Oh Crab!

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RULEBOOK

SMART FLAMINGO

In the game *Oh Crab!* players take on the role of crabs that have escaped from the fry-house and run away along the beach to hide in the safe waves of the sea. On their way they will face various obstacles like sandcastles, rubbish, voracious gulls and other crabs clumsily making their way towards the water. The chef hot on their heels is a great incentive to speed up their pace.

GAME ELEMENTS

20 starting action cards: 5 sets with 4 cards corresponding to each crab in the game

36 action cards

3 double-sided shell action tiles

5 player aid sheets

5 player boards corresponding to each crab in the game

32 shells

5 crab pawns

1 cardboard chef marker (first player maker)

Modular board:

1 double-sided start tile (marked with number 0, sides A & B)

3 double-sided beach tiles (marked with numbers 1 to 3, sides A & B)

1 double-sided finish line tile (marked with number 9, side A & B)

SETUP

The following rules apply to games with 3–5 players. The rules for a 2-player game are described in the **2-player variant** section on page 12. The image above shows the setup of a game for 3 players.

1. Place the board tiles in the middle of the table: the start tile, 3 beach tiles and a finish tile. You can arrange the beach tiles in any order and you can also turn all modules to any side. If this is your first game, we recommend using modules 0A (start), 1A, 2A, 3A (beach) and 9A (finish). You can change the arrangement as you like in subsequent games.
2. Place shells near the board.
3. Each player places a player board and a crab figure in a chosen color in front of them, and takes the 4 corresponding starting action cards.
4. Shuffle all the remaining action cards and place the deck face down next to the board. Then reveal 3 cards and place them in a row next to the deck. The deck and the revealed cards form an action cards market.
5. Place 3 shell action tiles on a random side next to the board.
6. Randomly select the first player. The first player places their crab on the starting space marked with the number 1. The remaining players, clockwise, place their crabs on the following spaces: 2, 3, 4, 5.
7. The player whose crab was placed on space 1 receives the chef marker and will start the first round.
8. Players in the remaining odd-numbered spaces with shells take 1 shell each.

GAMEPLAY OVERVIEW

The winner is the player whose crab reaches the sea first. Starting from the starting space, you will move in rounds, performing the actions of the cards you played and other special actions. You will exchange the cards you have from the beginning of the game with the card market, improving your decks.

By properly combining cards played in subsequent turns, you will gain additional move actions, often creating powerful combinations. You will push and knock over other players' crabs, bump into obstacles, navigate difficult terrain and collect shells, which you will use to perform additional actions.

Player's playing area

Above your board you will place cards discarded as a result of entering spaces with obstacles and shortcuts or as a result of performing certain special actions. You place the cards horizontally, face up in a stack.
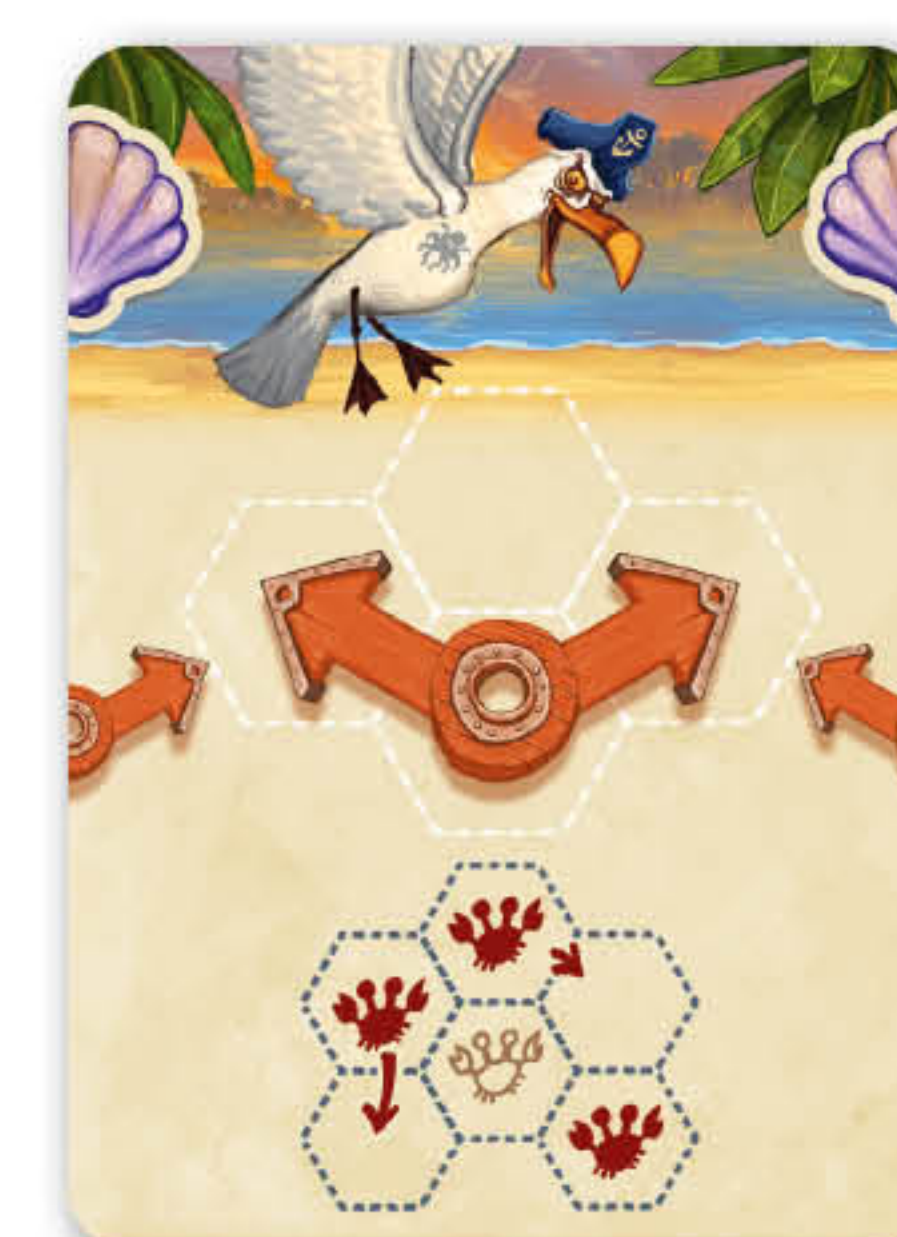
Below the board is a place where you arrange the sequence of played action cards. You will be adding new cards to it from the left or right side.

PLAYING THE GAME

The game is divided into rounds. In each of them, you carry out the following phases, in the given order:
1. Planning phase
2. Action phase
3. End of the round phase

1. Planning phase

You all do this phase at the same time. Each player **plays a card** from their hand. They place it in front of them, below their board. The card must be face down (you are not revealing it yet in this phase). If you have no cards in your hand, you take no action in this phase — declare a rest (see more on the next page).

Discard

Cards played in previous rounds

Currently played card

2. Action phase

In this phase, you take your turns in clockwise order, starting with the player with the chef marker.

First you either **build the sequence** or **take a rest** (if you decalred a rest in the previous phase, you must rest). Then you proceed to **perform the actions**. When you finish taking an action, the next player begins the action phase. After all players have taken their actions (when the player to the right of the player with the chef marker ends their turn), proceed to the end of the round phase.

Reveal the previously played card and place it below your crab's board ⓐ. If there are cards played in previous turns, the card dealt must be placed to the left or right of the sequence of cards played.

Try to match the halves of the side action icons to make them whole ⓑ. Icon matching is not required, but will allow you to perform additional actions. There is no limit to the number of cards on either side of your played card sequence. Later in your turn, you will be able to use the actions provided by the added card.

ⓐ

ⓑ

Rest

Follow the steps below:

1. Discard a card played in the planning phase. If you did not play a card during the planning phase because you declared a rest, ignore this step.
2. Draw one card from the action card market into your hand: one from the face-up or top of the deck. If you took one of the face-up cards, fill the market with a card from the deck.
3. Choose one card from your sequence of played cards — you leave it on the table. Take all remaining cards into your hand — both from the sequence and from the discard pile.
4. If your crab is **knocked over**, it gets up.

Perform the actions

After building a sequence or resting, you start performing actions. You can use all actions available to you this turn in any order. Remember to complete one action before starting the next one. Actions are not mandatory, you can skip performing any action. The actions you can perform during your turn are described on pages 7-8.

3. End of the round phase

If no crabs have reached the sea (see **End of Game** section on page 12), pass the chef marker to the player whose crab is furthest from the sea ⓐ. In the case of a tie, the chef marker is passed to the first player among the tied players, sitting to the left of the player who currently has the chef marker.

^ Towards the sea ^

Example: All spaces marked with the same letter are at the same distance from the finish line and are treated as spaces in one row. Squares A are the furthest from the sea, squares B are closer to the sea than squares A, but farther from squares C and D. Squares C are closer to the sea than squares A and B, but farther than squares D, and squares D are the closest to the sea among those marked.

ⓐ

^ Towards the sea ^

Example: At the end of the round, players check which crab is farthest from the sea. The blue crab is closest to the sea. Red and green crabs are the same distance from the sea. The yellow crab is the furthest from the sea. The player playing the yellow crab receives a marker

ACTION DESCRIPTIONS

Action cards

Chef marker

Shell action tiles
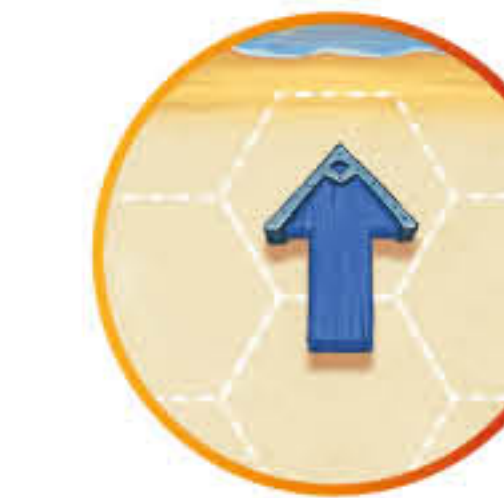
Spaces on the board

A. Main action from the card

In the middle of the action card there is an icon for the main action:
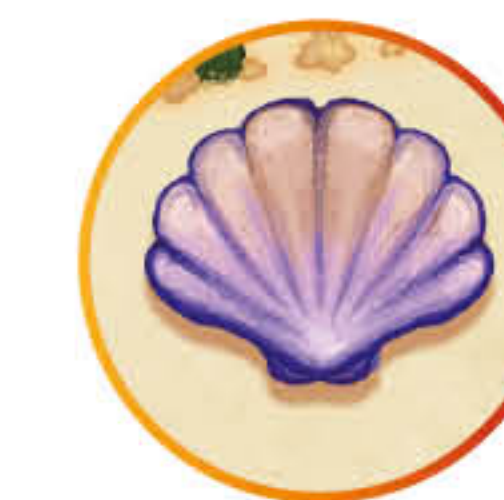
 Gain a shell from the supply.

Move forward — move your crab one space forward towards the sea.

 Move diagonally — move your crab one space diagonally towards the sea, left or right.

Move in any direction — you can move your crab one space forward, left or right, towards the sea.

Unless otherwise indicated in the action description, game moves are always made towards the sea. Special actions from cards or shell actions may cause other types of movement. The detailed rules for a given action describe what move it allows you to make.

You cannot move the crab off the board or into an unavailable space. When entering a space, you must consider any effects associated with it (see **Types of spaces** on page 10).

B. Side actions from the card

There are halves of action icons on the sides of the cards. If the card placed in your sequence this turn creates a complete icon image, you gain the action indicated by the placed icon.

C. Special action from the card

Cards may contain a special action. A detailed description of all special actions can be found on page 13 of the rulebook and on the player aids.

Important: If an action allows moving other players' crabs, all decisions about the direction of their moves are made by the player performing the action.

D. Action from the chef marker

If you have the chef marker, you can perform one additional diagonal move in your turn.

E. Action from shell action tile

Once during your turn, you can spend shells to perform one of the shell actions. Return the number of shells indicated on the tile to the supply and take the chosen action. A detailed description of the available shell actions can be found on page 14 of the rulebook and on the player aid sheet.

F. Actions from the board

If at any time during your turn your crab enters a space with an action assigned to it, you may or you must perform that action (depending on the type of that space). A detailed description of the actions occurring on the board's spaces can be found in the **Types of spaces** section on page 10.

^ Towards the sea ^

In a later round of the game, Steve playing the red crab has a chef marker, so he takes his turn first. He plays his card, adding it to the right side of the sequence of played cards. For the main action from card ①, he takes a shell from the pool. Then, with the action from the chef marker ②, he moves diagonally to the left. To perform a special action ③, he discards a card from his hand and moves forward to the space where Paul's yellow crab is standing. Steve pushes it diagonally to the right and knocks it over. Since Paul was pushed into the obstacle space, he must discard a card from his hand. With the next move from side action ④, Steve enters the shortcut space with his crab.

EXAMPLE OF A PLAYER'S TURN

^ Towards the sea ^

To use the shortcut, he discards two cards with the main action of moving in any direction ⑤ and moves in accordance with the arrow on the board, entering the space containing the shell, which he immediately takes from the board. Since he now has 2 shells, he spends them to perform the „Out of the Way" shell action ⑥ and switches places with Natalie's blue crab. This ends his turn, and the player to his left will reveal his card.

TYPES OF SPACES

Standard space
You can enter standard spaces without any restrictions, they do not cause any additional effects.

Inaccessible space
Spaces that are inaccessible and the areas beyond the sides of the board are treated as no space. Crabs can never enter them (no effects can change this).

Space with obstacle
To enter a space with an obstacle, you must discard an action card from your hand. You can still be forced to move into an obstacle if you do not have any cards in your hand to discard.

Space with shortcut
If at any time during your turn your crab is in a space with a shortcut, you may discard a number of cards with the corresponding main action symbols from your hand to move your crab to the space indicated by the arrow. To use this action, you must have the appropriate cards to discard from your hand.

Unoccupied space
A space of any type that does not contain any crab is considered unoccupied. It may contain other game elements.

Space with rushes
You can enter a space with rushes only from spaces adjacent to the side (in the direction indicated by the arrows). This rule applies to crabs performing an action during their turn. The crab can be moved to this space from the space below it by the actions of other players.

Space with waves
If you end your turn in this space, move your crab to the adjacent space indicated by the arrow. This space only affects the crab that took actions during the current turn — no other crabs are affected by it. If you move to another space with waves as a result of this space, you are **not** moved again.

Important: If this space moves a crab into a space occupied by another crab, push the other crab as normal.

Sea space
Once your crab enters the sea space, move it further into the sea space, indicating that it has run away and finished the race. This crab can no longer be targeted by any actions or effects. The current round will be the last in the game. See **End of Game** on page 12.

Space with a seashell
When a crab enters such a space, it takes a shell from the pool.

MOVEMENT RELATED MANEUVERS

Pushing

When you enter a space where another crab is standing, you push it out of that space . You move it in any direction to one of the 3 spaces towards the sea.

If a crab being pushed ends up in a space containing another crab, that crab is also pushed. All decisions about the direction of moves are made by the player taking their turn.

Any crab that is pushed becomes knocked over (see: **Knocked over crab and getting up** in the next column).

Example: A blue crab moves forward. Since he enters a space occupied by a yellow crab, he pushes it. He can move it to one of three spaces, including the space with the shell (on the left) or the space with the obstacle (straight ahead). The pushed crab is knocked over.

Knocked over crab and getting up

Your crab gets knocked over when someone pushes it. When you're knocked over, you can't move until you get up. You can use actions normally, but no action will move your crab (you ignore such effects). An action that affects other crabs and you will only affect other crabs, but not you. In other words: when you are knocked over, you cannot move on your own initiative until you get up.
To get up you must:
• Forfeit any move action shown by one of three icons: 🦀 ⬆ 🦀. The forfeit of movement action can come from an action card, a chef marker, or from shell action tiles.
OR
• Rest at the beginning of the action phase. Your crab stands up while resting.
When you are knocked over, you are normally moved by actions triggered by another player (e.g. by being pushed, result of a special action, result of using a shell action tile). Knocking over a knocked over crab has no additional effect on it.

The red crab moves to the right. Since he enters a space occupied by a brown crab, he pushes it. There is only one space on the left where you can push him. It is not possible to push the brown crab to the space to the right or straight ahead because these spaces are inaccessible. The brown crab enters the space occupied by the green crab, so the green crab is also pushed. The player taking a turn can move the green crab forward or to the obstacle on the left. All pushed crabs are knocked over.

END OF THE GAME

If one of the crabs has reached the sea, the current round is the last in the game: the remaining players play their planned moves for this round. Then the game ends.

The player whose crab reaches the sea wins the game.

If more than one crab reaches the sea in the same round, the player with more cards in his hand wins. If the tie cannot be broken this way, the players share the victory.

2-PLAYER VARIANT

<in development>

SPECIAL ACTIONS

Sideways! — Discard a card to use one of the side actions from the left or right of this card, as if its icon was complete.

Seagull! — Move any crabs ahead of you one space backwards to an adjacent unoccupied space towards the start. Moves can be performed in any order.

Reckless! — Until the end of your turn, you can ignore the effects of the spaces you enter.

Sand in the eyes! — All opponents whose crabs are ahead of you discard one card.
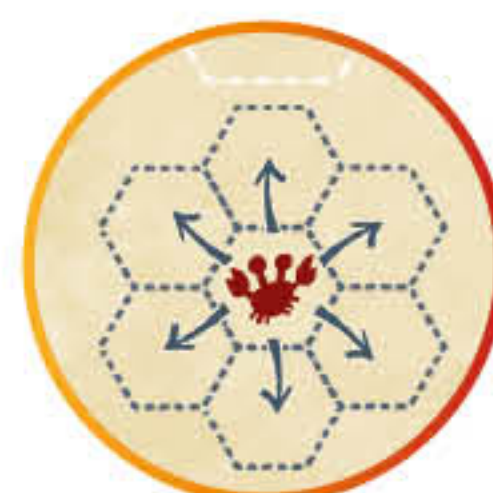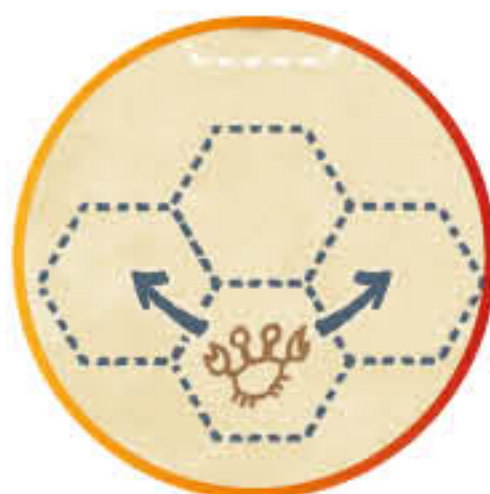
Move out! — Move any opponent's crab one space in any direction.

Jump aside! — Jump to any unoccupied space in the same row. The destination should be at the same distance from the sea in a straight line.
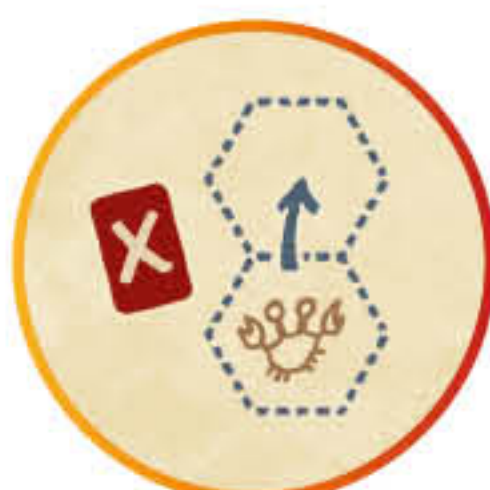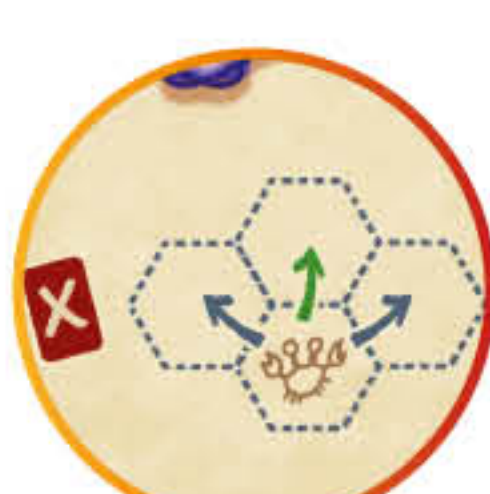
Slant! — Make a diagonal move.

Zigzag! — Discard a card to make two diagonal moves.

Faster! — Discard a card to make a forward move.
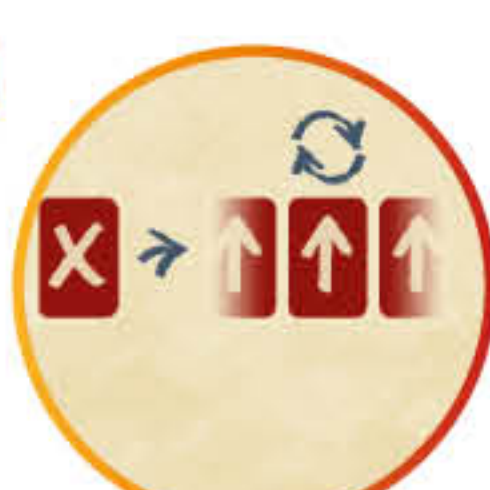
Slide! — Discard a card to make one forward and one diagonal move, in any order.

Call of the sea! — Move your crab and the crabs behind it on an adjacent, unoccupied space towards the sea. Moves can be performed in any order.

Momentum! — Discard a card from your hand to use the main action from any of your played cards.

SHELL ACTIONS

Still standing!   Take all your discarded cards back into your hand.

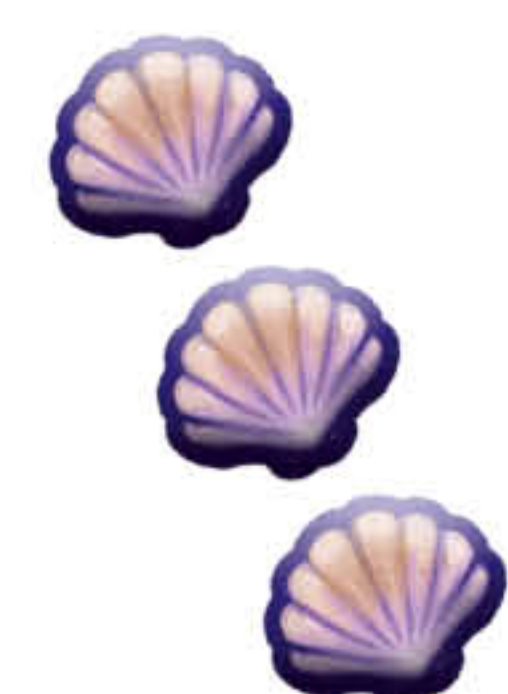**Slant!**   Make a diagonal move.

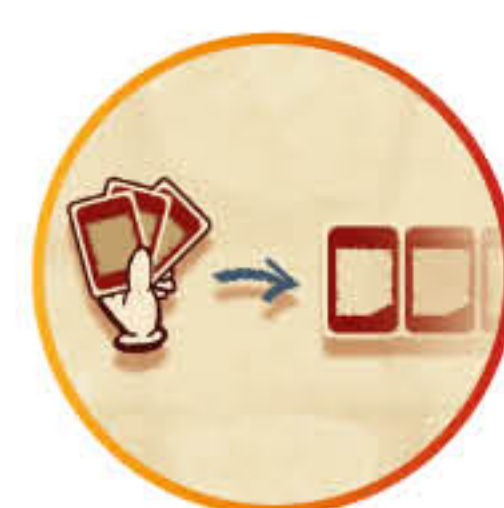**Faster!**   Make a forward move.

Out of the way!   Swap spaces with an adjacent crab. During this action ignore any effects of the spaces these crabs are on.

Power snack!   Play another card from your hand and use any available actions from it.

Tunnel!   Move your crab in a straight line to any space within 2 spaces of its current position. Apply the effect target space, if any. You ignore the effects of the spaces you bypass with this action.

ABOUT THE DESIGNERS

Bartosz Szopka

designer

Board game geek since childhood in a variety of ways: versatile and curious player, house rules and variants creator, rigorous playtester, puzzle solver and maker, meticulous miniature painter, aspiring game designer and developer, bedtime rulebook reader and editor. Using the work on *Oh Crab!* as an opportunity to take this board game hobby to the next level.

Bartłomiej Jacek Zielonka

designer

Fan of heavy-weight eurogames, points and math. Participant of many Board Game Laboratories, in which he has successfully designed several games — some of them are already published. Founder and host of the Koszalin's Board Game Club and youtube channel *Planszówki online* where he shows gameplays and reviews more difficult games.