

Send in The Clowns – game report by Dave Spieth

The game was played with 2 players. (I played both sides)

Game lasted 7 rounds

Each round lasted about 5 minutes. The total game took 40 minutes. I suspect the next time it will go faster, now that I'm familiar with the rules.

Comments:

There are references to 'Crowd' and 'Audience' cards in the rules. This should be one.

There are references to 'anticipation' and 'appreciation' tokens. I played that they're the same thing.

The negative feedback loop of letting the losing player pick the 1st ringmaster card and go first is a great touch.

The positive feedback loop seemed out-of-control at the end. On the 6th turn, I was able to land on '2pair', there were 6 counters. Winning the dice toss netted me: 2 crowd cards, + 6 counters, which also gave me two additional crowd cards. I don't remember what the applause values were, but I ended up with 14 points for the round.

On the 7th round, I netted 17 points.

Note that the positive feedback aided both players. At the end of the game, the winning player only had one more point than the loser.

Stunt and reroll question. Do I have to decide on if I'm using a stunt before any dice are rolled, or do I roll first and then decide if I need to play a stunt card? (Possibly followed by another stunt card, etc.)

Here's an example of my rolling, please let me know if it's legal:

I was trying to get 3 of a kind. I had a Custard Pie, so I rolled four dice, which showed two 6's, and two other numbers. I used my freebie reroll on two of the dice, which did not get me another six. I used a Stunt to reroll 2 of the dice again, and got a 5 and another number. I used a second stunt card to convert the '5' to a '6', thus winning the round.

Question: if the custard pie gives me a total of 4 dice, does my free reroll and stunt card allow me to reroll all 4 dice, or just my initial 3?

Another potential issue is that I never lost when rolling the dice. I'm not sure if it's because the stunts and rerolls make it too easy or if I played enough Yahtzee that I knew which spaces to shy away from. I will be playing a second game with my 7-year old who I'm sure will take greater risks.

For two players, the board may be too large. I say this because at no time was a player forced to go for a 'lesser' amount of tokens. (In turn 1, they got 1 token. In turn 2 they found a space with 2 tokens.....by turn 7, they still found spaces with 7 tokens.)

That being said, each player did choose a lesser amount on one space ½ way through the game, just to avoid a riskier dice roll proposition. The board may be right-sized for

multiple players. Would it be possible to have a second board with less spots when a smaller number of people are playing?

The game ended without anyone having to enter the inner ring with all the really risky dice rolls.

Also, by the end of the game, each player had at least one custard and one running gag, but nobody had the 3-of-a-kind required to get the double power. (Also, I played that they could be used once per turn and kept, not discarded. The only ones I discarded were Stunts. Is this correct?)

For Usability, adding a reference chart may help players not have to check the rules. Maybe showing how they start with 3 dice plus one reroll. (Initially I kept forgetting I had an automatic reroll)

Also showing conversion of appreciation counters to audience cards would help me remember.

Anyway, this game was fun, and I could see the need for tweaking, maybe by having a maximum number of counters on any one spot, or by having less spaces on the board so they can't keep accumulating.