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-4

AGE:
10+

TIME:
45+

Designer: Christoph Bauer

Artist: Katharina Kubisch

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 15 Euro

Publisher: DDD Verlag 2010

www.ddd-verlag.de

EVALUATION

Auction game
With friends
Version: multi
Rules: de en
In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Very nice auction mechanism
Short playing time - Lots of depth - Works best when you know values and interactions of the cards

Compares to:

Toledo 1085 and other games bidding for cards



2010 SWEDISH PARLIAMENT

ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN SCANDINAVIA

Again, in 2010 Harald Enoksson has brought a game with a non-mainstream topic to Essen, this time on the topic of an election campaign for the Swedish Parliament.

Each player chooses a party, draws one card and all players sit down around the table in order of the size of the party. The smallest party begins the game.

In your turn you can play any number of cards, but only draw one. A program/event card can be played either as program or as and event, two such cards can be used to for Political Posturing or to raise an issue or to strengthen an alliance; or you play a Voter card. A program card results in the re-positioning on the scale of those parties

that are affected by the card, Alliances are strengthened or weakened and each group of voters enhanced the approbation for the parties. An event results in a change of public opinion and all parties are moved within this scale in the direction denoted on the card, even the parties in the neutral zone. Two cards as a political posturing allow you to move your own party marker on any of the 10 scales. Two cards as a topic are implemented in the same way as a program card. If you play a Voter card, some voters form an opinion and 5 parties from the card can earn votes. When all cards have been used, remaining voter cards are scored and the party with most votes is the winner.

Idiosyncratic as usual in his games, interesting as usual and also only available in a very limited number of games at Essen and now on demand, a game deliberately targeting specialist, experts and fans of fringe games.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-10

AGE:
10+

TIME:
120+

Designer: Harald Enoksson

Artist: Harald Enoksson

Title de: ident

Price: on demand

Publisher: Mondainai Games 10

www.mondainai.eu

EVALUATION

Card game on positions
For experts
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Handmade copy - Limited edition - Only available from the designer - For experienced players only

Compares to:

1960 The Making of the President and other election games, basically all games using cards to change positions of markers



51ST STATE

ONE NEW STATE INSTEAD OF 50

A card game set in the Neuroshima universe; 30 years after the United States have been destroyed a 51st state is in the making to mark revival and rebuilding. Four Factions - New York, The Appalachian Federation as Feudalistic Mining Union, The Merchants' Guild and the Mutants' Union - fight for dominance over the new state.

In each round you receive new cards in the „Lookout“ phase. Locations you can conquer and thereby acquire loot, but only once per location. Or you can cooperate with a location and thereby acquire steady albeit smaller profit in each round, or you incorporate the location into your own faction and thereby win resources and possible ac-



tions.

In total, a round of the game comprises the phases Lookout, Production, Actions, count Victory Points and clean-up. In the production phase you acquire resources, workers, contact markers, cards and victory points either through production in a base or through acquired contracts and connected or build locations or by swapping loot for resources. In the action phase players in turn have one action until all have passed – possible actions are Conquer a Location, Establish Negotiation, Incorporate a Location, Redevelop a Location, Play a new leader or exchange current Leader, Discard and draw cards, place workers or implement leader action. If you reach or top 30 points, you end the game and win.

Despite the end-time conflict topic 51st State is pure resources management coupled with worker placement and multiple uses of cards for the optimum balance of fast profit, aggression and cooperation, resulting in an excellent enjoyable game.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
12+

TIME:
60+

Designer: Ignacy Trzewiczek

Artist: P. Cieslinski, D. Crayon

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 25 Euro

Publisher: Portal Publishing

www.portalpublishing.eu

EVALUATION

Resources management

With friends

Version: de

Rules: de en pl

In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Set in the Neuroshima Universe

Dark topic

Good components

Emphasis on optimizing

resources, not conflict

Compares to:

Race for the Galaxy, San Juan



ABETTO

SHOOTOUT OVER THE ROULETTE WHEEL

Players are gentlemen gangsters on nightly forays on the roofs of the town and collect trophies in the categories Valuables, Romance and Bravery. The game board is laid out with cards representing one- and two-storey houses around a central board that is used for placing bets on the roulette wheel. At the start of a turn a Task Card is turned up,

it sets conditions valid throughout the turn for all players. Then each player in his turn chooses three actions from, Moving, Burglary, Shot or Rest; Shot can be chosen only once, the others repeatedly. Moving is paid for with one Fatigue point and additional fatigue points for crossing a road or changing floor levels. Gadgets that you acquire can be used to

support yourself or to hinder your opponents.

Confrontations and attempts at burglary are decided by the roulette wheel: players bid on color and parity of the result and win or lose loots of the burglaries or a duel. After seven rounds the winner is the player with the most trophies in his worst category. Abetto is the first game from a new Polish publisher, all in all a very creditable first work. The first thing you note is the unusual coloring that harmonizes very well with the topic of the game, and of course the roulette wheel standing in for a die roll. That's a good idea, and lots of fun, too, and also goes well with gentlemen gangsters. The German rules are a bit difficult due to random translation, but with using English rules and the German Help Card you can play without much difficulty. A solid game, if you want all the fun it has to offer use the options stated with the individual paragraphs.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
12+

TIME:
90+

Designer: Rząddek, Włodarczyk, Kołos

Artist: Bednarczyk, Chołostiakow

Title de: ident

Price: ca.35 Euro

Publisher: Admondo 2010

www.admondo.pl

EVALUATION

A game of acquisition

With friends

Version: multi

Rules: de en fr pl

In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Elegant and beautiful design

Roulette as randomizer is a

funny and well-working detail

Not-so-good German

rules - Well-working

English rules

Compares to:

Nizza for topic, Roulette

used as a stand-in for

dice is new



AFFEN ACTION

THE ELEFUNTASTIC
MONKEY SNIPPING GAME

4+

Elefun and the monkeys are playing at the beach and the monkeys need to be snipped into the water holes to earn lots of bananas. The Lagoon is set up, each player has four monkeys and Elefun is placed in one of the water holes. At the start of the game he is activated, that is pressed down to be diving, then all players try to snip their monkeys by press-

ing down their tails. You go on snipping until either all monkeys are in the water holes or Elefun surfaces in the lagoon. In doing so he lets some monkeys jump into the air again. Now all players who have a monkey in a water hole receive a banana chip for each monkey, even when the monkey sits in the same hole with Elefun.



Then a new round is started, Elefun is „submerged“ again and all take their monkeys and start snipping. So you go on playing until all bananas are given out. If then you have most bananas you win the game.

When all players are trained monkey snippers, you can block one of the water holes and place the water lily blocker into one of the holes to block. Monkeys that are snipped into that hole do not earn their owner a banana.

Affen Action – Action with monkeys, basically a totally simple game, and once again an example for careful, painstaking fostering of a brand and a theme-world of games. Elefun, the butterfly-blowing elephant, and his friends have been the backbone of the children games range for some years and a guarantee for pretty topics and quick simple mechanisms. Letting the monkeys jump is fun, the 3D components are attractive and functional, and a good training for hand-eye-coordination and target snipping is included!

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
4+

TIME:
15+

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 18 Euro

Publisher: Hasbro / MB 2011

www.hasbro.de

EVALUATION

A game of dexterity
For children
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Games theme world Elefun & Friends - Very simple rules and mechanism
Children can play alone

Compares to:

Other snipping games and dexterity games with hit-a-target



AGRICOLA GAMERS' DECK

ASTRONOMER, BARD AND BEEHIVE OVEN

1

Agricola was and is one of the most successful games of the last few years. You improve and expand your farm, build and renovate huts, till the soil, have a family and look after your livestock. The first big expansion is Agricola Farmers of the Moore. It introduces peat and forest and thereby wood and fuel. This in turn influences the health of

the family.

The Gamers' Deck is a set of cards for Agricola, created and play-tested by Fans of the game on the play-agricola.com platform on the internet, where all fans of the game can design and play-test new cards. As the cover explicitly names Uwe Rosenberg and Friends as developers of this deck, the designers are men-

tioned here:

I-Sheng Yang, Ellen Yeh, Michael Wake, Dan Schwab, Justin Joshua Schleifer, Matt Ludbrook, Nicu Zavada, Ira Fay, Bryann Turner, Chris Deotte, Andrw Wolfson & Devin Block, Brian Hartwig, Chi Yam Wan, Marc Thompson, Trey Alsup, Kevin Richardson, Hunter Stenzel, Michael Korn, Abe Lewis, Fred Bush, Tedd Mullally, Tim Condit, Dylan Block, Viktor Luke-nics, Keith Gell, Devin Block, Norbert Szongott.

The set comprises 59 Minor Improvements and 60 Occupations, it can be used as a stand-alone set or can be shuffled into the other decks. The deck is targeted at experienced Agricola players, who already know the game. All fans of Agricola, always on the look for new expansions and versions for their favorite game, will have fun with this deck. It offers interesting details and possibilities for the basic game, you must know the interactions and demands of the game well for optimum use of the Gamers' Deck.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-5

AGE:
12+

TIME:
150+

Designer: Uwe Rosenberg + friends

Artist: Klemens Franz

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 13 Euro

Publisher: Lookout Games 2010

www.lookout-games.de

EVALUATION

Expansion for Agricola
For experts
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Only for use with the basic game
Developed and tested on the net
For experienced Agricola players only

Compares to:

Agricola



ANTWERPEN

PORTS OF EUROPE

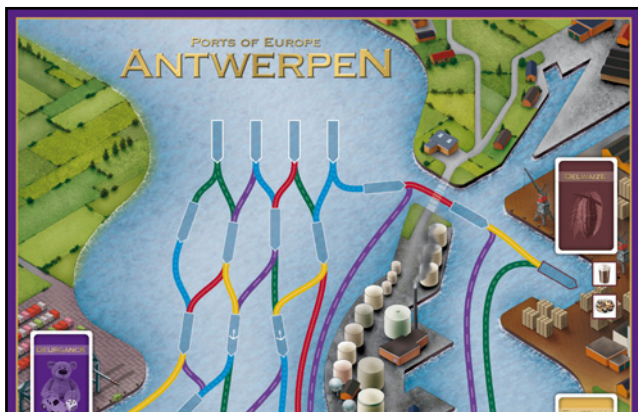
8+

Following Rotterdam now comes Antwerp in the series Ports of Europe. Players direct a fleet, transport resources and process them in the harbor into manufactured articles, all in order to dominate Antwerp Harbor with the majority of victory Points. The game works in analogy to its predecessor Rotterdam, with some new details and some amendments.

The order of moves in your turn is now up to your choice. Sluices are a barrier between the inner and outer harbor, you can reach the docks only if you own the necessary cards to operate the sluices. The river Schelde and the new harbor introduce double shipping channels, the sluices already mentioned and a transit harbor. Furthermore, resources

differ from manufactured articles. Those have a value between 1 and 4 points, orders can earn you up to 10 points. The joker ship card is missing and there are new ship cards in Antwerp. This is amended by special action cards and ships now deliver the goods directly upon arrival in the harbor. In your turn you can put a ship with a resource of your choice on a starting position, name a color and move all ships on channels of that color, or you can swap an order or swap products with other players, or fill and order or play ship cards or play sluice cards. When you have filled three orders all players have one final turn and then you score points for filled orders and manufactured article cards, the winner is the player with most points.

Antwerpen is a very well-working game with attractive mechanisms, works well with any number of players and the rule changes result in a fantastic game for the whole family.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
45+

Designer: Hans van Tol

Artist: W. Euverman, Y.-C. Scholten

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 30 Euro

Publisher: The Game Master 10

www.thegamemaster.nl

EVALUATION

Transport and logistics game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr nl
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Attractive rule amendments
Good mechanism for movement
Rule changes result in a simpler and more straightforward game than Rotterdam - now a good family game

Compares to:
Rotterdam



AUF DIE BIRNE

COUNT THE APPLES, PEARS AND MAGGOTS

7+

Harvest time in the fruit orchard, but unfortunately there are maggots in some of the beautiful pears or apples, so check carefully! Players count in their mind the number of apples, pears and maggots on cards that are played and name the correct number at the right moment, correct answers earn you harvest cards. There are two versions of

the game:

Off the Top of Your Head: All cards are shuffled and dealt evenly to all players. Then in turn you turn up a card from your stack and place it in the middle, all add up apples, pears and maggots. When a harvest card appears, you try to grab a number chip as fast as you can and then in order of the chips

you may give a guess on the number as demanded by the harvest cards, apples, pears and maggots on the harvest card do not count! If you name the correct number or are nearest to it you receive the harvest card.

You are supposed to be 11 Friends: Only the windfall cards are dealt to the players, each player receives two harvest cards, the rest is stacked. Then in turn a card is played into the middle. If you believe that there are 11 pieces of a kind in the stack, hits the stack. If you are the quickest you name the kind with 11 pieces in the stack. If you are correct you receive a harvest card from the stack. If you are wrong, you lose a harvest card. In both versions you win with the most harvest cards when all windfall cards have been distributed.

This is a fast simple counting and memo game, the challenge is in remembering the numbers and naming them at the right time. A good adding-up-training for first-year-pupils! Good fun for the whole family!



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
7+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Manfred Reindl

Artist: Gabriela Silveira

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 13 Euro

Publisher: Zoch 2011

www.zoch-verlag.com

EVALUATION

Counting game with cards
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Nice topic - Simple rules
Good for families as well as for children playing alone
Adding-up training for first-year pupils

Compares to:
All counting and reaction games



BITS

GETS COLORS INTO SHAPE



Bits is a placement game based on the placement game Fits, this time it features 20 tiles for each player, made up from two squares in all possible combinations of five colors. A task card is turned up and all players try to form the shape depicted on the card, exactly and as often as possible. Each player draws a starting card and takes the cor-

responding starting tile for his area. Then one building card after the other is turned up and each player places this tile on his area. The tile must be slid down the ramp and touch either the ramp end or other tiles, and you can fill only gaps that can be filled by sliding the tile, not those that need lifting and replacing the tile. If no-one can place a tile

anymore the round is scored. Depending on the task card you must reproduce form and/or color exactly, for the shape no additional area can be bordering along the edges. In each round a task card is added from the corresponding stack and you try to execute all task cards. After three rounds for a standard game and four rounds for an advanced game the winner is the player with the highest score.

Bits at first glance looks simple, but isn't simple at all in its demands. Because you need to check for formation of exact shapes and must avoid formation of bigger areas, because you do not score with those even when the shape from the task card is part of the area! And furthermore, there are the multiple tasks from the cards, so often you have to choose which what you want to score! Bits offers a challenging placement game with simple rules for fans of abstract topics.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
45+

Designer: Reiner Knizia

Artist: W. Pepperle, Schwarzschild

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 28 Euro

Publisher: Ravensburger 2011

www.ravensburger.de

EVALUATION

Placement game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Abstract placement game
Cumulative implementation of tasks - All play on their own
Solo version listed

Compares to:

Fits and other placement game with formation of shapes



BLOCKERS!

PLAN! BLOCK! WIN!



Three steps to win – plan, block und win! For this you place one tile in each of your turns and try to position your own tiles in the least possible number of groups on the board.

A group consists of tiles of the same color that touch each other orthogonally along the edges. At the start of the game you draw 5 tiles from your stock for your rack

and at the end of your turn you draw one tile. So you only know five of your tiles at a time, the others are face-down.

A letter and a number tile can only be placed into the respective columns or rows, a symbol tile must be placed on the same symbol on the board itself. You can replace a tile of another color with one of your own tiles, but

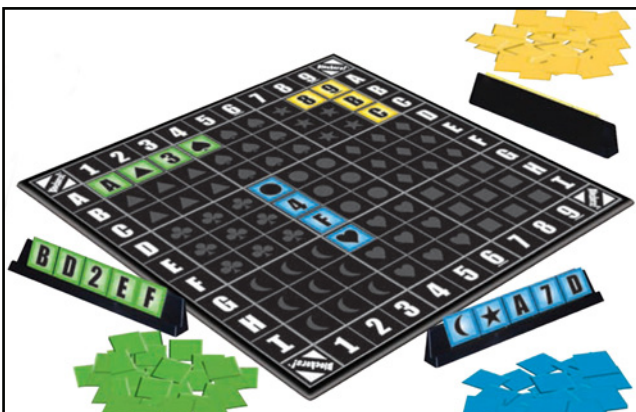
you must take up the replaced tile and you can only replace a tile if – when you take it from a group of 3 or more – you do not split the group. A joker replaces any tile. You cannot pass your turn.

When only 4 tiles are left on your rack you score 1 point for each group of your color on the board and one point for each tile in the biggest color group from which you did have to take up tiles, each single tile is a group. In case of a tie you only score the points once.

The player with the fewest points wins. In the expert version for 2 players each player plays with 2 colors on separate racks.

Blockers! is a nice version of the mechanism of group forming on pre-set spots. Interesting in this version is the scoring and the picking up of replaced tiles.

Some planning is definitely possible and very necessary, as there are only 81 places for 140 tiles if you play a game of 5.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
8+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Korey Heath

Artist: Rick Soued, Pixel Prod.

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 20 Euro

Publisher: Amigo 2011

www.amigo-spiele.de

EVALUATION

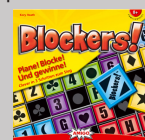
Placement game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Abstract game - Special rule for 2 players - Picking up of replaced tiles is an interesting detail
Good balance between planning and chance

Compares to:

Other placement games with group formation and using pre-set spots, e.g. Sequence



CRABS

STASH THE RIGHT COLOR!

7+

Players are out to fish for crabs with their ships. The crab tiles placed are in the bag, each player chooses a color and the number of crab figurines necessary for the number of players is set out. You draw 6 crab tiles from the bag and place them behind your screen.

In your turn you must place one crab tile and can take a crab and

put into the storage hold of your ship in front of your screen.

To place a crab tile you slide it into the board from any direction, in a straight line until it meets an obstacle, that is, another crab or an island. Empty spots must remain reachable in a straight line. You try to create groups of crabs in your color, which are connected along the



sides of the tiles. Only groups of 3 or more crabs score positive points, a single crab is worth -1, 2 crabs are worth 0, 3 crabs score 1 point, 4 crabs earn you 3 points and 5 or more crabs in a group are worth 5 points.

In the storage hold there is only room for one crab of a color and no crab of a given color can be placed on the same multiplier as with another player. If you are the first one to place a pink crab on x3, you block x3 for pink in other players' holds. The crab color on a multiplier scores you the points for crabs in that color. When all tiles are placed, the scores for groups of crabs in each color are determined and marked on the scale. Then each player scores points according to the color of the crabs in his hold.

Crabs is basically a simple group formation game, but the detail of the storage hold is crafty, you need a good balance between greed and too early revelation of your choices!

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
7+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Adam Kałuża

Artist: Piotr Socha

Title de: Kraby

Price: ca. 20 Euro

Publisher: Granna / Red Glove 10

www.granna.pl

EVALUATION

Placement game
For families

Version: en

Rules: pl en it

In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Granna games at Red Glove since 2010 - Simple rules
Attractive design, good components - Indirect scoring by choosing crabs is a clever detail

Compares to:

Ingenious and games on scoring color groups



CROWS

THEY LOVE ALL THAT GLITTERS!

Players want to attract lots of crows with their shiny objects and thus score points. To do so you place tree tiles showing 0 to 3 crows or trash or trinkets or cemeteries in a given starting display. You begin the game with 1 trash tile and 1 Shiny Object.

Each round comprises one turn per player, then crows flock and players score points, then the

murder = flock of crows scatters and the round ends.

In your turn you place a tile from the stock or your own trash tile on a free spot in the display, according to exact placement rules, and then place the necessary crows on the new tile. Then you place your Shiny Object on a free tile without crow pieces, but not on a trash tile. If you place it on

a tree without crow you receive a special token that you can use later for special effects, e.g. „no cemetery“. For the crows flocking you move crows in straight line to the next shiny object in the same row or column, with exact rules for gaps, trash and trinket tiles. Then each crow with your own Shiny Object scores you 1 point, or 2 points if on a cemetery. When there are more than 6 crows on a tile after flocking, the murder scatters: 2 crows mate and go out of the game, the others are redistributed. Then you discard special tokens that you did use and take back your Shiny Object. When all tiles have been placed you score for unused special tokens and then the player with most points wins.

Crows is a very tactical placement game with an unusual but very coherently executed topic, you must plan well for placing your Shiny Object. With the rule variations provided it turns into an excellent family game.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
10+

TIME:
45+

Designer: Tyler Sigman

Artist: Patrick LaMontagne

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 30 Euro

Publisher: Valley Games 2010

www.valleygames.ca

EVALUATION

Placement and amassing game
With friends

Version: multi

Rules: en de fr

In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Unusual, attractive topic - Rules variants for a simpler family game - Special tokens and tile interaction allow enough tactics

Compares to:

Placement games scoring points for positions in relation to other positions



DIGGER

MINE GEMS WITH DICE

8+

Players are mining for gold and gems in the jungle and try to collect as many gems as possible and to stow them away in their treasure chest before sundown. When there is no water left, the player with the most valuable gems in his treasure chest wins the game.

All gems are laid out in the middle of the table; each player has a

treasure chest board, white side up in the basic game. In your turn you roll the dice, sort the gems you did win by color, and stash them in your chest before sundown, symbolized by a timer of 30 seconds. You can only mine gems in colors that are visible once on all your dice after a roll. You can re-roll, but must re-roll all 5 dice. If there is one black

result in your roll you can steal gems from your fellow players in colors that are present once in your roll. If you dislocate gems while stealing your turn ends immediately and you must put back all gems taken in this move to the stock. If you want to stop rolling you must stack the gems, sorted by color, on your chest board. Blue water stones go out of the game. When the gems are stacked you call stop! When the timer has not yet run out at that point in your turn you keep all gems. The player who is current "Master of Time" keeps the timer hidden from you, turns it over when you start tolling and must call stop when the time runs out before you call stop. In this case you lose all gems that are not yet stacked.

Digger is a very pretty family game, nicely packed in a sturdy round tin, the well-known standard stop-your-turn-on-time mechanism has been attractively varied by using the hidden time factor.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-5

AGE:
8+

TIME:
15+

Designer: Roberto Fraga

Artist: not stated

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 12 Euro

Publisher: Jeux Descartes 2010

www.asmodee.de

EVALUATION

Dice and accumulation game

For families

Version: de

Rules: de

In-game use of language: no

Comments:

2. Game in the round tin packaging - Two versions - Variant of the Can't Stop mechanism - Simple rules - Good family game

Compares to:

Can't Stop, Six and other stop-your-turn-on-time games



DISCOVER INDIA

KOLAMS WITH GROUPS OF SYMBOLS

8+

Player are travel through India as a group. The country is divided into regions, roads connect the cities and each player has his own individual game board, a Kolam. At the start of the game a symbol tile is placed into each city, a stack of 5 tiles go into the airport cities. The starting player begins in an airport city. Then the active player moves his marker,

either into a free city adjacent to the target city of the previous player or to another airport. If a player has flown the next one cannot do so. Cities are adjacent when connected by a road. Then you take the tile of the city you reached and draw another tile for the city if necessary. The first tile you take always goes to the barter spot of your Kolam, from

your 2nd tile on you can place a new tile either directly on your Kolam or swap it with the tile in your barter spot or place it in another player's barter stop and take his tile there and place it in your Kolam for the cost of one victory point. In cities with a festival marker you receive a card, too, and relocate the festival marker. When all Kolams are filled, you score groups of identical symbols on your Kolam and city cards you own, the player with the highest score wins.

In a version you can place the tiles acquired in cities with a festival markers face down on your Kolam, this connects identical symbols that are not adjacent. The cards picked up there also count for symbols.

Discover India is a nice game movement and acquisition, which is upgraded by the Kolam mechanism, the Challenge version offers quite a lot of tactics for the collection of identical symbols.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
8+

TIME:
45+

Designer: G. Cornett, P. Sylvester

Artist: C. Stephan, M. Hoffmann

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 30 Euro

Publisher: Queen Games 2010

www.queen-games.de

EVALUATION

Movement /acquisition game

For families

Version: multi

Rules: de en

In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Nice components
Attractive version of standard mechanisms
Challenge-version allows more tactical play

Compares to:

All other travel games with collecting objects



DITO

DO YOU KNOW WHAT I THINK?

Aim of the game in this game of communication is to give answers that are the same as the answers of other players, the more the better. Each player receives his equipment of drawing board, pen and sponge. And then there are the "Was" cards featuring nouns which are categories, for instance animal or magazine or film, and the "how"

cards, giving a characteristic, for instance old or anything or serious.

If you are the active player you roll the die and depending on the result all players play by themselves or all draw a response or you can choose a partner and answer together. Then you turn up one what-card and one how-card and – depending



on the die result – each player notes down an answer or makes a drawing or you choose your partner and agree on an answer or drawing, all others play by themselves. Then all answers or drawings are revealed, if you are among those who gave the most frequent answer you can cross out a spot in your column on the board. If there are no double or multiple answers nobody scores. When different answers occur with the same frequency, all players giving one of those answers score a point. The first player to score 8 points wins the game.

As is the case in all those games on answer correlations, it is important not to be too narrow in your interpretation, especially when the group is heterogeneous as regards to age. Two pony tails for "funny" and "hair-do" may be easy to identify, but "funny" would be debatable. And as in all such games, the fun comes from the group and how they handle it when a combination of „serious“ and „beverage“ turns up.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-6

AGE:
8+

TIME:
25+

Designer: not stated

Artist: Nuyens Kristine

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 22 Euro

Publisher: University Games 09

www.universitygames.de

EVALUATION

Game on correlations
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de nl
In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Standard mechanisms
Nice choice of definition
Games plays very fast

Compares to:

All communication
games scoring correlations



DOMORY

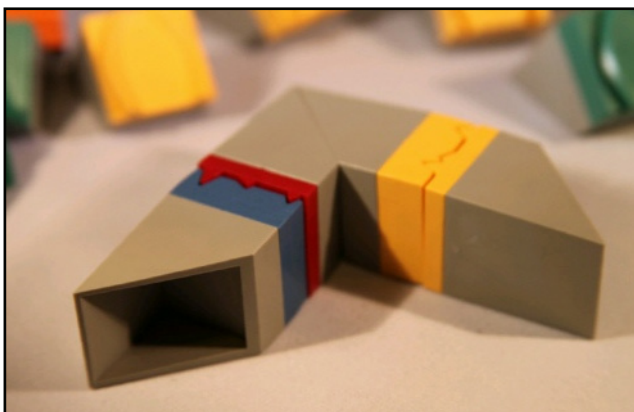
RED ARCHS IN RED GROVES

4+

You play a memo- and placement game with 60 unusual and very pretty pieces. The pieces are gray cuboids cut on the bias with a colored base, in five different colors. The colored base shows a pattern, either convex or concave. Convex and concave identical patterns fit together.

The Version ORY is the memory version of the game. All pieces

are placed color base down into the grid of the box bottom. Then in turn you draw any 2 pieces out of the grid. When the bases correspond in ridge and grove pattern and also in color you keep both pieces and draw two new ones. When the pieces do not fit, you put them back and the move ends. When all pieces have been taken, the winner is



the player with most pairs.

DO is the Domino variant for the Domory pieces, depending on the number of players you take 10, 14 or 20 pieces from the grid. Two pieces are placed – slanted sides together – for starting pieces in the middle of the table. In turn you place one of your pieces with a corresponding pattern at one of the ends and then any other one with the slanted side to give the next player two pattern ends. If you cannot place a pattern side you draw a piece. The level of difficulty can be varied by leaving out colors or not taking colors into account at all. If you take out pieces you must take care to remove corresponding ridge and grove patterns. Domory is a fantastic, unusually attractive and challenging version of standard game mechanisms, also very nicely playable for blind or visually handicapped players; and a good training for observation and pattern recognition which is fun, too.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
4+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Silke Kegeler

Artist: Silke Kegeler

Title de: ident

Price: auf Anfrage

Publisher: Einfach gut 2011

www.einfachgut-online.de

EVALUATION

Memory and placement game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Unusual, beautiful components
Simple, standard rules
Good for persons with special needs

Compares to:

All games of memory,
placement and touching



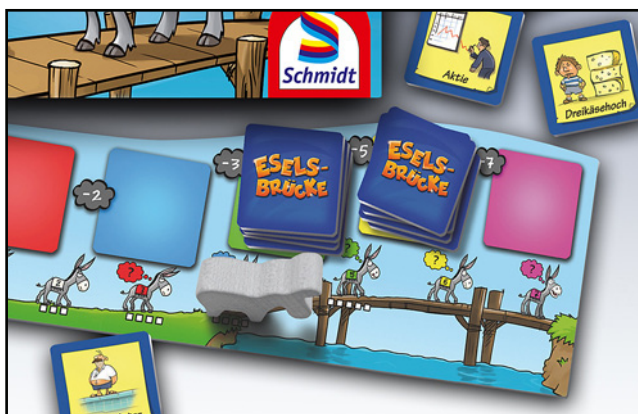
ESELSBRÜCKE

HAVE FUN WITH MNEMONIC TRICKS



In the first two rounds of the game players or teams tell stories with the help of randomly drawn picture tiles, stories should be as interesting and original as possible to make them memorable. The number of tiles you must use is given for each round. From round 3 on you first tell a new story and then distribute the tiles of a story already told,

clockwise, to the next players. Now in turn you use the tile to remember another element of the story and name it. If you remember correctly you receive the tile with this element from the player currently holding it, for a victory point. If you make a mistake you stop guessing for the round. If you did not get a tile you can only guess when players ahead



of you make a mistake. When all elements have been named or everybody made a mistake the game goes on with the story of the next player and subsequent distribution of his story tiles. If you made a mistake you must discard story tiles already received. When all elements have been remembered correctly, the narrator gets a stop-tile for his victory-points stack. If a stop tile is turned up when discarding penalty tiles for a mistake it stops the discarding. When all stories have been told and their tiles distributed and remembered, the player with the most tiles wins.

A colloquial term has been turned into a game very attractively, the game offers lots of fun and demands a talent for short, concise story that are easily remembered. The better your story is told the better it will be remembered and earn you a stop-tile! Creative fun for the whole family and for larger groups, because you can play in teams!

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-12

AGE:
8+

TIME:
45+

Designer: R. zur Linde, S. Dorra

Artist: Michael Menzel

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 25 Euro

Publisher: Schmidt Spiele 2011

www.schmidtspiele.de

EVALUATION

Memory and story telling game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Very attractive and fun mechanism - Good drawings
Works best with short, very individual stories

Compares to:

Other story-telling games with memorizing certain words



EVAS WELT

OUTSIDE-THE-BOX THINKING!



In Evas World there are buildings, a car, a tractor & trailer, a swimming pool, trees, a pasture and much, much more. All those things are pictured on 48 discovery cards, items are presented as seen from all possible directions. On the game board with 12 inner squares all those things are pictured when being looked on from above, as you would do

from an airplane.

At the start of the game the players randomly place their markers anywhere on the board. Then in turn you roll the die and move your marker accordingly in any direction over the 12 inner squares, but not diagonally. Then you look at the four squares adjacent to the square with your marker and try to image how

the item pictured on this square would look if you would see it standing on the ground. Then you search the display of discovery cards for the corresponding picture for each of the four squares and take the pictures. Your neighbor to your left controls the picture by turning it over. If there are not enough pictures left take those still available. When all cards have been given out, the player with most cards wins.

Evas World offers a very unusual mechanism for a children or easy family game, the rethinking of a top view into a side view is not easy for some adults, either. For children it is a wonderful training for spatial thinking and spatial imagination. The game also trains the ability to go from abstract to concrete, for instance to identify a blue-and-white pattern with a red circle in one corner and a yellow rectangle at one side as a swimming pool before thinking how this might look when standing before it.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
6+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Daan Kreek

Artist: Christian Fiore

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 20 Euro

Publisher: Noris Spiele 2011

www.noris-spiele.de

EVALUATION

Game on spatial thinking
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de fr it
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Unusual mechanism
Good learning game
Different pictures for each item depending on viewing point

Compares to:

First game of this kind



EXPEDITION SUMATRA

GET ANIMALS OUT OF THE JUNGLE

8+

Players are big game hunters contracted by zoos to roam the jungles of Sumatra to find specimens of threatened species, catch them and load them onto lorries and ships.

In your turn you have four actions, which you choose from a range of five possible action and at the same time implement tile functions that can change the

current situation. Possible actions to choose are: Changing paths, you turn a tile or tilt a tile without a lorry on an adjacent free square. If an animal appears you place a corresponding marker, effects like Muntjak, Trap, Native, Field Glasses or Storm are executed – move your own lorry, if it reaches the ship animals are loaded from the lorry onto



the ship – load an animal onto the lorry – steal an animal from an opposing lorry, this costs 2 actions – move your own ship one step forward or backward. Then you move your ship, in relation to the location of your lorry with the big storage space, 1 to 4 squares. Path tiles that have been cleared are replaced by new ones from stock. When a player has filled all storage space or there are no more path tiles in stock or the first ship has circled the island you score points for animals onboard your ship and bonuses for filled storage spaces, executed orders and circling the island.

Expedition Sumatra offers an acquisition game with nice graphics and coherent topic. You must always try to use the actual situation for optimum results, the load restrictions for the lorries and ship movement in relation to lorry locations demand pure logistics which are influenced by the changing paths and events.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
45+

Designer: B. Stöckmann, J. Jahnke

Artist: Gandzel, Włodarska, Rorot

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 35 Euro

Publisher: Igramoon 2010

www.igramoon.de

EVALUATION

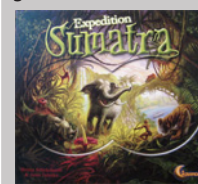
Placement and acquisition game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Very attractive design - Unusual mix of chance and logistics
Very nice family game

Compares to:

Auf Achse and other games of logistics, otherwise all roll & move games with events



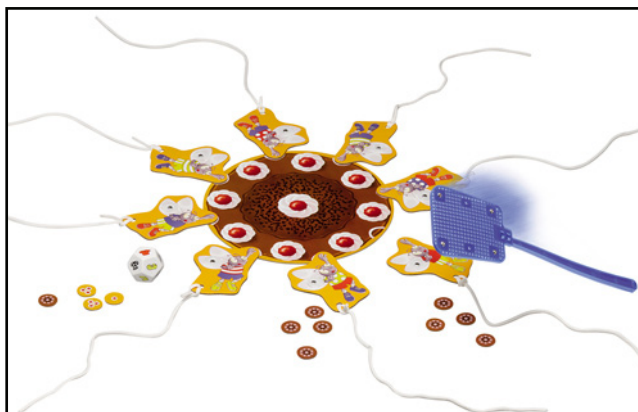
FLINKE FLIEGEN

CATCH A FLY TO GET SOME CAKE

6+

Flies want to eat cake, but the flycatcher is on the watch. Players alternate in being flies or flycatchers, all want to collect most of the cake with most cherries on them. If you currently play a fly, you hold the strings of two adjacent flies. If you are the catcher of the round you roll the die and try to catch a fly wearing clothes of the pattern rolled. If one of your

flies shows such a garment, you quickly draw the fly away from the cake before the flycatcher can slap it with his swatter. The patterns on the die are valid for all colors and colors are valid for all patterns. If no fly shows the pattern from the die the catcher may try to get any fly and so all players are allowed to pull their flies away. For correctly caught



or incorrectly withdrawn flies the catcher takes a piece of cake from the fly owner. For an incorrectly caught fly the flycatcher gives a piece of cake to the owner of the fly. Then the flycatcher has a second turn to catch flies. When this second attempt has been scored, the next player in turn becomes flycatcher, the former catcher takes over his flies. When each player has been flycatcher at least once and one player is out of cake pieces, the winner is the player with most cherries on his pieces of cake. The combination with the cake topic and the garments turns a well-known standard mechanism into a nice family game that makes you look really closely to make sure that you do not pull away the wrong fly. Especially nice is the marking for the alignment of the flies. This avoids errors and can also be changed for the 2nd attempt for a more challenging game.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
6+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Christoph Behre

Artist: Klemens Franz, Bluguy

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 15 Euro

Publisher: Kosmos 2011

www.kosmos.de

EVALUATION

A game of dexterity and reaction
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Standard basic mechanism
Very nicely varied - Topic fits the mechanism well - Trains observation and reaction

Compares to:

Spitz pass auf! and other reaction games with a catch/pull away



FROG RUSH

HOME AND SAFE FROM THE STORK!

7+

All frog families are rushing home across the pond and are hindering and jostling each other, besides being in constant danger from the hungry stork. In your turn you roll the die: When the result is a number you move one of your frogs accordingly, you need not use the full number of steps and can move diagonally, too. Or you can jump over

an adjacent frog onto a free spot, chain jumps are possible, but you can never ever jump over the stork. If you roll orange you move the stork on any frog of your choice, this frog is eaten by the stork and removed from the game. Frogs that have reached their home ground, that are the 9 spaces at the other side of the pond, are safe. If you did bring



home all your frogs that have not been eaten, you end the game and the winner is the player with the highest score from frogs on the beach (1), on the rocks (2) and on the bench (3).

True to the principle governing all Lego games this one, too, is made so that you can easily change or extend the game according to your own ideas, some ideas are already given in the rules: For a die result of 2 or 3 you can split the steps between your frogs or you can waive your turn to roll the die and instead bring one of your frogs that had been eaten back into the game or – in a game for of three – you can all start on the same side of the board and all bring home your frogs to the opposite side.

As all Lego games this one too is very attractive, with beautiful components and a nice story, the rules are simple and easily adaptable, in short, Frog Rush is a pretty family game that is also good for children playing on their own.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
7+

TIME:
20+

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 13 Euro

Publisher: Lego 2011

www.lego.com

EVALUATION

Roll & Move game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it nl
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Nice topic - Attractive components - Changeable die - Home-made rules can be published

Compares to:

All other Lego games



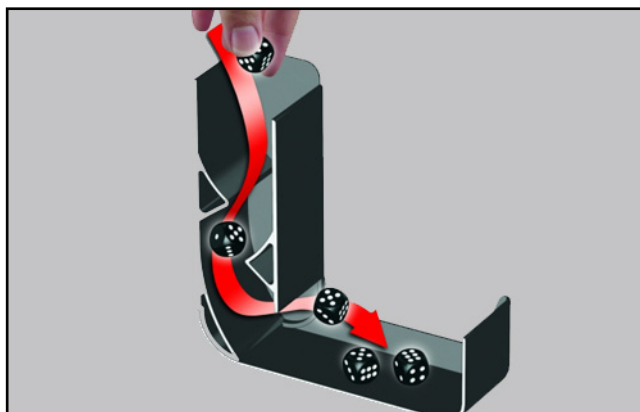
GEIZEN

COLLECT MANY CHIPS, GIVE AWAY A FEW

7+

Geizen is game Nr. 4 in the new series of dice games, by the name of Roll & Play. All players try to acquire as many chips as possible and to have to relinquish as few as possible. Depending on the number of players you start with 18 to 25 chips and take turns to roll the dice. You throw all dice into the tower and must then set aside at least

one die in each roll - you can set aside more than one, if you want - until all dice are set aside. Then you place chips onto the board according to result on the dice, always into the first free spot of the row indicated by the die value. On the 1st spot of rows 1 and 2 you must always place two chips. Chips you need to place on green spots come from your



own stock, chips to be placed on yellow spots you take from general stock. For a 6 you need not place a die. If you place a chip on a red spot you can take all chips from that row, then all other players must relinquish chips into the general stock according to the number next to red spot. If you empty a row and dice with the row number are still left over, you place again chips into that row. Chips in rows that you did not empty remain there. In your turn you can, if necessary, borrow up to 5 chips from general stock, but must give them back at the end of your turn. If you are out of chips at the end of your turn, the game ends and the player with most chips wins the game.

Geizen very attractively and cunningly varies well-known standard mechanisms and in addition to this captivates with the stable and sturdy box, which doubles as dice cup – an ideal game for travelling or for playing out of doors.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
7+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Leo Colovini

Artist: Dennis Lohausen

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 13 Euro

Publisher: Schmidt Spiele 2011

www.schmidtspiele.de

EVALUATION

Dice game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de fr it
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Series: Roll & Play Nr. 4 - Simple rules - Box doubles as dice cup - Well-known mechanisms nicely recombined - Good for travelling

Compares to:

Engel & Bengel, Gambler, Sharpshooter and other dice game



GLENN'S GALLERY

SECURE YOUR JOB WITH PREDICTIONS

The owner of Glenn's Gallery is not an amiable boss, you need to keep informed on trends in the world of the arts and predict which styles will attract most customers. Five galleries with differing layouts of rooms = spots for predictions are on display, each room shows the basic points Glenn is awarding for correct customer predictions.

The customers are represented by cards. In each round = month you receive cards for customers and/or art students, which drive off paying customers. If you play a customer into a gallery he is simply added. If you play an art student, you take away a customer from the gallery and discard him together with the student. Then you can place on



of your prediction marker – together with the bonus marker in the first round only – and hope that by the end of the month exactly that number of customers will be present in the gallery. At the end of the round you have one more opportunity to play a card and discard cards. Then the customers in each gallery are counted you score the basic points and bonuses. If you predicted incorrectly you must discard the marker. As soon as Glenn has acquired an expert in each style of art, that is there is at least one player in each category showing a value of 5 or more all values of 5 or more are added for each player and you win with the highest score.

Glenn's Gallery is a simple elegant game demanding lots of observation and reasoning, in each round a bit over half of the cards are in play and you must observe closely what other players predict and where they place cards. It is better to predict less and later but exactly!

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-5

AGE:
10+

TIME:
45+

Designer: Reiner Knizia

Artist: Chris McGloughlin

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 40 Euro

Publisher: Mayfair Games 2010

www.mayfairgames.com

EVALUATION

Card placement game

With friends

Version: en

Rules: en

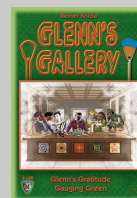
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Re-edition of Members Only
Topic and mechanism go well together - Beautiful design

Compares to:

All games with result prediction



GRIMOIRE

SPELLBOOK FOR TIME SPELLS

Grimoire is the French word for a spell book and each player holds one such book, complete with a book mark. Why? Well, each player is an adventurer on the hunt for treasures and uses his grimoire to find those treasures and also companions. Two kinds of treasures are available, either tasks cards that must be executed, that is, find treasures

or companions, or item cards which you can acquire by using special effects.

In each round a display of number of players + 1 task cards is prepared. Each player first determines a page using his spell book and his book mark. This page selection determines the order of play and also determines the kind of spell that will

be used by this player in this round: Attack, Defense, a Time Spell to turn around the order of play or "Creation" for item cards. The spells in the book get stronger with ascending order, but you choose the cards in order – that means a weaker spell gives you earlier choice from quest cards with treasures and companions. If you own 10 quest cards showing coins or 10 quest cards showing companions, the game ends at the end of the round and each player counts his victory points, if you have the most you win.

Grimoire is an interesting little card game with a few unusual details, the spell book, the Grimoire itself, is a pretty detail and the coupling of the spell strength with the order of play makes sense. Fortunately, the game is completely bilingual, featuring good English rules and bilingual spell books. Friends of unusual games will find it a nice tidbit, which has been announced for publication by Z-Man Games.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
10+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Hayato Kisaragi

Artist: Keita Komiyama

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 14 Euro

Publisher: One Draw 2010

<http://one-draw.jp>

EVALUATION

Fantasy card game

With friends

Version: multi

Rules: jp en

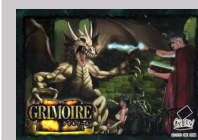
In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Bilingual material
Good English rules
Not easy to acquire
Announced for publication from Z-Man

Compares to:

Other fantasy card games



INTERSTELLAR MAYHEM

SPACESHIP VS SPACESHIP

16↑

Players are fighter pilots in space and want to destroy enemy spaceships. All players decide together on the layout of the board with asteroids and starting spots. At the start of a round all players without a ship on the board roll their 6 dice, distribute them to the areas for speed, shields and firepower and draw the bottom technology card from the stack.

The value for speed determines the order of play. Then starting spots and direction of flight for all spaceships that need to be placed are rolled for. A player turn comprises removal of overheat = remove 3rd die, recharging 2 dice, recalibrating one die = relocate it on a free place at speed, shield or firepower, move = one move per speed die for the



die result. Before and after each move you can turn your ship and shoot, in any order. In case of a collision with spaceship or asteroid, all objects involved are damaged. With enough points left and available turns you also can evade a collision. For shooting you use not yet used firepower dice, hits is determined by white fighter dice, you need to roll the value for the distance to the enemy; the firepower dice determine the damage. Damage is deducted from shield, speed and firepower in this order, with all those values at 0 the spaceship is destroyed and the victorious fighter pilot receives a marker. If you have three markers you win the game.

Shoot out in space, the random factor of rolling the dice for equipping the space ship is a little bit mitigated by placing, upgrading and relocating dice and the way you use the dice. Shooting itself is still governed by chance.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
12+

TIME:
60+

Designer: A. Ommer, D. Pullem

Artist: P. Soeder, A. Ommer

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 40 Euro

Publisher: Soylen Games 2010

www.soylen-games.de

EVALUATION

SciFi Shootout game
With friends

Version: multi

Rules: de en

In-game use of language: some

Comments:

Shoot and hit as aim of the game
Some tactics in distributing, using and combining dice values

Compares to:

Kingsburg and others
for placing dice values
to result in actions or functions



PETER PICKLOCK

... A RISKY GUESSING GAME

7↑

Players are on a foray with Peter Picklock and try to bring home the most and best booty. But to do so you must open the secure vaults and safeguard your booty in time before it is lost to the police. Booty cards of different values are placed under the vault cards. In your turn you roll the die to determine the color of the vault that you want to open.

If you roll a money bag you can choose the vault. Then you give a guess if a card that you will turn up from the draw pile will show a higher or a lower number than the top card under your target vault. Cards are numbered from 1 to 52.

For a correct guess you receive all booty cards underneath your target vault, the card you turned

up is placed under the vault. If you guessed wrong, you also place the turned-up card under the vault, on top of other cards there. And you are doubly unlucky if in case of a wrong guess you have unsecured booty cards, because these are lost and must be placed underneath the draw pile. To safeguard your booty you must choose to do so in your turn, if you do so you cannot roll and guess and place your booty cards underneath your money bag. Now they are safe. When all booty cards have been given out the player with most cards wins, in case of the tie the player with the highest card number.

Peter Picklock offers a nice version of a standard topic, with simple rules and few components. For children the game on higher or lower numbers is challenging and is a good training for estimating probabilities. The dilemma between breaking open a safe or safeguarding booty makes for a good family game, too.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
7+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Heinz Meister

Artist: Thies Schwarz

Title de: Saggi Safeknacker

Price: ca. 6 Euro

Publisher: Haba 2011

www.haba.de

EVALUATION

Guessing game with cards
For children

Version: de

Rules: de en es fr it nl

In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Simple rules - Good training for estimating probabilities
Also good as a family game

Compares to:

Gold Connection,
Codeknacker, games on
the topic of breaking
into safes



PiFroG

WIN WITH FROGS OR PIGS



In PiFrog a team of frogs is facing a team of pigs, both strive for victory over their opponents. Frogs are agile and can jump over opponents, pigs are strong and can crush their opponents.

On a board of 7x7 squares, featuring a chess-board pattern, the pigs and frogs are placed on the two opposite end rows of the board on the squares of their

color. Players move one of their pieces alternately until one of the victory conditions has been achieved: Either a player has conquered five opposing pieces or a player has placed three of his pieces on three of the opposing starting squares. In your turn you have one of three possible actions: Turn a piece so that it faces one of the eight possible direc-

tions, but another one as before, or move a piece one square in the direction the piece is facing or conquer an opposing piece. The pieces have faces, therefore the direction they are facing is easy to determine. Frogs and pigs conquer their opponents in different ways: A Frog jumps over an opposing piece onto a free square to conquer a pig, double jumps are allowed. Pigs conquer frogs by crushing them, crushing means a pig conquers a frog that sits on an adjacent square in the direction the pig is facing. PiFroG is a nice game for two with standard basic mechanisms in a nice combination, and also remarkable for its publisher – nestorgames has received lots of attention for its immense range of publications, partly classic standard games, partly new games, all packed into cloth bags and with flexible boards, minimalist and inexpensive, a very interesting concept all in all.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2

AGE:
8+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Angelo Porazzi

Artist: Angelo Porazzi

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 18 Euro

Publisher: Nestorgames 2010

www.nestorgames.com

EVALUATION

Placement game for 2
For families
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Standard basic mechanisms featured in classic games for 2
Very nice new mixture of those mechanisms
Funny design
Interesting also because of price and packaging

Compares to:

Checkers and other abstract placement game featuring conquering pieces or reaching opposing base line.



PLAY-DOH

SMASHED POTATO GAME

4+

Out of the potato sack, past the scissor slicer, the crinkle chipper, the french fryer and the chip chopper along the way to the finish, the potato field, this is the aim of the game. You mold your potatoes out of Play-Doh, shaped like the famous Mr. Potato Head, and move them from plate to plate. The game provides to molds, a Mr. Potato and

a Mrs. Potato, you make yourself the character of your choice in the color you like, yellow, orange, red or purple. In your turn you turn the spinner and either move your potato piece the number of spots indicated by the spinner or place it in front of the figure that is currently furthest ahead – if this is your own figure you move it one spot – or you smash up all

potato pieces that are sitting on spots of the Mash Machine.

If no potato figure is sitting on the Mash Machine you may choose a piece of any player and mash up this one. You can relinquish this possibility to mash a potato outside the Mash Machine. Any player who lost a potato figure due to mashing molds himself a new one and starts again at the Starting position, the potato bag.

The finish need not be reached with the exact number of steps. If you are the first to arrive at that spot, you win the game.

This is again a new and very felicitous version of a well-known, well-loved and often used game mechanism. This time the topic also encompasses a license character by the name of Mr. Potato Head, mashing and molding figures is an all-time favorite of all children. The assembling of the Mash Machine parental assistance is recommended and probably necessary for smaller children.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
4+

TIME:
20+

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 20 Euro

Publisher: Hasbro 2010

www.hasbro.de

EVALUATION

Roll and move play-doh figures
For children
Version: en
Rules: de en es
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Standard Mechanism
Nicely varied
Parental assistance necessary for assembling

Compares to:

Bravo Traube and other games with mashing of pieces



R-ECO RECYCLE

CORRECT RECYCLING FOR OIL OR ELECTRONICS

R-Eco Recycle is a sequel to the designer's game R-Eco, published by Amigo in German language as R-Öko. Again players are garbage recyclers rivaling for profitable contracts to remove and recycle garbage.

Dump side cards are laid out, reward cards stacked on them and contract cards are set out next to the dump sites.

In each round you are dealt a hand of 5 garbage cards and 7 more garbage cards are your personal draw pile. 4 garbage cards are laid out next to the "processed" side of the dumps and 4 next to the "unprocessed" side. You always play either one open-faced card from your hand to the "processed" side of a dump or face-down cards to the

"unprocessed" side; in this case you play the number of cards at the "processed" side plus 1. Then you take the corresponding contract, if necessary also from another player. You must play a card and cannot pass. If one player is out of cards the dump sites are scored one by one. Each correctly dumped garbage scores +1. Each incorrectly dumped one scores -2. When the total is 0, you receive a score card if you own the contract. When the value is negative, the penalty side of the score card counts. In round 3 the contract owner receives the dump site card in case of a positive result. The Environmental Manager Card holder scores according to dump sites results. After 3 rounds you win with the highest score.

R-Eco Recycled is an attractive card placement game with an up-to-date topic, yet somewhat abstract. You must think carefully how to use your cards, because you can only have one reward card of each color; if you win 5 and hold a 3 you must give back the 3.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
6+

TIME:
30+

Designer: Susumu Kawasaki

Artist: Susumu Kawasaki

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 12 Euro

Publisher: Kawasaki Factory

www.japonbrand.gamers-jp.com

EVALUATION

Card placement game

With friends

Version: jp

Rules: jp en de

In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Sequel to R-Eco

Currently only Japanese Edition

Rules download available in English and German

Compares to:
R-Eco



RALLYMAN

FIVE GEARS IN THE MRC



Players are Rally drivers in Micro Rally Cars and want to win the rally. So of course they try to complete each lap as fast as possible with the help of their co-driver and without losing control of their car. If you are the fastest over three laps you win the rally.

At the start of the game players choose track parts together

and then decide on a route from start to finish for each of the laps, there is no circuit track in the game. The movement of the car is determined by rolling 5 dice representing gear levels of; the two white dice represent acceleration. You either roll for a higher or lower than your current gear or for acceleration, also in a chain action, to change

gears up or down. While doing so you also incorporate available information on the track and ! rolled, ! indicate danger. If you collect three of those symbols in a turn you lose control of your car. At the end of the turn you take a card showing your current gear level.

Information on the track relate to bends with sliding, bumps, loss of control and damage. Of course, there are rules for overtaking, spare tires and arrival at the finish. When a car reaches the finish you add the time values on the gear cards you collected, the fastest player wins the lap. Advanced players can roll for time markers, which are deducted at the end, or can be spent for movement without dice roll or take weather and tires into account.

Rallyman is fun! It is a well-working and very attractive implementation of a standard topic, with painstaking details that – despite use of dice – allow for tactics and strategy as well to complete a lap fast and successfully.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-4

AGE:
9+

TIME:
90+

Designer: Jean-Christophe Bouvier

Artist: Bouvier, Clovis, Paquet

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 40 Euro

Publisher: Rallyman

www.rallyman.fr

EVALUATION

Car race game

With friends

Version: multi

Rules: de en fr it es nl

In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Many painstaking details

Well-illustrated, detailed rules

Some game experience is an

advantage - Tactics

despite dice is possible

Compares to:
All car race games with dice for movement



SHADOWRUN

WAR



Shadowrun is a role playing system in a not-very-far-away-future setting, telling the story of humans meeting machines and magic. Dragons are COEs of mega corporations and motorized trolls patrol the highways. Shadowrunners operate outside the law and take care of the dirty work. A bleak story in a cheerless world, incredibly detailed and

rich in satirical undertones! Shadowrun Fronteinsatz is the newest supplement for all travelers among the Mega Corporations, in a bitter and dark time when diplomacy has lost all impact and conflicts spiral out of control, no-one wants to stand down and war begins at the borders between Aztlan and Amazonia. Not only are merce-



naries entering the fray and blood offerings are supposed to enhance magic, but runners are no also involved in the war. This Source Book offers all the necessary background information as well as equipment and new rules in order to survive sabotage behind enemy lines, intelligence missions and operation of small units. Further assistance is given by a colored Ares equipment catalogue and a supplement, exclusive to the German Edition on MET 2000, ARGUS and Bundeswehr.

As all other Source Books and scenarios Shadowrun is not meant for gentle souls, but is dark, brutal with an emphasis on frontline missions and combat, dominated by combat technology, for instance an armor-plated Ferrari Spy Vehicle or vehicle lasers. To experienced Shadowrun players the volume offers a window into Bogotá at war and lots of new details and facets on the world in 2073.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-8

AGE:
14+

TIME:
var

Designer: Tobias Hamelmann u. a.

Artist: Ralph Berszuck u. a.

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 30 Euro

Publisher: Pegasus Spiele 2011

www.pegasus.de

EVALUATION

Source Book / Role Playing System
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

For Game Masters and Players -
Only for use together with other
Shadowrun material

Compares to:

Source books for other
systems



SILENZIO

TAKE CARE! NOISY!

5+

On the heels of Zockato, Silenzio has arrived, in the same elegant design and elegant tin. Silenzio is a reaction and action game featuring round cards that – as is stated explicitly in the rules – can also be used as beer coasters. Each of those round cards determines a sound and/or a move or gesture which must be imitated by players on turning up the

card. The cards are dealt evenly to all players and are stacked face-down by each player. Then in turn each player turns up a card and all must implement the correct action as fast as they can, the slowest player or the first one to react wrongly is given the card. The first player without cards wins the game.

A spinner determines the game

variant that is played – either you must react with sound and gesture when blue or green cards are turned up and remain silent and motionless in case of red or orange cards appearing, or you must remember to react only with gestures or only with sounds to cards of all colors.

You can use the 36 cards also for a game of memory, which is played according to the well-known standard rules; if you own most of the pairs, when all pairs have been found, wins the game. A game with standard mechanisms, which are implemented following standard rules, funny and different are only details – this starts with the name of the game, a game called „silence“ when you have to be noise in two of three versions! The drawings, too, are nice, the packaging is a beautiful tin, as already mentioned, and the rules are short and concise. An attractive gift or small present for a childrens' birthday party or any party.



INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
5+

TIME:
15+

Designer: not stated

Artist: not stated

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 9 Euro

Publisher: Zockato 2010

www.zockato.de

EVALUATION

Action and memo game For
families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Well-known mechanisms
Well-known rules
Beautiful packaging
Funny graphics

Compares to:

Kakadoo and other
reaction games



SKULL & ROSES

THE BIKER GAME

Why biker game? No idea! Because of the skulls, maybe? Anyway, it is a simple bluff game that asks you for a lot of nerves and no less bluff!

Each player has four coasters (Biker?!), no, cards, front side with a gang motive, backside three times a rose, one time a skull, and a playing mat, skull side up. Aim of the game is to

win two challenges. In turn, players choose one of their cards and place them face-down on their mat. When all have placed a card they can in turn again place a card or challenge the others. If you challenge you name a number of cards that you will turn up from all cards on the table without turning up a skull. The other players in turn must either raise



this bid or pass. The last player to raise the bid must now turn up the corresponding number of cards, starting with his own stack, from top to bottom, all cards. He need not turn up all cards in other players' stacks. If you win the challenge you turn your playing mat to the rose side and begin the next round, if you win a second challenge you win the game. If you lose, you must discard one of your cards face down and the owner of the skull you turned up starts the next round. If you are out of cards you drop out of the game.

Skull & Roses is a simple game, very tactical for three players, and a pure bluff and guessing game for six players, if you use two games more than six can play and bluff. Nail-bitingly challenging, psychologically interesting and very dangerous if you raise the bid for to strengthen your bluff! You could end up with the highest bid and have to turn up the skull you placed for bluffing!

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-6

AGE:
10+

TIME:
15+

Designer: Hervé Marly

Artist: Rose Kipik

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 16 Euro

Publisher: Éditions lui-même 11

www.asmodee.de

EVALUATION

Bluff game with cards
With friends

Version: multi

Rules: de fr

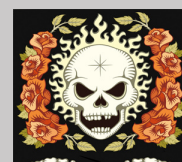
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

As d'Or Cannes 2011
Unusual box graphics - Very simple rules - Fantastic game, needs good assessment of fellow players

Compares to:

All bid/bluff games with a mechanism of correct choices



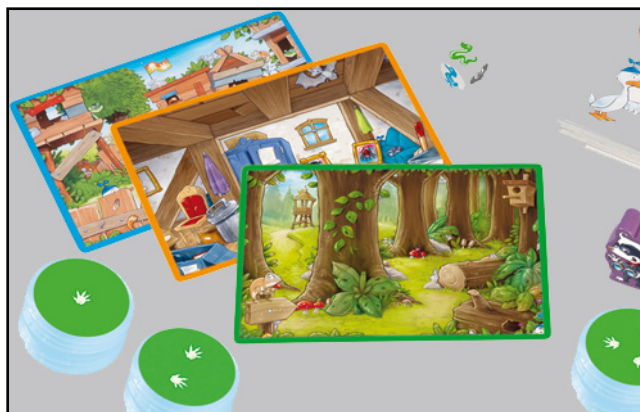
SMELLY MOLLY

.. A TURBULENT LOOK-CLOSELY-GAME

6+

Smelly Molly is approaching and all animals go into hiding to avoid Molly's very special scent. Who is the fastest to show Molly where all the animals are hiding? The buzzers are set out with the paws side upwards. In your turn you roll the die, name the animal and turn up the top picture. Now all players look for the animal selected by the die and count how

often it is hiding in the picture. If you have a result you quickly place your hand on the correct buzzer. If no animal of this kind is visible you grab Smelly Molly. If you do not manage to grab a buzzer or Molly, you cannot guess in this round and must simply pass. Then all players together count the wanted animal and the player who gave the



correct answer wins the picture. If you made a mistake you lose a picture. If you are first to collect 6 pictures, you win. Very rarely it can happen in a 6-player game that each of the players has collected five pictures. In this case all players win together.

Basically Smelly Molly is a very simple game using well-known standard mechanisms. The fun of the game this time is provided by the attractive graphics and the animals – there is a chameleon, a snake and a spider among them. The pictures show three different scenes, in the house, in the woods, and a playground/farmyard, the animals are always hiding in different places. So you need to look closely to identify the tip of the snake's tail or a half of a spider between a wooden beam and shovel handle. Why the duck carries a fan on its head remains a mystery, but it is not easier found because of it. All the same, a challenging and fun game!

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-6

AGE:
6+

TIME:
15+

Designer: Manfred Reindl

Artist: Oliver Freudenreich

Title de: Molly Mief

Price: ca. 12 Euro

Publisher: Haba 2011

www.haba.de

EVALUATION

Scanning game
For children

Version: de

Rules: de en es fr it nl

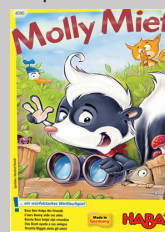
In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Funny topic
Very attractive graphics
Well hidden, unusual animals

Compares to:

All games with a reaction component



SPEED DATING

DENTIST VS GAME DESIGNER

Each player looks for the most suitable partner among his fellow players, the one with similar interests in the categories Travel, Sports, Culture, Leisure, Esotericism and Nerd stuff. All players start with a storage rack and one tip marker each in the colors of all players. The hobby tiles are placed in the bag. At the start of the game each player draws 5

hobby tiles and one tile each for name, age and profession, thus determining his personality for the round.

In each round one player is looking for a partner and has a 45 sec talk with each other player, controlled by the timer. Then he decides on a player and takes this marker in his closed hand, his choice must not be visible for



other players. The other players guess on his selection and pick up the corresponding marker. Then the choices are revealed and each correct guess scores one point.

When the active player and the partner of his choice can tell the name, age and profession of the other correctly, they can score additional points when they can name one or more hobbies of the other player correctly. After three wrong tries this is scored, if both could name a hobby in the same category they score a point each. When name, age and profession are not named correctly, the round ends immediately. When each player has been active player once, the game ends and the player with the highest score wins.

Speed Dating is a pure memory game, where it is important that you can make yourself unforgettable for the active player by witty communication. If you like that mechanism, you will fun with the hilarious combinations of characteristics.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
3-6

AGE:
12+

TIME:
45+

Designer: M.-A. Casasola Merkle

Artist: Agnes Lison

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 23 Euro

Publisher: Kosmos 2011

www.kosmos.de

EVALUATION

Communicative Memory game
With friends

Version: de

Rules: de

In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Basically pure memory game
Ability for witty for phrasing and a good memory are very useful
Good selection of characteristics

Compares to:

All games on correlations



THE BOSS

SURE HALF OF THE LOOT IN CHICAGO!

A display – in relation to the number of players - is prepared from character cards with Chicago in position 2 and a city card under each character card but Chicago, the remaining city cards are dealt to the players. Then you play 3 to 5 hands of 5 cards each. In each round you can first place one or more gangsters into a city and must

then place one city card, face up. You can only place gangsters on Chicago if you placed gangsters elsewhere earlier. Gangsters you placed you cannot take back or relocate. After the 3rd card a police card is turned over. When all 5 cards of a hand are played, you win the face-down card of a city if you have the majority of gangsters there. If you have



the majority in Chicago, you share with Al Capone half of the cards placed in the cities left of Chicago, the penalty cards are ignored. For the next hand Chicago moves one position to the right, all players collect their profit gangsters that are not wounded or dead and mark their winnings. When the 3rd , police card of the same color is turned over, the game ends at the end of this hand. The winner of the game is the player with most money.

The Boss offers a lovely mixture of bluff and deduction, which each open-faced card placed next to a city you have more information what the face-down card might be and you can place your gangsters accordingly; the occasional gangsters are a very good tactical instrument. But! You do not know everything and must take care when you release what information for your opponents! The sequence in which you play cards into a city can decide the hand for you!

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
10+

TIME:
60+

Designer: Alain Ollier

Artist: Tony Rochon

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 18 Euro

Publisher: Blackrock Editions 10

www.blackrockeditions.com

EVALUATION

Card game / bluff and deduction
With friends

Version: multi

Rules: de en fr

In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Very tactical bluff game - Good mixture with deduction elements - Sequence of the played cards is important

Compares to:

All games with stacked release of information



THUNDERSTONE

WRATH OF THE ELEMENTS

Thunderstone is a game within the genre of the so called deck building games.

The players are adventures on the search for a thunderstone, in the basic game they are searching in the Grimhold Dungeon. In this first expansion this Thunderstone, has been found and players must look for the second stone, The Stone of Agony in the

Guardian of Dreadwatch Keep! Each player accumulates his own deck, with abilities and equipment for his team of adventurers. A display of cards is prepared according to specific rules. Then, in your move, you must visit the village, enter the dungeon or rest. Cards that were used go to your personal discard pile, cards that were destroyed go out of



the game. In the village you can acquire cards. In the dungeon you must use all cards in your hand, when you rest you can change cards or destroy cards. At the end you win with most victory points in your deck.

New are traps, guardians, hordes and the new Thunderstone. Traps come in two varieties, Dire and Death. A trap is effective as soon as it is turned up from the Dungeon deck, before Breach Effects during the dungeon turn. Guardians behave like monsters when revealed and have a permanent Breach Effects, which they use to leave the dungeon. They can only be removed from position 0 by a successful attack. Hordes are special monsters and gain strength when fought, but at the end they score up to 5 points for each Hordes Card in your deck.

If you own Thunderstone you will acquire many new and very attractive possibilities for play with Wrath of the Elements, you can use the cards together with the basic game or separately.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
1-5

AGE:
12+

TIME:
var

Designer: Mike Elliott

Artist: Jason Engle

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 25 Euro

Publisher: Pegasus Spiele 2011

www.pegasus.de

EVALUATION

Deck-building card game

With friends

Version: de

Rules: de

In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Expansion for the deck-building game - Similar to Dominion, but more complex - Easier for experienced players - English edition at Alderac

Compares to:
Dominion



TIMMY DAS SCHÄFCHEN

SCHÄFCHEN KARUSSELL

4↑

Timmy the little lamb meets all his friends in the nursery school and they play together, this time with colors. Timmy is dressing up in different colors and his friends and you should guess what color Timmy will show when coming out of nursery school. Each player chooses an animal chip for his tips. The lambs are placed randomly into the carousel, then

the nursery school building is set into the board, now 4 lambs are hiding in the nursery school. In your turn you roll the die to determine the number of lambs coming out of the nursery school. Each player gives a guess what color the lamb will show that will be sitting next to the red arrow at the end of the carousel turn. You place your animal chip



onto the color dot of the color you believe will be correct. Of course more than one player can choose the same color. Then the carousel is turned. If you guess correctly, you win a toy chip. If you roll Timmy you win a toy chip immediately and you hand the die to the next player in turn. If you roll the flower, all players determine together how many steps the carousel will be moved: Each player holds up 0, 1 or 2 fingers and the carousel is turned for the total number of fingers held up. If you collect 5 toy chips, you win. For smaller children you can leave out the die and always move the carousel three steps forward.

Timmy offers an enchanting memory game with a pretty story, players train counting, especially when the flower is rolled, color recognition and of course their memory. Elder children who can count up to three easily can play on their own.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
4+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Gunter Baars

Artist: Ideenfabrik, Britta Hurter

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 18 Euro

Publisher: Ravensburger 2011

www.ravensburger.de

EVALUATION

Memory game on colors

For children

Version: multi

Rules: de fr it

In-game use of language: no

Comments:

Pretty 3D components
Good training for colors and first counting - Elder children can play alone

Compares to:
All memory games on colors



UUUPS

T IN THERMOMETER WIHOUT UUUPS!

8+

30 out of 60 word cards and 30 Oops cards stacked face down. Then you turn up 2 or 3 word cards to reach a total of 10 or more letters on the cards. All look at the words and then the starting player beats out the rhythm and players join the beat and call out the letters of the alphabet in consecutive order, each player one letter. When doing so

letters that appear just once on the cards must be replaced with oops. If you make a mistake you receive an oops card, place it face up on the table and all players must now take into account the letter on this card, too. The starting player changes and the listing of letters starts again at A. The 3rd oops card given out or reaching the letter Z without a mistake



ends the round. When the last oops card has been given out or when there are not enough word cards for a new round you win with the fewest oops cards. By using only 24 word cards and 24 oops cards or by restricting the number of letters on the card(s) you can change the level of difficulty, as well as by decreeing at a letter appearing on a card is always replaced by oops, regardless of how often it appears. If you want a more difficult game you can play the Schwupps variant, where you have to replace letters that appear on the cards more than once by Schwupps, and for an even more difficult game you can change the direction of play for a Schwupps. Schwupps and oops, or oops only, challenging and funny despite giving the impression that the alphabet must be very difficult! But still, "A B oops D oops oh not oops after all" in case of Chile on a card and you should have said F, is fun, isn't it?

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
2-5

AGE:
8+

TIME:
20+

Designer: Thorsten Löppmann

Artist: Klemens Franz

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 8 Euro

Publisher: Amigo Spiele 2011

www.amigo-spiele.de

EVALUATION

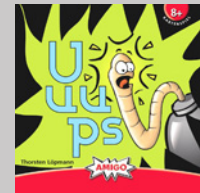
A game of letters and reaction
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game use of language: some

Comments:

Funny idea - Versions listed
Reading and knowledge of alphabet are necessary - Not really language-dependant

Compares to:

All other reaction games



YES & NO

ENVELOPE AND IPHONE



A game for larger group of players, in two teams, featuring words and definitions. At first glance the game offers a well-known standard mechanism, you must describe something to the members of your team, avoiding given taboo words, the team must guess the item or term. A new feature introduced in Yes & No is that you also have

a list of compulsory words that you must use. And this results in a completely different game. 110 double-sided cards feature 220 terms with a list of 5 forbidden and five compulsory words for each term, in your turn you draw the bottom card. Furthermore, the active player must try to use the compulsory words as early as possible, because team mem-

bers can give guesses anytime, but the word only scores if it is guessed correctly and all compulsory words already have been used. A member of the opposite time supervises the correct description. Of course, the team of the active player should wait a bit before guessing to avoid guessing correctly too early. To integrate Sun, Bright and Awake into a description of Evening is possible, to use Candles, Safe and Curiosity for an Actor is a bit more difficult, but Trigger Line and Envelope for iPhone is getting really hard. Copy, Applause, Steam, Page and Karate for a Squid, within a minute, poses a nearly impossible task! Yes & No is an attractive and felicitous variation of a well-known principle, especially good for large and changing groups. The compulsory words more or less eliminate the chance for personal hints among a team, as you cannot just list the words, but must use them in proper sentences.

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:
4-12

AGE:
14+

TIME:
45+

Designer: Michael Rüttinger

Artist: Michael Rüttinger

Title de: ident

Price: ca. 20 Euro

Publisher: Noris Spiele 2011

www.noris-spiele.de

EVALUATION

A game of words and definitions
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game use of language: yes

Comments:

Standard basic mechanism
First game to use compulsory words - Good for changing groups of players

Compares to:

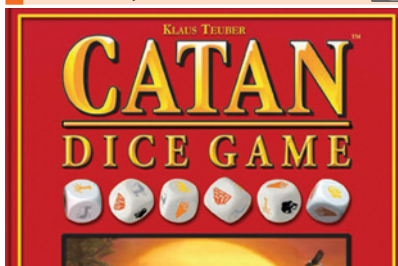
Tabu and other games on definitions



CATAN DICE GAME

Designer: Klaus Teuber
Publisher: Mayfair

7+



To settle Catan one needs roads, settlements and cities, which are built by rolling dice. Each player has a sheet with the island, the raw materials are rolled. One may roll up to three times, dice can be laid aside and rerolled later. Units built are marked on the sheet and the score is noted. If a player cannot build anything, he scores -2 for this round. Settlements and cities can only be built next to roads already built and in sequence of their value, a knight is a joker for one raw material. With 2 gold one can replace a raw material. After 15 rounds the player with the highest score wins.

Version: en, Rules: en, In-game use of language: no

Dice game for 1-4 players, ages 7+

FILLY UNICORN MEMO

Publisher: Noris Spiele

3+



42 Filly Fairies canter about on heart-shaped cards, two identical ones form a pair. 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. The rules can be found at the bottom of the vividly pink heart-shaped box.

Version: de, Rules: de, In-game use of language: no

Memo game for 2-4 players, ages 3+

LAURAS STERN SPIELEKOFFER

Publisher: Schmidt Spiele

4+



Lauras Stern, a license well-beloved by children, and a wonderful story, too. Now all fans of little Laura and her star can play with Laura and can choose from seven different games: There is a Junior Kniffel, a Memory game, a Schnipp-Schnapp and, in addition to those classics, a dice game Verstecken, a roll&move game Weltraum-Fangen, a funny card game by the name of Schwarzer Drache Nian, a Version of Old Maid, and finally Würfelsterne, a dice game on series of pictures.

Version: multi, Rules: de fr it, In-game use of language: no

A games collection for 2-4 players, ages 4+

LOGICUS PUZZLER XXL

Publisher: Huch

6+



Lonpos Colorful Cabin, adapted for the Huch range: A logical placement game with 12 colored pieces made up from 3, 4 or 5 marbles, which can be fit exactly into 55 dents in the board and must be arranged according to the tasks. 2 packs of task cards are included; the cards are tasks for either the board in the box with 55 dents or for the board with 25 dents in the lid of the box. The pieces must always be placed according to the task and then the remaining pieces must be placed to fill the area or result in the shape given by the task.

Version: de, Rules: de, In-game use of language: no

Logical thinking game for 1 player, ages 6+

MONOPOLY LITTLEST PET SHOP

Publisher: Hasbro Parker

8+



Monopoly Littlest Pet Shop uses motives, images and characters from the world of the tiny fantasy animals. The features of this edition were adapted to the topic. Train stations have been replaced with skateboard, sleigh, wheel barrows and hand carts. Event cards have turned into surprise cards and community cards into gift cards. Houses and hotels have been replaced with travel cages and kennels, and services have turned into foam bath and hamster wheel. Six of the big-eyed little animals are used for playing pieces. Standard monopoly rules apply and despite the topic the game is meant for families.

Version: de, Rules: de, In-game use of language: yes

Monopoly variant for 2-6 players, ages 8 and up

NINO DELFINO

Publisher: Ravensburger

4+



Nino the Dolphin wants to go on playing at the beach, the seals want to grab the balls. In this Bring-me-along version you roll the die and move your seal with the ball accordingly along the track. If you roll dots + dolphin you first move your dolphin and then turn the spinner with Nino – depending on where the white arrows point your seal is safe in a safety belt or must be moved backwards to the nearest safety belt spot. If you reach the boat with a ball you deposit the ball and start again with the second one. You win, if you are the first one to have two balls in the boat.

Version: de, Rules: de, In-game use of language: no

A game of moves and actions for 2-4 players, ages 4 and up

OLD TOWN SOLO

Designer: Stephan Riedel
Publisher: Clicker Spiele

10+



The Goldrush is over, the diggers have gone, only graves and ruins tell of times long gone. You are an archaeologist and try to reconstruct the old derelict ghost town. You choose cards according to a table for the solitaire game chosen; those info cards give you information on the locations of buildings. Possible locations are marked, when there is only one possible location the building is placed. There is always an unambiguous solution to the problem. Based on Old Town, Clicker 2004. New edition in a tin, first edition 2007.

Version: multi, Rules: de en, In-game use of language: yes

A game of deduction for 1 player, ages 10+

PERUDO

Designer: Cosmo Fry, Alfredo Fernandini
Publisher: Asmodee

8+



All players roll their dice at the same time with their dice cups and secretly look at them. The starting player names a bid on how many dice of one kind will be under all cups. The next player must raise the bid, either in number or value of the dice, and he can reroll some of his dice. If the doubt was justified, the bidder loses a die. If the number was correct or there are more dice than the bid required, the doubter loses a die. The joker die depicting Tucan Pace enhances the possibilities. If you are out of dice you drop out of the game. The last one in play wins.

Version: multi, Rules: de es fr nl, In-game use of language: no

Bluff and dice game for 2-6 players, ages 8 and up

TOP TRUMPS SPECIALS CHUGGINGTON

Publisher: Winning Moves

8+



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. Theme set: Chuggington

Version: de, Rules: de, In-game use of language: some

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

HUGO KASTNER RECOMMENDS

TAROCK

Austrian Joie the vivre!



Dear reader! For many Alpine dwellers Tarock is the one and only card game, a kind of ideology of life, and this is not exaggerated. They look down their noses at non-tarock players and deem them to be dilettantes who do not really play cards at all. Well, I will forego any commentary here, but it is absolutely true that it takes a few years to become an excellent Tarock player, especially when playing the noble game version of Königrufen. It is interesting that until today no official rules for Tarock have established themselves. In reality, no group of Tarock players is similar to another, at least as regards to the rules details. Indeed, throughout the centuries clever minds have come up with forever new versions which turned Tarock into an enormously demanding game. Whether you play Königrufen, Strohmandeln, Point-Tarock, Tappen, Dreiertarock or Zwanzigerrufen, you must be prepared for a warm-up period. The same goes for the very attractive game of Huszas, also known by the name of Ungarisches Tarock. Of course, the basic knowledge alone gets you along nicely on the way to a good player (see: Die große Humboldt Enzyklopädie der Kartenspiele von Folkvord/Kastner). In the Austrian Games Museum in Leopoldsdorf you can delve head-on into those intense and eventful ways to play. Website: www.spielen.at

The light of my lamp illuminating the volume written by me and my partner, Die große Humboldt Enzyklopädie der Kartenspiele, will provide you with a coherent glimpse into the copious family of these card games: The many, many different editions of Tarock cards are probably among the most beautiful playing cards ever published and are traded among collectors for enormous sums. Based on relatively confirmed information the **Game of Tarock** can be traced back to the 15th century. Its origins lie near Bologna in Italy. The earliest pointer to the game dates back to the year 1419, the first positive proof to the year 1442 and the Court of Ferrara. The current way to play of that time, **Tarochino** (dt. Kleines Tarock, Small Tarock,

as it was played with a reduced deck of cards) probably was especially well liked in Ferrara, Bologna, Florence and Milan, the game of **Piemonteser Tarock**, which was played with 78 cards, was especially favored in the perimeters of the town of this name. Both games already feature the "suits" of today's Tarock, albeit with the Italian card symbols of Sword, Chalice, Coin and Stave. And very probably this game at first was reserved for the nobility, as the hand-painted cards must have been unattainable for the normal citizen. The important noble houses, on the other hand, have again and again commissioned most creative picture cards from important artists. Subsequently, independent, differentiated rule books have been developing in each of those courts. The name of Tarock is proved to be mentioned first in Ferrara in 1516 in the shape of "tarocchi" (Registro di Guardaroba) and was mentioned a bit later in 1534 in a French volume, François Rabelais' „Gargantua, as „tarau“. The Die originally high number of 78 cards triggered the following comment in the Encyclopädie der Spiele (published 1879): „That the game of Tarock is not more widely spread is definitely due to the fact that it is hard to master, and especially that the game featuring such a high number (78) cards demands constant and intense attention.“ The final shape of today's regular Tarock cards has happened in France, probably around the year 1500. The modern popular versions of Tarock did not develop much earlier than the 18th century, especially in different parts of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire. Thus, the oldest Austrian book on Tarock was published in Vienna in 1756, the first book on Tarock in German came out barely two years earlier in Leipzig. With the emigrants from Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, Transylvania, the Ukraine and other crown lands this typical and very Austrian card game found its way overseas. And still, in the countries of its origin, Italy and France, or in Scandinavia, one version or another of

TIP #64

Designer: unknown

Price: ca. 15 Euro (and more)

Jahr: unknown

Publisher: Piatnik and others

www.piatnik.at

PLAYERS:

2-4

AGE:

10+

TIME:

30+



The mixture of tactics and chance in a game of course depends hugely on the version of the Tarock game you did choose. In „Königrufen“ for instance the balance would move one step towards tactical. But in all versions the lack of information on the hand of other players is essential.

HUGOS EXPERTTIP

If you are not yet fully familiar with the cards you should start to play the simple Zwanzigerrufen. Königrufen or Point-Tarock as the highlight of your games of Tarock can easily wait a while till you are ready.

HUGOS FLASHLIGHT

I need to post a warning You will be forced to learn a nearly completely new card language to really become familiar with the secrets of Tarock. From Ultimo to Ouvert, Pagat to Sküs, Piccolo, Dreier, Trischaken or Valat, Absolut oder Ein-Blatt, Tarock has a thousand names. But you will not regret your pains for one minute. As I said. Tarock is joie de vivre or a way of life.

PREVIEW:

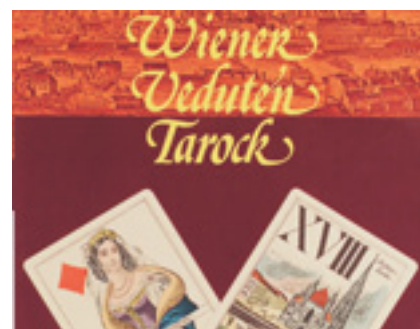
MAESTRO

From one music agent to the other!

Tarock is intensely played ... The wonderful books Das große Tarockbuch by Wolfgang Mayr and Robert Sedlaczek and Tarock – mein einziges Vergnügen, published by Hans-Joachim Alscher, are standard tomes and offer an excellent insight into the game of Tarock as a formative facet of culture.

Comments to: Hugo.Kastner@spielen.at

Homepage: www.hugo-kastner.at



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**

Blattlinie: Die Blattlinie ist die Meinung aller Redakteure, freien Mitarbeitern und Gastautoren. Die Spiele zur Erstellung der Rezensionen stellt das Österr. Spiele Museum für die Dauer der Arbeit kostenlos zur Verfügung. Niemand erhält Sach-, Service-, Geldleistungen von den Verlagen. (Alle nicht namentlich gekennzeichneten Rezensionen zu den Spielen sind von Dagmar de Cassan) English Edition Version 1.0

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Icon explanation



Solo Play



Two Players



Large Groups



Recommended Minimum Age

GABIS explanation on page 5

Dominant Species

