



Bouken

"Bouken" translates into "adventure" – but that's something the Adventure Planning Service, as the company calls itself in English, didn't feel like this year. "After the accident in Fukushima, we were in shock," Koushi Kondou, the company's game developer, tells us. For this reason, they presented only one new prototype in Essen (besides the MAKE You series that we reported on last year). **BRAVE 50** addresses the accident in Fukushima. Power plant operators, police, fire brigades and emergency services try to put out a fire in a nuclear power plant. Essentially, the object is to pump water into the damaged reactor. What's interesting is the reputation that the different units have among the Japanese population and that manifests itself in a "moral test" that they have to undertake before entering a specific danger zone: For the emergency services, it is only required at the highest danger level, for the power plant operators, even at level 2. It is not certain yet whether the game will ever go on sale. At present, the public's reactions to the game theme – also in Japan – are still being tested. *-kmw/sbw*

Cardhaus

Cardhaus, an American exhibitor, is listed here as the distributor of the English edition of the Japanese game **TANTO CUORE**. In keeping with the game, the fair booth was manned by young, appropriately dressed domestic servants. In addition to the basic game, two expansions have been released in the meantime, which

Appropriately dressed domestic servants at the booth of the TANTO CUORE distributor Cardhaus





existed only in Japanese at the time of the fair, however. But from December, **EXPANDING THE HOUSE** is supposed to be available also in English. Contrary to assertions by the booth staff, the set can also be played independently, without the basic game. What's new are construction cards that give you victory points but are not taken into your own deck. Furthermore, the negative event cards are missing. A release date has not been set yet for the second expansion, **ROMANTIC VACATION**. It will be a complete game, too, and include a new type of card, the reminiscence cards. Meanwhile, **TANTO CUORE** is also available in a Chinese edition, which has not been licensed, though.

-kmw/sbw

Japon Brand

Like **STRING RAILWAY TRANSPORT** (see review on p. 55), **MASTER MERCHANT** was sold out

very quickly as well. The minimalist card game was invented by Seiji Kanai. It makes do with just 40 cards, but is nevertheless able to keep up to four players busy. Ten different character cards are available, face up, at different prices and in different quantities. Each player starts with two cards on hand; he puts them in his personal display, which enables him to buy cards from the table. These cards allow him to buy cards also from other players' displays, or bring other players' cards back into the general display, or.... For monetary transactions, everybody has a special card that is turned or flipped over to indicate the current account balance. As soon as a player has collected a certain number of character cards or accumulated a certain amount of money, the game ends. In fact, **MASTER MERCHANT** is a kind of mini-**DOMINION**, but with a lot of interaction. Let's hope

that another company will take it on board so that this excellent deck-building game will stay in existence.


Besides its featured highlights, Japon Brand offered numerous other games; we look at just a few of them here. Some look to European eyes like offshoots of the **DOMINION** clone **TANTO CUORE**. For instance, **DYNAMITE NURSE RETURNS**, a deck-building game in which scantily dressed nurses have to heal the heroes of a fantasy world of their wounds and injuries that the men sustained in the dungeon. The title of a "Dynamite Nurse" is anything but desirable; it is given to the nurse who has too many patients dying off while under her care.

The events in the games of the **KUNITORI** series, which continues with two new titles this year, offer something more substantial. The players are feudal lords in medieval Japan, gathering (female) troops in the course of the game and also fighting against each other – a deck-building game that can be played individually (Tenka) as well as in teams (Kessen). In the latter, two, four or six participants form two parties that sit opposite each other. Between them, they have a row of "land" cards they are fighting for. **SCHOTTEN-TOTTEN** meets **DOMINION**.

IDOL PROJECT turns us into talent scouts. Even though it looks like a deck-building game, it isn't. Each player runs a company and is in search of the new superstar. The talents under his wing earn

Emergency management training game: **BRAVE 50** by Koushi Kondou





their money with performances, which also generate victory points. However, they want to be paid. And they have preferences that determine what company they turn to. If there is a tie regarding the preferences that the companies offer to the talents, the talent enters into a monastery, since he or she couldn't make a decision! The game ends as soon as one talent performs in "The Dome." **IDOL PROJECT** is available in Japanese only. Most cards are understandable thanks to their symbols, though; and the texts of a few event cards and special rules are explained on a supplementary sheet (translated by Peer Sylvester).

And now to something completely different. **CRYPTIDS TV** is a party game with an electronic timer enclosed. The timer is necessary since each player has one minute to invent a "Cryptid." This is a creature – one determined by a randomly drawn card. For instance, "a creature of bad smell." Each player draws what he pictures on a sheet of paper. Then the sheets are mixed, face down, and dealt out again. And now, everybody comes up with a story about the creature he has received. The subject, again, is determined by a card. For example, "This discovery while doing the laundry? A housewife's report." Again, the player has one minute to tell the story. After that, all players vote on which story was the best – and that story will be shown on TV. After several rounds, there are winners and losers. And in the end, according to the game instructions, "everyone looks at the suggestions that were botched and discusses them."

HYAKUNIN ISSHU is a traditional card game in which players have to correctly continue an initial verse of poems. In **CARDUTA**, this idea has been transferred to quotations from Shakespeare. Twenty-four cards, each of them showing the second half of a quotation, are spread out on the table and players have to pick the correct card when the first half is read out. So you should know Shakespeare in the original language if you want to join in. Actually, the game was first released four years ago; but now, it has been divided into a **TRAGEDY SET** and a **COMEDY SET**.

-kmw/sbw