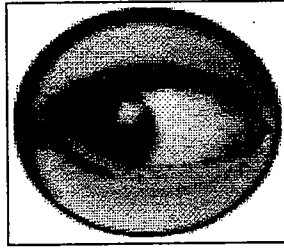


The following article was written by Dan Barlow, author of "Cribbage For Experts"



## PEGGING POINTERS

### #5

A good player occasionally decides which card to play based on suit rather than denomination. Say you're playing against me, and I lead a King. You play a 7 for 17, my Queen makes the count 27, and you score 31 for two with your four. Now I lead a Jack. You must play either the 3 of clubs or the 2 of hearts. If all three of my cards are hearts, you would play the 2. You suspect that I have a flush and if I do, I can't possibly pair your 2. If all three of my cards are clubs, you would play the 3, again fearing I have the flush.

A related strategy I first encountered in DeLynn Colvert's fine book, Play Winning Cribbage, could help you gain a few holes every now and then. When you hold three cards of the same suit, try to play them first. Your opponent may become so concerned with your "flush" that he/she makes the wrong play. Here are two examples:

1) You're playing a tough competitor. You hold a 9-10-J of spades and the 10 of clubs. You lead off with a 10, making sure that it's the 10 of spades. Opponent scores 15-2, you play the 9, and opponent scores 31-2 with a 7. Now you lead the Jack. Opponent's last two cards are 6-9 of diamonds. Normally, he would play the 6 to prevent you from scoring a run, and he may well do that anyway; but with those three spades staring at him, you know he's at least thinking flush. And he knows you can't peg on his 9 if you have a flush. He's worried that you have the 6 of spades. He squirms in his seat, smokes a couple of cigarettes, and plays...THE 9! The flush fake claims another victim. Had you led the 10 of clubs, there would have been little or no chance of the opponent's giving you those three holes.

2) You're playing another strong opponent, which is nothing to worry about normally, but this opponent is unusually sharp this match. Opponent leads an 8, you score 15-2, his 7 pairs you, and you make the count 30 with an 8. He says go, and your Ace gets you 2 holes. Opponent must lead from 7-9 of clubs. He notices that all three of your cards are diamonds. He knows you can't peg on his 7 if you have a flush, but that you COULD peg on his 9. Perspiration is pouring down the sides of his face. Finally he plays...THE 7! Your card is the 8 of spades! Flush fake! Two Hall of Famers in one Tournament! You may not win, but at least you have something to tell the grandchildren.

Faking a flush can backfire. If your fourth card in Example 1 had been the 6 of hearts and your flush fake convinced opponent to play the 9 rather than the 6, you lost two holes. How do you know when to fake the flush and when not to? You probably don't, unless you have x-ray vision. But go ahead and

fake those flushes, because in the long run, the more often you convince your opponent that you have something you don't have, and the more often you give him/her something extra to worry about, the more often he/she will make the mistake that gives you the holes that win you the game that qualifies you for the finals of the tournament you were destined to win from the very beginning.



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