

# Picket

[Cotton, *The Compleat Gamester*, London, 1674, pp. 80-89.]

Before you begin the Game at Picket, you must throw out of the Pack the *Deuces*, *Treyes*, *Fours*, and *Fives*, and play with the rest of the *Cards*, which are in number thirty and six.

The usual *Set* is an hundred; not but that you may make it more or less; the last Card deals and the worst is the Dealers.

The Cards are all valued according to the number of the spots they bear, the Ace only excepted, which wins all other Cards, and goes for eleven.

The Dealer shuffles, and the other cuts, delivering what number he pleaseth at a time, so that he exceed not four, nor deal under two, leaving twelve on the table between them.

He that is the elder, having lookt over his Cards, and finding never a Court-Card among them, says, *I have a Blanck*, and I intend to discard such a number of Cards, and that you may see mine, discard you as many as you intend; this done, the Eldest shows his Cards and reckons ten for the Blanck, then taking up his Cards again he discards those which he judgeth most fit: here note he is always bound to that number which he first propounded. This being done, he takes in as many from the Stock as he laid out; and if it should chance to fall out that the other hath a *Blank* too, the younger *Blank* shall bar the former and hinder his *Picy* and *Repicy*, though the eldest hands *Blank* consists of the biggest Cards.

It is no small advantage to the eldest to have the benefit of discarding, because he may take in eight of the twelve in the Stock discarding as many of his own for them; not but that if he find it more advantageous he may take in a less number; after this the Antagonist may take in what he thinks fit, acquitting his hand of the like number. Here note, that let the Game be never so good the Gamesters are both obliged to discard one Card at least. After the discarding you must consider the *Ruff*, that is how much you can make of one suit; the eldest speaks first, and if the youngest makes up no more the *Ruff* is good, and sets up one for every ten he can produce; as for example, for thirty reckon three, for forty four, and so onward, withall take notice you are to count as many for thirty five as for forty, and as much for forty five as fifty, and so of the rest; but from thirty five to thirty nine you must count no more than for thirty five, and so from thirty to thirty four, count no more than for thirty; and this Rule is to be observed in all other higher numbers.

As for *Sequences* and their value after the *Ruff* is plaid, the Elder acquaints you with his *Sequences* (if he have them) and they are *Tierces*, *Quartes*, *Quintes*, *Sixiesms*, *Septiesms*, *Huictiesms*, and *Neusiesms*, as thus; six, seven, and eight; nine, ten, and Knave; Queen, King, and Ace; which last is calleh [sic] a Tierce Major, because it is the highest. A Quart is a sequence of four Cards, a Quint of five, a Sixism of six, &c. These Sequences take their denomination from the highest Card in the Sequence. It is a Tierce Major or a Tierce of an Ace when there is a Queen, King, and Ace, a Tierce of a King when the King is the best Card; a Tierce of a Queen when there is no King nor Ace, and so till you come to the lowest Tierce, which is a Tierce of an eight. You must reckon for every Tierce three, for a Quart four, but for a Quint fifteen, a Sixiesm sixteen, and so upward; now what ever you can make of all you must add to your Blank, and count the whole together.

Here note that the biggest Tierce, Quart, or other Sequence, although there be but one of them makes all the others less Sequences useless unto him be they never so many; and he that hath the biggest Sequence by vertue thereof reckons all his less Sequences, though his Adversaries Sequences be greater, and otherwise would have drowned them.

Farther observe, that a Quart drowns a Tierce, and a Quint a Quart, and so of the rest, so that he that has a Sixiesm may reckon his Tierces, Quarts, or Quints, though the other may happen to have Tierce, Quart, &c. of higher value then the others are that hath the Sixiesm; trace the same method in all the other like Sequences.

After you have manifested your Sequences, you come to reckon your three Aces, three Kings, three Queens, three Knaves, or three Tens, as for Nines, Eights, Sevens and Sixes, they have no place in this account; for every Ternary you count three, and they are in value as it is in Sequences; Aces the highest and best, Kings next, after these Queens, then Knaves and last of all Tens. The higher here drowns the lower here as in the Sequences. He that hath three Aces may reckon his three Queens, Knaves, or Tens, if he have them, though the other hath three Kings; and this is done by reason of his higher Ternary. Now he that hath four Aces, four Kings, four Queens, four Knaves, or four Tens, for each reckons fourteen, which is the reason they are called Quatorzes.

Now they begin to play the Cards, the elder begins and younger follows in suit as at Whisk, and for every Ace, King, Queen, Knave, or Ten, he reckons one.

A Card once play'd must not be recalled, unless he have a Card of the same suit in his hand, if the elder hand plays an Ace, King, Queen, or Ten, for every such Card he is to reckon one, which he adds to the number of his game before; and if the other be able to play upon it a higher Card of the same suit, he wins the Trick, and reckons one for his Card as well as the other. Whosoever wins the last Trick reckons two for it, if he win it with a Ten, but if with any Card under, he reckons but one; then they tell their Cards, and he that hath the most is to reckon Ten for them.

After this, each person sets up his Game with Counters, and if the the *Set* be not up, deal again; now a *Set* is won after this manner, admit that each party is so forward in his Game that he wants but four or five to be up, if it so happens that any of the two have a Blank, he wins the *Set*, because the Blanks are always first reckoned; but if no Blanks, then comes the Ruff, next your Sequences, then your Aces, Kings, Queens, Knaves, and Tens, next what Cards are reckoned in play, and last of all the Cards you have won. If any of the Gamesters can reckon, either in Blanks, Ruffs, Sequences, Aces, &c. up to thirty in his own hand, without playing a Card, and before the other can reckon any thing, instead of thirty, he shall reckon ninety, and as many as he reckons after above his thirty, adding them to his ninety; this is known by the name of a *Repicy*.

Moreover, he that can make in like manner, what by Blank, Ruff, Sequences, &c. up to the said number, before the other hath play'd a Card, or reckoned any thing, instead of thirty he reckons sixty, and this is called a *Picy*. Here note, that if you can but remember to call for your *Picy*, or *Repicy*, before you deal again, you shall lose neither of them, otherwise you must.

He that wins more than his own Cards reckons Ten, but he that wins all the Cards reckons forty, and this is called a *Capet*.

The Rules belonging to this Game are these. If the Dealer give more Cards than his due, whether through mistake or otherwise, it lieth in the choice of the elder hand, whether he shall deal again or no, or whether it shall be played out.

He that forgets to reckon his Blank, Ruff, Sequences, Aces, Kings, or the like, and hath begun to play his Cards cannot recall them. So it is with him that sheweth not his Ruff before he play his first Card, losing absolutely all the advantage thereof.

He that misreckons any thing, and hath play'd one of his Cards, and his adversary finds at the beginning, middle or end of the Game, that he had not what he reckoned, for his punishment he shall be debar'd from reckoning anything he really hath, and his adversary shall reckon all he hath, yet the other shall make all he can in play. He that takes in more Cards then he discardeth is liable to the same penalty.

He that throws up his Cards imagining he hath lost the Game, mingling them with other Cards on the Table though afterward he perceive his mistake, yet he is not allowed to take up his Cards and play them out.

No man is permitted to discard twice in one dealing.

He that hath a *Blank*, his *Blank* shall hinder the other *Picy* and *Repicy*, although he hath nothing to shew but his *Blank*.

He that has four Aces, Kings, Queens, &c. dealt him and after he hath discarded one of the four reckons the other three, and the other say to him *it is good*; he is bound to tell the other, if he ask him what Ace, King, Queen, &c. he wants.

If after the Cards are cleanly cut, either of the Gamesters know the upper Card by the backside, notwithstanding this the Cards must not be shuffled again. In like manner, if the Dealer perceive the other hath cut himself an Ace, and would therefore shuffle again, this is not permitted; and if a card be found faced, it shall be no argument to deal again, but must deal on; but if two be found faced, then may he shuffle again.

Lastly, Whosoever is found changing or taking back again any of his Cards, he shall lose the Game, and be accounted a foul Player.