DIE LEGENDEN VON ANDOR

Schützt gemeinsam
das Land Andor
und erlebt fantastische Abenteuer!

INTERNATIONAL EDITION: IN THIS ISSUE WE PRESENT 55 GAMES

EXECUTE AN ESCAPE PLAN

ALCATRAZ – THE SCAPEGOAT

VERRAT HINTER GITTERN

Alcatraz is a cooperative game, in which players take on the roles of prisoners and try to instigate a prison breakout. In order to succeed they must solve six different tasks. As soon as two or more players manage to solve such six tasks among themselves they can escape. The scapegoat is left behind (nearly) as a matter of course.

But beware, there are also guards on the prowl in Alcatraz and when all guards have entered the game all players have lost together and are condemned to go to seed in Alcatraz.

Background:

On the island of Alcatraz, in the middle of San Francisco Bay, there was once located a high-security prison, which before being turned into prison had been a fortified fortress. Today the prison only serves as a tourist attraction.

Alcatraz prison was said to be escape-proof. According to official records nobody managed to escape in its 29 years of use, despite there being several attempts. Those attempts sometimes had a fatal ending, some prisoners drowned, some fugitives were shot. On top of that a rumor was spread about man-eating sharks to ward of attempts. But the only sharks in the waters around Alcatraz were harmless cat sharks. Nonetheless countless legends are flying about telling of successful breakouts, which also were often topics in films and literature. One of the best-known legends might be the escape of Frank Morris and the Anglin Brothers who dug a path through the air ventilation grids of the cells and fled with w self-assembled rubber dinghy put together from raincoats and glue. They were never seen again and the FBI assumes that they drowned. But their bodies were never found. This story was made into a film with Clint Eastwood.

There are many more such legends surrounding Alcatraz, but we now want to experience our own legend.

The game:

Aim of the game in our legend, too, is to escape from prison.

To succeed, players must collect items, co-operate with their fellow prisoner and try not to be the Scapegoat at the right time. Those players/prisoners who manage to execute the plan, that is, complete all tasks that are necessary to implement the plan, can leave Alcatraz together.

But beware; when all possible guards have entered Alcatraz the game ends and all players have lost together.

Before you can start to plan the escape location sheets are laid out randomly. In accordance with the location cards four guards are introduced onto the board and two task cards are laid out.

Each player receives a prisoner sheet, on which he marks his stamina and cash levels using two of his markers. Furthermore, each prisoner receives one marker each in all the colors of other prisoners.

The first Scapegoat is determined randomly. Each round of the game is made up from three phases (with the exception of the first round, in this round only Phase 3 is played).

Phase 1:

The Scapegoat places as many new guards as there are players, using the auxiliary cards.

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Phase 2:

The new Scapegoat is chosen. The election happens secretly, the prisoners can discuss the matter beforehand. After about two minutes of discussion players vote for the new Scapegoat, using their markers. If a tie occurs, the new Scapegoat is the old Scapegoat.

Phase 3:

In this phase prisoners move about in the prison. In order to do so they can use three actions (with the exception of the Scapegoat who has more actions at this disposal). You play your actions in clockwise direction, starting with the Scapegoat. At the end of this phase you check if escape would be possible.

Actions that you can do:

Move on the board, take an item, swap or give away an item, take a Scapegoat card, instigate a revolt or acquire stamina, for instance for bonus actions, or acquire money in order to bribe guards. All those actions come at a cost of one action point.

On top of this there are free actions, for instance bribe a guard or use stamina.

Furthermore, a player can, should he have collected all items necessary for a task, resolve this task. As a reward for solving a task you receive the letter shown on the task card and mark this letter with a yellow marker on your prisoner sheet. Then every other player, with the exception of the Scapegoat, will receive a reward. Each player randomly draws a task card and gets the letter depicted on this card. Then you choose a new task in a location with the help of the auxiliary cards. This also costs one Action Point.

Why bribe the guards? Well, there are tasks for which there can only be a certain number of guards around or you are restricted in your action when a certain number of guards are around.

When one or several players have completed the escape plan (they hold all letters from the prisoner cards - A, B, C, D and E - together), they can escape and win the game. The Scapegoat is left behind and loses, unless he is necessary to complete the plan because he holds a letter that nobody else owns - in this case he can join the breakout; in all other cases he is left as a matter of course.

Whatever the outcome, one prisoner is left behind in Alcatraz. When there are several prisoners who are not indispensable and none of them is the Scapegoat, then this tie is decided be the fewest completed plan elements, then by the fewest cash owned, then by the fewest items held and then by the lowest stamina level. When all those criteria do not break the tie, players decide who remains behind-

Should the plan be incomplete at the end of a round, a new round begins.

But should all guards be on the board, all players lose together.

Now for a look at the Scapegoat, whose role has advantages as well as disadvantages!

Advantages:

He has more actions, depending on how long he has already been Scapegoat

He can use Scapegoat cards

Disadvantages:

No reward when others complete a task

He cannot complete a task

Is left behind with a very high probability

Variant:

When you turn over the locations you are offered more possibilities to complete a task.

The idea behind this game is a very good starting point for the game itself and I do like it very much. Besides that, Alcatraz is once again a game where one can cooperate. What I do not like at all is that there is always a loser as a matter of fact, perforce. This results in a very high probability that, especially in a game for three players, some players band together and always choose the same player for a Scapegoat which robs this player of all chances to win. On the positive side again, components and graphics are very nice and fit the topic beautifully. ☑

Katherina Knoll

INFORMATION

Designer: R.+K. Cywicki, K. Hanusz
Artist: R. Badan, M. Szczykutowicz
Price: ca. 21 Euro
Publisher: Heidelberger 2012
www.heidelbaer.de

PLAYERS:
3-4

AGE:
15+

TIME:
60+

EVALUATION

Cooperative collecting game
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de en es fr it pl ru
In-game text: no

Comments:
German/Italian edition at Heidelberger
* Good mechanisms * Lots of communication and interaction * The role of Scapegoat has its allures, too

Compares to:
Other cooperative games, in this combination first game of its kind

Other editions:
Z-Man, Gen X, Filosofia, Cranio Creations, Kuznia Gier, Magellan

My rating:

40 Lines for Meeples
Dagmar de Cassan, Editor-in-Chief

November is the month when **SPIELEFEST** happens in Austria, the very special event, where you can try all games as long as you want to, but not buy them, because you should buy them in the special games shops; therefore this year for the first time the entry ticket was good for a voucher to be used at your next purchase, worth € 5,00 in participating games stores.

Only when there is a well-working games trade with special games stores will there be the great selection of games; because when nothing is bought, not much will be produced.

When you - dear Reader - are looking at this November issue, we have made up a bid of our backlog and we are busy working at the next issue.

There will be lots to read for you within the next weeks, and that's for sure, because at the beginning of February the International Toy Fair at Nuremberg comes up, bringing us lots of fantastic new games.

So have fun with reading this issue and if you want more information, take a look at our database **LUDORIUM**, at http://www.ludorium.at.

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The printed edition of our games Handbook GAME BY GAME is published and can be bought at the SPIELBOX-SHOP. Infos: http://www.spielehandbuch.at ☑

RACE THROUGH THE SOLAR SYSTEM!

KOSMONAUTS

THRUST! THRUST! ... THAT WAS TOO MUCH!

`8↑`

Russian designers, a Portuguese publisher, not necessarily a classic combination in the board games community, but only another outcome of the rapidly advancing globalization whose incredible fast development cannot be overlooked and which gets more and more varied all the time.

The designer duo of Nadezhda Penkrat and Yury Yamshchikov has hitherto been unknown to me. The publishing company mesaboardgames has attracted attention within the last two years with Vintage and Caravelas. Caravelas is - like Kosmonauts - a race game without a big chance factor.

Have it been ships in Caravelas that sailed the Seven Seas its space ship in Kosmonauts that we board to visit all those beautiful planets orbiting our sun.

The board is separated into hexagons and shows our solar system with the sun in the middle of the board and eight planets that orbit the sun in marked orbits; the recent degradation of Pluto from a planet to a piece of rock has been already taken into account here. Some squares are also marked on the board. Planets are embodied by wooden discs that move from hex to hex in each round. The planets are accompanied -

in the same rendition - by Halley's Comet. Players choose together where to place the planets at the start of the game.

Each of the two to four players takes a rocket (a player board), filled with propellant (represented by red and yellow wooden cubes) and three grey cubes representing energy shields; this rocket is represented on

Markus Wawra

A fun and entertaining race game with a medium playing them which can be recommended to the casual players as well as to the experienced player!

the game board by a colored marker which is placed on Earth at the start of the game. Next to the board one places the chips representing victory points and the pile of event cards. Now each player is given three target cards. Those cards score extra points when the player reaches the planets shown on the cards first (1 card) or second (2 cards).

Color codes, target groups, features, icons and GABIS are explained on page 5 and at the bottom of pages 36 and 37

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Now all we need is a starting player and we can begin to play.

The game is played in rounds, the starting player changes in each round.

The first phase of each round is the event phase. The starting player chooses one of the three event cards in the open display, which always affect all players. In general, there are two kinds of event cards. They either influence the trajectory of rockets by adding thrust in one direction or another; or they give players propellant or cubes for energy shields or take those things away. Those cards can also be positive as well as negative, sometimes even in relation to the current position and the direction for the next target. Basically the rule is effective that all bad events can be neutralized by discarding an energy shield cube. Some positive cards cost you such an energy shield cube in order to allow you to use them.

Then the rockets of the players fly! For flying each player has a control panel. In this control panel you can place three propellant cubes on the six direction hexes to give thrust for the rocket. For each yellow cube the rocket moves one hex in the direction indicated. The valuable red hyper propellant cubes move the rocket forward by 2 hexes. You need to remember that we move in space and therefore there is nothing that would slow down our rockets, with the exception of planets. Therefore the thrust cubes from last round remain in place!

When you reach a hex with a planet you can land on the planet and take the most valuable victory point tile still available for this planet (for each planet with the exception of Earth there are for tiles yielding 1 to 4 victory points) and you also remove all propellant cubes from your control panel.

As an alternative to moving players whose rocket has landed on a planet can choose to stay and refuel. Then you can refill the storage tank of your rocket with one red cube and all possible yellow cubes up to the capacity limit.

Then all planets move along their orbital path to the next spot marked for them. Players can also land on a planet in this phase when the wait for the planet to arrive at such a marked spot.

The game ends at the end of that round in which a player has visited all planets but one and has returned to Earth. All players who manage to do the same in this round are rewarded for this with a chip of value. Then all that remains to do is to add your victory points and we have a winner. All in all this takes about an hour. Ion the internet you can find expert rules who make the game a bit more difficult, but also shorter (yes, really, that's not an error!)

The only thing one could criticize is that the movement is rather predictable in this game. The only incalculable facts are introduced by the event cards, and they should not be deemed to be negligible. Furthermore, interaction with other players prevents uniformity or boring phases. Especially the target cards for second place, which yield the remarkable amount of four victory points, are not really predictable, because who knows when finally one player will decide to be the first visitor to a planet. To really be the second one on this planet then again is also a question of a bit of luck. The game is pretty and clearly structured and the rules do not leave any questions unanswered. They are quickly explained and - provided there are no great thinkers at the the table - you will play an entertaining race game. On top of this Kosmonauts has a bit of a potential to be used as an educational game for conveying the basic facts of astronomy: Solar System, Planetary movement and Conservation of Momentum, all is there and implemented agreeably correct.☑

Markus.Wawra

INFORMATION

Designer: N. Penkrat, Y. Yamshchikov
Artist: Filipe Alves, Gil d'Orey
Price: ca. 30 Euro
Publisher: Mesaboardgames 2012
www.mesaboardgames.pt

PLAYERS:
2-4

AGE:
8+

TIME:
60+

EVALUATION

Race game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game text: no

Comments:
Clearly structured * Nice, functional components * Entertaining, mostly parallel and thrilling * Simple and easily understood rules

Compares to:
Caravelas, Hase & Igel, Formula 1 and other race games

Other editions:
In Russian at RBG/Rightgames

My rating:

FRONTIERS RICH IN POINTS

CORE WORLDS

TO BOLDLY GO THERE WITH SHIPS!

I wonder if Donald X. Vaccarino had an idea what other, partially really ingenious games, his idea of a deck building game would initiate? Many times since Dominion his idea has been picked up by other designers, has been varied, adapted and transformed into new games. One of those games is Core Worlds - a SciFi game for 2 to 5 players on the topic of conquering new worlds and of continuously improving and upgrading the units and space ships necessary for this endeavor. If you own the worlds (planets) richest in points and the biggest ships at the end of the game, you win the game.

At the start each player is given a table showing summary of the rounds, your possible moves in the action phase and tracks for the number of actions and energy available to you. Furthermore, those summaries also list all Core Worlds, which come into play in the last two rounds, with all their victory points and the necessary conquest cards.

Each player draws one of five home worlds and takes the corresponding deck of cards. All decks are identical with the exception of one unique and individual hero. The game comprises ten rounds; every two rounds new cards in relation to the number of players and from pre-prepared stacks are introduced to the game for possible acquisition by all players.

A round comprises several phases, which are implemented simultaneously by all players, with the exception of the action phase.

The first phase is the Draw Phase. Each player replenishes his hand of cards to six cards from his own personal deck (to seven cards in the last two rounds of the game). You are allowed to take one single card from a previous round into the next round, if you want to so. Should your personal draw pile be empty you reshuffle your personal discard pile. This is followed by the Energy Phase. Each player marks the amount of energy produced by all his worlds on the energy track. The home world alone produces three Energy units. Should you hold a so-called "Energy Surge" card at that point, you can discard it for two additional Energy units, but only if you are not in the lead in Energy production. You receive one unit of Energy if you are in the lead for Energy Production. From the numerous possibilities to produce energy you can see that energy is very, very important in the upcoming Action Phase. You could say no results without energy.

In the next phase, the Galactic Phase, the selection of cards placed at the center for all players is turned up from the stack corresponding to the current round; cards that

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might be leftover from the previous round, and are already marked with an energy token, are removed from play. All cards that are already displayed and are without energy token are now marked with an energy token. After an individual rule for drawing

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Gert Stöckl

A deck building game in the best tradition of Dominion, full of intense atmosphere and - in case of four and five players - correspondingly long duration - but every minute is worth its while!

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cards are turned up until the necessary relation between worlds to conquer and other cards (unit and tactic cards) is reached.

In the Action phase all actions mentioned below can be implemented in any order of your choice until all players pass their turn because they are either out of action points or out of energy. The number of possible actions is the same for all players and is preset at the start of the round according to the card of the round.

At the start four actions are possible, near the end of the game this raises to six actions. To take a card from the general display uses up exactly one action, but you need of course also the amount of energy stated on the card (that is, the so called draft costs). You cannot buy more than one card at a time, because the other players might want to buy something, too. You must wait until it is your turn again in this round and hope that the coveted card will still be available. The card you bought is placed onto your own personal discard pile. By the way, the starting player changes in each round, so that each player can choose from the complete range once. In order to conquer worlds in the display you need a certain amount of Fleet and Ground Poser on your unit cards in your so-called War Zone. To get cards from your hand into this War Zone you can lay out a card at the cost of one action point pro card and the amount of energy equal to the deploy cost that is noted on the card. Please note: At this point you can deploy more than one card at once; this is a point that often is overlooked. The more powerful the deployed units (space ships and ground troops) are the better worlds (as regards to energy or victory points) you can invade, which takes us to the next possibility for an action, which is to invade a world.

All worlds produce energy, many of them also yield victory points and they are the whole purpose of the game. You spend one Action Point and one unit of Energy and name a world that you want to invade. To do so you then put the corresponding

number of units from your War zone on your personal discard pile in order to equal or top the Fleet Strength and the Ground Strength of the respective world. A number of Tactic cards, playable directly from your hand, allow you to raise the values of your own units to enable you to reach the necessary strength values. Each successfully invaded world is placed next to your home world and is available for energy production in the next Energy phase. Another action possibility there are several Tactic cards, which allow you - at the cost of one action point - to implement certain things cheaper, for instance to buy a card at an especially good price.

At the end of the round the Discard and End Phase are implemented. All players discard all their hand cards but one, if so desired, onto their personal discard pile. In case there are left over energy or action units you reduce them to zero, you cannot save them for the next round. The token for the starting player goes to the next player, the round marker is advanced by one and a new round can begin. After round Ten all victory points provided by all worlds, Core Worlds, prestige cards and units are added and the winner is the player with the highest total.

What were especially fascinating for me in this game are the really simple game mechanics and the dense, marvelous flair which intensifies from round to round. To upgrade your own units in your stack with new cards, to deploy your battle force in your War Zone in order to invade your targeted world as soon as possible, to play Tactic cards directly from your hand, all this is really coherent and fits the topic extremely well. The only thing that I did not like that much is the fact, that the majority of victory points is generated within the last two rounds, all that precedes those two rounds is nothing more than a prequel and nearly all players up to then have a nearly equal or at least comparable number of victory points from their worlds and units.

Should something interfere at that point and you need to deviate from your plan, for instance when your intended Core World is snatched up by another player from under one's nose (which is quite probable in a game of four or five players) it can be really aggravating. Because a Core World usually earns you at least 8 victory points, sometimes more, and to switch quickly to another Core World more often than not is not possible due to the rather big amount of required Fleet and Ground Strength. And it is of no avail to buy up Prestige cards that come up in the last two rounds, because those are not cheap either, but only yield between 2 and 3 victory points. If someone

should manage to invade two Core worlds out of the total of six that are available the win is his, rather surely, because to invade such a world you would need a huge force. And to get your force to that strength is rather difficult as you reduce it again and again in previous rounds to conquer other worlds because you need those for energy generation.

I cannot keep it hidden that the time to play Core Worlds is directly related to the number of players. A game with five players is - according to the rules - only recommended for very experienced players. The game plays best with three or four players, as this constellation results in enough cards for the central display. In case of two players it will take you a few games to get acquainted will cards in the game. An expansion for Core Worlds, Galactic Orders, has already been published, but I did not have an opportunity yet to play it, but I am sure that it will intensify the feeling of the game even more. As a resume I can state that this game can be wholeheartedly recommended to any fan of deck building games who wants to boldly play where no one has played before. ☑

Gert Stöckl

INFORMATION

Designer: Andrew Parks
Artist: Maciej Rebisz und Team
Price: ca. 35 Euro
Publisher: Stronghold Games 2011
www.strongholdgames.com

PLAYERS: **2-5**

AGE: **10+**

TIME: **120+**

EVALUATION

SciFi Deck building game
With friends
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Intense flair and atmosphere * Simple game flow * Results can fluctuate wildly within the last two rounds * Expansion "Galactic Order" is available

Compares to:
Dominion, Thunderstone and other deck building games

Other editions:
Currently none

CAVES AND DRAGONS …

DIE LEGENDEN VON ANDOR

AND DWARVES – O MY!

Andor is a lovely, fertile country, ruled by a king in his beautiful castle. The peasants till the land, trading posts are busy creating wealth, and even the witch in her foggy marshes by the great river is kind and helpful, selling her magic potions – for a price, that is. In the woodlands elves are singing their merry songs, in the mountains deep industrious dwarves do … whatever these small people do. This bucolic idyll is only occasionally disturbed by bloodthirsty monsters attacking the castle, a deranged necromancer plotting to take over the world, a kidnapping of the heir to the throne or comparable calamities. How convenient, that some adventurers (you can actually choose between male and female characters) will take on the attempt to restore peace. They will carry on with the legend.

In the game's booklet, Michael Menzel, author of "Legends of Andor", says "thank you" to quite a lot of people and especially his family, for their support, understanding and not least for their patience. After all, the development of this project took more than two years' time. He previously worked as a graphic designer and illustrator in the games industry before "Legends of Andor" had been published with Kosmos. Even now he is still answering questions promptly and patiently, for which we want to express our gratitude here.

In "The Legends of Andor" up to four characters (Archer f/m, Dwarf f/m, Mage f/m and Warrior f/m) rush across the game board to fulfill multiple missions, which all have to be mastered to meet the chosen legend's goal. Time is always running short, there are never more than fifteen rounds to get there, already counting the double round triggered as a rare special event. The basic rules remain the same, though, as explained within the first adventure "The Arrival of the Heroes". Since these rules are not stated anywhere else, you may not pass on that quest when you set out to play for the first time. Heroes (Heroines likewise) start with a number of Strength-points and Will-points, which should be marked on their character sheet.

Color codes, target groups, features, icons and GABIS are explained on page 5 and at the bottom of pages 36 and 37

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Strength may increase constantly (although very slowly; and there are some nasty surprises to the contrary as well), but the characters' Will (equals Body- or Health-points) is more likely to decrease more often than not – and faster than one would like! Healing is rather expensive and often time-consuming. Movement from space to neighboring space costs one hour on the Time (Day) Track (advance the colored chip), just as much as a round of combat or some other actions (for example, to move allies like the

Martina, Martin & Marcus

The attractively equipped and designed game promises legendary adventures. But unfortunately it doesn't turn out that way, because if you want to win you have to painstakingly calculate while totally ignoring the setting in this world of Legends.

prince or the dwarf troops).

Up to ten hours per day are available, though the last three hours of each day – if used for actions – have to be paid for by spending Will-points. At certain locations on the game board or sometimes when markers come into play (either on the game board as well or next to the Narrator's Track / Rounds Track) characters may buy useful items (e. g. weapons, potions, even a hawk). When monsters are in play – and they are almost always; and almost always too many of them, moreover, rather strong monsters –, they move as soon as the last character in the round declares his daily activities at an end and puts his marker onto the starting field of the Time Track.

The monsters move along small arrows on the game board towards the castle of Andor. (The only legend set in the caves of Andor as yet – on the reverse side of the game board – works exactly by the same rule, except you cannot really see the castle.) At each break of dawn an event card is revealed, its instructions are to be followed. Besides fulfilling their tasks (for example, finding herbs or rune stones, save peasants by leading them into the castle), Heroines and Heroes also have the possibility to fight and destroy monsters. Combat is done by means of dice rolling. Since there is no Game's Master, the monsters' dice may be rolled by anyone, preferably by someone whose character is not involved in that fight. Killed monsters are placed in the designated space on the game board and for each the Narrator pawn progresses on the Rounds Track (labeled from "A" to "N").

This in turn frequently leads to reading out aloud a new Legend Card: conditions may change, crises may ripen, a new enemy or ally might emerge – whatever the chosen legend requires. If the "N" has been reached

the final card is turned up, the legend ends. The game seems nicely devised, the rules are easy to understand and short enough so that one can just get along without an index.

The markers, cards and figures are designed from (solid) cardboard and graphically quite attractive, as you would expect from an experienced illustrator. Counters and dice are made of wood. The Legend Cards are a little inconvenient, one larger card presenting the starting conditions would have been better or even a quest booklet (instead of cards numbered from "A1" to "A6"). Irritating, and not just at the beginning, is the numbering on the game board – hardly any two neighboring spaces are connected by numbers ascending or descending in a normal numerical sequence; surely a lot of thoughts went into the actual numbering, but we could not guess the deeper meaning behind it. These are only trifles, though.

More serious however is the effect of the monster movement mechanism and the often far too rapid progress of the Narrator pawn along the Rounds Track. There is an absolute requirement of protecting the castle in almost each of the five legends. Depending on the number of characters (or players) and an additional allowance for each peasant that has been rescued to the safety of the castle's walls, only a certain number of monsters may enter the stronghold. If only one additional monster gets inside, the Heroes and Heroines lose that adventure. Players automatically will start reckoning: Is it more favorable to fight (and possibly kill) a monster or rather let it get into the castle? Is it better to let the strong ones enter (Trolls or even Wardraks: ferocious, dog-like beasts) and fight the weaker ones (Gors and Skrals, the copyright safe counterparts to Goblins and Orcs)?

This somehow contradicts the lore of Andor, but seems reasonable enough considering the only tentatively growing strength of the Heroines and Heroes. Heroic action yields absolutely nothing here. Each slain monster earns you some (little) gold (or, alternatively, Will-points), but it also advances the Narrator pawn and shortens the remaining time. That may be especially critical when you have to get the life-saving herb to your dying monarch as soon as possible. More often than not you have to search for persons or objects before you can even get to start your mission.

The witch, for example, hides in the foggy forest, but there are also monsters there or even more unpleasant events (and only very little gold). There are two sets of rune stones,

each consisting of three different stones, but only five stone markers come into play. You can figure out yourself the chances of collecting a complete set over a short period of time in order to reap the benefits (a special die for combat). Too much randomness for our taste, and almost always to the detriment of the characters! With all four of them you will maybe just cope with the time issue, but on the other hand the power of the main enemies increases proportionally.

The dragon (in legend 5 "The Wrath of the Dragon") may thus gain up to 68 Strength-points, special powers not even included. In comparison, each character starts with only 4 points of strength. There is nothing wrong, of course, to turn a game into a strong challenge. To have almost no chance at all, though, is never a good idea. Players will hardly muster enough curiosity to try the whole thing anew, this time with better tactics and changed strategy. Nine blank cards come with the game to create your own legend for Andor, but we did not feel inclined to take up this final challenge. ☑

*Martinha & Martin Lhotzky
Marcus Steinwender*

EVALUATION

Cooperative adventure game
With friends
Version: de
Rules: cz de en es fr hu it ru
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Beautiful design * Rules explained in steps during the individual legends * Intense cooperation and lots of calculations necessary to win

Compares to:
Rückkehr der Helden, Quest Zeit der Helden

Other editions:
Czech, French, English, Italian, Hungarian, Russian and Spanish

My rating:

HUNTING PREY IN THE WILDERNESS

QUARRIORS!

QUARMAGEDDON

Acquire fame and advance to be the greatest Quarrior of all!

Image you are playing a deck building game: You use one kind of card to influence other cards and use yet other cards to attack your opponents. You have only one buy and try - fully in the tradition of deck building games - to keep you deck lean by disposing of cards. At the end of each turn you place all cards you used or did buy onto your discard pile, draw new cards and if necessary you shuffle your card pile well, again and again and again.

Imagine on top of this; you are a mighty magical warrior who - instead of buying - uses his mysterious power of „quiddity" to catch prey in the wilderness, uses those caught creatures to attack opponents, uses spells o push his own creatures or to

call them back from the graveyard or does many other things with them to finally acquire huge fame in the guise of points with those his own creatures and that you select instead dispose.

And then, finally, imagine that the "bothersome" element of shuffling is missing. I can hear the "Ah's" and "Oh" and a tentative "How is that supposed to work?" When I now state that Quarriors! makes do nearly without any cards at all you might be even more baffled and maybe completely lose your countenance when I let on the fact that this deck building game is played with dice and heralds a new generation of games, that is, the generation of the so called Dice Building Games.

In general, those Dice Building Games work exactly like deck building games and

many game mechanisms like additional buys, additional cards or disposal are sufficiently familiar from games like Dominion, or Thunderstone, or Ascension … One of the biggest differences, if not THE biggest difference, is the lacking of the perpetual shuffling of cards, which will come as welcome news for many a player. In Quarriors! you simply place the dice in a bag, shake the bag and draw the necessary amount of dice. Voilà!

The first German edition of the game Quarriors! is available in a cubic metal tin. This tin holds 130 colorful dice, 53 power cards and four small cloth bags in the four player colors. All those dice, in groups of five, are packed into tiny, really tiny plastic backs and it is very tiresome to find and unpack the right dice for each game, as some kinds have very similar colors. And it is equally bothersome to pack them away at the end of the game! So it is very nice that the game designers have already provided an expansion for the game, which this time is packed into a "standard" box made from cardboard which - besides 6 new creatures and 2 new

Color codes, target groups, features, icons and GABIS are
explained on page 5 and at the bottom of pages 36 and 37

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spells plus all 40 corresponding dice - hold a fantastic plastic tray to store all but one sets of dice. A see-through lid on this plastic tray forestalls tumbling about and falling out of dice. This is what I call well-made! By the way, the name of this expansion is Quarriors! Quarmageddon.

The rules of the game which come across

> **Christian Huber**
>
> *Quarriors! nicely transfers the mechanism of a deck building game to a dice game, which makes handling of the game much easier, but also results in a higher chance factor due to dice.*

as forced-funny, that is, as really not funny at all, have been changed slightly in some points in comparison to the basic game. Therefore I use the new rules in this review for the core game of Quarriors, too.

As I have previously mentioned you embody a mighty magical warrior, one of the so called Quarriors. The background story of Princess Quiana and her Mage Quaxos, who serves as her oracle and of a Dragon, who announces Quarmageddon with his appearance and including a lot more of that kind of babble that is just bad can be set aside without any qualms. It has no importance for the game whatsoever.

At the start of the game you place the three Basic Resource Cards for Assistant, Quiddity and Portal, which are used in each game of Quarriors!, and put the corresponding dice on top of them, and then you add three Spell cards and seven Creature cards. Those cards too, are equipped with the corresponding dice. Those 13 cards represent the "wilds". Each player is then given 8 basic power dice and 4 supporter dice. Each player puts those 12 dice into his personal bag.

At the start of a turn each player scores his creatures - when present. He scores the number of fame points indicated by the corresponding power card. In the first turn this part of a turn is skipped. After scoring creatures you can make a selection by returning one die for each scored creature from the graveyard onto one of the cards on display. Then you draw exactly six dice from the bag and roll them. Those dice are placed into the so-called Active Pool! The dice can then be used in very different ways, and you can even re-roll certain dice, other dice allow you take an additional die from the bag, or maybe even two, and so on. Spells will be transferred to the Ready Area. When your roll results in creatures you can summon them by means of paying the necessary power which is stated on the die in the top left corner. The price can be 1 to 3 power units. At the same time this number

also indicates the level of these creatures. Summoned creatures are also placed into the Ready Area. Should you have power points left you can use them to catch exactly one Prey = Quarry die in the Wilds. All power dice and all other dice that have been use are transferred into the Spent Pile. At the end of the turn they are transferred to the Used Pile. Now all summoned creatures attack all creatures of all opponents.

This works as follows: You add the values in the top right-hand corner of the upper dice side of all summoned creatures and with this total value you first attack the creatures of the player to your left. This player chooses a creature for defense purposes from his Ready Area, if available. The defense value in the right hand bottom corner is deducted from the attack value. When the defense value is Zero, the attacked creature dies and is placed into the Used Pile. If an attack value is left the attacked player chooses the next creature for defense. This is repeated until either the attack value has reached 0 or less or the attacked player has no creature left for defense purposes. Then the next player is attacked with the full attack power. When all players have been attacked the turn ends and all dice in the Spent Pile are placed into the Used Pile. This ends your turn and the next player draws dice from his bag after scoring creatures, should some be available for scoring.

You should always keep an eye on the power cards in the middle of the table and the dice on them; those dice describe what creatures can do, what abilities they have and how many fame points the yield in scorings and what can be found on the six sides of the dice. The same goes for the Spell Dice. The game ends - depending on the number of players (2/2/4) with a player acquiring a certain number of fame points (20/15/12) or when four of the creature power cards are depleted of dice. This end-of-game condition seems to occur very rarely, as we did not see it happen in approximately 20 games.

Resume

Fans of games from the deck building genre might like Quarriors!, but whether Quarriors! will manage to recruit many new fans for the genre is doubtful at best. I don't really think so! The chance element at some points in the game is rather high and leaves one or more players feeling rather frustrated.

The same feeling of frustrations is felt when one is confronted with the tiny numbers on the dice of the Core Game. At least this was changed for the dice in the expansion; those dice show all numbers to be bigger and more clearly, and printed with a different font.

The rules in some places are just embar-

rassing. First a rather laughable story was constructed to supply a background for the game and then the rules simply brim over with words starting with "Qu" - no mercy for the reader, because also words beginning with K and others have been transmuted to Qu, the example of "Quomponents" should suffice to show that someone tried too hard to come across funny and witty. And, furthermore, I cannot find anything to laugh about in the little quotations on the sides of the boxes.

On the positive side of the balance sheet one has to remark that the game is very quickly explained and also has a recommendable short duration of about 30 minutes. Quarriors! works best with three and four players, but can easily be played with two. Two additional expansions (Rise of the Demons and Quest of the Qladiator) are announced, but currently only available in English language editions.

Why Quarriors! is recommended for players from ages 14+ or should only be played by 14 year olds remains an unsolved riddle. The game is not highly strategic and the creatures are not that fearsome! So there's no reason not to play the game at an earlier age. ☑

Christian Huber

INFORMATION

Designer: Mike Elliot, Eric Lang
Artist: J. Lonnee
Price: ca. 40 Euro
Publisher: Wizkids 2011/2012
www.wizkidsgames.com

PLAYERS: **2-4**
AGE: **14+**
TIME: **30+**

EVALUATION

Dice Game
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de en it jp
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Fantasy topic * High chance factor because of dice * Quick to explain * Short duration * Lettering a bit to small in the core game

Compares to:
Deck building games, e.g. Lord of the Rings

Other editions:
Arclight, Japan, Stratelibri, Italy

My rating: ★★★★ (filled) ☆☆☆ (empty)

INTERVIEW WITH

MARCEL-ANDRÉ CASASOLA MERKLE

WINNER OF THE AUSTRIAN GAMES AWARD 2012

The Interview with Marcel-André Casasola Merkle (MAC) was recorded on November 16th, 2912, during the Spielefest in Vienna

Editor's Note: The following translation is not a literal one!

WIN: Hello and welcome to our Spielefest in Vienna!

MAC: Hallo.

WIN: Which board game was the first you ever played and how old where you then?

MAC: Ha, ha, I don't know, and I wonder how many people remember what their first game has been. Probably „Mensch ärgere dich nicht". And as to age, no idea! The first memories I have are of the then Ravensburger Games, for instance „Heimlich & Co" and those things, but of course before those there had been many, many others - Memory, Wortmix, of course, there were some more even before those.

WIN: How much did that first game impress you and which game has influenced you most in your life so far?

MAC: The first ones didn't impress me at all, because I do not remember them. In those times I often only played with the components instead of the game itself; for instance, Super 3 by MB, those pieces were wonderful; I did use them for many other things, very different ones that did not relate to the game at all. Which game did impress me much? Well, there have been I few, I guess. Well, Löwenherz, the first edition, I did not like the second one at all. Yes, this I did like a lot, that was very balanced and so versatile, because at that time it was still okay to combine such different mechanisms, I mean, types of mechanisms, bluff together with strategy and a chance element, or so. Nowadays this is rather frowned on. A game should be only strategic or chance only or bluff only; mixes don't happen very often anymore.

WIN: Has this been a deciding factor in your becoming a games designer?

MAC: I'm not even sure when Löwenherz was published and if I did design games already before that time … well, Löwenherz was not the reason. Not connected to Löwenherz - the other games before that were the reason that I thought there should be something else. One could do quite different things! So, the deficits in games of the 80ties were the reason for me to start designing.

WIN: What makes a game a good game for

you?

MAC: A good game is a game that is fun to play, which sounds very trite and trivial, but this opinion is not that widespread, after all (laughs shortly). But I have often heard at the end of a game "that was really fun" or not even that, they just laughed and had had a good time. And then they started using their head and started analyzing and then you heard „but this is a no go" and „that element is silly" and this and that and that again. Well, for me, fun with the game is a must.

WIN: I think fun is one of the most important elements.

MAC: And apart from that, what makes a game a good one? Well, I like new elements and new ideas and a new perspective. And I like games that tell you a bit about life.

WIN: Which one would that be, for instance?

MAC: Well, in Santa Cruz, for instance, I tried to mirror the situation that at some point in my life I did something that i regretted, but I cannot go back and revise the action. There are people who muse on that for 5 years, 10 years afterwards. So I said, okay, I will make a game now where you can revise decisions! This is the reason for Santa Cruz being played in two stages. In the second stage I have the same prerequisites, but I can make different decisions than in the first stage. As I said, I found it challenging and interesting to see, how on revises one's decisions, how you play differently and the result is different. This does not say that it is better. And then to transfer that to your real life, „Well maybe, it would not have been better if I had decided differently then … maybe the outcome would have been simply different …" And that is a huge potential for games that could tell you something this, which could create those "what if…" situations.

WIN: The rules of Santa Cruz don't really explain this, why the settlers are suddenly gone and then come again?

MAC: Well, there have been several ideas on that issue, now in the final product it ended up that way that there is one first wave of settlers, as was often the case on those islands, and that the settlements were abandoned after a time and then the island was settled again. We have also considered for some time if the first round could be played as a planning round, that is, we are all still in Europe and have our cards and plan how it could go when we land at the island. But then we discarded that idea and left it as it

is, unexplained.

WIN: My idea was, maybe due to an illness, maybe Cholera ….

MAC: …and there is a volcano on the island, who knows what that triggers. But, as I said, it was a common thing that islands were deserted for a time.

WIN: Back to good games, in which of your games did you manage this?

MAC: I believe, the outcome is always very different, well, for instance, Santa Cruz does what I did describe a few moments ago, or also Fiese Freunde, Fette Fetten, in an extreme way - I can live a life in this game that I would not want to live otherwise. All those complications, what happens, and how are the relations working between people, this what-would-happen-if element is very strong there.

But there is a second approach for me, which I always try to realize, that is, dynamics between players; this for me is also what makes a game a good one, that I have a different experience with different players. This was the reason for developing Verräter and Meuterer, those group dynamics, how do people inter-play, or take Speed Dating, where I wanted to mirror self-presentation and getting to know each other, compressed into a game that can be played in 30 minutes, this question of what is important when I meet somebody for the first time. I am assigned five characteristics at random and must present myself, present myself quickly, which is exactly what one has to do in real life when one is looking for a partner, and so to say shows a picture about one's self, tells a story. The fun in Speed Dating is also that you can bluff, you can tell something about a horse, but in the end all that counts is that one comes across as okay. One always meets twice in life. Well, there is always a neat little story behind a game which fascinated me and most often it is a story of life and about dynamics between people.

WIN: So there is no game that you regret having designed it?

MAC: Oh no, no. I have so far only made games for which I could state that I like to play them. Of course, there are some that I prefer and some that are not so hot, but I don't regret a single one.

WIN: What is the typical creation process, from the first idea up to the first prototypes?

MAC: I'm just going through this at the moment! Funnily enough I always get my ideas at Fairs and Trade Shows, when I amble along the corridors and have nothing much to do or am walking somewhere to get a cup of coffee. Suddenly my mind is free to think about games. It is not about walking along tables and checking what I could glean from there. Not at all, but those are the moments when I am not distracted

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by daily life. In earlier times it was waiting at bus stops, for instance. That's when first ideas for, over which I am brooding. Well, I'm brooding for a long time; keep an idea in my head before taking the trouble to put it on paper, because I really detest making prototypes. So it takes an eternity before I arrive at that stage.

WIN: So, no notes, and then saying, well this idea is shelved for half a year now or something like that?

MAC: Notes come very late in the process and very often it so happens that I have one or more ideas in parallel and think about them and make no notes at all. Maybe I will remember them after a month or even more, some things surely get lost that way; but I always hope that the real crackers stay in mind!

WIN: They stick, you mean!

MAC: And sometimes I do make notes; well, I have founds notes from ten and 15 years

ago. That was very funny. But I do not do this regularly or systematically; there are designers, who are clearly regular; I know about the Brands, that they have numbered all their prototypes. That's very cute. And I think that everybody has to find his personal scheme. I do not believe that one should open a Designer School and teach people you must work from 10 to 16 hours and have accomplished this and that. This is a method that suits some people, and does not suit others. Everybody has to find their own way to do it.

WIN: Back to your childhood? How did your parents handle playing? Playing games, that is. I don't know if you have children, but if you do, how much do you play with them?

MAC: I don't have children yet. My parents have taught me to play; they did buy games for us and also did play them with us … in that aspect all was normal.

WIN: I seem to have read somewhere that

you have a brother, I believe?

MAC: Yes, I do. I did play a lot with him. At one point we did arrive at an age when our parents thought that now we could play on your own. So, they did not play games passionately, but they had fun, yes they had fun, but have not been games. So it was more the standard approach, just the normal procedure for everybody in the German-speaking world to be introduced to games-

WIN: A lot of games are played in the German speaking world ….

MAC: Yes, exactly, and it is normal and standard that parents play with their children.

WIN: Exactly. Name three important persons for us, from now back to the beginnings of history, who you would place at a table to play which game with them?

MAC: Which game would I play with them…? (is thinking) … I think that is a very wide-ranging question, I can give any an-

swer now. Well, let's keep it simple - I would say Angela Merkel and Peer Steinbrück und then I get ... who was elected what recently? .. ähm - Frau Göring-Eckardt. So that's leading German politicians and I play any good game with them and show them what you could learn for politics from playing games - Such things as equity or taking care that people remain in play and are not kicked out - I think this could be turned into a valuable lesson for them. That might me more interesting than choosing some dead personalities who cannot initiate any changes anymore.

WIN: OK. Then I advance one question. What would you wish from Obama, Merkel & Co?

MAC: Those people should play more, should analyze more games in order to learn from them. I believe that games very nicely get across topics like equity. This is really funny and interesting. Sit people down at a table with a game, they immediately tell you if a mechanism is unfair, if one is preferred and abuses this. They feel this, yes, they do, and if one would look at laws from that point of view it would not be bad at all; I can only recommend this warmly to Obama, who in his turn might be in a difficult position to implement this.

WIN: This brings up another question. Why do you involve yourself in politics? What is your motivation? I have learned that you are member of the Pirates' Party?

MAC: Well, exactly this is my motivation. I look closely at the world and think if "that has to be the way it is"? Because, there are always things in this world about which you feel, "Well, something is not right here" and it is interesting to see adolescents who protest against that and as a game designer who is used to look at things from the other side, that is, especially if you design new games, to say "there always has to be a winner". That's how it was. Let's do a game where this is not the case, kind of break the rules. As a game designer you do not resign yourself to the status quo, but note when it gets at you, when you think about "why is everything so unfair, and why has it been always so and could we not change it?" That's where you start thinking, and that is the reason why I got involved in politics. Because I believe that one often can find solutions that are not immediately at hand, that there can be different solutions to problems. That is a very important point for me, variety; that you allow people to be different; that I do not have to say, I live in a society where you have to get up at 6 a.m. and at 6 p.m. all is done, but that there can people who like getting up at 6 a.m. and others who are active in the evening. And as a society one can easily handle this so that people can be happy in different and parallel ways. And I think that that is often the case in games, too, that one offers different ways to carry on and that in this way one game can reach more

people. A good example for this is Carcassonne, which you can play very strictly and competitively, or completely cooperatively. And yes, simply give people the opportunity to develop in a way they like. This is a big concern of mine; therefore I got involved with the Pirates.

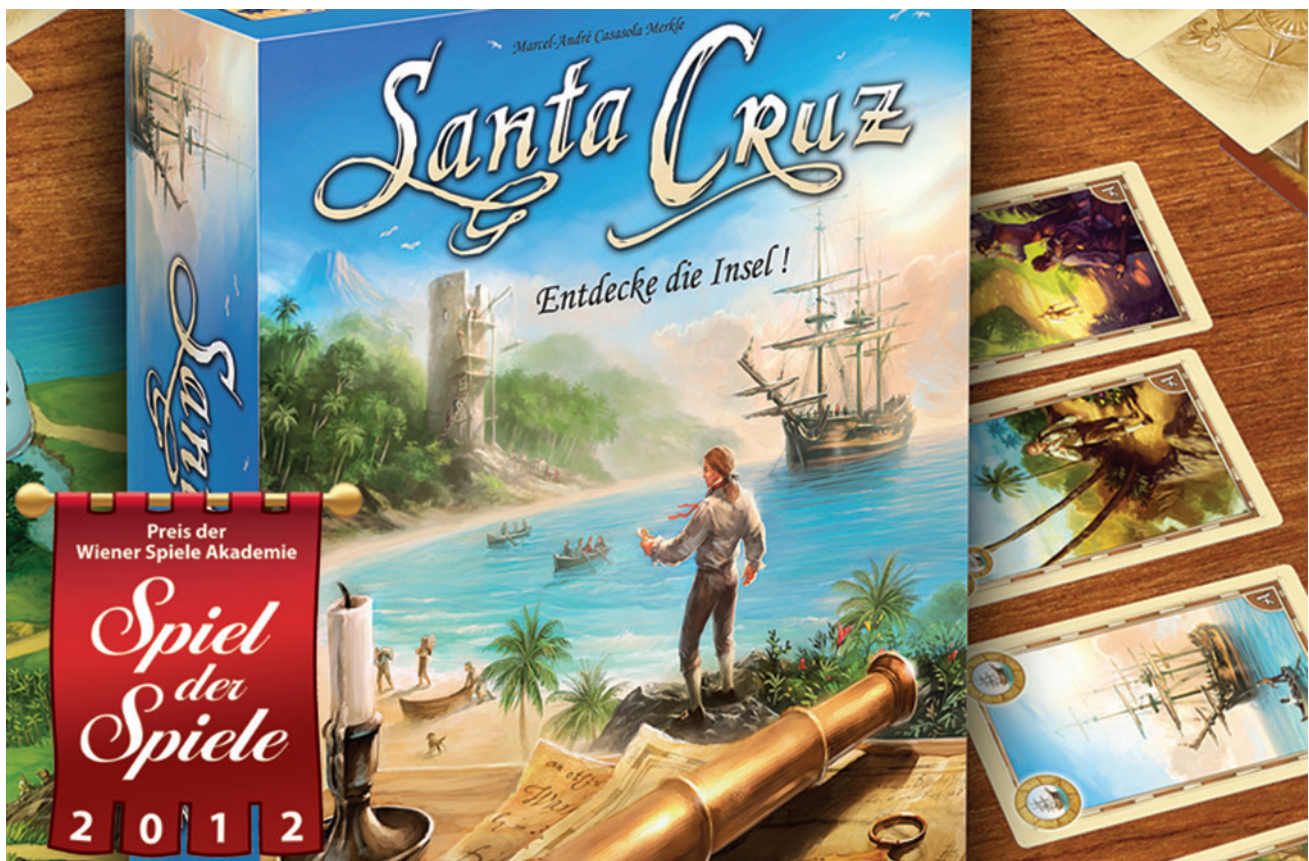**WIN:** Pirates are offering this in the most accessible way?

MAC: Yes, this is one of their basic philosophies, somehow, to support and encourage this variety and not to see it as a necessary evil or denigrate it and to say „this is the standard now, this is good, and if you behave differently than it is bad".

WIN: Are you only a rank and file member or do hold any office with the Pirates?

MAC: Well, yes, that is a party were especially the rank and file members do have an office, which is a bit unusual; and no, I do not have any official jobs. I have never had them and this is good, that I don't have to hold an office to be involved in making politics.

WIN: Back to more private matters. Which other hobbies, if we list games play under hobbies, do you have or would you like to have?

MAC: Well, this is a very difficult question; for me it is hard to speak about hobbies at all because for me it is not easy to separate job and hobby. Because, with some projects I do earn good money and other projects are not so successful that I earn money with them, but I can hardly call them a Hobby.

Color codes, target groups, features, icons and GABIS are explained on page 5 and at the bottom of pages 36 and 37

That is, I cannot really say, I play games for a Hobby. I do not do it as my main profession, but I do many different things. Well, I am a programmer, too; we program Apps for the iPhone, game applications among other things. I am a free-lance programmer with TheCodingMonkey. We have just programmed an App for Carcassonne on the iPhone and most recently Lost Cities. And then, quite recently, I have become a writer recently (he takes out a book from his jacket). I have published a book together with my girlfriend. It is called Smartbook.

WIN: Smartbook, I think I have seen that on the web. And I think I saw it on your site.

MAC: Exactly. The idea behind it was simple: We take an iPhone and try to implement it on paper. Simply think about what a telephone could look like. That ends up with a Morse alphabet and you can (knocks on the book cover) knock at the book cover to send a Morse code. Or an SMS turns into a paper airplane and the watch becomes a sun dial. It was simply fascinating to keep finding definition and to muse "why has there been no product before the Smartbook, ähh, before the Smartphone which offers all those things." Because, you can transform nearly everything into a paper copy in one way or another, more or less charmingly. And, I do many things like this, many different things; I am a blogger, as well ….

WIN: This is a cute thing, anyway. (Holds the Smartbook up for the camera).

MAC: Yes, exactly. It is available everywhere from bookstores. If it is not in stock you can order it and it also offers a few games. Small ones. For instance, there is an Artificial Intelligence for TicTacToe, in which I have tried to provide a way to win against the computer. And yes, I blog a lot. I have also studied Film/TV and have made an animation film for my final qualification film. I am interested in all the media with which you can express yourself.

WIN: And what would be your perfect holiday? Where and how do you relax best?

MAC: Well, the perfect holiday has just ended. (Laughs). I don't take many holidays. This year we treated ourselves to two weeks in Turkey. Just laying on the beach, think, soaking up the sun, especially at that time of the year when it is cold. That's not always the way how I spend my holiday, but for once it was nice, because I had a very work-heavy year. Usually I look visiting cities. But especially if do many free-lance things, and move around the blogger scene, twitter a lot, at least sometimes, then you are on the road a lot. Every weekend in another city, now and there in Vienna! Then it is nice to be able to relax.

WIN: That's obvious, this takes up a lot of time all those trips, all those Games Fairs. You have mentioned Friedemann Friese

earlier in connection with a game and Uwe Rosenberg, too! Are you actively looking for cooperation with other designers or did this happen coincidentally?

MAC: Well, the projects I did together with other designers have happened more or less coincidentally. For me it is nice to work with others, usually one gets results more quickly. But I would not like to to it exclusively, I also like to work on a game alone. I try to do both. But the most important thing is the chemistry between co-workers, when you work together! If it works, then I do it and then it is real fun!

WIN: The chemistry with Friedemann Friese seems to work?

MAC: Yes, the first game got started over a Belgian beer in France, where we simply arsed around wildly; it was a great experience. To develop the game was a great experience.

WIN: What do you appreciate more? Invent games or illustrate?

MAC: Illustration for me always was an offset; because, which sounds really idiotic to say it, you can work more stupidly at illustrations. That means, I can sit down at the computer and can illustrate and I can listen to music at the same time or to a podcast, or what else. I don't have to use my head 100%. From the working side of things, inventing games has always held more of an interest for me. Well, illustrating as an additional thing I quite like to do, but not as my main occupation. I think that would drive me mad (laughs a bit).

WIN: And which of your occupations provides your livelihood?

MAC: Well, it's always the complete mixture adding up, because I do so many different projects.

WIN: So it is not only inventing games and illustrations, but lots more …?

MAC: Yes, exactly. Well, programming, too, and now the book. Illustrating, for instance, has a completely different cost structure and earnings. When I illustrate I know beforehand what I will earn and what my budget is. In case of a board game I never know what the outcome will be, and therefore that varies. But as to which part of my projects earns me most? Well, meanwhile there are those programs like Flatter, where you have your Blog and then somebody presses a button and you receive a small donation, because you wrote an interesting article or said something nice on the web. There is a wealth of possibilities.

WIN: Yes. So, while researching I have discovered that you also did illustrate cards for Dominion, which is one of my favorite games: How does one get such an assignment and how does it work? Tells you what one should draw in which way, in what style, for instance?

MAC: Yes, well, as regards to Rio Grande, Jay Tummelson did approach me a long time ago and wanted a game illustrated. So far, this has not been published, but is said to be scheduled for publication.

WIN: Good look for this!

MAC: Funnily enough, a game which I illustrated six years ago. The cooperation worked very well, even if the game was rescheduled. And he asked me again for Dominion, because he wanted to have illustrations from different artists. And then there were rough specifications, what would be the setting, and then one could just try. And the illustrations I did for Dominion are very different. There were some about which I say that they are the better ones, and some that I believe are not as good as I expected them to be. But I am glad to have been involved in this project.

WIN: Are there more in the pipeline?

MAC: That could be well the case; well I do not now the schedule, things often happen spontaneously. I did not even play all of them.

WIN: It is nearly impossible recently, because ….

MAC: … it has become very difficult.

WIN: As I said, Dominion is one of my favorite games. What are your top 3 games? Which kind of games do you like best?

MAC: I try to play as many different genres as I can get hold of, because I am interested in this. What did fall a bit short in recent years are the really complex games, because my spare time does not allow for this. But apart from this I am open for everything, as regards to games. The only ones I do not like that much are games with a logistics topic, but everything else just all over the place. And the question for my favorite game I have not been able to answer for quite some time! As mentioned before, Löwenherz has been the one once upon a time, but I do not mention that anymore, because there has been a new edition of the game, which goes by the same name, but from the flair and feeling for me is completely different.

WIN: And what can we expect from the near future? What will be the next game?

MAC: Future will tell! I can say nothing at all on this.

WIN: There are plans in your head, but you do not want to talk about them?

MAC: There are plans, but if they will be realized, who knows?

WIN: Then I say thank you very much for this interview and hope that you will a nice time in Vienna!

MAC: Yes, me too, thank you!

The interview was recorded by Astrid Willim and Christian Huber. ☑

Astrid Willim und Christian Huber

10 TAGE DURCH DEUTSCHLAND
CORRECT ROUTES BY BUS AND TRAIN

`8↑`

A map of Germany, divided into 44 regions which are marked with five different colors and a map only marginally correct geographically - we are asked to plan a route around this country comprises 10 days/stations; we travel across borders into adjacent regions or use bus and train to reach regions farther away. You are dealt 10 cards face down which you take up one by one and place it on a slot of your choice in one of your racks. In this phase you cannot change the location of a card once you placed it. Three more cards are displayed openly. In your turn you take the top card from the stack or one of the open-faced cards. The card you take can be discarded or swapped with one of the cards on your racks. By swapping cards you try to create a correct route. Such a route runs over a border into an adjacent region or via train in a region of the same color, further away - the train must be of the same color as the two regions it connects. With a bus you can jump over an adjacent region, without any regards to color. Stage 1 and stage 10 of the route cannot be means of transport. If you have created your complete route you announce this and show the route to the other players; if the route is correct, you win instantly.

10 Tage durch Deutschland is an adapted re-implementation of Europatour and also 10 Days in …; a fast interesting fun game in which you must be prepared to change your route in an instant when a good card is available. Here really the path is your destination. ☑

EVALUATION

Travel game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:
Adaptation of Europatour
* Good rules with lots of examples * Very good family game

Compares to:
Europatours

Other editions:
10 Days through …, Out of the Box, USA

ALFABET SPEL
A DIFFERENT KIND OF WORD GAME

The designer himself presented this game to me in Essen - Alfabet, a word or letter placement game with has its roots in Scrabble and other games based on the principle of crossword puzzles.

Each player has his own set of 42 letters and 6 jokers; those 48 tiles have the same backside color! In a two-player game each player uses two sets of tiles! On the front side 16 letters and 2 jokers are white on black, 15 letters and 2 jokers are white on red and 11 letters and 2 jokers are red on white. Each player puts his letters down face-.down, draws 7 letters for his first hand and displays them openly. Then in turn you place one word in the manner of crossword puzzles; the first player has absolutely free choice of where to position his first word. After placing a word you draw or maybe discard letters; how many letters you may draw or might have to discard depends on the word you placed: Each letter on a red background placed on a red spot on the board gives you one letter from your stock, each letter on red or white placed on a black spot or each letter on black placed on a red spot costs you one letter from your hand.

The number of letters in your hand can never go below four; if necessary you draw letters after discarding letters. You win when you manage to place all letters or - when nobody can place words anymore - with the fewest letters in total in your hand and your personal stock.

Alfabet is an elegant little game in classy design, and a real tidbit for all fans of word and letter placement games; the Dutch rules are quickly translated and the letter division is compatible with German. ☑
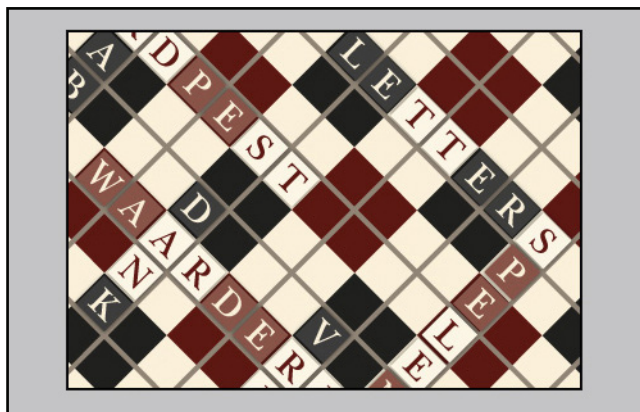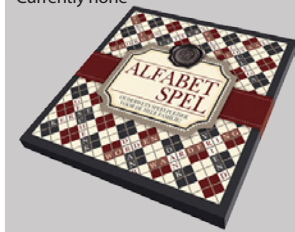
EVALUATION

Word placement game
With friends
Version: nl
Rules: nl
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Variant of the Scrabble mechanism * Each player has the same letters * In a game for two you play two colors

Compares to:
Scrabble and other letter placement games

Other editions:
Currently none

ANGRY BIRDS SPACE
SPACE RACE KIMBLE

`5↑`

The Angry Birds at long last have taken their eggs to safety, but suddenly a long robot arm from another dimension grabs and kidnaps the eggs and once again the Birds must set out to get them back.

This in short is the background story to the game, which presents the topic of Angry Birds in combination with the game mechanics of Ludo, Pachisi and Mensch ärgere Dich nicht and other versions of the game. The birds must now fend off the robot arm of the thieving pigs in the orbit of the dice planet. This dice planet is represented by a transparent cupola with a die in it; on a game board of clear plastic the bird pieces sit in anti-skid indents, each player has his own set of birds, which are very attractively designed and different for each player. You hit the clear cupola: The die jumps once, turns over and shows a new result; the pips denote the number of steps one of your birds can move forward, but only if it has been brought into play, or, as the story tell us, shot into orbit by rolling a six as usual. And, again as usual, you send birds who sit in a spot where you now land, back to their home spots. The pig spot represent finish spots and must be reached with an exact roll. If you are first to circle the planet with your four birds and land them on the four pig spots with exact rolls, you win. And the "Kimble" in the title is due to the fact that the game can also be found as a hidden Eggsteroid Level in the Angry Bird Space Apps.

Angry Birds Space Space Race is is lots of fun to play, the old familiar game gets a facelift by the spacey boards and components. Go get the pigs, on the count of three! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS: 2-4	AGE: 5+	TIME: 30+

Designer: not stated
Artist: not stated
Price: ca. 20 Euro
Publisher: Tactic / Piatnik 2012
www.piatnik.com

EVALUATION

Roll & Move game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de hu and others
In-game text: no

Comments:
Based on the Angry Birds license * Elegant futuristic design * Cute, nice playing pieces * Standard mechanisms

Compares to:
Pachisi, Mensch ärgere Dich nicht, Ludo

Other editions:
Tactic, Finland; and others

ANGRY BIRDS STAR WARS AT-AT
ABSCHUSS-SPIEL

`👤` `5↑`

The mechanism of this game does not hide in any way, but announces itself boldly already in the title: AT-AT Shooter Game aka Attack Battle game. For all non-Star-Wars fans: AT-AT is the battle robot from the Star Wars films. In this game he is the target for the Angry Birds, who - in analogy to the usual Angry Birds Topic - shoot the evil pigs, that is, some characters from Star Wars off the AT-AT and then demolish the AT-AT.

Well, before you can sling you must assemble, the first time will need some adult assistance. After assembling the Light Saber Launcher and AT-AT the AT-AT is loaded with Star Wars characters from the Dark Side - Darth Vader, AT-AT Driver and AT-AT Commander, supplemented with two Storm Troopers and two Snow Troopers. They all should be defeated by a total of five Rebel characters; in an Angry Birds disguise there are Han Solo, Luke Sky-Walker - he is featured twice, once from Echo Base and once from Battle of Hoth - plus R2-D2 and a Rebel trooper. Two of the figures - Luke Skywalker from Echo Base and the AT-AT Commander, are exclusive to this box of the game, additional figures are available.

The package also includes a code with which you can unlock Star Wars content in the Angry Birds App. At first glance the combination of topics results in irritation, but somehow it makes sense; Star Wars was and is a topic of conflicts, and in Angry Birds you sling, shoot, overthrow and destroy - if you have fun with such games you will like the 3D-version for your table, too; fans of both topics will love it anyway and the training effect on motor skills and visual judgment cannot be denied. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS: 1	AGE: 5+	TIME: 5+

Designer: not stated
Artist: not stated
Price: ca. 40 Euro
Publisher: Hasbro 2012
www.hasbro.de

EVALUATION

Dexterity Game
For children
Version: multi
Rules: 13 languages
In-game text: no

Comments:
Adult assistance necessary for assembly * No batteries * Combines the topics of Angry Birds and Star Wars * Expansion packs available

Compares to:
All versions of Angry Birds

Other editions:
Angry Birds Star Wars AT AT Attack Battle Game, Hasbro USA

BABAR
UND DIE ABENTEUER VON BADOU
DAS SPANNENDE SUCHSPIEL

`4↑`

Babar, Badou and their friends want to bring colored crayons into the Jungle School, but they got lost in the jungle. Dice determine which friend carrying which color of crayon is currently searched for.

The four palm trees are assembled and then - easily visible - distributed around the room, at not to great a distance. Then nine spotting tiles are displayed open-faced next to each palm tree. In your turn you roll both dice. One of the dice determines the friend that must be found, the other the color of crayon this friend must carry. For each combination of friend and color there is only one tile. While the timer runs you may run from one palm tree to the next and look for the actual tile. When you have found the correct tile, you place it onto your own board and hand on the dice. When you took a wrong tile, you must put it back and can go on searching while the timer runs. When the gift is rolled, all players can look for the actual friend who carries the gift. If you rolled the gift you then have another turn of rolling and searching. When the friend you are looking for has already been taken by another player, you grab the star tile. If you are first to do so, you get the tile from its current owner; if he was quicker to grab the star tile he can keep his friend tile. If you grab the star tile in error, you must give back a tile that you already won. If you are first to have five tiles on your board, you win.

A nice idea for a game, the inclusion of the whole room introduces movement and also training for passage of time - can I run once more around the palm trees before the timer runs out? ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:	AGE:	TIME:
2-4	4+	10+

Designer: Karin Hetling
Artist: not stated
Price: ca. 20 Euro
Publisher: Huch! & and friends 12
www.huchandfriends.de

EVALUATION

Spotting game
For children
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:
License topic * Well-made version of the spotting mechanism * Pretty components

Compares to:
All spotting games using the whole room

Other editions:
Currently none

CARD OF THE DEAD
SURVIVE THE ZOMBIES ATTACK!

Fight Zombies! Flee the City! Collect movement points! Aim of the game is to survive in a card game featuring three kinds of cards: Action cards, Zombie cards and Event cards. Zombies cards are simply Zombies, Action cards represent actions or items that can affect Zombies or other players; the number in the top right-hand corner denotes movement points. Event cards introduce events that must be implemented; they change the course of the game.

In your turn you first draw a card; if you did draw a Zombie you place it on the table in front of you; an Action card is taken in hand and an Event card is implemented. Then you can use a card from your hand: Action cards as an item - you implement the effect of the item - or for movement points; those are collected in a separate display to collect the number necessary for escape and to win the game.

When the Zombie cards in front of a player have reached the limit - 5 to 7 cards depending on the number of players, this player is dead and quits the game. Some card interactions can countermand that. You win if you are the last one in play or if you have acquired the necessary number of movement points - 5 to 7 depending on the number of players - to escape from the town. When the deck is empty before that you win with most movement points.

The interesting element in this game is that you do not attack other players directly, you can only hand on Zombies as an event or draw cards from their hand or things like that; more important than attacking other players is to control the number of Zombies in your own display and to have defense cards against events. ☑
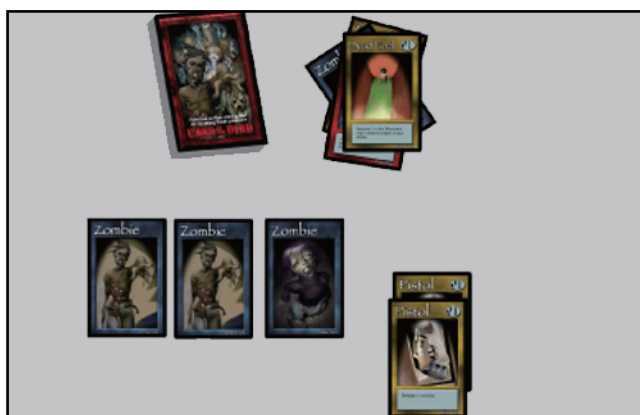
INFORMATION

PLAYERS:	AGE:	TIME:
2-5	10+	20+

Designer: Motohiro Nakamura
Artist: M. Hassegawa, M. Nakamura
Price: ca. 10 Euro
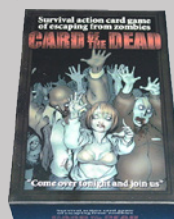**Publisher:** Tamakonnyaku 2012
www.gamers-jp.com

EVALUATION

Card placement game
With friends
Version: en
Rules: en jp
In-game text: no

Comments:
No direct attacks in the usual form on other players * Defense cards against Zombies and events are essential * Topic nicely implemented

Compares to:
All card games with a Zombies topic

Other editions:
Currently none

CARO

BUILDING BLOCK - BUT ONLY AT FIRST GLANCE

👥 8↑

The elegant box in abstract design holds 48 square Caros in white, light gray, dark gray and red. Each player - regardless of the number of players - is given three Caros of each color and in a turn you place one Caro for the maximum possible number of points. This placing of Caros is restricted by a limit for the maximum size of the display; for two players it can have maximum 6x6 Caros, for three players 7x7 Caros and four players can place up to 8x8 Caros. The number of points you can score depends on the color of the Caro you placed. The starting player chooses any color and scores 10 points as compensation. You can never place a Caro next to a Caro of the same color, so there can be six different combinations: red/black for 10 points, red/gray for 8 points and red/white for 6 points; black/grey scores you 4 points and black/white or gray/white both score 1 point. Placing a Caro can of course result in formation of several color combinations due to it touching several other Caros, all those are scored separately. But there are more restrictions: You can only place a maximum of two Caros of the same color next to a color and there cannot be a diagonal of more than three Caros of the same color. When you place the last Caro of a color you double the score of this move. When a Caro is placed you cannot relocate it unless you must correct a mistake, but this loses you 10 points.

Caro is an attractive, abstract game making you think around corners, because you want to place Caros correctly and for lots of points and not really prepare a high score for the next player or yield it to him by overlooking it. ☑

EVALUATION

Abstract placement game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Very beautiful components * Needs close observation and careful consideration * Opposing pieces visible all the time

Compares to:
All placement game with scoring of color combinations

Other editions:
Currently none

CAVEMEN

PLAYING WITH FIRE
STONE AGE FIRE FIGHTERS

👥

One does not play with fire and therefore the cave dwellers want to extinguish one of the opposing fires to be on the safe side.

According to exact rules each player creates a display of Fire Cards and Cave Cards, so that in the display and at its edges four paths are formed vertically, along those paths cards can be moved; you can also move cards horizontally over cards in the display to another path. From the rest of your cards you draw five for your hand.

One turn comprises the phases 1 - implement action, 2 - place cards, 3 - discard cards and 4 - draw cards. An action is movement or attack using cave dwellers, only one step or attack per path. The ranks (values) of attacking and attacked card are compared, the card of lower rank (the one with the higher number) is discarded openly, and the higher ranking card remains in the display, face-down. In Phase 2 you can lay out up to 3 of the 5 cards in your hand; cave dwellers go next to your own fires or caves, caves open-faced between fires. You can replace an opposing cave with one of your own, but not one directly above a fire. If you want to, you can then discard cards from hand and draw cards to replenish your hand to five cards.

The special abilities of cave dweller cards are activated for movement or attack, but in doing so you reveal the location of the card. A fire is extinguished when an opposing cave dwellers moves on top of it with one step! As you are only allowed to shuffle the discard pile when you have lost either your strongest or your weakest character according to the rules you need to plan the use of your cards cleverly. Sophisticated, tricky and highly tactical! ☑

EVALUATION

Card game
With friends
Version: multi
Rules: de en nl
In-game text: no

Comments:
Sophisticated tactic game * Systematic use of cards is a deciding factor * Good memory for cards is an advantage

Compares to:
Stratego for hidden information, trading cards for strength comparison

Other editions:
Currently none

CHEEKY MONKEY

SWAP A MONKEY FOR AN ELEPHANT

7↑

The „if only I could stop" mechanism is the main mechanism in this game and for this game; this enchanting versions, packed into a cuddly plush monkey, is the third edition of this game in English. 52 animal tiles are placed in the bag; 8 bonus tiles are on display, they show the animals in the game and the number of tiles for each animal.

You draw a tile, put it on the table and can draw another tile or stop voluntarily. If you on and you draw another animal than you did before, you can decide again to draw or stop. If you stop voluntarily you stack the animals according to your choice and can decide to put one kind of animal at the bottom of a stack. But if you go on and draw an animal

for the second time, you put back all tiles drawn in this round. If you draw an animal that is also visible on one or more stacks of other players, you can take all of them and then decide to go on or stop. When must put tiles back you must also put the tiles taken from other players back into the bag.

Monkeys are governed by special rules; you can treat them like another animal or swap them for another animal from a player's stock. When all tiles are taken, all players sort their animals; if you have most of a kind you take the corresponding bonus tile and you win with the highest total from tiles and bonus tiles-.

Cheeky Monkey is an attractive version of the Can't stop principle; the monkey is simply cuddly! Tactic and luck of the draw are nicely balanced; the info on the bonus tiles lets you check if a majority could still be achieved, but for this you need to count all animals with all players! ☑

EVALUATION

Collecting game
For families
Version: en
Rules: de en hu jp ru
In-game text: no

Comments:
Attractive design *
Enchanting packaging *
Felicitous version of a well-known mechanism

Compares to:
All games with a stop/go on choice

Other editions:
Monkey Business, Piatnik; Cheeky Monkey, Face2Face

DER HOBBIT

DAS KARTENSPIEL

10↑

The journey to the Lonely Mountain has been portrayed with this trick-taking card game for teams; Hobbit Bilbo, Dwarf Thorin and Gandalf the Magician represent Good against Dragon Smaug and Orc Bolg representing the evil side. The game comprises five character cards and 60 playing cards, made up from values 1 to 12 in five colors. Depending on the

number of players, character cards and playing cards are specifically assigned and dealt.

A game is made up from a maximum of two rounds; a round ends when the last card from hand has been played and the trick assigned. Thorin is the starting player and plays one card, the other players play the same color, or, if they don't have it, another color

or purple for trump. The winner of the trick assigns cards to himself and other players according to the rules valid for his character: Bilbo keeps one card, hands on one card and discards the rest. Thorin shuffles the trick face-down and deals one card randomly to each player; Gandalf and Smaug distribute the cards at their choice, but only one per player; they can assign cards or discard them all. Bolg must take a card himself or give one to another player and discards the rest. You cannot collect positive symbols for yourself, but can only use them instantly to balance bad symbols; both cards are then discarded, as are cards without such symbols. When there is no winning team after the first round, a second round is played. A character is out of the game when he holds two negative symbols.

A basically very simple trick game, where the finesse is in assigning the cards of a trick, you must carefully consider if you want to take a trick, because you could end up with a card you do not really want. ☑

EVALUATION

Trick-taking card game-
For families
Version: de
Rules: de en es fr gr it jp nl pl
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Basically simple trick card game * More choice for the Bad side, they can choose cards before discarding some, but have fewer characters in play

Compares to:
Basically all trick-taking card games

Other editions:
France, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, USA, etc.
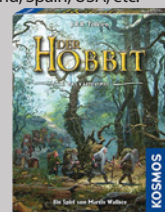
DER ISSES!

WHO IS MISLEADING WHOM?

👥 10↑

The aim of the game is very simple, you want to acquire one silver coin in each round and win with four silver coins!

Each player has a set of colored tiles (7 colors with the same backside) - seven markers in those seven colors are placed randomly on the board and, finally, the silver coin is placed, with a minimum of one square distance to the next marker. Now each player secretly chooses a color by himself, this marker is his in this round and he places the tile in this color at the bottom his stack of tiles. The player who did not place the silver coin starts the game, in later rounds the player who won the previous round.

For your turn you choose any marker and move it by one step or let it jump over one or several adjacent markers; the chosen marker must be in a position nearer to the silver coin at the end of the turn than it was in at the start of the turn; a diagonal distance is considered to be longer than a straight distance. You win the silver coin either by 1) moving on top of the coin or 2) by choosing the same color as the player who jumps onto the coin or 3) by challenging the opponent, you point to a marker which you are sure of that is is the one chosen by your opponent and say „that's the one"; if you are correct you get the coin. You are not allowed to pass your turn but must move a marker or challenge your opponent and say "that's the one".

A typical Alex Randolph game, small, neat and more of challenge than you credit it with at first glance; how do I best hide my choice without bluffing too obviously, do I go for the coin directly or for misleading my opponent? ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:	AGE:	TIME:
2	10+	20+

Designer: Alex Randolph
Artist: Johann Rüttinger
Price: ca. 13 Euro
Publisher: Drei Hasen i. d. Ab. 12
www.hasehasehase.de

EVALUATION

Bluffing game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
New edition of Xe Queo! * Very attractive design and components * Good, challenging family game

Compares to:
Xe Queo and other bluffing games on positions

Other editions:
In the Past: Xe Queo, Drei Magier Spiele and Venice Connection, currently none

DER KLEINE PRINZ

PLANETENWANDERER

6↑

The evil snake darkens planets, and players travel with the Little Prince to the darkened planets and help to set them free from the power of the snake.

Each player places a Space board and 15 Darkling Chips on the table. The Snake board and snake parts are also laid out. All planets and the snake tile are placed around the board, open-faced; all players take a good look at this display and then the tiles are turned over.

The disc on the board represents the home planet of the little prince and is spun; when it comes to rest the airplane is moved to the nearest star; now a planet is visible in one of the gaps on the board. If you know the location of this planet disc you turn it up - if you picked the correct planet you can go on playing until you either make a mistake or turn up the snake. If you make a mistake, you put the wrong tile back and the snake grows by one part. If you turn up the snake it grows by two parts and you switch the snake tile with any planet tile. In both cases you then fly the spinning top in the box lid to the upturned planets. You can move the box lid to make the spinning top touch one or several planets; if you succeed the planet is turned back over and you can put one of your Darkling chips star side up on your Space board. When you could place all 15 stars or if you first turn up all planets correctly in your turn and then manage to fly the spinning top to all of them correctly, you win the tame. When the snake is complete before this, the snake has won.

This is an enchanting game for children based on a literary topic; the combinations of mechanisms - memo and dexterity - results in a wonderful game with basically simple means! ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS:	AGE:	TIME:
2-4	6+	20+

Designer: Kai Haferkamp
Artist: Olga Cress, LLPM
Price: ca. 28 Euro
Publisher: Schmidt Spiele 2012
www.schmidtspiele.de

EVALUATION

Memo and dexterity game
For children
Version: multi
Rules: de fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Nice implementation of the topic * Marvelous design * Simple rules for impressing effects

Compares to:
Das kleine Gespenst and other combinations of dexterity and memo

Other editions:
Currently none

DREHWÜRMCHEN
ROLL A WORM, HARVEST RASPBERRIES

5↑

The little worms love to nibble at strawberries and you must collect little worms in order to harvest raspberries, but this will only work if you collect triplets of the same color.

27 wooden discs show worms, three each of the same color in nine different colors; those discs are spread face-down on the table and shuffled again. The necessary number of raspberries - depending on the number of players - is stacked open-faced. In your turn you roll the die: When the result is an arrow, your turn ends and you hand the die to the next player. For a green leaf you can roll again, and a raspberry basically also means that your turn ends -but only until a worm has been rolled.

As soon as the player who rolled the worm starts to turn up worm discs, using one hand only. When three worms of the same color are visible you take this triplet. The other players meanwhile go on rolling in turn; when another worm appears that means stop - you swap your triplets for one raspberry each from the stack, turn the worms back over again und shuffle all worm discs. But should a raspberry be rolled, you keep your turned-up worms, but the player who rolled the raspberry now turns up worm discs and you roll with the others. This continues until a worm calls a halt and worm-triplets are swapped for raspberries or until another raspberry is rolled and the new player begins to turn up worm discs. When all raspberries have been harvested, you win with most of them.

The educational effect is neatly hidden in Drehwürmchen; it trains concentration, dexterity and attention spans quite unobtrusively, the searching for worm triplet is real fun! ☑

EVALUATION

Memo and dice game
For children
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Simple basic mechanisms
* Intense training for dexterity and concentration * Pretty wooden components

Compares to:
All set-collecting games using dice

Other editions:
Currently none

EISKALT ERWISCHT
SNIP HARD AND TUMBLE FLOES AND FISH!

5↑

Paul Penguin wants to show off is ability to stay on top in the Arctic Sea Rodeo and players want to assist him. From four levels of ice floes an iceberg is built up, following exact instructions from the rules. On the top floe of the iceberg you place Paul Penguin and then you distribute the fish in such a way that there is a fish on each floe. In your turn you place one of your three ice discs somewhere in the Arctic Ocean (that is, in the box bottom) and snip it towards the iceberg, using either your finger or the snip-stick. This can result in one of two possibilities: Paul Penguin managed to stay in the saddle, that is, on top of the iceberg or he has tumbled off. When Paul did stay on top, the active player can take all parts that he has freed - fish, ice floes and also ice discs - and the turn passes to the next player. When Paul did tumble off, or fell over, you must but him back in place and must distribute parts that you might have freed among the other players; you don't get anything in this case. If you want to, you can relocate Paul at the start of your turn you can do so, but it costs you one of the floes that you have already collected, you put it back onto the iceberg. You can also use a floe instead of a disc for snipping; this will result in a stronger push.

When Paul sits on the last floe, you win if you managed to collect most parts.

Eiskalt erwischt! is a dexterity game in the best tradition of Haba - simple rules, enchanting components, a nice story and lots of fun to play, and with discarding a floe to relocate Paul you can even introduce some tactic into the game. ☑

EVALUATION

Snipping game
For children
Version: multi
Rules: de en es fr it nl
In-game text: no

Comments:
Attractive wooden components * Simple basic rules * Some tactic from relocating Paul and choice of floe or disc to snip

Compares to:
All snipping dexterity games

Other editions:
Currently none

iKNOW
KNOW; GUESS; GUESS WHAT OTHERS KNOW

The elegant white box offers a new quiz game; you are meant to collect 20 points in answer chips by correct answers to questions and correct guesses on how well the other players will do. Questions come from the categories of People, The World, Products and Works of Art as well as Phenomena and Events.

Each player is given two markers and a white chip. One player is reader of the first round, he reads out a questions in a category of his choice; he marks it with the transparent marker; at this point he does not read out any clues. The other players now place their iKNOW marker on a free spot on the board - if you think you can answer after one clue, you place the marker into one of the two 3-points-squares, for two clues into one of the two-points-squares and for three clues in one of the one-point-squares. The player whose marker is in front then guesses first, which of the other players will answer the question correct or wrong and places his marker accordingly into an empty circle in the (+) or (-) side of the board, next to the iKNOW marker of the player he picked.

When all markers have been placed, the first clue is read out. Then players on the 3-points-squares answer, after the second clue those on the 2-points-squares and so on. For a correct answer you score the corresponding number of chips; for correctly guessed reactions of other players you score one chip and the reader gets two chips.

The unusual mechanism allows for a tactic to let others answer first and also to repeat answers that you believe are right; if you are seated far from the reader you might have to answer first without wanting to! ☑

EVALUATION

Quiz and trivia game
With friends
Version: en
Rules: en fi
In-game text: yes

Comments:
International edition for 8 countries planned for 2013
* Interesting categories
* Unusual mechanism *
Elegant design

Compares to:
All Trivia/Quiz-Spiele

Other editions:
Finnish edition

KINGDOM BUILDER NOMADS
ERWEITERUNG 1

Each player creates his own kingdom by building settlements in order to acquire most gold at the end of the game. In each game you use 3 out of 10 Kingdom Builder cards; these cards set the conditions for getting gold at the end. Four of the eight quadrants are laid out and equipped with location tiles and summary cards. In your turn you place a landscape card and then place settlements into this landscape according to stringent placement rules; when the settlements border locations you receive location tiles and can use their special abilities once per turn either before or after placing settlements. For each castle next to one of your settlements you always earn 3 gold.

The first expansion, Kingdom Builder Nomads, introduces the components for a fifth player. Furthermore, there are 4 new quadrants, which introduce the new landscape type of Nomad Hexes into play, these hexes cannot be settled and replace the Castle locations; also new are four new locations - Quarry, Caravan, Village and Garden including the corresponding summary cards. The 15 Nomad tiles offer additional special actions, which can only be used once in the game - Donation, Resettlement, Outpost, Sword and Treasure. New Kingdom Builder cards - Families, Shepherds and Ambassadors - earn you gold during the game and the cards Workers and Merchants from the basic game are replaced by new cards of the same name. And finally, there are 25 Stone Walls, which are introduced via the Quarry and block landscape hexes.

Nomads is an attractive expansion with lots of new features, which seamlessly join with the basic game and offer quite some challenges for experienced players. ☑

EVALUATION

Placement game
With friends
Version: multi
Rules: de en es fr nl
In-game text: yes

Comments:
First expansion for Kingdom Builder * Needs core game to play * Mechanisms from the Core game well mixed with new challenges

Compares to:
Kingdom Builder

Other editions:
Currently none

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KROKO TOGO
GORIFFES UND KROKOPHANTS

`8↑`

There are corners in the jungle which no-one has seen before and so there are some very curious animals to be found there. But you must be quick or the most exciting finds will be gone, so use your explorer fast!

15 of 30 animal cards are placed open-faced on the table, the rest is set aside. 54 Search Orders are shuffled and stacked face down; each player picks up his explorer marker. Now the top search order is turned up in a way that all players see it simultaneously and players try, also simultaneously, to place their explorer marker onto an animal card in the display that fits the search order card. You cannot change your mind, when your explorer did touch a card he stays on this card; on each card only one explorer is allowed. You can decide not to place your explorer at all. The search order cards demand animals as follows: Animals in a green circle must be on the card, animals in a red circle must not be on a card; the search orders can also demand the rarest animal, the most frequent animal, cross-bred animals or pure-breed animals. If you have placed your marker correctly you receive the animal card; for a mistake you must discard a card. When after a round there are less than two cards in the display the remaining 15 animal cards are added to the display. When all cards or all but one are taken you win with most cards.

Funny, fast, with enchanting drawings, and you must always take a good, close look, especially in case of search orders with two conditions; because when an animal is forbidden it may not be present at all on a card, not even in parts in a cross-bred animal. ☑

EVALUATION

Spotting game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Pretty, witty drawings * Animal parts also easily identified * Close looking and concentration are necessary

Compares to:
All spotting games with prerequisites

Other editions:
Currently none
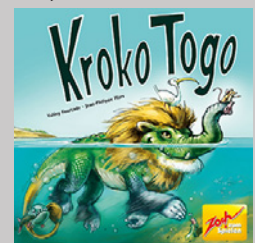
LÄNDER EUROPAS
TERRA KIDS

`7↑`

A journey of discoveries across 51 European countries, players assist four tourists who have lost their bearings a bit during their journey. From clues you must guess the current correct location of a tourist.

Each player guides a tourist and holds answer and risk cards of corresponding color. 12 country cards are chosen and covered with the "Do-not-Look" card.

The active player is the challenger and tests his fellow players: You take the top card, look at the clues, choose one and read it to the others; then you place the card in a way that all players can easily read the choice of answers. Players can place their card after each of the clues, it is placed on the spot with the corresponding number of points; clues are read until each player has placed his card; after the 4th clue all players must answer.

Two risk cards in the game can be used to change an answer that was already placed or steal points from another player if he should get more points for a correct answer given earlier, that is, after fewer clues. When all clues have been read and all answers placed the correct answer is named and in case of a correct answer you move your tourist for the number of points under your answer card. If you are first to have circled Europe with your tourist or are furthest ahead when all 12 country cards have been played, you win.

A challenging game of knowledge, not only for children! Who knows the capital of Ukraine, recognizes the country by its shape on the map or recognizes the flag? Challenging, informative and entertaining, geography instruction as child's play! ☑

EVALUATION

Game of Knowledge
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en es fr it nl
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Serie Terra Kids * Spannend und informativ * Man lernt Flaggen, Hauptstädte, Lage und Form eines Landes * Auch gut als Familienspiel

Compares to:
All travel and knowledge game on Europe

Other editions:
Currently none

LAS VEGAS

2 WHITE DICE WIN AGAINST 3 BLUE AND 3 GREEN

`8↑`

You try your luck as a hardened gamester in the glitter and glamour of Las Vegas; you can grab different sums of money from six casinos, marked with different dice values.

Each player hold a set of eight dice of one color; six casinos showing dice values of One to Five are laid out and you place money from the stack to each casino, placing notes up to a minimum value of 50.000 Euros. In your turn you roll all dice or, from the second turn on, all your remaining dice, choose one value and place all dice of this value on the corresponding casino – regardless if and whose dice are already in that casino. If you are out of dice you wait for the end of the round, when all players have placed all their dice. When all players have placed all their dice, each casino is checked in turn: When at a casino there are the same numbers of dice from two or more players, all those dice are taken off. Then the player with the highest number of dice in the casino takes the note of highest value, the other players follow in descending order of numbers of dice at the casino and take one note of decreasing value. If not enough money is available you might get nothing, if money remains, it is placed underneath the casino. For the next round all take back their dice and new banknotes are placed next to the casinos. After four rounds you win with most money.

Las Vegas is an easy, simple and fast game offering lots of fun; it is an ideal introductory game or a light finish to an evening of games play, and it is so nicely aggravating when you roll a Five with a red dice and can use it to cancel out the white Fives in the casino! ☑

EVALUATION

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

Comments:
Title changed from Vegas to Las Vegas * Very simple rules * High replay value * Very good, simple family game

Compares to:
All dice game with cancellation of identical results, in this case amounts of dice

Other editions:
Vegas, alea, 2012

MIXTOUR

PICK YOUR DISTANCE!

Mixtour starts with an empty board of 5x5 squares, and you hold 20 pieces in your color. White starts, and in your turn you can either enter a new piece on the board or move a tower. A new piece is entered by placing it on any free spot and becomes a tower. If you move a tower the move must always end on another tower; the tower moved is stacked on top of the tower reached; towers can be of any height. If you construct a tower of five pieces or more you win if the top piece belongs to you. A tower moves straight ahead orthogonally or diagonally over empty spots. But the core rule of the game concerns the distance of tower movement: It is not the tower you want to move which determines the distance by its height, it is the target tower whose height determines the number of step: If you for instance want to reach a tower consisting of three pieces you must move a tower that is located in a distance of three steps from your target tower, the last step is onto the spot with the target tower. You can move any tower on the board and can split towers any way you like, but you cannot immediately reverse the move that has just been made.

Should you want to play a tournament you determine a number of winning towers = counting markers; when you set up a winning tower, its owner takes a counting marker and the tower is taken off the board, its pieces go back to their owners. If you win more than half of the counting markers you win.

Mixtours is as simple a Gerhards game as always, as elegant as usual, intriguing and this time also especially sophisticated, the way your moving distance is determined is a special challenge! ☑

EVALUATION

Placement game
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:
Wooden components * Very short, concise rules * Absolutely unusual mechanism for moving distance * Tournament rules

Compares to:
Placement games where movement distance is determined by stack height, first game with determination by target tower

Other editions:
Currently none

MUTANT MEEPLES
SHORTEST WAY TO THE SCENE OF CRIME

`8↑`

Meeples are game pieces, and in this game some of them have been changed into super heroes; they are all super fast and each of them has an individual super power. Aim of the game is to assemble a super team of heroes by sending Meeples as quickly as possible to different crime scenes in Metropolis and then appointing them to the team.

For each round you reveal two location markers for alley and road, that is, row and column of the board, and place the crime scene marker accordingly. Now each player by himself considers how to get a Mutant Meeple to this location with fewest moves. For this you can use up to three Meeples and mark them and the total number of steps on your

player board and take the corresponding movement marker. You can use up to 10 steps for a Meeple and all in all not more than 24 steps to reach the target. One step covers the straight distance to an obstacle; changing direction begins the next step. Obstacles are walls, the edges of the board and other Meeples. Super powers allow exceptions from those rules. When all are done all show their path by moving the Meeple placeholders, in ascending order of steps announced. Whoever correctly manages the shortest path causes the end of the round and takes the marker of this Meeple off the board; he has joined the team and is no longer available. Your possibilities are reduced with every Meeple that joins your team and you win when six Meeples are in your team.
Mutant Meeples is a witty and well-done advancement of Ricochet Robots, super powers introduce new possibilities and the limitation for the number of steps is a real challenge, too! ☑

EVALUATION

Logic game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en
In-game text: no

Comments:
Based on an idea by Alex Randolph * Basic rules of Ricochet Robot have been sophisticatedly adapted * Two different boards * Includes side-kick expansion

Compares to:
Ricochet Robot

Other editions:
Currently none

NOAH
TWO ELEPHANTS FILL A BOAT

`7↑`

It has happened! The Flood has started and the animals must be loaded into boats that will take them to the Ark which must be filled in three rounds.
The game comprises eight boats and 47 animals. The boat cards show the maximum possible weight they can hold, the animal cards show weight, sex, characterizations, special abilities and

penalty points for not saving this animal.
Five boats are placed next to the landing stages on the board; Noah is placed randomly in one of them; then one animal is placed next to each boat and each player is dealt eight animal cards. In your turn you play one animal card next to the boat holding Noah and then move

Noah according to the card you played. In each boat you can place only male animals or only female animals or only pairs if animals and you must adhere to the weight limit. If you cannot play a correct card, you must take all animals cards next a boat and then play a card. When you played a female, Noah goes into one of the neighboring boats; if you played a male Noah moves to one of the two opposite boats. When you add an animal of the same kind you can do another complete turn. When a boat is full it leaves; a new one is placed and all players hand on cards to the left. When someone is out of cards or the boats are all used you score penalty points for animals in hand. After three such rounds you win with fewest points.
Enchanting animal drawings, simple mechanisms and a little bit of tactic, when you want to get rid of your animals in an optimum way; if you hold both elephants it gets difficult, but then there are the special abilities … ☑

EVALUATION

Placement game
For families
Version: multi
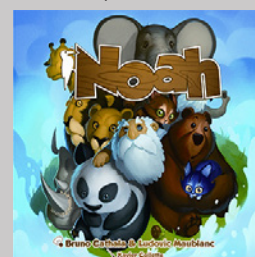Rules: cz de en es fr nl
In-game text: no

Comments:
Enchanting animal drawings * Good rules * Some tactic possible * Very nice family game

Compares to:
Arche Opti Mix

Other editions:
Noë, Czech Republic

Color codes, target groups, features, icons and GABIS are explained on page 5 and at the bottom of pages 36 and 37

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OHNE FURCHT UND ADEL
ASSASSIN OR KING?

The city needs new districts and we must set them up with the help of some dubious characters. 65 districts/buildings are color marked for categories, from religious buildings to special buildings. In each round you can either take two Gold or a building and then you can lay out a building by paying gold and displaying the card. Which would not be a real challenge was it not for the characters! These characters are assigned again each round, that is, each player secretly chooses a character from the ones left in the deck.

The characters are called in turn by the King and use their special ability: Assassin- blocks another character; Thief - steals gold from a character of his choice but the assassin and his target; Magician - swaps buildings; King - next starting player; Bishop - protects his buildings; Merchant - gets gold; Architect - new cards and one additional build; Warlord - destroys a building. With the eighth building of a player the game ends and you win with most points from buildings and special scorings.

This new edition introduces "Circus" action cards, and you can play one of them per round: Fortune Teller - swapping card hand; Director - builds up two two buildings; Rasputin - negates Assassin; Acrobat - Becomes King if King not chosen; Cashpoints - draw cards for gold; Living Cannonball - swap building for payment, and Circus tent - Value 0, but indestructible.

The choice of characters is the essence of the game, driven by lots of factors - what is left, what do I need to protect, and it should not be too obvious - still one of the best „ I think that you think that I will take …" games. ☑

EVALUATION

Card game
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: yes

Comments:
New edition with new „buildings" for action cards * Attractive mix of tactic and luck of the draw * Interdependencies of cards are the deciding factor

Compares to:
Verräter and other games with choice of character

Other editions:
First edition in at least 15 languages

PUZZLE OF OZ
DEFEAT COINCIDENCE

A wooden board shows 25 dented squares, arranged in a cross. 25 lens-shaped pieces in five colors - blue, green, orange, white and black - are put into the bag. In a game for two each player is assigned two colors, black in this case is a neutral color. In the solitaire game as well as in a game for two in each turn you draw one piece from the bag and put it on the board. In the first four turns the four corner squares are filled, then in each turn you must place the new piece next to another already on the board; either horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Pieces of the same color can never be placed next to each other, neither horizontally, vertically or diagonally. When a piece cannot be placed in compliance with this rule, in a game of two players the owner of the color has lost the game, regardless of who did draw the piece. If the piece that cannot be placed happens to black you lose the game if you drew it from the bag. When all pieces could be placed, you win in a game for two players if you placed the last piece.

If you would like to play several rounds, the winner of a game scores one point for each piece on the board, regardless of its color, and you win, if you are first to reach or top a total of 61 points.

Puzzle of Oz is an elegant fast game that has all the makings to become a classic; it has very simple rules, to be exact, it has only one rule, and is nonetheless a tantalizing challenge in a solitaire game as well as in a game for two. Can you place all pieces and defeat coincidence? Should you try to count pieces and try to assess probabilities? Shall we play again? ☑

EVALUATION

Placement game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en
In-game text: no

Comments:
Two editions * Wooden components * Only one rule * Good solitaire game

Compares to:
All abstract placement games with color rules

Other editions:
Puzzle of Oz, Gerhards Spiel und Design 2012

PUZZLE OF OZ
Der Zufall gewinnt

RANCHO
SUPER FARMER

7↑

Rancho is the sequel to Super Farmer, a game that was created in Poland in 1943! Players are farmers and want to breed and thus enlarge their herds; dogs protect the herds from wolf and fox; in Rancho on top of that farmers must provide enough pasture areas to support the herds. Each farmer starts with a sheep and a rabbit at one farm area of his choice.

In your turn you can first enlarge your farm and then multiply your animals. To enlarge your farm you can buy pasture and trade animals for other animals in any order of your choice. Trading animals can always be done in both directions, for instance one cow for two sheep or two sheep for a cow. New pastures cost 1, 2 or 4 rabbits and must form an uninterrupted area with your starting farm. To breed animals you roll the die and can breed each variety you rolled; you add the die value to the number of animals of this kind that you already own and take one new animal from stock for each pair of those animals you own. To accommodate them on the pastures you can relocate animals on the pastures. For wolf or fox as a result of the die roll you must roll again for the pastures they threaten; dogs protect pastures, but must be discarded afterwards and bought again. If you are first to own a herd of at least one horse, one cow, one sheep and one rabbit, you win. Rancho - Super Farmer - super good and a really fantastic family game; despite die and simple rules Rancho has quite some tactic to offer - when do I acquire a dog, where do I place the cow, when do I trade which animals, when do I buy a pasture! No wonder that the game is a hit since 1943! ☑

EVALUATION

Trading/collecting game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr + pl
In-game text: no

Comments:
Revised re-edition of Super Farmer * Lots of tactic with simple rules * Change element not a deciding factor

Compares to:
Super Farmer, Monad for exchanging values for higher values

Other editions:
Rancho, Granna, Poland

SCHATZ, SCHATZ!
TREASURE HUNTING WITH MAP

6↑

An old map has been found and this map shows a treasure at its center, which players of course want to acquire. Each player is secretly assigned a color which only he knows and then you shuffle the deck of cards and deal three cards to each player. You roll two dice and add the pips; then you choose a color according to the cards in hand and lay down this card. Now can move the marker in this color the number of steps equal to the result from multiplying the marking on the card with the total of pips rolled. When this move ends on a spot marked with a feather you can move the marker a second time for the total of steps. When the movement ends on a spot with a spiral, you must switch this marker with any other of your choice. Both markings are only valid for the last spot reached with the total movement, not for stages in between, when you can move 4 x 3 steps only for spot 12!

When one of the markers reaches the treasure spot the game ends and the winner is the player holding the card in the color of this marker.

Schatz, Schatz! continues the series of very simple educational games from Logis, in this case the target is simple mental arithmetic; of course you can rule that you can move the result of the dice roll as many times as the card you played states, that is move the marker three times for four steps when you rolled 1+3 and the card is marked with x3; or you can ask that you must multiply and count out the total number of steps, in this case 12. Spiral and feather spots introduce a tiny bit of tactics, the luck of dice dominates the game. Simple, easy and nice to look at! ☑

EVALUATION

Movement game
For children
Version: multi
Rules: de en + lt
In-game text: no

Comments:
Nice components * Ultra simple rules * Trains counting and mental arithmetic

Compares to:
All movement games with target prerequisite and calculation of movement range

Other editions:
Lithuanian edition

Color codes, target groups, features, icons and GABIS are explained on page 5 and at the bottom of pages 36 and 37

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SCHEIBENKLEISTER
THE PARTY GAME

Scheibenkleister is a party game following a seemingly standard pattern: One player explains a term; the others guess and score for guessing correctly. Sounds easy but there is the Trapper! At the start players agree on a number between 1 and 6, this marks the valid question on each card. You then choose an Explainer for the round, his neighbor is the Trapper and all others are Guessers.

The Explainer takes a card, reads it and shows it to the Trapper. The Trapper notes three words, nouns or verbs or adjectives, connected to the current term on the card and of which he believes that someone might use them. Then the Trapper turns over the timer and the explainer starts to describe the term, of course he must not use part of the word or any permutation of the word. The Guessers can make as many guesses as they want. When the term is guessed correctly in the run-time of the timer both Explainer and correct Guesser score one point; when nobody guesses the term the Trapper reads out his words and all Guessers have one more try; if someone guesses correctly now, the Trapper and correct Guesser both score one point.

In case somebody has used one of the Trapper's words during the run-time of the time, the Trapper calls out „Scheibenkleister" (Sugar!), the explainer stops, the Trapper reads out his words and the Guessers have one more try. When everyone has been the explainer three times you win with most points.

Witty, familiar and yet new, and "Scheibenkleister" probably is at the tip of your tongue, even if you are not the Trapper, because you can't think of a term fitting „American Indian" and „Commissioned Officer" ☑

EVALUATION

Party game
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Wtty adaptation of a standard game mechanism * Two trappers in case of more than four players * The trapper must listen very closely

Compares to:
Taboo and other games explaining terms

Other editions:
Currently none

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SINGAPUR
SKYLINE WITH MOST HOUSES

The skyline of Singapore - we are meant to build it up in a way that we can see most houses when we look at it from our side of the board.

The house blocks that we place are square tiles, 27 pieces in each of the two colors, showing vales 1 to 9, three times each, as dice pips. Before the start of the game one block of value 1 in each color is placed on the board according to the specification in the rules. Then all other blocks are shuffled face-down and laid out for stock. There is no personal color in this game; each player can use both colors. Finally, you draw four blocks face-down from stock. In your turn you place one of those four blocks and then draw another one. The placement of blocks is governed by simple rules: When there is a block of the same color already on the board whose value is lower than the value of the block you want to place you place the new block on top of this block; gaps between numbers are allowed. When no block of the same color and of lower value is on the board you place the block on an empty square of your choice. Houses on the board do not belong to a player, either, you can place blocks on anywhere. When all blocks have been placed or when all squares are filled you win if you see more houses from your side of the board, which are not hidden by higher houses, that is, in front of which are only lower houses or no houses at all. So simple and so difficult; very astute players try to count values. Instinctively you are tempted to concentrate on one color, but of course only height and number values are important! Pure abstract play and fun! ☑
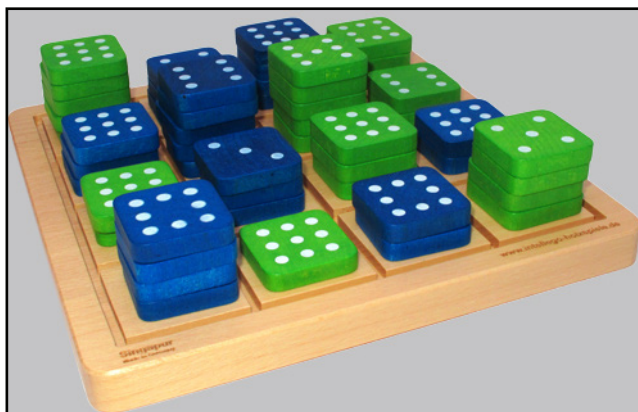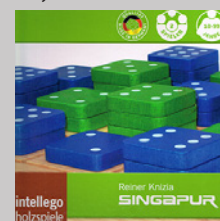
EVALUATION

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

Comments:
Series: Generationenspiele * Forget the colors, think about heights * To keep track of numbers can be an advantage

Compares to:
Abstract placement games on majorities

Other editions:
Currently none

SPACE STATION
UTILIZE SIX DIFFERENT MODULES

International Space industry is picking up momentum; as a player you control one of the companies participating of this growth and compete with other companies for the best, biggest and most beautiful space station ever.

The game covers 6 years. You start with a Core Module and 10 M€, roll for the starting player and implement the actions for start of the year; you get resources in the guise of Money, Crew and cards. For Year 1 these preparations give you five cards, 16 m€ and one Core Module with 1 Crew. Then you have one action in turn from: Build - add a module from your hand to your station. Module Action - you implement an action according to a module, each kind only once per you and the crew member used for it is spent; or you do a crew-independent module action, those can be implemented more than once per year. Event - just execute it. Pass - you can act again next turn. When all players pass in turn, the year ends and you score one victory point for each majority in functioning modules of one color. Temporary damage is removed and the die marking the year is handed to the next player. Damage can accumulate and be removed by multiple repair actions. You can also choose to play the option "Market", in which you display five cards at the start of the year and you can buy one card as a Market Action; the leftmost card costs always 1M€, the others always +1 for each card.

Space Station must have one of the shortest rules ever for a game with lots of tactic, especially passing at the right time is an interesting option; cards are self-explaining and studying the cards before playing results in optimum use. ☑

EVALUATION

Card game
With friends
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Very nice, self-explaining cards * Extremely concise rules * Good basic mechanisms * Lots of tactics

Compares to:
First game with this mix of mechanisms

Other editions:
Currently none

SPUZZLE
GAME PLUS PUZZLE

👤 4↑

Spuzzle is short for „SPIEL UND PUZZLE, meaning a game and a puzzle combined! The game features four sets of 20 puzzle parts each, in colors of blue, yellow, purple and red. Those sets are accompanied by 28 Spuzzle cards.

At the start you sort your 20 parts by animals and spread them out. The first player turns up a card and displays it: He can now place a puzzle part that corresponds to the animal pictured on the turned-up card into his part of the board - he can choose which one to place. When the card shows the grinning monkey in green trousers you may remove a part from the puzzle of another player and hand it back to him. But you can only take away a part from an animal that is not finished; complete puzzles are safe from the monkey action. When the card simply says "Spuzzle", all players call out "Spuzzle" and each player places one puzzle part of his choice on the appropriate spot in his part of the board. IF you are first to complete all your puzzles you win.

The idea for this comes from Canada, Luc St. Pierre showed it 2011 in Essen and he also had a multi-language edition to offer. The Amigo Edition 2012 features the same happy, colorful, cheeky animals. The game itself is completely chance-driven, because even if you believe that you must take away a part from a certain player to hinder him to finish quickly, all in all the chance of the cards reigns. And the next Spuzzle cards fills the gap again and he himself then in his draws the missing tail end of the kangaroo or the next player turns up a Spuzzle card and all the tactic was in vain. An ideal game to learn how to play a game! ☑

EVALUATION

Placement games
For children
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it nl
In-game text: no

Comments:
Very good introduction into how to play a game * Ultra-simple rules * 100% chance-driven * Pretty illustrations

Compares to:
Zozzle and other puzzles featuring rules

Other editions:
GameBrotherz, Canada; 999 Games, Netherlands, Scandinavian Trend Company

Color codes, target groups, features, icons and GABIS are explained on page 5 and at the bottom of pages 36 and 37

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STICHELN
A TRICKY CARD GAME

Sticheln is a card game, and, as indicated by its title, it is a trick-taking game: The game comprises cards in six colors, with values 0-14 in each color. The rules state which cards in which colors are used for each of the possible number of players in a game. For each game the cards are shuffled and dealt evenly to all players, each should hold 15 cards.

Now you choose one card from your hand to represent your "hassle" color and place it face-down. They are then all revealed simultaneously and remain open-face for the rest of the game; they are your first penalty points.

The active player chooses one of his cards, all other add one card, and you can play any number in any of the colors. The starting color is the color of the card that was lead; all other colors in a trick are trump! When only cards of the starting color are played, the trick is taken by the highest card of this color. When other colors are in the trick, too, the card of highest value - regardless in which color - wins the trick; in case of a tie the card that was played first takes the trick. Zero can never take a trick! When all tricks have been played, you score penalty points for each card of your „hassle" color in the tricks you took, equal to the value of the card; each other card in your tricks scores +1 points. Should you want to play another game, you reshuffle the cards and choose a new hassle color. Since 1993 this card game delights and hassles all Fans of good card game; the free choice of cards always offers new challenges, even for experienced players. The rules offer tips and examples for tricks for this ideal travel game. ☑

EVALUATION

Trick-taking card game
With friends
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: no

Comments:
New edition * Changed number of players * Simple basic rules * Challenging for experienced players, too

Compares to:
All trick-taking card games with special rules for trump and following suit

Other editions:
Amigo 2001 and 1993

STICKY STICKZ
CHASING CREATURES WITH SUCTION CUPS

8↑

Players want to catch creatures on demand with the help of their Sticky Stickz; Sticky Sticks are sticks with a suction cup on both ends. The game features 54 creature tiles and one creature die each for color, number and facial expression of the creatures. Each player is given a Sticky Stick and holds it like a pen. All creature tiles are distributed evenly on the board. One player rolls all three creature dice into the middle of the board: The number die shows how many creatures must be depicted on each tile, the color die determines the creatures' color and the facial-expression die shows what facial expression/mood they creatures you want to catch must show.

Now all players play simultaneously and try to pick up creature tiles with their Sticky Stickz that fit the prerequisites set by the three creature dice in order to "catch" them. You can use both sides of the Sticky Stick. When all players agree that there are no remaining creature tiles with the criteria on demand, the round ends and all tiles that were collected are checked and stacked. If you made a mistake you put back the wrong tile plus one of the previously caught correct tiles onto the board. When five squares are empty you win with most creatures. For children you can play a simplified version without the facial-expression die. Fast reactions and dexterous handling of the stick are in demand, of course also close observation and to be quick in catching the joker tiles! All this together will ensure that you have most tiles at the end and win! ☑

EVALUATION

Spotting/collecting game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr nl + kr
In-game text: no

Comments:
Trains observation and speed of reaction * Standard Mechanisms nicely varied * Pretty components

Compares to:
Monstopia, Klatsch-Fix and others

Other editions:
Sticky Stickz, Happy Baobab, Korea

STOMPLE
PURPLE STOMPED, WHITE STILL THERE

`8↑`

Cleverly stomped to win! This is the motto of Stomple, an abstract clearance game. Stomple comprises 49 marbles in seven colors, for six of those colors there is also a Stomple piece, for white there is no such piece. Each player draws at random a Stomple piece from the bag, the color of this piece is also the color for his marbles on the board.

The 40 marbles are distributed randomly on the board. In turn each player starts the game in one of the rows at the edges of the board and stomps one marble down; it need of course not be one of his own color. From now own the Stomple piece starts from the spot it ended on last turn, you always either stomp an adjacent marble or a

chain of marbles. A chain contains orthogonally or diagonally adjacent marbles of the same color, in one direction. When you cannot stomp an adjacent marble you must jump onto any marble of your own color still left on the board; should this marble be part of a chain you must stomp down the complete chain. If you cannot do a regular move you must quit the game. The last player left with marbles on the board scores 3 points for winning the round plus 3 points for each white marble that is left on the board plus 1 point for each colored marble on the board. When a player reaches or tops the score necessary for the current number of players, he wins the game.

Abstract simple and just challenging enough that at the end of a game one immediately fishes the marbles out of the tray and redistributes them, because that can't happen that one is stomped down so unceremoniously! This time I will pick the best place to start from! ☑

EVALUATION

Placement game
For families
Version: de
Rules: de en
In-game text: no

Comments:
Elegant design * Simple rules * High replay value * Good spatial sense is of help

Compares to:
Color Pop

Other editions:
Stomple, Spin Master USA


SWISH
BLUE DOT IN A BLUE CIRCLE

`👤` `8↑`

Stacking fun with cards! Swish wanted! A Swish is a stack of two or more clear cards in which each dot must sit in a circle/ring of the same color.

The game holds 60 transparent playing cards, each of those cards features one dot and one circle. Dot and circle on the card more often than not are not of the same color. The dealer shuffles

the cards and places 16 cards in four rows. On the command of "Swish" all players simultaneously search for Swishes. You cannot touch the cards but must combine them in your head in a way that each colored dot sits in a circle of the same color by turning them in your mind until you have found a corresponding counterpart in color and ar-

rangement of dots and circles. If you find a swish you announce it with "Swish" and then place the cards on top of each other. For a correct Swish you take both cards and two new cards are added to the display from the draw pile; otherwise you put the cards back and you discard one card already collected. Some help comes from the fact that color always matches position: e.g. Blue is always in the corners. Each card in a Swish scores one point, so you try to achieve multiple Swishes. When all players are in agreement that now more swishes are possible four cards from the display are replaced with new ones. When beginners and expert swishers play together, you can decree that the experienced players can make Swishes from three or more cards only.

A very sophisticated puzzle about quick reactions and spatial sense, not as easy as it seems to be, because cards must be placed congruently! Who can rotate or tilt the cards fastest in his mind only? ☑
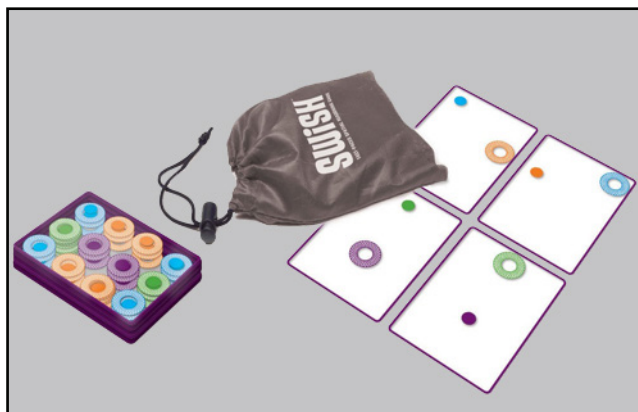
EVALUATION

Stacking game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: de en fr it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Challenge for spatial sense * Identical positions for colors are helpful * Swishes from up to 12 cards are possible

Compares to:
Durchblick, Hutter/Cocktail Games

Other editions:
Currently none

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THE RESISTANCE: AVALON
ARTHUR AGAINST MORDRED

The Resistance is a deduction game on secret identities; Avalon is the sequel to The Resistance, featuring the same mechanism, but a different setting in early medieval England, of secret loyalties in the fight of King Arthur against Mordred and his minions. The Companions of Arthur win if they successfully complete three quests; Mordred and his henchmen win when they successfully block three quests.

Merlin and the Assassin are always in play, the necessary number of additional character cards for the number of players is shuffled and each player is given one of them. Then the Leader - adhering to stringent rules - ensures that all Mordred's men know each other and that Merlin knows all minions of Mordred. In each of the rounds the Leader selects a team; players discuss his choice and then vote on the team; if the team is confirmed it starts a quest; if not, the role of Leader passes to the next player who tries to select a team. When a team is confirmed the Leader gives cards for success/failure to all players and a vote is taken; Arthur's companions must vote success, Mordred's minions can choose! The quest fails when there is only one vote of failure!

The Resistance: Avalon is a fantastic game in teams, it works exceedingly well and is good fun; you need clever and logic discussion, close listening and well-considered statements. Merlin has the problem that he is only allowed to talk about Mordred's men in riddles and he must take care not to be identified, because, even if Arthur's team did win three quests, the Assassin has one try to identify Merlin: If he succeeds Arthur's team loses all the same. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS: 5-10	AGE: 13+	TIME: 30+

Designer: Don Eskridge
Artist: Team
Price: ca. 15 Euro
Publisher: Indie Boards a. Cards 12
www.heidelbaer.de

EVALUATION

Discussion game
Many players
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: no

Comments:
Sequel to The Resistance *
Compatible and combinable with The Resistance *
Very attractive illustrations * Works well with the minimum of five players

Compares to:
All versions of Werewolf games

Other editions:
The Resistance

TIPTOI
WETTSTREIT IM HEXENWALD

7↑

Whoever among the witches in the Magic Wood will brew the most powerful potion will be the new Head Witch! Players assist the witches and search for potion ingredients with the help of their imps and deliver those ingredients for Training points and bonuses to the witches and the next Head Witch. On each of the 15 spots on the board you find exactly one ingredient; identical spots deliver identical ingredients, but with varying frequency which is marked by symbols. Movement between those spots is free, there are no paths, but it takes different amounts of time to travel between spots, that is, it is your turn irregularly depending on your destination. In your turn you can travel, question witches on the spot with you or send imps to spots without imps or deliver ingredients or brew your own potion for a special ability. Your potions are in effect instantly or over a span of several turns. You mark them on the potion card and use them to chase away a witch, calling imps with ingredients, higher speed, faster discovery of ingredients, more carrying capability or training points. When you are on a spot together with a witch you can question here, she flies away afterwards. When five kinds of ingredients have been delivered to a witch you win with most training points, if you did deliver ingredients to the evil witch you lose points.

The tiptoi pen allocates ingredients, moves the witches, answers questions and administrates deliveries and training points. Wettstreit im Hexenwald offers a thrilling game, including a bit of tactic and lots of fun, ideally supported by the tiptoi pen acting as game master. ☑

INFORMATION

PLAYERS: 2-4	AGE: 7+	TIME: 50+

Designer: Ulrich Blum
Artist: Dynamo Ltd, KniffDesign
Price: ca. 35 Euro
Publisher: Ravensburger 2012
www.ravensburger.de

EVALUATION

Movement/collecting game
For children
Version: de
Rules: de
In-game text: yes

Comments:
Nice topic, implemented well and excitingly * Tiptoi pen not included * Download of files necessary

Compares to:
All other games in the tiptoi range

Other editions:
Currently none

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TOWN CENTER
BUILDINGS AND ENERGY SUPPLIES

As Lord Mayor you must develop the town center. The higher and bigger you build, the more points you will score at the end of the game; but you must take care to supply the buildings with enough energy sources.

You start with your own board for the town, one purple block for the Town Hall and two grey pieces to mark the money on the track; a certain selection of blocks is set aside as a reserve. The game is played over 10 rounds and each round comprises the phases Acquire Blocks, Build, Development and Income. In Phase 1, acquire blocks, the starting players draws blocks equal to twice the number of players from the bag and makes up stacks of two blocks; then according to rules each player first selects one block and then another block. In Phase 2, building, players have to put those 2 blocks into their town.

In Phase 3 you develop your town by adding of apartments and shops to the ones already present; in general offices and Town Hall develop apartments, apartments in turn develop shops. Placing blocks in Phase 2 and Phase 3 is governed by stringent rules for neighborhood, height and costs. In Phase 4 you first earn 1$ salary and income from parking houses and electrified shops; then you can buy a yellow generator or black elevator block and place it. When the bag is empty there is a final scoring and you lose points for each block in the suburb regions of your town.

Town Center offers interesting and descriptive building, the Lego pieces used for blocks are a nice retrospective on early building experiences; but in this game you must take care to adhere to building rules and provide energy supply. ☑

EVALUATION

City building game
With friends
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: no

Comments:
First game of the Small City Trilogy * Simple basic rules * Rather complex and very detailed rules for building * Energy supplies necessary

Compares to:
City construction games with inter-relations of buildings

Other editions:
Currently none

URBANIA
REFURBISHING THE TOWN WITH SPECIALISTS

As a town planner you must renovate a town, refurbish and re-develop it again according to urban standards. Five of 49 buildings are put on the board at the start of the game, renovated side up, the remaining 44 buildings are distributed randomly on the remaining districts, non-renovated side up,. Each player is dealt five resources cards and chooses a color. Five more resources cards are displayed as open stock; the project cards are stacked face down and the specialist cards are also displayed.

In your turn you must always choose two actions out a choice of four actions and implement them: 1) Draw two cards of your choice from the resources stack, the project stack or the resources display. There is no limit to the number of cards you can hold. 2) Renovate a building by playing cards; the chosen building must be adjacent to one already renovated and you place workers from your hand, represented by resources cards in corresponding colors and showing the necessary number of icons. The marker for the building on the value track is adjusted. 3) Hire a specialist from the reserve or from another player by discarding corresponding resources cards. 4) Submit a project by displaying a card. At the end of your turn you score specialists that you employ. When there 2 or fewer non-renovated buildings in a district or three specialists are worth more than 5, you score your submitted project after a final round.

Urbania offers very interesting mechanisms, which remind one a bit of Ticket to Ride and work very well; at the end of the game one must take good care not to lose one's grasp on the board to the plenitude of colors. ☑

EVALUATION

Placement
With friends
Version: en
Rules: en
In-game text: no

Comments:
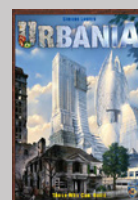Nice graphics, but difficult to visually distinguish details, some colors are similar * Nicely interacting mechanisms * Fast entry into the game

Compares to:
Other city building games for the topic, Ticket to Ride for some of the mechanism

Other editions:
Currently none

Color codes, target groups, features, icons and GABIS are explained on page 5 and at the bottom of pages 36 and 37

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WILD OLTRENATURA
PATHS TROUGH THE WILDERNESS

`8↑`

We are parachuting into the savannahs of Kenya, the deserts of Namibia, the jungles of Columbia or the glaciers and mountains of Alaska. In all those regions we must assist Fiammetta Cicogna to find the best ways to travel on foot or on waterways in order to meet most animals while making sure that she always has sufficient energy, water and medication.

You use as many landscapes as there are players; you choose a landscape, only one player per landscape is allowed at the start. Tokens are placed according to the set-up rules. In a turn you can either move or eat or rest. You may move up to three steps, using energy and water. At a natural resource spot you can stop and use it. When you meet animals you must stop and dice are rolled to decide the encounter; the better result decides; when Fiammetta wins she receives token and card of the animal; if she loses her health is reduced. In order to eat you discard an animal token plus the animal card and you record the energy amount the animal yields for your explorer.

When you rest you can record +1 one for energy, water or health. You can also challenge opponents, the challenge is decided by animal cards; the challenger decides if the highest or lowest value wins; whoever wins the challenge gets the animal card. When you reach the marked spot you move your explorer into the next landscape setting.

Most important is this marvelous family game is the balance between collecting resources and move along the path; because when somebody has explored all landscapes you win if you have the highest total from causing the end of game and remaining resources. ☑

EVALUATION

Movement/collecting game
For families
Version: multi
Rules: en it
In-game text: no

Comments:
Game based on an Italian TV Show * Series: Ghenos junior * Balance of movement and resources is essential * Very pretty design

Compares to:
All travel games with resources management and comparison of strength

Other editions:
Currently none

YAMUNDA
COLLECTING PICTURES IN A DIFFERENT WAY

`5↑`

36 double-sided picture cards feature a red border on one side and a green border on the other side. Both sides of the picture show a dice symbol; the number of pips designates how many individual picture cards make up the complete image of which the card is a part. You can make up eleven different images from each border color.

All cards are randomly placed in the middle; the only prerequisite is that there should be roughly half the cards showing a red border and half of the cards a green border.

In your turn you can form a complete combination, that is, one complete image, from cards displayed in the middle. Or you can turn over one card in the middle and use it and maybe other cards from the middle to complete an image; for this you can also use cards from your own display or from those of fellow players. Or you form a complete image using only cards from your own display and/or those of other players and at least one card from the middle.

If you find a complete combination you take the cards and assemble the image on the table in front of you; then you turn all the cards over: this results in a display of individual cards showing parts of other images. When all combinations have been formed you win with most cards in front of you. The game will not work out, that is, not all images can be completed, if someone forgets to turn over a complete image that he did collect.

In Year One after Dr. Hein as CEO of the company he is very much present, he did illustrate this game, which is a sophisticated placement and collecting game demanding sharp eyes and a good idea of what could fit where. Pure fun to play! ☑
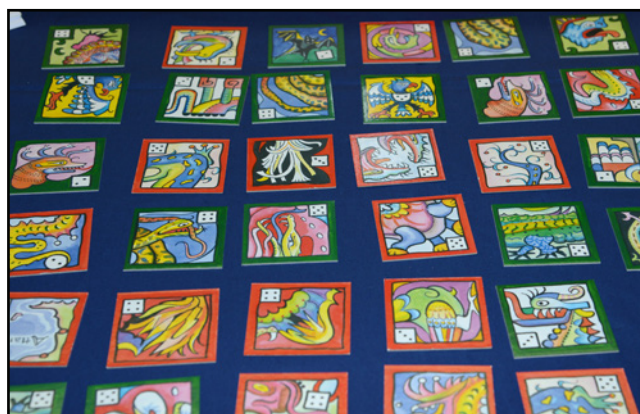
EVALUATION

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

Comments:
Very beautiful illustrations * Sophisticated mechanism * Simple rules

Compares to:
First game in this combination of mechanisms

Other editions:
Currently none

DER KLEINE RABE SOCKE HALLI GALLI JUNIOR
Publisher: Amigo Spiele
Designer: Haim Shafir

`4↑`

Cards show Kleiner Rabe Socke and his friends, on most of the cards laughingly, but sometimes also sad, when Kleiner Rabe Socke has lost his socks. All cards are dealt evenly to all players who stack them face down. At a signal all turn up their top card. When two identical laughing friends are visible, you must hit the bell quickly - if you are fastest you get all face-up cards. But take care! When the same character is visible once with a sad face and once with a laughing face you must not ring the bell or you lose cards! With you are out cards you must quit the game, after a last correct round you win with most cards. *Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: no*

Reaction game for 2-4 players, ages 4+

DER ZÄHLEFANT IM ZAHLENLAND
Publisher: Huch! & friends
Designer: Reinhard Staupe

`3↑`

Zählefant is travelling through Numberland and meets funny animals, for instance frogs eating ice cream or monkeys riding on a locomotive. The book comes with a color dice and 10 tiles showing numbers 1 to 10 are integrated into the pages of the book. You can now play a reading-game without die and place the numbers accordingly into the pages or you can lay out the numbers and turn over a tile corresponding to the color rolled and put it into a second row and remember its position. When all tiles are turned over players try in turn to guess the current first tile of the row. If you guess correctly you can put the tile into the page. *Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: yes*

Educational game book for 1 or 2-4 players, ages 3+

MEHR RUHM FÜR ROM
Publisher: Lookout Spiele
Designer: Carl Chudyk

To reconstruct Rome you use task cards for roles, clients, building materials, buildings or money. You draw cards or play a card for a role or other use of cards, the other players can then also use this role. After meeting an end-of-game condition you win with most victory points from influence, private means, merchant bonus and special buildings. The expansion introduces new buildings: 6 x each Domus/Wood and Barracks/Rubble; and 3x each of Solarium, Aerarium and Tribunal for cement, Water Mill and Castra Praetoria for bricks, Plebeian Council and Dining Hall for marble, Bacchanalia, Guard and Domus Area for stone. *Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: no*

Expansion for Ruhm für Rom for 2-5 players, ages 12+

MERLIN
Publisher: Nürnberger Spielkarten
Designer: Reinhard Staupe

`4↑`

Merlin keeps changing his outfit and you must find a Merlin that looks different from the Merlin in the middle. 12 cards are laid out and one card is turned up from the stack. All players now search among those 12 cards for a Merlin who is completely different from the one turned up from the stack. If you find one, you put your hand on it; if you are correct you get the card, the card from the stack is placed into the display of 12 cards and a new one is turned up. If you make a mistake you are out of the game for the round and must discard one of you cards already won; if you are first to have 6 cards, you win! *Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: no*

Spotting game for 2-8 players, ages 4+

MIA AND ME MIA UND IHRE FREUNDE
Publisher: Schmidt Spiele
Designer: Wolfgang Dirscherl

`6↑`

In the world of Centopia Mia and her Friends are looking for symbols. Each player holds three tiles for one character and 36 cards are spread out on the table. Each of those cards shows four different symbols from the world of Centopia. One player rolls all three dice and you try to find a card with a solution as fast as you can and to cover it with one of your character tiles, even if the card is already placed in front of a player. There are always three cards with correct solutions. If you cover a wrong tile you loose one of your character tiles for the next round. IF you are first to collect eight cards, you win. *Spotting game for 2-4 players, ages 6+*

Spotting game for 2-4 players, ages 6+

OBSTSALAT
Publisher: Noris Spiele
Designer: Wolfgang Dirscherl

`4↑`

Obstsalat is a dice game in the series of Happy Families: The active player rolls all four dice and tries to achieve as many fruits of the same kind as possible. You can roll up to three times, set aside any dumber of dice and can re-roll any number of dice; the fruit basket is a joker. If your roll only shows fruits you decide on one kind and take - depending on the number - a fruit card from the middle or from another player; if you roll Schimmi Schimmel you must take his card. When all cards are gone from the middle you win with most points; if you hold Schimmi you must deduct two points. *Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: no*

Dice game for 2-4 players, ages 6+

THE AMAZING SPIDERMAN GAME
Publisher: Ravensburger 2012
Designer: Reiner Knizia

`6↑`

Young Spider-Man is training his super powers and should not wake up Lizard. You want to be first to collect two masks + 2 spiders or any six symbols. You roll the die and move Spider Man this number of sky scrapers; there you win the tile if you get one of one to three cubes thrown into the board to touch the color field corresponding to the tile color. When a cube rolls into a hole, Lizard wakes and is moved from now on. When he meets Spider Man, Spider Man loses a tile. When Spider Man meets Lizard he gets a tile when he manages to get one Cube into the smaller hole. For an X on the die you place a new tile at a sky scraper. *Version: multi * Rules: de fr it nl * In-game text: no*

Dexterity and collecting game for 2-4 players, ages 6+

TOP TRUMPS SPECIALS PHINEAS UND FERB
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. Themeset: Specials Phineas und Ferb. *Version: de * Rules: de * In-game text: yes*

Card/quiz game for 2 or more players from age 8

WARHAMMER INVASION BLUTQUEST
Publisher: Heidelberger Spieleverlag
Designer: Eric W. Lang

GEFÄSS DER WINDE
The Core Set holds four pre-constructed card decks for Empire and Dwarves against Orks and Chaos. With Battle Pack cards you can adapt Core Decks to your preferences and strategies. The card types in the game are Unit, Tactics, Quest, Support und Draft. Aim of the game is to set fire to two out of three regions of the opposing capital. The **Blutquest/Bloodquest Zyklus** is the 5th cycle of Battle Packs. **Gefäss der Winde / Vessel of the Winds** is the 4th pack in the cycle comprising cards 61-80. Winds of Magic rip through the Empire as a fissure opens into the Realm of Chaos. Many try to fight it, but who will be alive to tell the tale? *Version: de * Rules: de en es fr * In-game text: yes*

Battle Pack for Warhammer Invasion, for 2 players, ages 13+

Color codes for target groups (Headline Color)
- For children + learn
- For families
- With friends
- For experts

Color codes for features (Bar in Evalution box)
- Chance
- Tactic
- Strategy
- Creativity
- Knowledge
- Memory
- Communication
- Interaction
- Dexterity
- Action

HUGO KASTNER RECOMMENDS

RAJA

PALACE BUILDING IN INDIA

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
Tactic   Info+   Chance

Dear readers! The setting for this strategic board game can be found in the northwest of the Indian sub-continent, in the province of Rajasthan, to be more exact. And even a European who does not have much time for art and culture is not left unmoved by the „enchantingly beautiful buildings, temples, mosques, palaces, fortification and mausoleums" of India. In this tactical-strategic development game you take up the role of a renowned medieval prince who rules a province and aims to become First among all favorites of the Maharaja. To achieve this goal you must keep constructing magnificent palaces and houses, always under conditions permanent, strangling lack of money. Relive the dilemma of those princes in a game of 90 to 120 minutes with sumptuous components and secure for yourself the palace buildings necessary for your prime ranking with clever tactics, bluff and trading. [From WIN330]. Author's note: Raja was my my very first review for the perpetual and yet so modern and actual games journal of the Austrian Games Museum in Leopoldsdorf.
Website: www.spielen.at

The light of our lamp picks out a spreading game board in the classic manner, showing seven Indian towns in tilted bird's view; all towns feature city walls and a cupola symbol for seven palaces. A network of paths, similar to a spider's net, connects those towns of the Maharaja. Where ever the Maharaja happens to be, you, the princes, are richly rewarded for the palaces and houses you so painstakingly constructed. Seven different City Coats of Arms, which are displayed openly next to the board, determine the visiting schedule of the Maharaja and thus the schedule for scoring. Next to the board you also place a stock of houses and money, and also six - or seven in the expert version - confidants who aid the respective princes with their special abilities. Raja is played over a maximum of ten rounds. The course of the game is clearly structured, albeit not always easy to implement by players. A round of the game comprises four

steps: (1) The Maharaja and a Coat of Arms are placed into the city about to be scored. (2) All players mark two actions on their spinner. (3) Actions are implemented according to the numbering of the confidants and playing pieces, called architects, are moved, (4) Finally, the city holding the Maharaja is scored. This sounds rather simply, and, technically speaking, it is simple. But the devil as usually is in the details; as gold coins come from the bank, new houses from general stock (quarry), available houses are built and relocated, scoring order of cities is changed and new character cards can be chosen the result is a remarkable depth for the game as regards to strategy and tactic; which is supported by a very convincing design: The palaces are made from colored glass beads, houses and architects from elegant wood. It is an esthetical pleasure to look at a game in progress. As so often before, Franz Vohwinkel has done an excellent graphics job! ☑

Rückmeldungen an: Hugo.Kastner@spielen.at
Homepage: www.hugo-kastner.at

Besides using some tactical instincts you need to calculate well: How many points can be gleaned from the current city by me and by my opponents? Do I have enough money to implement my two chosen action at the time when it is my turn? You must also consider which town will be the next stop for the Maharaja, because there is always the threat of somebody changing the scoring order. A small lack of attention can result in dramatic consequences later on.

Hugos EXPERT TIP
To players who like to play challenging games that can fill an evening and who play at a similar speed, Raja can be absolutely recommended, especially when four or five princes are assembled around the table. For two and three players, which can play Raja as well according to the rules, there is noticeably less dynamics in the game, despite the expert rules recommended in the rules, using a 7th confidant, the Yogi, who allows you a third action in your turn, and despite a special auction of the starting confidants cards and a home town assigned to each confidant. The particularly alluring switch of persona really only comes into play for the full allocation of players.

Hugos BLITZLICHT
Raja offers a lot for the experienced player. A casual player must prepare himself for an extended period of getting acquainted with the game. You should try to assemble four or five friends in order to make use of all the game elements demanding high levels of concentration. The action discs are something special; you use them to choose two out of nine possible actions, quite an embarras des richesses. On those discs the game is won or lost, they are where the princes can demonstrate cleverness and their abilities to bluff, but sometimes those discs also create long down-times during the game. Anyway, besides hours full of decisions you are rewarded with marvelous game components

PREVIEW
REEF ENCOUNTER
Luminous Worlds of Corals