

FORT WORTH GIN

In the fall of 1997 a group of local cowboys introduced an unsuspecting camp of antelope hunters to a card game they called "Fort Worth Gin". John Greer saw this as an opportunity for an additional source of income, so he brought the game back to Tampa, and soon thereafter it became a regular event. As there were a few gaps in the rules, local rules were adopted.

A. GENERAL RULES/DEFINITIONS

1. Aces are always low.
2. A "meld" may consist of a "spread" of 3 or 4 like cards, (e.g. 3's or queens), or a "run" of 3 or more consecutive cards in a suit, (e.g. 9, 10, Jack of Hearts).
3. A "spread" cannot contain more than 4 of a kind, including wild cards.
4. No meld may contain more wild cards than natural cards, however a wild card may be played as either wild or natural. For example, if 4's are wild, a run consisting of the 3 and 4 of Hearts and the 4 of Diamonds could be played as the 3, 4, 5 of Hearts with the 4 of Hearts natural and the 4 of Diamonds wild.
5. The full game consists of 13 hands with the wild card progressing from Aces on the first hand, 2's on the second hand, and so on until Kings are played as wild cards on the thirteenth and final hand.
6. A short game of odd numbers wild (seven hands) or a very short game of even numbers wild (six hands) can be played when time is limited.
7. The object of the game is to "close" or "go out" by placing all of the cards in a player's hand on the table in melds and discarding his last card.
8. A player's turn must begin with the draw of the top card from either the draw pile or the discard pile. A player's turn must end with a discard including when a player closes. The discard is final and the player's turn over when the discard touches the table, even if the card is still in the player's hand.
9. Reasonable care will be taken to place each discard on the top of the discard pile so every other player will have a reasonable opportunity to follow the play of the cards.
10. If a player accidentally discards before he draws a card, he must draw, and then his turn is over without the opportunity for additional plays.
11. A player must accumulate and play a meld from the cards in his own hand (called getting "on the board") and thereafter may play additional melds from his hand or add to any melds "on the board". A player may not play on or from cards "on the board" until he has first placed a meld "on the board" from his own hand.
12. Substitution of wild cards contained in melds "on the board" may be done by a player who is "on the board". To substitute for a wild card, you must replace the wild card with the natural card it represents. In the case of "spreads", you must only match number, while in a run, both number and suit must match. The wild card may then be kept in the player's hand, used with cards in the player's hand to make another meld, or moved to another meld on the table.
13. A wild card in a spread represents any missing card, however when used in a run a wild card must be declared and placed to represent a specific card in the run.
14. A wild card cannot be substituted for another wild card on the table unless it is the natural card the wild card represents (e.g. in a run consisting of the Jack, Queen of spades and the King of hearts wild, the King of spades could replace the King of hearts but the king of diamonds could not).
15. If a card is exposed on the deal, the hand will be redealt.
16. In the event of a misdeal, all cards will be thrown in and the same dealer redeals.
17. If an error made in play is recognized before a player has discarded he may correct the error in any manner and continue his turn until he discards.
18. If an error made in play is recognized after a player has discarded but before another player has played, he must replace all cards involved in the erroneous play in his hand until his next turn.
19. If an error made in play is recognized after one or more subsequent players have played on the erroneous play, an effort will be made to replace all cards in the hand of players who played them. If agreement is not reached among the players as to the correct remedy, the hand will be thrown in and redealt.

B. PLAY OF THE GAME

1. The game may be played by 2 to 5 players.
2. Players first draw for deal and position. Low card deals, the second low card sits to the dealer's left and so on. The deal rotates to the left.
3. Seven cards are dealt one at a time to each player and one card is turned face up to begin the discard pile.
4. The player to the dealer's left may take the card from the discard pile or draw the top card from the draw pile. The player then may place melds, "on the board" if he is able and so chooses. He then discards. Each player then proceeds in turn drawing the top card from either the discard or draw pile. Play continues until a player "closes".
5. When all cards have been taken from the draw pile, the discard pile is shuffled, cut, and replaced as the new draw pile. The player who drew the last card then discards to end his turn, thereby beginning the new discard pile.
6. Play proceeds through two shuffles of the discard pile. If no player has closed at that point, a "stymie" is said to have occurred, the hand is closed and scored according to the cards remaining in each player's hand.
7. Following play of the thirteenth hand (Kings wild), the game is scored and the player with the lowest number of points is declared the winner. In jurisdictions where gambling is legal, the game is typically played for \$0.50 per point. The margin of victory is the difference between the score of the winner and each other player. In the event of a tie for low score, all tying players split the winnings.

C. SCORING

1. When a player closes, each of the other players displays his hand face up with each card visible to the scorer. The cards will remain on the table, face up until the scorer has the chance to verify and enter the score. The scorer will ask each player for his score in sequence and enter the score on the score sheet.
2. When the scorer has verified and entered all scores, he will so state and the cards may be stacked and shuffled.
3. The scorer will announce the totals from time to time or at the request of any player. The scorer will always announce the totals prior to the play of the last hand in a game. Mathematical errors in scoring will be corrected and brought forward to the correct total at any time they are observed until the last hand of the game. It is each player's responsibility to insure his correct score has been entered and totaled when the scores are announced prior to the play of the last hand.
4. Aces count 1 point, number cards count their value, face cards count 10 points and wild cards count 20 points.
5. The player who closes each hand receives negative points (points off) according to his total score at that point in the game. The score range and points off are as follows:
Less than 100 points = 10 pts. off, 100 to 199 points = 20 pts. off, 200 to 299 points = 30 pts. off, 300 to 399 points = 40pts. off, and so on
6. "Double negative" – A variation of scoring may be used in which the scores of all players are doubled if the winning player is in negative points at the end of the game. Double negative is not recommended in short games or in games of fewer than 4 players. Double negative does not exist unless agreed to by all players in advance and so marked on the score sheet prior to the beginning of play.
7. "Spades" – A variation of scoring may be used in which points are doubled (including the deduction for the player who closes) if the turn card is a spade and tripled if the turn card is the Ace of Spades. This variation must be disclosed prior to the beginning of play.
8. "Kings Double" – A variation of scoring may be used in which points are automatically doubled for the last hand, "Kings Wild". When played in conjunction with "Spades", the points are only doubled regardless of the suit of the turn card except for the ace of spades, in which event the points are tripled. This variation must be disclosed prior to the beginning of play.

FORT WORTH GIN

Value _____ Double Negative _____

PLAYER:											
Dealer	Wild	POINTS	SCORE	POINTS	SCORE	POINTS	SCORE	POINTS	SCORE	POINTS	SCORE
	A										
	2										
	3										
	4										
	5										
	6										
	7										
	8										
	9										
	10										
	J										
	Q										
	K										
Low Score		Minus		Minus		Minus		Minus		Minus	
Difference		Equals		Equals		Equals		Equals		Equals	
Value		Times		Times		Times		Times		Times	
Damages		Equals		Equals		Equals		Equals		Equals	