
THE HISTORY OF CANADIAN TEN-CARD DOUBLES CRIBBAGE

researched by Egon Koch and Wayne Albertson

Playing cribbage is common at workplaces all over North America, and for the BC Transit bus drivers working out of the bus depot in Surrey, British Columbia, in the mid-1970s, cribbage was their favourite pastime. As bus drivers, they often worked long days with various shifts.

Sometime in 1976 four drivers—**Kevin Carroll, Stan Churchill, Roy Fonseca, and Don McArthur**—experimented with a variation of doubles play where the dealer and the player in front of the dealer were each dealt ten cards. They then selected four-card hands for themselves and their partners before discarding to the crib.

No one seems to remember the specific reason for this experiment, but they enjoyed the play and soon introduced it to their fellow drivers. The higher hand counts allowed them to get in more games during breaks, and everyone at the depot began play “ten-card crib.”

Several drivers frequented a nearby social house called the California Club,

which already had an established group that played doubles on a weekly basis. Bartender **Eddie Hustins** noticed a group of bus drivers playing the ten-card game one



Angel Thorpe

evening and mentioned it to the weekly club organizer, **Margaret “Angel” Thorpe**. By 1997 a new club was established ap-



An early meeting of the Surrey Canadian Doubles Club

plying the ten-card variation of the game.

The ten-card game grew in popularity, and tournament attendance continually increased. The group needed a larger facility to accommodate more players, and in 1999 **Angel and Val Howard** approached **Keith Donnelly**, the president of Royal Canadian Legion Branch 6, and asked permission to play at the legion on Wednesday evenings. Donnelly's response was, "The more the merrier," so they began play with about forty players at their first tournament. By the end of their first season, attendance tripled to one hundred twenty players for the final tournament.

Play has continued at what locals refer to as the "Cloverdale Legion" ever since. Today attendance is constantly a hundred players or more each week. In addition, a group meets on Monday evenings at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 8 in White Rock

BC, and weekly tournaments on Friday afternoons alternate between four Senior Recreation Centres in Surrey. These tournaments routinely draw an average of a hundred players per session.

The four originators of the game continued play at the bus depot until they gradually retired. Two of them, Kevin Carroll and Stan Churchill, are still regular attendees at the weekly tournaments. Kevin also introduced the game at pubs in the United Kingdom during a vacation a few years ago.

Margaret Thorpe retired from managing the Cloverdale Club in 2009 and is now 89 years old. She now resides, with her husband Leslie, in an assisted living facility in Surrey. **CW**

Wayne and Egon are members of an ACC cribbage club, Cloverdale #340, in Surrey, British Columbia, Canada.

Ruling Points . . .

A friend called late one night to ask about a ruling. Player A played an Ace for 29, and Player B said "go." Player A took the go, then almost immediately noticed they had another Ace and said, "Oh, I have to play this," and played it and pegged a total of three points. Judges on the scene called it a renege and did all the corrections for the renege call. This may seem like it was not a renege because the second sentence of the renege rule says "a player may correct a 'go' call before either player plays a card or before the opponent pegs a point." According to a brief survey of the Rules Committee and senior judges, the "correction period" window closes once that player takes *any* action. The rule is being currently reworked to include this specific aspect.



Ruling Points is written by Patrick & Michael Barrett (Wisconsin Rapids WI). The brothers have been ACC judges since the early 1990s, and Patrick has been a senior judge since 2002. If you have a question about the rule-book or a judge call, send it to them at barrettsauctions@gmail.com.