Half-Pint Heroes

A game by Johannes Goslar, Roland Goslar, and Søren Schaffstein

In the Half-Pint Pub, tempers are running hot. You can almost feel the tension in the air. Most patrons have already chosen sides, with very few even trying to stay out of the conflict. So far they've still just throwing insults instead of bar stools, but any moment things could break down into a full-out brawl...

GAME SUMMARY

Half-Pint Heroes is an easy to learn, but hard to master, card game for **2-7 players**. Players will play sets of cards from their hands each round to beat the sets of their opponents. You'll also need to be able to correctly assess the strength of your hand in order to predict how many sets you'll win each round. Once the predictions are revealed, players will also be able to bet against each other reaching their goal.

You'll need to stay alert and keep an eye your opponent's plays to avoid letting a brawl break out. If that happens, only one player will walk away a winner...

The game is played over 10 rounds. Points are scored for each winning card set, for correctly predicting your number of winning sets, and for correctly betting against other player's predictions. Additionally, bonus points are scored at the end of the game for the longest streak of correct predictions.

Half-Pint Heroes

CONTENT:

65x Fight cards

(numbered 1-13 in 5 different suit colors)

1x Score pad

7x Reference cards showing the valid card sets and a turn summary

7x Betting chips (one in each player color)

28x Prediction cards

(numbered 0-3 for each of 7 different player symbols)

SETUP

Each player chooses a player symbol and takes the corresponding **betting chip** ❶ and **four prediction cards** ❷, which they lay face down in front of themselves. Each player also receives a **reference card, showing the valid card sets and a turn summary** ❸ . Betting chips and prediction cards with unused player symbols are not needed and can be returned to the box.

The fight cards are shuffled and placed in a stack in the middle of the table.

Save enough space near the fight card stack for a row of up to 5 cards to be laid out next to one another.

Write the player's names (in clockwise order) on the scorepad at the top of each pair of columns.

Fig. 1: Equipment for each player (corresponding to the player's symbol)

FIGHT CARD LAYOUT

Card value
and color

Number of cards in
the card row this
round

Number of cards
in each player's
hand this round

Fight cards come in **5 different colors**, each with cards numbered 1 through 13. The higher the card value, the stronger the card is. Each card also has two other symbols – ⬚⬚ and 🖐 .

GAMEPLAY

The player who most recently had a black eye is the start player.

The game is normally played over **10 rounds**. Each round is divided into **5 phases**. At the end of each round, points are recorded on the scorepad, as well as whether or not each player was correct in their prediction. The game ends following a final scoring after the last round.

Phase 1: Deal

The start player reveals the top card of the fight card deck, and lays it face up in the middle of the table to start the card row. The start player then looks at the number shown in the 🃏-symbol on the card, and deals each player that many cards face down from the stack.

Now look at the number shown in the 🂠-symbol on the face up card. If the number is **greater than 1**, deal additional cards from the stack face up to the card row until the number of cards in the card row matches the number shown in the 🂠-symbol on the first revealed card.

3 cards for each player's hand
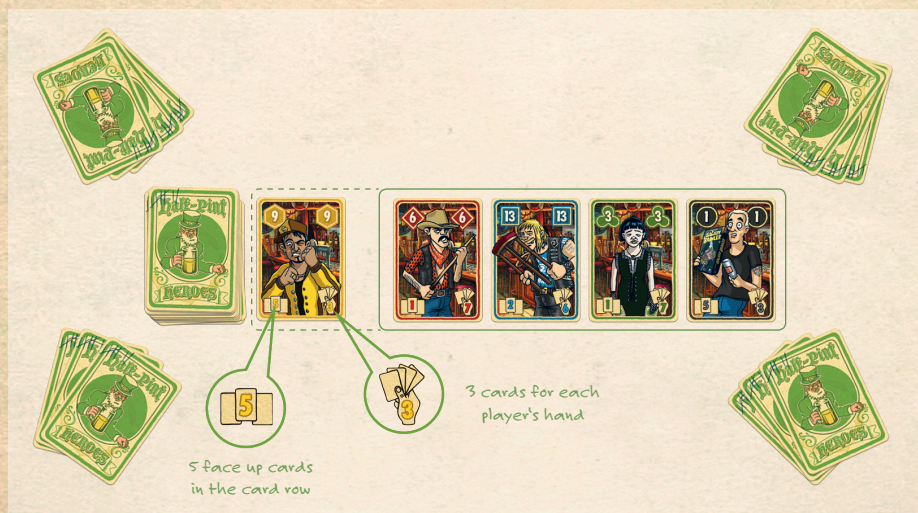
5 face up cards in the card row

Fig. 3: The first revealed card shows that the card row will contain five face up cards this round, and each player will be dealt 3 cards for their hand

Phase 2: Make Predictions

Each player looks at their hand of cards and decides how many sets they think they can win this round. This decision is based on **what sets could be built** using both the cards in a player's hand, as well as the cards in the face up card row. A set can consist of a single card, or a specific combination of multiple cards. See the player reference cards and Phase 4 (*below*) for more details on valid sets.

Players then select one or more of their prediction cards to indicate the exact amount of sets they intend to win this round. Multiple prediction cards can be added together to reach the desired total (except the 0 card, which must be used alone to predict winning no sets). Everyone places the chosen cards **face down** in front of them as their prediction. Once all players have made their predictions, they are turned face up so they are visible to everyone else.

Fig.4: The player could make the following card sets this round: one pair (13s), one pair (2s), two pair (13s and 2s), high card (12), or high card (2). They believe they can win two sets this round and play the prediction card with the number 2.

NOTE: **The sets shown on the reference card are meant to be representative. They show (with one exception), only the types of numbers and colors required for each set and not the exact cards. The exception is the highest set: the Royal Flush. This set must be 5 sequential cards of the same color ending exactly with 13.**

Phase 3: Betting

Each player **places their betting chip** in front of the opponent who they believe is least likely to achieve their prediction this round. If this opponent's prediction is incorrect, then any player betting against them will receive bonus points (*see Phase 5 below*).

Special 2 player rules: Each player must decide whether to bet against their opponent, or not. Betting against a prediction that turns out to be incorrect is still worth the normal bonus points. However, (only in a 2 player game) if a bet is made against an opponent who successfully achieves their prediction then the opponent receives the bonus points instead.

Phase 4: Play Cards

The start player goes first and plays **a set of one or more cards** from their hand face up to the table in front of themselves. Each other player then follows around the table **in clockwise order** until every player has played a set. At least one card must always be played if a player still has any cards remaining in their hand. Players without any cards in their hand are skipped for the remainder of the round.

A card set consists of either a single card, or a specific combination of multiple cards. Valid card sets are shown on the **reference card** and detailed below. Any cards played must constitute a valid set.

Sets can be built using not only the cards in player's hands, but also the cards in the face up row on the table. These cards remain on the table, but every player may always treat them as though they were part of their hand for purposes of building sets. They may be part of multiple player's sets simultaneously, and part of multiple sets for the same player each round. Players may not, however, use ONLY cards from the card row when making a set. At least one card from the player's hand **must be included** as well. (*see Fig. 7 below*)

After every player has played a single set to the table, the sets strengths are compared and the strongest set wins. In case of a tie (two sets of the same type), the set with the highest numbered card wins. If still a tie, continue on comparing the next highest numbered cards to determine a winner. In the case of identically numbered tied sets, the winner is the set that was played first.

Fig. 5: Player 1 uses the card row to play two pair (10s and 7s). Player 2 plays a three of a kind (11s) straight from their hand and beats player 1. Player 3 uses the card row to play a straight (6, 7, 8, 9, 10), which beats the three of a kind. Player 4 plays a single 4 from their hand, since they can't beat the straight and at least one card must be played as long as they have hand cards left. Player 3 wins the set.)

Fig. 6: Player 1 uses the card row to play a pair of 3s. Player 2 beats this with a pair of 8s from their hand. Player 3 has no more cards in their hand and must pass. Player 4 also plays a pair of 8s. In this case, player 2 wins the set since their set was played first.)

Fig. 7: Player 1 uses the card row to play a straight (8, 9, 10, 11, 12). Players 3 and 4 each play a single card, since they can't beat the straight and at least one card must be played as long as they have hand cards left. Player 4 uses the card row to play a higher straight (9, 10, 11, 12, 13) and wins the set.)

Fig. 8: Player 1 plays two pair (7s and 5s), player 2 plays a pair of 7s, players 3 and 4 each play a single card. Player 1 wins, since the pair of 12s in the card row isn't usable by itself and may only be built into a higher set by adding cards from player's hands.)

The winner of the set takes all the played cards (not those in the face up row) and places them in a stack next to their play area. The cards from each winning set are placed in separate stacks so the number of stacks (won sets) can be counted at the end of the round. The winner of the set is now the start player, and begins again by playing a new card set to the table. If this player has no cards left, the start player is the next clockwise player who still has cards remaining.

Brawl: If the same player is able to win three sets in a row, a brawl is started and the round ends immediately. This player is the only one who will score any points this round (*see Phase 5 below*).

It is possible that at some point in the round only one player will be left with cards still in their hand. In this case, turns continue normally with that player automatically winning every set played. Players should take care to avoid this, since a player with enough cards in this situation may easily start a brawl.

Special rule for 2 players: In a 2 player game the round ends immediately when one player runs out of cards.

Valid Card Sets

There are 11 valid card sets in the game. Each player has a reference card showing all the set types and their relative strengths. All the valid sets are listed here from strongest to weakest (four of a kind beats a flush):

Royal Flush: *5 cards of the same color, numbered 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13.*

Five of a kind: *5 cards of the same number.*

Straight flush: *5 cards of the same color, with 5 sequential numbers (all less than 13).*

Four of a kind: *4 cards of the same number.*

Flush: *5 cards of the same color.*

Full House: *5 cards, 3 with the same number and 2 with a different matching number.*

Straight: *5 cards with 5 sequential numbers.*

Three of a kind: *3 cards of the same number.*

Two pair: *4 cards, 2 with the same number and 2 with a different matching number.*

One pair: *2 cards of the same number.*

High card: *A single card of any number.*

Phase 5: End of round scoring

When all players are out of cards the round ends and scores are totaled on the scorepad. Each player receives **10 points** for each set they won (the number of card stacks in front of each player). If a player won exactly the number of sets that they predicted at the beginning of the round, then they receive the additional points shown on their chosen prediction cards, and an "X" in the second column on the scorepad. If a player predicted (and won) 0 sets, then they receive an additional **20 points** (in games with 5 or more players) or 30 points (in games with 2-4 players). If a player's betting chip is in front of a player who did not win the number of sets they predicted, then the owner of the chip receives **20 additional points**. (Note: Each betting chip is double sided, with one side showing the point value. As a scoring reminder, flip the chips in front of each player to the point side if they fail to meet their prediction.)

> *Special 2 player rules: If a player's opponent bet against them (placed their betting chip in front of them), but they did win the number of sets predicted, then the player who was bet against receives the 20 bonus points themselves.*

The round score for each player is totaled in the first column on the scorepad.

Brawl special case: If a brawl occurred, the round ends immediately and only the player who started the brawl scores any points. They receive 10 points for each set they won, and an additional 30 points for starting the brawl (a total of at least 60). Prediction and betting chip points are not scored. That player also receives a "B" in the second column on the scorepad for this round. All other players receive 0 points, and nothing in column 2 (even if their prediction was correct).

Example for 3 or more players

Laura predicted 3 sets, won 3 sets, and bet against Max. Max predicted 0 sets, won 1 set, and bet against Laura.
Laura receives 30 + 30 + 20 = 80 points. Her prediction was correct, as well as her bet against Max (who did not achieve his prediction of 0 sets). Max receives 0 + 10 + 0 = 10 points. His prediction was incorrect, he won 1 set (even though he wanted 0), and his bet against Laura was incorrect since she matched her prediction.

If this was the last round, proceed to final scoring. Otherwise, the next clockwise player to the last start player becomes the new start player. All players take back their prediction cards and betting chips. All fight cards (including those in the face up row, score stacks, and player's hands) are shuffled back into the main fight card stack, and begin the next round with Phase 1.

Gun fight: If one or more players is able to either make a correct prediction or start a brawl 5 rounds in a row (has 5 "X" or "B" marks in a row in their score column), then a gun fight is started. The next round is played normally. If one of these players is able to again make a correct prediction or start a brawl (for the sixth time in a row), then the game ends immediately and that player is declared the winner without counting points. If more than one player makes their sixth correct prediction in a row in the gun fight round then the winner is the one whose prediction is higher. If a tie still exists, then they share the victory. If no player makes their 6th correct prediction, then the round is scored normally and standard play resumes. If a gun fight is started on the final round of the game, play one more round (using the special 11th row on the scorepad) to give those players a chance to win before proceeding to final scoring.

FINAL SCORING

After the last round has finished, comes the final scoring.

Each player scores bonus points for the **longest consecutive number of rounds** where they either made a **correct prediction** or started a brawl ("X" or "B" in their score column). Any row without a mark in the second column ends a consecutive run. Each player receives **10 points per round contained in their longest consecutive run**. These final points are added to the scorepad, and each player's points from all rounds are totaled.

The player with the most points is the winner. In case of a tie, the tied player who started the most brawls ("B") wins. If still tied, the win goes to the tied player with the most correct predictions ("X"). If a tie still exists, the tied players share the victory.

	Max		Laura		Sven		Frank								
	20	⊠	30	○	30	○	60	⊠		○		○		○
	30	○	40	○	30	○	30	○		○		○		○
	10	○	60	⊠	10	○	30	⊠		○		○		○
	-	○	-	○	-	○	60	Ⓑ		○		○		○
	20	⊠	30	○	-	○	10	○		○		○		○
	40	⊠	10	○	30	⊠	40	⊠		○		○		○
	40	⊠	20	○	30	○	10	○		○		○		○
	10	○	40	⊠	-	○	10	○		○		○		○
	60	⊠	-	○	-	○	-	○		○		○		○
	-	○	80	⊠	30	○	40	○		○		○		○
		○		○		○		○		○		○		○
	260		320		170		310							
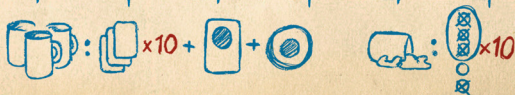
Fig. 9: Final scoring example

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