



## THE "TWENTY-SIX THEORY" (Con't) #13

But getting back to the average games, the "Twenty-Six Theory" will give you the 6% edge playing an expert...and a much greater edge against the average player. Against a beginner, it's downright devastating, with edges up to 50% or more (winning 75 of 100 games) not uncommon.

Let's begin a game with you being the non-dealer. Your objective is to speed up the game, to play offense...to gain those seven points over average to give you the advantage on the ninth deal.

Being the non-dealer, you, of course, discard to the dealer's crib on the first deal. Contrary to what was taught earlier in this book ("Beginning Cribbage"), don't be overly concerned with balking the crib. Hold your hand to score maximum count...even at the expense of giving Uncle Jake a good crib. If Jake does get a high-scoring crib on the first deal, he still must make up 17 tough points over average to count first and win on the eighth hand (the dealer stands at 94 after seven average hands, and with first count on the eighth hand, scores an average of 10 points, and will be at 104 points...17 points short of winning the game).

After discarding, and holding cards to form maximum count, begin pegging by leading a card that will entice a score, and allow you to retaliate with a score. Even if it means risking a pairs royal...or coming out on the short end of a run, SCORE! Take every pair, every run, every "15-2" possible!

Getting back to Lord Kelvin and the example of the 4-5-queen-king. The king is led! Why? Because the most likely card held by Jake will be a 5. The least likely "ten" card held by Jake will be a king. By leading the king, your chances of scoring are best. You hope to entice a 5 from Jake for "15-2" and then you counter with your 5 for a pair and two points. Even if Jake defies the odds and has the third 5 for pairs royal, running the count to "25," your 4 will probably gain the "go". You have scored three badly needed points...and even if Jake had the third 5, and pegged eight points on the exchange, he is still far short of the 17 he needs to gain to win the game with first count on the eighth hand (if the game progresses approximately average.)

Leading the 4 from the 4-5-queen-king may draw a king or queen that you could pair for two points, running the count to "24," without much chance of a follow-up for "31" or a "go." But the odds are for a lower peg score, resulting in you NOT picking up many of those seven points (-7) over average you need to gain the advantage. **ON THE FIRST HAND AS THE NON-DEALER PLAY THE CARD THAT WILL RESULT IN THE MOST PEG POINTS...REGARDLESS OF THE NUMBER OF PEGS YOUR OPPONENT SCORES!**