



**GAME DESIGNER COMPETITION**

**OF THE**

**HIPPODICE SPIELECLUB e.V.**

**2026**



**Dear Sir or Madam,**

This year marked the 36th edition of the Game Design Competition. The competition is organised annually by Hippodice Spieleclub e.V.

With this document, we would like to provide you with an overview of the results of this year's competition. The overview includes the games that reached the final round as well as a list of recommendations. In addition to the results folder, publishers will receive the contact details of the designers.

More than 50 people were involved in organising this year's competition. In total, over 1,200 hours of voluntary work went into reviewing, organising, testing and evaluating the submitted games.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to the members of the jury for their dedicated work, as well as to the testers from Hippodice Spieleclub e.V., who identified the games for the final round through numerous testing sessions. We would also like to thank the Spielezentrum der Stadt Herne, Friedhelm Merz Verlag and the game designers' guild 'SAZ' for their kind support.

Special thanks also go to J'S Creative World for designing the winner's trophies.

For further information, please contact:

[competition@hippodice.net](mailto:competition@hippodice.net)

<https://hippodice-competition.net/>

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44882 Bochum**

## The standings of the 2026 final



1. Platz

***On the run!***

Florian Maas (Germany)



2. Platz

***Khamzara***

Wolfgang Dirscherl &  
Wolfgang Lehmann (Germany)



3. Platz

***Xterminators***

Patricia Limberger &  
Felix Leder (Germany)

### **The other participants in the final round**

(in alphabetical order)

Das grosse Froschhüpfen	Torben Schürenberg & Tom Freudenberg	Germany
Dueling Coasters	Tony Bowes & Cameron Bowes	Australia
Fährverkehrt	Svea Schenkel	Germany
Palace	Victor Belser	Germany
Schiebung im Zauberlabyrinth	Silvia Gaitzsch	Germany
Soap Box Race	Bart de Jong	Netherlands
Trickwriters	Lars Dieckmann	Germany

## Das große Froschhüpfen

Number of players: 2–6  
 Age recommendation: 5+  
 Playing time: 5–10 minutes  
 Target group: Families



There's plenty going on at the lake. Take on the role of a frog and skilfully sink water lilies to be the last frog to have to jump into the cold water.

At the start of the game, lay out the game board in front of you to form a water lily pond. Depending on the number of players, it measures 5x5 or 7x7 squares. Then choose a frog and place it on a starting square of the matching colour.

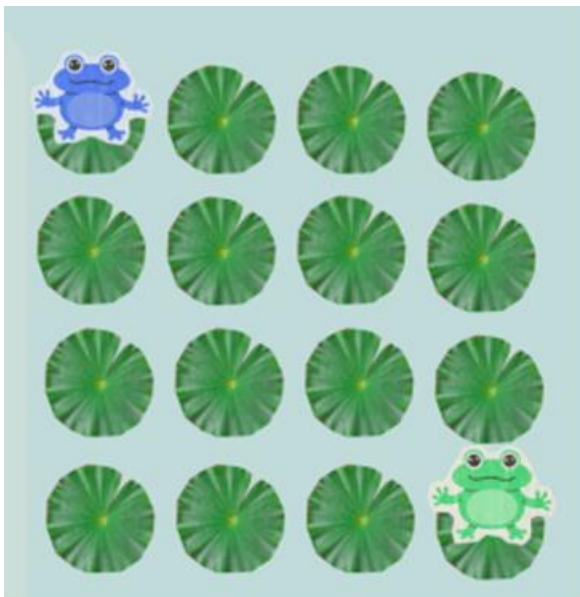
Whenever it is your turn, you have exactly two options:

1. You perform a frog leap and jump onto an unoccupied water lily that is up to two squares away, either vertically or horizontally. You may jump over other frogs in the process. After your leap, the water lily you were standing on sinks.
2. You jump into the water and are immediately eliminated.

The player who has to jump into the water last wins the game.

After a few rounds, the standard game can be expanded with variations that can be combined as desired. These include, for example:

- each player receives two frogs
- the water lilies have special effects
- the type or distance of a frog's jump changes
- each frog has a secret ability



## Dueling Coasters

Number of players: 2–4  
 Age recommendation: 8+  
 Playing time: 10–20 minutes  
 Target group: Families

## *Dueling Coasters*

Build the ultimate ride for your theme park. Outdo everyone else, design the best rollercoaster and claim victory!

In *Dueling Coasters*, you build rollercoasters that deliver a real adrenaline rush. To do this, all players work in parallel to develop the most spectacular amusement park attractions possible. But woe betide you if the riders feel sick on the ride...

In turn, players attach one of their three hand cards to their rollercoaster and ride their carriage to the end of the section of track just laid. When tracks cross, you also help build your fellow players' tracks.

Starting from your own station, the ride thus becomes ever longer and more eventful. Loops, steep bends and corkscrews alternate – the three test drivers must keep their nerve and have a strong stomach. However, as the rollercoaster becomes more difficult, the test drivers feel worse, which leads to points being deducted. But there is also the option of building relaxed sections of track to soothe the stomach and calm the nerves.

The game continues until a player returns to a starting station or runs out of components. The winner is the player who has managed to provide the test drivers with the greatest thrill whilst keeping their nausea to a minimum. This is reflected in the points awarded for the individual sections of the track and the condition of the three test drivers.



## Fährverkehr

Number of players: 2–4  
 Age recommendation: 8+  
 Playing time: 30 minutes  
 Target group: Families



It's holiday season and everyone wants to cross the sea! This is your chance to make your mark as a ferry operator. Transport as many vehicles as possible and become the richest ferry captain. Turn the game table into the open sea and set sail.

On your turn, you may steer your ferry to any port. It just costs fuel – and that, of course, depends on the distance. As soon as you arrive at the port, vehicles are unloaded, paid for, and the ferry is reloaded. But be careful: if you drive onto the ferry forwards, you must also drive off the ferry forwards.

So plan wisely which vehicles you load onto your ferry, when, and in which direction, or you'll be in a right pickle. The first player to make a fortune signals the end of the game.

The special twist in this puzzle-transport race is loading and unloading the ferries in the direction of travel. At each port, you must decide which way round your ferry will dock so that as many vehicles as possible can drive on and off the ferry.

Players take turns: in the first step, they sail to a port. Depending on the distance, this incurs travel costs that must be paid immediately. Once docked at the port, the ferry is unloaded and players receive income for all vehicles in the port's colour. New vehicles are then loaded and the vehicle supply at the port is replenished. As the game progresses, you can expand your ferry with a loading zone and transport even more vehicles.

Once a player has exceeded the 50-point mark, the round is concluded. The player with the most points wins.



## Khamzara

Number of players: 2  
 Age recommendation: 8+  
 Playing time: 30–40 minutes  
 Target group: Families



# Khamzara

In the endless expanse of the Khamzara Desert, caravans with their camels rest in oases, always in search of the precious shade of the palm trees and the life-giving source of water. Your aim is to place camels, palm trees, wells and tents in the desert in such a way that you score more victory points than your fellow players at the end.

Khamzara is an exciting tile-laying game for two players, based on pentagonal tiles. The game board is divided into three areas: each player has their own area, where only they may place tiles. There is also a neutral area in the centre of the board, where both players may place tiles. This creates a high level of interaction between the players.

At the start of each round, five tiles are drawn and laid out face up. The two players then each choose a tile twice and place it. The fifth tile is removed from the game. Tiles may only be placed on a side marked with an arrow of a tile already laid in one's own area. All tiles placed in the neutral area in the centre count for both players. Unless they are occupied by an ownership marker and are therefore claimed by one player.

As soon as a player can no longer place any more tiles, the game ends and the scoring begins. Each player scores points for their largest contiguous herd of camels, the camels standing at the oases, the bonus tiles they have earned, the palm regions – depending on their size – and the money spaces.

The player with the most points wins.



## On the Run

Number of players: 3–4  
 Age recommendation: 10+  
 Playing time: 30–45 minutes  
 Target audience: Experienced players



**ON THE RUN!**

ON THE RUN! is a trick-taking game where the cards are your loot. But be careful: at the end of each round, the police search a house number – if you've taken as many tricks as that number, you'll be caught and your loot confiscated!

The twist: In ON THE RUN! you can escape the obligation to follow suit. If you're supposed to play the suit that was led, you can take an escape token instead and play any card from your hand! But be careful: at the end of the round, every escape token you've taken increases the police's reach. Can you still get away with the loot?

The game is played over 4 rounds, each consisting of 8 tricks. After each round, the police carry out a raid, and the remaining loot is then scored.

Every card you play has an additional function. Either it brings you loot, or you can use it to move the police or change the trump suit. The area of the city where the police raid takes place is determined by the location of the police vehicle at the end of the round. This location corresponds to a certain number of tricks, and only those players who have taken at least that number of tricks are affected by the search. As a result, they lose part of their loot for the subsequent scoring. Before the start of the next round, players who have been raided are given a hideout that protects them from further raids for a certain number of rounds.

After the final round, the final scoring takes place, with the player with the most money winning.



## Palace

Number of players: 2–4  
 Age recommendation: 12+  
 Playing time: 25–35 minutes  
 Target audience: Families



Four builders, one palace – yet each pursues their own vision. With every move, you change not only your own façade but also those of the others – who will secure the most points before the tower clock strikes four? Each player controls one of the four sides of the palace. All block sides facing you form your façade.

Place a new block on your turn. Try to use the symbols on your façade to form the combinations shown on your task cards. Completed tasks earn you victory points at the end of the game. The other sides of the block you place automatically alter the façades of the other players, to their advantage or disadvantage.

Once the starting tile has been placed on the game board and all players have received three task cards, the game begins. On their turn, a player draws a block from the bag and places it on the board. Blocks must be placed adjacent to another block in such a way that the player can see one side of the block.

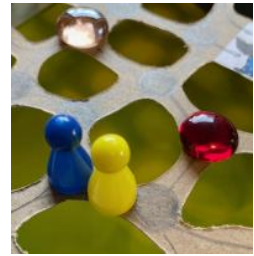
The player may then renovate a building (rotate a block or tear down a roof), swap mission cards, complete a mission, or place a roof.

The game ends when the fourth clock tower block has been drawn and placed. After that, all players receive points for the completed tasks, their own tower, the banners and the rubies. The player with the most points wins.



## Schiebung im Zauberlabyrinth

Number of players: 2–4  
 Age recommendation: 6+  
 Playing time: approx. 15 minutes  
 Target audience: Children



Welcome to the Magic Maze. The Head Wizard has called the Magic Gnomes to a competition. Which Magic Gnome will be the first to reach the Magic Hall with their magic potion?

Only those who skilfully navigate the maze and have collected all the necessary ingredients for the perfect magic potion may enter the Magic Hall and hand over their potion. But be careful: treacherous paths lurk beneath your feet and you might fall into a hole or two. The other magic gnomes aren't sitting idle either; they want to win the race to the Magic Hall. They might push you into the nearest hole and steal one of your ingredients.

Players take turns: first, they fill the empty white spaces on the game board with random ingredients. Then they roll the dice and move their own magic elf forward the corresponding number of spaces using the magic wand. On your way, try to push as many ingredients and the other magic elves into a hole as possible. You may then put the ingredients into your magic bottle. You return the magic gnomes and may steal one ingredient from the magic bottle from each of the players in question.

Once a player has collected all the ingredients for their potion, they may, on their next turn, move their magic elf to the magical hall in the centre of the board and redeem it there. The first player to hand in their potion to the Head Wizard in this way wins the game.



## Soap Box Race

Number of players: 2–5  
 Age recommendation: 10+  
 Playing time: 45 minutes  
 Target audience: Families

# SOAP BOX Race

You make a bet with your friends: the first person to reach the bottom of the hill in their soapbox car wins a huge bag of sweets. And off they go on a wild race!

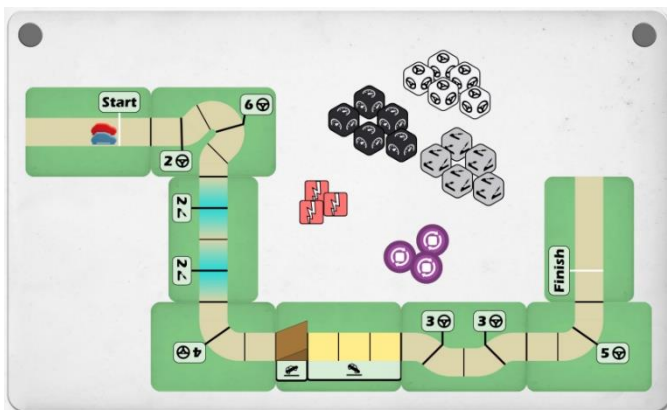
Soap Box Race is a fast-paced racing game where you have to build a soapbox. In each round, you must choose between further upgrading your vehicle, repairing the soapbox, and driving on the track. Build the perfect soapbox to overcome all the obstacles on the course and be the first to cross the finish line.

The game is played in three time slots per round: morning, midday and evening. Different actions are available at these times to further improve your soapbox, repair damaged parts and make progress on the track.

When driving, you must maintain a good balance between speed, cornering and control. If you go too fast or don't take the bend properly, you risk damaging your vehicle. And when the going gets tough, you'll even have to use a jump ramp to cover part of the track.

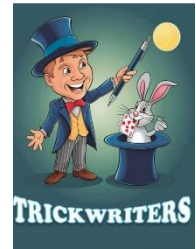
Your range, vehicle control and manoeuvrability depend partly on the vehicle parts fitted and partly on the results of your dice roll.

If you take a bend too fast, are travelling too slowly or lose control of the vehicle, you'll crash out and have to spend the next round repairing the damage and fitting new parts to your soapbox. The first person to cross the finish line in their soapbox wins the game.



## Trickwriters

Number of players: 3–5  
 Age recommendation: 10+  
 Playing time: 30–45 minutes  
 Target audience: Families



Trickwriters is a trick-taking game for anyone who enjoys roll-and-write games.

In the game, you try to grab the right cards to record the best combinations on your score sheet. The aim is to record matching numbers in all three colours and the longest possible sequences of numbers. And if the cards just don't seem to fit, you can always use a modifier to adjust the result accordingly.

At the start of the round, all playing cards are dealt evenly and each player receives a score sheet and a pen. The shared trick-taking mode board in the centre of the table determines which suit is trump and whether the highest or lowest card wins the trick. During the game, players must follow suit whenever possible.

The player who wins the trick may then choose a card and tick its numerical value in the corresponding row on the score sheet. All other players may only use the lowest card from the trick to tick. When ticking, modifiers may also be used to adjust the number or suit of the card used, or to use a different card from the trick. Each modifier is only available once during the game. Whoever has played one of the 5 cards may then change the trump suit on the trick mode board or switch the game mode, so that the lowest card wins the trick instead of the highest card, or vice versa.

The game is played for as many rounds as there are players at the table. The final scoring then takes place. All players receive points for complete columns in all three suits, for the longest possible sequences of numbers in each of the three suits, and for the star bar, which may be used if the trick result does not provide a suitable option for marking. In the end, the winner is the player who has entered the best combinations and scored the most points.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
5	5	10	10	20	20	30	30	10	15	20	30	
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	
2	2	2	10	2	2	2	20	2	30	2	40	
♣	♠	♥	♦	♣	♠	♥	♦	♣	♠	♥	♦	
-2	-1	+1	+2	+3	+4							



## Xterminators

Number of players: 1–4  
 Age recommendation: 9+  
 Playing time: 30–45 minutes  
 Target audience: Families



## Xterminators

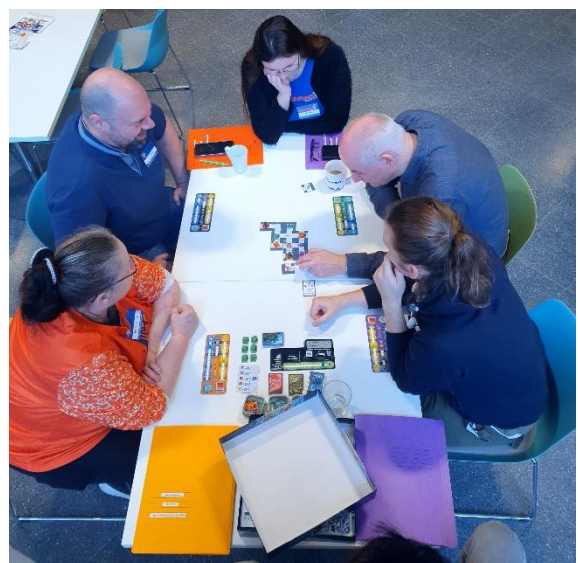
The Bugs are an alien race that loves to settle in space stations and render them uninhabitable in no time at all.

And that's where you come in! As an intergalactic pest control team in the service of the Company, you'll take on the Bugs with fervour, tackling them with your flamethrowers. You'll work your way through the station level by level. But watch out for the Queens, the leaders of the Bug swarms! Can you manage to clear an entire space station in a single 'run'?

Xterminators is a cooperative roguelike tile-laying game: over the course of up to six rounds, you venture deeper and deeper into the space station, fighting bugs, collecting new fuel, energy and thrust, and facing off against the swarm queens. This continues until one player drops to 0 energy and triggers the emergency extraction (you are immediately beamed out of the station), which ends the current mission. In each level, new special rules and tiles come into play, ensuring that no two missions are alike.

You work your way through the game together, level by level, by drawing tiles from the bag and placing them within a set grid. A 'push-your-luck' mechanic constantly presents you with exciting decisions: if you don't want to place the tile you've drawn on your turn, you can set it aside, but you'll then have to draw two more tiles. You can set these aside too, but you must then draw 3 new tiles. This could go well – or it could go completely pear-shaped! Because you must place these 3 tiles, and each tile is activated once. Tiles set aside go back into the bag. If you really can't or don't want to place a tile, you put it on the Queen's board. As soon as the grid is complete (or there are no more open spaces to place tiles), the battle against the Queen begins: the more gaps there are in the grid and the more tiles are on her board, the stronger she becomes!

If you defeat the Queen, you move on to the next level, until you successfully complete the mission after Level 6, or the Company has to extract you.  
 How many stars can you earn on the mission?



## Jury und Ausrichter



from top to bottom and from left to right: Wolfgang Lüdtke, Tim Käßner, Thomas Hög, Arnd Bernsmann, Nils Schürmann, Paul Mulders, Elmar Quiring, Michael Kippelt, Jana Schierwater, Christian Hildenbrand, Hilko Drude, André Zottmann, Polina Shvartsman, Uwe Bursik, Beate Heinke, Rashmi Knight, André Bierth, Aleksander Cuznar, Thomas Kilfitt, Markus Hahn

### Jury:

in alphabetical order by surname:

André Bierth - Hutter Trade Huch

Uwe Bursik - Skellig Games

Hilko Drude - TOPP frechverlag GmbH

Beate Heinke - Skellig Games

Christian Hildenbrand - NSV

Rashmi Knight – AMIGO Spiel + Freizeit GmbH

Wolfgang Lüdtke - Kosmos

Paul Mulders - H-Town Games

Elmar Quiring - Hans im Glück

Jana Schierwater - Deep Print Games

André Zottmann - Pegasus Spiele

On behalf of the organiser of the game design competition (Hippodice Spieleclub e.V.):

in alphabetical order by surname:

Arnd Bernsmann, Aleksander Cuznar, Markus Hahn, Thomas Hög, Tim Käßner, Thomas Kilfitt, Michael Kippelt, Nils Schürmann, Polina Shvartsman

## Statistics

### Preliminary round

Entries: 327

