

# A HISTORY OF GAMES PLAYED WITH THE TAROT PACK

## THE GAME OF TRIUMPHS

SUPPLEMENT

BY MICHAEL DUMMETT AND JOHN MCLEOD



**A HISTORY OF GAMES PLAYED  
WITH THE TAROT PACK  
THE GAME OF TRIUMPHS**

Supplement

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and  
John McLeod

Maproom Publications  
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## Cover illustrations

**Front cover:** Troggu players in Visperterminen – see game 15.1. Photograph by Renata Studer.

**Back cover:** Tarocchi Milanese. Modern reproduction by Masenghini of late XIX century pack, as used for game 5.8. Top row: 9 of Swords; Cavallo of Cups; Queen (Regina) of Batons. Bottom row: trump 12 (l'Appeso – the Hanged Man); trump 20 (il Giudizio – Judgement); trump 21 (il Mondo – the World). From the collection of John McLeod.

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## Table of Contents

Introduction to the Supplement.....	S iv
Supplement to Chapter 2: Early Stages in France and Switzerland.....	S 1
Supplement to Chapter 3: Classic XVIII-century Tarot outside Italy.....	S 1
Supplement to Chapter 5: Swiss Tarot.....	S 2
Supplement to Chapter 6: Tarot in Lombardy .....	S 6
Supplement to Chapter 10: Ferrara.....	S 7
Supplement to Chapter 14: Sicilian Tarocchi .....	S 8
Supplement to Chapter 15: Tapp-Tarock.....	S 9
Supplement to Chapter 16: The Variants of Tapp-Tarock.....	S 17
Supplement to Chapter 17: Cego .....	S 30
Supplement to Chapter 18: Königrufen .....	S 32
Supplement to Chapter 19: XIXer-Rufen and XXer-Rufen.....	S 44
Supplement to Chapter 20: Hungarian Tarock .....	S 60
Supplement to Appendix C: Other games with Tarot Cards .....	S 63
Supplement to Appendix E: Index of Games by Type of Cards and Number of Players.....	S 64
Detailed Table of Contents .....	S 68

## Introduction to the Supplement

The invention in northern Italy, in the late 1430s, of the Tarot pack, and of the game played with it, was an event of major importance for the history of card play, for it was the invention of the idea of trumps. True, the idea had been invented earlier, for the German game of Karnöffel; but it was its independent invention for Tarot, about a decade later, that was to be the source from which it was borrowed for games with the regular pack of 52 or 48 cards. The word “trumps” is a corruption of “triumphs”, the word, in its Italian form *trionfi*, originally used for the trumps in Tarot, and, translated, in the games for which the idea was borrowed, such as the English game of Triumph, the ancestor of Whist. In contrast, in Karnöffel the trump suit was called the ‘chosen suit’ and some of its members were only partial trumps, beating all but the highest card or cards of the suit led.

The game of Tarot was not content to bequeath its salient innovation to games played with the less interesting regular pack, and then die quietly out. Rather, it spread from its native Italy to many other countries, to France, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Germany, Austro-Hungary and Sicily, taking its special pack with it (as the game of Minchiate took the expanded Minchiate pack). It also carried with it its distinguishing features: the point-values of the three trump honours and of the twelve court cards; the obligation to follow suit when one could; and, when one could not, the obligation to play a trump if one had one. These are defining characteristics of all genuine Tarot games (not including Minchiate, nor, of course, of games described in Appendix C). They remained constant under the radical change in the role of the Fool from Excuse to highest trump. But in all the lands in which Tarot has been played, and in many regions within them, players have invented new variations. In our book we attempted a comprehensive survey of all these games. We knew we had little chance of completely succeeding; but we had not expected that, within quite a short time after the publication of our book, we should have a substantial amount to add. This Supplement will in turn be added to subsequently if we learn more. Its purpose is, of course, to approach more nearly the comprehensiveness which was our ideal goal; we know we have not reached it yet.

Michael Dummett

John McLeod

Oxford and London, February 2009

## **Supplement to Chapter 2**

### **Early Stages in France and Switzerland**

*Erratum.*

On page 18, the subject of trump XVIII in the Tarot de Marseille should be listed as *La Lune* (the Moon).

## **Supplement to Chapter 3**

### **Classic XVIII-century Tarot outside Italy**

Hans-Joachim Alscher has found an earlier edition of *Die beste und neueste Art das in den vornehmsten Gesellschaften heutiges Tages so beliebte Taroc-Spiel sowol in drey Personen zum König, als in vier wirklichen Personen mit zweyerley Karten recht und wohl zu spielen*, published in Nuremberg in 1756, so in Chapter 3, page 30 the date of the earliest account of a Tarot game specifically said to be played in Austria should be changed from 1763 to 1756.

## **Supplement to Chapter 5**

### **Swiss Tarot**

In Chapter 5, page 92 we identified five areas of Switzerland which had separate Tarot traditions in the XX century, but could only describe games from three of them. To these we can now add descriptions of two different games from Ticino and some information about the Fribourg game Le Tape. Walter Haas has managed to contact some former players of Le Tape and has passed their recollections on to us. It turns out that this was a game with bidding in which the Fool is the highest trump, a relative of Tapp-Tarock. It therefore belongs in part III and will be described as game 15.23 in the supplement to chapter 15.

The Atlas für Schweizerischer Volkskunde (ASV) includes several reports of Tarot having been played in the Italian-speaking canton of Ticino. It indicates that in the 1930's Tarot was frequently played in the Val Bedretto and was occasionally or had formerly been played in several places further south. In 2004 one of us had the opportunity to visit Ticino and meet some surviving players.

Tarocchi is no longer played in Bedretto, but the game was kindly explained and demonstrated by Sig. Diego Orelli, who used to play it with his parents and brother. Bedretto Tarocchi is not closely related to the games in nearby Wallis (15.1, 15.2) or Surselva (5.1 – 5.4); although these regions are only a few kilometres away they have different languages and cultures and are separated by mountain ranges that are impassable for a large part of the year. Its closest relative is the Lombard game (6.1), as can be seen from the unusual value of 6 points given to the Mondo (XXI).

## 5.8 Bedretto Tarocchi (early-mid XX century)

### *Players, cards and terminology*

The game is for four players in fixed partnerships, partners sitting opposite each other. A 78-card Lombard Tarocchi pack is used, of the type reprinted in the 1970's by Masenghini with the title Tarocchino Milanese. The suits are known as *Spade*, *Bastoni*, *Quadri*, *Cuori*. The numeral cards of the suits are *scartine*; trumps are *briscole*. In all four suits the cards rank in descending order: King, Queen, Cavalier, Jack, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. The trumps rank according to their numbers, from the XXI (highest) to the I (lowest).

### *Deal and Discard*

A game consists of four deals, one by each player in turn. The cards are shuffled by the dealer, cut by the player to dealer's right, and dealt three at a time, until everyone has 18. The dealer then deals one more card to each of the other players and the last three to himself.

The dealer must discard two of his 21 cards, placing them face down in front of him. It is illegal to discard trumps, the Fool, Kings or Queens: the only cards that can be discarded are *scartine*, Jacks and Cavaliers. The value of these discarded cards counts for the dealer's side. After the discard all four players have 19 cards.

### *Play*

Play is clockwise, under the usual rules, the player to dealer's left leading to the first trick. The Fool (*il matto*) serves as excuse without exchange. A player may knock on the table when leading a card. This is a signal to the player's partner to win the trick and then play out his own high cards.

### *Scoring*

The cards are counted in groups of four and have their standard values, except for the XXI, which is worth 6 points instead of 5. The two cards discarded by the dealer are treated as though they were a set of four cards. The total value of the cards in the pack is 73 points. Each side records its points, and the side with the greater total score over a

series of four deals is the winner of the game, which was not played for money, but for a bottle of wine or a similar prize.

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From Don Claudio Laim we learned an unusual five-player game which he informed us used to be played by priests throughout Ticino, though unfortunately by 2004, according to Don Laim's estimate, there were only around 20 who still remembered how to play.

### **5.9 Five-Handed Tarocchi (Ticino, XX century to present day)**

The game is for five players only, using the Tarocco Piemontese. It is played clockwise, and the numeral cards in all suits rank from 10 high to 1 low. The cards are counted individually: trumps 21, 1, 0 and the Kings count 5 points each, Queens 4, Cavaliers 3 and Jacks 2. However, trumps 2-20 and the numeral cards of the suits have no value at all, so the total value of the cards is 71 points. The bidder's side needs at least 36 points to win.

The dealer shuffles, and the player to the dealer's right cuts. The cards are dealt in threes, so that everyone has 15. The last three cards are placed *face up* in front of the dealer. They are not taken into any player's hand, but count towards dealer's tricks. The player to the left of the dealer can pass (*passo*) or call (*chiamo*). If this first player passes, the next player in rotation has the same options. A call ends the bidding. If all five players pass there is no play – the turn to deal passes to the left.

If there is a call, the bidder may call any card, for example a king, the 21 or the 20. The holder of the called card is the bidder's partner and must not reveal his identity. If one of dealer's face up cards is called, the dealer is the partner and of course in this case the partnerships are clear to everyone. The bidder can call one of his own cards in order to play alone. Alternatively, a bidder wishing to play alone can, instead of calling, ask for any card, whose holder must give it to the bidder. The bidder gives one unwanted card face down in exchange.

No matter who the bidder is, the player to the dealer's left leads to the first trick. The rules of play are as usual, except for those governing the play of the Fool (*Matto*), which serves as excuse without exchange. It can be played to any trump trick, but if a suit

card is led, the *Matto* can only be played if the holder has no card of the suit led. The *Matto* can be led to a trick, and the other players must follow with trumps. The player of the *Matto* does not put it in the trick but simply shows it, usually saying "*Calo il matto*" and adds it face down to his own trick pile. The *Matto* should be played within the first ten tricks: if it is played in the last five tricks, it loses its 5-point value. There are then only 66 points in the game, and the side with 34 or more points wins. If the points divide 33-33, the side that played the *Matto* loses. It can sometimes happen that a player is unable to save the *Matto*, since he has to follow suit to all the first ten tricks. We do not know what happens in the unlikely situation where the *Matto* is led to a trick after all the other players have run out of trumps.

In a game where a card was called and two players play against three, if the bidder's side wins the bidder scores 2 game points, the bidder's partner scores 1, and their opponents lose 1 game point each. If the bidder's side loses, the bidder loses 2 game points, the bidder's partner loses 1 and the opponents gain 1 game point each. When the bidder plays alone, the bidder wins or loses 4 game points, and the opponents 1 game point each. A cumulative score is kept on a sheet with a column for each player: the scores are such that the total of all five players' scores will always be zero. If a player has a zero cumulative score, this is written as "=", not "0". The penalty for a revoke, such as failing to follow suit or trump when required to do so, is to lose 4 game points while the other players gain 1 each.

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## Supplement to Chapter 6

### Tarot in Lombardy

*Pages 111-112: additional source for XVI century order of trumps*

Mr. Ross Sinclair Caldwell has communicated to us a third testimony to the order of the trumps in XVI-century Lombardy, that of the jurist Andrea Alciato (1492-1550) in his *Parergon Juris* of 1543. Alciato uses unconventional names for some of the trumps: the Pope, Emperor, Empress and Popess are for him the Priest, King, Queen and Priestess (Flaminica), while the Sun, Temperance and Hanged Man are respectively Phoebus, Fame and the Cross. But, this apart, Alciato's trump order differs from Susio's only in two respects: the Popess ranks below the Empress; and Fortitude ranks below the Chariot rather than above it, putting it adjacent to its sister Virtue, Justice.

*Page 114: date of publication of BNA*

As stated in the supplement to Chapter 3, the first edition of BNA was in fact published in 1756. So we may now assume that game 6.1 was played in Milan from about 1740 onwards and reached Vienna in about 1750. Accordingly, the title of game 6.1 on page 115 should be amended to: "Four-handed Tarocchi (Lombardy, from c. 1740, and Piacenza, XX century) and Taroc (Austria, Germany and the Netherlands, from c. 1750 to c. 1840)".

## Supplement to Chapter 10

### Ferrara

By means of a careful study of the Ferrarese poet Alberro Lollo's mock diatribe against the game of Tarot and of Vincenzo Imperiali's verse reply to it, Dottor Girolamo Zorli has made deductions concerning the game on which Lollo comments (see *The Playing Card*, vol. 36, no. 2, Oct.-Dec. 2007, p. 84). Dott. Zorli agrees that it was for three players, as stated on page 252 of Chapter 10, but takes it to have been played with a shortened pack of 62 cards, as in Bolognese *Tarocchino*. The deal was therefore in four rounds of five cards each (rather than in five rounds, as stated on page 252), with two extra cards going to one of the players (presumably the dealer), who then discards two. As in the Bolognese game, the reduction to 62 cards would have been effected by the omission of four numeral cards from each of the four plain suits; the poems do not allow us to infer just which numeral cards were set aside. From the absence of a diminutive name such as "*tarocchino*" (or, as later in Sicily, "*tarocchini*") for the game, it may be surmised that by the mid-XVI century the game with the full 78-card pack had fallen into disuse in Ferrara.

In view of this, the last line of the translation on page 251 should be changed from "the remainder of your cards" to "the cards allotted to you".

On page 256 we speculated on the rule governing the play of the Matto. Game 5.9, described in the supplement to Chapter 5, suggests another possibility: that the Matto may be played to a trick in a plain suit only by a player who is void in that suit. This is a more likely restriction in the present case, which could also be extended to the case when a trump was led.

## Supplement to Chapter 14

### Sicilian Tarocchi

#### 14.6 Three-handed Tarocchi (Mineo, present-day) – revision

An announcement of intent that the last trick will be won by one of the opponents of the *solista* is made by the opponent's saying "*Mi vanto*" if he has the Giove, or "*Mi rivanto*", if he does not. This announcement is made when the bidding is completed but before play begins, and it increases the score for the last trick from 1 game point to 2. According to Signor Domenico Starna of Rome, "*mi vanto*" or "*mi rivanto*" may only be announced by an opponent who has taken no part in the bidding because a Solo was bid before he had an opportunity to bid.

The above explanation supersedes the last sentence before the heading '*Play*' on page 388 and the penultimate sentence of the *Play* section on page 389. Under scoring on page 389, the second point should read:

*vanto* – 1 game point for winning the last trick if the opponents did not announce "*mi vanto*" or "*mi rivanto*", 2 game points if they did.

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#### *Other errata and addenda*

On page 367, line 7 from bottom and on page 371, line 13, the letter O stands for 'Oro', not 'Ori'.

On page 373, first line, insert Gaetani's dates: (1594-1693).

On page 377 in the terminology section, insert: "In Mineo, the suit of Bastoni is called *Mazze*"

## Supplement to Chapter 15

### Tapp-Tarock

When this chapter was first written, the game of Troggu (15.1) appeared to be on the verge of extinction, with only a handful of surviving players in the German-speaking part of canton Wallis in Switzerland. However, it turns out that the game is still very much alive in the village of Visperterminen, where there are around 100 players. It suffered a decline there in the second half of the XX century, but in recent years interest has grown again, and many younger people have learned to play. Troggu is recognised as part of the cultural heritage of the village and promoted by the Kulturpark, a tourist organisation that provides information about it to interested visitors. We are grateful to Renata Studer for introducing us to several groups of players there.

#### 15.1 Troggu (additional variant: Visperterminen, Wallis, present day)

The game is similar but not identical to the other local versions of Troggu described on pp 407-410: only the differences will be explained here.

The game is for 5 to 7 players, 6 being the preferred number. The version (15.2) in which the declarer can call a partner is unknown in Visperterminen. With 7 players the deal is 6 cards to the Tapp and then 8 cards (4+4) to each player.

There are three possible bids. In ascending order, they are “*A Liechte*” (a light one), “*Ich nehme*” (“I take”, also known as “*Tapper*”), and “*Schreku*”. Players pass by saying “*fort*”. If all pass, a *Misère* is played. *Ich nehme* is the normal game in which the declarer (the Tappist) takes the Tapp, discards and plays alone against all the other players as a team. *A Liechte* is an offer to play if no one else wishes to do so: if everyone else passes the bidder plays an ordinary game, exactly as though he had bid *Ich nehme*, but *A Liechte* can be overbid by another player saying “*Ich nehme*”. The usual reason for bidding *A Liechte* is that the player’s hand is too strong to risk a *Misère*, but not strong enough to be confident of winning as Tappist. The highest bid *Schreku* is equivalent to

the Solo in other versions – the bidder plays with his original hand, and the cards in the Tapp are added to his tricks, unseen until the end of the play. The bidding is by simple escalation: a player who has passed cannot bid again, but a player with a strong hand who began with *A Liechte*, perhaps hoping to mislead the other players, can raise his bid to *Schreku* after another player bids *Ich nehme*.

It is illegal for the Tappist to discard 5-point cards: the discard of all four Kings is not allowed in Visperterminen. The rules of play are as in other versions of the game. When the Fool is “*verschwiegen*” (the holder, having played all his other trumps, keeps the Fool for the last trick and discards a suit card instead), it is played to the last trick as *Excuse with exchange*. *Verschwiegen* is not allowed in a *Misère* – in this game the Fool must be played as the highest trump. (This rule probably also holds in other places where Troggu is played with a *Misère* option.)

The payment for a normal game is the difference between the Tappist’s card point score and 57, rounded to the nearest 5, paid to or from each opponent as Rappen. The original rule was that if the difference was less than 3 card points, the payment was still 5 Rappen, the Tappist losing if the card points were divided 57-57. However, some now play that in case of a 57-57 tie there is no payment, and some make no payment if the card points are anywhere in the range 55 to 59. If one side wins all the tricks, the payment according to some players is 55. Others increase it to 100 (i.e. 1 Franc) in this case. If the bid was a *Schreku*, all payments are doubled.

In a *Misère*, the player who takes most card points is the sole loser (the points in the Tapp do not count for anyone). Formerly this player paid 10 to each opponent, but nowadays many people play that the player with the fewest card points subtracts these from the loser’s total and rounds to the nearest 5 to determine the amount that the loser must pay to each opponent. If two or more players tie for most points, they must each pay the full amount to each of the other players. If one player takes all tricks in a *Misère*, then instead of losing, they win the same amount as for taking every trick in a normal game: this is known as a *Kaputige*.

*Variants*

(1) Some play a simplified version of the game without bidding. The holder of the Fool shows it and automatically becomes the Tappist in a normal game. If the Fool is in the Tapp, a *Misère* is played.

(2) To end a session it is common to play a *kleine Misère*, which is a series of four deals as follows. In the first the holder of the Fool is the Tappist, in the second the holder of the XXI is the Tappist, in the third the unfortunate player who holds the I must be Tappist and the fourth is a *Misère*. If the card that determines the Tappist is in the Tapp in any of the first three deals happens to be in the Tapp, then that deal is also played as a *Misère*.

(3) The *grosse Misère*, which is occasionally played, is a series of 23 deals. In the first the holder of the Fool is the Tappist, in the second the holder of the XXI, then the XX, the XIX and so on down to the I on the twenty-second deal. The final deal is a *Misère*, as is any deal in which the card that determines the Tappist is dealt to the Tapp.

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Following a further visit to Kirchberg am Wechsel in Lower Austria, we are able to give a revised and expanded description of the three-player game played there (pages 455-456).

**15.17** Doppen (Kirchberg am Wechsel, present day) – revised

The Pagat is called *Pagatt* or *der kleine Mann*, and the Trull *Drull*. The game is played by three players with 54 cards, which are counted in threes, and the deal and point-values of the cards are standard, as in game 15.16. The admissible bids are Dreier, Unterer, Zweier, Einer and Solo; a player wishing to pass says “*weiter*”. As usual, in a Solo the talon is set aside without being seen, and belongs at the end of the hand to the declarer’s opponents. In the other contracts, when the bidding is over, the declarer exposes the whole talon; in Dreier and Unterer, he takes either the top or the bottom three, at his choice, into his hand, and discards three face down under the usual restrictions; the other three cards of the talon are set aside face down, and belong at the end of the hand to his opponents. In a Zweier, the declarer takes the top, middle or bottom pair from the talon,

discarding two; in an Einer, he takes just one card and discards one. The rules of play are standard, but there is one unusual convention. When the declarer leads to a trick, and the second defender (the player to declarer's left) is able to win it, he may indicate this by the gesture of detaching the winning card from his hand and holding it ready to play. This indicates to his partner that it is safe to play a valuable card.

The basic score for the game, if won, is 10 game points plus 1 game point for every point by which the declarer's point-total exceeds 35. This basic score is doubled in an Unterer or a Zweier, tripled in an Einer and quadrupled in a Solo. The game is lost if the declarer's point-total is 35 or less. The basic score is then 10 game points plus 1 game point for every point by which the declarer's total falls below 35; it is just 10 game points if his total was 35 points exactly. In any contract above Dreier, this basic score is multiplied by 2, 3 or 4, as when the declarer won. Additional bonuses obtainable without prior announcement are:

Pagatt (winning the last trick with the trump I):	10 game points
Uhu (winning the last trick but one with the trump II):	10 game points
Drull (all three trump honours in hand at start of play):	10 game points
Könige (all four Kings in hand at start of play):	10 game points
Valatt (winning all the tricks)	50 game points

The score for Valatt supersedes that for game; the other bonuses are independent of it. Pagatt, Uhu and Valatt may be announced before the start of play. As usual, this doubles the bonus if successful, but incurs a penalty of the same amount if it fails. Bonus scores are multiplied by 2, 3 or 4 if the contract Zweier, Einer or Solo but are not doubled for Unterer. As usual, an opponent may say Kontra to the game and separately to any announced bonus, doubling its score.

Although the game is normally played for money, the usual stake being 2 cents or 4 cents per point, according to agreement before the game, the score is kept on paper with a column for each player. At the end of the play the declarer's cumulative score is updated by adding or subtracting the game points won or lost. If an opponent scores a bonus, this is subtracted from the declarer's cumulative score. There is a pot (*Pott*) for announced Pagatt, to which each player contributes 1€ or 2€ (according to agreement) at

the start of play and when it is empty. A player who announces Pagatt wins the contents of the pot if he is successful, and doubles it if he fails. After a hand in which all pass, each player adds half the agreed amount (50 cents or 1€). The accounting for the pot is performed on paper, and the game points and pot are settled in cash only when the pot is won or the session ends. The amount that each player has contributed to the pot is recorded on the right side of the score sheet. For example if 1€ is contributed at the start a figure 1 is written, and when a hand is subsequently passed out this is altered to 1.5, showing that pot now contains 4.50€, of which 1.50€ contributed by each player. When announced Pagatt is lost, the amount to be paid to the pot is noted at the foot of the loser's column. Continuing our example, in which the pot contained 4.50€, represented by 1.5 written at the right of the score sheet, 4.5 would be written at the foot of the column of a player who lost an announced Pagatt. The pot would now be worth 9€. When an announced Pagatt is won or the session ends, the game points and the debts to the pot are converted to cash and the players settle up: each pair of players settles according to the difference between their game point scores, and everyone pays the amount they owe to the pot, the total being collected by the winner of the Pagatt. If Kontra is said to an announced Pagatt, the amount paid to or collected from the pot is also doubled. The penalty for a revoke is that the offender pays 50 cents or 1€ to the pot, shown by entering 0.5 or 1 at the foot of the offender's scoring column. If at the end of the session there is a pot in play with unequal contributions from the players, caused by revokes or unsuccessful announced Pagatt, the pot is of course shared equally among the players.

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We saw in Chapter 5 that Fribourg was one of the chief centres of Tarot playing in Switzerland, that the game played there was known as Le Tape, but that it was already dying out by the mid XX century. Le Tape turns out to be a relative of Tapp-Tarock, with some similarity to the games played in Wallis (15.1 and 15.2) though in Fribourg the Fool was apparently always the highest trump. We know from correspondence that Tarot was already played in Fribourg in the mid XVIII century<sup>1</sup>, presumably at that time in a version

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<sup>1</sup> Walter Haas cites correspondence from a Fribourg aristocrat who wrote on 8<sup>th</sup> October 1750: "*Je fus obligé d'aller au plus près prendre gîte avec lui chez son frere L'Eveque à Jetschwihl. J'y trouvai un*

of the classic XVIII game described in Chapter 3. Walter Haas observes that in the late XVIII century most of the aristocracy of Fribourg spent part of their youth studying in Austria, where they learned German, which was at that time the language of government in Fribourg, and suggests that it could have been by this route that the idea of Tapp-Tarock was communicated from Austria to Switzerland or vice versa. Walter Haas has obtained detailed recollections of Le Tape from two former players, Frau Annemarie Maendly (AM) and Nicolas Jordan (NJ), and fragmentary information from some others. He has also discovered a newspaper article about Tarot<sup>2</sup> written in 1956 by Nicolas Jordan's father Joseph (JJ), which includes a short description of Le Tape. There are some uncertainties in each of these sources, and some disagreements between them, which indicate the presence of several variants.

### 15.23 Le Tape (Fribourg, XX century)

The basic game was for six players using a 78-card pack, originally the Italian suited Tarot de Marseille. However in the late XX century many players began to use French suited cards. The Fool (*Le Mat* or *La Vieille*, also sometimes referred to as XXII) was the highest trump. Trump I was known as "*Le Pirli*". Until the mid XX century the suit cards ranked in their original order, but later the simplified order was adopted, with 10s following jacks in all suits. The cards had their standard values, at least according to AM. JJ and NJ mention only that *Le Mat*, *Le Monde* and *Le Pirli* were worth 5 points each. There is no indication that the cards were counted in groups, so we should probably assume that they were counted singly, for a total of 130 points. The game was played anticlockwise.

In AM's version, the dealer dealt six cards face down to the *Tape* and 12 cards to each player. There must then have been a round of bidding, presumably beginning with the player to dealer's right, to decide which player would take the *Tape*. This player took all six cards to his hand without showing them, and discarded six cards under the usual restrictions. The points in these cards counted for the declarer. The declarer led to the

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*excellent soupé, dont je profitai tres peu. Apres soupé on joïa aux Taroux jusqu'à dix heures et j'y gagnai quelque argent."*

<sup>2</sup> *Les tarots, appelés familièrement le tape*, in *La Liberté*, 4th April 1956.

first trick and the play of the cards was under the standard rules. If the declarer took more points than the opponents he won a fixed stake of 20 Rappen from each, otherwise he paid 20 Rappen to each. This payment was doubled to 40 Rappen if the losers took 22 card points or fewer. If everyone passed, a *Misère* was played in which the player to dealer's right led to the first trick and the object was to take as few points as possible. AM did not explain how *Misère* was scored.

According to AM the game can also be played by 3, 4 or 5 players, though it is less interesting with fewer players. The pack is reduced by omitting the lowest cards of each suit so that the number of cards dealt to each player is always 12, so 3 players play with 42 cards, 4 with 54 cards and 5 with 66 cards. Seven could play, the dealer sitting out of each hand. According to JJ, most people play with 66 cards, which may indicate that the 5-player version was commonest. Unfortunately JJ does not specify the number of players or number of cards per player but mentions only that 3, 4, 5 or 6 can play. NJ describes only the game with 6 players and 78 cards.

The versions of the game described by NJ and JJ differ from that of AM in several other respects. According to NJ, the *Tape* was dealt face up for all to see (AM also recognised this as a variation). After the bidding, the declarer took the talon, discarded face down, and then called a card, usually a high trump, whose holder would be his partner, so in each hand two players would play against four. The partner's identity remained secret until the called card was played. At the end of the play, the declarer and partner added the points they had taken in tricks and scored that number, and their four opponents each scored the total points that their team had taken. The first player who achieved a cumulative score 1000 or more (over several deals) won the game. It was possible to claim to have won during the play, but if the player who claimed proved to have fewer than 1000 points, the player lost the game instead. Neither AM nor JJ mentions the calling of a partner – the declarer plays alone.

According to NJ, if everyone passed, the cards were thrown in and the next player dealt. JJ mentions both this and *Misère* as variations. JJ recognises three additional bids which outrank an ordinary game with a partner. In a **Solo**, the declarer plays without taking the talon, but it is not stated whether the points in it count for or against him, or not

at all. In a **Nolo**, the declarer undertakes to lose every trick and in a **Piccolo** the declarer must win exactly one trick. NJ also mentions these three bids, but says that in a Solo the declarer undertakes to win all the points playing alone<sup>3</sup>, which if true would make the bid extremely rare. NJ states that if a Solo, Nolo or Piccolo succeeds, the declarer scores all the points in the game, presumably 130, but if he fails each opponent scores this amount.

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JJ says that although *Le Pirlu* is usually worth 5 points, in some places its value is doubled to 10 points. It is not completely clear whether at this point he is talking about Fribourg games or tarot games from elsewhere that he may have heard of, but ASV also reports variant values (and names) for the trump honours in the vicinity of Fribourg.<sup>4</sup> The Fool was sometimes called *Der Püntu* or *Der Püנגgu* and worth 20, the XXI (*Der Mund*) 10 and the I (*Der Pirlu*) strangely 20 if captured from an opponent but only 1 if brought home by the original holder. JJ also indicates that in Fribourg the Fool sometimes acquires some properties of the *boer* – the highest trump in the Swiss game Jass – in that it can be played at any time. So it may be that there were some versions of Le Tape which, like the Wallis game Trogggu, featured a hybrid role for the Fool, but unfortunately the evidence is too slight for us to be sure of this.

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<sup>3</sup> “*Le joueur déclarait vouloir jouer seul contre tous et faire la totalité des points, tant les cartes de son jeu étaient excellentes.*”

<sup>4</sup> ASV page 1133: from Wünnewel: “*Der Püntu (Le Mat) ist der beste Trumpf, der Zweitbeste der Mond (= le monde) mit je fünf Punkten*” and from Jaun: “*Der Püנגgu ist der höchste, Mund der zweithöchste mit 20 bzw. 10 Punkten; der kleinste Trumpf ist der Pirlu; bekam man ihn, zählte er 20, besass man ihn aber schon, so zählte er nur einen Punkt.*”

## Supplement to Chapter 16

### The Variants of Tapp-Tarock

#### 16.8 Slovenian Tarok – additional variant: Bled rules

In Slovenia, a regular series of three-handed Tarok tournaments is held, play taking place in various towns. Robert Sedlaczek has provided a German translation of the rules for a tournament held in Bled in 2005, which do not provide a complete description, but differ from those on pages 495-499 of our book as follows.

The contracts in ascending order and their values are: Trojka 10, Dvojko 20, Enojko 30, Berač 70, Solo 80. There is no mention of a multiplier – probably the difference of the card points taken from 35 is simply added to the basic value.

If the other two players pass after the first player opens the bidding with Trojka, he can play Klopecki, Trojka or any higher game.

After announcing a Klopecki, the first player can pass or kontra. If he passes the second player can pass or kontra, and if he too passes the third player has the same choice. If there is a kontra, the number of game points lost by each player is normally double the number of card points taken. If a player takes 35 or more points he loses 140 game points if there was a Kontra, while the other players lose nothing. If the player who said Kontra takes the greatest number of card points, he loses twice this number of game points while the others lose only the number of card points they took.

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#### 16.14 Block Tarock – additional variation

Robert Sedlaczek has discovered the *Handbuch des Block-Tarock* by Oscar Edlen von Hofmannsthal (HBL), a booklet printed privately in 1889, which is mainly devoted to detailed advice on bidding and play. Hofmannsthal recognizes the earlier form of scoring as given in the first edition of IWT in which each player begins by placing one block into

the pool, with each dealer adding a further block. However he recommends beginning instead with a *Stamm-Bête* of 10 blocks from each player, and setting a maximum *Spiel-Bête* of 20 blocks, so that the pools to be played for do not differ too greatly in size. The remaining scores are mostly the same as in Ulmann's BF, but a player who holds all seven honours is paid 6 large blocks in place of the bonuses for Tous les Trois and Four Kings. This large payment sometimes makes it worthwhile for a player who holds six honours to look at both halves of the talon in a Dreier, hoping to find the remaining honour. There is a bonus of 6 large blocks for Volat, here called "*Valade*", which does not need to be announced. This replaces the normal payment of 1 small block for a Dreier, but a player who makes *Valade* in a Solo receives payment of 4 large blocks from each player for the Solo itself as well as 12 for the Valade, since as usual all bonus payments are doubled in Solo. In a Dreier, the declarer can give up without play (*schleifen*) after looking at the whole talon, and in this case he only pays for losing a single game: one small block to each opponent and one *Spiel-Bête*.

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In 2006, Kurt Doleysch and Hanz Kunz published *Das Grosstarockbuch vom XXer-Rufen zum Grosstarock Modern und Trischaken* (GM) but the Grosstarock of the title is not the 78-card game described in our chapter 4. By the mid XX century, the 40-card game of XXer-Rufen (game 19.13) had become the dominant form of Tarock in some districts of Vienna, and the 78-card pack was entirely forgotten. Players familiar with the 40-card game therefore reused the name Grosstarock in the 1950's and 60's for a three-player game played with the larger 54-card pack. According to GM this game was popular in the Cafe zum Landgut and other coffee houses in the Favoriten district of Vienna, but gradually died out in the 1970's as these coffee houses closed. It was revived in 2004 and further developed by a group of players led by Kurt Doleysch.

This game has some unusual features. The idiosyncratic method of counting the cards is a result of combining the card values from XXer-Rufen, in which the Tarocks are worth 1 point while the empty suit cards are worth nothing, with the practice of counting in cards in threes in such a way that 36 points are needed to win the game. This has the strange result that some tricks have a negative value. Also unique among Tarock games

is the option for an opponent to take the declarer's discard in order to attempt a higher contract. This "*Nachschau*" is borrowed from a popular Austrian variant of Preference, a three-player plain-trick game with bidding played with a 32-card pack. According to Doleysch, the counting method and the *Nachschau* were both present in the version of Grosstarock he played in the 1960's, but since we have no contemporary account it is impossible to be completely certain which features were in the original game and what has been added in the XXI-century revival. The following description is based on GM and on some games played by one of us with Kurt Doleysch and his group in the Volksoper coffee house in Vienna.

#### **16.19 Modern Viennese Grosstarock (mid XX century to present day)**

There are three players and a 54-card pack is used. It is possible for four players to take part, the dealer giving himself no cards. The counting cards have their standard values and the Tarocks from II to XX are worth 1 point each but the empty cards Ace to 4 and 10 to 7 in the suits are worth 0 points. The cards are counted in threes using the subtraction method, but subtracting only 1 point from each set of three cards. Thus a set of three non-counting Tarocks is worth 2, while a set of three empty suit cards is worth minus 1. There is a total of 72 points in the pack, when counted in this way, and in a normal contract the declarer needs at least 36 points to win. Deal and play are *clockwise*. Sixteen cards are dealt to each player, in four rounds of four cards each, the talon of six cards being dealt as two sets of three after the second round.

#### *Bidding and draw from the talon*

The available bids in ascending order are Sechserdreier (also called Sechser), Dreier and Solo. As usual the player to dealer's left begins. A player who does not wish to bid can pass, saying "weiter", and cannot re-enter the bidding on a later round. If all three players pass, a Trischaken is played. If anyone bids, the bidding continues for as many rounds as necessary until two players have passed. Each player in turn can pass, overbid the previous bidder, or equal the previous bid by saying "*ich halte*" (I hold). It is possible to hold irrespective of one's position at the table, and even if the bid has already been held by another player. The only restriction on holding is that a player cannot hold his own

bid. For example if the first player bids Sechserdreier, the second player can hold and the third player can also hold, after which the first player must bid higher or pass, since he cannot hold his own bid. If the first and second players now pass, it will be the third player who plays a Sechserdreier.

If the final contract is Sechserdreier, the declarer takes all six talon cards into his hand without showing them and discards six cards face down; if it is Dreier he looks separately at the two halves of the talon, again without showing them, selects one half to add to his hand and discards three cards face down. In either case, there are *no restrictions on the discard* – kings and trumps including honours can be discarded freely – and the points in the discarded cards, as well as those in the part of the talon not taken in a Dreier, count *for the opponents*. In a Solo the declarer plays with his original hand. The talon is not looked at and counts for the opponents at the end of the play.

#### *Nachschauen*

When the declarer has discarded, he says “*ich liege*”, and there is the possibility for a player to announce “*ich schaue*” (I look), pick up the cards discarded by the declarer, discard an equal number of cards face down (without restriction), and play Ohnevalat – also known as Nullvalat or Bettelvalat – which is a contract to lose every trick. If more than one player wishes to do this, the player to the original declarer’s left has priority, then the player to declarer’s right, and if neither wishes to, the declarer could pick up his own discard and change to an Ohnevalat. It is not possible to play an Ohnevalat when the original declarer bid a Solo.

If a player opts to play Ohnevalat, then after he has discarded and said “*ich liege*”, the original declarer may announce “*ich schaue nach*” (I look again), pick up the cards discarded by the Ohnevalat player, discard an equal number of cards, and play a Valat, which is a contract to win every trick.

#### *Bonuses and announcements*

If the contract is a Sechserdreier, Dreier or Solo, bonuses are available for Trull or Four Kings in hand, Pagat Ultimo and Valat, and these can be doubled by announcing them before the first lead. There are further bonuses for Absolut (taking at least 40 points in

tricks), Kramerboy<sup>5</sup> (at least 50 points), Pansièr (at least 60 points), Uhu (taking the penultimate trick with the II) and Pelikan (taking the third last trick with the III), which are scored only if announced. Each of the announcements in the series Absolut, Kramerboy, Pansièr, Valat includes all the previous announcements; in the same way an announcement of Uhu includes an announcement of Pagat and can only be made by a player holding both cards, and an announcement of Pelikan includes Uhu and Pagat and can only be made holding the I, II and III.

An opponent of the declarer can say Kontra to the game or to any actual or implied announcement, doubling the score for it. For example if the declarer announces Pansièr, an opponent could Kontra just the Pansièr, or Kontra the Kramerboy implying also a Kontra of the Pansièr, or Kontra the Absolut, implying Kontra of both the Karamerpoi and the Pansièr, and so on. A similar scheme applies to Kontras of Pagat, Uhu and Pelikan. A declarer whose game or announcement has been Kontra'd can reply with a Retour, doubling the score for it again. There are no further levels of doubling.

It is possible for the opponents to make announcements against the declarer having first said Kontra to the game – for example one opponent might Kontra and the other add an Absolut announcement. The announcements “Kontra Absolut” and “Kontra Kramerboy” against the declarer are known as “compact announcements” (*Kompaktansagen*) because they can only be won or lost as a whole: if the opponents fail to take as many as 50 points having announced Kontra Kramerboy they lose the whole announcement, irrespective of whether they managed to take 36 or 40 points. GM does not mention the possibility of Kontra Pansièr or Kontra Pelikan, and it is almost inconceivable that either of these could be sensibly announced against the declarer. Even Kontra Pagat and Kontra Uhu, which are mentioned, must be extremely rare. Kontra Uhu is *not* compact – it is possible for the opponents to win the Pagat but lose the Uhu. It is not explicitly stated in GM but it seems likely that Kontra Pagat and Kontra Uhu are scored independently of the game. After any of these announcements by the opponents, the declarer can say Retour, which doubles all the opponents' announcements.

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<sup>5</sup> Sic. The spelling is unusual, but many variants of this term are found in the literature – Kramerpoi, Grammpoi, Gramerboy, Grammel-Punkt, and even Grammophon (in Unger: *Kleines Lehrbuch des Tarockspiels*, 1937). See also footnote 20 on page 523.

In Ohnevalat, in Valat bid after Ohnevalat and in Trischaken, no bonuses, announcements or Kontras are allowed.

### *Play*

The declarer leads to the first trick. In Sechserdreier, Dreier, Solo and Valat the standard rules of play apply. In a Sechserdreier or Dreier, the opponents may expose the cards discarded by the declarer (but not the unused part of the talon in a Dreier) after the first trick. A player who has announced Pagat Ultimo cannot play the Pagat until he has no legal alternative. An announcement of Uhu commits the declarer to keep the II and I as long as possible and to play them in that order, and Pelikan similarly the III, II and I. So for example a player who has announced Pelikan and finds himself forced to play a trump on the fourth last trick, having only these three, cannot play the Pagat first in order to win the next two tricks with the III and II: he must play the III first.

In Ohnevalat, special rules apply. As usual, players must follow suit if able to, and must play a Tarock if they have no card of the suit led, but Tarocks do not beat suit cards. The trick is won by the highest card of the suit that was led, or by the highest Tarock if Tarocks are led. In the *first trick only*, it is compulsory to beat the highest card so far played to the trick if able to. There is no restriction on what may be led (unlike the game of Farbensolo found in many four-player Austrian Tarock games), and it is common for the declarer to keep the XXI or some other high Tarock and lead it to the first trick, forcing the opponents to take it. Keeping such a card prevents the original declarer from successfully bidding Valat over the Ohnevalat. In Ohnevalat and in a Valat bid over an Ohnevalat, the opponents are not allowed to look at the declarer's discard.

In a Trischaken, the player to dealer's left leads to the first trick, and players must beat the highest card so far played to the trick when able to. The Pagat cannot be played until it is the holder's last Tarock. Before leading to the first trick, the player to the dealer's left must announce which of three possible variants will be played. These are: "*Bunt gemischt*" (multicoloured), in which players are free to lead any card; "*Austarockieren*", in which players must lead their highest Tarock until they have no Tarocks left; and "*Austarockieren über den Pagat hinaus*" in which players must lead

their highest Tarock, and if a player wins a trick with his last Tarock, the lead then passes to the holder of the highest outstanding Tarock, if any are left.

### *Scoring*

The score is normally kept on a slate, and except in Trischaken, all scores are recorded as positive numbers: when the declarer loses, both opponents score the appropriate amount. There is no difference in scoring between Sechserdreier, Dreier and Solo. The basic game is worth 5 game points, and there are 5 game point bonuses for Trull in hand, Four Kings in hand and Pagat Ultimo. Trull or Four Kings in the hand of an opponent score only for the holder. As usual an unannounced Pagat Ultimo is lost if the Pagat is played to the last trick and does not win. There is a 10 game point bonus for “*gefangene Mond*”, scored by a side whose Sküs captures the enemy XXI. Pagat Ultimo, Trull and Four Kings score 10 game points each when announced before the first lead. The score for announced Absolut is 10 game points, for Kramerboy 20 and for Pansièr 30: there is no score for these if not announced. Announced Uhu scores 15 game points and Pelikan 20 – again there is no score for these if not announced. Valat scores 20 game points unannounced and 40 if announced, and when Valat is scored no unannounced bonuses are counted. However, a player can forgo the score for Valat if he is able to score more by doing so. Kontra doubles the value of the affected game or bonuses and Retour doubles them again.

The compact announcement Kontra Absolut is worth 30 game points (twice the sum of the normal scores for game and Absolut) and for similar reasons Kontra Kramerboy is worth 70 game points. Kontra Pagat is worth 20 game points and Kontra Uhu 30 – just twice the value of the equivalent announcements by the declarer.

*Example:* the declarer announces Trull, Pelikan and Kramerboy and an opponent says Kontra to the Pelikan and Uhu. The declarer takes 48 points in cards and succeeds in the Pagat and Uhu but loses the Pelikan. The declarer scores game (5), announced Trull (10), announced Pagat (10), announced Uhu with Kontra (30) and announced Absolut (10) for a total of 65 game points, while the opponents win announced Pelikan with Kontra (40) and Kramerboy (20), so they each score 60 game points.

The declarer of an Ohnevalat scores 35 game points if he succeeds in losing every trick. If the opponents succeed in giving him a trick, play ceases they each score 35 game points. This score is invariable – there is no Kontra and no bonuses. In the same way, the score for Valat bid over an Ohnevalat is fixed at 45 game points.

In a Trischaken, only the cards in the players' tricks are counted; the points in the talon count for no one. The player to dealer's left is treated as the declarer, and he wins if he succeeds in taking fewest points of the three players. In this case he scores 30 game points, the opponent with more card points scores minus 20 and the other opponent scores minus 10. If one or both of the other players has a card point total less than that of the declarer, then the declarer loses 30 game points, the opponent with fewer card points scores plus 20 and the other plus 10. A tie between the declarer and an opponent for least card points is decided in favour of the player who took fewer tricks, and in favour of the declarer if these too are equal. If the declarer's opponents take equal numbers of card points they score plus or minus 15 points each. An exception occurs if a player takes no tricks: this player is then *Jungfrau* (a virgin) and scores plus 30 game points, while the player with most points is *Bürgermeister* (mayor) and scores minus 30. The third player does not score. If one player is Jungfrau and the others have equal scores, the two losers score minus 15 each. In the hand immediately after a Trischaken, all scores are doubled. Should this be another Trischaken, then in the following hand all scores all scores are multiplied by four, after a third consecutive Trischaken by eight, and so on. As soon as a game other than Trischaken has been played, there is a return to single scores.

In a four-player game, the non-playing dealer scores the same as the highest scoring active player, excluding any bonus for Trull or Four Kings.

#### *Notes on tactics*

For a successful Ohnevalat it is desirable to have the lowest cards of one's suits. A suit of three or more cards lacking the 7 if black or 4 if red will usually result in defeat. If trumps are held they must include the Pagat and sufficient low ones. A holding such as VIII-VI-V-III-I is quite dangerous, since an opponent with the II and III will often be able to shorten his partner's trumps by leading long suits and then give the declarer a trick by means of trump leads. The declarer can afford to keep one high card, which he leads to

the first trick, forcing the opponents to overtake it. Sometimes he will keep a high trump such as the XXI or XX to protect against a Valat by the original declarer.

The declarer in a Sechserdreier or Dreier must beware of discarding 4's or 7's, as these are very helpful to an Ohnevalat player. The best discards to inconvenience an Ohnevalat player are high cards from a long suit in which one holds the 7 or 4, though such a discard will usually not be ideal for the success of one's own contract if one is allowed to play it.

#### *Variations*

The game described in the main account above is, according to the testimony of GM, equivalent to the version played in the 1960's. In the XXI-century version, some new variations have been introduced, mainly with the intention of discouraging Ohnevalat, which was being attempted too often, frequently with inadequate hands, and also to make it easier to 'look again' after an Ohnevalat had been announced.

First, there are four additional positive contracts: *Sechserzweier*, *Sechsereinser*, *Zweier* (also known as *Zweiblatt* or *Dreierzweier*), and *Einser* (*Einblatt*, *Dreiereinser*). In all of these, the declarer examines the two halves of the talon separately, without showing them to the opponents. In *Sechserzweier*, he takes two cards from each half and discards four cards, in *Sechsereinser* he takes just one card from each half of the talon and discards two cards, in *Zweier* he takes two cards from one half and discards two, and in *Einser* he takes just one card and discards one. So in this variation there are seven possible bids – in ascending order they are: *Sechserdreier*, *Sechserzweier*, *Sechsereinser*, *Dreier*, *Zweier*, *Einser*, *Solo*. Since each of these bids can be held, as in the basic game, the auction could in theory be quite long. In practice, however, players normally jump to the bid they wish to make. An immediate bid of *Sechserzweier* or *Sechsereinser* is attractive: the declarer is still able to take the best cards from both halves of the talon, but a subsequent Ohnevalat is much less likely than over a *Sechserdreier*, since only four or two discards are available to be taken.

A second innovation is ‘*Pagat Nullvalat*’. This is an extra option for the original declarer after another player has announced a Nullvalat. The original declarer takes the Nullvalat player’s discards, discards an equal number of cards, and can choose to announce Pagat Nullvalat rather than Valat. The rules of play are the same as in Nullvalat. The declarer must lose every trick and in addition must play the Pagat to the last trick. The Pagat does not have to win the last trick, or even to be the only trump in that trick. For a Pagat Nullvalat the declarer needs very long trumps including the I, the II and other low ones. Since the Nullvalat player, lacking the I and II, must be playing without trumps, the Pagat Nullvalat player can expect to find a few trumps in the discard. The score for Pagat Nullvalat is 40 game points and there is no Kontra or bonuses.

‘*Hohes Spiel*’ (high game) is another option over a Nullvalat, but is allowed only if all the players agree in advance. The original declarer plays a positive game in which he must announce at least Kramerboy. The Nullvalat player’s discard is *not* taken, but left undisturbed until the end of the play. All points in the six cards of the talon count *for* the declarer. The declarer may make higher or additional announcements – for example Kramerboy with Uhu or Pansièr with Pagat – and the announcements are ‘compact’ – they must all succeed, otherwise the whole contract fails. Only Four Kings and Trull in hand are scored independently of the contract. The score if the declarer succeeds is the normal score for the game and whatever bonuses were announced. No Kontra is allowed, but if the declarer fails, each opponent scores *twice* the value of the game and all announced bonuses.

Some allow the opponents of the declarer in a Trischaken to say Kontra, doubling the scores, and the declarer could then say Retour, doubling them again.

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As mentioned on p530, the verb “trischaken” in Viennese dialect means “to beat up”, or “to thrash”. Its use in Austrian card games was not always confined to Tarock. Trischaken was also the name of a gambling game of the XVIII and XIX centuries in which the players were dealt three cards each from a 32-card pack and bet on who had the

best combination<sup>6</sup>. The etymology is uncertain: the most plausible derivation is from the Czech word “třískat” (to hit), possibly with some influence from German “dreschen” (to thrash). An early XX-century form of XIXer-Rufen – game 19.7 in our book – was also known as Trischacken. Another game called Trischaken, in which the object is always to avoid taking points, is described in Doleysch and Kunz’s GM.

#### **16.20 Modern Viennese Trischaken (mid XX-century to present day)**

This game is played by 3, 4 or 5 players with a 54-card Tarock pack. The counting cards have their standard values, Tarocks II to XX are worth 1 point each, and the empty cards in the suits have no value. The cards are counted singly, for a total of 90 points in the pack. Deal and play are clockwise. When there are three players the deal is a batch of 8 cards to each player, then 6 to the talon, then 8 to each player; with four players the deal is 6 cards to each, 6 to the talon and then again 6 to each; with five players the deal is 5 each, then 4 to the talon, then again 5 each. The talon cards are not used and do not count for any player.

There is a single round of bidding, begun by the player to dealer’s left, who cannot pass but says either “*ich spiele*” (I play) or “*den zweiten*”, “*den dritten*” or “*den vierten*” (the second, the third, the fourth), according as there are three, four or five players. Then each of the other players in turn says either “*weiter*” (pass) or “*ablöse*” (take over). The last person who said “*ablöse*” becomes the declarer. If all said “*weiter*”, the player to dealer’s left is declarer. The significance of the different forms of words that this first player can use to start the bidding is obscure to us – the result seems to be the same whatever he says.

In every case the declarer’s objective is to take fewer card points than any other player, but he can choose between a number of different rules of play. In all cases, players must follow suit, play a Tarock when unable to follow suit, and in all except the last they must beat the highest card so far played to the trick when able to. According to the declarer’s choice, the following special rules apply:

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<sup>6</sup> Trischacken, given in parentheses as alternative name for Brehan, was one of the games prohibited by Friedrich Wilhelm II, King of Prussia, in his decree of 9<sup>th</sup> February 1787. A copy of this decree in the Deutsches Spielkartenmuseum, Leinfelden is cited by Dr Annette Kröger in paper *Playing cards and gambling* given to the 2008 International Playing-Card Society Convention in Hoofddorp.

**Austarockieren.** Players must lead Tarocks whenever they are able to, and when playing a Tarock must always play their highest.

**Austarockieren über den Pagat hinaus.** The rules are as in Austarockieren, but in addition, until all the Tarocks have been played, any player who wins a trick with his last remaining Tarock must surrender the lead to the next player in clockwise rotation who still has a Tarock to lead.

**Die Kleinen stechen die Grossen.** The ranking order of the Tarocks and of the cards in each suit is reversed. So the Pagat is the highest Tarock and the Gstieß the lowest; in the suits the 7 or 4 is highest and the King lowest. Players must lead a Tarock when able to but there is no obligation to play one's highest Tarock. The obligations to follow suit, trump when unable to follow, and beat the highest card in the trick when able to (according to the revised ranking) still apply.

**Kunterbunt.** The general rules (follow suit, trump when unable to follow, beat the highest card) apply, but there are no restrictions on what card may be led.

**Ausfärbeln.** Tarocks have no power over suit cards. The highest card of the suit led wins, or the highest Tarock if Tarocks are led. Players must follow suit when possible but are under no obligation to beat the other cards played. When unable to follow suit a Tarock must be played if possible. It is illegal to lead a Tarock unless one's hand contains nothing but Tarocks.

Each player begins the session with 500 game points. At the end of the play of a hand, the card points are counted. If the declarer has fewest points, he scores plus 30 game points, the opponent with most points scores minus 20 game points and the opponent with second most points scores minus 10 game points. The other opponents (if there are more than three players) score nothing. If any other player has fewer points than the declarer, the declarer scores minus 30 game points, the opponent with fewest points plus 20 game points, and the opponent with second fewest plus 10. If two of the declarer's opponents tie their game points are shared equally. A tie between the declarer and an opponent for least points is decided in favour of the declarer, but if there are only three players the tying opponent scores zero and the other opponent minus 30. If any

player has no tricks (Jungfrau) then it is this player who scores plus 30 game points, and the player with most points is *Bürgermeister* and scores minus 30.

*Variations*

In a variant known as “Reihe”, the possible contracts are ranked in ascending order: Kunterbunt, Die Kleinen stechen die Grossen, Ausfärbeln, Austarockieren, Austarockieren über den Pagat hinaus. Bidding is by simple escalation – each player in turn may pass or name a contract higher than that of the previous bidder – and may therefore last for up to three rounds. A player who has passed cannot subsequently bid, but in the first round only, a player may say “*abwarten*” (waiting), which reserves his right to bid in the second round, and commits him to bid a contract if all subsequent players pass.

Some play that when “Austarockieren” is chosen, players must always play the highest card they hold in the suit they play, not only their highest Tarock.

Some play with the “*Damen Parade*” (ladies’ parade) in which all players who hold Queens must lay them face up on the table in front of them. They are still regarded as belonging to the player’s hand, and may be played on a lead of that suit or themselves led, but may not be discarded on a Tarock lead or on a lead of a different suit, except perforce if the player has no other cards left.

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## Supplement to Chapter 17

### Cego

Peter Müller has provided some information about the versions of Cego played at Ichenheim, near Offenburg. Here the three-handed game is the principal form, but four-handed Cego is also played as a casual game.

#### 17.3 Modern three-handed Cego (*additional variant: Ichenheim version*)

There are annual Cego tournaments with about 60 to 100 players on 6<sup>th</sup> January in the Gasthaus “Hechten” in Ichenheim. Two sessions of 24 deals are played. These are all 3-player games: if the number of entrants requires one or two tables of four players, then at these tables the dealer takes no part in the play, but wins and loses equally with the defenders.

There are two special contracts that can be bid instead of Solo in the first round of bidding. As in Bräunlingen, ‘Ulti’ is a contract to play with one’s original hand and win the last trick with Trock I, the payment being 20 game points to or from each defender. The other special game is ‘Solodu’, sometimes also called ‘Drescher’, in which the declarer must win every trick playing with his original hand. This is worth 64 game points per defender.

The multiplier for Solo is 1, irrespective of whether the game is won or lost. In Eine Leere, Zwei Leere and Zwei Verschiedene, the cards led by the declarer must be genuine empty cards (Brettli).

If the declarer wins, the base value of the contract is 1 game point for each 5 points or part of 5 points over 35. If the declarer loses the base value is 1 game point for each 5 points or part of 5 points below 36 (so for example if the declarer has 26-30 points the base value is 2). A declarer who is “Bürgermeister” (loses with exactly 35 points) is expected to buy a round of Schnaps for the table. If either side takes all the tricks the base value is 8 game points as usual. There is a tradition that if the declarer loses every

trick (“*er geht durch*”), his opponents taunt him by singing an extract from the German folk song “*Im Wald, da sind die Räuber*”.

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#### 17.4 Modern four-handed Cego (*additional variant: Ichenheim version*)

The play and scoring of the ordinary contracts is the same as in the three-handed game at Ichenheim. There are three special contracts: Piccolo is worth 10 game points, Bettel 15 and Ulti 20. There is the usual penalty for skinning a Solo if challenged.

If all pass in the first round of bidding, and the other three players pass again over the first player’s compulsory bid of Cego, then instead of playing Cego the first player can announce a Räuber. The play is somewhat similar to that of the Geregelte Räuber described on page 567. All players must play Trocks to the first three tricks if they have them. The holder (if any) of the Gstieß must play it to the first trick, the holder of the 21 to the second and the holder of the 1 to third trick. During the first three tricks, players who were dealt fewer than three Trocks may discard suit cards (but not Kings) when they hold no Trock apart possibly from an honour that must be saved for a later trick. The cards of the *Blinde* are given to the winner of the last trick. The player who takes most points is the loser, and must pay 5 game points to each opponent. This is doubled to 10 points if any player wins no trick, and doubled again to 20 if two players take no trick.

#### *Geregelte Räuber - erratum*

The description of on page 567 contains a small error: the trump honours are not in general led to the first three tricks. The player to dealer’s right leads to the first trick and the winner of each trick leads to the next. In the first three tricks all players must play Trocks if they can, and the Gstieß, 21 and 1 must be played to the first, second and third tricks respectively. These rules take priority over the normal requirement to follow suit. When unable to play a Trock in the first three tricks one must play a Brettli (empty suit card). For example a player who held the 16, 1 and no other Trocks would have to play the 16 to the first trick, a Brettli to the second and the 1 to the third.

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## Supplement to Chapter 18

### Königrufen

#### 18.10 Contemporary Königrufen (*additional variants*)

At least two further books on this game have been published in the last few years. Karl Haas: *Das Handbuch zu den Tarock-Spielregeln* (2004 = HTS) is based on the Upper Austrian style of Königrufen as played in the Raiffeisen Cup. His scoring schedule agrees with the one on page 678 of our book, the Besserrufer being known as A-Rufer (short for Auchrufer). Sechserdreier can only be bid by the first player at the outset, and is overbid only by a contract of Piccolo Ouvert or higher. The same schedule and similar rules are used for the Hausruck Cup, another Upper Austrian tournament series.

A standardised example of the Viennese style is found in the rules of the Wiener Tarockcup (WTC), a tournament series organised by Robert Sedlaczek. The scoring schedule for these tournaments is as follows:

<u>Contracts for the first player only</u>		<u>Contracts for all players</u>		<u>Bonuses</u>	
Rufer	1	Piccolo	2	Trull	2/1
Trischaken	1	Solorufer	2	Four Kings	2/1
Sechserdreier	5 (–10)	Pagatrufer	1+2	Pagat Ultimo	2/1
		Bettler	4	Uhu	4/2
		Uhurufer	1+4	Kakadu	6/3
		Farbendreier	5	Quapil	8/4
		Dreier	5	King Ultimo	2/1
		Piccolo Ouvert	6	Valat	x8/x4
		Kakadurufer	1+6		
		Bettler Ouvert	8		
		Quapil Rufer	1+8		
		Farbensolo	10		
		Solodreier	10		

Sechserdreier, like Rufer and Trischaken is an option for the first player only if the other players all pass after he has opened with “*Mein Spiel*”. The *Kaiserstich* rule, in which the Pagat beats the Sküs and Mond when all three cards are played to the same trick,

applies in all contracts, though in Farbensolo and Farbendreier the Pagat only wins the trick if a trump was led. When opting for Trischaken after the others has passed, the first player can choose between “*Tarock von oben hinunter*”, in which a player with Tarocks must always lead his highest, but other players do not have to play their highest so long as they head the trick if able to, and “*Bunt gemischt*”, in which any card can be led. In either case the talon cards are given to the winners of the first six tricks. In Trischaken normally the loser pays 1 game point to each opponent, but if the first player loses this is doubled to 2. It is also doubled if the loser has 36 or more points (*Bürgermeister*), so if the first player is *Bürgermeister* he pays each opponent 4 game points. If two or three players tie for most points, they each pay 1 game point. A player with no tricks (*Jungfrau*) normally wins 3 game points from the loser and the other two players neither win nor lose. If the loser is a *Bürgermeister* he pays 6 game points to a *Jungfrau* or 3 each if two players are without tricks. If two players tie for most points and there is a *Jungfrau*, they pay 3 each. The score for Valat supersedes the game, Four Kings and Trull, but not birds. It is not allowed for more than one player to play Piccolo or Bettel at the same time.

Martin Vácha's book *Tarock – Lehrbuch des Königrufens* (2007 = LK) is intended as to introduce the game to high-school students and covers the rules, common variants and basic tactics. It is also in the Viennese tradition, though the recommended scoring schedule is rather different, the larger birds being less expensive relative to the smaller ones.

<u>Contracts for the first player only</u>	<u>Contracts for all players</u>	<u>Bonuses</u>
Rufer 2	Zwiccolo 4	Trull 4/2
Trischaken 2	Piccolo 4	Four Kings 4/2
Sechserdreier 8 (-16)	Solorufer 4	Absolut 4/2
	Pagatrufer 2+6	Pagat Ultimo 6/3
	Bettler 9	Uhu 8/4
	Uhurufer 2+8	Kakadu 10/5
	Farbendreier 10	Quapil 12/6
	Dreier 10	King Ultimo 4/2
	Piccolo Ouvert 12	Mondfang -/2
	Kakadurufer 2+10	Valat 40/20
	Quapil Rufer 2+12	
	Bettler Ouvert 18	
	Farbensolo 20	
	Solodreier 20	

Somewhat unusual here is the Absolut bonus, which requires at least 49 points plus 1 card in this version. The contracts Bettler, Zwiccolo and Piccolo can be played simultaneously by two or more declarers, playing the same or different contracts.

It is perhaps not surprising that the series of bonuses for winning a late trick with a small Tarock has been extended by some groups to include not only the V but also the VI, which has to win the sixth last trick to score the bonus, and costs the same amount if it is played to the sixth last trick and beaten. However, it is still rare to come across games where the sequence of birds continues beyond the IIII.

#### *Erratum – page 677*

Hans-Joachim Alscher points out that in the Melk game, while the Tarock and Großtarock bonuses are won only if the game is won and lost otherwise, the rule for Honeur and Großhoneur is different. These two bonuses do not depend on winning the game. For these announcements to succeed, the necessary honours must be present in the player's original hand and must also be brought home in tricks; otherwise the bonus is lost and must be paid to the opponents.

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#### **18.11 Königrufen (Salzburger Lungau, present day) – revisions**

As a result of a session played by one of us with a player from the Salzburger Lungau, there are a few revisions to our account of that version of the game.

The penalty for Königfang in a Rufer is 10 game points, not 20.

As in other versions of Königrufen there is a bonus for King Ultimo, which is worth 20 points if announced and 10 if not. This was omitted from the table on page 682.

As usual it is possible for five people to play, in which case the dealer sits out *except* when a *Fahren* (Trischaken) occurs. In a *Fahren*, the dealer picks up the talon and joins in the first six tricks, and can *Kontra*. If the dealer wins the sixth trick with his last card, the lead to the seventh trick passes to his right-hand opponent.

After a *Fahren*, the next four hands (if there are four players) or five hands (if there are five players) are played for double stakes. If another *Fahren* occurs during this time, the stakes for it are not doubled, and it does not count towards the number of hands to be doubled, but an additional four or five double stake hands are added to those scheduled to be played.

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Tarot, in any form, is not generally known as an American game; there are, however, particularly in Texas, circles of players sufficiently numerous for tournaments to be held. As will be apparent from the use of Czech-derived words such as *Povenost*, they are especially concentrated among those descended from immigrants of Czech origin. So far as our information goes, the types of Tarot game played in the United States are Königrufen, XIXer-Rufen and XXer-Rufen, with XIXer-Rufen being the most widespread form. The American versions closely resemble their European counterparts. They share one common feature: every card has a point-value, however small, and the cards are counted singly to determine a player's point-total: there is therefore never any need to count them in threes or in fours. We know of two American versions of Königrufen. The first is described in a set of rules for a tournament in Taylor, Texas. The author clearly does not consider Königrufen to be the usual form of the game, since the rules begin by explaining that a King is called instead of the XIX or XX. The description is somewhat incomplete, but since the game is closely related to Texas XIXer-Rufen and XXer-Rufen (games 19.16 and 19.17), we have used those accounts to supply some missing details here.

**18.13 Tarok (Texas, U.S.A., present day, King called for partner)**

There are four players; deal and play are counterclockwise. A 54-card French-suited pack is used.

The trump honours are called Skys, Mond and Pagat, and are worth 5 points each. In each suit, the King is worth 5, the Queen 4, the Knight (called Rider) 3 and the Jack (called Walker) 2. Every other card is worth 1 point. The cards are usually counted singly, giving a total of 106 points in the pack. In the black suits, the cards rank, in descending order, K, Q, C, J, 10, 9, 8, 7. In the red suits they rank K, Q, C, J, 4, 3, 2, A. Players cut to decide dealer to the first hand: the one who cuts the highest card deals.

The dealer places the first six cards face down on the table to form the talon, and then gives out two rounds of six cards each, unless the player on his left knocks the pack instead of cutting and specifies that the cards should be dealt 1, 2, 3, 4 or 12 at a time. If he chooses 12, he has the right to say which 12 (first, second, etc.) he will himself receive, then the player to dealer's right is asked which of remaining packets of 12 he wants, then the player opposite the dealer chooses a packet and the dealer takes the remaining 12 cards.

After the deal, the bidding follows; in the first deal of a session the player who holds the trump II is the first to speak (or, if no one has the II, the one who has the III, and so on). This player will become the dealer of the second hand. In the second and subsequent hands the player to dealer's right opens the bidding and the turn to deal passes to the right after each hand. The player who opens the bidding cannot pass, but must make a positive bid. There are three positive bids: in ascending order Povenost, No Trick and Prever. It is not entirely clear, but it seems that, as in other similar games, the first player must announce one of the three bids – most often he will say Povenost – and this begins a single round of bidding in which the other players can pass or bid higher.

In Povenost, declarer takes the first four cards of the talon and discards four under the usual rules. The next player after him takes one card from the talon, and the player after him takes the last card; both discard one card each. A player who has two trumps or no trumps may refuse to take a card from the talon, so as to preserve his right to be paid for these holdings; in this case the fourth player draws the last talon card and discards

one. A trump may be discarded if the holder has nothing but trumps and kings, but must then be shown to the other players or placed face up beside the one discarding it. After all discards have been made, declarer calls a King, naming its suit or, if he has three Kings in his hand, he may say "The fourth King". If another player holds the called King, he becomes declarer's partner without announcing the fact; but declarer is allowed to call a King he himself holds, in which case he plays alone against the other three, although this is not at first known. If the Povenost player has all four Kings, he may either call one of them to play alone, or call a Queen. The declarer will lead to the first trick. His object is to obtain 54 points or more, with his partner if he has one.

If the declarer bid No Trick, the talon is set aside unseen. The player who bid first leads to the first trick. Every player must, if he can, play higher to a trick than the cards already played (including playing a trump when unable to follow suit). Declarer's object is to take no tricks.

If the declarer bid Prever, he will play alone against the other three, with the object of obtaining 54 points or more. He looks at the first three cards of the talon, and, if satisfied with them, takes them into his hand and discards three cards. He may alternatively expose the first three and look at the second three. If he is satisfied with these, he may take them into his hand without showing them and discard three cards. Finally, he may expose the second three and after all take the first three into his hand, again discarding three.

Before play starts in Povenost or Prever, announcements are made, beginning with the declarer and continuing in clockwise rotation. Any player may announce "Pagat" if he holds that card, with the intention to take the last trick with it. If he holds the called King in his hand, he may announce "King", with the intention that his side will take the last trick, with that King in it. A player who announces either of these may not play the card, Pagat or King, before the rules oblige him to do so. A player may announce "Valat" (taking all the tricks). He may also declare any of the following bonuses:

Tarockee (holding 8 or 9 trumps but not more)	2 game points from each other player
Tarockee or Velki (holding 10 or more trumps)	4 game points from each other player
Trul (holding Skys, Mond and Pagat)	2 game points from each other player
Pane (four 5-point cards, incl.. 2 or 3 Kings}	2 game points from each other player
Trul Pane (Trul and one King)	4 game points from each other player
Krale (all four Kings)	4 game points from each other player
Rosane Pane (all four Kings and one Trul card)	6 game points from each other player
SPJST (all seven 5-point cards)	10 game points from each other player
Two trumps (holding 1 or 2 trumps)	2 game points from each other player
No trumps	4 game points from each other player

An opponent of the declarer may give a Contra to the game or the King declaration, and an opponent of a player who announced Pagat may Contra the Pagat. An opponent of the player who said Contra may redouble by saying “Re”, which may be countered by “Supre”, and that in turn by “Mort”. Contra, Re, etc. may be said to a No Trick game, but none of the other announcements may be made.

The payments are to be understood as follows. When declarer has a partner, he is paid the stated amount by one opponent or pays that amount to one opponent, and his partner is paid by or pays to the other opponent. When declarer plays alone, he is paid by or pays each of the three opponents. The value of a Povenost or No Trick game is 1 game point. If declarer plays a Prever game, having taken the first three cards of the talon without looking at the other three, its value is 1 game point from each opponent, or 2 if No Trick had been bid by anyone. If declarer took the second three cards of the talon, its value is 2 game points; if he went back to the first three after seeing the second three, its value is 4 game points.<sup>7</sup>

Losing the XXI to the Skys incurs a penalty of 2 game points. Winning the last trick with the Pagat has a value of 2 game points, or 4 game points if announced. The

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<sup>7</sup> The payments for the game are not clearly explained. All the rules actually say is: “A Prever loss costs two chips for the second three and four chips for going back to the first three. A Prever loss after a No-Trick bid results in a two chip penalty.” However, given that the scores for announcements are similar to those of games 19.16 and 19.17 it may be that the game scores in this game 18.13 should also be similar, and therefore based on the difference between the card points taken and 53, in which case the score for No Tricks must also be more than 1, perhaps 16 game points as in 19.17.

same values attach to winning the last trick with the called King in it (the King need not itself win the trick). If an announcement of Pagat or King is unsuccessful, the penalty is 4 game points. If Pagat is not announced, having the Pagat captured in the last trick (even by one's partner) incurs a penalty of 2 game points. Valat (taking all the tricks) has a value of 20 game points, or 40 if announced.

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The other American version of Königrufen is known to us from a leaflet dated 1922, accompanying a special 54-card pack of Tarok cards, item USA265 in the Cary Collection, Yale University. The author, August Petrtyl of Chicago, evidently intended to popularize the game in America, which accounts for some of the terminology. We do not know whether this met with any success. We have not found any players of this version of the game, and American players nowadays use the standard Austrian or Czech 54-card pack.

#### **18.14 Tarok (U.S.A., 1920s to 1930s and perhaps later, Petrtyl Version)**

There are four players; deal and play are clockwise. A special 54-card French-suited pack is used, with pink hearts, yellow diamonds, black clubs and green spades. The Sküs is called Uncle Sam or U.S. Skees, the trump I is called Papoose and the Kings are called Chiefs, the Queens Squaws, the Knights Cavaliers and the Jacks Scouts. The trumps are called Taroks and the numeral cards of the suits are called Scartins. In the red suits the cards rank K, Q, C, J, 4, 3, 2, A. Uncle Sam, the XXI, the I and the four Chiefs count  $4\frac{1}{2}$  points apiece, the Squaws  $3\frac{1}{2}$  points apiece, the Cavaliers  $2\frac{1}{2}$  points apiece, the Scouts  $1\frac{1}{2}$  points apiece, and all the other cards  $\frac{1}{2}$  point apiece, the cards being counted singly. This is equivalent to giving the cards their usual values and counting them in threes: it yields a total of 70 card points for the whole pack. Except in a Nullo game,  $35\frac{2}{3}$  are needed to win.

Deal and play are clockwise. The dealer puts two sets of three cards, crossways, to form the talon, and then, if player on his right cuts the pack, deals two rounds of six cards each to each player. If that player does not cut, the player to dealer's left specifies that the cards should be dealt in sixes or twelves; in the latter case, he states which of the four sets of twelve he wants. If in sixes, the cards are dealt as usual. If in twelves, and

the first twelve was opted for, they are given out twelve at a time in rotation. If a later twelve was asked for, each player in turn says which of the remaining sets of twelve he wants. Any player who is dealt no Taroks and no Chiefs may call for a redeal at any time before his first turn to bid.

In ascending order, the positive bids are Three, Four, Five, Grand Nullo and Grand Sweep. The player to dealer's left must open the bidding with at least Three, and he always leads to the first trick. A player may hold a subsequent bid by saying "Retain". If a bid of Three is passed by all the others, the hand is not played. The other three pay the declarer 3 game points each.

In Four, declarer calls a Chief for a partner. He may call his own Chief, or he may say "No Chief", in either of which cases he plays alone. If he has three Chiefs, he may say "the fourth Chief". After calling, he looks at the first set of three cards of the talon without showing them, and may take it and discard three cards under the usual restrictions. The game is then worth 4 game points. Or he may place the first three face up and look at the second three, which he may take and discard three. The game is then worth 5 game points. Or he may also place the second three face up and take the first three after all, discarding three. In this case the game is worth 6 game points. A trump may be discarded only if it is necessary to do so to comply with other rules, and must then be laid down face up. If the called Chief is found in the talon, the declarer is under no obligation to take the half that contains the Chief: he may play on without a partner using either half of the talon without penalty, or he may give up and pay the value of the game to each of the other three players, thus avoiding the possibility of a Contra.

In **Five**, the talon is set aside unseen, but the declarer calls a Chief, as in Four; if the called Chief proves to be in the talon, he has played alone, but the three cards containing that Chief are his. Otherwise the whole talon belongs to the opponents after play. The value of the game is not stated, but it is probably 8 game points.<sup>8</sup>

In **Grand Nullo**, declarer plays alone, and wins if he does not take a trick. The talon is set aside unseen. The value of the game is 36 game points.

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<sup>8</sup> The value of an undeclared Sweep in Five is stated as 24 points, and we may assume that this is three times the ordinary value of the game, as in Four when the first part of the talon is used.

In **Grand Sweep**, declarer plays alone, and wins if he takes all the tricks. The talon is set aside unseen. The value of the game is 60 game points.

After the bidding there is a round beginning with the declarer, in which players may announce various bonuses, opponents of the declarer can double the game, and opponents of players who have made announcements can challenge the announcements. The doubles and challenges are Contra, Recontra and Suprecontra. No player who has passed in the bidding may give a Contra to the game; nor may one who has bid "Four" give Contra to Five. The possible declarations and announcements are as follows:

**Chief last:** announced by the holder of the called Chief with the intention that he or a partner shall win the last trick with that card in it. He must keep that Chief until he is compelled to play it. Contra may be given to this.

**Papoose last:** announced by the holder of the Papoose with the intention that he shall win the last trick with it. He must keep the Papoose until he is compelled to play it. Contra may be given to this.

**Regiment:** declared by a player with ten or more trumps.

**Lack of Regiment:** declared in a Nullo game by the declarer if he has two or fewer trumps.

**Sweep:** announced by the declarer with the intention that he and his partner, if any, shall take all the tricks. Contra may be given to this.

The player to dealer's left always leads to the first trick, and the cards are played according to the usual rules. When play is finished, declarer may claim honours, either Trule for having in his hand all three trump honours (U.S., XXI and I) or All Four (the four Chiefs) or both. These are each worth 1 game point from every other player (including the holder's partner) in a Four game, 2 in a Five game and 4 in a Grand Sweep. In a Grand Nullo game, a player can collect 4 game points each from the other players for having no Trule card or for having no Chief. In a Four game, for winning the last trick with the Papoose or with the called Chief in it without announcement, declarer and his partner each receive 1 game point from the opponents, or 2 if it was announced. If either was announced but not made, they each pay 2 game points. If in a Four game declarer and partner make an undeclared Sweep (win all the tricks between them), the value of the

game becomes 12 game points if declarer took the first three cards of the talon without seeing the second three, 14 if he took the second three, and 16 if he took the first three after seeing the second three. These points are doubled if Sweep was announced. In a Five game, sweep is worth 24 game points undeclared and 48 declared. In Grand Sweep, where it is included in the bid, it is worth 60. In case of a Sweep, whether announced or not, there are no payments for Chief Last or Papoose Last. An announcement of Regiment in a Four game gains 1 game point from every other player (including partner), 2 in a Five game and 4 in Grand Sweep. Lack of Regiment gains 4 game points from each in Grand Nullo.

There is a “penalty pot” into which the dealer must pay 4 game points in the event of a misdeal. A player who announces Papoose Last takes the contents of this pot if he succeeds but doubles it if he fails.

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A five-handed form of the foregoing game is briefly described in Petrtyl’s leaflet.

**18.15** Five-handed Tarok (U.S.A., 1920s to 1930s and perhaps later, Petrtyl version)

This is like game **18.14** except for the following details. The dealer puts only four cards face down on the table to form the talon, and then deals two rounds of five cards each to each of the five players. In a Four game the declarer picks up the whole talon and discards four cards: game is worth 6 game points. A Five game is worth 12 game points. For an announcement of Regiment the player must have ten trumps and for one of Lack of Regiment he must have none.

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Petrtyl also describes a three-handed version. Properly speaking, this is not a form of Königrufen, since declarer does not call a King or any other card for a partner: he will always play alone against the other two. However, it seemed best to describe it here, since Petrtyl regards it as the three-handed form of game **18.14**.

**18.16** Three-handed Tarok (U.S.A., 1920s to 1930s and perhaps later, Petrtyl version)

A 42-card French-suited pack is used, with 10s the only numeral cards in the black suits and Aces the only numeral cards in the red ones. There are therefore only 66 points in the

pack, rather than 70 (according to the points system with thirds). A score of 34 points or more is needed to win the game. The deal is as in the four-handed game – twelve cards to each player in two rounds of six to each. For an announcement of Regiment the player must have twelve trumps and for one of Lack of Regiment he must have none.

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Petrtyl also describes a version of Strohmann-Tarock (compare game 15.22).

**18.17** Two-handed Tarok (U.S.A., 1920s to 1930s and perhaps later, Petrtyl version)

The rules of 18.14 hold good with the following exceptions. The deal is always three cards at a time: after the talon, two hands are dealt to the live players and two dummies, one belonging to each player. Each dummy comprises four three-card stacks. There are no Nullo or Grand Sweep bids, Papoose Last is the only possible announcement. There are no payments for Trule or All Four but before the play either player can claim payment for any four of the seven honours held in hand.

Immediately before the first lead, each player turns up the top card of each of the piles that form his dummy. If any of these are Taroks or Chiefs, the player takes them into his hand and turns up the next card of the pile. Play is under the usual rules, tricks consisting of two cards and each player playing either from his hand or the top card of one of his dummies. When a dummy card is played, the next card of that pile must be turned up and taken into hand if it is a Tarok or Chief, as at the start of the game.

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## **Supplement to Chapter 19**

### **XIXer-Rufen and XXer-Rufen**

#### **19.12 Neunzehnrufen (Melk) – erratum p741**

Hans-Joachim's correction to the rules of Melk Königrufen presumably also applies to the corresponding version of XIXer-rufen. While announced Tarock and Großtarock bonuses are won only if the game is won and lost otherwise, the rule for the Honeur and Großhoneur bonuses is different. For these announcements to succeed, the necessary honours must be present in the player's original hand and must be brought home in tricks; otherwise the bonus is lost and must be paid to the opponents.

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#### **19.13 Zwanzigerrufen with 40 cards – additional variations**

The *Grosstarockbuch* by Doleysch and Kunz (GM) describes a version under the name "XXer-rufen modern", which includes some extra features. It is not quite clear which of these are widespread: some may be innovations introduced by the authors and played only in their own circle.

The scoring differs slightly from that given on page 748, but unfortunately the explanation is not clear enough to be sure exactly how it is intended to work. In GM the scores are all multiples of 5 game points: here we will divide them by 5 to give a score of 1 game point for the basic game, which is consistent with the table on page 748. On this basis, Absolut, which scores only if announced, is worth 2 game points in GM, as is catching the XXI. Valat is worth just 2 game points unannounced and 4 game points if announced. Trull and four Kings are worth 1 game point each and Pagat Ultimo is worth 1 game point unannounced and 2 announced. A Farbensolo or Solo is worth 4 game points, but apparently the value of the bonuses is unaffected by the contract. The first player is permitted to call a trump that he holds himself – normally this would be the XX,

and as usual if a lower trump is called, the caller must have all the higher trumps up to and including the XX. In this case a “silent Solo” is played, whose value is 2 game points.

In a Rufer, not only can the opponents double the value of the game by saying Kontra, but the declarer or his partner can also double it by saying “*erhöhtes Spiel*” (raised game), even when there has been no Kontra. There are contradictory statements about whether only the game itself can be “raised”, or whether the value of an Absolut announcement can also be doubled in this way<sup>9</sup>. Probably there are different versions and the players should agree before the game on which to use. Unlimited further doubles by alternate sides are possible - Retour, Subre, Resubre and so on – though it is rarely sensible to go beyond Retour.

If the first player calls a card without any further announcement and the next two players pass, the fourth player (the dealer) is not permitted simply to pass. He must either make some announcement, or double the game, saying either *erhöhtes Spiel* or *Kontra*, depending on whether he holds the called card or not, or if he does not wish to do any of these, he must announce a **Trischaken**, in which all players play for themselves and the object is to avoid taking card points. In a Trischaken, the first player (to dealer’s left) leads, the usual rules of play apply and subject to these, each player must beat the highest card so far played to the trick if possible. The Pagat cannot be played until it is the holder’s only trump. When the dealer calls for a Trischaken he can make one of two additional announcements: “*Austarockieren*” obliges a player on lead always to lead his highest Tarock, if he has any. “*Austarockieren über den Pagat hinaus*” additionally requires a player who does not have any Tarocks to cede the lead to the holder of the highest Tarock, if any remain. If the dealer makes no announcement, there is no restriction on what card can be led (except of course that the Pagat cannot be led unless it is the holder’s last trump). After the dealer announces a Trischaken, any other player may Kontra, which doubles the scores.

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<sup>9</sup> On page 20 we read that “Der Absolut mit Partner ... zählt einfach 15 Punkte. ... Ebenso kann der Partner des Rufer dessen oder seinen eigenes Absolut mit »Spiel erhöhen« auf 30 Punkte verdoppeln.” – but on page 23: “Der »Absolut« kann nicht erhöht werden”.

The scoring of Trischaken in XXer-rufen is almost the same as in game 16.20. If the dealer has fewest points, he scores plus 6 game points, the opponent with most points scores minus 4 game points and the opponent with second most points scores minus 2 game points and the fourth player scores nothing. If any other player has fewer points than the dealer, the dealer scores minus 6 game points, the opponent with fewest points plus 4 game points, and the opponent with second fewest plus 2. If two of the dealer's opponents tie their game points are shared equally. A tie between the dealer and an opponent for least points is decided in favour of the player with fewer tricks, or of the dealer if these too are equal. If any player has no tricks (Jungfrau) then it is this player who scores plus 6 game points, and the player with most points is *Bürgermeister* and scores minus 6. The deal immediately after a Trischaken is played for double stakes. If this too is a Trischaken the next deal is played for quadruple stakes, and so on. As soon as a game other than Trischaken is played, the following deal reverts to single stakes.

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It is mentioned on page 728 that Taroki is played in southern Poland: the region in question is the part of Silesia that formerly belonged to the Austrian empire. We are now able to provide a description of the game played in Zabrzeg (near Czechowice-Dziedice), as a result of a visit there in 2005, organised with the help of Robert Sedlaczek and Wolfgang Mayr of Vienna. As expected, the game is closely related to Czech Taroky.

#### **19.14 Polish Taroki (Zabrzeg, present day)**

##### *General*

There are four players and a 54-card pack is used. Trumps are called *taroki*, the Fool is the *skiz*, the XXI the *mund* and the I the *pagat*. Deal and play are counter-clockwise. The cards are counted in threes, two odd empty cards counting 1 point and one odd empty card nothing, so that there are 70 points altogether. The declarer, with his partner if any, needs at least 36 points to win.

##### *Deal*

After the shuffle and cut, the first six cards are dealt to the talon, and the remainder in batches of six. If any player has no trumps, or a lone trump honour with no other trumps,

or only the *mund* and *pagat* with no other trumps, he may immediately declare this, in which case the cards are thrown in and the shuffle, cut and deal are repeated.

### *Bidding*

There are four possible contracts: *Powinność*, *Pagat*, *Brewer* and *Zolo brewer*. There is just one round of bidding. The first player must bid at least *powinność*, and is therefore the only player who can undertake this lowest contract. The other players in turn must either bid higher or pass (saying “*dobrze*” - good).

In the first two contracts, the declarer calls the XIX, or if he holds the XIX the highest trump below the XIX that he does not hold, down to the XVI, but never a trump lower than the XVI. Thus a player holding the XIX, XVIII, XVII and XVI must call his own card and play alone. The declarer then draws the top four cards of the talon, without showing them, and discards four cards under the usual restrictions. The next two players in rotation each draw one card from the talon without showing it and discard one card under the usual restrictions: no honours may be discarded, trumps may only be discarded if there is no alternative and must then be discarded face up. Discards count for the team of the player who discarded them. The second contract is exactly like the first, except that in addition the declarer must hold the *pagat* and must announce *Pagat* in the round of announcements.

In a *Brewer*, the declarer plays alone against the other three. He draws three cards from the talon after inspection by stages with exposure after rejection (see Chapter 16, page 466: *methods of drawing from the talon*). There are therefore three levels of *Brewer*, taking the first three cards without looking at the rest, taking the second three cards after rejecting the first three, and returning to the first three having seen all six. The declarer discards three cards, which count for him, under the usual restrictions. The other three cards count for the opponents.

In *Zolo Brewer* the declarer plays alone against the other three. The whole talon is set aside unseen and counts for the declarer's opponents.

If the first player says *Powinność* and the other three pass, the first player must play his contract – there is no option to convert to a negative contract as in the Czech game.

*Bonuses and announcements*

Before the first lead, there is a round of announcements, beginning with the declarer, during which players can claim various bonuses for declarations of combinations of cards held in the hand of one player before play begins. The combinations are as follows:

Barwy	3 game points
Honery	4 game points
Trul	5 game points
Trul – honer	6 game points
Kenix – trul	5 game points
Kenix – trul – honer	6 game points
Mały tarok	2 game points
Duży tarok	4 game points

‘Duży tarok’ signifies a holding of from ten to twelve *taroki*, and ‘Mały tarok’ one of eight or nine. ‘Trul’ of course signifies possession of the three trump honours *skiż*, *mund* and *pagat*. ‘Honery’ denotes a holding of at least four honours, but not including all four kings or all three trump honours. With all three trump honours plus at least one king the player declares ‘Trul – honer’, with four kings ‘Kenix – trul’ and with four kings plus one or two trump honours ‘Kenix – trul – honer’ for a higher score. With all seven honours one could declare ‘Trul’ and ‘Kenix – trul’ for a total of 10 game points, but this is the only case where more than one honour combination can be declared by the same player. ‘Barwy’ (suits) is a declaration that one holds two or fewer *taroki*. This can be combined with an honour declaration, if the appropriate cards are held.

A player can announce ‘Pagat’ at his turn, committing himself to win the last trick with the *pagat*: this announcement is of course compulsory for a declarer who has bid Pagat. A player who believes that his side can win all the tricks can commit to this by announcing ‘Walat’.

The score for the game or for any announced ‘Pagat’ or ‘Walat’ can be doubled by an opponent saying ‘Kontra’ during the round of announcements, and further doubles ‘Re’, ‘Sub’ and ‘Mord’ by alternate sides are possible.

*Play*

The first player always leads to the first trick, and play is under the usual rules. If the three trump honours are all played to the same trick, the pagat wins the trick. A player who has announced pagat must keep the pagat until forced to play it.

*Scoring*

The declarer's side wins the game if they take at least 36 points in tricks. The payment for the basic contract Powinność is obtained by subtracting the card points taken by the losing side from 35, rounding to the nearest 5, dividing by 5 and adding 1. So for example if the winning side takes 43 card points, this is a difference of 8, which rounds to 10, to give a payment of  $2+1 = 3$  game points. If the bid was Pagat, the payment for the game is the same, and there is the additional payment for the Pagat, as explained below.

In Brewer, the payment for the game is multiplied by 3 if it was at the first level, 2 if it was at the second level, and 1 if it was at the third level. Note that this is the reverse of the practice in other games where the talon is taken in stages, but it is logical in a game where the multiplier applies whether the game is won or lost. The contract becomes easier the more the declarer exercises his choice of talon cards, so the reward is reduced. In Zolo Brewer the payment for the game is multiplied by 6. Multipliers only apply to the score for the game, based on the number of card points taken. The scores for bonuses and declarations do not vary according to the contract.

If the *pagat* is played to the last trick without previous announcement, there is a bonus of 4 game points if it wins the trick, but a penalty of 4 game points for the side that played the *pagat* if it is beaten, whether by an opponent or by the player's partner. If Pagat was announced and the *pagat* wins the last trick, the announcing side receives 8 game points if the *pagat* wins the last trick and loses 8 game points otherwise.

A side that wins every trick is paid a bonus of 20 game points for Walat, and this supersedes all other payments. Because of this it can be profitable in a Brewer or Zolo Brewer to give up a trick deliberately so as to receive payment for the game and bonuses rather than for Walat. An announced Walat is worth 40 game points but incurs a penalty of 40 game points if the side fails to win every trick, and there are no other payments.

There is a pot called the *Žid* (compare games 15.12 and 19.9) into which penalties are paid for irregularities and various other events. The pot is empty at the start of the session. If the holder of the *pagat* loses it to an opponent, he must pay 5 game points to the pot; if the holder of the *mund* loses it he must pay 10 game points, and for the loss of the *skiž*, which can happen only when the three trump honours fall together, the holder must pay 15 game points. If the total score for a hand when the game and all bonuses are added together comes to zero game points, then the declarer and his partner if any must each pay 5 game points to the pot. The contents of the pot are collected by a side that successfully announces Pagat. There is no payment to the pot for a failed Pagat announcement, except for the normal payment of 5 game points if the *pagat* itself is lost to the opponents.

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The visit to Zabrzeg also yielded the tantalising information that in at least one of the villages nearby, a form of Taroki is played in which a King is called, rather than the XIX. Robert Sedlacek has speculated that this might be a relative of the Romanian game 18.6, but so far we have not managed to obtain any definite information.

It is becoming clear that many versions of 54-card Neunzehnrufen are played in Austria, and that as with Königrufen each group of players has its own somewhat different local rules. The following description is based on a session played by one of us in 2004 in the village of Winklarn, near Amstetten in Lower Austria, with a group to whom we were introduced by Hans-Joachim Alscher and Robert Sedlacek.

### **19.15 Neunzehnrufen (Amstetten, present day)**

The game is similar to the Mühlviertel game (19.11, page 730), with the following differences.

The game is played with five birds: Pagat (I), Uhu (II), Kakadu (III), Wildsau (IIII) and Kamel (V). There are no negative contracts other than Trischaken, but there are two suit contracts: Farbendreier and Farbensolo.

The first six cards are always dealt to the talon in a single batch, without changing their order. When the cards are knocked instead of cut, if the first player wants to choose a batch of cards other than the first 12 he must do so before the deal commences, and the

other players then choose. Otherwise, the first player is dealt the first batch of 12 cards and the second, third and fourth batches to the other players in order.

The contracts in ascending order are Rufer (available only to the first player), Besserrufer, Farbendreier, Dreier, Farbensolodreier, Solodreier. In a Besserrufer, which is sometimes announced by saying “*Gesehen*” (seen), the declarer must announce at least one of the five bird bonuses after the discard, but does not specify until then which bonus the bid is based on. There is just one round of bidding. The first player says *Vorhand*, and each subsequent player either bids at least a Besserrufer or passes, each bid being higher than the last. If the other three players pass, the first player can play any contract, including Rufer or *Trischaken*. Rufer and Besserrufer are played the same way as the Rufer contracts in game 18.11. It is usual for the two players who draw one card each from the talon to bet on who has the higher card, the usual stake being 50 game points. If both agree to this, they show each other the cards they drew (without exposing them to the other players) and the loser immediately pays the winner. In a Dreier the declarer takes three cards from the talon after inspection by stages. The first half of the talon is never exposed to the opponents; the second half is exposed to the opponents only after rejection, if the declarer goes back to the first half having looked at both halves, thus playing a threefold Dreier. The Solodreier is equivalent to the Solo in game 18.11.

In a Farbendreier or Farbensolodreier the procedure for using the talon is the same as in a Dreier or Solodreier respectively. In a Farbendreier, the declarer must discard Tarocks other than honours – only when he has no more 1-point Tarocks can he discard suit cards. There are no bonuses, declarations or announcements, except for *Kontra* and *Valat*. In the play, Tarocks have no power to beat suit cards and cannot be led unless the player leading has nothing but Tarocks. As usual players must follow suit if able to, and if not must play a Tarock if they can. Each trick is won by the highest card of the suit led, and by the highest Tarock only if Tarocks are led.

The bonuses, announcements and *kontras* are similar to those in game 18.11 with the addition of the *Kamel* bonus for winning the fifth to the last trick with Tarock V. If Tarock V is played to the fifth to last trick and does not win the trick the bonus is lost

(even if it has not been announced). A player who has announced Kamel must keep the V for the fifth last trick and play it then if possible.

The scores for Rufer, Dreier and Solodreier are shown in the following table<sup>10</sup>. All the scores for this game correspond to payments in Euro-cents, so appear roughly 10 times as large as those listed for game 18.11. The scores for Farbendreier and Farbensolodreier are twice those for Dreier and Solodreier respectively, even though the suit contracts rank lower in the bidding than the corresponding “black” contracts.

Declarer's side's points	Opponents' points taken	Rufer	Single Dreier	Twofold Dreier	Threefold Dreier	Solodreier
all (Valat)	none (Valat)	win 110	win 220	win 220	win 220	win 440
98 – 101	5 – 8	win 50	win 100	win 100	win 100	win 200
88 - 97	9 – 18	win 40	win 80	win 80	win 80	win 160
78 - 87	19 – 28	win 30	win 60	win 60	win 60	win 120
68 - 77	29 – 38	win 20	win 40	win 40	win 40	win 80
54 – 67	39 - 52	win 10	win 20	win 20	win 20	win 40
40 – 53	53 - 66	lose 10	lose 20	lose 40	lose 80	lose 40
30 – 39	67 - 76	lose 20	lose 40	lose 80	lose 160	lose 80
20 – 29	77 - 86	lose 30	lose 60	lose 120	lose 240	lose 120
10 – 19	87 - 96	lose 40	lose 80	lose 160	lose 320	lose 160
4 – 9	97 - 102	lose 50	lose 100	lose 200	lose 400	lose 200
none (Valat)	all (Valat)	lose 110	lose 220	lose 440	lose 880	lose 440

The scores for bonuses and declarations are as follows.

	Rufer	Dreier	Solodreier
Pagat ultimo	20 / 10	40 / 20	80 / 40
Uhu (II)	40 / 20	80 / 40	160 / 80
Kakadu (III)	60 / 30	120 / 60	240 / 120
Wildsau (III)	80 / 40	160 / 80	320 / 160
Kamel (V)	100 / 50	200 / 100	400 / 200
Tarock (at least 8 Tarocks)	10 / -	20 / -	40 / -
Trull (Sküs, XXI, I)	15 / -	30 / -	60 / -
Honneur (at least four honours)	10 / -	20 / -	40 / -
Großhonneur (four Kings)	20 / -	40 / -	80 / -
Valat	220 / 110	440 / 220	880 / 440

<sup>10</sup> Some readers have asked why in these tables no scores are given for the case where the declarer's side has 1-3 points or the opponents 1-4. The reason is that if there is no Valat, the losing side must always have at least one trick, worth at least 4 points, and in addition the opponents always have at least one card from the talon or discard.

To score for the declarations Tarock, Honneur or Großhonneur it is sufficient to hold the cards in one's hand – there is no requirement to win the game or to bring the cards home in one's tricks. The score for Großhonneur supersedes the score for Honneur. An announcement of Trull, Honneur, Tarock and Pagat together is known as "Komplett". In case of a Valat, there is no score for any other bonuses or declarations.

The score for Trischaken is 50, which is paid by the loser (the player who takes most points) to each opponent, so the loser must pay 150 game points altogether. If two players tie for most points then both losers pay 50 to each of the other players (so they pay out 100 game points each). A player who takes 53 or more points has to pay double, and the first player (who chose the Trischaken) also has to pay double if he loses. If a player takes no tricks, he collects the entire payment from the loser (at least 150 game points) and the other players neither win nor lose. After a Trischaken, the next round (four hands assuming that there are four players) is played for double stakes. If another Trischaken occurs during this round, a new round for double stakes is started and this supersedes the one that was in progress – so no hands are played for more than double stakes and the double stake hands due to successive Trischakens are not accumulated.

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Both XIXer-Rufen and XXer-Rufen are played in the United States among people of Czech descent, especially in Texas; it was recorded in the last chapter that the same is true of Königgrufen. The following description of XIXer-Rufen is based on rules for two tournaments played in the towns Taylor and West.

**19.16 Tarock (Texas, United States, XX century to present day, XIX called for partner)**

There are four players. A 54-card French-suited pack is used; Knights are called Riders and Jacks Walkers. Deal and play are counter-clockwise. The red suits rank K, Q, C, J, 4, 3, 2, A. The pack is cut to decide the first dealer, who is the one who cuts it at the highest card.

The player to dealer's left (or the one opposite dealer) either cuts the pack or taps it. If he cuts it, the dealer first puts six cards face down on the table to form the talon, and then gives out two rounds of six cards to each player. If the pack is tapped, the player doing so may specify whether the cards are to be dealt 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 or 12 at a time. If they

are dealt 12 at a time, the player to dealer's right has the first choice of which batch of 12 cards to take, then the other players in rotation. In the first deal of a session, the bidding is opened by the player holding the trump II (or, if none does, by the player holding the lowest trump other than the Pagat). This player will become the dealer of the second hand. In the second and subsequent hands the player to dealer's right opens the bidding and the turn to deal passes to the right after each hand.

The opening bidder must make a positive bid, of which there are only two, Povinost and, higher than it, Prever. In Povinost, declarer takes the first four cards of the talon, and the next two players one each; they each discard the same number of cards that they picked up under the usual restrictions. A trump may be discarded only if one has to be, and is then placed face up beside the other discards (if any). A player who has two trumps or no trumps may refuse to take a card from the talon, so as to preserve his right to be paid for these holdings; in this case the fourth player draws the last talon card and discards one. Declarer then calls the trump XIX for a partner. He may call his own XIX if he is content to play alone, or, having the XIX, he may call the highest trump, from XVIII to XV, that he does not have. (With all the trumps from XV to XIX, he must call the XIX.)

In Prever, declarer plays alone against the other three. He may take the first three cards of the talon without showing them; the second three are then set aside unseen. Or, having looked at the first three, he may expose them and take the second three without showing them. Or, finally, having looked at the second three, he may expose them and take the first three after all.

The trump honours (Skys, Mond and Pagat) and the court cards have their usual point-values, and all other cards are worth 1 point each, making a total of 106 points. The declarer's side needs at least 54 points to win.

Scores for winning the game, for taking the last trick with the Pagat and for Valat, and the corresponding penalties, are communal. That is to say, when declarer has a partner, each of them is paid by or pays one opponent; when declarer plays alone, he is paid by or pays each opponent. Each of the other three players pays the winner of an individual bonus.

The score for the game is based on the difference of the card points taken from 53. To this difference 10 is added, and the total is multiplied by 2 if the bid was Povinost, or by 3 if it was Prever. The result is rounded to the nearest 10 points, 5 being rounded up, and divided by 10 to give the number of game points paid. Example: the player of a Prever takes 59 points. The difference from 53 is 6; adding 10 and then multiplying by 3 gives 48, rounded to 50. So in this case the Prever player is paid 5 game points by each opponent. If a Prever is lost the payment is doubled if the declarer took the second three cards from the talon; and multiplied by 3 if he took the first three after exposing the second three. For example, if the Prever player takes only 42 points after taking the second three cards from the talon, an 11 point difference, the payment is 12 game points to each opponent:  $(11+10) \times 3$  is rounded to 60, divided by 10 and doubled.

The opening bidder leads to the first trick and the cards are played according to the usual rules. If the last trick is taken by the Pagat without announcement, the side winning that trick gains a separate score of 2 game points, irrespective of the score for game; if the Pagat is played to the last trick and does not win it, the side that played it must pay the other side 2 game points. If one side wins all the tricks (Valat), the score for the game is raised to 20 game points; there is then no score for the Pagat in the last trick.

After declarer has discarded and, in Povinost, called for a partner, there is a round of announcements. "Pagat" can be announced, as can "Valat", in both cases doubling the score for gain or loss; if Valat is announced, there is no score for the Pagat. Contra can be said to the game, and to an announcement of Pagat or Valat. The sequence is Contra, Re, Supre, Mort. There are also announcements of individual bonuses for initial holdings. It is obligatory on every player to make any announcement that he can; he may not announce a smaller bonus than he is entitled to. The possible announcements are as follows:

Taroky (8 or 9 trumps)	2 game points
Tarocky (10 or more trumps)	4 game points
Trull (Skys, Mond and Pagat)	2 game points
Pane (four cards worth 5 points)	2 game points
Trull Pane (a King and all three Trull cards)	4 game points

Krale (all four Kings)	4 game points
Rosanne Pane (four Kings and one Trull card)	6 game points
SPJST (all seven cards worth 5 points)	10 game points
No trumps (Uni)	4 game points
Two trumps (hand contains only 1 or 2 trumps)	2 game points

The first bidder leads to the first trick. At the end of play, a player who started with no trump cards (Uni) may claim an individual bonus of 4 game points. One who started with only one or two trump cards) may claim an individual bonus of 2 game points. A player may decline to draw a card from the talon in order to ensure either bonus, in which case the card he would have drawn is given to the player who otherwise would have drawn no card

#### *Variants*

In a Povinost, the declarer must call before drawing from the talon. He must call the XIX or the highest trump in the range XIX to XV that he does not hold. If he draws the called trump from the talon, he may throw in his hand and pay 2 game points to each of the other players.

In the red suits, the cards rank, in descending order, K, Q, C, J, A, 4, 3, 2. In Prever, the score for the game when declarer took the first three cards of the talon after seeing the second three is 12 game points. The bonus for Uni is only 2 game points, and there is no bonus for having been dealt only one or two trumps.

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The following description of an American version of XXer-Rufen is based on set of rules written down by Dr. Havlak of San Angelo, Texas.

#### **19.17 Taroks (Texas, United States, XX century to present day, XX called for partner)**

There are four players. A 54-card French-suited pack is used. A King is called a Kral, a Queen a Dama, and a Knight a Rider; the trump honours are Skyz, Mond and Pagat. Deal and play are counter-clockwise. The red suits rank K, Q, C, J, A, 4, 3, 2.

The player dealer's left either cuts or taps the cards. If he cuts, the dealer first puts six cards face down on the table to form the talon, and then gives out the remaining cards in two rounds of six at a time. If the player taps the cards, he may specify that the cards

be dealt 1,2,3,4 or 12 at a time. If he chooses 12, the dealer first lays down the six cards for the talon, and then asks him which twelve cards he wants (first, second, etc.) and then gives them to him. He then asks the player to his right which twelve cards he wants, followed by the next player, and finally himself.

In the first deal of a session, the player holding the trump II (or the lowest trump above the Pagat if no one has the II) will be the first to bid. This player will be the next dealer, and in the second and subsequent deals the player to dealer's right bids first. The first bidder may pass; the positive bids, in ascending order, are Povinost, ZebraK, Ze Ruky and Prever. A player may bid Povinost only if he holds at least one trump in his hand; if he does not, he must pass.

In Povinost, declarer takes the top four cards from the talon, and the next two players take one each; all discard. A trump may be discarded only if it is necessary to do so, and the player must announce that he is doing so. Individual bonuses are now declared. These are the same as in game 19.16; the declaration of one or two trumps is called Bid and the declaration of no trumps is called ZebraK (instead of Uni). It is not obligatory to declare a bonus, but it is forbidden to declare a lower bonus than one is entitled to. Declarer now calls the trump XX for a partner, or, if he has the XX, the next high trump down to the XVII that he lacks; holding all the trumps from XVII to XX, he must call one of these four trumps and play alone. Further announcements may now be made: doubles in the sequence Hrb, Rhea, Contrec, Suprec (all accompanied by knocking on the table), "Valat" and "One" (or "Pagat"). An announced Valat raises the score for game to 40 game points, for win if the Valat is made, or loss if it is not. An announcement of Valat may be doubled, redoubled, etc. A Pagat may be announced only by the player who holds the card, and is worth a communal bonus (if successful) or penalty (if unsuccessful) of 4 game points. Declarer leads to the first trick, and the usual rule of play apply. The score for game is calculated as follows. 10 is added to the difference between 53 and the winners' score; this sum is doubled and the product rounded up or down to the nearest multiple of 10 (e.g. 64 down to 6, 66 up to 7). The result is the number of game points paid by the losers or loser to the winner or winners. Thus if both sides make 53 points, declarer's side has lost for a payment of 2 game points

to the opponents. An unannounced Valat raises the score for game to 20 game points. There is a communal bonus of 2 game points for winning the last trick with the Pagat without announcement, and a corresponding penalty for losing the Pagat in the last trick. The payments for Pagat apply even when Valat is made.

In Zebrak, the talon is set aside unseen. Taroks lose their power as trumps, and it is no longer obligatory to play a tarok if unable to follow suit. There is no doubling, and no bonus for winning the last trick with the Pagat. If any player bid Povinost, he leads to the first trick; otherwise declarer does. If declarer succeeds, he is paid 16 game points by each of the others, and if he wins a trick at any stage, play stops and declarer pays each of the others 16 game points.

A player who holds the trump XX cannot bid Ze Ruky. In Ze Ruky, the talon is set aside unseen. The player holding the XX is declarer's partner; but if the XX proves to have been in the talon, declarer has played alone. In the latter case, the talon belongs to declarer at the end of play; otherwise, it belongs to the opponents. The first player to make a positive bid leads to the first trick. Announcements such as Pagat, Valat and Hrb are made as in Povinost. The score for game is calculated by adding 10 to the difference between 53 and the winners' score; quadrupling this sum and the rounding up or down to the nearest multiple of 10. The result is the number of game points paid by the losers or loser to the winner or winners. If both sides make 53 points, declarer's side has lost and must pay 4 game points to each opponent. The score for Pagat in the last trick is as in Povinost; the score for unannounced Valat is 40 game points, and for announced Valat 80 game points.

A bid of Prever may be overbid by a subsequent player's also saying "Prever" – clearly a dangerous thing to do. In Prever, declarer plays alone. He may look at the first three cards of the talon and take them without showing them, or expose the first three and do the same with the second three, or expose the second three and take the first three after all. Announcements such as Pagat, Valat and Hrb are made as in Povinost. The score for game is calculated by adding 10 to the difference between 53 and the winners' score; tripling this sum and then rounding up or down to the nearest multiple of 10. But when declarer loses, if he took the second three cards of the talon, he must pay twice this sum to

each opponent, and if he went back to the first three, four times the sum. If both sides make 53 points, declarer must pay 3 game points to each opponent. The score for Pagat in the last trick is as in Povinost; Valat is valued at 30 game points unannounced, 60 announced.

*Variations*

- (1) Some do allow a Povinost player who holds the XX to call his own XX, thereby playing alone, even if he does not hold the XIX, XVIII and XVII.
  - (2) Some require a player who loses the XXI to his opponents to pay 2 game points to each of the other three players.
  - (3) Some allow Contra to be given to an announcement of "Pagat".
  - (4) Some regard the Pagat as winning a trick containing all three Trull cards.
  - (5) Some allow taroks to retain their power as trumps in a Zebrak game; it is then obligatory to play a tarok when unable to follow suit. Each player must, if he can, play to a trick a card that beats any yet played to the trick. The Pagat cannot be led until it is the last trump in a player's hand.
-

## Supplement to Chapter 20

### Hungarian Tarokk

#### *Uhu*

The origin of this term is discussed on page 814. Robert Sedlaczek has drawn attention to a mention in Friedrich Torberg's *Die Tante Jolesch*, which is a collection of anecdotes on Jewish life in Vienna and Prague between the World Wars. In it, "Uhu pre-ultimo" is mentioned as a bonus for winning the penultimate trick with the II<sup>11</sup>, not the last trick as recorded by Unger in 1937. Since the book was not published until 1975, it may not provide reliable evidence, but the book is largely based on letters and notes collected by Torberg at the time of the emigration in late the 1930's, so this is a strong indication that Uhu was already in use in Vienna in the 1920's or 1930's as a name for Tarokk II and that winning the second to last trick with it sometimes carried a bonus, as now.

#### *Hungarian Tarokk in Austria*

A version of Hungarian Tarokk survived throughout the XX century in the Mühlviertel region of Upper Austria, especially in the villages around Rohrbach. It is still played there occasionally, though from the 1980's most players went over to XIXer-Rufen and later Königrufer, encouraged by the Königrufer tournament series (Raiffeisen Tarockcup) which was founded in nearby Helfenberg in 1995. The game is locally known as XXer-Rufen or Ungarisches Tarock, and there is a tradition that the players in this region learned it from Hungarian soldiers with whom they served in the First World War. This is plausible, since the game is very similar to the late XIX century game 20.1. The following description is based on information from Robert Sedlaczek, who has

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<sup>11</sup> Friedrich Torberg: *Die Tante Jolesch*, p160: 'Die im Café Central beheimateten Meisterspieler hatten eine unglaublich komplizierte Abart des ohnehin anspruchsvollen „Königruferens“ erfunden ... Hier gibt es ... noch einen „Uhu pre-ultimo“, nämlich die Ansage, daß man mit den zweitniedrigsten Tarock den vorletzten Stich machen würde, was im Fall des Gelingens eine hohe Punktpremie einbrachte.'

visited the players, and a game in which one of us took part with Rudi Stürmer at Bad Leonfelden in 2008.

### **20.7 Ungarisches Tarock (Austrian Mühlviertel, XX century to present day)**

Only the differences from game 20.1 (page 754 to 760) will be described.

The deal is three cards at a time, with the 6-card talon dealt after the first round. If the player to dealer's left taps the pack instead of cutting, the talon is dealt first followed by a single round nine cards at a time. There is no right for a player who holds the XXI alone to throw in the hand. Some play that a player who has no Kings and no Tarocks can demand a redeal, but this may be a recent practice inadvertently copied from Königrufen or XIXer-Rufen.

The contracts are Drei, Zwei, Eins and Solo, and bidding with immediate hold is used (see appendix B) with no jump bids allowed. If only one player bids, he can choose after all the others have passed which of the four contracts to play. When bidding, the players do not name the contracts, but simply indicate whether they wish to make the next higher available bid or pass. A variety of dialect expressions is used, or the bids may be indicated by silent gestures. A player can pass by saying "Nixe" (nothing) or "Ausgstiegn" (dropped out) or, after another player has bid, "Ghalts da!" (keep it). A bid of three can be expressed as "I hab was!", "Haben tuat's", "A wengerl was!", "Reden!", "I häng an!" or "Anhängt!" (I have [a little of] something, speaking, I stay in). To make the next higher bid one says "I treib!" or "Treibn!" (in the sense of "antreiben", meaning "to urge onward"), and to hold one says "Söba!" or "Selber" (myself). So after the following auction: A: "Red'n", B: "Ausgstiegn", C: "Nixe", D: "Treibn", A: "Söba", D: "Treibn", A: "Söba", D: "Ghalts da!", A is the declarer and the contract is Eins.

All discards by players other than the declarer are grouped into a single pile which counts for the declarer's opponents. Tarocks may only be discarded if the player thereby leaves himself with nothing but Tarocks and Kings, and must be discarded face up. The declarer must call the XX unless he himself holds it, in which case he calls the highest Tarock below XX that he does not hold.

The principle of the yielded game (invitation to the XX) is recognised but not consistently practised by all players. If a player opens the bidding and then passes a

second player's bid, the first player is expected to hold the XX, which the second player will then call (assuming that the other players pass). Normally the first bidder will have a high honour as well as the XX, though this is not an absolute requirement. If the first player holds, there is no strong expectation that the second player will have the XX if he then passes, leaving the first player to play *Zwei*.

The bonuses and declarations are as in game 10.1, but with a score of 5 game points for unannounced *Pagat Ultimo* and 10 game points for *Mondfang* (catching the XXI). Since the cards are counted in threes, there are 66 points in the pack and the declarer's side needs at least 34 points (33 points plus two cards) to win. As in *Ulmann's* version of game 10.1, if one side takes less than half the number of card points needed to win (i.e. at most 16 points and one card) the score for the game is doubled – this is known as “*Ned's Halbs*” (not half). If one side takes all the tricks, the game score is quadrupled – this is known as “*Durch*”. *Trull*, *Four Kings*, *Pagat Ultimo*, *Mondfang* and *Durch* can be announced for double score, but “*Ned's Halbs*” cannot be announced. The score for *Durch*, whether announced or not, supersedes the scores for the game and all unannounced bonuses: only announced bonuses and declarations of 8 or 9 *Tarocks* are paid.

*Kontra* may be given to the game or any announcements, and a range of colourful expressions are used for this, such as: “*I schiaß!*”, “*Gschossn!*”, “*Spritzn!*”, “*Gspritzt!*”, “*A Pfeiffer!*”, “*A Pfeiffer! gemma eam schon!*”. We are not sure how many levels of *Kontra* are allowed – certainly at least *Rekontra* is possible.

As in the Hungarian game, the announcement of *Trull* is used fairly freely to indicate the likelihood that one's team holds both high trump honours. For example the partner of the declarer may announce *Trull* holding just one high trump honour, in the expectation that the declarer has the other, or if the first bidder passes the second bidder's overbid, leaving him to play *Zwei*, the declarer may indicate his high honour by announcing *Trull* in the expectation that his prospective partner, the first bidder, also holds one. The *Four Kings* announcement is often used to show long and strong *Tarocks*, and thereby encourage partner to try for *Pagat Ultimo* or *Durch*.

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## Supplement to Appendix C

### Other games with Tarot Cards

#### C8 Vier-Anderle

This game turns out to be more widespread than we realised. For example, Peter Müller informs us that essentially the same game is played in the region around Offenburg, where it is known as *Strassenwart*.

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## Supplement to Appendix E

### Index of Games by Type of Cards and Number of Players

The updated tables of games below replace the tables on pages 886-888. They have been expanded to include the additional games described in this supplement. Note that games that are normally played with a subset of the French 78-card pack are included in the “78-card French suited Tarot” column even when they require 54 or fewer cards. The “54-card French suited Tarot” column lists games that are normally played with purpose-made 54-card packs from Central and Eastern Europe.

	78-card French suited Tarot	54-card French suited Tarot	78-card Italian suited Tarot	Minchiate, Sicilian Tarot, Bolognese Tarot
<b>Games for two players</b>				
	<b>78 cards:</b> 3.5, 9.20, 9.21, 9.22 <b>42 cards:</b> C13 <b>22 cards:</b> C12	<b>54 cards:</b> 15.21, 15.22, 16.18, 18.17, 19.5, C9 <b>40 cards:</b> 16.12, 16.13	<b>78 cards:</b> 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 3.2, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.8, 8.9, 8.21, 8.27, C5, C6, C7 <b>66 cards:</b> 2.3 <b>62 cards:</b> 14.10	<b>Minchiate – 97 cards:</b> 12.3, C2, C3 <b>Sicilian – 63 cards:</b> 14.10 <b>Bolognese – 62 cards:</b> 11.5, 11.7, 11.8, 11.9, 11.10, 11.11, 11.12, 11.19, 11.20, 11.21, C4

<b>Games for three players</b>				
<b>individual</b>	<b>78 cards:</b> 3.1, 3.3, 3.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 8.31, 8.43, 9.23, C10, C11 <b>62 cards:</b> 8.32 <b>56 cards:</b> C13 <b>22 cards:</b> C12	<b>54 cards:</b> C9	<b>78 cards:</b> 2.1, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 5.3, 5.6, 6.2, 6.7, 6.8, 8.1, 8.2, 8.7, 8.21, 8.25, 8.35, 8.37, 8.38, 8.44, C6, C7 <b>66 cards:</b> 2.3 <b>63 cards:</b> 14.9 <b>54 cards:</b> 8.42	<b>Minchiate – 97 cards:</b> 12.4, C2, C3 <b>Sicilian – 63 cards:</b> 14.9 <b>Bolognese – 62 cards:</b> 11.7, 11.18, C4
<b>alliance</b>	<b>78 cards:</b> 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 9.3, 9.6, 9.10, 9.14, 9.16 <b>66 cards:</b> 7.5 <b>42 cards:</b> 15.23	<b>54 cards:</b> 5.7, 15.3, 15.5, 15.8, 15.10, 15.13, 15.14, 15.16, 15.17, 15.18, 15.19, 16.1, 16.2, 16.8, 16.9, 16.14, 16.15, 16.16, 16.17, 16.19, 16.20, 17.2, 18.16, 19.3 <b>51 cards:</b> 17.3 <b>42 cards:</b> 15.4, 15.6, 15.7, 15.9, 15.11, 15.12, 15.15, 15.20, 16.3, 16.4, 16.5, 16.6, 16.7, 16.10 <b>40 cards:</b> 16.11	<b>78 cards:</b> 8.13, 8.19, 9.2 <b>62 cards:</b> 15.1 <b>54 cards:</b> 6.3, 8.18 <b>42 cards:</b> 15.23	<b>Sicilian – 63 cards:</b> 14.1, 14.3, 14.5, 14.6, 14.11 <b>Bolognese – 62 cards:</b> 11.16, 11.17

	78-card French suited Tarot	54-card French suited Tarot	78-card Italian suited Tarot	Minchiate, Sicilian Tarot, Bolognese Tarot
<b>Games for four players</b>				
<b>individual</b>	<b>78 cards:</b> 9.23, C10, C11 <b>70 cards:</b> C13 <b>22 cards:</b> C12	<b>54 cards:</b> C9 <b>38 cards:</b> C8	<b>78 cards:</b> 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 8.21, 8.22, 8.23, 8.24, 8.39, C1, C6, C7	<b>Minchiate – 97 cards:</b> 12.5, 12.6, 12.7, C2, C3 <b>Sicilian – 78 cards:</b> 14.11 <b>– 64 cards:</b> 14.2 <b>Bolognese – 62 cards:</b> 11.18
<b>fixed partners</b>	<b>78 cards:</b> 3.6, 3.7, 8.30 <b>62 cards:</b> 8.34	<b>40 cards:</b> 20.6	<b>78 cards:</b> 5.1, 5.5, 5.8, 6.1, 8.3, 8.11, 8.26, 8.36 <b>54 cards:</b> 8.12, 8.40	<b>Minchiate – 97 cards:</b> 12.1, 12.2 <b>Sicilian – 78 cards:</b> 14.11 <b>– 64 cards:</b> 14.2 <b>– 63 cards:</b> 14.4 <b>Bolognese – 62 cards:</b> 11.1, 11.2, 11.4, 11.11, 11.13, 11.14, 11.15
<b>alliance</b>	<b>78 cards:</b> 8.29, 8.43, 9.1, 9.4, 9.5, 9.7, 9.8, 9.11, 9.13, 9.15 <b>76 cards:</b> 7.4 <b>62 cards:</b> 8.33 <b>54 cards:</b> 15.23	<b>54 cards:</b> 5.7, 17.1, 17.4, 18.1, 18.2, 18.3, 18.4, 18.5, 18.6, 18.7, 18.8, 18.9, 18.10, 18.11, 18.12, 18.13, 18.14, 19.1, 19.2, 19.4, 19.6, 19.7, 19.8, 19.9, 19.10, 19.11, 19.12, 19.14, 19.15, 19.16, 19.17 <b>42 cards:</b> 20.1, 20.2, 20.3, 20.4, 20.5, 20.7 <b>40 cards:</b> 19.13	<b>78 cards:</b> 8.14, 8.19, 8.20, 8.43, 9.1 <b>63 cards:</b> 14.8 <b>62 cards:</b> 15.1 <b>54 cards:</b> 6.4, 8.18, 8.41, 15.23	<b>Sicilian – 78 cards:</b> 14.11 <b>– 63 cards:</b> 14.7, 14.8

	78-card French suited Tarot	54-card French suited Tarot	78-card Italian suited Tarot	Minchiate, Sicilian Tarot, Bolognese Tarot
<b>Games for five players</b>				
<b>individual</b>	<b>78 cards:</b> 9.23, C10, C11 <b>22 cards:</b> C12	<b>38 cards:</b> C8	<b>78 cards:</b> 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 5.4, 8.10, 8.21, C1, C6, C7	<b>Bolognese – 62 cards:</b> 11.6, 11.18
<b>alliance</b>	<b>78 cards:</b> 8.28, 9.9, 9.12, 9.17, 9.18 <b>66 cards:</b> 15.23	<b>54 cards:</b> 5.7, 18.15	<b>78 cards:</b> 5.9, 6.5, 8.15, 8.19 <b>66 cards:</b> 15.23 <b>62 cards:</b> 15.1	
<b>Games for six players</b>				
<b>individual</b>	<b>78 cards:</b> C10	<b>38 cards:</b> C8	<b>78 cards:</b> 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 8.21, C1, C6, C7	<b>Bolognese – 62 cards:</b> 11.6, 11.18
<b>fixed partners</b>	<b>78 cards:</b> 9.19		<b>78 cards:</b> 5.2	<b>Bolognese – 62 cards:</b> 11.3
<b>alliance</b>	<b>78 cards:</b> 15.23	<b>54 cards:</b> 5.7	<b>78 cards:</b> 8.16, 15.23 <b>62 cards:</b> 15.1	
<b>Games for seven players</b>				
<b>individual</b>	<b>156 cards:</b> C10	<b>38 cards:</b> C8	<b>78 cards:</b> 2.4, 2.6, 8.21, C1, C6, C7	<b>Bolognese – 62 cards:</b> 11.6
<b>alliance</b>		<b>54 cards:</b> 5.7	<b>78 cards:</b> 6.6, 8.17 <b>62 cards:</b> 15.2	
<b>Games for eight (or more) players</b>				
<b>individual</b>	<b>156 cards:</b> C10	<b>38 cards:</b> C8	<b>78 cards:</b> 2.4, 2.6, C1, C6, C7	
<b>alliance</b>			<b>62 cards:</b> 15.2	

## Detailed Table of Contents - Revised

### VOLUME ONE

<b>List of Illustrations.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Preface.....</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>xv</b>
Introduction to the Supplement.....	S iii
<b>Chapter 1 The Game of Tarot.....</b>	<b>1</b>
The Tarot pack .....	1
Trick-taking play: order of the cards.....	3
Use of the Fool.....	5
New role of the Fool .....	6
How points are counted.....	6
Suit systems .....	10
Talon and discard.....	11
Shortened packs .....	12
Bidding.....	12
The history of the games.....	13

### PART I

<b>Chapter 2 The Early Stages of the Game in France and Switzerland .....</b>	<b>17</b>
2.1 Early XVII-century French Jeu des Tarots (1637).....	19
2.2 Two-handed XVII-century French Tarot .....	21
2.3 66-Card French Tarot (1637) .....	22
2.4 Le jeu de Taros (France, 1659) .....	23
2.5 Le jeu de Taros (second version) (France, 1659).....	24
2.6 La rigueur (France, 1659) .....	24
2.7 Early Swiss Troggen (1659) .....	25
Supplement .....	S 1
<b>Chapter 3 Classic Eighteenth-century Tarot outside Italy .....</b>	<b>27</b>
3.1 German Taroc (mid-XVIII century).....	35
3.2 Two-handed XVIII century French Tarot (after de Gébelin).....	39
3.3 Three-handed Dutch Tarok (1846 text).....	42
3.4 Belgian Tarot (c. 1890-1910).....	45
3.5 Two-handed German Tarok (XIX century) .....	47

3.6 Four-handed Dutch Tarok (XIX century) .....	49
3.7 Tarok-Whist .....	50
Supplement .....	S 1
<b>Chapter 4 Grosstarock .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<i>Terminological conventions</i> .....	56
4.1 Three-handed Tarok (Germany and Austria, c. 1780-1800) .....	58
4.2 Three-handed German Tarok (about 1800).....	62
4.3 Three-handed German Tarok (about 1820).....	65
<i>The tradition of 4.2</i> .....	71
<i>The tradition of 4.3</i> .....	71
4.4 Three-handed Dutch Tarok (first half of the XIX century).....	74
4.5 Danish Tarock (mid-XIX century).....	74
4.6 Danish Tarok (late XIX century) .....	77
4.7 Danish Tarok (XX century) .....	83
<b>Chapter 5 Swiss Tarot, Troggen or Troccas.....</b>	<b>89</b>
<i>Romansh Terminology for Troccas</i> .....	95
5.1 Modern four-handed Swiss Troccas (Grisons) .....	96
5.2 Modern six-handed Troccas.....	105
5.3 Modern three-handed Troccas .....	105
5.4 Modern five-handed Troccas .....	106
5.5 Four-handed Jeu de Tarots (Geneva, XIX century) .....	107
5.6 Three-handed Jeu de Tarots (Geneva, XIX century).....	108
5.7 Jeu du Tarot (? Switzerland, c. 1900) .....	109
Supplement .....	S 2
5.8 Bedretto Tarocchi (early-mid XX century) .....	S 3
5.9 Five-Handed Tarocchi (Ticino, XX century to present day).....	S 4
<b>Chapter 6 Tarot in Lombardy .....</b>	<b>111</b>
6.1 Four-handed Tarocchi (Lombardy, from c. 1750, and Piacenza, XX century) and Taroc (Austria, Germany and the Netherlands, from c. 1760 to c. 1840).....	115
6.2 Reseghino (Lombardy, XVIII and XIX centuries) .....	117
6.3 Three-handed Tarocc'Ombre .....	119
6.4 Ombra arrabiata .....	120
6.5 Five-handed Tarocc'Ombre .....	121
6.6 Seven-handed Tarocc'Ombre .....	121
6.7 Three-handed Tarocchi (Como, XX century) .....	122
6.8 Mitigati (Lombard form, XX century) .....	123
Supplement .....	S 6
<b>Chapter 7 Tarok-l'Hombre.....</b>	<b>125</b>
7.1 Tarok-l'Hombre (older version).....	127
7.2 Tarok-l'Hombre (later version).....	133
7.3 Tarok-l'Hombre with declarations.....	134
7.4 Tarok-Quadrille.....	136
7.5 Droggn (Stubai valley, Tyrol, XX century) .....	141

**Chapter 8 Tarot in Piedmont and Savoy ..... 149**

<i>General rules and terminology for Piedmontese Tarot games</i> .....	152
<b>8.1</b> Three-handed Venticinque (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850) .....	154
<b>8.2</b> Three-handed Partita (Piedmont, second half of XVIII century).....	155
<b>8.3</b> Partita (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850).....	155
<b>8.4</b> Two-handed Venticinque (Piedmont, second half of XVIII century).....	156
<b>8.5</b> Morto (Piedmont, second half of XVIII century) .....	156
<b>8.6</b> Baronetti (Piedmont, second half of XVIII century).....	157
<b>8.7</b> Mitigati (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850) .....	157
<b>8.8</b> Two-handed Mitigati with the Morto (Piedmont, first half of XIX century)....	159
<b>8.9</b> Two-handed Mitigati with a large discard (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850).....	159
<b>8.10</b> Dottore (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850).....	160
<b>8.11</b> Consiglio (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850).....	160
<b>8.12</b> Consiglio castrato (Piedmont, first half of XIX century).....	161
<b>8.13</b> Three-handed Permesso (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850).....	162
<b>8.14</b> Four-handed Permesso (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850) .....	165
<b>8.15</b> Quintilio (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850).....	165
<b>8.16</b> Sestilio (Piedmont, second half of XVIII century) .....	165
<b>8.17</b> Settilio (Piedmont, second half of XVIII century).....	166
<b>8.18</b> Permesso castrato (Piedmont, first half of XIX century).....	166
<b>8.19</b> Permesso with Bagatto ultimo (Piedmont, first half of XIX century) .....	166
<b>8.20</b> Chiamare il Re (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850).....	167
<b>8.21</b> Giuoco del meno (Piedmont, second half of XVIII century).....	169
<b>8.22</b> Sedici (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850) .....	169
<b>8.23</b> Trentuno (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850) .....	170
<b>8.24</b> Trentuno al meno (Piedmont, c. 1750 to c. 1850).....	170
<i>General terminology and rules for Annecy Tarocs</i> .....	172
<b>8.25</b> L'écorché (Annecy, late XVIII century).....	172
<b>8.26</b> Le jeu de Tarocs à quatre (Annecy, late XVIII century).....	173
<b>8.27</b> Le jeu à Fora (Annecy, late XVIII century) .....	174
<i>General rules and terminology for Chambéry games</i> .....	174
<b>8.28</b> Five-handed Chambéry Tarot (Savoy, early XX century) .....	175
<b>8.29</b> Four-handed Chambéry Tarot (Savoy, early XX century).....	176
<b>8.30</b> Tarot croisé (Savoy, early XX century) .....	177
<b>8.31</b> Three-handed Chambéry Tarot (Savoy, early XX century).....	177
<b>8.32</b> Three-handed Tarot simplifié (Savoy, early XX century) .....	177
<b>8.33</b> Four-handed Tarot simplifié (Savoy, early XX century).....	178
<b>8.34</b> Tarot croisé simplifié (Savoy, early XX century) .....	178
<b>8.35</b> Scarto (Pinerolo and Turin, late XX century) .....	179
<b>8.36</b> Four-handed Tarocchi (Pinerolo and Turin, late XX century).....	180
<b>8.37</b> Three-handed Mitigati (Pinerolo, late XX century).....	181
<b>8.38</b> Three-handed Mitigati (Turin, late XX century).....	183
<b>8.39</b> Four-handed Mitigati (Pinerolo and Turin, late XX century) .....	184
<b>8.40</b> Four-handed Partita (district of Asti, present day).....	185
<b>8.41</b> Chiamare il Re (district of Asti, present day) .....	188
<b>8.42</b> Three-handed Partita (district of Asti, present day) .....	189
<b>8.43</b> Four-handed Mitigatti (Nice, 1840 or earlier until 1930s).....	190
<b>8.44</b> Three-handed Mitigatti (Nice, 1840 or earlier until 1930s).....	193

<b>Chapter 9 Modern French Tarot .....</b>	<b>195</b>
<i>General rules and terminology for modern French Tarot games .....</i>	196
<i>Bêtes or mouches .....</i>	198
<b>9.1</b> Tarot d'appel (1850 or earlier to c.1939) .....	200
<b>9.2</b> Three-handed Tarot (Franche-Comté, 1850 or earlier to c.1900) .....	204
<b>9.3</b> Three-handed Tarot (Burgundy, 1927 or earlier to c.1945) .....	207
<b>9.4</b> Later Tarot d'appel (c.1940-1975) .....	208
<b>9.5</b> Four-handed Tarot (Burgundy, 1925-c. 1950) .....	210
<b>9.6</b> Three-handed French Tarot (c. 1950-1970) .....	211
<b>9.7</b> Four-handed French Tarot (c. 1950-1970) .....	216
<b>9.8</b> Four-handed Partnership Tarot (c. 1970-80) .....	217
<b>9.9</b> Five-handed French Tarot (c. 1950-1970) .....	218
<b>9.10</b> French-Swiss three-handed Tarot (c.1970-1990) .....	219
<b>9.11</b> French-Swiss four-handed Tarot (c.1970-1990) .....	220
<b>9.12</b> French-Swiss five-handed Tarot (c.1970-1990) .....	221
<b>9.13</b> Contemporary French four-handed Tarot (F.F.T. rules) .....	222
<b>9.14</b> Contemporary French three-handed Tarot (F.F.T. rules) .....	228
<b>9.15</b> Contemporary popular four-handed French Tarot .....	229
<b>9.16</b> Popular French three-handed Tarot (contemporary) .....	235
<b>9.17</b> Five-handed French Tarot d'Appel (contemporary) .....	236
<b>9.18</b> Five-handed Solo form of French Tarot (contemporary) .....	240
<b>9.19</b> Six-handed French Tarot (contemporary) .....	241
<b>9.20</b> La Découverte (France, contemporary) .....	242
<b>9.21</b> La Tirette (France, contemporary) .....	243
<b>9.22</b> Tarot with a Mort (France, contemporary) .....	244
<b>9.23</b> Nullo (France, contemporary) .....	244

## PART II

<b>Chapter 10 Ferrara .....</b>	<b>245</b>
Supplement .....	S 7

<b>Chapter 11 Bolognese Tarocchino .....</b>	<b>257</b>
<i>Basic rules of Bolognese Tarot games .....</i>	263
<i>Special combinations of cards .....</i>	264
<b>11.1</b> Partita (late XVI or early XVII century) .....	269
<b>11.2</b> Partita (mid-XVIII century) .....	277
<b>11.3</b> Six-handed Partita (mid-XVIII century) .....	282
<b>11.4</b> Partitaccia (mid-XVIII century) .....	282
<b>11.5</b> Milloni (mid-XVIII century) .....	283
<b>11.6</b> Mattaccia (mid-XVIII century) .....	283
<b>11.7</b> Quarantacinque (mid-XVIII century) .....	284
<b>11.8</b> Settanta (mid-XVIII century) .....	286
<b>11.9</b> Lecchini (mid-XVIII century) .....	287
<b>11.10</b> Toppa (mid-XVIII century) .....	288
<b>11.11</b> Centini (mid-XVIII century) .....	288
<b>11.12</b> Cinquina (mid-XVIII century) .....	289
<b>11.13</b> Partita (XIX century) .....	289

11.14	Ottocento (present day).....	295
11.15	Cinquecento (Castel Bolognese, present day).....	299
11.16	Terziglio (Bologna, present day) .....	300
11.17	Terziglio (Monzuno, present day).....	302
11.18	Mattazza (present day).....	303
11.19	Millone or Mille (present day).....	305
11.20	Centino (present day).....	307
11.21	Centocinquanta (present day).....	307
	<i>Appendix to Chapter 11: Other Giuochi</i> .....	309
<b>Chapter 12 Minchiate</b> .....		<b>315</b>
12.1	Minchiate with partners .....	329
12.2	Partnership Minchiate without entragnos.....	345
12.3	Two-handed Minchiate .....	346
12.4	Three-handed Minchiate .....	347
12.5	Four-handed Minchiate without partners (first form 1676-1753).....	348
12.6	Four-handed Minchiate without partners (second form 1747-81) .....	349
12.7	Four-handed Minchiate without partners (third form 1820) .....	350
<b>Chapter 13 Rome and Naples</b> .....		<b>357</b>
<b>Chapter 14 Sicilian Tarocchi</b> .....		<b>367</b>
	<i>General rules of Sicilian Tarocchi</i> .....	377
14.1	Three-handed Tarocchi (Barcellona, present day).....	378
14.2	Four-handed Tarocchi (Barcellona, present day).....	381
14.3	Vanto (Tortorici, present day).....	381
14.4	Four-handed Tarocchi (Tortorici, present day).....	383
14.5	Vanto (Tortorici, original form, up to c. 1930).....	384
14.6	Three-handed Tarocchi (Mineo, present day).....	387, S 8
14.7	Four-handed Tarocchi (Mineo, present day).....	390
14.8	Four-handed Tarocchi (Calatafimi, present day) .....	393
14.9	Three-handed Tarocchi (Calatafimi, present day) .....	397
14.10	Two-handed Tarocchi (Calatafimi, present day) .....	398
14.11	XVIII-century Sicilian Tarocchi .....	398
	Supplement .....	S 8
 <b>VOLUME TWO</b>		
<b>List of Illustrations</b> .....		<b>vii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....		<b>ix</b>
<b>Preface</b> .....		<b>xi</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....		<b>xv</b>

**PART III****Chapter 15 Tapp-Tarock ..... 403**

15.1 Troggu (Tappä) (canton Wallis, present day) .....	407, S 9
15.2 Troggu (Tappä) with 7 or 8 players (canton Wallis, present day) .....	410
<i>Bidding with immediate hold</i> .....	415
15.3 Tarok-Tappen (earliest recorded form, Austria and Germany, c. 1820-1845).....	416
15.4 Tarok-Tappen with 42 cards (earliest recorded form, Austria and Germany, c. 1820-1845).....	423
15.5 Variations in 54-card Tapp-Tarock (southern Germany, c. 1900).....	425
15.6 Variations in 42-card Tapp-Tarock (southern Germany, c. 1900).....	426
15.7 Czech Three-handed Taroky with 42 cards (c. 1870) .....	426
15.8 Austrian 54-card Tarok-Tappen (1850s).....	428
15.9 Austrian 42-card Tarok-Tappen (1850s).....	433
15.10 German 54-card Tapp-Tarok or Tarok-Tapp (second half of XIX century).....	434
15.11 German 42-card Tapp-Tarok or Tarok-Tapp (second half of XIX century).....	437
15.12 Austrian 42-card Tarok-Tappen (1870-1890).....	438
15.13 Austrian 54-card Tarok-Tappen (1870-1890).....	441
15.14 Austrian 54-card Tapp-Tarok, Tappen or Tapper (c. 1890-1920) .....	442
15.15 Austrian 42-card Tapp-Tarok or Zwölfertarok (c. 1890-1920).....	446
<i>Bidding with delayed hold</i> .....	449
15.16 Modern Austrian Tapp-Tarock or Tappen .....	450
15.17 Doppen (Kirchberg am Wechsel, present day) .....	455, S 11
15.18 Czech three-handed Taroky with 54 cards (1906) .....	456
15.19 Three-handed Hungarian Tarokk with 54 cards (after 1945).....	457
15.20 42-card Tapp-Tarock (Austria, early XX century) .....	459
15.21 Strohmandeln (first half of XIX century).....	460
15.22 Strohmann-Tarock (1880 to the present day).....	461
Supplement .....	S 9
15.23 Le Tape (Fribourg, XX century) .....	S 14

**Chapter 16 The Variants of Tapp-Tarock..... 465**

<i>Methods of drawing from the talon</i> .....	466
16.1 Tarocco Triestino .....	468
16.2 Styrian Tappen .....	472
16.3 Three-handed Hungarian Tarokk (1889) .....	474
16.4 Hungarian Tapper (late XIX century) .....	476
16.5 Magyar Tarokk (1898).....	478
16.6 Husarln (Austria, XX century).....	486
16.7 Three-handed Romanian Tarok: Tapper .....	489
16.8 Modern three-handed Slovenian Tarok.....	494, S 17
16.9 Draufer (Slovenia, before 1939) .....	502
16.10 Three-handed Simple Tarock with 42 cards (Austria, XX century) .....	504
16.11 Three-handed Simple Tarock with 40 cards (Austria, XX century) .....	508
16.12 Two-handed Simple Tarock with 40 cards (Austria, XX century) .....	509
16.13 Strohmandeln with 40 cards (Austria, present day).....	510

16.14	Block-Tarock (Austria, 1855-1930).....	511, S 17
16.15	Ilustriertes Tarock (Austria, second half of XX century to the present day)	517
16.16	Point-Tarock (Austria, second half of XX century to the present day).....	521
16.17	Tarock (Klagenfurt, present day).....	531
16.18	Kosakeln (Austria, second half of XX century to the present day).....	536
	Supplement .....	S 17
16.19	Modern Viennese Grosstarock (mid XX century to present day).....	S 19
16.20	Modern Viennese Trischaken (mid XX century to present day) .....	S 27
<b>Chapter 17 Cego.....</b>		<b>539</b>
17.1	Four-handed Cego (1860).....	544
17.2	Three-handed Cego (1860).....	549
17.3	Modern three-handed Cego.....	552, S 30
17.4	Modern four-handed Cego.....	565, S 31
	Supplement .....	S 30
<b>Chapter 18 Königrufen .....</b>		<b>575</b>
18.1	Königrufen (earliest recorded form) .....	578
18.2	Königrufen (Austria, 1840).....	585
18.3	Königrufen (Germany, XIX century).....	592
18.4	Königrufen (Austria, late XIX century, according to Vanderheid).....	595
18.5	Königrufen (Austria, late XIX century, according to Bermann).....	601
18.6	Romanian four-handed Tarok .....	605
18.7	Early modern Königrufen .....	618
18.8	Slovenian four-handed Tarok (present day).....	623
18.9	Four-handed Tarok (Krka valley) .....	636
18.10	Contemporary Königrufen .....	638, S 33
18.11	Königrufen (Salzburger Lungau, present day).....	682, S 34
18.12	Königrufen (Tyrol, present day) .....	684
	Supplement .....	S 32
18.13	Tarok (Texas, U.S.A., present day, King called for partner) .....	S 36
18.14	Tarok (U.S.A., 1920s to 1930s and perhaps later, Petryl Version).....	S 39
18.15	Five-handed Tarok (U.S.A., 1920s to 1930s and perhaps later, Petryl version) .....	S 42
18.16	Three-handed Tarok (U.S.A., 1920s to 1930s and perhaps later, Petryl version) .....	S 42
18.17	Two-handed Tarok (U.S.A., 1920s to 1930s and perhaps later, Petryl version) .....	S 43
<b>Chapter 19 XIXer-Rufen, XXer-Rufen and Czech Taroky .....</b>		<b>693</b>
19.1	Neunzehner-Rufen (old form, late XIX century).....	696
19.2	Neunzehner-Rufen (intermediate form, late XIX century).....	698
19.3	Three-handed Neunzehner-Rufen .....	703
19.4	Neunzehner-Rufen with a flying Strawman.....	704
19.5	Two-handed Neunzehner-Rufen .....	704
19.6	Neunzehner-Rufen (early XX century form) .....	705
19.7	Trischacken .....	709
19.8	Zwanziger-Rufen with 54 cards .....	716

19.9 Czech Taroky .....	720
19.10 Neunzehnrufen (Styria, present day) .....	728
19.11 Neunzehnrufen (Mühlviertel, present day) .....	730
19.12 Neunzehnrufen (Melk, late XX century) .....	737, S 44
19.13 Zwanziger-Rufen with 40 cards .....	742, S 44
Supplement .....	S 44
19.14 Polish Taroki (Zabrzeg, present day) .....	S 46
19.15 Neunzehnrufen (Amstetten, present day) .....	S 50
19.16 Tarock (Texas, U.S.A., present day, XIX called for partner) .....	S 53
19.17 Taroks (Texas, U.S.A., present day, XX called for partner) .....	S 56
<b>Chapter 20 Hungarian Tarokk .....</b>	<b>751</b>
20.1 Paskiewitsch or Húszas (Hungary, c. 1870, Austria, 1890s) .....	754
20.2 Paskievits (Hungary, 1880s) .....	767
20.3 Modern Hungarian Four-handed Tarokk, known as Húszashívásos Tarokk or Paskievics Tarokk .....	776
20.4 Illusztrált Tarokk (also known as Palatinusz Tarokk) (1920s to present day) .....	804
20.5 Magas Tarokk (High Tarokk, 1960s to present day) .....	815
20.6 Royal Tarokk (present day) .....	820
Supplement .....	S 60
20.7 Ungarisches Tarock (Austrian Mühlviertel, XX century to present day) .....	S 61
<b>Afterword .....</b>	<b>837</b>
<b>Appendix A Counting points in Tarot Games .....</b>	<b>839</b>
Card values in non-Italian games: counting by the original method .....	839
Counting valuable cards .....	840
Counting in sets different in size from the number of players .....	841
Counting the Fool .....	843
Counting using fractional values .....	844
Counting using the subtraction method .....	845
Comparison of methods, and examples .....	846
Other card valuations and methods .....	846
<b>Appendix B Bidding procedures .....</b>	<b>849</b>
Single round bidding .....	850
Bidding with immediate hold .....	852
Bidding with delayed hold .....	854
Bidding by escalation .....	856
Other bidding methods and variations .....	857
<b>Appendix C Other games played with Tarot cards .....</b>	<b>861</b>
C1 Triomphe forcée (France, XVII century) .....	861
C2 A sei tocchi (Florence, early XVIII century) .....	862
C3 Al Palio (Florence, early XVIII century) .....	863
C4 Calini (Bologna, XVIII century) .....	864
C5 Diavolo (first version – Turin, XX century) .....	866
C6 Diavolo (second version) .....	867

C7 Giuoco del Nove (Turin, XX century) .....	868
C8 Vier-Anderle (Baden, present day) .....	869, S 63
C9 Neapolitanisch (Austria).....	870
C10 Le Papayou (France, present day) .....	872
C11 Le Grelin (France, present day).....	873
C12 Le Contrat (France, present day).....	874
C13 Le Cold-Poker (France, present day).....	875
<b>Appendix D Maps .....</b>	<b>877</b>
<b>Appendix E Index of Games by Type of Cards and Number of Players ....</b>	<b>885</b>
Supplement: revised version .....	S 64
<b>Detailed Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>889</b>
Supplement: revised version .....	S 68
<b>General Index.....</b>	<b>897</b>

