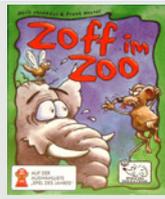


HUGO KASTNER RECOMMENDS

# ZOFF IM ZOO

**AUCH EISBÄREN HABEN KALTE FÜSSE!**

Dear readers! „Zoff im Zoo“/“Frank’s Zoo“ is one of the many variations of the kind of card games where the aim of the game is to get rid of all cards in your hand, but Doris Matthäus and Frank Nestel have enlivened the basic mechanics with some really clever ideas. The origin of this game mechanism can be found in China. There the getting-rid-of-cards is kept up under the hard-to-remember name „Zheng Shang You“ (Two Giants). Another way to play is called “Tichu Tientsin”. Both versions use the 56 cards typically used in in China (Colors: Jade, Swords, Pagoda, Star plus four special cards: Mah Jong, Dog, Phoenix and Dragon). In “The Playing Card”, published by the International Playing-Card Society this way to play was described for the first time my John McLeod and thus got known in the western hemisphere. More similar versions can be found in the guise of the Russian games “Durak” (Fool) and “Korol” (King). 1988 the German games publisher Hexagames published a modern version of the game under the name of “Karriere Poker”, followed in 1996 by Richard Garfields “Der Große Dalmuti” at Amigo. Many other commercially sold editions follow the same game mechanism. The Chinese name has the meaning of “climbing up” with a clear emphasis on social advancement. The Japanese “Dai Hin Min” (A very poor Man) or the French “Trouduc” (elegantly translated by the not very flattering term “Bum”), too, attribute a sociological flavor to the game by its name. In the London Card Club one talks about “Pits” (Grube), card expert David Parlett calls that kind of game “Bum Game” (see also the French name). Whatever the name, the game mechanic offer lots of fun and demand a lot of card management ability. (From: Folkvord/Kastner: „Die große Humboldt Enzyklopädie der Kartenspiele“) And in “Zoff im Zoo” a bonus is added in the guise of changing partnerships and special abilities of all the land

and water animals. Simply try it out in the Austrian Games Museum in Leopoldsdorf. And don't get cold feet!

Website: [www.spielen.at](http://www.spielen.at)

When the light of the lamp falls on the cute little box for the first time you might think that you see a children's game because of the round-eyed timid elephant and the cocky needling mouse. If you take a closer look at the inhabitants of the zoo this your opinion will be strengthened due to the masterpieces from Doris Matthäus' pen. The inhabitants are: A luxurious whale, an insecure elephant, a hungry crocodile, a sleepy polar bear, a dreamy lion, a contemplative seal, a clever fox, a greedy perch, a happy hedgehog, a school of smug sardines, a heavy-muscled mouse, an irritating gnat and last but not least a versatile chameleon joker. But don't let yourself be fooled: This cute design is just camouflage for the game depth of a pleasurable card hit! Not for nothing was “Zoff in Zoo” put on the selection list for Game of the Year 2000.

The repeatedly interlocking game mechanisms, the mixture of discarding cards and trick-taking, the necessity of taking into account a partner and the many special effects of the respective zoo inmates makes everyone cry out for a re-match immediately at the end of the round. The points are not only scored by discarding all animals from your hand, but you also need to tame lions, acquire hedgehogs and deploy elephants in battle. If you cannot achieve this at first try the designers allow us to make a mountain out of mole hill, contrary to the general recommendation not to do so. “Zoff im Zoo” is different - providing a beastly good time. ☑

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**TIP #67**

Designer: D. Matthäus/F. Nestel

Price: ca. 15 Euro

Jahr: 1999

Publisher: Spiele von Doris & Frank

<http://doris-frank.de>

PLAYERS:

3-7

AGE:

10+

ZEIT:

60+



Tactics

Info±

Chance

The corner stones of tension – Tactic, Info and Chance – are wonderfully balanced in this Matthäus/Nestel creation. Without a tactical approach you cannot win, but due to the general lack of information some element of probability comes into it. And luck is necessary too, especially when cards are dealt at the start of each round.

**HUGOS EXPERT TIP**

The rules in „Zoff im Zoo“ are basically simple but due to elements in the game like Joker, Showing, Forcing etc. they need some time to get used to. Furthermore it is not easy to remember the defeat abilities of all 12 animals in the first game. My recommendation; Make a copy of the “who defeats whom table” from the rule booklet for each player. One more thing: “Zoff im Zoo” plays best with 4-6 players, no more and no less.

**HUGOS FLASHLIGHT**

The might of the mice, the habitus of the hedgehogs, the weight of the whales, the lot of the lions, the mutation of the mosquitoes and much more turn „Zoff im Zoo“ into a turbulent card game where the aim of the game seems to be to get rid of your cards. But there are changing partnerships to consider. You take advantage of the success of your partner, therefore egocentric play should be avoided, even if somebody super cool arrives at the table. As mentioned before – even polar bears get cold feet!

**PREVIEW****SCHWARZE KATZE**

Trick game classic in a team version

**IMPRESSUM**

**Offenlegung nach dem Mediengesetz:** Medieninhaber, Eigentümer, Verleger und Hersteller: Verein „Österreichisches Spiele Museum“, vertreten durch Obfrau Dipl. Ing. Dagmar de Cassan, Raasdorferstrasse 28, 2285 Leopoldsdorf im Marchfelde, Telefon 02216-7000, Fax 02216-7000-3, mail-to: [office@spielen.at](mailto:office@spielen.at), Internet: [www.spieljournal.at](http://www.spieljournal.at) - [www.gamesjournal.at](http://www.gamesjournal.at) - Chefredakteur: **Dipl. Ing. Dagmar de Cassan**

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

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Icon explanation



Solo Play



Two Players



Large Groups



Recommended Minimum Age

GABIS explanation on page 5