

FROM THE THEORY OF 26 TO CRITICAL POSITION ZONES

Much has been written about the theory of 26 and Delynn Colvert has authored "Play Winning Cribbage", considered by most to be the best book available on cribbage strategies. He has successfully demonstrated the merits of those tactics and has become the highest ranked cribbage player in the world.

A step beyond the theory of 26 is where we are headed in this class. That theory is based on mathematical probabilities that existed in 1979. The first edition of the book was actually published in 1980. Players of 2000 have sharpened their skills and this book has been a major factor. Crib size is slightly smaller. Dealer hand score is substantially lower since dealer attempts to put cards to crib worth two points value as minimum, and peg points are slightly less as most players have learned to avoid pegging traps, etc.

Let's review the basis premises of the Theory of 26 before moving on:

Non dealer averages 9-10 points; dealer averages 16-17 points for combined total of 26 points.

Dealer advantage is an extra crib, an extra hand for pegging as dealer, and first count on final hand of game. Remember a high percentage of games end on the even deals (8,10, 12 deals) and dealer of first hand counts first on all even deals.

Winning the opening deal provides a 15-20% advantage.

Strategy for non-dealer is to play offensively. Keep for maximum hand potential on opening deal and take pegs. The object is to count out on deal nine with first count.

Strategy for dealer is to play defensively. Slow game down so that first count on tenth deal wins the game.

Dealer does not have a problem on opening hand unless hand is of two points or less, poor discard to crib, and no help from cut for hand or crib discard.

If you use this system, it is important to remember par holes for dealer and non-dealer in order to effectively assess board position during the course of game.

90%+ of all games played will end on deals 8, 9, or 10!!