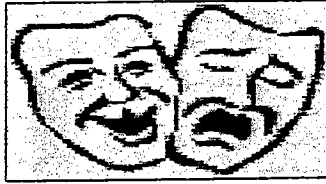


5-9



THE MAGIC ELEVEN

#2

Cards that total eleven are especially important in Pegging. The 5-6, 7-4, 8-3, 9-2, and "ten-card"-Ace combinations aid offensively and defensively in Pegging. These eleven combinations are especially important when you need a strong defense. When Jake needs a couple of peg points to win the game, make every effort to keep a "Magic Eleven". The reasons are obvious. Sixteen "ten" cards (combined with 5's) are one of the most common hands held. And since 5's are rarely led in Pegging, the "ten" cards are played first. The "Magic Eleven" easily scores thirty-one... shutting out Jake, and scoring for you. If you are playing desperation defense and don't have two cards totaling eleven, try to keep three cards that total eleven. For example, 5-3-3, 9-Ace-Ace, 8-2-Ace, 7-2-2, 6-3-2. It's amazing how often this "eleven" defense works.

Even if defense is not of prime importance, when studying your six cards and an obvious discard is tough to figure, base your decision on the "Magic Eleven". Keep cards that total eleven. Your score in pegging will improve.

And your defense will improve! An example of a tough hand to discard: Ace-2-6-9-Jack-King (your crib). Discard the Jack and King instead of the 6-9. Even though the Jack and King, combined with the Ace, adds to Eleven, the 9-2 combination is preferable. Since the "Magic Eleven" is especially designed to stop "ten" leads, your Jack and King, combined with the Ace, are not nearly as effective as the 9-2. If Jake plays a 10 or Jack first, play your 2. But if Jake plays a Queen or King first, play your 9.

This is obvious if you think it out. A 9 played on a Jack or 10 lead gives Jake the opportunity to score a three-card run. Playing the 2 on his lead gives Jake a chance for a "fifteen-two" play, but this is the least risky of the two alternatives. However, play your 9 on the Queen or King lead as there is no risk of a three-card run.

Another example: Ace-2-6-Jack-Queen-King (opponent's crib). Discard the 2-6, keeping the "eleven" combinations intact. And the odds for hitting the Starter card for maximum remain the same, whether you hold the Ace or 2 with the Jack-Queen-King. Holding the Ace, eight cards will give you a nine-point hand (4-4-4-4-5-5-5-5). Holding the 2, again eight cards will give you a nine-point hand (3-3-3-3-5-5-5-5). Holding the Ace will give you that little extra edge in Pegging.



By DeLynn Colvert, author of, "PLAY WINNING CRIBBAGE"



"SLEEPER" CARDS

#1

For every offense, there is a defense. Knowing that Jake (opponent) will be analyzing your hand after taking a look at your first card, lead your "sleeper" card. A "sleeper" is a card that is a mismatch in a good cribbage hand. For example, in a 7-jack-queen-king hand, the 7 is a "sleeper". Lead the 7. Camouflage your hand as long as possible. Make Jake guess which side of a sequence your third or fourth card falls on. For example, you are holding a 10-10-jack-queen. Don't play the 10, then the queen, as the void between the 10 and the queen makes the jack in your hand obvious. Play the jack. Jake may wrongly surmise you are holding a 9. Conversely, if you are holding a poor hand, by purposely leaving a void, Jake may wrongly surmise you're holding the card in the void. This deception makes your odds a little better of scoring on Jake's subsequent plays.

If you're playing offense (playing on) and want to pair as much as possible, lead from the end of a sequence of four cards. For example, the 9-10-jack-queen should begin with the 9 lead. A good possibility exists of a queen pair with the 9 lead, but quickly diminishes with the 10 lead, and practically disappears with the jack lead. In addition, this play cuts down on the possibility of Jake scoring the "31" followup if he happens to have a 6 for 15-2. You follow with the dumped jack for 25. Since a 6 has already been played, the odds are lessened for Jake to follow with another 6 for 31. In this case, Jake may be forced to play a 5 for 30 and a go. This makes your following 10 lead that much safer. In this case, dumping the jack with your second card creates a 9-void-jack, but the lone jack is more of a liability than exposing a probable 10.



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