

Great Finds!

Professor Frederik Schuh and his Puzzle-Game

UNICUM

Article by Fred Horn

In all the publications referencing Frederik Schuh only one game has been mentioned as a published game: *RATIO* or “*The Soldiers Game*” (as it was known in France) or “*De Reus en de 3 Dwerfen*” (The Giant and the 3 Dwarfs) as the inventor named it in his 1943 book.

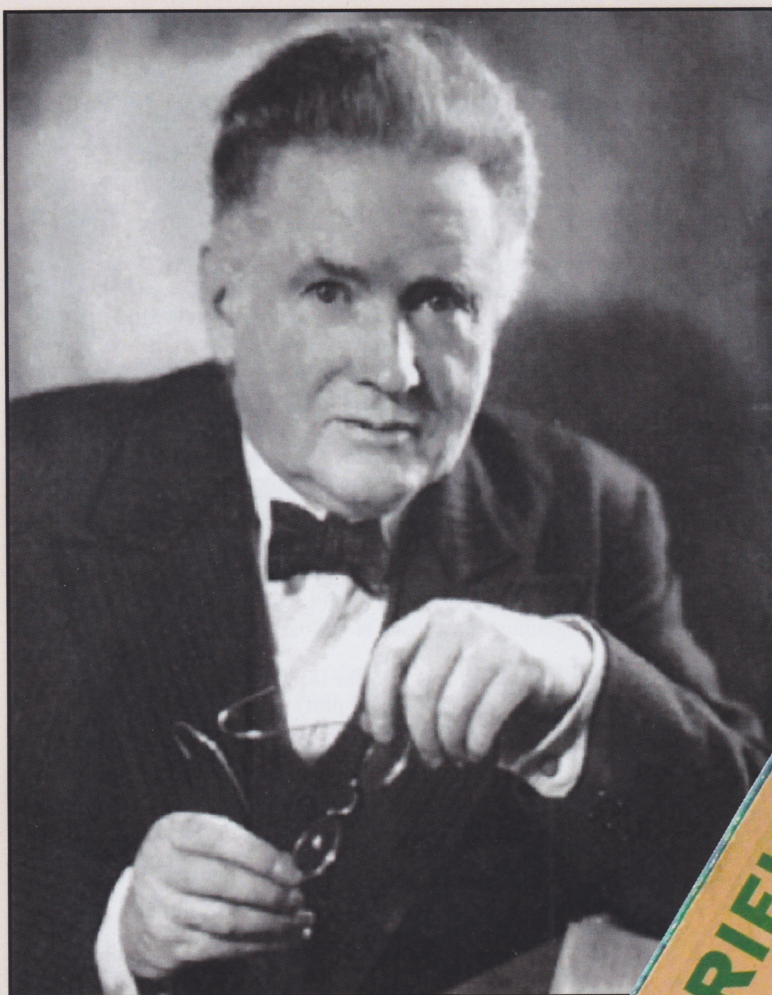
Note: Schuh's game RATIO was previously featured in the 2017 Fall AGPI Quarterly (Vol. 1 No. 3.)

Later in 2017 I was made aware of a puzzle-game called *UNICUM* which turned out to be published in the year 1946. As uncovered by Rob van Linden, it was a puzzle and domino game invented by Schuh.

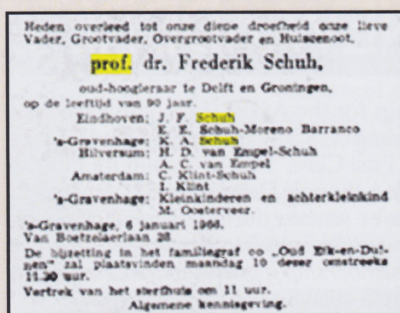
As far as we know its existence is really an “unicum” = “unique (thing)” for we could not find another example or even a mention of the publication of the game.

Unique Triangle Puzzle:
GamesLab

102 solution options.
Also a board game.



Mathematician and author Professor Frederik Schuh



At left: Obituary notice of Frederik Schuh:
Today, to our deep sadness, our dear Father,
Grandfather, Greatgrandfather passed away

The rules for the “Domino” game(s) are simple:



Game rules for “Domino”

Similar play as in dominoes (with the red and green dots/pips) always touching red to red and green to green. The black dots at the outside, under, and above are not used in the game.

Game rules for making “Five” and its multiples

Again, the black pips are not used in the game. The “pot” must contain around 150 fiches (chips), so all participants put in their share.

(N.B. All triangle playing pieces are dealt out between the players)
The one receiving the triangle piece containing all sixes starts (F.H.—lays the playing piece down in the middle of the table. Then if possible, having the right “numbers” continues) by laying down a green 4 to a green

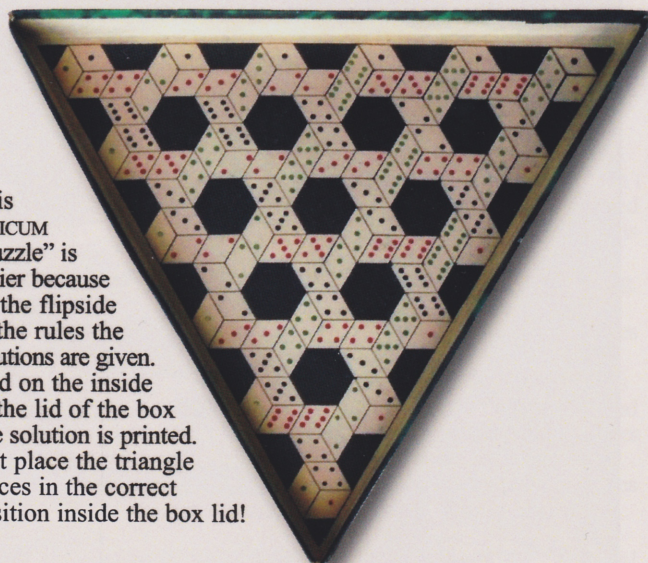
6, and a red 4 to a red 6 scoring 20 and winning 4 fiches out of the ‘pot.’ That is: 4 green adjacent to 6 green = 10, also on the outside 6 red to 4 red = 10. To add points, the dots must be of the same color.

When a player is not able to place a triangle piece to add up to a multiple of 5, he or she must pass and pay two fiches into the ‘pot.’

The first one to play all their pieces or is able to block the possibility of other players (F.H.—to lay down further triangles) wins. The victor gets from all the other players 1 fiche for each 5 pips they still possess.

N.B. These rules are not so clear as you should have expected from Mr. Schuh!

This UNICUM “puzzle” is easier because on the flipside of the rules the solutions are given. And on the inside of the lid of the box one solution is printed. Just place the triangle pieces in the correct position inside the box lid!



Deze tabellen geven de omtrekken aan in de driehoek des reeds deponde kleuren en getallen tegen elkaar.

Eerste groep						Tweede groep						Derde groep					
R	G	Z	R	G	Z	R	G	Z	R	G	Z	R	G	Z	R	G	Z
1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1
3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2
4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3
5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4
6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5

These tables indicate the perimeters, so in the triangle the same colors and numbers always go against each other.

Who was Frederick Schuh?

Frederik Schuh was a very prolific writer of textbooks on mathematics and mechanics. In his lifetime he produced more than 30 titles. He was also an editor and/or subscriber for a large number of magazines on the subject in the Netherlands.

For example, as early as 1913, he started publishing and in that year founded “*Nieuw tijdschrift voor Wiskunde*” (“*New Magazine on Math*”). Besides delivering ten articles, each year he detailed solutions for the examinations of the teachers’ training.

In that respect he did not spare the authors his criticism of the phrasing of the questions. Often, he called a question “more of a puzzle than a questionnaire!”

He was born on February 7, 1875 in Amsterdam; was married and had two sons and two daughters. He died in The Hague on January 6, 1966.

He studied at the H.B.S. in Amsterdam, where he received a golden award for his answer in a mathematical contest. Going to his hometown university, he achieved “cum laude” in 1905.

Becoming a teacher in Apeldoorn and Sneek, he soon was working at the Groningen University. In 1907 he was inaugurated as Professor at the “Technische Hoogeschool” (Technical University) at Delft until given accorded emeritus status in 1945.

In his private life Schuh was not a “dull” person. Many anecdotes exist about his “wild times,” not sparing the booze and also his fondness for women!

AGPI