

NEWS AND VIEWS FOR WOMEN READERS



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206.—Sometimes a Chinese player having "three" of some Honor or Wind in his hand will expose them (placing one tile on top of the others two). This shows the other players that they might as well discard the fourth one if they have it, giving him an open Kong. Of course, by not exposing the closed "Three" Honors or Winds, perhaps they spoil the hand of another player who may have the fourth tile and hopes in vain to match it for "game!"

207.—Chinese players do not use the word "Kong" as a call they call "Pung" and indeed the more shrewd players will call "Pung" on a discarded tile to go "Mah Jongg." How often I have seen a player with his hand complete, on the discard tile, call "Pung" and then pretend to try and make something out of his hand, shifting the tiles around, and then, as if a great inspiration had come to him, the hand is just laid down quietly, usually with the score already made up, and the news is announced as "Sixty-Four."

208.—One of the most noticeable features of the game, when played by the Chinese, is the extreme courtesy between the players. There is hardly a word spoken, the only sound is the clicking of the tiles. Very often they need a discarded tile they will just flip over the tiles they are matching up and all in one moment discard and take up the tile they have claimed.

209.—There is a curious little side light on the game which you will probably notice when you have played many games. If you are playing for a hand all of one suit, the chances are that one of the other players will try for a hand also in that same suit. It is usually the player facing you. The reason may well be because you discard the suits other than the suits you are trying for, and these help make up the hand of the player on your right. He in turn, in filling up his hand, has to discard, and probably throws away tiles which you may need very badly. But the player on his right, (facing you), gets the benefit of these discarded tiles, and if he has anything at all of that suit to start with, he may get a better hand than yours.

210.—A very good plan in playing for a big hand is to try and figure out some scheme which will conceal your real intentions—you must mislead your opponents in every manner you can devise. Suppose you are South wind and this is your hand:



You have quite a good start for a "farn" for circles, if we can only get rid of all those other tiles. The number of circles is perhaps a bit slim, but we will try. The Chinese, consider eight or nine tiles of one suit the minimum on which to play for a one suit hand. I propose to play this hand out for your benefit making it the Chinese way of doing it.

In our hand we have seven circle tiles; we will try for a "circle" hand. We have only one solitary Bamboo, so we will try to convey to our opponents that we are making up a hand all "bamboos!"

(Note: Before writing this section, I played this identical hand over and over again, changing the suits of course. It would take too much space to explain all of these but the hand was completed nearly every time; the score was different each time naturally.)

Well it is our first draw, we get from the wall an eight character. That just completes a sequence, (which by the way, we can get rid of altogether later on if things go right.) If things do not go very good, we may be glad that sequence if after all, we have to try for a quick "Mah Jongg." We discard the West wind (read paragraph for the reason).

Now we draw a character—(say a "four")—we put it in our hand, and manage to knock down our "three bamboo" so that everybody can see it. However, we hurriedly stand it up again, arranging our tiles, and then discard the character we have just drawn. One of the players now discards a South Wind, and before it is your turn to play perhaps another player also discards a South Wind. Our next draw is a "bamboo," and we do not want it at all. Still we will keep it.

There is little use now holding on to that one South Wind of ours so we draw a "seven circle." We now discard the "three circle," and we do it in a very positive sort of manner, trying to convey that we throw out All circles.

Now let us review our tactics: Our opponents have noticed that: We discard Winds. We discard Character. We discard Circles.

We have Bamboos hidden in our hand and we do not discard them.

Later on somebody discards a bamboo, at once we pounce on it—bring it over to our hand still face upwards on the table. Then on closer examination of our hand we must pretend that we discover that we cannot use that particular bamboo, and rather reluctantly we return it to the discard.

Then we draw from the wall, let us suppose we get a Red Honor. Now we discard the nine character. This leaves us the "seven" and "eight" characters—which is then left open at either end for a sequence play, if we have to change our tactics. (The next time we discard characters, it will be the "seven," to convey the idea we have got the "eight." If the other players think so, they will not hesitate to discard it, and perhaps, in the end, that may yet be our necessary paid to "go game.")

Sooner or later we shall have the chance to discard our seven bamboo perhaps some other player "Pung" three seven bamboos, so we can discard it, and draw his attention to the fourth one as we throw it out.

Perhaps a couple of the "seven bamboos" have been discarded, in which case, we will discard our "seven bamboo" but in doing so we will put it alongside the other ones, to convey the idea that it was no use trying for that number in the bamboo suit.

The hand is getting on now and perhaps a "one circle" will be discarded. We need that, but we do not want our



opponents to know how badly we need it. However, in a very resigned manner we do Pung the "one circle," as if we had completely ruined our hand by the play, and had broken to go game on anything. You might even appear to be annoyed by the course of the play, and go so far as to say so, sort of "bad luck" complaint!

You will find that by following out tactics of this kind, you will probably be able to complete your hand and with any kind of luck you will succeed in getting your farn for circles, and your opponents will be quite on the wrong track. You will quite likely get a third Red Honor, a pair is a good start, it is half the total number, and the chances are that the other players holding an odd one will discard the tile if they have it (of course one of them may also have a pair!)

Of course you may have a run of drawing Winds or Honors, in which case you would follow the trend of the game as it comes. It is really quite impossible to do any more than give general rules. It is no use playing out in detail any particular hand, or a hand drawn at random, for the reason that you may never once get the actual hand dealt with.

(To be Continued Next Wednesday)

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Treating the Screamer. One Mother Says. Screaming and crying fits are often the result of a wish to be noticed. If there is nothing physically wrong with a child who has such spells, the best thing to do is to let him know that his crying does not bother you, and to go on as if nothing is happening. Trying to argue with a child or pet it out of such habits is useless.

"The preacher says impatience is sinful, and I reckon he knows; but I'll bet he ain't never tried to teach a calf to drink out of a bucket."

Be slow of giving advice, ready to do a service.