

## *Fair Go*

*Reviewed by Dianne Bates*

Aussie educator Andrea Thompson has created a fun way to help the next generation understand the importance of social responsibility in the new family board game, *Fair Go*. I've just played *Fair Go* for the first time and it's obvious to me that adult players or families with children in particular would have loads of fun playing this strategy game which is for two to six players from ages eight and up.

Like the time-honoured *Monopoly*, players receive money at the start of the game and then have opportunities to purchase various properties – or industries -- as they throw dice and progress around the board. The thirteen industries are as diverse as Rural, Banking, Telco, IT, Transport and Manufacturing. Instead of Monopoly's Jail, there is a Flood Zone on a corner square where one misses two turns, and Market Places and a Charity Shop on the other corners.

This Australian-made game has many new twists. The outcome rests on a player's ability to help others reach their potential, giving them a 'fair go' and ensuring that players buy their products. For example, acquiring a *Stand of Success* signifies that a player has earned a reputation in the community for giving everyone a 'Fair Go.' The trick of the game is not how much money or property cards a player owns, but deciding when to make the vital purchase of four rings plus upgrade to one's Stand of Success.

Landing on Fair Go squares as one moves around the board results in players paying bonuses or forfeitures. A player might receive money -- a Fair Go (FG) 1,000 – for finding a cure for cancer, or they might win a most helpful volunteer award, choosing from collecting a Stand of Success for free or receiving FG 3,000. On the other hand, the player might have 'made some poor business decisions' and are thus required to pay half of their money to the Fair Go Box (the banker); similarly they might have to pay FG 150 for exercises classes. When players land on the Flood Zone Space, they must miss two turns in order to help farmers with emergency flood relief. So much rests on the throw of the dice!

Although *Fair Go* needs careful maneuvering in the early stages to learn and negotiate its many rules, this is a clever game that covers many bases, aiming to be entertaining; to give players an understanding of buying and selling in the business

world, and to start players along the road to being good and responsible members of their community. It is an invaluable lesson for young players who live in a materialistic world to see that it is possible to gain a reputation for philanthropy and social justice, something they can never learn playing computer games. As the game is played, parents can talk to their children about society and their roles and responsibilities in it as they grow into adulthood.

There are many strategies to the game so players must constantly be tactically aware. If they don't have negotiation skills before they play, *Fair Go* provides them with a perfect opportunity to learn them, while having fun at the same time. There is also an element of luck involved so that the younger, and perhaps less skilled players, can still hold their own.

*Fair Go* is an attractively presented board game. The board itself is brightly coloured and sturdy enough to withstand the wear and tear of many a game, perhaps over several years. Once the rules are learnt (and they are numerous, as with any other complex and absorbing game), *Fair Go* is sure to become a family favourite.

Fortunately, there is a very well-written and user-friendly rule book, which clearly explains all facets of the game. I'd suggest for maximum enjoyment that someone – perhaps an adult – should acquaint themselves thoroughly with the rules before gathering the family around to play.

*Fair Go* can be purchased directly from the distributor at a reasonable cost of \$49.95, which includes free postage to Australia, New Zealand, or the United States. For further details contact: [fairgogame@hotmail.com](mailto:fairgogame@hotmail.com)