

# Holmgang Duel at Eider

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*Frederik Jensen. 2 players. 10 minutes.*

In *Holmgang: Duel at Eider* two players play out a famous duel from the sagas. One side plays Uffe the Meek of the Angles. To defend his father's kingdom and honour, Uffe faces the prince of the Saxons and their best champion.

The game is essentially rock-paper-scissors but where you draw the actions from a single shared deck of 20 cards. Players simultaneously choose cards for their fighters, then reveal and resolve in order to attack, defend, and move around on the seven space arena.

Players quickly learn that they can deduce a lot about what the opponent might play based on the cards on their hand and the cards already played. Bluffing and trash talk ensures a fast and fun play experience. Games tend to get to a point where the next blow could win the game for either player.

*Holmgang* is quick to learn. Playing with new players is fun as these often play more unpredictably. There is enough luck in the game that anyone can win and enough skill that one will keep playing to get

better at the game. Once players have played a couple of games, games tend to take longer as players discover there is a lot to deduce. But the bluffing and luck make sure it doesn't end in AP. *Holmgang* plays in 10 minutes.

While you should think that the game is not balanced; that Uffe is at a disadvantage, experience shows that the odds are quite even.

*Holmgang* exists in prototypes close to its final form. I have play tested extensively both with family members and friends. I haven't done any blind tests yet and so far I have always been present to teach the game to new players. I am still honing the rules on a few dark corners of the game to make sure it is as fun as it can be. A print-and-play edition is available at <https://thoughtfuldane.com/games/holmgang-duel-at-eider/>.

I have sent pitches to two publishers but haven't heard anything back. I would love to see this game available with five nice minis in gift shops in museums in Jutland and northern Germany. At the same time it is a niche game.

It will be great fun to run a tournament of *Holmgang* at Fastaval 2026. I expect the game to reach 100% of the segment of Fastaval board game players named Uffe.