

Clockwerks: Feedback by Eve Woodman

I'm glad you re-did your board, as it was very difficult to see the hexagons. But as I only checked back today to get ready to post up my comments, I tested on the hand drawn version. This does affect game play a little.

Okay just to start this off then, both mine and my boyfriends first thoughts of the game and the instructions were: This looks complicated. The layout of the instructions, for part of it seems to go on forever, and did become boring to read, and I had to take a break before looking back at them again. (This problem mainly occurs in the explanation of 'Option C').

Length of the game

For a 2player game, once got into the flow of the game it takes around 30-40mins. This to me is the perfect length for that many players. You wouldn't want it to go on any longer, or it could seem like the game could go on forever. However, the length of the game not only depends on how many players are playing but how long each player decides their turn to be.

As from my understanding of the rules, a player can play as many cards as they wish to on their turn. Where they could play all their cards if they wish too, or choose 'Option E' to draw 3 cards to end their turn. I think this is a bit too much freedom for the players and there needs to be a restriction on how many cards they can play in on turn.

For myself, while playing I kept it to up to 3 to 4 cards to play per turn.

Setup

What you have entered as your 'Game rules' is essentially the setup. This did kind of confuse me, as I thought it was going to be the rules of 'How to Play' the game. So just be careful of what words you use, as they could mean something totally different for someone else. More on this further down.

However, after re-reading a couple of times, the setup of the game is quite simple. But in saying that, where to put the players counters, did confuse me. As I thought where you had written on the board 'P1, P2, P3, P4' that's where the players would start from. However, as I continued to read, at 'Option C' it mentioned about the players starting at the 'Mouse holes'. It wasn't till I re-read the setup and 'Option C' that the 'P' meant the 'P' in 'Pendulum'.

When in most games, P is used to mean Player. To avoid this confusion just shorten the word Pendulum to Pend.

Make sure when you are explaining what each of the options that a play can do on a turn to keep it purely to explaining the turns. As in 'Option B' you went onto explain the different types of cards, which I think can be inserted after the explanations of the Options. This would help to simplify the look of the instructions. Try to ensure that each explanation under each heading is no longer than half a page. This will minimise the player from falling to sleep from just reading the instructions.

Out of the Options, B and E seemed to be the most appealing, as they were short explanations (of what actually belongs to the explanation for B). And easy to understand, A is also simple but not a likely choice for players to choose, as I'm sure a players would not like to make one of their counters to fall of the board.

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This stands true, unless they fall 3 hexes to swing across a clock hand or ladder.

Option D seems a little pointless unless you put a restriction on how many cards a player can play per turn. Option D could in affect un-balance the game, as there is not a restriction on cards, and one player may choose to play all their cards in a turn. But that means on their next turn they have to do Option E to draw the 3 cards. Yet to draw a card you have a restriction.

Game play

Once I had got past these problems, and got onto playing the game, it was quite fun, although which did disrupt the flow was moving the all the components on the board after everyone had, had their turn; it was quite bothersome, as there are quite a few clock hands to move 60 degrees CW or CCW.

However, moving the pendulum, elevator and turn tracker make perfect sense. As they need to be moved, and not just by a players choice. For the clock hands it's up to you whether you want to keep that in, or to take that out. Although once I got into the flow of the game, It wasn't that much of a bother, and actually became quite fun.

Questions

Can you move in any direction? That's how I played it, that you could move 5 hexes in any direction. (Option C)

Is the swinging over to objects counted in the 5 moves? I played it as it was included in the 5 moves.

Target Audience?

Is it for 2-4 players?

What do you mean in Overview, when you say 'Two clock hands over lap? As there are never two clock hands on one clock face. They can only ever connect to form a bridge.

Where is the Board exit? Is it the Mouse Hole?

Clock cards: You don't seem to actually explain these cards, only ever mention them in an example. What are they? And what do they do?

General Comments

I like the theme of this game; however, I don't understand why you have Gnomes and presents included in the game. Clocks and mice I can understand, as that makes me think of the nursery rhyme, and then mice like cheese or so we have been made to believe since we were children.

My favourite aspects of the game would probably have to be after collecting a Cheese and trying to get it back to the Mouse Hole without another player making you fall and dropping it. Once you get a cheese/ present it adds in a race aspect, bring in friendly competition too. Which is always fun.

I think that the clock hands being moved before any of the players next turn, changes their states, especially if one of the players mice are on a clock hand which then gets moves, it can put them in

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either a advantage to where they want to go or a disadvantage, moving further away from where they want to go.

Overall a very creative theme, and is a fun game after the initial reactions to all the game components and the large board, and the not very friendly layout of the instructions.

This makes a new rival to mouse trap. And a much better game.