

SUPPLEMENT - LESSON #4
DEALER RESPONSE TO OPENING LEAD

<u>OPENING LEAD</u>	<u>BEST RESPONSE</u>	<u>WORST RESPONSE</u>
Ace (1)	5, 9, 8, 6, 10	A, 7, 2, 3, 4

If ace is led, it often suggests the presence of other small cards. A ten-point drop on the small card lead often results in an unanswered 15-2. If you cannot play a 5, 9, 8, or 6, play ten-point card. With the drop of the ten-point card you avoid any run possibilities, fifteen for four situations for sure, or pairs royal (six points for triples). Don't pair or set up run situations unless you are desperate for points and board position suggests you've got to take pegs.

2	5, 8, 7, 6, 9, 10	A, 2, 3, 4
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This lead also suggests the presence of other small cards. Dealer often gets chance for 15-2 with play of preferred card of lower rank. The ten point card is preferable to those worst responses although often will result in 15-2 for the non-dealer. The advantage of the ten point play is that it keeps you away from sequences or possible triples for six pegs.

3	7, 8, 9, 10	A, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
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This lead suggests that the non-dealer would like you to pair or pay the ten point card so that an unanswered 15-2 can be gained. Note that the ten-point card is preferable to cards with rank from 1-6. Remember the trey is the key connector among the small cards.

4	9, 8, 7, 10	A, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
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This is the best lead that can be made by the non-dealer and is the most difficult to defend without setting up pegging opportunities for non-dealer. Dealer play of 1-2-3 creates either run possibilities or fifteen-for-two possibilities. The five or six played creates sequences as well as fifteen-two options. If the 9, 8, 7 not available, the ten-point drop is preferable. Although pairing an opening lead is not generally considered a good thing to do, it is safer to pair the four than other opening leads. Board position should determine the action taken.

5	1, 2, 8, 9, 10-pointer	3, 4, 5, 6, 7
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Assume that the non-dealer has a lot of fives or one five with three different ten-point cards. In the latter case, it is an enticed play and desired that you take fifteen with a ten-point card. In this case, the non-dealer pairs your ten-point card and gains two peg points which are not otherwise possible. Seems a bit unwise to pair this lead except in unusual situations and playing a ten-point card on it may be the best approach possible. In many cases, it is preferable to ignore the fifteen-two possibility entirely.

<u>OPENING LEAD</u>	<u>BEST RESPONSE</u>	<u>WORST RESPONSE</u>
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6	9, 10-pointer	4, 5, 6, 7, 8
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Very likely that non dealer has other middle cards. Dumping the nine and pegging fifteen-two is the dealer's best option. Playing a ten-point card so that count is over fifteen is next best. Use Queen or King to do this as commonly held hand is 6-9-10-J. Unless desperate for points, don't play into a run.

7	ten-pointer, 3, 2, A, 8, 9	4, 5, 6, 7
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Be cautious with putting the 8 or nine on this lead as non-dealer will seldom lead a seven unless other middle cards are present. The seven will be often led from that middle-card pair. Putting the count at 17 is often the best play by the dealer. Of the small cards, the trey is preferable since it is more likely non-dealer will have a 6 or another seven than a five spot. Also if non dealer has a small card with seven, the ace is most likely followed by a deuce. Remember the seven is the key connector among the middle cards.

8	K- Q- J, 3, 2, 4, 5, A, 7, 6	8, 9, 10
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Putting the count over fifteen with the play of the J-Q-K is often the best choice. Strong likelihood that non-dealer has other middle cards. If that's not possible, the play of the 3, 2, 4, 5, or A are strong plays. Non-dealer would prefer to lead a small card rather than the eight spot. The eight is often lead from the middle-card pair. Avoid the 8, 9, or 10. Of those three, the ten is best of the worst.

9	6, Q, K, A, 2, 4, 5	9, 3, 8, 7, 10, J
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Score the fifteen-two as first choice. Not likely that non dealer will lead the nine if holding a six. A nine is seldom led unless in part of a pair. Most would agree that a single nine is the poorest lead in cribbage. It's possible depending on board position and composition of the dealer hand that a seven play on that lead is preferable to other choices.

10	5, 4, 7, K, A, 2, 3,	10, 9, J, 8, Q, 6
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The lead of a ten-point card indicates better leads not available. Your best option if holding a five may be to take the fifteen. If holding a five/six, you may wish to drop the six to gain the 31-for-two at end of play. If desperate for pegs, you may go for both. If you are unable to score fifteen, put the count beyond. Be wary of the play of the six on this lead unless you also have the five as it will often give your opponent the 31-for-two with a five spot. Don't forget the importance of four-play. Remember there is strong possibility that non-dealer does not have small cards or the ten-card would not likely be the choice for openers.

<u>OPENING LEAD</u>	<u>BEST RESPONSE</u>	<u>WORST RESPONSE</u>
J	5, 4, 7, 8, A, 2, 3	J, 10, Q, 9, K, 6

Same as above and remember play of K may lead to a sequence of three. Since jack is key connector among ten-point cards, the odds are extremely high that player has other ten-pointers.

Q	5, 4, 7, 8, 9, A, 2, 3	Q, J, K, 10, 6
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Same rationale as for other ten-point cards. Take the fifteen, engage in four-play, put the count beyond fifteen, or drop a small card.

K	5, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, A, 2, 3	K, Q, J, 6
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This is the poorest leader the non-dealer can make unless leading from a pair or sleeper card. The lead of the king puts no pressure on the dealer and gives the dealer opportunity to play most any card in hand.

REMEMBER TO AVOID PAIRING UNLESS RELATIVELY SAFE. THE OPENING LEAD IS A BIASED OFFERING. IT IS PREFERABLE TO TAKE FIFTEEN-FOR TWO RATHER THAN PAIR IN NEARLY ALL CASES. THERE ARE A FEW EXCEPTIONS. AVOID PLAYING INTO RUNS UNLESS BOARD POSITION AND THE COMPOSITION OF YOUR HAND SUGGESTS AN ADVANTAGE. HOLD YOUR OPPONENT TO THOSE PEG POINTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED (GO OR LAST CARD).