

CONSPIRACY IN THE MEDIEVAL AGE

# ORIFLAMME

BLUFF AND FIGHTS BETWEEN "REAL FRIENDS"

10↑

**Introduction**

**Oriflamme** is essentially a card game, quick and short, so it is perfect as a filler or to introduce new gamers to our hobby. "Oriflamme" is a French name that was used to identify the King's banner in battles or in the most important ceremonies: this banner was completely red with golden stars and flames, thus its name. At a first glance the game seems very similar to Bruno Faidutti's "Citadels" (personalities with powers, dark setting, etc.) but in practice the two games are very different.

The little box (see Picture 1) contains five decks of ten cards each: each deck is identical and shows some personalities with different powers, but each has its own colour and its back is different from the others. The

remaining components are a few tokens (Influence Points or IP) a tile "First Player" and tile "Directional" that depicts the Oriflamme on a Pike and is used to decide the direction of the actions. All the materials are of good quality and we never had problems in playing.

Each player takes one deck, mix it and discard three cards, keeping in hand the remaining seven. The First Player gets the special tiles and decides the direction of the Oriflamme, right or left: this means that the cards are revealed and applied from right to left or from left to right and it is important to know this because the players will place their cards accordingly.

The situation at the set-up should look like the one that you may see in Picture 2

**The Game**

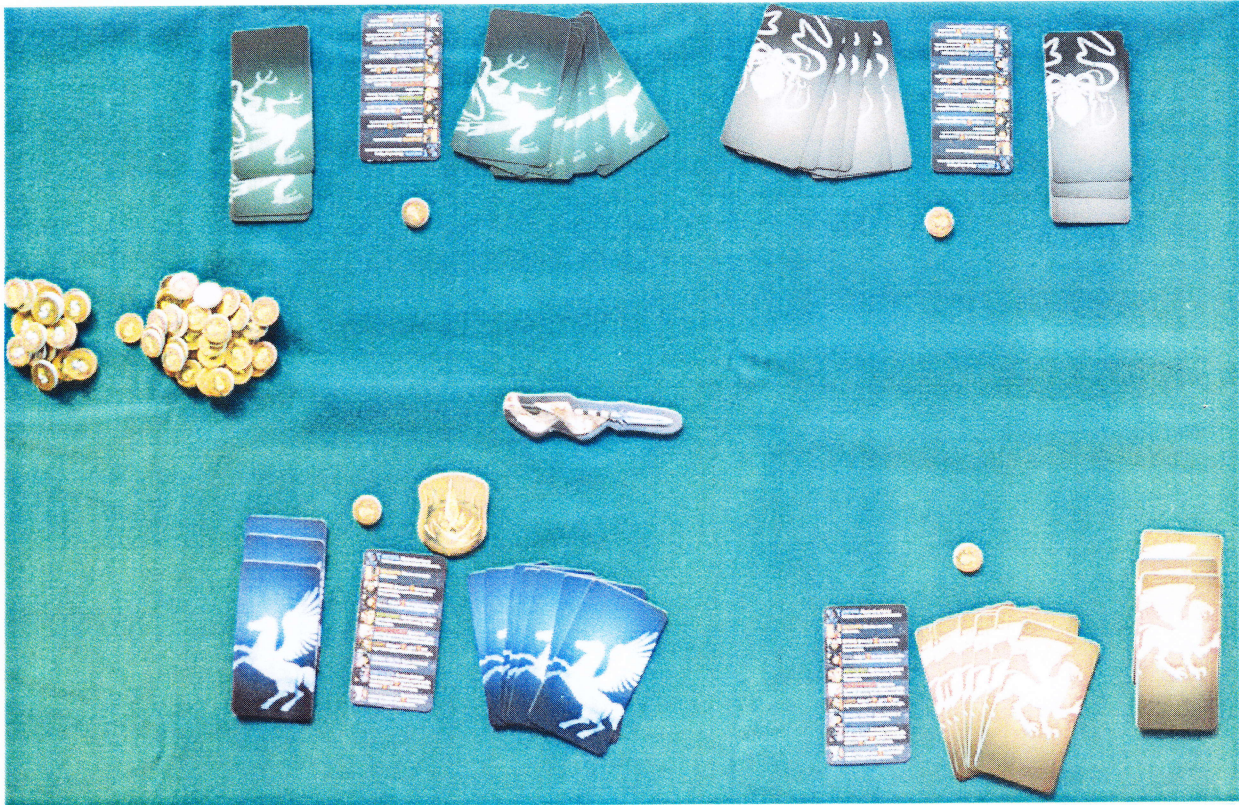
In Phase 1, the first player selects one of his cards and place it (covered) on the table: the others do the same, selecting a card and placing it on the right or on the left of the ones already on the table. When everybody played the first card the game proceeds with phase 2: resolution of the cards. If the Oriflamme points to the right the first card to be decided is the one on the extreme left of the row, otherwise is exactly the contrary.

Pietro Cremona

*A simple and funny card game, to be used as a filler, were bluff and luck are equally important.*

The owner of this card has to decide if he wants to keep it secret (turned down) or reveal it: if he selects option "1" he simply places a token IP on the card and the game proceeds to the following card. If he selects option "2" the card is overturned and its effects are immediately applied, and the owner takes the IP tokens eventually located on that card. When the last card in the row is examined the turn stops and the Oriflamme





is passed to the player immediately on the left of the preceding one. Then the game resumes exactly as before, with each player selecting a new card, adding it to the row and revealing the cards one after one.

After turn six the players discard the seventh card that they still have in hand and

the IP are examined to decide the winner. As you understand the "heart" of the game are the cards and the powers of each personality, so it is time to see their effects (look also at Picture 3):

Archer: the owner may discard the first or last card in the row;

Soldier: the owner discards one of the two adjacent cards;

Lord: immediately take 1 IP, plus 1 IP for each adjacent card of the same colour (Blazon);

Heir: immediately take 2 IP if, and only if, no other Heir is visible on the row;

Spy: steals 1 IP from one of the owners of the adjacent cards;





Murderer: discard any card in the row (together with the Murderer);  
 Faceless: copy the ability of an adjacent "active" (face up) card;  
 Conspiracy: take the double of the IP tokens placed on its back (then discarded Conspiracy);  
 Royal Decree: move any card in any place in the row (then discard the Royal Decree);  
 Ambush: if this card is discarded by another player it gives to 4 IP to the owner, but if it is revealed by the owner it gives only 1 IP to him (and the tokens on its back, as usual);

Probably the best thing to clarify how to use the cards is to make an example with the help of Picture 4.

As you see the Oriflamme is oriented towards the right, so the first card to be decided is on the extreme left of the row. It is Royal Decree and the player used it to move the BLUE card (still covered) from the last position to the third in the row. RED now turns the second card (Conspiracy) that has 2 IP tokens on its back, so the RED player moves in total 2+2 tokens to his reserve and discards the Conspiracy. BLU knows that the third card is a Soldier (of course, as it is one of his cards) and probably will decide to turn it over and to discard the "Faceless" located on his right side. And so on.

It is possible to protect an important card from the opponents' attacks with another one placed on top (same blazon, of course). If the position is attacked only the top card will be discarded leaving the other ready to be used. How to "program" your cards is the central decision of the game and of course this depends on the number and type of cards that you still have in hand and those that are already active on the row (they may use their ability in every turn, until they are attacked and discarded). But remember

that an active card MUST use its power, even if the result is a damage for the owner because no alternative are possible.

In general if you succeed in keeping your cards covered for a few turns you should be rewarded by a good amount of IP tokens, but your opponents will do their best to stop you as soon as possible, so "bluffing" becomes a necessity: image, for example, that one of your opponents decides to attack one of your cards which already has 2 IP tokens, and figure his face when he realizes that you had an "Ambush" there and that you won 4 IP tokens instead of losing points..

The "Spy" is another interesting card: you may place 1-2 tokens on it and later discover it to steal 1 IP per turn to an opponent. Of course, you should try to protect this kind of cards in the first 2-3 rounds (when everybody has a large hand of cards) against the attack on enemy soldiers.

To be last in a turn is very often an advantage as you may decide which card to use and where to place it after having seen what the others did. If, for example, you remark that one of your cards is in great danger you may play in the very first place of the row and then kill the enemy or move your card in a safer place.

Do not forget that your goal is to collect the maximum number of IP tokens so do not mind if someone else attacked you and refrain from ... avenge the affront losing time and cards to counter-attack without gaining any IP. Do not forget that "revenge is a dish to serve cold" and you may simply wait for the good moment.

Oriflamme is not a game for everybody: do not play it with friends that do like to

"exactly program" their games and that do not like "too much luck" or to be attacked (and thus lose those points for which they worked so much): in effect this game offer sudden reversals, mocking looks and bluff and should be played just as a filler to get some laugh. The short playing time (more or less 20 minutes) allows you to use it before a more demanding game or to end an evening at the club with a ... good fight between "real friends". ☑

Pietro Cremona

INFORMATION

**Designer:** Adrien & Axel Hesling  
**Artist:** Tomasz Jedruszek  
**Price:** ca. 13 Euro  
**Publisher:** Studio H / MS Edizioni 2019  
[www.pegasus.de](http://www.pegasus.de)

**PLAYERS:**  
3-5

**AGE:**  
10+

**TIME:**  
20

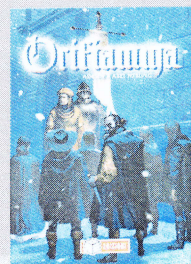
EVALUATION

Card game  
 Users: For families  
 Version: it  
 Rules: de en es fr it  
 In-game text: yes

**Comments:**  
 Very short playing time \* Good interaction among players \* Rules easy to learn and to teach \* High impact of luck

**Compares to:**  
 Games resolving card displays using card effects

**Other editions:**  
 Studio H (en fr), Pegasus Spiele (de), Gen-X Games (es)



**My rating:** ★★★★★