

HERRLOF

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Scandinavia during the Viking age, from roughly 800 until 1050 AD, is characterised by powerful magnates (or chieftains) and kings. The title of king is not inherited, you fight for it. The leading magnate is recognised by the others as “first among equals”.

Four magnates now battle for Herrlof: the victory and praise gained in war. Who will become the next Viking king?



Game overview

In this trick taking game your goal is to be the first player to reach 50 points or more, the player with the most points wins. You score points by winning tricks and can gain bonuses. The game is played in a maximum of 10 rounds, although most often players will easily reach 50 points before that.

Preparation

Each player receives one sheet from the score pad to keep track of their predictions and score. For the first round you randomly pick one player as the dealer, this alternates for the following rounds.

Gameplay

The game is played in rounds, each round you:

1) Deal 15 cards 2) Set the trump 3) Predict your score 4) Battle for tricks 5) Reveal predictions and determine your score.

Every round consists of 15 tricks, a trick consists of one played card from both players.

1) Dealing cards & 2) setting the trump

The dealer deals 15 cards to both players, the remaining 12 cards form a facedown deck on the side of the game. The dealer then turns the top card of the deck face up, the colour of this card is the trump colour for this round. If this is a ♠ or a N, there is no trump colour.

Each trick is won by a single player. If both played cards are the same colour, the player with the higher card wins the trick. If player B played a different colour than player A, then player A wins the trick (regardless of the number on the card) unless player B played a trump card. If player B played a trump card (while player A played another colour), player B wins the trick regardless of the number on his card.

The winner of the trick takes both cards, places them on top of each other and puts them to the side of the table. Every following trick that he wins, he puts there in such a way that both players can at any time see how many tricks each player has won. You are only allowed to review the most recent trick, you cannot check any previous tricks for which cards were played. The winner of a trick starts the next trick, unless a card with a special ability changes this.

5) Reveal predictions and determine your score

When all dealt cards are played, each player reveals their prediction. You receive one point for each trick you won. If you won the exact number of tricks you predicted, you receive 10 bonus points. If you only won three, four or five tricks, you receive 5 bonus points (regardless if this was your prediction).

3 – If you play this card, you may choose to take the top (facedown) card from the deck to your hand and discard a card from your hand to the bottom of the deck. You may discard the card you just received. This special ability is regardless of who wins the trick.

6 – If you win the trick with this card, you may choose to blindly steal one card from the hand of the other player. You may add this card to your hand and return a different card to the other player, or may hand back the same card you just stole.

9 – If you win the trick with this card, your opponent starts the next trick.

All numbered cards that have a special ability are recognisable by the ⚡ rune on the card.

Three player alternative

It is possible (and enjoyable) to play the game with three players. Simply deal 11 cards to each player per round. When a card with a special ability indicates “the other player”, substitute this with “another player”. With the 9, the player left of the winner starts the next trick. Note that the five bonus points for 3, 4 or 5 tricks is cancelled for three players. You are also recommended to put the scoring goal at 40 points, rather than 50.

3) Predict your score

Both players take their dealt cards to form their hand and predict how many tricks they think they will win. They write this on their sheet and keep it concealed. You are not allowed to alter your prediction in a round, and you cannot show your prediction to the other player.

4) Battle for tricks

The player next to the dealer starts the first trick by playing one card, let's call him player A. The card played by player A indicates which colour card player B must play if player B has that same colour. If player B does not have a card in that colour, he may play a card of his choice. You are always allowed to play a ♠ or a N instead of matching the colour. If a player starts a trick with a ♠ or a N, the other player may play a card of his choice.

Examples - Trump: blue

– Player A plays a green 7, player B doesn't have green cards (anymore) and therefore plays a card of his choice. Player B plays a red 8. Player A wins the trick.

– Player A plays a green 7, player B doesn't have green cards (anymore) and therefore plays a card of his choice. Player B plays a blue 3. Player B wins the trick since blue is the trump colour.

End of the game

The game ends when, after scoring a round, one or both players have reached 50 points. The player with the most points wins. In case of a tie, the player that most often received the prediction bonus wins. If there still is a tie, the player with the most tricks in the final round wins. If there still is a tie, the players share the win.

Cards with special abilities

⚡ – Destroys the trick in which it is played. This means that both cards played in this trick are removed from the game for this round, lowering the total number of tricks that can be won this round. The same player that started the trick starts the next trick. If two ⚡'s are played in one trick, a new trump colour is immediately turned face up from the deck (replacing the existing trump).

N – This card is lower than all other cards. The loser of this trick starts the next trick. However, if two N's are played, the first one wins the trick.

1 – If you win the trick with this card, you may choose to steal a trick from the other player. Note that this is a trick he had already before.

Examples - Trump: red

– Player A plays a red 5, player B plays a ♠. The trick is destroyed, player A starts the next trick.

– Player A plays a blue 1, player B plays a N. Player A wins the trick and takes one additional trick from player B, so player A adds two tricks in total to his pile. Player B starts the next trick.

– Player A plays a red 3, takes the top face down card from the deck and discards another card. Player B plays a red 6. Player B wins the trick and steals one card from A's hand and returns a different card from his own hand. Player B starts the next trick.

– Player A plays a green 9, player B plays a yellow 4. Player A wins the trick, player B starts the next trick.

CREDITS

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