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General introduction

General introduction



Welcome to the game of Pymtheg. In this instruction guide you will find the rules of the game of Pymtheg along with the rules of a few other games that can be played with this deck of cards.

The deck itself and the games noted in this instruction guide are all based on the fantasy series “The Phantasar Chronicles” (in Dutch: “De Kronieken van Phantasar”). This project came to be when I set up these series originally for RPG computer games, later with the addition of epic fantasy novels, I did realize that apart from this world having its own people and therefore its own history, it would also have its own political systems, religions, languages, measurements units, and also, games.

In the Pymtheg project I made the Phantasar variant of a deck of cards, and I've set up some games that you could play with this deck of cards.

The main focus lied on the primary game Pymtheg, but I did quickly get some ideas for other games, such as Burn (In Dutch: Branden) and Cârts Tity (means “Crazy Cards” in the common language of Phantasar).

As Pymtheg was the first project I set up for this, I chose this project in order not to make things too hard on myself in the first project, however concepts for other projects have already sprung to mind, and I do hope I like Pymtheg or the other games you can play with these cards.

Pymtheg

Pymtheg

Introduction

On the world of Phantasar, Pymtheg is a game that has been played most of all by the Befindos. Especially under the high-class houses, the game is very popular. Among the Befindos, not much is known about the origin of the game. People say that the game originated from the state Krijtkust, but despite the game being played there most, this theory is controversial among the Befindos. After the Befindos got allied with the Drop-Out-tribe of the Elves, under the reigns of Queen Aziëlla and her predecessor King Herondo, they also began to play the game, although Elves who grew up in mixed communities such as the city of Gagolton also appear to have taken a liking to this game. Since Pymtheg does not involve money as a bet, they see it a very good past-time.

Rules

Introduction to making tricks

For those familiar with card games such a bridge, rikken, whist or klaverjassen, the basis of Pymtheg will be easy to learn, since Pymtheg works, just like the games mentioned before with making tricks, possibly by using a trump suit. The card suits Hearts, Spades, Diamonds and Clubs have been replaced by the four elements: Fire, Water, Wind and Earth. Their function is effectively the same, however, unlike the games you may know, the cards are now numbered from 1 till 15, in which 1 is the lowest card and 15 the highest.

Making tricks works the same as with the regular card games. The one who may start the trick plays a card, and the other three players must follow by playing a card with the same element (you **MUST** play the same element), and the one with the highest card of the required element wins the trick. If one is unable to follow suit (or in this case element), then he may play a different element but this will always cause him to lose the trick, unless one plays an element that has been made trump in this round, then one can still claim the trick. (Playing a trump card is **NOT** an obligation (as it is in Klaverjassen). In other words you are allowed to play a trump card in such a situation, but you don't have to. "Over-trumping" is allowed, but "Under-trumping" is forbidden unless it is not possible to do anything else).

When it appears that somebody violated the rules by not following element when he could in fact do so, then the violator gets if he belongs to the playing party (more about that later) the maximum amount of minus points possible in the current game type, plus 100 extra minus points as punishment. If the violator is not the playing party the playing party gets the maximum amount of plus points possible and 100 points extra as bonus. The game round in question will end immediately and the next dealer will deal the cards for the next round.

Basically this rule applies to any form of "cheating".

Pymtheg

Game Flow

The Befindos themselves play counter-clockwise, but as we on Earth are used to play clockwise, this can be deemed as “acceptable” (unless you are one damn purist). It's best to play the game at a square table with one player at each side. The player at the opposite side of the table is your partner, and together you play against the other two players.

Every round one player deals the cards and the first player after him/her may open the “bidding round” and the “playing round”. After the dealing the players will bid. Who thinks he/she can play makes a bid, who thinks not to be able to play will pass. Who passes cannot make another bid during that round any more, but is still allowed to “double” or “redouble” later.

Bidding

Pymtheg has three kinds of bids. Gâm (the â is pronounced as the “a” in the word “chance” in UK English, but only a bit shorter. This word means “Game”). Ry (pronounced as “Ree”, meaning “nothing”) and Lon (pronounced as “Lone” meaning “Alone”).

- When one bids “Gâm”, he/she claims to be able to win 9 tricks with the help of his partner. If they are successful, then they'll get 20 points + point for every trick they made more than 9. When one bids Gâm one can decide to immediately announce the chosen trump element (and then one will play for 30 points + over-tricks) or to wait with that until it's sealed he will be the one playing that bid. One can also decide to play No-Trump, and then there is no trump element. All points will then be doubled. When they fail, they'll get 20 minus points plus 1 minus point for every under-trick. When the opposing team does not want you to play Gâm, they can bid Gâm +1 and then one must make 10 tricks at least, and one plays with 30 points (plus over tricks) and 50 points plus over-tricks when the trump is immediately announced and the minus points are calculated in the same manner. This can be raised with Gâm +2 and so on. Please note Gâm+1 can only be bid when Gâm has been bid and Gâm+2 can only be bid if Gâm+1 has been bid and so on.
- When you bid “Ry” you expect to make no trick at all, and the opponent has to try to force you into winning one. When you win one trick the round ends immediately and your partner loses that round. When one wins a Ry he/she and his/her partner win 150 points, but when losing it 150 points will be subtracted. Please note the tricks the partner makes do not count, only those who are won by the one who bid “Ry” count. The partner is therefore allowed to make tricks to prevent the Ry player from doing so. Further more there are also the bids “Ry 2” and “Ry 3”. With “Ry 2” one plays for 200 points on a win, and 200 minus points on a loss. The tricks the partner of the Ry-player wins will not lose the game immediately, but 20 points will be subtracted for every trick the partner wins. Technically this makes it possible to win the

Pymtheg

round still losing points.

With “Ry 3” both players of a team may not win any tricks at all, and when either the player or his/her partner wins a trick the game is lost. Most Befindos only make this bid when the partner already did bid Ry or Ry 2.

All variants of “Ry” are played without trump.

When the opponent overbids a Gâm variant over a Ry, the basis points of the Ry will be subtracted along with the points of the Gâm if the game is lost. Unfortunately, when one wins this Gâm no bonus points are applied.

- With “Lon” the player placing this bid must win all fifteen tricks without his/her partner's help. If this bid is won, the playing party wins 2500 points. If this bid is lost, the playing party loses 2500 points + 50 points for every trick won by the OPPONENT. Tricks won by your party will thus not count for these 50 penalty points (something that can when one has lost already be used a way of “damage control”).

Double and redouble

The highest bid counts, and as soon as the highest bid is known, the opponent has the possibility to “double” upping the stakes as the points played for are doubled. So double points on a win will be awarded, but double points will be subtracted on a lose. The playing party can respond with a “redouble” meaning the points awarded or subtracted will be multiplied by 4. A few notes are in order:

- Doubling can only be done when the highest bid is known. When the player who did the bid has not announced the trump during the bidding, the doubling must be done before the trump is named post bidding.
- Redoubling can only be done by the party who did the bid when the opponent did cast a double. Here too goes that it must be done before announcing the trump (unless this has been done during the bidding).

Pymtheg

Ranking order of bids

As said before only the highest bid counts and only the playing party can win or lose points. Below is the order of bid ranking from low to high.

- 1) Gâm
- 2) Gâm +1
- 3) Gâm +2
- 4) Gâm +3
- 5) Ry
- 6) Gâm +4
- 7) Ry 2
- 8) Gâm +5
- 9) Ry 3
- 10) Gâm +6
- 11) Lon

Burn

When everybody passed without making a bid, then the sub-game “burn” will be played. Then people will play tricks without trump. At the end of the game, a team gets 5 minus points for every fire-card won with a trick, unless one has more water cards than fire cards (equal is NOT more) the fire counts as “put out” and no minus points are scored. Does one score all fire and water cards, then there are no minus points and one instantly wins 10,000 points (which rarely happens).

(The game “Burn” is under the lower class-Befindos very popular as a game on its own and not as a part of Pymtheg. See the “Burn” game section of this manual for more information).

Pymtheg

End of the game

There are no official rules when a game has ended as a whole. Often people play a certain time decided pre-game, and that after that time the team with the most points wins. (It is customary when the time limit is reached, but a round has not yet been finished, to finish that round first).

There is a “twenty-round” variant in which exactly twenty rounds are played, no more and no less (over multiple days if required).

Some Befindos play with the 100,000 points limit. The team passing 100,000 points either positively or negatively ends the game, and the team with the most points then wins.

Shuffling and dealing

It's customary when shuffling and dealing to use a special method for this.

1. When shuffling for the first round with a deck never used before a normally shuffling method is in order.
2. In all subsequent rounds one prefers only 1 certain amount of cards to be re-orderd randomly ONCE. (People from Noord-Brabant who often played “rikken”, yeah the shuffling method is the same).
3. When dealing each player gets 3x a set of 5 cards each.

This method is used to ensure one can always play each rounds and to prevent all players passing all the time, which is considered highly annoying. (Be prepared that after a game of Ry or Burn the cards can still end up rather strangely).

This shuffling and dealing method is not “official” but “highly recommended”. Befindos will hate you when you refuse to use this method.

Pymtheg

Tournament rules

Big tournaments are very common in Aeria. At these tournaments the cards at each table will only be shuffled once and by means of a match schedule all teams must play once at each table. Ranking points are awarded based on which team made the best (or least bad) result. The best team will get 1 point and the second best 2 points and so on, based on how many teams compete. Both teams are judged separately. If on a certain table the North/South team has the best result would have the best result (and thus 1 point) the East/West team would as such have the worst result and get the highest amount of points.

When a game ends in everybody passing the sub game “burn” will not be played, and both teams will have “worst result” (ties are possible when other teams also on a round-pass. The highest amount of points will be set then).

The team with the least amount of ranking points will be the champion.

There are no official “tie-break” rules, meaning multiple champions are possible. Unofficial tie-break rules can sometimes be set up by the tournament's organizer.

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Score table

The score table below has the scores per game type.

Gâm

Bid	Trump	Trump announced	Base score	Over-/under-trick
Gâm	Yes	After bidding	20	1
		During bidding	30	1
	No	After bidding	40	2
		During bidding	60	2
Gâm +1	Yes	After bidding	30	1
		During bidding	50	1
	No	After bidding	60	2
		During bidding	100	2
Gâm +2	Yes	After bidding	40	1
		During bidding	70	1
	No	After bidding	80	2
		During bidding	140	2
Gâm +3	Yes	After bidding	50	1
		During bidding	90	1
	No	After bidding	100	2
		During bidding	180	2
Gâm +4	Yes	After bidding	60	1
		During bidding	110	1
	No	After bidding	20	2
		During bidding	220	2
Gâm +5	Yes	After bidding	70	1
		During bidding	130	1
	No	After bidding	140	2
		During bidding	260	2
Gâm+6	Yes	After bidding	80	1
		During bidding	140	1
	No	After bidding	160	2
		During bidding	280	2

Pymtheg

Ry

Bid	Score	Tricks partner
Ry	150	No consequences
Ry 2	200	20 points subtracted per trick
Ry 3	1000	Instantly losing round

Lon

- When won: 2500 points
- When lost: 2500 minus points + 50 minus points the OPPONENT (not your partner) won
- When Lon is played without trump these scores are doubled (so 5000 points when won en 5000 minus points + 100 minus points each trick the opposing team won).

Burn

- 5 minus points for each fire card one claims by winning a track.
- When more water cards than fire cards have been obtained (*more*, so NOT *equal* to), the minus points (no matter how much there are) are NOT given.
- When all fire and water cards are claimed by the same team then 10,000 points are won (and minus points will not count).

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Double and redouble

Double

- Can be set by the teaming opposing the playing team, *prior to* the announcement of the trump, if the trump was already announced in the bid itself or when one plays Ry then *prior to* the first card being played.
- Discussing this with your partner is NOT allowed
- ALL points (plus or minus) will be doubled.

Redouble

- Can be set by the playing party as a *direct response* to a double, before any other game action takes place.
- Discussing this with your partner is NOT allowed
- ALL points (plus or minus) will be multiplied by four.

A few notes:

- It does not matter whom of the two players in a team sets the double or redouble as long as he/she is a member of the team who has the right to do so.
- Discussing with your partner is NOT allowed.
- People are NOT required to ask the players if they want to double. They have to remember the opportunity themselves. If they say nothing the game continues and it can be too late. If one needs more time to decide whether or not to double or redouble one has the time to request that, and the other players are not allowed to deny you such a right. Prior to the game a time limit can be proposed and counts when all other players agree.
- A “double” or “redouble” cannot be set in a game of “burn”.

Burn

Burn

Introduction

“Burn” (or “Branden” as I call the game myself in Dutch), is a nice game that already exists as a sub-game to Pymtheg, but can also be played as a stand-alone game. There is both the team vs team variant as the player vs player variant.

The three variants

In team vs team play the game can be played in either. 2 teams of 2 players, 3 teams of 2 players or 2 teams of three players.

In player vs player the game can be played with 3, 4, 5 or 6 players.

In 2 teams of teams 2 players, you can best sit on a square table with a player at each side with your partner at the opposite site of the table.

In 3 teams of 2 players you have to sit in ABCABC order, in which the letters relate to the respective team.

In 2 teams of 3 players you need to sit in ABABAB order (so both players beside you are your opponents and not your partners).

Base flow of the game

Each round the dealers shuffles the cards (normally so no crazy setups as with Pymtheg) and deals one card to each player in the same order in which they play. (this goes for both PvP as TvT game types).

There is no bidding round, the tricks are just played normally (read the Pymtheg game chapter for making tricks in general). The first trick is started by the first player after the dealer, and the other tricks by the player who won the last trick.

When all tricks have been played the scores are counted for each player/team.

If one team/players reached 100 points or more the game is over and the one with the least points wins. If none of the teams/players reached 100 points another round is played and the first player after the last dealer becomes the new dealer.

Burn

Scoring points

Base rules

In Burn you want to have as little points as possible. You get 1 point for each card of the element fire that you win by making a trick, unless you manage to get more (more is NOT equal) water cards by making tricks than fire cards.

When playing in teams the tricks you make count as tricks for all players in your team as well as the points scored. So this means that if you have 6 fire cards, and your partner has 1 fire card and 8 water cards scored by tricks, you have 7 fire + 8 water in total 9 and thus no score as there was more water than fire. You follow?

If a player or a team manages to get all fire and water cards we call that a “pit”. In that case the player or team who won all these cards, may decide (discussion with team members is allowed) to either subtract 30 points from their own score, or to add 30 points to the scores of all opponent teams/players. A few notes are in order though:

1. You are NOT allowed to get another player/team to pass 100 points this way.
2. You are NOT allowed to make your own score get below 0(zero).
3. If there's a situation in which you will always either get below 0 or get another player/team to pass 100, then the rule that you cannot go below 0 takes priority, meaning another player/team gets to exceed 100 ending the game in the process.

A variant scoring rule

When playing 3vs3 you are more likely to score a pit than when you play 1vs1vs1vs1vs1vs1. In the official rules a pit will count as -30 for you or 30 for all opponents all the same. This variant takes the likeliness in order you score a pit and allows you to score different amounts of points in case a pit is scored. For that see the table on the next page.

1. The not past 100 or not below 0 rule does apply in the same way as in the base rule.
2. Prior to starting the first game, all players must be in agreement that this alternate way of counting is applied. If a certain agreement is not set up prior to the first game, the normal base rules will always apply.

Burn

Team Size	Teams	Score
3	2	30
2	2	40
	3	50
1	3	50
	4	60
	5	70
	6	(instant win) 100

Tournament rules

Just like Pymtheg it's possible to play Burn in tournament form. Prior to the tournament it must be clear:

- If it's player vs player or team vs teams
- At all tables the same number of players/teams should play
- The score variant used for pits must be clear
- Are we playing in league or knock-out form?

In league form the same rule applies as with Pymtheg that teams/players play at all times where the hands are always the same for each player playing there, and the best score meaning 1 point and 2nd best 2 points etc. And after all rounds are played the player/team with the least points wins.

Since there it's on Phantasir very common to have Burn tournaments that start with poules and end in a knock-out therefore requiring a tie-break in order to see who passes through (this is only common for 1 vs 1 player or 1 team vs 1 team) the tied players will have to play extra games. In case only 2 teams/players are tied they play against each other until one of them passes 100 making the other the winner. In case more players/teams are tied they will have to play a kind of mini-league against the same way as a normal league. The latter process can be repeated until there all ties are broken.

In a knock-out race (only for 1 player vs 1 player or 1 team vs 1 team), in which the winner passes on to the next round and the loser is out of the game, all the way up to the finals in which the champion is decided, it's for many tournaments not uncommon to use the score cap of 100 only in the first round and to raise that by 100 points at each next round that follows. Meaning that in the 2nd round the game ends if one player/team passes 200 instead of 100. Some tournaments only raise this by 25 per round in 1vs1, 100 in 2vs2 and 250 in 3vs3. It's up to the organization of the tournament to decide, and of course, what system they use must be known to all players before entering the tournament.

Cârts Tîty

Cârts Tîty

Introduction:

Cârts Tîty means “crazy cards” in de common language of Phantasar. The game can be played with a regular deck of Pymtheg cards in which all four elements in which all cards from 1 till 15 are being used. The game is most of all popular among children who live on Phantasar.

Goal of the game:

All players start with 8 cards and the one who is the first to be out of cards wins.

Start of the game:

The deck is shuffled thoroughly and all players receive 8 cards. The remainder of cards are then shuffled again and put as a drawing deck on the table with their backside up and the upper card is face side up beside the drawing deck. This will be the first card of the playing pile.

Game flow:

Each player may play a card of the same value or the same element as the top card of the playing pile by putting it onto the top card of this pile. If this is not possible, one may draw a card from the drawing deck and end their turn in the process. One can also opt to discard their entire hand and take as much cards from the drawing pile as they had on their ends, but then not only their turn is over, they will also have to skip their next turn. Changing the entire hand may only be done three times per game, and the player in question must have 4 or more cards in their hands.

If a player plays a “follow up card”, which means that the value on that card is 1 point higher or lower, they can force the next player to draw 2 extra cards of the drawing pile. This player can counter this action by playing a follow up as well and then the next player must take 4 cards. When this gets ABOVE 10 cards (above is NOT equal) the chain is broken and the next player can just play their turn normally without having to draw extra cards.

The “follow up card” does not have to be of the same element, but if it is, the next player must skip their turn in stead of drawing cards unless they play a “follow up card” too in the same turn. This rule overrides the drawing a card from the drawing pile.

Should the drawing pile get completely depleted, the played cards on the playing pile will be (except for the top card which will be the first card of the new playing pile) be shuffled and form a new draw pile.

NOTE: 15 does not follow up to 1 or vice versa. You can only follow up to 15 with 14 and only follow up to 1 with 2.

Cârts Tîty

Optional rule:

Some Cârts Tîty players use the rule that if the total of the value of the top card on the playing pile plus the value of the card being played make 16 in total the player doing this may get an instant extra turn. This rule *does* require that both cards are of the same element (meaning two 8 cards of two different elements won't work).

Last card:

If a player only has one card left in their hand, they must announce that to the other players. The method for this is not states in any rules, but must be agreed on prior to the game. Knocking on the table or yelling “last card” are the most common ways to do this.

If one or more players only have 1 card in their hands left, nobody can be forced to skip a turn, nor with the optional rule of 16 for an instant extra turn come in place.

If a player with only 1 card left gets the obligation to draw extra cards they must draw 1 extra card (should this force them to draw 11 cards or more, the chain is broken, and the obligation is voided).

If the player after the one with 1 card left plays their turn and the player with 1 card neglected to announce only having 1 card left, in accordance to the pre-game agreement, they must draw 5 extra cards as penalty. If one or more of the other players has more than 10 cards (more, not equal) this penalty will be 7 cards.

Overflow:

When a player has MORE than 25 cards in their hand, they instantly lose and are out of the game. If that means only 1 player is left that player automatically wins, when there are more players, the game continues without the overflowed player until there's only 1 player left or one player manages to empty their hand.

Notes to prevent confusion:

1. The overflow rule applies when the turn ends, so should you take your 26th card and be able to get rid of it the very same turn, you do not suffer an overflow.
2. If one uses the optional rule of an extra turn on total value 16, then the overflow is suffered after the extra turn.
3. When you end your turn and all your opponents are forced to skip theirs, effectively getting you an extra turn, then you have effectively ended your turn and the overflow must then be checked anyway before the your next turn comes into effect, meaning that if you have 26 cards then between your two turns or more are you still screwed.

Cârts Tîty

End of the game:

As soon as a player is out of cards the game is over and that player wins. If a player gets out of the game due to an overflow the game continues without that player unless there's only 1 player left.

Optional scoring system:

People can decide to use a scoring system, in which when a player ends the game by getting their hand empty, the other players count 1 point for each cards they have left in their hands. The one who has the least points after an agreed number of rounds will then win the game. Some players decide to make the game end as soon as somebody gets 100 points or more, making the one with the lowest amount of points the winner.

Somebody who gets out of the game by an overflow gets 30 points (if an overflow causes a round to end due to 1 player being left, that player still has to count 1 point for each card left in their hand).

If you play with 4 players or more one may subtract 20 points from their score if they are the only player left when all others are out of the game due to an overflow, and then they don't have to count the cards left in their hand. You cannot get below 0 and when this rule would bring you to a negative score, your score will just end up on 0.

Large number of players:

Normally Cârts Tîty is played with 2,3,4 or 5 players.

It is common that if you have 6 players or more to use 2 decks, and with 12 or more 3 decks and with 18 or more 4 decks and so on.

Copyrights

Copyrights

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I do allow the creation of your own custom deck and to distribute them under your own copyrights and license. When distributing it as a “Pymtheg” deck you are required to apply this original document with it and credit me as the creator of the original game.

I do allow translations of this document into any language, however only the English version will count as “official”. This because certain details can easily get lost in translation, but also because it's undoable for me to keep all versions of this documentation up-to-date all the time. Translators are responsible themselves to keep translations up-to-date. The original English version should always be distributed with the translation.

Just like normal card decks, Pymtheg decks are suitable to be used in other kinds of games. Try to make up some. Think them well through. I won't stop ya. Please refer to Pymtheg if you do. If the game is a variant of Pymtheg the original documentation should be included (and in that case the game should always be freely available).