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# Gamer scores touchdown

*Players learn the rules, some math, make a 'touchdown'*

NEWPORT - Sports, he knew, but games were new to Jeff Spelman.

In March, the Newport resident set out to create a baseball card game for his two older sons, then 7 and 4.

It was supposed to be a way to spend time with the boys and get them interested in sports cards.

By Nov. 1, he had 8,000 decks of Quick Count Football, a card game that is based on the rules of football. In two months, Spelman has sold almost 2,000 decks, which were produced by the Norwood-based United States Playing Card Co.

"I've never done any of this before," said Spelman, who grew up in Reading - the same suburb where Uno was invented. "I had no track record. We were very persistent with the local retailers."

Spelman's background is in media relations for college football teams. In 1991, he switched sports and started Team One, a company that organized baseball showcases for scouts and the country's top high school players.

Spelman sold his business last year, and before he created Quick Count, he was writing two books and weighing his next career move.

Mostly, though, he was enjoying spending time with his wife, Michelle, and three sons, after spending more than 120 nights on the road last year. Spelman, 41, quickly learned that Pokemon cards had trumped the stat-based football and baseball cards of his generation.

The baseball game became football, and after 20-30 changes, a two-month hiatus and countless practice games, he got serious about getting the game on store shelves, with plenty of help from friends and family.

He wanted a game that would teach math as well as sports, so to earn 7 points for a "touchdown," players must tally 100 yards by matching pass-catch cards or picking up run cards with varied values.

The game - which requires no previous knowledge of football - is now carried in 16 stores across Northern Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati, on eBay and at Spelman's Web site, quickcountfootball.blogspot.com. In 2008, Spelman is expanding his sales area and pursuing professional and collegiate licensing deals.

The card game doesn't take up much space on shelves and made a great stocking stuffer, which Spelman said helped convince retailers to give him a chance. It takes just 25 to 30 minutes to play four quarters (four times through the deck), and with a \$7.99 retail price, it's a great impulse purchase to have at the registers.

And, he says, it would be a great diversion during Super Bowl or game-day parties.

"I meant for this game to bring families together," said Spelman. "That was the whole intention of this game."

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Jeff Spelman demonstrates Quick Count Football, a card game he invented to teach about math and football.