Santa Claus takes the Intercity



A game for 3 to 5 players

by

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The one and only Santa Claus, the Dutch Sinterklaas, celebrates his birthday at December 6th. All the kids in the Netherlands will get presents at the evening before. The Dutch founders of New Amsterdam integrated Santa with Father Christmas, who then conquered the US, Britain and the world - in this order. In his role as Father Christmas Santa becomes increasingly popular in the Netherlands, so he now has a double job to do. Clearly too much for one person, even for a Santa....

Therefore, Santa is looking for a replacement to do his job at Chritmas Eve. His job involves a great deal of travelling, and since Santa on visiting the kids is always treated with a good glass of jenever, this travelling must be done by train. Thus, the candidates for this job must be fully knowledgeable with the Dutch Railway system. The person who shows the best capabilities in this respect will get the job...

Inventory

Laminated game board, showing most of the Dutch Intercity system and a Distance Track
5 coloured tokens
25 Route cards (they have to be cut)
Rules folder

Apart from the material provided with this Christmas Card, you'll need non-permanent pens or wax crayons in the same colours as the tokens (one for each player) and a deck of playing cards (two decks when five play). In this game the value of the Jack is 11 pt, the Queen 12 pt and the King 13 pt. The Ace is worth 14 pt when at least one court card (J,Q,K) is played, and 1 pt otherwise.

Preparation

The board is put in the middle of the table. Each player gets a full suit from the deck(s) of playing cards and selects a colour (pen + token). The tokens are placed in the 'START'-square of the Distance Track. The Route cards are shuffled and put face-down on the table. The top card is turned over. It reveals a route between two Dutch Railway stations and a number of distance points (1 d.p. is approx. 20 km).

Play

The game is played in rounds. In each round, all players select a playing card from their hand and put this card face-down on the table. When all have played the cards are revealed. In normal circumstances the highest card wins the Route card. If, however, the highest card ties, the highest untied card wins.

In the case that all cards tie, a new round is played with a new Route card turned over on top of the already open Route card(s). The player with the highest total wins all Route cards.

After each round the following cards are discarded:
- the winning card (the complete set of winning cards when multiple Route cards are won)
- the highest card in a round (or cards in case of a tie)
- the court cards
- Ace to 3 when three play, Ace to 4 when four play, Ace to 5 when five play.

All other cards are taken back into the hand of their players. The winner colours the route(s) obtained on the board with his personal colour.

All players now determine their single longest set of routes (in d.p.'s) they can ride with one train, without making U-turns at stations. Each single route may be used only once, but towns may be visited more than once.

They total the number of d.p's of that set of routes and put their marker on the corresponding square of the Distance Track.

Example 1: Roosendaal - Rotterdam - Breda is not a valid route, because of the U-turn at Rotterdam, but Rotterdam - Breda - Roosendaal - Rotterdam is a valid route for 6 d.p.

Example 2: Amsterdam - Utrecht - Den Haag - Amsterdam - Amersfoort - Utrecht - Rotterdam is a valid route for 14 d.p.

The game lasts for 25 rounds, unless all players are void of playing cards before this has happened. If the latter is the case the game stops immediately after the round in which the last playing card has been played.

Winning the Game

The player with the longest route wins the game. In case of a tie: the tying players order the Route cards from their longest set from highest to lowest. The top cards are compared, highest card wins. In case of a tie: the tying players compare their next Route card; highest card wins. And so on until a decision is reached.