

**SPOONEYE!** First documented as "Thirty-Fours" in a 1571 British list of injunctions, the modern form of the game developed aboard pirate ships sailing in the Caribbean in the late 17th century. The game's most notorious enthusiast was none other than the ruthless pirate Spooneye, who had a spoon in the place of a lost hand due to a fondness for soups, and who, owing to extreme myopia in one eye (the right, it is believed), would often cover the bad eye with his spoon-hand in order to focus. During the infamous double mutiny fad of the 1690s, (itself immortalized in the game, as well as numerous ballads,) Spooneye learned of Thirty-Fours from the crew formerly belonging to his mortal enemy, the nefarious Danish privateer Weirbeard. Legend has it that the most powerful card in the game, the Nine, or 'Spooneye', originated when Spooneye was engaged in a game with his ship's new cook (name unknown). Frustrated at his own poor performance, Spooneye played a Nine—his favorite card, due to the resemblance—and then grabbed one of the cook's cards and placed it on his side of the table. Justifiably angry, the cook argued that this was not part of the rules: in the original Thirty-Fours, Nines grant no special privilege. Spooneye, in response, leaped out of his chair and gouged out the unfortunate cook's left eye with his mighty spoon-hand. Most accounts suggest that the cook was keelhailed after the game; some (possibly apocryphal) accounts suggest that it was this cook who later became the despised buccaneer Dishey. In either event, we can assume that Spooneye won the game, which has borne his name, and his new rule, ever since. The game subsequently spread to the mainland, and maintained a modest following until the middle of the 18th century, when Whist's sudden rise in popularity and social cache caused the game to fall out of favor with all but the most provincial stratas of society. A brief revival of interest, mainly among women of ill repute, is documented as occurring in the 1840s, when the game was imported to America via profiteers importing illegal merchandise into New Orleans. The revival had completely waned by the 1860s, however, and in this day and age, with such technological marvels as the moving picture show, the broadcast television variety program, and the long-playing phonograph record capturing the public's fancy, interest is almost entirely confined to inmates, invalids, and the otherwise socially incapable.

From "Pirates: An Unruly History," by Herbert Zim, Farrour  
& Strauss. New York, New York, 1953.

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# The Deal

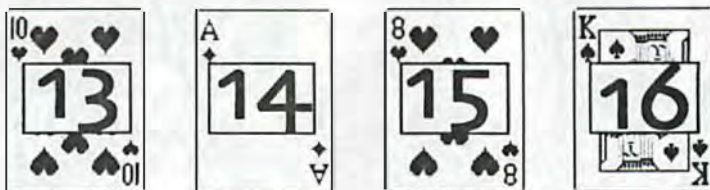
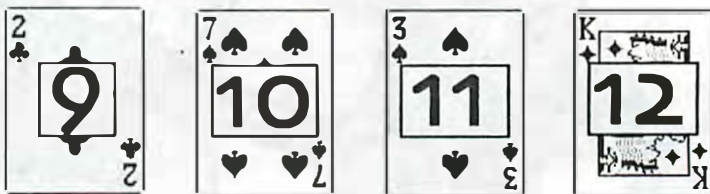
At the start of the first game, cut for deal. Lower card deals, with the deal alternating each game thereafter.

Matey then deals out the cards in the order shown below:

Captain's Hand



Captain's Masts



Matey's Masts



Matey's Hand

In Spooney!, Aces are always considered low.

The non-dealer is known as *Captain*, and the dealer is known as *Matey*.

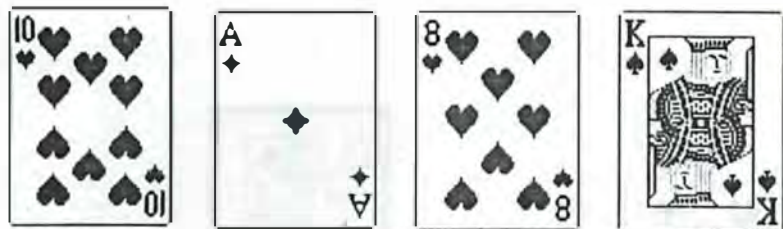
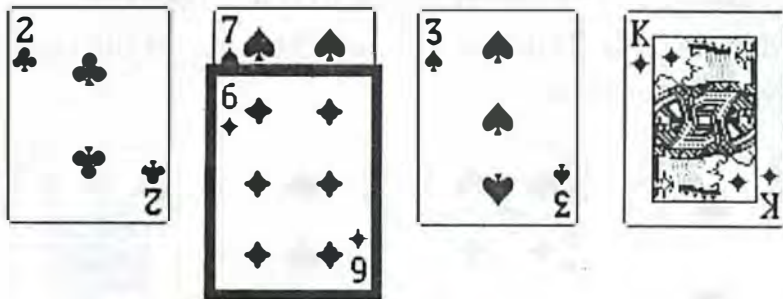
The eight columns on which players will play their cards are known as *masts*.

If you're *Captain*, make sure not to pick up your hand until all the cards are dealt.

# Building Masts

Captain goes first. A player's turn consists of two phases. First, the player draws a card from the deck and places it in their hand. Then, the player plays any card from their hand onto one of the masts in the playing area:

Captain's Hand: (J♥) (8♠) (Q♦) (6♦) (3♣)



To build masts, cards are played one on top of each other towards the opposing masts, with the most recent card played always staying on top.

Always remember to draw your card *before* you play a card. If you forget to draw on your turn, your opponent is not obliged to remind you - and if they start their turn by drawing a card, you forfeit your draw for that previous turn.

Turn 1C: Captain draws the J♥, and then plays the 6♦ on the 7♠, building a mast that totals 13.

When a card is the top card in a mast, it's known as being *in the crow's nest*.

# Card Values

The suit of a card never affects its value in either the Basic or Standard Game.

10s, Queens, and Kings are collectively known as 10-spots.

Turn 1M: Matey draws the 5♠, and then plays the J♣ on the 8♥, building a mast that totals 16. If he had played the Jack on either the 10 or the King, the resulting mast would equal 20; if played on the Ace, the resulting mast would equal only 2.

Any card may be played upon *any* mast, as long as it does not cause the mast to total more than 21. The values of the cards are as follows:

<b>A</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2-10</b>	<b>Face Value</b>
<b>Q,K</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>J</b>	<b>?</b>

Jacks are special. A Jack is worth 10 if it is the bottom card in its mast. If not, it assumes the value of the card directly underneath it.



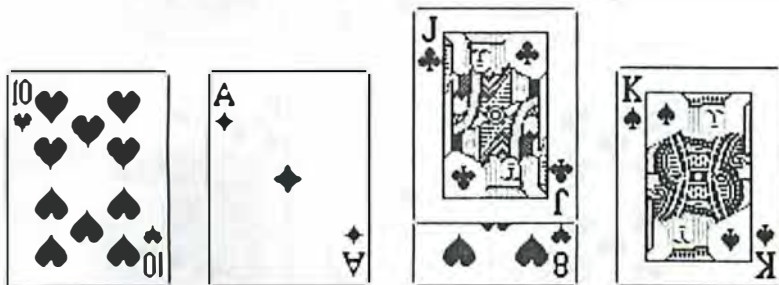
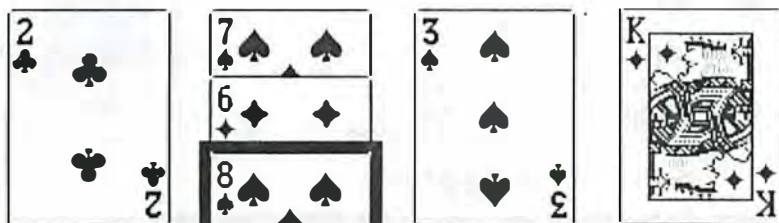
Matey's Hand: (5♠) (4♠) (10♠) (J♣) (Q♠)

# Raising and Capturing Masts

Raising the masts on your side of the table is the only way to capture the masts on your opponent's side. A mast is raised when it totals exactly 21. The raised mast is then taken, along with any one of your opponent's masts, and placed face down off to your side.

Captain's Hand: J♥ 8♠ Q♦ 5♥ 3♣

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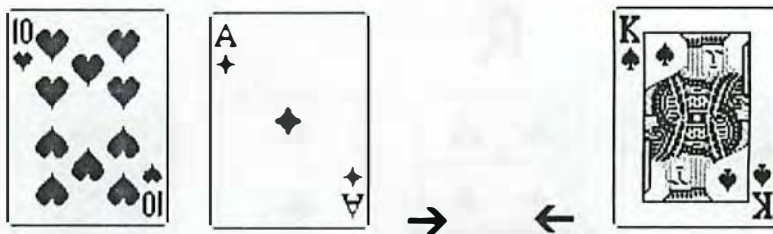
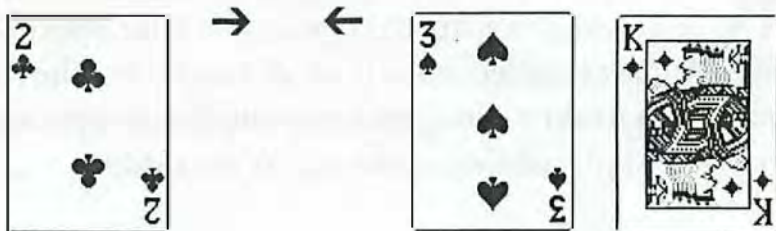
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Your pile of captured cards is known as your *booty pile*. Keep in mind that you raise the masts on your side, and you capture the masts on your opponent's side, but any cards placed in the booty pile are considered captured.

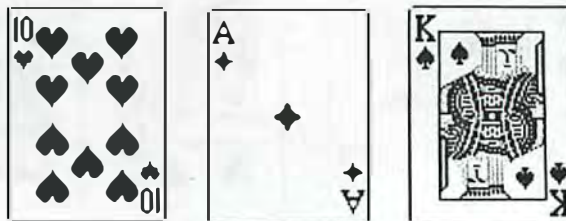
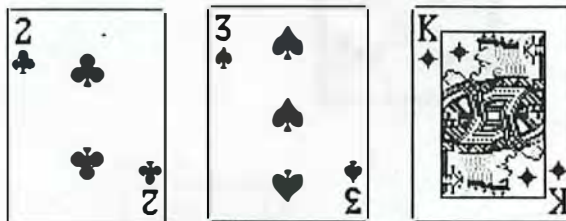
Turn 2C: Captain draws the 5♥ and plays the 8♠ on the 6♦, building a mast that totals 21. Captain takes the completed mast, and then chooses which mast on Matey's side to capture. Captain decides to take the mast containing the J♣ and the 8♠, placing all five cards in her booty pile.

# Closing Masts

There are never any spaces between masts. If a mast being raised or captured results in an empty space in between other masts, those masts immediately move together so as to eliminate the space:



The Capture



The Result

There's no way to ever play a card in an empty space; all new masts are started on either the left or the right of the masts already on the table.

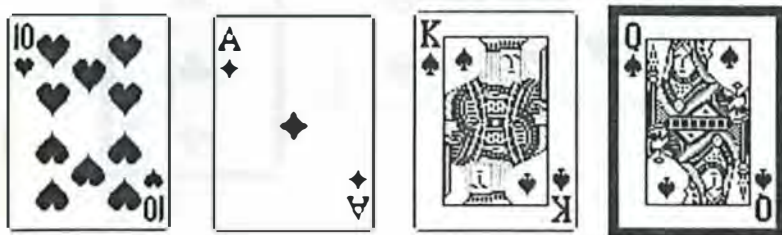


# Starting New Masts

There can be a maximum of four masts on each player's side. If there are fewer than four, any player can start a new mast on that side. Although new masts cannot be placed in between existing masts, a new mast can always be placed to either side of the existing masts.



If your masts are in danger of falling off the edge of the table or running into your opponent's masts, it's okay to re-center the entire structure. Just don't change the *relative* positions of any of the cards.



Turn 2M: Matey draws the 8♣, then starts a new mast by playing the Q♣ to the right of the K♠. Note that Matey could have played the Q♣ to the left of the 10♥, and that if the 10♥ gets captured, a new mast could be started to the right of the Q♣.

Matey's Hand: 5♣ 4♠ 8♣ Q♣ 10♠

# Cards With Effects

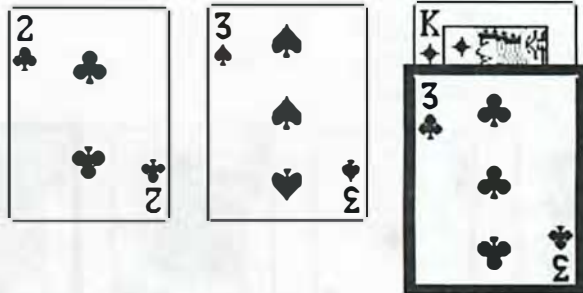
Playing 3s can cause a player's hand size to increase, up to the practical maximum of 8 cards.

# 3

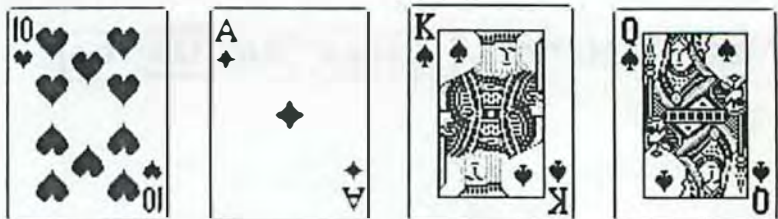
Three ranks of cards have additional effects when they are played. Whoever plays the card gains the effect, regardless of which side the card is played on. Cards dealt to masts at the start of the game do not have effects.

If a 3 is played, the player gets to draw another card from the deck. If the deck is exhausted, there is no effect. His or her turn then ends.

Captain's Hand:      



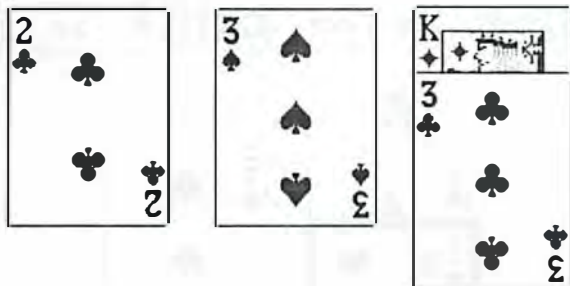
Turn 3C: Captain draws the 2♠, and then plays the 3♣ on the K♦, building a mast that totals 13. Because Captain played a 3, she gets to draw again from the deck. Captain draws the 10♦, and the turn then ends.



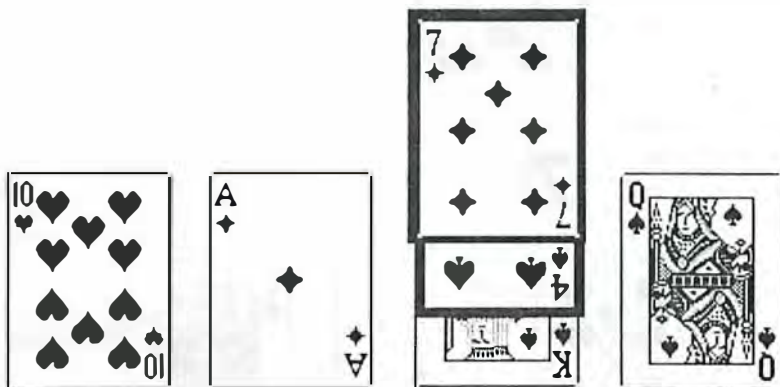
# 4

If a 4 is played, the player must play another card from his or her hand. If this card is a 4, another card is played, and so on. The player's turn then ends. The effect of this card occurs immediately after the card is played, *except* that any raising/capturing/closing of ranks always takes precedence.

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Turn 3M: Matey draws the 7♦. This is a lucky draw, as it allows him to play the 4♠ on the K♣, and then play the 7♦ on the 4♠, raising his mast and swashbuckling Captain's rightmost mast.



R

Capturing an opponent's mast in this manner (by playing a 4 and another card to raise a mast) is known as *swashbuckling*.

Matey's Hand: 5♠ 4♠ 8♣ 7♦ 10♠

# 9

The 9 is also known as the *spooneye*, and to take an opponent's card after playing a 9 is to *spooneye*.

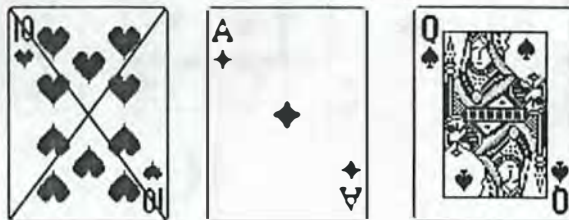
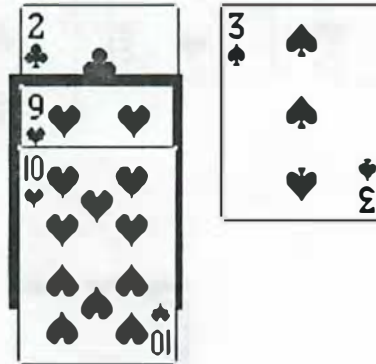
To raise one of your masts by spooneying an opponent's card is known as *hornswoggling*.

Turn 4C: Captain draws the 9♥ and plays it on top of the 2♠. This allows Captain to spooneye Matey's 10♥ and raise his mast with it, capturing Matey's Q♠.

If a 9 is played, that player gets to steal any exposed card off of one of their opponent's masts and place it anywhere they could play a card on their side. If there are no cards on the opponent's side, the 9 has no effect. The effect of this card occurs immediately after the card is played, *except* that any raising/capturing/closing of masts always takes precedence. Stealing a 3, 4, or 9 does not produce an additional effect.

Captain's Hand: (J♥) (9♥) (Q♦) (5♥) (2♠) (10♦)

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# Endgame

**A**fter the deck is exhausted, play continues as usual; each player alternates playing a card, simply skipping the draw phase of their turn. If one player runs out of cards before the other, the player with cards remaining plays out the rest of their hand without interruption.

**T**here are two ways for a game of *Spooneye!* to end:

**1.** All eight masts have been built, and the player whose turn it is cannot play a card without causing a mast to go over 21. In this case, the game ends immediately.

**2.** The entire deck has been exhausted, and there are no cards left in either player's hand.

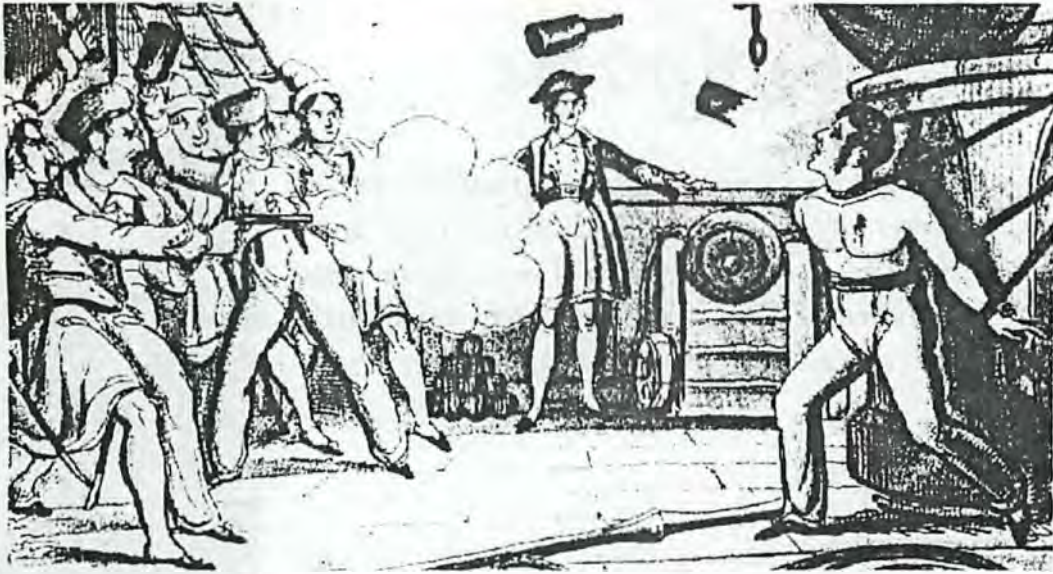
In either case, any cards out in the playing area are gathered up and discarded. These cards will count towards neither player's score.

**N**ow, each player counts up the cards in their booty pile. Each card is worth 1 point, and the player with more points is the winner.

This way, though possible, is extremely rare.

Cards that are captured by neither player are said to go to *Davy Jones' Locker*.

For why a differentiation is made between cards and points, see the *Standard Game*.



## Questions and Answers

Q. If I'm dealt a 3, 4, or 9 as one of my starting masts, is there any way to utilize its effect?

A. Not in the Basic Game.

Q. If I play a Jack on a 3, 4, or 9, does the Jack mimic that card's effect?

A. No. Jacks acquire the value of the cards they are on - not their suit, effect, or anything else.

Q. Let's say my opponent has a Jack on top of a 7, and I spooneye it and place the Jack on my 9. Is it still worth 7, or does it change its value?

A. It changes its value. The Jack's value is always determined by what card it is *currently* on top of.

Q. What happens if I play a 4 on my opponent's side?

A. You then get to play another card. Your opponent gains no benefits.

Q. Let's say I've got 3 masts. The middle one adds up to 17, and it's my turn. I play a 4 on it, raising the middle mast and capturing one of my opponent's. Do I still get to play another card?

A. Yes. If you play a card with an effect, it always takes effect if possible.

Q. Can I start a new mast with that additional card?

A. Sure.

Q. Can I start that new mast in between the other two masts?

A. Nope. Closing masts happens instantaneously.

Q. Okay, well, if I play a 9 on my opponent's side, do I still get to take one of the cards on their side and put it on mine?

A. Sure, as long as it's in the crow's nest.

Q. Can I take the card that I just played the 9 on?

A. No. As soon as you play the 9 on the card, it's no longer in the crow's nest.

Q. Can I take the 9 itself?

A. Oddly enough, yes. There's obviously no card on top of it, and it is on your opponent's side, so there's no reason that you couldn't.

Q. Isn't that really silly and useless, though?

A. Look, I didn't say you should do it, just that you could. Don't completely dismiss it though. On occasion, a loophole that makes spooneyeing effectively optional can have its uses.

Q. If I play a card on my opponent's mast that makes it total 21, what happens?

A. Your opponent takes the raised mast and any one of your masts, just as if he or she had raised it. This is, incidentally, the only way in the two-player game to capture cards on another player's turn.

Q. Why would I possibly want to do that?

A. Well, in theory I can think of a few possible scenarios where it might be strategically advantageous, especially later on in the Standard Game. But generally, yeah, it's a pretty muttonheaded thing to do.

Q. Well, then, why play on your opponent's side at all?

A. The most common reason to do this is in order to block them from completing a mast. If your opponent has a mast that totals 15, and you haven't seen any 6s yet, it might be worth the gamble of throwing a low card on there and hoping that they can't still raise their mast. Towards the end of the game, in fact, this can become a crucial strategy; if all the Aces have been played, making an opponent's column total 20 effectively renders it useless.

Q. Any other good reasons?

A. After the deck is exhausted, if it's clear that you have a mast that's able to be raised and your opponent doesn't (and especially if you have more cards left in your hand), you can throw cards onto their side and then capture them back. Tricky, eh?

Q. Why are you allowed to have four masts on your side? I thought that pirate ships only had three.

A. These are exceptionally massive pirate ships, as befits the epic nature of the game.

Q. Can I decide not to play and just stockpile cards in my hand?

A. No. Playing, like drawing, is mandatory.

Q. Can you raise more than one mast in a turn?

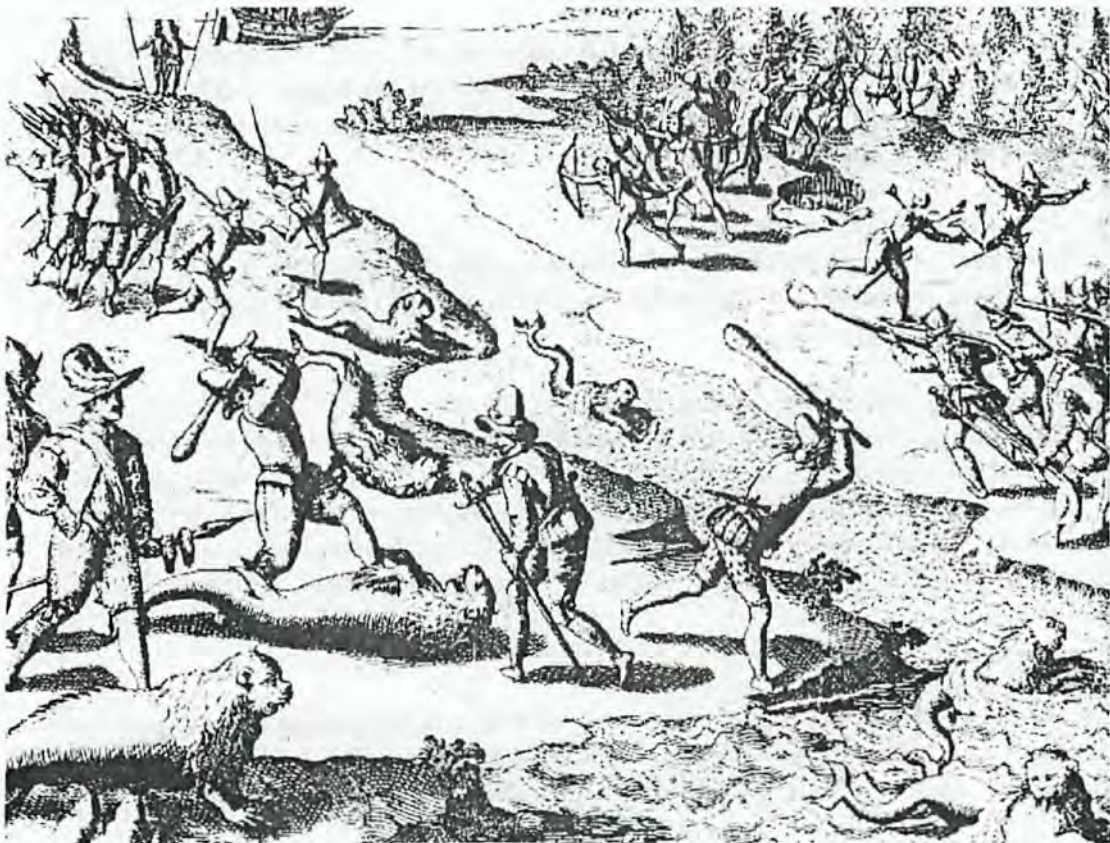
A. Sure, although you'd have to use a 4 or a 9 (or both).

Q. Is there any way to capture the cards remaining in the playing area if I have no cards left in my hand?

A. No. Any cards that your opponent doesn't capture will end up in Davy Jones' locker and count towards neither score.

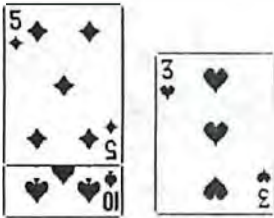
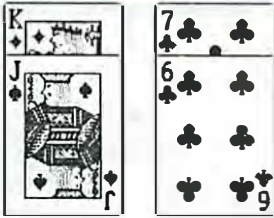
Q. Anything else I need to know?

A. Your mother wears army boots.





# FUN

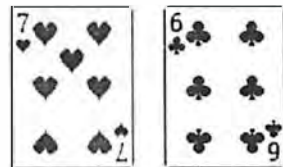
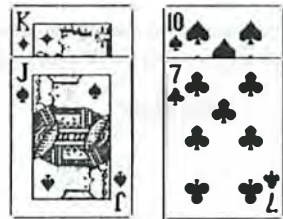


Your Hand: 5♣, 6♠, 7♥, 7♦, 9♥  
What do you play?



Can you connect the dots?

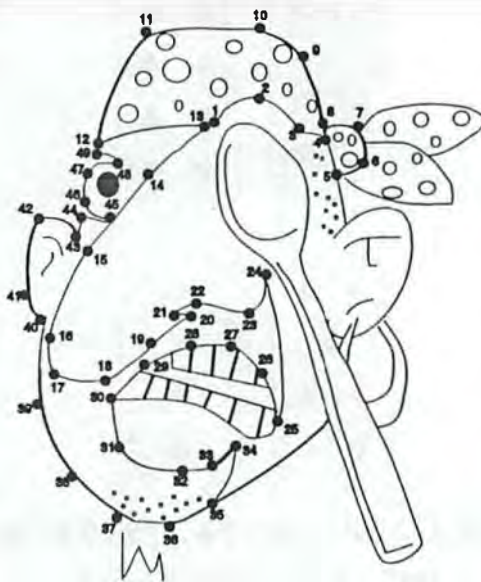
Can you name five commonly used phrases that come from cards or card games?



Your Hand: 3♣, A♠, A♥, 10♥  
What do you play?

# ANSWERS

Playing the 6♠ on the 5♦ is the most obvious move, but has the flaw of leaving the opponent in position to complete whichever mast you leave him. Playing the 9♥, spooneyeing the 6♣, and placing it on the 5♦ is somewhat of a waste of the 9♥, as the 6♠ could have been used to complete the mast. Secondly, this leaves the 7♣ out on the board, which could be dangerous - if your opponent has a 4, you're as good as swashbuckled. The best move is to play the 9♥ on the 3♥, spooneyeing the J♠ and placing it on the 9♥, capturing the 7♣. This gets rid of nearly any potential threat; even if the opponent has a 4, they are unlikely to have the only remaining 7. It uses a card (the 3♥) with no other immediate strategic use, and it leaves you in a position to complete another mast next turn, even if your opponent plays the Ace he apparently has in an attempt to block.



It's a pirate!

## A partial list, in no particular order:

Ace in the hole	Tipping your hand
Dealt a raw hand	Passing the buck'
Play the hand you're dealt	'The buck stops here'
Not playing with a full deck	A square deal
Not my strong suit	House of cards
Nothing up my sleeve	A pat hand
Wild card	Not in the cards
Poker face	Call a spade a spade
According to Hoyle	Call your bluff
Stacking the deck	Laying your cards on the table
Dealing from the bottom of the deck	

The best move here (assuming the deck is not close to exhausted with the other two Aces still extant,) is clearly to play the 3♣ on the 7♣. Not only does it allow you to draw an extra card, but it also effectively blocks the opponent by making the mast irrevocably redundant. This move also prevents the opponent from capturing all the masts on the board, if they are fortunate enough to actually have a 4.

'A buck is slang for a buckskin knife, which, folded up, was the traditional item placed in front of a player when it was their turn to bet in poker - or to call, which is where the latter expression comes from.

# *The Standard Game*



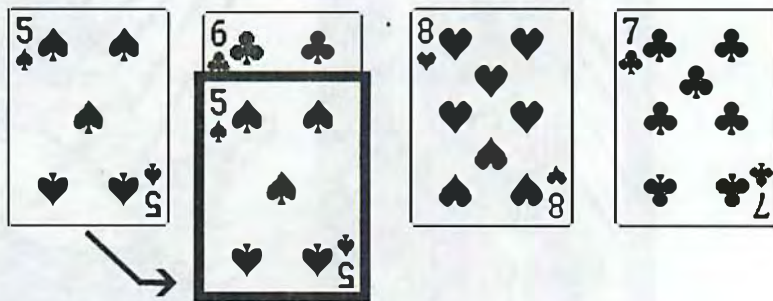
# Moving Cards

As soon as a player draws a card, they lose their opportunity to move a card that turn.

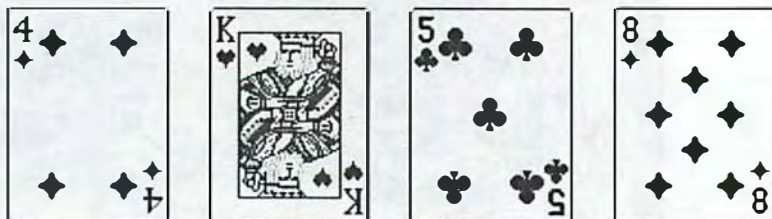
Perhaps the biggest change from the Basic Game is the ability to move cards. At the beginning of a turn, a player may choose to, *instead of* drawing and playing a card, move one of his or her exposed cards to an adjacent mast. Raises and captures occur as normal, but the following restrictions apply:

1. Cards can only be moved onto existing masts. In other words, you can't start a new mast by moving a card.
2. When the deck is exhausted, no cards can be moved.

Captain's Hand: J♥ 4♣ 6♠ 7♥

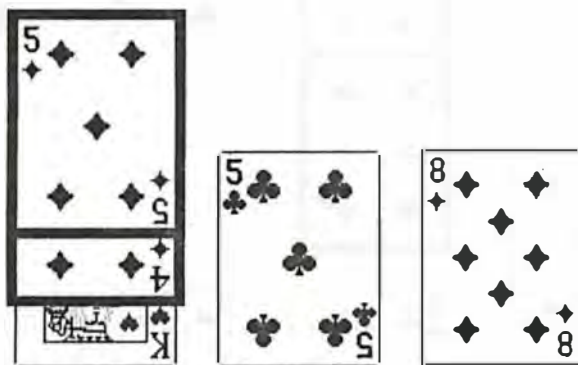
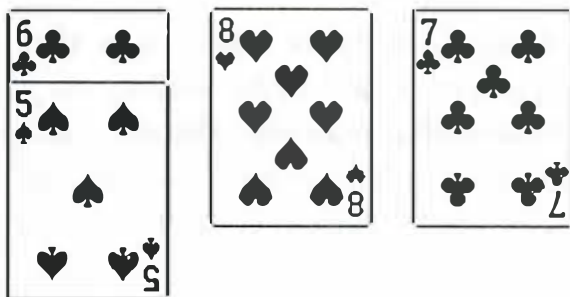


Turn 1C: Captain, instead of drawing a card, decides to move the 5♥ (originally the leftmost mast), onto the 6♠.



# Moving and Effects

If a card with an effect (i.e., a 3, 4, or 9) is moved, the effect of that card does *not* occur. The only exception to this rule is that, on each player's first turn of the game, moving a 3, 4, or 9 *does* produce the additional effect.



Matey's Hand: 5♦ 9♠ Q♥ 10♦

Moving a 3, 4, or 9 on the first turn is known as *dropping anchor*.






Turn 1M: Matey moves the 4♦ onto the K♥, dropping anchor and allowing him to play the 5♦ on the mast. Please note that this is a stupendously knuckleheaded move, as Captain will almost certainly capture next turn.

# Flipping Cards

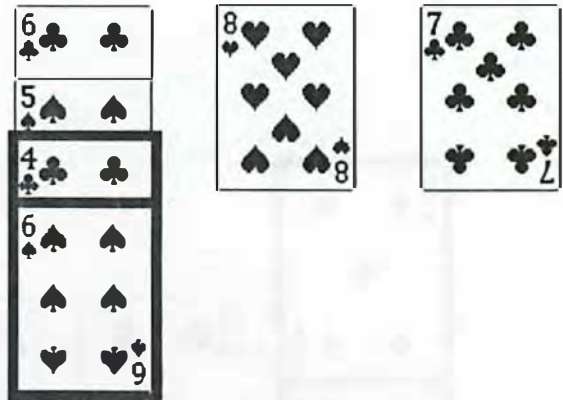
In the Standard Game, cards can be placed in the booty pile flipped face-up. Face-up cards count as 2 points each when totaling scores. There are three ways for cards to get flipped face-up:

## Walking the Plank

If a raised mast contains more than three cards, the raising player is said to be *walking the plank*, and any cards played on that mast past the third are placed in the booty pile face up. No cards in the captured mast are placed face-up, even if said mast contains more than three cards.

Captain's Hand:     

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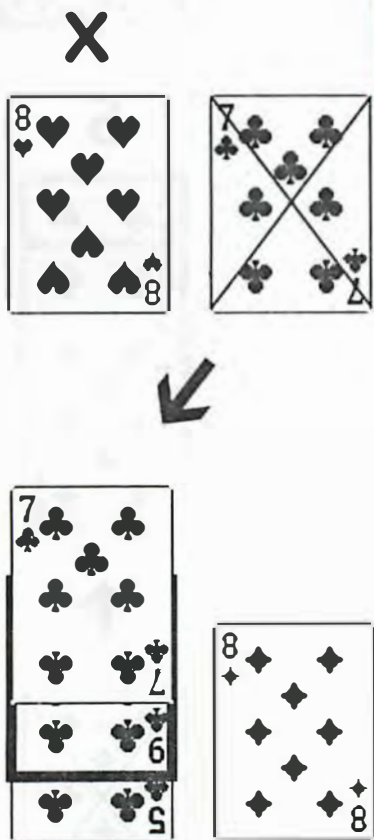


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Turn 2C: Captain draws the 9♥ and plays the 4♣ on the 5♠, allowing her to then play another card, the 6♠, on the same mast. This completes her mast with 4 cards, which means that the 6♠ will go into Captain's booty pile face-up. However, all other cards captured will stay face down.

## Hoisting the Colors

If a raised mast entirely consists of cards of one suit, the raising player is said to be *hoisting the colors*, and all of the cards in the raised mast are placed face-up in the booty pile. All cards in the captured mast go face-down in the booty pile, even if all of the same suit.



H

Matey's Hand: 9♠ Q♥ 10♦ K♠

Turn 2M: Matey draws the K♠ and plays the 9♠ on the 5♣, allowing him to spooneye the 7♣ onto the 9♠ and complete the mast. Since his mast is entirely of one suit, all three cards will go face up in Matey's booty pile. However, the captured 8♥ will still go face down.

# Swabbing the Deck

If, by raising his or her mast and capturing his or her opponent's, a player leaves no cards on either side of the table, that player is said to be *swabbing the deck*, and all cards in both the raised mast and the captured mast are placed in the booty pile face up.

There is no cumulative effect from fulfilling more than one of these three conditions: i.e., if a player hoists the colors and swabs the deck at the same time, it is the same as just swabbing the deck.

Turn 3C: Captain conveniently draws the 4♠ and plays it as a new mast, allowing her to play the 9♥ on it and spooneye Matey's 8♦. This completes the mast and swabs the deck, meaning that all the cards in Captain's mast go face up in her booty pile, and if Matey had had a mast to capture, all the cards in it would have gone face up as well.

Captain's Hand:    

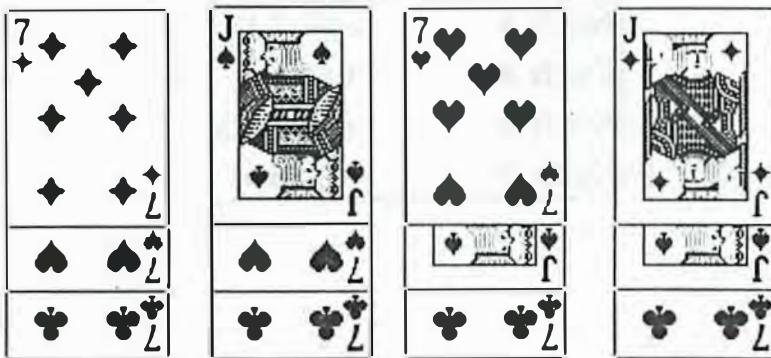
S





# Exchanging Hands

If a player raises a mast that consists entirely of 7s, he or she immediately exchanges hands with his or her opponent. Jacks *can* count as 7s for this purpose. The players exchange their entire hands, even if of different sizes. Masts, booty piles, and all other aspects of the game are unaffected.



Raising a mast with only 7s is known as a *double mutiny*.

Here are the four different ways that a double mutiny can occur.

# Endgame and Scoring

The best way to keep track of the two scores is to draw a horizontal line across the middle of the paper. The score written below the line is just called the *score*; the score written above the line is known as the *larder*.

An easy way to total this up is to follow this process:

1. Chuck all the hearts.
2. Pair up clubs and spades (which cancel each other out), until you are left with only one or the other.
3. Count the diamonds, double that number, and then either subtract the remaining clubs or add the remaining spades to the result.

Clubs are known as *scurvy*.

The ways in which the Standard Game can end in are identical to those in the Basic Game. The method of counting up the score is identical as well, except that, in the Standard Game, cards flipped face-up are worth 2 points each.

However, if one is playing a full match (see next page), each player also receive an auxiliary score. After counting their regular score, each player then turns all of the cards in their booty pile face-up and counts them again, this time according to the following chart:

Each ♦	2 points
Each ♠	1 point
Each ♥	0 points
Each ♣	-1 point

This auxiliary score does not affect the regular score in any way, and is kept completely separate from the regular score until the end of the match.

# The Full Match

In the Basic Game, each game played is a separate, self-contained contest. In the Standard Game, however, games can be played separately or as part of a larger match. In a match, games are played until, at the end of a game, at least one player has achieved a score of 100 or more points. When this occurs, the match ends. Any player who has crossed the rubicon adds their larder to their score, and this then becomes their final score. Otherwise, the larder is lost. The player with the higher final score wins the match.

Reaching or exceeding 100 points is known as *crossing the rubicon*.

If a player does not reach 100 points at the end of a match, he or she has been *keelhauled*.

This sample scoresheet shows a match that took three games to finish. After each game, the score was tallied to see if either player had achieved 100 points. In this game, only one player achieved 100 points, and so only that player got to add their larder to their below-line score. Note that, while the score needs to be continuously tallied, the larder does not need to be totaled until the end of the match - if at all.

	Cap'n Pinky	Cap'n Planky
<b>Larder</b>	13 (game 1)	8 (game 1)
	10 (game 2)	16 (game 2)
	20 (game 3)	12 (game 3)
	43 (total)	
<b>Score</b>	34 (game 1)	18 (game 1)
	28 (game 2)	33 (game 2)
	62 (total)	51 (total)
	42 (game 3)	22 (game 3)
<b>Final Score</b>	104 (total)	73 (total)
	43 (larder)	0 (larder)
	<b>147</b>	<b>73</b>

# Spooneye! With Three or Four Players

Spooneye! with three players is known as *Cutthroat Spooneye!*

In three-player Spooneye!, the player who goes second is known as *Skipper*.

Spooneye! with four players is known as *Partnership Spooneye!*

Spooneye! with three players is fundamentally similar to the two-player version, requiring only the following adjustments:

1. When drawing for deal in the first game, the player who draws the highest card is Captain, and the player who draws the lowest card is Matey. Matey always sits directly to Captain's left, and the positions rotate clockwise after every game.
2. Play always goes clockwise.
3. Players may capture or spooneye from either of their opponents' masts.
4. If a mast containing three 7s is raised, it is known as a *triple mutiny* and all players give their hand to the player on their left.

Spooneye! with four players is played in a partnership format, like Contract Bridge or Canasta. Each partnership has two hands and two sets of masts, but shares one single booty pile and score. There are the following alterations:

1. Each player draws a card to determine Captain and Matey, with play going clockwise. The player who draws the highest card is Captain and plays first, with his partner playing third. The player who draws the lowest card is Matey and plays last, with his partner playing second. Positions rotate clockwise after every game.
2. Each player is dealt three cards and three masts.
3. Each player can have a maximum of three masts, and those masts are in *fixed* positions (see diagram). Closing masts does not occur in Partnership Spooneye!, and a new mast does not have to be started next to an existing one.
4. Players can capture or spooneye cards off of either opponent, but not off their partner. Any spooneyed card must be played on the player's own masts, not their partner's.
5. Players can only move cards on their side, *not* their partner's. There is no way to move a card to the partner's side.

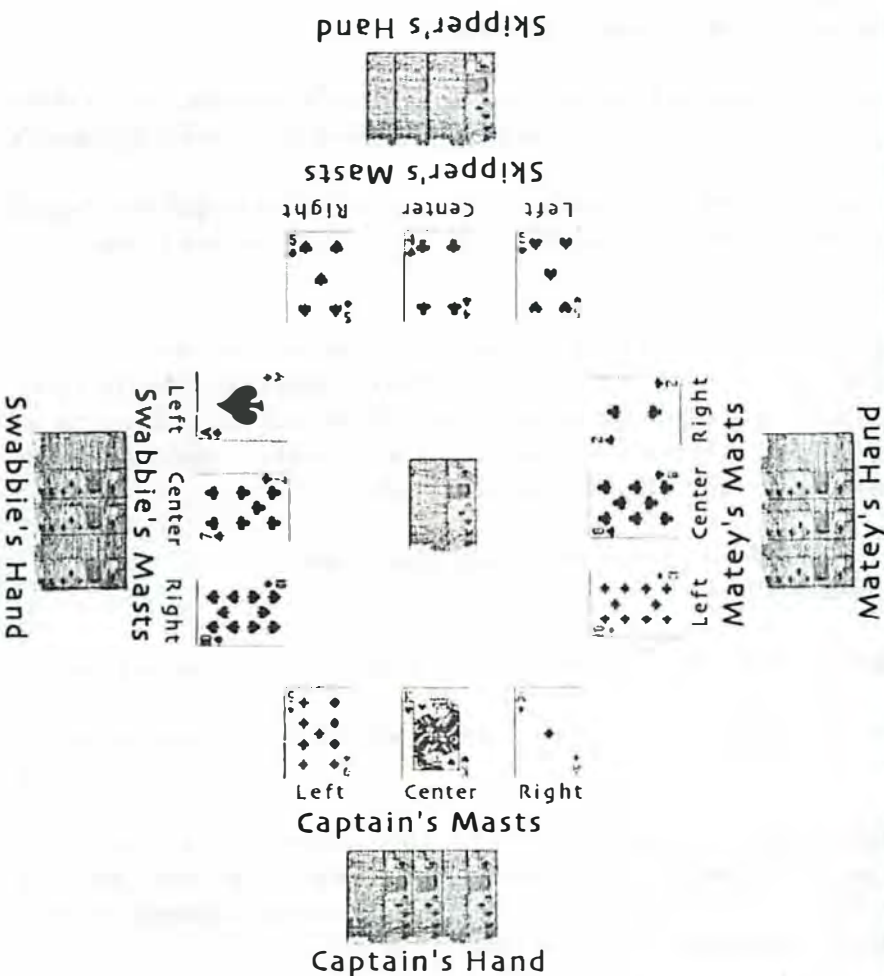
6. Yes, swabbing the deck entails swabbing the *whole* deck.

7. As in regular Spooney!, if a 3,4, or 9 is played on one of either of the opponents' masts, the player still gets the benefits. However, if a 3,4, or 9 is played on the partner's side, the partner immediately gains the additional effect. This can involve cards being drawn or played out of turn. Play continues as normal afterwards.

8. If a mast containing three 7s is raised, it is known as a *quadruple mutiny* and all players give their hand to the player on their left.

9. No non-card signals can be passed between partners.

10. During the endgame, if one player runs out of cards, play simply skips them for the rest of the game. Their partner continues to play as normal.



In Partnership Spooney!, the Captain's partner is known as *Skipper*, and the Matey's partner is known as *Swabbie*.

Signalling to one's partner by playing on one mast instead of another is allowed. For instance, starting a new mast on your own side commonly signals that you can raise that mast, while starting a new mast on your partner's side signals that you're looking for assistance.

In Partnership Spooney!, the deck is placed in the center of the board, and masts are played either to the left of the deck, to the right of the deck, or (the center mast) lined up with the deck.

# More Questions and Answers

being

VOLUME TWO, NUMBER THREE OF  
THE COMPLETE GOULD-GOULD  
CONVERSATIONS



eg: So, Mr. Gould, we meet again. How are you today?

EG: Oh, just fine. Loved you in *The Long Goodbye*, by the way.

eg: Um, yes. My first question refers to this hopelessly muddled rule about moving cards. Is there any instance in which I might be allowed to, for strategic purposes, move a card on my opponent's side?

EG: For heaven's sake, Mr. Gould! Surely you could have come up with a less insipid initial question than that! Such a thing is clearly stated as utterly impossible in the rules, and I judge you a fool for even asking it.

eg: Ah, but what if one plays one's own card on the opponent's side? Surely, then one must...

EG: Listen, Mr. Gould, for I'll say this once and once only. When one plays a card on the opponent side, as soon as that card is placed down and any additional effects have taken place, it is no longer your card, it is your opponent's. This is why a player does not raise their opponent's masts for them, and why one cannot move cards on one's opponent's side.

eg: I see. But permit me to do you the indiscretion of asking again about...

EG: Could you stick to the point? Please?

eg: Fine. If one plays a 4, are you then allowed to move a card, or must you instead play another card from your hand?

EG: The latter. A 4 does not give a player an extra turn; it specifically forces them to play another card.

eg: Yes, very good. Another silly question, I'm afraid, but is there any way for a player to do nothing; that is, neither to draw a card and play a card, nor to move a card? For instance, let us say that a player only has one mast, consisting of two cards. Could they, in a sense, "attempt" to move a card and fail, thereby causing them to take no action that turn at all?

EG: Oho, Mr. Gould, now you're getting a bit more clever. But no, there is no way to do the thing you describe. Every turn, each player must either draw and play a card, or *truly* move one of the cards already on their side of the table.

eg: What if the deck is exhausted and no more cards can be drawn?

EG: Then, my friend, you must simply play cards until you run out.

eg: Let us move on to these awkward new scoring rules, especially that of "swabbing the deck."

EG: It would be my pleasure.

eg: Two theoretical examples for you to consider, Mr. Gould. Firstly, let us say that one has two masts - one comprised of the 6 of Diamonds and the Queen of Clubs, the other merely comprised of the 8 of Spades - on one's side, and there are no masts on the opponent's side. And you hold a 5 in your hand.

EG: I think I see where you are headed with this...

eg: Well, I know that there is no way for one to capture masts on your own side. But is there *any* way, in this case, for the player to swab the deck?

EG: Unfortunately for the player, no. But before you protest, Mr. Gould, view the situation from the other side. If your opponent were to have a mast totaling 16 on his side and you had nothing, then it would truly be a marvelous strategy for you to start a new mast on your opponent's side with the 8 of Spades, as that could not be moved onto their existing mast and would prevent them from swabbing the deck. At least, immediately. Now, you mentioned that you have another example?

eg: In fact I do. Let us say that you have two masts on your own side, one comprised of the 10 of Spades and the 7 of Spades, the other of the 10 of Clubs and the 3 of Diamonds. Your opponent also has two columns, the contents of which are superfluous to this discussion. Now, if one plays the 4 of Spades on the first mast, and then immediately plays the 8 of Clubs on the latter mast, what happens?

EG: A complicated question indeed. Now, since the first capture occurs before the second card is played, there is no swab of the deck at that time, and so, while the ten-seven-four mast does go face up, as the player did hoist the colors, whatever mast they capture at that time will go face-down. Then the second card is played, the second mast is raised, and in that case, the deck is indeed swabbed, and both masts are placed in the booty pile face-up.

eg: That's very interesting. I like your stories. Now, Mr. Gould, not to veer off topic, but...

EG: You're going to veer off topic.

eg: Exactly. Now, in the movie *Kicking and Screaming*, in which you are quite riveting as the lead character's father, there is a reference at the beginning of the film to the movie *Bob and Carol and Ted and Alice*, which you starred in, except the character refers to it as *Monkeys, Monkeys, Ted and Alice*. Is this a sly reference to your legendary...hirsuteness?

EG: Good God, Mr. Gould! Is this your idea of a pertinent line of questioning?!? If so, I might as well simply stand up and leave right now.

eg: No, please, calm yourself. I meant no offense. Let us turn our attention back to this marvelous if rather unnecessarily Byzantine game that you've invented.

EG: Yes. Let's do that.

eg: Let us speak of the larder. I suppose the most obvious question is, can the larder, if one is sufficiently unlucky or perhaps simply a wretched player, total a negative number?

EG: Of course it can, Mr. Gould. What do you think this is, some sort of children's game, where nothing untoward ever occurs and at the end everyone gets a lollipop and a pat on the head? Life is hard, Mr. Gould, and if you do not wish to put this rule into practice, then simply stop capturing so many clubs.

eg: Well, Mr. Gould, I fear it is time to stop throwing you these softballs and to start asking the difficult questions. Once a highly respected and perhaps even world-renowned actor, your career has since declined precipitously, to the point that in recent years you have been reduced to character parts in such reprehensible Cinemax twaddle as *Night Visitor*...

EG: Do you have a question, Mr. Gould?!?

eg: Yes. What was it like working with Shannon Tweed?

EG: I don't know. Was that Shannon Tweed? Christ, it may as well have been. Do you know what kind of residuals you get off of pay-cable? I can barely afford to store my motorcycles.

eg: Speaking of motorcycles and residuals, Mr. Gould, in the mid-80s you were the star of an extremely short-lived hospital sitcom called "ER." Do you get any money from the hit show of the same name on the air today?

EG: It's still working its way through the courts as we speak. Although I and all the other fine actors on the original show certainly deserve a portion of the profits that have been made off this rip-off - a show, mind you, that not only ripped off our name and stole George Clooney, but also our entire concept of setting a television show in a...hospital setting - the outcome of the case is still not certain.

eg: Why is that, Mr. Gould?

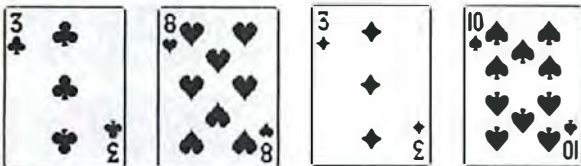
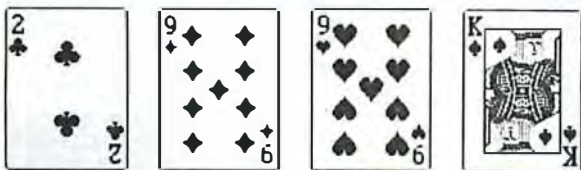
EG: They might have us on a technicality, which is that, in the commercials, they pronounce their new show "Ee - Ar," while in our commercials, the announce simply pronounced the title "Er."

eg: "Er"?

EG: Well, of course, we eventually realized our blunder but that was three, maybe even four weeks after the commercials had been recorded, and by then we'd been canceled. You see, back then, it wasn't about medical consultants and authenticity experts and all of that. It was about the jokes.



# MORE FUN



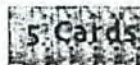
Your Hand: A♦, A♠, 5♠, 7♥, 10♣

(It's the first turn of the third game, and the score is You 56, Them 73.)

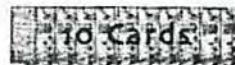
What do you play?

Can you match the hand to the game?

Contract Bridge



Partnership  
Canasta



Ecarté



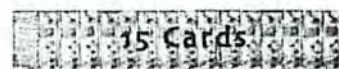
Ninety-Nine



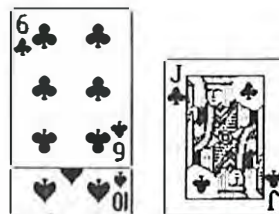
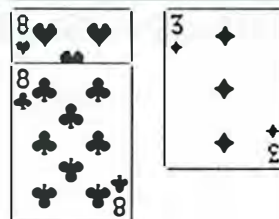
Auction  
Pinochle



Skat



Can you name three songs that mention cards and are not sung by Kenny Rogers?



(It is Turn 14, and there have been 4 3s, 2 4s, and 2 9s played)

Your Hand: 4♦, 5♣, 7♥, K♠  
What do you play?

# MORE ANSWERS

Moving a 3 and dropping anchor is the safest move here. It is by no means indefensible, as it does net you a valuable extra card you wouldn't otherwise get. But the score necessitates that you play defensively. It being unlikely that you'll net 44 points this game, your only hope is to keep your opponent from scoring 27 points this game and keelhauling you.

The key card is the 9♦. It can hornswoggle you by moving and dropping anchor in either direction, and there's no way for you to protect all your vulnerable cards at once. Your only hope is to play a card on top of the 9♦, preventing it from moving with the hope that you didn't just hand your opponent a capture. The question is, which card to play?

An Ace would be the worst choice. Your opponent could move the 9♥ onto that mast, spooneying one of your cards and creating the obviously dangerous total of 19. The 7♥ would be better, but still not great; the 9♥ could be moved, spooneying a 3 and again giving your opponent 19. The 5♠ is your best option, as it both prevents the 9♦ from moving and gives the 9♥ nothing good to spooneye.

Ecarté

5 Cards

Skat

10 Cards

Partnership  
Canasta

11 Cards

Ninety-Nine

12 Cards

Contract Bridge

13 Cards

Auction  
Pinocle

15 Cards

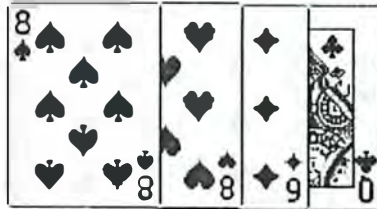
## A (very) partial list. Send 'em in.

Queen of Hearts - Dave Edmunds, Juice Newton  
Run Red Run - The Coasters  
Ace of Spades - Motorhead  
Rosemary, Lily, and the Jack of Hearts - Bob Dylan  
The Joker - Steve Miller  
Pull Your Card - Lordz of Brooklyn  
Skywest And Crooked - Carter U.S.M.  
Grounded - Pavement  
The Devil's Right Hand - Steve Earle  
Dead's Man Hand - Tora Tora  
Hearts Are Trump - Trio  
The Red and The Black - B.O.C.

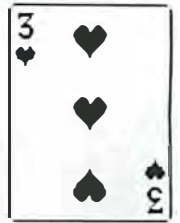
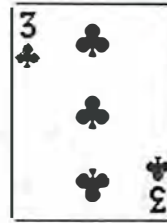
The choice here pretty clearly comes down to playing the 5♠ on the 10♠-6♣ mast vs. playing the 4♦ and the 7♥ on the J♣ mast. Although the larder does favor the latter play by 2 points, strategically, playing the 5♠ seems the superior move - by leaving the less dangerous seeming J♣ mast, the opponent might be suckered into playing on the 3♦ on their turn, allowing you to swab the deck. However, Turn 14 is pretty late in the game, and there are still two 9s out there, making it fairly likely that the opponent has one. If the 5♠ is played and the 8♥-8♣ mast is captured, this then allows the opponent to play a 9 on the 3♦, spooneye the J♣, and swab the deck himself. Therefore, even though 4s should normally be held onto when another capture is possible, in this case the best move is, in fact, the 4♦-7♥.

# The Sample Game

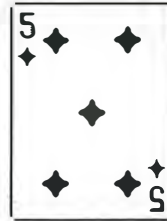
Captain's  
Hand



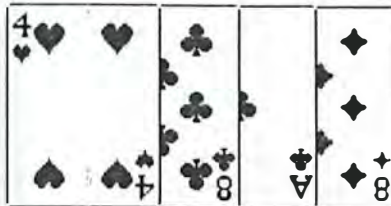
Captain's  
Masts



Matey's  
Masts

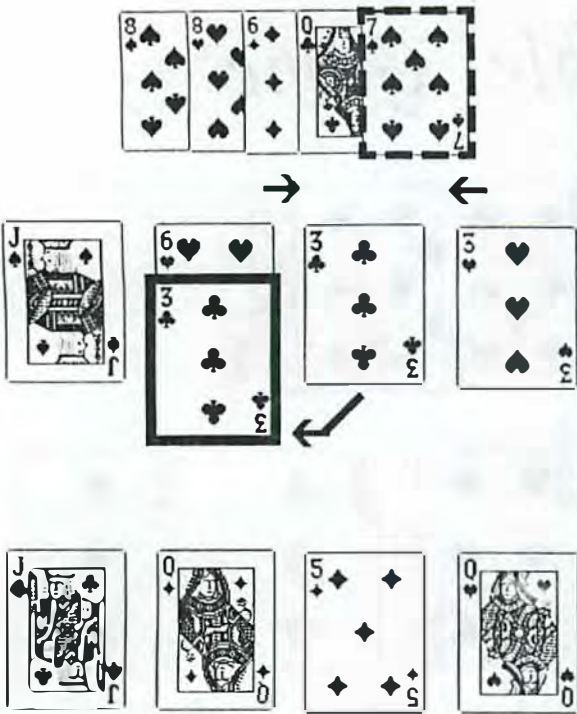


Matey's  
Hand



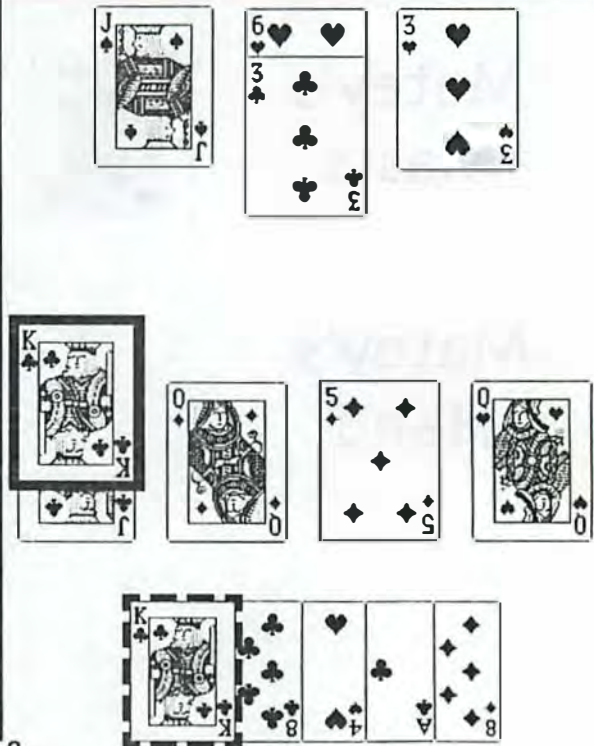
## Turn 1C

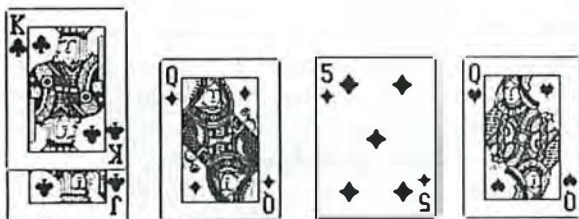
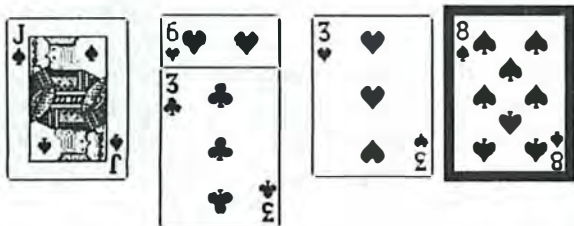
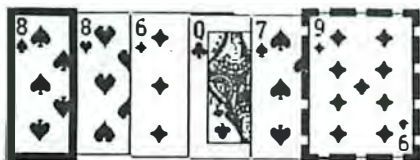
Captain moves the 3♣ onto the 6♥, which, because it is her first turn, allows her to draw another card, the 7♠. This is a pretty good move, given the significant chance that Matey has a 4 or a 9 and can capture something of Captain's anyway. Deciding to bluff by drawing and playing might not have been a bad idea, though, especially since drawing of the 7♠ would have meant she wouldn't be bluffing after all.



## Turn 1M

Matey draws the K♣ and plays it on the J♣. A lucky draw (we'll be seeing a couple of those by Matey in this game), making this move pretty unimpeachable. Playing the K♣ (as opposed to the A♣) is definitely the better move, as it prevents Captain from playing on the mast in an attempt to block, and also saves a more valuable card in the hand in case Captain swashbuckles on his next turn.



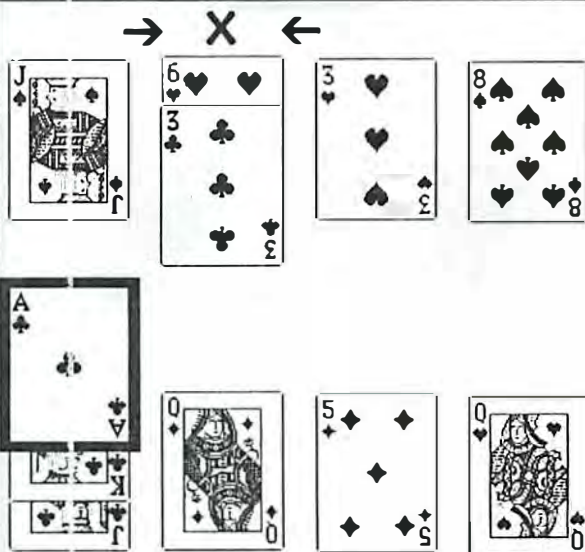


## Turn 2C

Captain draws the 9♦ and plays the 8♠ as a new mast. An odd move, but not unjustifiable. First, there's the chance that Matey's play was in fact a bluff. Matey has to play on some existing mast, and, with a hand full of mismatched cards (and perhaps a surfeit of 10-spots,) might try to look threatening in order to buy time. Playing the 9♦ - probably where the 8♠ ended up, taking the K♣ - would not have been a bad move at all (in retrospect, it may seem the better one,) but it's understandable to want to save a spooneye for when it's truly necessary. Captain knows that the 8♠ is safe - if Matey has an Ace, he'll almost certainly decide to capture the 6♥-3♣ column. So, Captain's apparent plan is to wait and see - the 8♠ (or the 8♥) is necessary for the 8-7-6 combination that Captain holds, so it's worth getting down there, and the 6♥-3♣ isn't all that strategically valuable anyway.

## Turn 2M

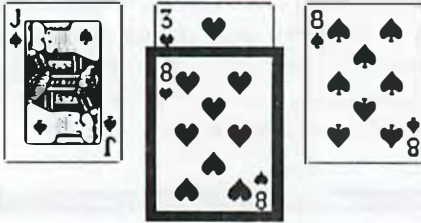
Matey draws the 10♥ and plays the A♣ on the K♣, hoisting the colors and capturing Captain's 6♥-3♣ mast. No other possibility.



H



## Turn 3C



Captain draws the 2♦ and plays the 8♥ on her 3♥. Sometimes, being Captain gives a player a serious advantage at the start of the game. This is clearly not one of those times, although the 2♦ does brighten the picture considerably. Captain's move, though arguably not the best, leaves the most options open. Captain could hornswoggle the Q♥ next turn, hoisting the colors. There's also a slim chance of drawing either the K♥ or (as far as Capain knows) the 10♥ next turn. It's a definite threat to Matey, and one that provides no opportunity for hornswoggling. Nor is there anything Matey could play on this mast to block its raising: only a 6 or 7 wouldn't allow her to walk the plank, and either one of those cards could just be sloughed off onto the 8♠, again aiding Captain.

### Other possible options:

*Play the 9♦ as a new mast, taking the Q♥ and placing it on the 9♦*

**Pro:** A decent set-up of a hoist, and Matey probably doesn't have any effective way to defend against it.

**Con:** Not the most effective use of a 9. Involves swallowing some pride, as it would be tantamount to Captain admitting (at least to herself) that she guessed wrong about the A♣.

*Play the 7♠ on the 8♠*

**Pro:** Another worthwhile move that would serve both as a bluff and as a genuine threat. Not a bad position to be in, as Captain could then try to wait for the 6♠ to show up, able to raise the mast if threatened.

**Con:** Sets up a possible hornswoggle for Matey, and, if Captain draws the 4♠ (which is just as likely as drawing the 6♠), she'll feel like a dumbass.

*Play the 2♦ as a new mast*

**Pro:** If opponent isn't paying attention, this could sneakily set up a hornswoggle/hoist.

**Con:** If opponent is paying attention, that's a pretty obvious threat, and it gives them a chance to play on their Q♦ and get it out of the crow's nest.

# Turn 3M

Matey draws the 6♠ and plays the 8♣ as a new mast. Matey makes the safe move here - the 8♣ is not terribly valuable to him, and it prevents Captain from capturing too many cards. It doesn't really set anything up, though.

## Other possible options:

*Play the 6♠ on Captain's 3♥-8♥ mast.*

Pro: Well, of the blocks available, it's certainly the best option.

Con: The odds that Captain has a 4, 5, or 7 (any of which would make this move backfire) are pretty good - and if Captain has either the 5♠ or the 7♠, this would be a disaster.

*Play either the 8♣ or the 8♦ on the Q♥.*

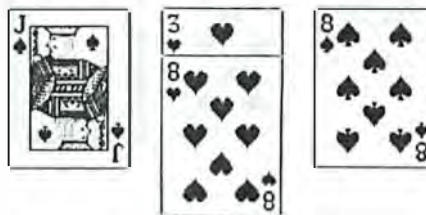
Pro: It may prevent Captain from hoisting the colors.

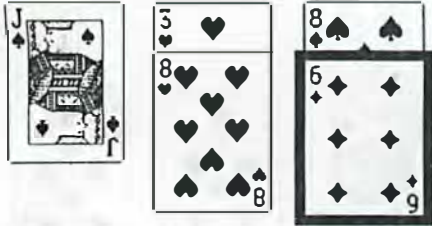
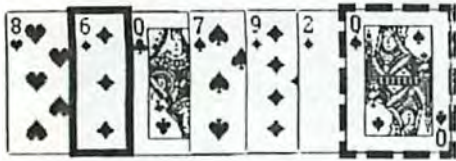
Con: Is this really worth it? Captain probably has a 10-spot of some sort, and the difference between hoisting the colors and just capturing the whole mast would only be 2 points. Even if Captain does have a 9, she might not even bother.

*Play the 10♥ as a new mast.*

Pro: Nothing really bad about it. A pretty safe move, being that it's identical to the Q♥.

Con: Gives Captain a little too much information - if she has a 9, she knows that she's probably not going to be drawing a 10-spot in hearts any time soon, and that she can more or less feel free to build up other masts, as she can hornswoggle a 10-spot in hearts at her leisure.



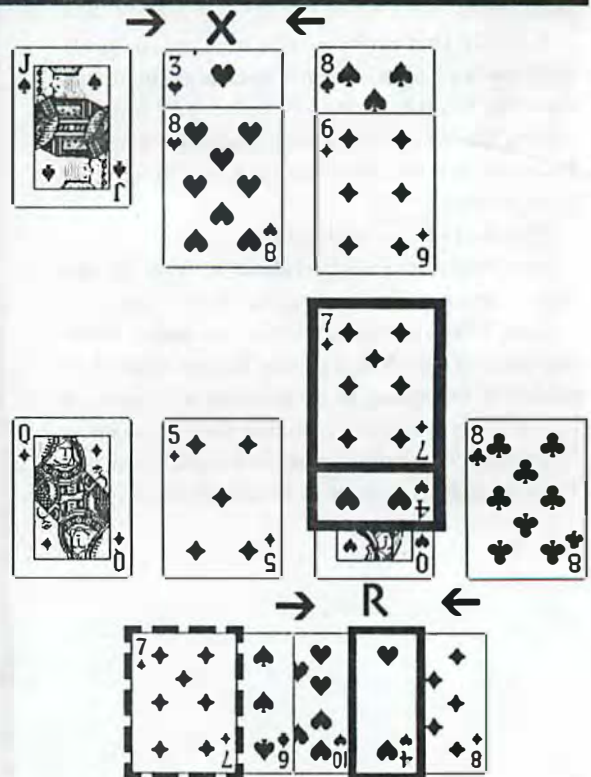


## Turn 4C

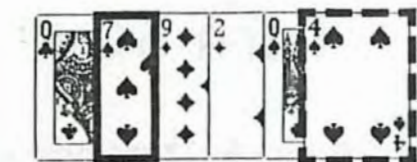
Captain draws the Q♠ and plays the 6♦ on her 8♠. The play of the 6♦ is Captain attempting to set herself up in a position of strength, while forcing Matey to build on an existing column. For this purpose, the 6♦ is a better choice than the 7♠, as that card would make Captain vulnerable to hornswoggling. In hindsight, either is going to backfire, and not playing the 9♠ and getting rid of both of Matey's Queens is going to seem like a mistake. There's really no way of knowing that at this point, though, and not wanting to use up the 9 yet is understandable if maybe overly tentative.

## Turn 4M

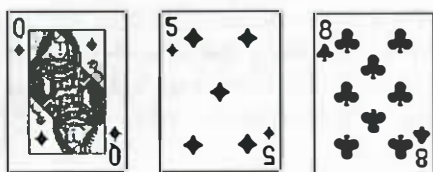
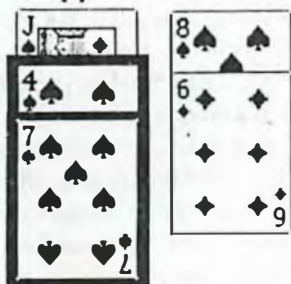
Matey draws the 7♦ and plays the 4♥. This allows him to play the 7♦, raising the mast and capturing Captain's 3♥-8♥ mast. A fortuitous draw leads to another easy choice, with the only decision being which mast to capture. Although the 8♠-6♦ mast would put 3 more points in the larder, Matey apparently sees the other mast as a more direct threat. Which is probably true, at least in a long term sense: by leaving the 8♠-6♦ mast, Matey forces Captain to play a 7 to complete it, a more valuable card than the 10-spot that would complete the 3♥-8♥ mast.







H

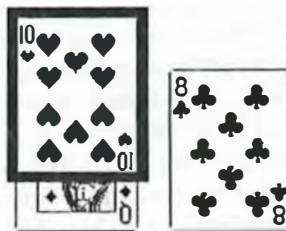


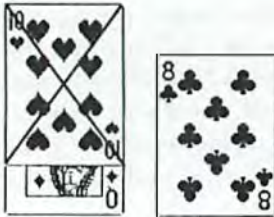
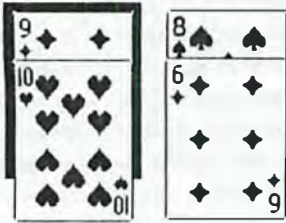
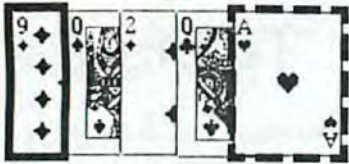
## Turn 5C

Captain draws the 7♠ and plays the 4♠ on the J♠. This allows her to play the 7♠ on the 4♠, hoisting the colors and capturing Matey's 5♦ mast. After getting burned twice, Captain isn't taking any more chances. This does make the 8♠-6♦ mast kind of useless, though, and if Matey's paying any attention, he might surmise that Captain doesn't have another 7. As for which card of Matey's to take, the Q♦ would be the obvious choice, but the 5♦ probably is in fact the better one - Matey can't make 21 without any odd cards, and this leaves the Q♦ for possible later hornswoggling. Also, leaving the 5♦ next to the 8♠ could be dangerous, as either an 8 or a Jack held by Matey could pose an immediate threat. By itself, the 8♠ is considerably less of a threat - there are only two more 3s out there, and if Matey had one, he'd probably have played it on Turn 3.

## Turn 5M

Matey draws the A♦ and plays the 10♥ on the Q♦. A bit of a risky move, but Matey is pretty sure that Captain doesn't have another 7 (aided, perhaps, by noticing that the 4♠ was also the card that Captain drew, and that even though Captain had a possible hoist, she still paused for a few seconds before playing the 4.)



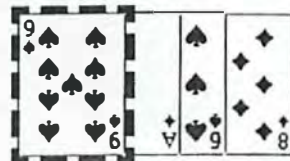
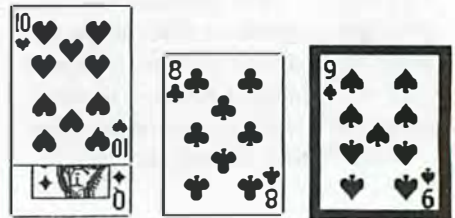
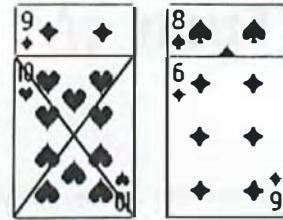


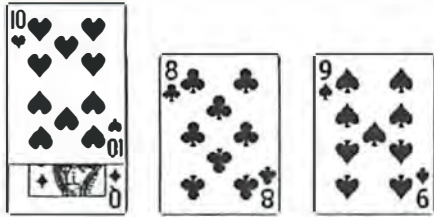
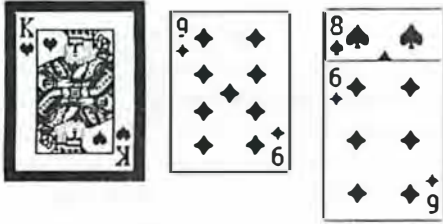
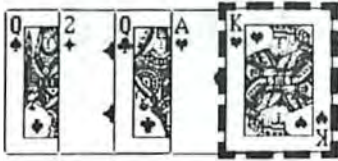
## Turn 6C

Captain draws the A♥ and plays the 9♦, spooneycing the 10♥ from Matey and placing it on her 9♦. Getting burned seems to have made Captain cautious, as, after holding back on playing the 9 a couple of times, she finally uses it in a defensive maneuver. It is probably the best move, though; a bluff on Matey's part doesn't seem terribly likely, and it does buy a few rounds for a much-needed 6, 7, or Jack to pop up. Playing the 2 or a Queen as a new mast wouldn't have been bad either - especially the 2, as that would set up a easy hornswoggle as soon as Matey played another 10.

## Turn 6M

Matey draws a 9♠ and plays it as a new mast, stealing Captain's 10♥ and placing it on his Q♦. Okay, this is where things start getting absurd. It's a draw that just can't be turned down, though; the pull of instant revenge is too great for Matey to consider any other options. It should be noted, though, that if the 8♣ weren't on the board, playing the 6♠ as a new mast would be a much better move - it would not only set up a hornswoggle on Matey's part next turn, but, if Captain did raise the 9♦-10♥ mast on her next turn, it would set Matey up for swabbing the deck.



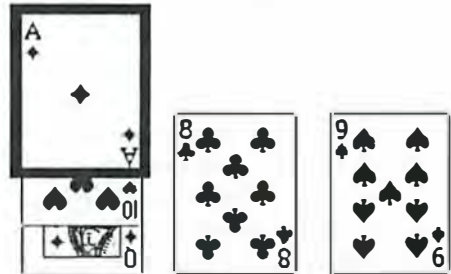
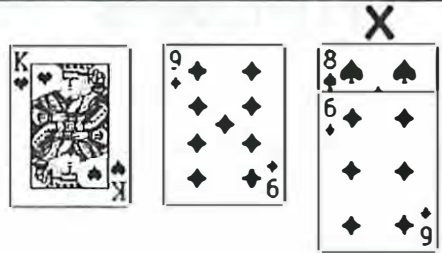


## Turn 7C

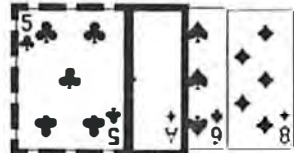
Captain draws the  $K♥$  and plays it as a new mast. Of the paltry options available here, starting a new mast with the  $K♥$  is probably the best move; it won't get captured immediately, and, although a hoist is unlikely, the possibility tilts the decision away from either of the Queens. Playing anything on the  $9♦$  would be foolish, as Matey clearly knows by now that the  $8♠-6♦$  mast is no immediate danger, and would just capture the  $9♦$  and whatever card was played on it.

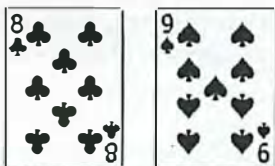
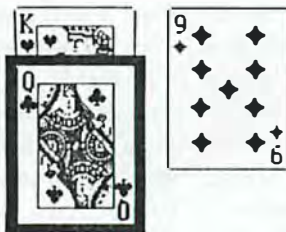
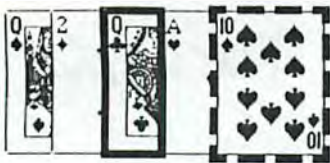
## Turn 7M

Matey draws the  $5♣$  and plays the  $A♦$  on the  $10♥$ , completing the mast, and capturing Captain's  $8♠-6♦$  mast. Another no-brainer, which nets a kick-ass 7 additional points for Matey's larder. Nice draw, too.



R



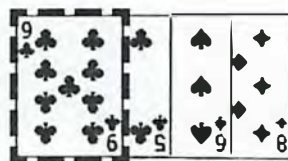
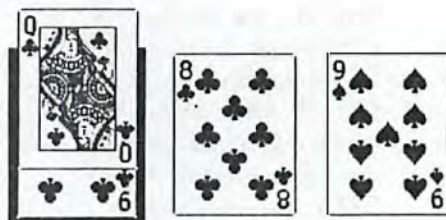
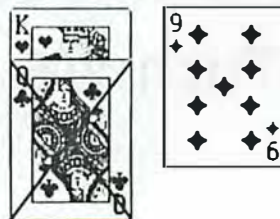


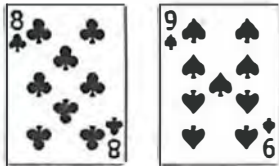
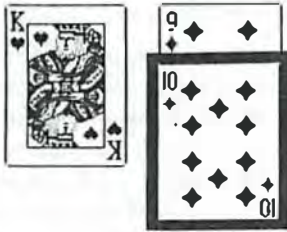
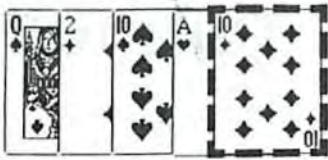
## Turn 8C

Captain draws the 10♠ and plays the Q♣ on her K♥. A pretty straightforward move; it's worth holding onto the Q♣ and the 10♠, just in case the A♥ shows up. Playing the A♥ on the K♥ would have been silly, as only the J♥ is still extant, and even if Captain drew it and played it, the mast would then total 12, not 21. Playing the 2♦ on the 9♦ would have been better, but it's too easily blocked by Matey, and Captain can't afford to be blocked at this point.

## Turn 8M

Matey draws the 9♣ and plays it as a new mast, stealing Captain's Q♣ and placing it on the 9♣. Gee, another 9; but what to do with it? Well, stealing the Queen is obvious, but there's nowhere really satisfactory to put it. Ordinarily, in fact, Matey might have just saved the 9♣ and played the 6♠ as a new mast, essentially ceding a raise to Captain. But none of the 2s have been played yet, meaning that a bluff like the one Matey did could be convincingly dangerous.



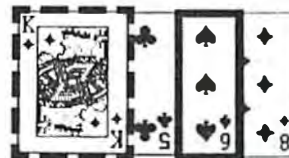
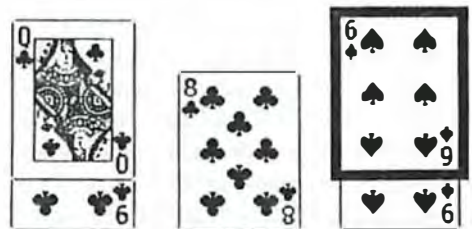
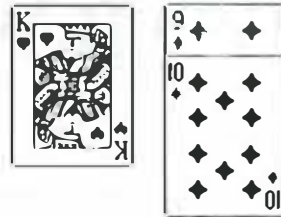


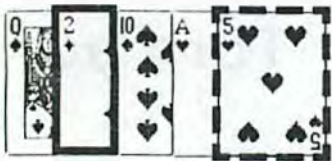
## Turn 9C

Captain draws the 10♦, and plays it on her 9♦. Setting up for a hoist when in obvious danger seems on paper to be a foolhardy move. However, Captain noticed that Matey, although having drawn the 9♣ the same turn he played it, paused a little too long for it not to be a bluff. If Matey had executed his bluff more seamlessly, probably the best move for Captain would have been to start a new mast with the Q♣ or the 10♠.

## Turn 9M

Matey draws the K♦ and plays the 6♠ on the 9♠. Looks like Matey's luck finally ran out. Playing the 6♠ on the 9♠ puts Matey in a relatively acceptable position - there's still one 6 and two Jacks extant, meaning that no matter which mast Captain captures, Matey will have a fighting chance to raise a mast in the next few turns. Playing the 5♣ on the 8♣ would be overly risky, as Captain might take it over the presently useless 9♣-Q♣ mast, wrecking Matey's only currently held shot at raising a mast. Playing the K♦ as a new mast would be a safe move, but not terribly useful.





H



X

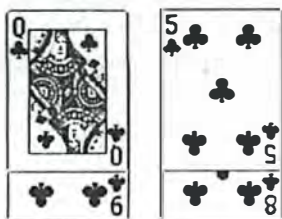
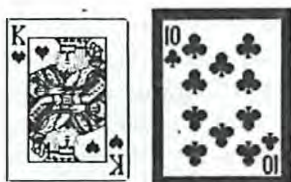
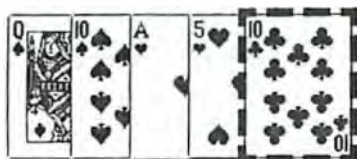
## Turn 10C

Captain draws the 5♥ and plays the 2♦ on the 9♦-10♦ mast, hoisting the colors and capturing Matey's 9♠-6♠ mast. Although Captain realizes that the 9♠-6♠ mast is probably also a ruse, it's still the safer one to capture; also, it's worth considerably more for the larder than her other choices.

## Turn 10M

Matey draws the 5♠ and plays the 5♣ on the 8♣. Although this is slightly risky (there still being 2 4s and a 9 extant), it seems fairly sensible. It's a better move than playing the 8♦; that move would attract too much larder attention, and would also provide the key component for a not totally unlikely 4-9 hornswoggle (as would leaving the 8 uncovered and doing something dull like starting a new mast.)





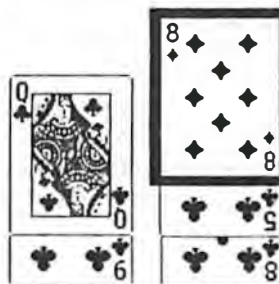
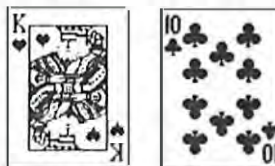
## Turn 11C

Captain draws the 10♣ and plays it as a new mast. Yay. Blocking Matey's 8♠-5♠ mast with the 5♥ would be risky, but has its rewards. Doing so with the A♥ would just be foolish, though, as Matey could then just move it onto the Q♠-9♠ mast, possibly even helping him raise that mast as well.

## Turn 11M

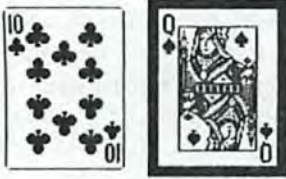
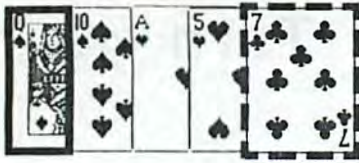
Matey draws the 7♥ and plays the 8♦ on the 5♣, raising the mast and capturing the K♥. Yeah, that's pretty much what you'd do.

X



R



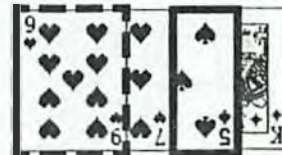
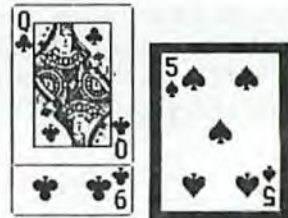


## Turn 12C

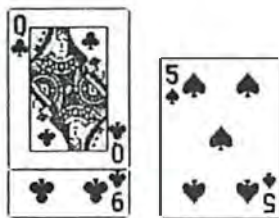
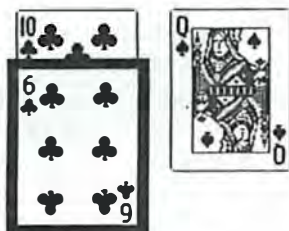
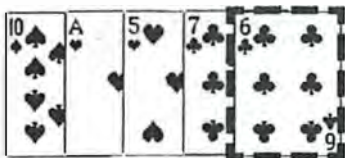
Captain draws the 7♣ and plays the Q♠ as a new mast. A safe move, and also a smart one. Playing the Q♠ on the 10♣ is tempting, but perhaps too risky - Matey could be doing some sort of demented double-bluff in order to swab the deck, or could just get a lucky draw. Also, not capturing Matey's mast, with its -2 larder, is no great loss, and if Matey does produce a 2, this leaves Matey with the only card on the table, an advantageous position.

## Turn 12M

Matey draws the 9♥ and plays the 5♠ as a new mast. The 9♥ is nice, but of no immediate use. The 5♠ is probably the best move; it looks to be of no immediate threat, but sets up a 5♠-9♥-7♥ raise.





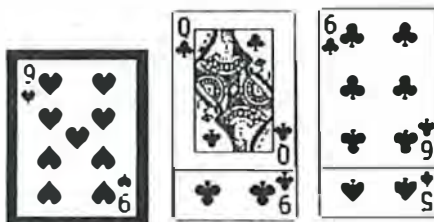
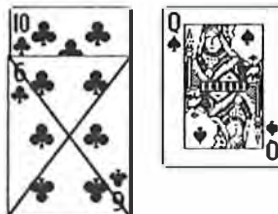


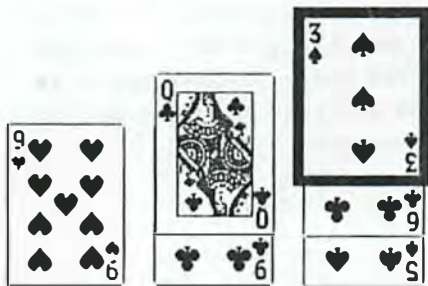
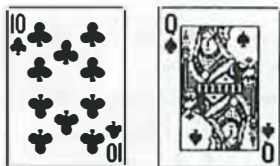
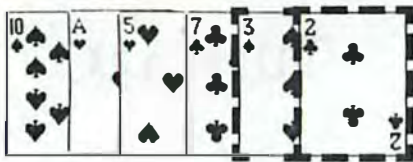
## Turn 13C

Captain draws the 6♣ and plays it on the 10♣. Some sort of aggressive move must be made here, before Matey actually does draw a 2. Going with the 6♣ seems best, as the clubs ensure a weak ladder if Matey manages to raise the Q♣-9♣ mast. Also, playing the 6♣ might trick Matey into playing on the 5♠ in an attempt to avoid being hornswoggled.

## Turn 13M

Matey draws the K♠ and plays the 9♥ as a new mast, spooneying the 6♣ and placing it on his 5♠. It's a shame to use up the last 9 in such an anticlimactic way, but there's not much other choice if Matey wants to stay on the offensive. Playing the 9♥ on the 5♠ and using the 6♣ to start a new mast would also be feasible. However, it would require using the 7♥, while Matey's move lets him save it in case a 4 comes along.



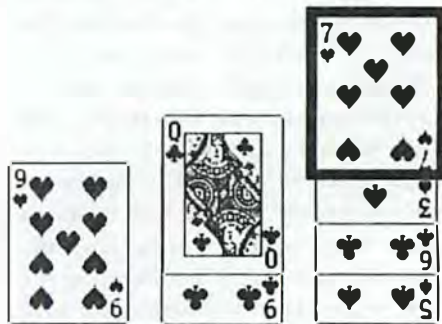
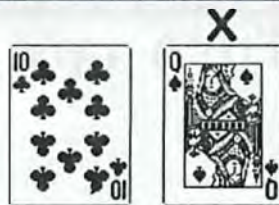


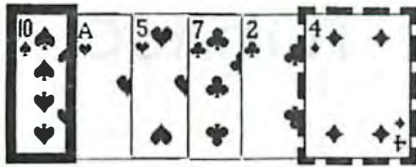
## Turn 14C

Captain draws the 3♠ and plays it on Matey's 5♠-6♣ mast, which lets her draw the 2♣. There being really no good moves on his own side, this is a pretty good block - the 3♠ can't be moved next turn, there's only one 7 left, and if Matey had wanted to play a 7, he would've played the 9♥ on the 5♠.

## Turn 14M

Matey draws the 3♦ and plays the 7♥ on the 5♠-6♣-3♠ mast, walking the plank and capturing Captain's Q♣. The obvious (and correct) move, though it does use up the last 7 available.



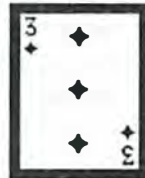


## Turn 15C

Captain draws the 4♦ and plays the 10♠ as a new mast. Swashbuckling (by playing the 4♦ and the 7♣ on the 10♠) is the obvious move, but gives Captain -2 points in her larder and leaves Matey with the only card on the board. Playing the A♥ on the 10♣ would set up an obvious threat; however, the number of cards in the deck is rapidly dwindling, making Matey too likely to draw a 2 for this to be a safe move. Captain's actual move is the savviest - it puts her in a better position if she decides to swashbuckle next turn, and if Matey does raise a mast on his next turn, that just sets Captain up to swab the deck.

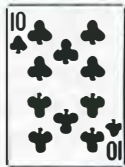
## Turn 15M

Matey draws the 4♣ and plays the 3♦ as a new mast, additionally drawing the A♠. Not much else to do here, really - playing the 3♦ on the 9♥ wouldn't be too useful, as there are no more 9s available to raise the mast (and only one 5 to go with the 4.)





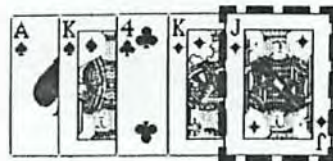
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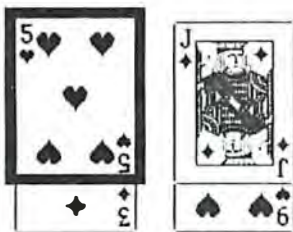
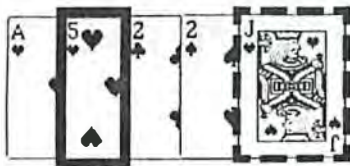
## Turn 16M

Matey draws the J♦ and plays it on the 9♥. A good illustration of how luck can be another word for good planning; if Matey was counting cards, then he knew that there were still two Jacks extant, with only 3 cards left in the deck. Playing the 3♦ next to the 9♥ sets up for this eventuality perfectly. If the 3♦ had been played on the 9♥ earlier, then the Jack would also only have a value of three; this way, though, the Jack has a value of 9, and Captain is going to have to play on the 3♦ to block the raise.



## Turn 16C

Captain draws the 2♠ and plays the 4♦ and the 7♣ on the 10♠, raising the mast and capturing Matey's 9♣-Q♣ mast. There's really no advantage to putting this off any longer - at least the larder isn't actually negative, and although there's only one more 2 out there, there's also only 3 cards left in the deck.

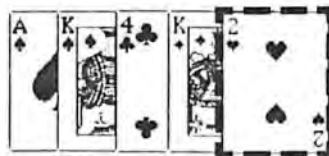
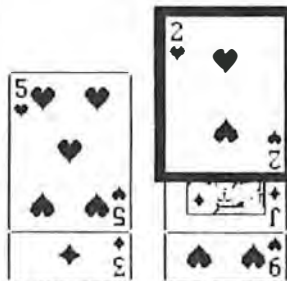


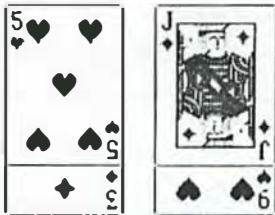
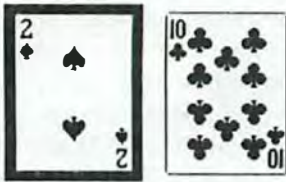
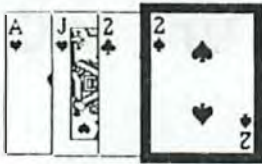
## Turn 17C

Captain draws the  $J♥$  and plays the  $5♥$  on Matey's  $3♣$ . This is really the only move here that makes sense. There is only one card left in the deck, so this will be Matey's last chance to move a card; the only card movable, though, is the  $J♦$ , and moving it onto the  $3♣-5♥$  mast would be useless, as there are no more 8s extant.

## Turn 17M

Matey draws the  $2♥$  and plays is on the  $9♥-J♦$ . The only sensible move, and there's no way for Captain to block a mast that already equals 20.



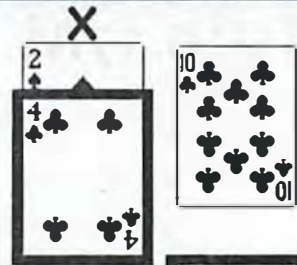


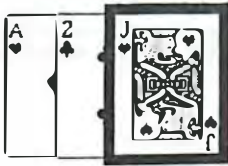
## Turn 18C

The deck is exhausted. Captain plays the 2♠. This is more or less a desperate decoy, in the hopes that Matey will ignore the strategically invaluable 10♣ in an attempt to boost his larder.

## Turn 18M

Matey plays the 4♣ on the Captain's 2♠, and then plays the A♠ on his 9♥-J♦-2♥ mast, walking the plank and capturing Matey's 2♠-4♣ mast. The smart move here is playing the 4♣ on the 2♠ for an extra point. The knuckleheaded move is playing it on the 2♠ instead of the 10♣.



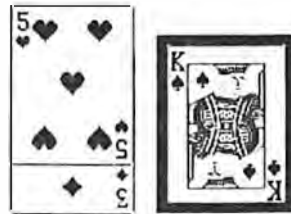


## Turn 19C

Captain plays the J♥ on the 10♣. Matey made a disturbingly glottal noise upon witnessing this move.

## Turn 19M

Matey plays the K♠ as a new mast. This is known as "awaiting the inevitable."





R



X

## Turn 20C

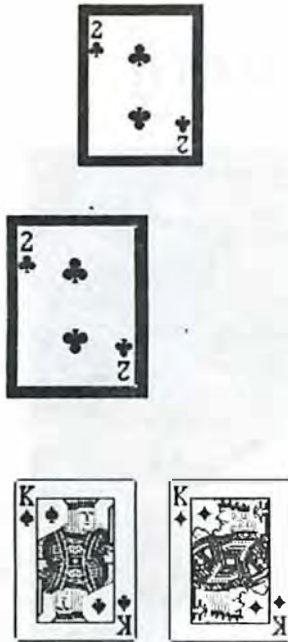
Captain plays the A♥ on the 10♣-J♥ mast, raising the mast and capturing the 3♦-5♥ mast. Sometimes decoys work, even when they're not supposed to.

## Turn 20M

Matey plays the K♦ as a new mast. Welcome to Thrillsville. Population: You.







## Turn 21C

Matey plays the 2♣ as a new mast. The three cards remaining on the board are tossed into Davy Jones' Locker. Those who find this anticlimactic are encouraged to check out the Weirdbear variant in the Hall of Infamy.

# The Tally

Cards captured by Captain (19):

J♠, 4♠, 7♠, 9♦, 10♦, 2♦, 5♦,  
6♠, 9♠, 7♣, 4♦, 10♠, Q♣, 9♣,  
A♥, J♥, 10♣, 5♥, 3♦

Cards flipped up by Captain (6):

J♠, 4♠, 7♠, 9♦, 10♦, 2♦, 5♦

Captain's Score: 25

Captain's Larder: 14

♦:6	♥:3
♠:6	♣:4

Cards captured by Matey (30):

J♣, K♣, A♣, 3♣, 6♥, 7♦, 4♥,  
Q♥, 8♥, 3♥, A♦, 10♥, Q♦, 6♦,  
8♠, 8♦, 5♣, 8♣, K♥, 3♠, 6♣,  
5♠, Q♠, 7♥, 2♥, J♦, 9♥, 4♣,  
2♠, A♠

Cards flipped up by Matey (5):

J♣, K♣, A♣, 7♥, A♠

Matey's Score: 35

Matey's Larder: 10

♦:6	♥:10
♠:6	♣:8

# Hall of Infamy



When it comes to card games, I'm pretty much a purist. An evening of poker means an evening of Seven-Card Stud, maybe occasionally broken up by Five-Card Draw or a few rounds of Indian Poker. Wild cards are verboten, and even the inclusion of a joker in the deck requires moderate alcohol consumption to induce lowered inhibitions. My snobbery towards people who put money under Free Parking began before my voice changed - admittedly, I'm talking about college, but still. I concede that I did use 4d6 when rolling up D&D characters, but I felt really, really guilty about it, and refused to switch scores around even when doing so would have gotten me a paladin.

Okay, before this gets any more pathetic, point being: I'm not much for variants. There's usually enough already going on in games I like that I rarely get the urge to tinker with another game or change anything, unless it seems unbalanced or just plain screwy. And, unlike many other types of games, traditional card games are usually pretty seamlessly assembled - it's not like you're ever playing Hearts and unable to figure out what's supposed to happen next. And even when stuff is arbitrary or illogical, it's often an integral part of the flavor of the game: Cribbage wouldn't be Cribbage without "His Nobs" or "His Heels", and though I can't exactly figure out the strategy of Durak, I still like it the way it is.

But I do like reading about variants, and I agree that the capacity for them is one of the hallmarks of a worthwhile card game. So, I've decided to include a few of the more interesting ones that have been invented as the game of Spoooney! evolved. These variants fall into three basic categories: Some were 'the other option' when various design junctures were reached, some are rules that were in the game at one point in time but proved too clunky or unbalancing to remain, and some are just stuff I was tempted to put in the game that would've toppled it over like an overdecorated wedding cake. Like that hasn't happened already.



*Weirdbeard*

**A**t the end of the game, players can still move cards around in lieu of playing. If you run out of cards in your hand, you can still move a card on your turn. The game ends when both players have run out of cards and have no further moves that they wish to make. All the cards in your opponent's masts go into your booty pile, and all the cards in your masts go into your opponent's booty pile. There is no Davy Jones' Locker. If playing three- or four-player, you capture the cards of the player on your right.



*Pegleg Stu*

**H**earts are played upside down, and are not flipped over and revealed until either the mast they are in is raised or captured. They may move normally. A player may only pick up and look at hearts played on his own masts. If a card that is placed upside down is later revealed to not be a heart, or if a heart is later revealed to have caused a column to go over 21, the opposing player immediately and automatically swabs the entire deck. (If playing three- or four-player, the cards are divided up equally, with any remainder going to Davy Jones' Locker.)



### *Increase Henry*

**O**n a player's turn, they can, instead of drawing/playing or moving a card, replace an exposed card on their side of the table with one from their hand. If a 3, 4, or 9 is taken into the hand and then played, no additional effect occurs.



### *Scurvy Pete*

**T**he card value of all clubs are *negative*: the 6 of Clubs is worth -6, the King and Queen are worth -10, etc. Yes, this means that the Jack of Clubs basically ends up cancelling whatever card is played underneath it. Masts can have a negative value, and -21 completes a mast just like a regular 21. This is a fun variant, and is especially disorienting in combination with Howard Johnson.



*Captain Scrummy*

If, at the end of the match, only one player crosses the rubicon, then all of the ladders of his or her opponents are added to his or her final score. A variation that appeals to riverboat gamblers and other such jackanapes.



*"The Baron"*

You must complete a mast using 5 cards to walk the plank, and none of those cards can be 4s. However, walking the plank turns *all* of the cards in the completed mast face up. This is the original walking the plank rule. It actually adds a little more excitement to the game, but tends to rather dominate the strategy, and also exacerbates the occasional one-sided pounding that occurs when the luck of the draw drastically favors one player over other.



## *Disheye*

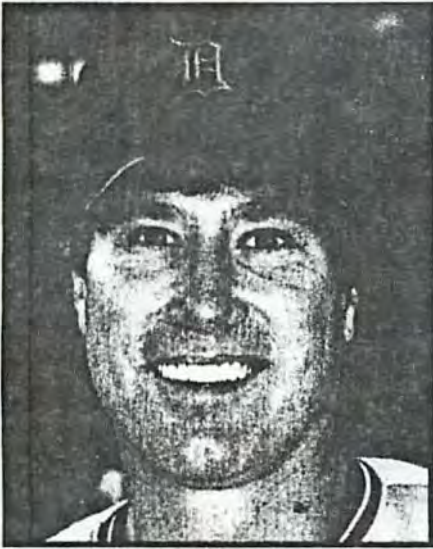
*(dish not shown)*

Jacks are never placed in the booty pile. Instead, when a Jack is captured, it is immediately placed by the capturer on one of their masts. All Jacks eventually end up in Davy Jones' Locker.



## *The Crafty Monsiñor Ernesto*

In this variant, 2s possess the special effect of 3s, 6s possess the special effect of 4s, and 8s possess the special effect of 9s. 3s, 4s, and 9s have no additional effects. Obviously not the most radical way to structure this variant, but one that wreaks surprising amounts of havoc nonetheless.



*Cap'n Pinky*

**A**t the beginning of the game, deal out no masts. Instead, give each player eight cards in their hand. Each player, starting with the dealer, then alternates playing individual cards face-up on their opponent's side. Masts are placed in strict left-to-right order. If playing three- or four-player, place the masts of the player on your left.



*Cap'n Planky*

**A**t the beginning of the game, deal out no masts. Instead, give each player eight cards in their hand. Each player then takes four of their cards and lays them face down in a row on the opponent's side. The cards are then flipped over and play proceeds as normal. If playing three- or four-player, you place the masts of the player on your left.



## *Zane, Lord of the Pirates*

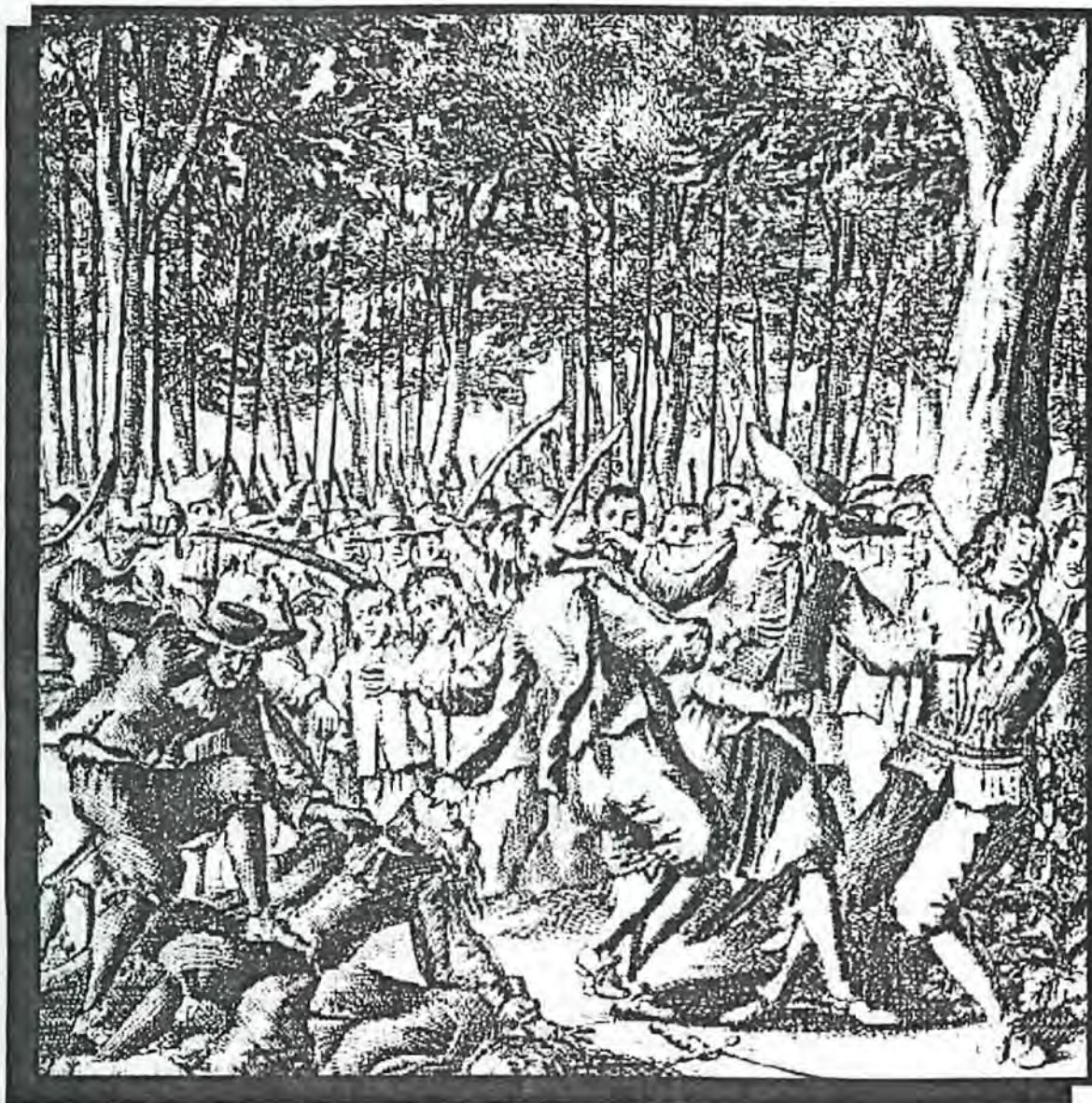
**L**ord of the Pirates is a gargantuan gauntlet of gaming guffawery, recommended to those on coast-to-coast train rides, the snowbound, and those who have accumulated "three strikes" in our enlightened justice system. It consists of ten consecutive games of Spooneye!, each one played using a combination of the listed variants:

- Game 1: Weirdbear, Cap'n Pinky
- Game 2: The Crafty Monsiñor Ernesto, Cap'n Planky
- Game 3: Increase Henry, Disheye
- Game 4: Scurvy Pete, "The Baron"
- Game 5: Pegleg Stu, Disheye
- Game 6: Cap'n Pinky, Weirdbear, Increase Henry
- Game 7: The Crafty Monsiñor Ernesto, Cap'n Planky, Disheye
- Game 8: Scurvy Pete, Pegleg Stu, "The Baron"
- Game 9: Increase Henry, Cap'n Pinky, Pegleg Stu, Disheye
- Game 10: All Variants (except Cap'n Pinky)

After the last game, tally up the scores. If a player's score equals or exceeds 300, they may add their larder to their total score; if not, their larder goes to their opponent.



# *Uno: Blight, Scourge, or Menace?*



I love cards for many, many reasons, not the least of which is that I'm a consumer, and as consumer objects go, cards are pretty much as good as it gets. The texture, the colors, the patterns. The waxiness of the coating, the thickness of the paper underneath, the sharpness of the specially designed knife edge. The way they riffle, the way they shuffle, the way they bridge. Their collective heft, their individual lightness, their startling aerodynamicity. The unnoticed, split-second slights of hand, the breathtakingly obvious stunts of dexterity, the everyday player's inimitable flourishes. I'm no Paul Lukas, but I know quality when I see it.

If there's an object with a more blissfully lopsided cost to utility ratio, I've yet to find it. You can do anything with cards. You can tell your fortune with them; many think that's what solitaire games were originally invented for, and the Tarot's occult properties came about some years after their original purpose, a complicated trick-taking game that utilized the Major Arcana as a permanent trump suit. You can probably do more different magic tricks with a regular deck of cards than with every other prop put together, and that includes all those silly trick decks. You can, with a few hours of practice, throw them up in the air and have them boomerang right back. You can attempt to toss them into a hat. You can stick them into the wheels of your bicycle and make cool noises. You can build a house out of them.

And you can play a couple of games with them, too. Unlike chess, checkers, go, Monopoly, etc., cards are not themselves a game. They're a tool for creating and playing a variety of games, just like a guitar or piano is a tool for creating and playing a variety of music. It's rare to meet someone who likes games at all who doesn't like at least one card game, because anyone can play cards, and there's a game to appeal to practically everyone. People in small groups, people in large groups, people alone and bored. People who want to spend a lifetime learning a game, people who want to spend 20 minutes, people who want to see if they can smack the tabletop faster than the other person. People who don't want to gamble, people who want to do nothing but gamble, people somewhere in the middle. People looking to sharpen their concentration, people looking to relax, people looking for a way to make human interaction a little less awkward.

There's more differences, once you start getting down into different games. Hearts, Ninety-Nine, Skat, and Bridge may all fall into the same basic trick-taking family, but switch over from one to another in the middle of an evening, and you might as well have switched the CD from Steely Dan to bis, or started drinking whiskey instead of wine. Switch over to Poker or Asshole, and it might as well be a different night.

But for all the disparity in mood different card games can engender, it's what they all have in common that acts as their universal strength. To quote someone far better versed in the history of cards than myself, playing card historian (and inventor of Ninety-Nine, the best card game of this half-century,) David Parlett:

At risk of sounding pretentious, I believe cards will continue to thrive because they relate so closely to the human condition. For all their variety, they embody a unique and unrivalled gaming idea: that of things mysterious on one side and obvious on the other, whose exercise involves unravelling the mystery from glimpses of the obvious in time to put that understanding to good use. There will always be those who decline the invitation, preferring to surrender themselves passively to the dictates of chance -- just as there are those who prefer to mark the backs or slyly peek at the fronts, even when not playing games. But so long as anyone is left to wield a card there

will always be intelligent games reflecting the basic set-up of life, which starts us all off from unplanned and unequal opening positions, and itself is nothing if not the ultimate game of "imperfect information".<sup>1</sup>

Like art, card games serve as a manner in which to reflect, understand, and, in an escapist but essentially benign way, control life. They are a metaphor; an imperfect metaphor, because you can win, but one that strengthens and prepares the mind in the same way that the metaphor of sports strengthens and prepares the body. Playing cards, and games in general, are maybe not literally an art form (and in this murky zone I could ramble on for 20 pages without coming to a more definite conclusion, so allow me to fudge,) as they comprise a closed logical system without any room for ambiguity or subjectivity. But calling cards a universal language is a less figurative statement than it may seem at first.<sup>2</sup> I can imagine a world without chess, Monopoly, or any particular card game as easily as I can imagine a world without, say, Dutch. You don't even have to try to imagine variations in form - more suits, different suits, different ranks, different card shapes - as they exist all over the world; anyone who thinks that a deck of cards equals 13 clubs, 13 hearts, 13 diamonds, and 13 spades should leave the country, or at least go to a library. But the idea of cards themselves is, like language, virtually a priori; in fact, I'm pretty sure I was playing War before I learned how to spell it. Nobody's absolutely sure who invented them or when they were invented, but in the last millenium they have left virtually no culture untouched. Like language, ideas inhabit a pack of cards, to be seen or missed, as animals inhabit the forest.

What's more, they're free. Well, pretty much - a good pack of cards will run you about the same amount as a decent pen and a pad of paper, which seems appropriate. Rulebooks cost money, are a practical necessity for certain highly formalized games, and here's hoping there's a couple of other people out there who actually enjoy reading about card games. But I'd venture to say that even today, what with all the Barnes and Nobles and such, the majority of people who play cards have never bought a book on cards in their lives. One strong similarity between cards and language is that, like every hipster's favorite smacked-out wife-killing pederast Nike shill<sup>3</sup> once said, "Language is a virus." And in much the same way, card games spread most vigorously (and interestingly) when people learn them directly from other people. And, as they do, the games change, spawn new variants, and sometimes even evolve. Which makes them, like neologisms, legends of the urban, suburban, and traditional variety, ballads, blues songs, and (in an oblique way, perhaps most analogously) dances, a product of folk art.

**B**ut, you know, looking back here with really nothing but a couple of measly Nostradamus-predicted cataclysms sitting between us and the next millenium, if the 20th century was about anything, it wasn't exactly the triumph of folk art. In card games as much as anything, the trend was toward formalization (rule books, national associations, and international tournaments all require standardization,) complexity (Contract Bridge is as bafflingly beguiling a

<sup>1</sup> David Parlett, *The Oxford Guide to Card Games*, Oxford University Press, 1990, p. 307

<sup>2</sup> Contract Bridge bidding systems, in fact, are basically language in microcosm, complete with dialects, idioms, and the occasional bemusing homonym. The majority of strategy in Contract Bridge involves parsing the information provided by the other three players into as full and coherent a picture as possible before the "actual game" even starts.

<sup>3</sup> William S. Burroughs. If you had to read this, consider yourself lucky.

product of Modernism as any Charlie Parker extension,) and, of course, we can't forget commerce. Commerce has existed in some form or other since civilization began, but it wasn't until this century that its contours became the prime determinant of the vast preponderance of culture. From the beginning of civilization on, creative expression has been irrevocably refracted through the tension created by turning it into commercial product. And music, thanks to a lot of the wrong kind of people and the devil muse Syncopaticus, has gotten off relatively easy<sup>4</sup> With television, newspapers, or even movies, knowing the commercial context - who created it, who hired the person to create it, what company hired that person, what company owns that company, and what other companies sponsor the whole thing - is at least as important to comprehending it as the putative content itself. And if that statement strikes you as overly generalized or even farfetched, it's my humble opinion that that's because it's become so natural for you that it's just like breathing, which you probably also didn't consciously realize you were doing right now until you read this here sentence.

Though my political views are probably best described as some sort of shaky semi-populist ground between Jerry Brown and Jello Biafra, I am, ultimately, a product of an intensely capitalist culture, and I can't say that I don't find some value in it. If it wasn't for mass newspaper production and networks of cartoonist syndication, the formal structure for people like George Herriman, Winsor McCay, and Charles Schulz to reach their artistic potential in might never have existed. I certainly prefer living in a culture where artworks are mass produced by large corporations to one where there's exactly one copy of their work and it's sold to the highest bidder - which is probably why cartooning and sequential art has been improving geometrically ever since McCay put pen to paper, while the (snicker) "High Arts" continue to chase their own post-post-representational tail when they don't just chop it up and snort it. And if you think that lack of contact with the commercial overculture automatically - or even usually - leads to artistic integrity or aesthetic quality, I've got this book of poetry by Jewel here I'd be happy to send you, packed in shredded issues of Maximum Rock 'N' Roll for protection. Let's face it; there's a real thrill on those rare occasions when an already worthwhile work of popular art (*Pulp Fiction*, *The Simpsons*, "Smells Like Teen Spirit") becomes a shared cultural touchstone, or even (*Slanted and Enchanted*, *High Fidelity*, *Eightball*) just a shared subcultural one. It can almost convince you that the purpose of the capitalist culture we live in is to decrease our total burden of shared isolation. Almost.

Which isn't even to put down plain old commercial crapola. I like commercial crapola, in controlled doses, if it's of a high level of craft. Haven't used my Playstation to do much but play my Loaf<sup>5</sup> CDs lately, and I'll buy maybe two new games in 1998. But I bet I'll *really* like those games. I mean, there's nothing inherently wrong with video games; they're okay in moderation, just like *Frasier*, James Cameron movies, and whippets. But none of them are doing your brain all that much good, and none of them leads to making too much contact with other real-life human beings. Heck, even Solitaire makes you at least say hello to yourself.

<sup>4</sup>Books have also gotten off relatively lightly, mainly because the good ones often require some actual effort to comprehend. In fact, looking back today on such infamous obscenity cases as those involving Ulysses and Lady Chatterly's Lover, it's tough not to get nostalgic for such an intellectually weighty class of sexually repressed zealots. I mean, jeez, personally, I'm even starting to miss Robert Bork.

<sup>5</sup>Archers of, Freud, Meat, etc.

20th century culture did produce a national obsession with cards, though, albeit a somewhat disconcertingly class-based one. It's difficult to comprehend or even believe today just what an enormous cultural influence Contract Bridge was in the Twenties and the Thirties. Thanks to Ely Culbertson, a man three parts Edmond Hoyle to two parts Stanley Burrell, the war over bidding systems was a bigger news story than any World Series had ever been; even people who didn't care had to have an opinion. When Culbertson, already a multi-millionaire from his books and his teaching organizations, took on his main rival Sidney Lenz, it was a bigger story than, to choose a telling example, the Lindbergh flight. The match lasted six weeks and was front-page news in virtually every newspaper the whole time, even surviving a break for the Christmas holiday. Two million words were written on it in the newspapers alone, to say nothing of radio or magazines. In other words, imagine a public event approximately as all-consumingly frivolous as Coke vs. Pepsi or Clinton's dick vs. Republican pricks, but about something that actually took a modicum of brains to comprehend.

After the glory days of Culbertson came the game's comfortable middle age of the 40s and 50s, typified by the genial perspicacity of Charles Goren. Since then, though, the status of not just bridge but cards in general has slid steadily downhill. Although several excellent card games have been invented since then, the last one to really make an impact was Canasta, which, though a fine game, wasn't ever deep enough to sustain mass interest past the fad stage. Bridge, which counted among its fans everyone from Somerset Maugham to Humphrey Bogart to Pee Wee Reese to President Eisenhower (whose own philandering I accord much more respect to, as he was a tournament-caliber Bridge player while Clinton only seems to be able to master Hearts) in its day, is now a niche activity, like building model railroads or birdwatching, and the median age of the participants is probably even higher. Hell, actors don't even play (in between takes any more, the impetus for that game's popularity in the first place

**W**hy there was such a precipitous decline in interest is not tough to figure out. No matter how you slice it, there's no real money to be made from card games, at least by business standards: the money that all the bridge experts ever raked in, in today's dollars, would probably add up to one good-sized summer blockbuster. In a market-driven culture, if there's no profit to be made, there's no reason for something to be hip, and few will bother to repeatedly hammer the message that you need this thing here to make your life complete. In short, card games, unlike video games, movies, and pop music, (but like many other activities condescendingly termed "hobbies",) are tough to use as the egg beater that turns consumer interest into the froth of the highly manipulatable apprehension that you'll miss out on the next big thing that makes the whole modern entertainment-industrial complex go round. I mean, we've added exactly one card to the deck in the last 500 years, and even *that's* still quite a bone of contention. Go on, get your head frozen in a jar and come back in a couple of hundred years when they find the cure for ennui. You're not going to miss anything.

This isn't to say that cards haven't had their success stories in the last 30 years or so - just not playing cards per se. Anyone with an interest in geek culture knows about the phenomenon of Magic: The Gathering, the game invented by a math professor looking to break into the gaming industry that has since managed to effectively swallow said industry whole. Some basic back-

ground information: Magic: The Gathering was the first (and, with the exception of the tragically obscure - and therefore quite affordable - *On The Edge*, still the best) of the genre of collectible card games, in which each player builds their own deck of 40-80 cards out of the hundreds (if not *thousands*) that they have bought, and then competes that deck against that of another player. Last I heard, Wizards of the Coast, the Seattle-based company that has produced the billions of Magic cards sold around the world, bought out the formerly mighty TSR itself.

I have mixed reactions to Magic. As someone who spent a few hundred dollars on the cards back in the day (though, thanks to the luck of getting in early, I made that money back and considerably more,) and who pretty much remembers the year 1994 in the order of importance Move to Colorado-Stable Relationship-Magic-Mellow Gold-College Graduation, I obviously have an appreciation for it. And it is a really good game. Forget about the scary men with the Spawn T-shirts and unkempt beards that carry around long white boxes of cards and brag about their hundred-dollar cards like porn stars boast about their capacity for serial erection. Ignore the fact that Dungeons and Dragons prevented either you or somebody you know from losing their virginity in high school. Try to block out the fact that, at least once to my immediate knowledge<sup>6</sup>, oral sex has been traded for a Black Lotus. What you're left with is a neat idea - and not just the deck design aspect, but all the simple, elegant mechanics that beguiled me four years ago and that I still couldn't ever imagine having thought of myself - whose tragic flaw was that its designer never imagined how nuts people would go over it.

But people have, and in ways that are, to any outside observer, not particularly healthy. The main thing that turned me off to Magic is that, after I graduated from college and my friends scattered in various directions, I couldn't really find any other people to play with who didn't, like, creep me out. What attracted me about the game, originally, besides the mystery of not knowing what all the cards were, was how it creatively empowered the player in a way that no game really previously had. I probably enjoyed trying to design the most ludicrous, unwieldy, and obtuse decks playable, and then trying to pull off trades (read: swindles) of my suitemates to get the cards I needed, all while they were doing the exact same thing in their own inimitable manners, more than actually playing the game itself. Which is to mistakenly assert that that wasn't playing the game itself. It was kind of like playing Competitive Legos crossed with Wiffle Capitalism, and if it proves anything, it's that capitalism as a closed system can be fun - a lot of fun - when you don't take it seriously and losing doesn't have any dire consequences.

**T**he competitive side, like in all games, is necessary. If on some level you don't want to win, then there's really no point in playing. But there's wanting to win, and then being incapable of enjoying a game unless you win, and that's where the Magic line started to get drawn for me. I'm not a particularly competitive person, nor am I someone who's particularly interested in conspicuous consumption. But what seemed to me simply as a more social stress-reliever than Nintendo has evolved in the hands of those (abetted at least semi-intentionally, of course, by Wizards of the Coast) who play it into the worst of both worlds, like playing tennis with a bunch of arrested adolescents in a world where the price of your racquet really did determine 90% of the game. The game ceased to be fun; either there was just no contest, or I ended up

<sup>6</sup> No, not that immediate

using the cards I had fucked into in the beginning that I was trying to sell because they were worth far too much money to the sort of people who had just whopped me to possibly keep, which made me feel like I'd lost on a much broader level. The only way not to lose was not to play.

On a superficial level, I dropped up out of Magic for the same reason that I've given up my once-stated goal of being the Chuck Eddy of video games: I like meeting girls. But the real problem with Magic (and video games) is a little more wide-ranging. Both are, moreso than most hobbies, cultures of addiction. Now, addiction is a word that's been so overused and hanalified that it's lost nearly all meaning, so let me borrow a definition<sup>7</sup> from David Foster Wallace. "Something is malignantly addictive," he writes, "if (1) it causes real problems for the addict, and (2) it offers itself as a relief from the very problems it causes."<sup>8,9</sup> On the first point, Magic gets off pretty easy; the worst problem you could say it causes is social ineptitude and pathetically escapist power-tripping plus an empty wallet, a description that could fit a good 90% of commercial culture to some degree or other. Plus, there is an upside to it; although the social interaction in large settings like (eek) gaming conventions gives off a disconcertingly Jane Goodall-esque vibe, overall it's a relatively social and kindness-inducing game.

In fact, compared with most of the *real* crapola that gets passed off as entertainment out there, Magic comes out looking pretty damn good indeed. At its core, despite all the flaws, it's a game whose original inspiration came from Eros instead of Mammon<sup>10</sup>, and on some level you can always tell the difference. But the second point, although not always literally applicable, does strike a lot closer to home. The most fun I ever had with Magic, just like any other addiction, came at the beginning, when the effect was novel and the dosage was low - under 50 bucks, even. Which is what gives Wizards of the Coast the effective license to print money<sup>11</sup>; like with any addiction, once you get into it, it's difficult to not formulate the simple equation More Supply = More Fun, sticking to it far past the point when it continues to be true at all.

**T**his issue is obviously not confined to the sexy, high-stakes world of Collectible Card Gaming. It's the easiest and maybe most instinctual reaction to the anxiety of diminish ing returns - just keep upping the voltage, because I'd rather feel bad than feel nothing at all. Going back to Wallace, who quite literally wrote the book (or, at least, a really, really big book) on such matters, there's a portion of another essay he wrote that seems like a far better explanation of what I'm trying to get at than my own perky but generally shallow intellect is capable of articulating. The essay, for a little background, is the title piece from his collection, *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*. The "thing" in mention is a week-long *Celebrity Zenith*

<sup>7</sup> Among other things.

<sup>8</sup> David Foster Wallace, "E Unibus Pluram: Television and U.S. Fiction", *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*, Little, Brown, and Company, 1997, p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> "A cycle perhaps best illustrated by the aphorism "You smoke because you're uneasy, and you're uneasy because you smoke."

<sup>10</sup> It's unfair to talk about all of this without mentioning WotC's at least two-thirds-hearted attempts to mitigate this tendency: there are different levels of tournament play that restrict or ban many cards from being used, and, although I haven't seen or tried it, the *Portal* decks they've come out with look like a reasonable way to (if I'm interpreting their purpose correctly) keep a lid on the whole thing for those who want to just dabble. Although they do keep cranking out the new cards, well over 2000 last I checked, plowing narrower and narrower tracts of arable imagined landscape. My advice, if you're interested: buy 30 bucks worth of the latest edition, get a friend to buy 30 bucks worth, and for God's sake, play for ante.

(which he sophomorically dubs the *Nadir*, though admittedly that's a pretty tough joke to resist considering the eventual circumstances,) cruise that *Harper's* sent him on, in order to write an experiential piece on the inhuman levels of pampering (Celebrity's loaded<sup>11</sup> gerund, not mine) that exists on such cruises. It more or less works, for a while, until, triggered by seeing another cruise ship in port even more gleaming and sumptuous and entropy-denying than the one he's on, he suffers an attack of lucidity:

I am suffering here from a delusion, and I know that it's a delusion, this envy of another ship, and still it's painful. It's also representative of a psychological syndrome that I notice has gotten steadily worse as the Cruise wears on, a mental list of dissatisfactions and grievances that started picayune but has quickly become nearly despair-grade. I know that the syndrome's cause is not simply the contempt bred of a week's familiarity with the poor old *Nadir*, and that the source of all the dissatisfaction isn't the *Nadir* at all but rather plain old humanly-conscious me, or, more precisely, that ur-American part of me that craves and responds to pampering and passive pleasure: the Dissatisfied Infant part of me, the part that always and indiscriminately WANTS...We're maybe now in a position to appreciate the lie at the dark heart of Celebrity's brochure. For this -- the promise to sate the part of me that always and only WANTS - is the central fantasy the brochure is selling. The fantasy they're selling is the whole reason why all the subjects in all the brochures photos have facial expressions that are at once orgasmic and oddly slack: these expressions are the facial equivalent of going "Aaaahhhhh," and the sound is not just that of somebody's Infantile part exulting in finally getting the total pampering it's always wanted but also that of the relief all the other parts of that person feel when the Infantile part finally *shuts up*. The thing to notice is that the real fantasy here isn't that this promise will be kept, but that such a promise is keepable at all. This is a big one, this lie; it may well be *the* Big One, come to think of it. And of course I want to believe it - fuck the Buddha - I want to believe that maybe this Ultimate Fantasy Vacation will be *enough* pampering, that this time the luxury and pleasure will be so completely and faultlessly administered that my Infantile part will be sated. But the Infantile part of me is insatiable - in fact its whole essence or *dasein* or whatever lies in its a priori insatiability. In response to any environment of extraordinary gratification and pampering, the Insatiable Infant part of me will simply adjust its desires upward until it once again levels out at its homeostasis of terrible dissatisfaction. And sure enough, on the *Nadir* itself, after a few days of delight and then adjustment, the Pamper-swaddled part of me that WANTS is now back, and with a vengeance.<sup>11</sup>

People who seek empirical evidence of the view stated above are encouraged to seek out those fascinating artifacts known as old commercials. Ever notice that any commercial that's over a decade old seems hilariously if not surreally manipulative to you? That remarkably few of the people around you - including, possibly, yourself - seem to think that present-day commercials have all that much of an effect on their viewpoint or their purchasing actions? That it's the more or less the same companies who are producing and airing those commercials today as it was 30 years ago, and the only difference is that most of them have gotten a lot, lot bigger? The spiral stairs of the age of the spectacle keep wending upwards and upwards, and all that can be hoped is

<sup>11</sup> No pun intended. Well, maybe some pun intended. But I really couldn't think of a suitable synonym.



that if get to the top we don't just keep climbing. No, wait a sec, that's a little too optimistic for me. All that can be hoped for is that we aren't doing that right now.

This naturally brings us to the subject of tonight's harangue, Uno. I loathe Uno, for a simple and fairly logical reason: it's the thing in one of my fields of aesthetic interest that best represents everything I genuinely detest about the culture I live in. It's like how Chuck Berry disciples feel about Jive Bunny and the Mastermixers, or how Bergman nerds feel about Titanic, or how fans of Picasso must feel about Margaret Keane (me, I like Margaret Keane,) or how Winsor McCay-heads feel about Hanna-Barbara, or people who did their Master's Thesis on Wallace Stevens probably feel about Maya Angelou, or how septugenarian Cubs fans feel about the Florida Blockbusters, or how people who didn't eat a lot of lead paint as kids feel about James Redfield. Uno is 100% American Cheese, its status as kitsch eagerly awaited, as that might mean nobody actually ever plays it anymore.

Uno takes a perfectly worthwhile if rather minor folk game called Rockaway (a variant of the better known Crazy Eights,) makes no changes but the most perfunctory (more cards, different card values, colors instead of suits, a moderately appealing but basically mediocre mid-60s design sensibility), and sells it back to the public for inflated prices. I don't loathe Uno because it's a bad game - it's no better than Rockaway, which is at best a light and simple-minded diversion, but better either one of them than, like, Mall Madness. I loathe Uno because it was made on the backs of people who cared about cards, by people who cared only about money, and it shows.

Uno is mental bottle feeding, played mostly in the sort of households where Snapple is considered health food, the couches are covered in plastic wrap, the Christmas tree is covered by snow that came out of an aerosol can, and television and sucrose are the main tools of control. Uno is a dead end, worse than giving a kid Garfield instead of Peanuts books for their birthday<sup>11</sup>. Kids don't make up their own games with an Uno deck. Other kids don't teach them new games. I've never even met anyone who plays a significant variant. When you get bored with it, you have to whine at your parents until they go and buy you another crappy game (have you seen Five Alive, the game that they sometimes package Uno with? Jumpin' Jesus on a pogo stick, that thing makes Uno look like the fucking LSAT.) Give a kid a deck of real cards and you've given them access to hundreds of years of the best that humanity has to offer. Give them Uno, and you've created another consumer who thinks that corporations hold the key to fun.

Which is not to say that any of this was going through my mind when I invented Spooneye! (or at least a skeletal version thereof) four years ago. That was, in order of importance: it's 4am, I'm bored, I can't get to sleep, and none of the card games me and my girlfriend play are even remotely antagonistic enough to suit my personality. Past that original moment of inspiration, as inexplicable as they all are, the rest has just been tweaking. And there's been a lot of it, much that didn't originate with me. Spooneye!, like all card games, has been a communal effort, and I wouldn't restrict that community to people I actually know or

<sup>12</sup> Ibid pp. 315-7.

<sup>11</sup> Actually, in the case of Uno households, I imagine the present of choice would be a *Space Jam* video, in which case you might as well just stick an icepick into the back of the kid's head and wiggle it out around some, thereby skipping the middleman and just slicing the proverbial Gordian Knot child rearing-wise.

even people who are still even alive. I hope it inspires other people to do the same thing; I hope it illustrates that, even today, it's possible to do something creative just for the sheer sake of doing it, even if its primary purpose isn't to be sold or bought. Even if it's just ideas.

There's a hundred card games out there waiting to be invented, just as there are a thousand zines, albums, and comic books being worked on right now by people all across this country, people who care more about committing an act of creative expression than making a buck<sup>14</sup>. And that makes me happy. Really, I'm a pretty positive-thinking fellow. I mean, 20 years ago, the zine culture most likely responsible for putting this document in your hands without undue interference barely even existed. Many forms of craftsmanship have fallen into disrepair, but others have risen up in their place; there's all sorts of great work going on right under our noses, if we can be bothered to look, by people just like you and me except that maybe they know some stuff that we don't. And there's no reason you can't be one of them, because odds are, you know some stuff that the rest of us don't - it's just a matter of finding the best form by which to express it. If I have a token of faith, it's that there are no bad genres, only bad intentions.

And speaking of bad intentions, this leads us to the original inspiration - and, I suppose, the real point of this whole rant. At various points during Spooneye!'s development, some helpful souls whom I won't embarrass by naming have informed me, repeatedly, that I was shooting myself in the foot by not making Spooneye! a commercial game - that is, subjecting it to Unofication, by altering the deck so that it couldn't be played with a regular deck of cards and then trying to sell it. Pardon my utter lack of maturity for a moment, but I've spent eight pages so far expressly in order to set up the proper context for the following sentence. Blow me.

I've got nothing against commercial games, or even good commercial card games like Set or Water Works - games which which require and are designed around a unique deck. But, if this essay has articulated anything, I hope it's that turning this game into another product of commercial culture would destroy everything about it that, to me, makes it worthwhile. To be honest, I don't think its main strength is as a card game. As such things go, it's pretty good: deeper than Cribbage, less inaccessibly baroque than Contract Bridge, though not the other way around, and, if nothing else, at least not de trop. And if it was a commercial card game, it'd be another pretty good commercial card game, whee, and I'd make a few bucks off it, and if I saw it in a store, I'd probably never buy it or play it, because I rarely can find time or people to play the dozen or so card and board games I own already. Its main strength, as I see it, is that it contains the possibility of inspiring someone else to make something better. Please be assured that I lack neither greed nor self-interest. Really, ask around. If anything, it's their gargantuan appetite that makes Unofication strike me as not only repugnant but completely counter-productive. Greed for money strikes me as pretty small potatoes, personally. I'm greedy, as any artist with even a shred of integrity in their bones will readily admit, for immortality.

**T**he other silly if perhaps flattering (depending on how you take it) question I get asked is when I'm going to try to do another game. My stock answer is that I was about to ask them the same question. Which is snide if satisfying, basically just a passive-ag-

<sup>14</sup> Not that there's anything inherently wrong with making a buck off of creative expression, as long as it's something you'd be willing to buy yourself.

gressive version of a MAD magazine Snappy Answer. To be honest, after making a conscious effort exactly twice, I haven't had any ideas for another game - at least, not one that I like enough to devote this much effort to - and I won't be particularly surprised or upset if I never have another one in my life. There's enough other stuff out there to keep me occupied, I'm sure.

But just because my answer's glib doesn't make it untrue. Odds are, even if you've read this far, you're not nearly as interested in the history and mechanics of playing cards as I am, and, though I'm proud of what limited expertise I may have, I do try to avoid being an indie-rock-style pigfucker who's going to try to convince (or, like a true indie-rock pigfucker, passive-aggressively insinuate) that not sharing my own at least partially circumstantially constructed aesthetic obsessions points to a defect in your own character or intellect. Although I sincerely hope that you have at least one aesthetic obsession - it's mentally healthier than religion, that's for sure - it would be an incredibly boring world if we all shared the same one. Almost as boring, in fact, as a world in which nobody had any weird obsessions and just felt a completely unimpeachable vague appreciation for everything that ended up in front of their faces, but that's another essay. Or maybe it isn't. Anyway.

My point is that, even among my own aesthetic obsessions, I wouldn't rank playing cards as first in personal importance - just, perhaps, in degree of deviation from the norm. But I do care about them a lot. And I hope that what I've tried to do here leads you to at least consider why one could find this particular obsession to be of value, if not to learn more about card games, their history, and their enormous cultural influence, if not to tinker around with a game you like to see if you can make yourself like it even more, if not to just toss this book aside and start working on your own game. This is an end, but it's not a dead end.

# Appendix A

## Index of Nautical Terminology

**10-spot:** Any 10, Queen, or King.

**Booty Pile:** The pile into which each player places his or her captured cards.

**Building a Mast:** To play a card upon another card already in the playing area.

**Captain:** The non-dealer, who plays first.

**Capturing a Card:** Placing *any* card, whether from a raised mast or a captured mast, into your booty pile.

**Capturing a Mast:** To take a mast from your opponent's side and place it in your booty pile after raising a mast on your own side.

**Crossing the Rubicon:** Reaching or exceeding 100 points below the line.

**Crow's Nest:** The top, or exposed, card in a mast.

**Davey Jones's Locker:** Where cards captured by none of the players go to.

**Double Mutiny:** Exchanging hands with one's opponent as a result of completing a mast with three 7s.

**Dropping Anchor:** Moving a 3, 4, or 9 on one's first turn, thereby gaining its additional effect.

**Hoisting the Colors:** Raising a mast that consists entirely of one suit. In this case, all cards in the completed mast are flipped face-up.

**Hornswogging:** Raising a mast by spooneyeing an opponent's card onto that mast.

**Keelhauled:** To not reach 100 points during the same game as one's opponent(s), thereby losing your larder.

**Larder:** The score listed above the line, consisting of 2 points for each diamond, 1 point for each spade, and negative 1 point for each club.

**Match:** A series of games, played until at least one player reaches 100 points.

**Matey:** The dealer, who plays last.

**Masts:** The eight (or twelve) columns that comprise the playing area.

**Raising a Mast:** To build a mast on your side of the table that adds up to 21.

**Scurvy:** The colloquial term for clubs.

**Skipper:** The player in Cutthroat Spoooney! who plays second, or the player in Partnership Spoooney! who is Captain's partner and plays third.

**Spooneye (n):** Any 9.

**Spooneye (v):** The act of taking an exposed card on an opponent's side and placing it on one's own column, after playing a 9.

**Swabbie:** In Partnership Spoooney!, the player who is Matey's partner and plays second.

**Swabbing the Deck:** Leaving no cards on the table after a capture occurs.

**Swashbuckling:** Raising a mast by playing a 4 and another card on the same mast.

**Walking the Plank:** Raising a mast that consists of four or more cards.

# Appendix B

## Uriah Heep Personnel 1965-76

	IEF KERSLAKE Drums	PAUL NEWTON Bass	KEN HENSLEY Keyboards	DAVID BYRON Vocals	MICK BOX Guitar	ALEX NAPIER Drums	NIGEL OLSSON Drums	KEITH BAKER Drums	IAN CLARKE Drums	MARK CLARK Bass	GARY THAIN Bass	JOHN WETTON Bass	
1965			THE JIMMY BROWN SOUND	THE STALKYAC	THE STALKERS								
1966	THE GODS	THE GODS	THE GODS	SPICE	SPICE	SPICE							
1967										THE ST. JAMES INFIRMARY			
1968	TOI FAI	SPICE	TOI FAI						ERESSIOA		BRITISH SOUL BANDS		
1969							PLASTIC PENNY	THE BAREFOOT		EDONSUBM			
1970	NATIONAL MESH BAND	BRIAN HEPP (Dec)	BRIAN HEPP (Dec)	BRIAN HEPP (Dec)	BRIAN HEPP (Dec)	BRIAN HEPP (Dec)	BRIAN HEPP (Feb)	BRIAN HEPP (May)	BRIAN HEPP (Sept)	BRIAN HEPP (Dec)	KEEF HARTLEY	FAMILY	
1971								BRIAN HEPP (Sept)	BRIAN HEPP (Dec)				
1972	BRIAN HEPP (May)	Leaves U. M. (May)							Leaves U. M. (Nov)	BRIAN HEPP (May)	Leaves U. M. (Feb)	BRIAN HEPP (Feb)	KING ERICSON
1973													
1974										TEMPEST			
1975										TEMPEST Drabonds		Leaves U. M. (June)	BRIAN HEPP (June)
1976													

# Appendix C

## The Rules of Spoooneye!

**THE DEAL** Lowest cut deals first and the turn to deal alternates. Dealer (known as *Matey*) deals four cards to each player, alternating one at a time, face down, to non-dealer (*Captain*) first. Matey then deals four cards face up in a row in front of Captain, and then four face up in front of himself. These are the players' columns, known as *masts*. The deck is then placed to one side as a draw pile.

**CARD VALUES** Aces have a value of 1. Pip cards are worth their face value. Queens and Kings have a value of 10. Jacks are worth 10 if there is no card underneath them; otherwise, they match the value of the card they are directly on top of.

**THE PLAY** Captain goes first. Each turn, a player must do either one (and only one) of the following:

- a) Draw a card, and then play a card on either side of the board, either playing on an existing mast or starting a new one.
- b) Move an uncovered card in one of his or her masts to an adjacent mast.

**SPECIAL CARDS** Three cards, when played, have additional effects:

- a) When a 3 is played, the player immediately draws another card from the draw pile. The player's turn then ends.
- b) When a 4 is played, the player must immediately play another card from his or her hand. The turn then ends (unless another 4 was played). Note that another card is not drawn when a 4 is played, and that a player's hand can vary in size.
- c) When a 9 (*spoooneye*) is played, that player takes any exposed card from one of his opponent's masts and places it on one of his own. A new mast may be started in this fashion. Special cards taken in this manner never have additional effects, and if there are no cards on the opponent's side, the 9 has no effect.

Note that a card takes effect for whoever just played it, regardless of on whose mast it is played. Completing masts, capturing masts, and closing masts always takes precedence over such effects, but the effects do always eventually take place, even if the card is no longer on the board.

**MOVING CARDS** As described above, a player may choose to move any exposed card in one of his masts to an adjacent mast, under the following restrictions:

- a) A new mast may not be created in this manner.
- b) Once the deck is exhausted, no cards may be moved.
- c) If a special card is moved, it does *not* take effect as it would if played from the hand. The exception is that, on each player's first turn, shifting a special card already face up *does* take effect as if it were played from the hand.

**MASTS** If a player has less than four masts, a new mast can be started to either side of the existing ones. No player may have more than four masts, nor can any mast ever total more than 21. There are no spaces between masts. If for any reason a mast is removed, the remaining masts immediately close together.

**RAISING AND CAPTURING MASTS** If a player's mast totals 21, it has been *raised*. The raising player takes that mast and any one of his or her opponent's masts (if any), and then places them face down in his or her booty pile. In some cases one or more of the captured cards will be placed face up:

- a) If the capturing player's mast is made up of more than three cards, this is known as *walking the plank*, and any card past the third is placed face up.
  - b) If the capturing player's pile is made up of only one suit (i.e. K♠-4♠-7♠), this is known as *hoisting the colors*, and the entire mast is placed face up. Cards captured from opponent's mast go face down, even if all of the same suit.
  - c) If, by capturing, the player leaves no remaining cards on the table, this is known as *swabbing the deck*, and both masts taken are placed face up in the booty pile.
- Swabbing, hoisting, and/or walking simultaneously confers no additional bonuses.

**EXCHANGING CARDS** If a player raises a mast by using only 7s and/or Jacks, then a *double mutiny* occurs, and, after the capture is finished, the players exchange their current hands. Masts, booty piles, etc., are not affected. This can result in players having a different number of cards in their hand than they did previously.

**ENDGAME** Once the draw pile is exhausted, players play out their remaining cards without drawing. If one player runs out of cards first, the other player plays out his or her remaining cards uninterrupted. Any cards left uncaptured go to *Davy Jones's locker*: they count toward neither players' score. Also, in the event that playing on any of the eight masts would bring the total above 21, and that no cards already in masts may be moved, the game immediately ends.

**SCORING** When the game is over, players first total up the number of cards in their booty pile. Face-up cards count as two cards each. Then, the player turns all cards face-up and re-counts their cards as follows: Diamonds are each worth 2, Spades are each worth 1, Hearts are each worth 0, and Clubs are each worth *negative 1*.

The number of cards is written below the line and is the player's score. The suit-based count is written above the line, and is the player's *larder*. Games are played until one or both of the players' scores reach or exceed 100. If both players reach or exceed 100 after the same game, then both add their total larder to their score, and whoever has the greater total score wins. If only one player reaches or exceeds 100, they add their total larder to their score, while the other player's larder is lost.

# Acknowledgements

It would be incorrect to say that Spooneye! would not have existed without the help of other people. However, it is correct to say that it would have sucked. Here are the people who made it not suck:



Jesse Ehnert, besides being my best friend and perpetual gaming buddy since I was 11, was the first person to play Spooneye! against somebody besides me, losing thirty bucks to his college roommate in the process. While spending an arduous month with me hanging out on a tropical island, he also helped me refine and improve the rules of Spooneye! immeasurably, co-wrote the rules sheet, co-wrote the history of the game, and was the instigator of all of the really goofy faux-pirate terminology enclosed within. He is currently the co-webmaster of [www.spooneye.com](http://www.spooneye.com), when he's not kicking ass on Mario Kart 64.



Jens "Weirdbeard" Carstensen, besides being the only drummer adept enough to allow me to retain the pretense that I have an iota of musical talent, also invented several of the variants and has just generally been an invaluable help in the evolution of this game. Just one example: The first time I showed the game to him, he pointed out that, when you played a 9, it was pretty dull to just get to take one of your opponent's cards and put it in your booty pile, and suggested taking the card and putting it on your side instead. He also does a really good impression of Alf.



Mishka Shubaly, besides being my stepbrother and just an all around swell fella, is responsible for organizing the very first Spooneye! tournament (I made it to the finals, then lost to his drummer Ricky. Then we kept playing until everyone was too drunk to shuffle.) He is also the utterer of the most convincing "Arrr!" I've heard as yet.



Andy Brown, besides being my roommate for my first eight months in New York, which is onerous enough on its own, has given way more thought and offered way, way more incisive constructive criticism on my endless stream of card-related blather than I have any right to. I could go into more detail, but he has requested that I simply write something in his acknowledgment "that will reel in the ladies." So, 5'9", 140, brown hair, does a genuinely mind-blowing karaoke version of Pearl Jam's "Alive," even-tempered, outgoing, and knows every dance step known to man, including the Captain Morgan aka the 'Comin' Alive When It's After Five.'

Thanks also go to: My family, Sam Sacks, Mike Morell, Joe Soriano, Brice White, Tins McCall, Jeff Stern, Greta Englert, Robert McCormack, Jason Powers (who drew the cover illustration,) the Egyptian Ratscrew Website (for the card images) and Beef's Pirate Image Archive (for the pirate images), Scott Harris (for pretty much everything else,) John Bergdahl, Andy Lutz, and anybody who's actually bothering to read this all the way through. And special thanks go to Janet Haven, who played the very first game with me and could have told me it sucked when it did, but didn't and now I'm done.



# Other Stuff

## Geekcore #1 (\$2.00)

Amateurish but still kind of charming, this issue featured a good article about fonts, a funny rant about why comic book stores suck, and some other stuff that I can't remember right now but I'm sure is just wonderful.

## Geekcore #2 (\$1.00)

My first attempt at using Pagemaker, and it kind of shows. Nevertheless, the writing here is probably better than in the first issue, and Brian Glover's article about retro still gives me a chuckle. The Local H review is also pretty amusing, even though I totally disagree with what I wrote now.

## Crazy Rhythms #1 (\$1.00)

The debut issue of my record review zine. Features a turgid if sporadically insightful review of Maxinquaye, and overstated and oddly defensive retrospective of Carter the Unstoppable Sex Machine, some random reviews, and one too many personal essays.

## Crazy Rhythms #2 (\$1.50)

An improvement, though still kind of haphazard. The Marshall Crenshaw retrospective is pithy enough, I suppose, and SPIN editor Eric Weisbard has many worthwhile things to say about the process of rock criticism, if you're interested. Clip art provides most of the remaining highlights.

## Crazy Rhythms #3 (\$1.50)

Although a mish-mash of recycled magazine articles and old interviews, this housecleaning is still probably the best issue so far, as well as the first to contain other writers, a trend that will hopefully continue. I'm still pretty fond of the Philip Glass piece, overlong as it may be, and the Christgau interview is nicely snarky.

Extra copies of this here manual, incidentally, are \$5.00. To order or to send comments, questions, suggestions, death threats, etc., write to: Jesse Fuchs, 601 West 110th St., #8J2, NY, NY 10025, or e-mail me at [spooneye@escape.com](mailto:spooneye@escape.com), which by the time you read this might actually have something on it besides these rules. And if you live in the city, look out for the Denver Zest playing at a sticky-floored club near you. Everything in this document is Copyright © 1998 by Jesse Fuchs. Spooneye™ is a trademark of Jesse Fuchs. Unauthorized duplication of this document for non-commercial purposes is permitted, as long as this notice is kept intact, but any commercial use is prohibited, and if you even briefly contemplate creating a thinly disguised version of the game that requires some sort of commercial "specialty" deck, I will track down your relatives and FedEx you their fingers one knuckle at a time. Thank you for your cooperation.

