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Rules of Ovalia

http://ovalia.cazaux.free.fr/

This is a 2-player card game. The goal is to mark points which are obtained by making melds.

Inspired by the rugby sport, the melds correspond to *tries*, 5 points, or *drop-goals*, 3 points. Tries can be transformed to goal 2 more points. There are *line-outs* and *scrums*. Finally, a *red card* one may penalize a player and cancel a card that has just been played.

MATERIAL:

80 cards making 5 suits of 16 cards each. Their colors symbolize the most famous squads of planet Ovalia: Fern (New Zealand's All Blacks), Rooster (France), Wallaby (Australia), Rose (England) and Springbok (South Africa).

In each suit there are 15 cards numbered from 1 to 15, representing the players of a rugby team, and a "*red card*".

The 1s, 2s, 3s and 4s, 5s, 6s bear a very big number. The 4s and 5s represent a small flag. The 9s and 10s are a jersey. The 11s, 12s, 13s, 14s represent a rugby ball. The 15s represent the typical H-shaped goalposts. The Red Cards bear a white symbol over a red ground.

THE GAME:

The game is played in two successive halves. One player is the dealer for the first half-time and the other plays the first card. For the second half-time, the roles are reversed.

Every player is dealt 8 cards. The remains of the deck are placed face down to form the stock.

At their play turn, the players execute the following consecutive actions:

a) **Draw the upper card from the stock**. (Then, the hand is full with 9 cards)

b) If possible, **put down one or more cards on the table to form a meld** (The players are not allowed to put down more than 1 meld per turn)

c) Then, **draw from the stoc**k the same amount of cards that he has put down

It is not allowed to put down a new meld at this time. One must wait until the next turn to play.
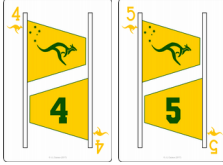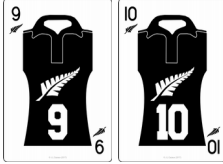
d) Finally, **discard 1 card**. One must always **end his turn with 8 cards** in hand.

The discarded cards are piled face up beside the stock.

When starting the turn, it is permitted to take the card that has just been discarded by the opponent, but only if this allows putting down a meld along with the cards already in hand.

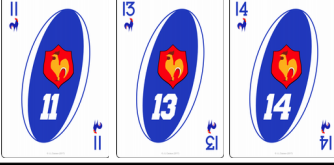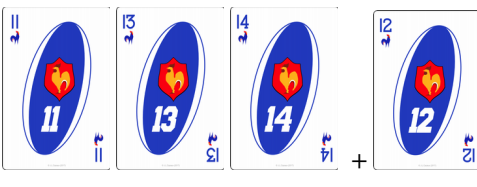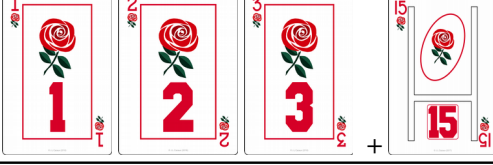## POSSIBLE COMBINATIONS:

The melds reflect the constitution of a rugby squad. Each meld marks points which are like the possible realizations at this sport, by associating cards from a same suit:

Scrum Front Row: complete (1,2,3) counts for **a try (5 points)**	
Scrum Locks: complete (4,5) **wins a line-out** (**2 cards taken from the opponent, see below)**	
Scrum Third Row: complete (6,7,8) counts for **a try (5 points)**	
3 cards from the First and Third Rows can also win **"scrums"** (**3 cards taken in the discard**, see below). *Example : 1-3-7 or 2-6-8*	ou
Halves: **complete Half-Backs (9,10)** counts for a **drop-goal (3 points)**	
Any combination of **3 Three Quarters (among 11,12,13,14)** counts for **a try (5 points)**	
The meld of the **4th Three Quarter** completing the line marks an additional drop-goal (**3 points**). *Example: 11-13-14 mark 5 points ; 11-12-13-14 mark 5+3=8 points*	+
Fullback: **the 15** allows to **convert** the tries (**adding 2 points**)	+
The **Red Card cancels** the meld that the opponent has just declared	

PARTICULAR CASES:

The 4th Three Quarter: it is allowed to complete a Three Quarter line. Putting down the 4th Three Quarter counts as a meld.

It is forbidden to take this card on the opponent's discard.

The Fullback: the 15 can only be put down when the player simultaneously marks a try or if he has already put down a meld at the same suit (try, drop, line-up, scrum) before.

The Fullback allows **converting** the tries of its suit laid down at the same or at the subsequent turns (+2 points per converted tries).

The Fullback cannot convert the tries marked at the preceding turns. It is forbidden to take a Fullback on the opponent's discard.

THE LINE-OUT:

Combination realized by the player who put down a complete Scrum Locks line (4-5). The player draws **2 cards, randomly, from his opponent's hand**.

Then, the player **keeps playing**, putting if possible a new meld.

Finally, he concludes his turn by drawing new cards to fulfill his hand, and he discards a card.

The opponent shall wait for his turn to fulfill his hand.

THE SCRUM:

Combination realized by the player who put down **3 separate cards** from the **First and Third Rows**. *For example (1-3-8) or (2-6-7).*

The player winning a scrum selects up to **3 cards in the discard pile**. These cards must be all of different suits; there is no other restriction. They are shown to the opponent. If less than 3 cards are taken in the discard pile, the player fulfill his hand by drawing cards from the deck, but do not return to the discard pile.

Then, the player **keeps playing**, putting if possible one or several new melds. Finally, he concludes his turn by drawing new cards to fulfill his hand, and he discards a card.

The opponent may **counteract the scrum** by immediately seizing of the 3 laid down cards in order to put down a try (of 1st or 3rd row) or a new scrum himself. The counteracted scrum is lost and its player will have to wait his turn to fulfill his hand. The cards of the counteracted scrum will be discarded on the pile.

Example 1: Player A puts down 1-2-7 Blue. Player B has 6-8 Blue in hand. He seizes the 7 and puts down a try: 6-7-8.

Example 2: Player A puts down 1-2-7 Blue. Player B has 3-6 Blue in hand. He seizes the 7 and puts down a new scrum 3-6-7. Note that Player B could have seized the 1 or the 2 for an identical result.

It is possible to put down one or two cards over a scrum already laid down in order to complete a line and mark a try. This action is only possible if it permits to immediately mark a try. The line within a laid down scrum where only one card is missing cannot be completed by an opponent's discard.

Example 1: Player B has put down the scrum 3-6-7 Blue. He comes to draw 8 Blue. He adds it to his scrum and marks a try: 6-7-8. The 3 stays isolated, available for an eventual future new try. Note that the missing 8 could not have been taken on an opponent's discard.

Example 2: Player A has put down the scrum 1-6-7 Rose. He comes to draw 3 Rose and keeps it in hand because he doesn't have the right to add it to his scrum yet. Later, player B discards 2 Rose. Player A takes it on the

discard pile and puts down 2 and 3 to mark the try: 1-2-3. The 6 and 7 stay available for an eventual future new try.

It is possible to enchain consecutive line-outs or scrums, which consequently permits to keep playing.

Line-outs and scrums do not mark any points.

Remark: scrums can be ignored for beginners discovering OVALIA

RED CARD:

The Red Card is defensive. **It must be played at the right moment when the opponent puts down his meld (try, drop, line-out, scrum) at the same suit. The Red Card cancels this combination.**

The cancelled cards are discarded and the Red Card stays visible on the table.

The player of the Red Card draws two cards from the deck in order to fulfill his hand and plays. The penalized player has to wait for his turn to fulfill his hand and play.

If the Fullback is put down simultaneously with a try which comes to be cancelled by a Red Card, the Fullback is not discarded. It stays on the table will be able to convert eventual future new tries.

It is forbidden to put down a Red Card afterwards, on a meld realized at former turns by the opponent.

It is forbidden to take a Red Card on the opponent's discard.

END OF HALF-TIME, END OF THE GAME:

At the half-time end, the player who draws the last card from the deck plays then counts his remaining cards in hands.

> If he has still 9 cards in hand, he has to discard a last card which must **not be a Fullback or a Red Card**. Then, the turn goes to the opponent.

> If he has 8 cards or less, he keeps the turn.

Then, the players play the **extra-time**: one after one, starting by the one who has the turn (this order is important), the players play a last time, without discard. Then, the half-time is finished.

Practically, the player who has the turn pass or put down a last and only meld which either scores points, or is countered by a Red Card, or keeps going if it is a line-out or a scrum until it eventually scores some points. At this moment, the turn goes to the opponent who also plays a last time.

At the final end of the half-time it may happen that the players have still potential points in hand. They are lost.

Particular case: if the second player put down a scrum which is countered, the first player may have the chance to play again and thus, score points a very last time.

The winner of the game is the player having **the highest score after two half-times**.

COUNTING:

Points are marked all along the game when melds are put down. It is recommended to record the score that evolves all along the game as in a … rugby game.