Trophy Case

A Game for the Fanucci Deck

by Dave Howell

A trick-taking game with lots of bluffing, for three to five players.

Object of the Game

To have the most points when somebody reaches 30 points or more.

Setup

Deal each player 14, 12, or 11 cards (for 3, 4, or 5 players). Reshuffle the deck after every three hands. Deal rotates clockwise. The player to the left of the dealer leads, but *only* at the beginning of the game.

Playing The Game

Summary

A player leads a card. Players repeatedly play cards on the trick until all but one player has passed or until somebody trumps the trick. The last player still in the hand, or the first player to play a trump, wins the trick and scores the points (see Scoring, below). *The player to their left* then leads to the next trick, even when somebody has dealt out new hands.

Leading

A player can lead any suited card in their hand. If a player has nothing left in their hand but trump cards, and it is their turn to lead, they show their hand to the other players, and everybody discards their hands and a new one is dealt.

Playing On a Trick

Players do *not* have to follow *suit*, but they *do* have to follow *color* if they can. If they have no suited cards in the led color, they may play either an "out of color" (OoC) suited card, or a trump. OoC cards always rank lower than in-color cards. Trumps always rank higher.

   In-color suits rank as follows: the suit led will be the lowest-ranked suit of that color. The second in-color suit played on the trick will outrank the first suit led. The third suit (if played), will outrank the second. Within a suit, cards rank numerically low to high from 0 to infinity (∞).

Folding

When a player decides that they don't want to play any more cards on a trick, they can fold. A player who folds is out of that trick, and cannot win it, *even if they have the highest card in the trick when the trick is over*. However, a player *cannot* fold if they still have cards in their hand that are the same *suit* (not color) of the card that was led.

Trumps

As previously mentioned, trumps are Out of Color; they cannot be played until a player has no more in-color cards in hand. Trumps outrank suit cards. As soon as a player plays a trump on a trick, the trick has ended, and they win.

Running Out of Cards

If a player runs out of cards during a hand, they do not have to fold. Pretend they've played a gray Zero of Mud. (There's always more Mud.)

Winning the Trick

When all but one player has folded, the remaining player wins the trick. Add the trick's value to the player's score, and set the cards aside. If any player is out of cards, the hand is over; cards remaining in other players' hands are discarded, and new hands are dealt.

Scoring

Eights and nines are worth one point each. ∞'s are worth 2 points. *If a trump was played on the trick*, then zeros are also worth a point.

Strategy

Generally, when leading, you will look for a color in your hand where you have some low cards in one suit, and some high cards in another. Lead the low cards, and hope that somebody plays the remaining suit in that color before it comes back around to you, because that will make your high cards the "third suit" and thus most likely to win the trick.

Be careful of playing zeros unless you also have trump; otherwise you might just be giving somebody else extra points.

You will want to play Out of Color cards on a trick if you're winning the trick or if you've also got some trump up your sleeve. However, if you play too many of them, you might end up with nothing left to work with for the next trick, unless you can manage to play all your remaining cards, thus causing new hands to be dealt for the next trick.

A Guide to the Fanucci Deck

Suits

Each suit has eleven cards, numbered 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, ∞

Bugs	Lamps	Rain	Hives	Scythes
Mazes	Fromps	Zurfs	Time	Ears
Inkblots	Plungers	Tops	Faces	Books

Trump

There are nine unique trump cards.

Beauty	Death	Granola
Grue	Jester	Light
Lobster	Snail	Time