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JASS AND EVEN MORE JASS!

The articles which have appeared in previous issues on the subject of the noble Swiss art of Jass have certainly attracted interest. We are indebted to Mr. H. E. Mitchell of 7, Appleford Close, Hoddesdon, Herts for the following interesting piece on the subject.

WGS

There are 36 cards in the pack: 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, Jack, Queen, King, Ace.

The game is normally played by two pairs of partners. The partners sit opposite each other and all four cut and the highest deals.

Before playing the cards are shuffled by dealer and cut by player to the left of the dealer. The cards are dealt three at a time to each player, starting with the player on the dealer's right and then to each in turn in an anti-clockwise direction. The players arrange their cards in suit and ascending order but keep them concealed from the other players.

Any of the following card grouping held in one hand can bring the following bonus points ("WIESE") during the first round of each hand:

4 Aces	- 100
4 Kings	- 100
4 Queens	- 100
4 Jacks	- 200
4 Tens	- 100
*4 Nines	- 150
a running flush of 3	- 20
a running flush of 4	- 50
a running flush of 5	- 100

Notes on "WIESE"

*The 4 nines are not always included and whether they count as a "WIESE" (bonus score) is agreed in the local house rules.

The holder of 4 Jacks wins the right to "WIESE". The right is otherwise held by the holder of the following in descending order:

- *4 Nines (house rules)
- Running flush of 5 cards ("FUENF BLATT")
- 4 Aces
- 4 Kings
- 4 Queens
- 4 Tens
- Running flush of 4 cards ("VIER-BLATT")
- Running flush of 3 cards ("DREI-BLATT")

"WIESE" is carried out by each player in turn as they play their first card. In the event that two players "WIESE" at the same "BLATT" level then the player whose "WIESE" contains the highest card in A, K, Q, J, 10, 9 order is entitled to the bonus score.

When two players both "WIESE" at the same "BLATT" level and hold same

level cards in the "WIESE", the one first entitled to name his/hers "WIESE" scores the bonus associated with it unless the other player is "WIESE" in the trump suit, in which special case he/she scores the bonus. The player entitled to the "WIESE" bonus can also score other minor additional "WIESE" in his/her hand. A card can only be utilised once for "WIESE" scoring.

If the score "WIESE" contain the K and Q of trumps then a further 20 bonus points are scored for "STOECK". If "STOECK" is held by a different player then it is concealed until the second card of the pair is played and "STOECK" is called as it is played. The 20 bonus points are then scored.

A single score is kept for each pair of partners. Scores are traditionally made by stroke combinations with a special chalk pencil on to a small slate but pencil and paper can be utilised:

I	-	Hundreds
XX	-	Fifties
	-	Twenties

The first partnership to score a total of 1,000 points wins.

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Scoring and winning

Value of cards during play:

Jack of trumps	— 20
other Jacks	— 2
Nine of trumps	— 14
other nines	— 0
Aces	— 11
Kings	— 4
Queens	— 3
*Tens	— 10

*These have a scoring value of 10 but can only win tricks containing non-scoring cards.

Trumps are chosen by the player on the right hand side of the dealer. The player inspects his hand first and if he does not consider he has a good trump choosing hand he can insist that his partner chooses. No discussion on the subject can take place and only the word "GSCHOBE" is spoken. The decision to "GSCHOBE" cannot be withdrawn and cannot be requested by the partner.

Play

Tricks are won by the player giving the highest ranking card. The suit led must be followed by all players unless they exercise their right to trump, or unless they do not wish to follow a trump lead because they only have the Ijack of trumps which they wish to save for a later trick. This right may be exercised at any time by the player when it is his turn to play. Players not able to follow suit may give any card in their hands. The player

on the right of the dealer lays the first card and they are followed in turn by each of the players in an anti-clockwise direction.

After nine tricks have been played each team adds up the score of the cards contained in the tricks they have won.

The total value of the cards in the pack is 152. A bonus of 5 points is given to the winner of the last trick. If one team wins all the tricks they earn a bonus of 100, making a total score of 257 points.

These abbreviated rules for the normal partnership game of "JASS" do not cover tactics or the multitude of variations that make the game even more entertaining.

I am British and learnt the game soon after marriage as a social means of communication with my new Swiss relations. I have an ambition one day to play in a "Pig-JASS" but unfortunately have never yet been in the right place at the right time to indulge myself. Maybe a keen Swiss "JASS"-player could follow up this preliminary instruction by writing the tactics of play and the rules of the variations on the game.

And even more information on the subject has been forthcoming from Mr. W. Zuber of Ventnor, Isle of Wight who so very kindly presented me with a copy of a book entitled Schweizerisches Jass-Reglement.

Published by the Schweizerischen Wirtverein, Zürich, the book was obviously intended for "Wirtshans" players. According to the fly leaf it was

apparently first published in its present form in 1949. The copy in my possession is a fourth edition but there is no indication, other than the name of the publisher quoted above, of whether it was — or still is — generally available.

In any event it is an interesting publication and one which I shall keep with pleasure. I thank Mr. Zuber most warmly.

Incidentally, he is certainly an "old colonial" who although having been resident in the Isle of Wight for many years, carefully maintained his Swiss links and memories. He points out that Ventnor has an Alpine Road with house names which include Montreux, Engelberg, Clarence Helvetia and a Swiss Cottage. In addition, Mr. Zuber ran his Café Suisse in the High Street for some 40 years until he retired in 1964.

In his letter to me Mr. Zuber also made some interesting observations about the new Swiss Banknotes which were described in a recent edition of the Swiss Observer. He wonders if, in a subsequent issue, other Swiss creations abroad might be featured — including San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge and London's Westminster Bridge. I wonder how many of our readers knew of any Swiss connections here?

WGS

The noble game of Jass has been discussed at some length in the Swiss Observer since an English reader asked for the rules. May I thank all concerned for their interest.

WGS

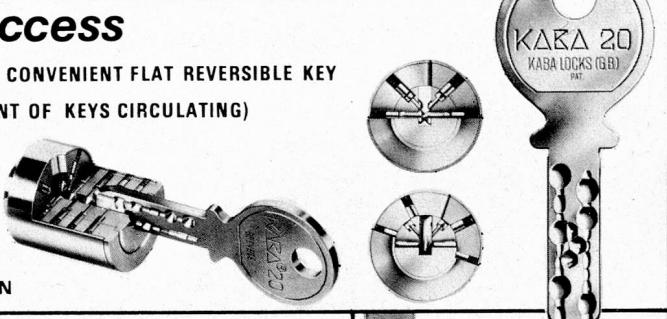
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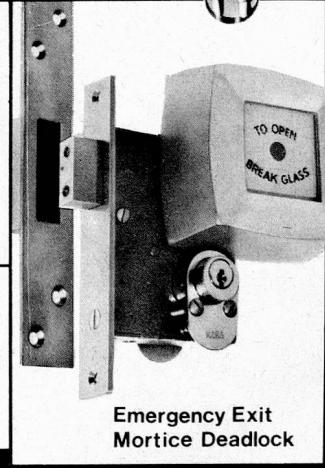
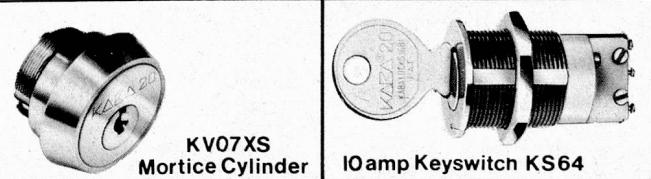
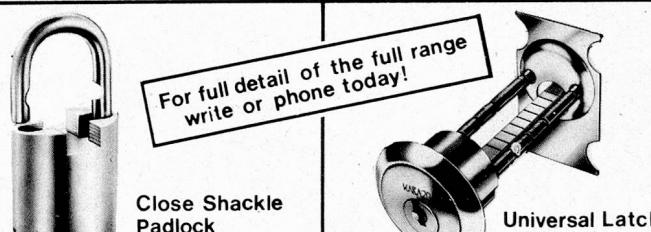
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