At the young age of 8, I invented my first game. I named it CARDO.

Article by Fred Horn

CARDO and its American counterpart...

I was doodling around with some decks of cards with, in my mind, a rough idea for using them for a Domino-like ‘laying game.’ Cutting the cards into ‘halves’ provided me with something that I could use for play.

Unfortunately for me, I wanted square playing pieces for my game. I found by cutting a card through its middle its result was a rectangle and not my wished for ‘square.’ But then I remembered a pack of cards my father had stored somewhere in a locker. Finding these ‘oblong’ cards gave me the exact shape what I wanted!

So that evening, I proudly showed my father my game invention and the nice playing pieces I made from his pack of cards. He really didn’t know if he should get real angry (I had damaged an antiquarian deck of cards worth a lot of money) or be proud with a son who had invented a nice game. This prototype has been lost during our many moves to other houses, but I still own two others.

Playing pieces for CARDO published by XIN DAO.
A very long time thereafter I was dealing with a Dutch firm on a few of my games that could be used for some of their commercial activities selling them to firms for PR use. One of the games they liked very much was my old game of CARDÓ, but only in a simpler version. Thus, we skipped the lower numbers and only took the higher SKAT numbers and figures. The game was published as such in 2005 by the firm XIN DAO.

In August 2021, I was searching the Internet for games for my collection, now part of the Spellenlab of the High School VIVES in Bruges Belgium, when I stumbled upon an American game nearly identical to my invention of 1953, named RO-KARD.

The printed rules for my game CARDÓ.

Not much information was available for this game. It appears to be from the 1980s and the inventor is noted as Clinton.

It is amazing the same type of game is invented by two different people in two countries far away from each other, and in between the two, such a long ‘timespan’!

Of course this took my interest so can anyone tell me more about the game of RO-KARD?