



8th of May 2019

An evening with the Accademia del Tarocchino Bolognese

Venue: Centro sociale Giorgio Costa,
via Azzo Gardino, 44 - Bologna

Coordinator Dr. Lorenzo Cuppi, PhD

Programme



- ❑ 20:45 - 21:15 Davide Baroncini: *Rules of tarocchino bolognese and introduction to its cards*
- ❑ 21:15 - 22:00 *Participants practice with the cards and game assisted by members of the Accademia*
- ❑ 22:00 - 22:40 Lorenzo Cuppi: *An outline of the historical development of the game of tarot in Bologna*
- ❑ 22:40 - 23:00 *Presentation to participants and greetings*

Bolognese Tarocchino – Rules



The deck

The Bolognese Tarocchino is played on a deck of 62 cards divided in 5 suits: 10 cards each of coins (*denari*), cups (*coppe*), sword (spade), batons (*bastoni*), and 22 trumps (*trionfi*). Among the 22 trumps, the most important ones are: Angel (*Angelo*), World (*Mondo*), *Bégato* and *Matto* (“Fool”) which are called the *Tarocchi* (“Tarots”).

Aim of the game

In Bologna and most of its provinces, two variants are currently played: in one variant players aim to score 800 points (*Ottocento*), in the other, the couple which scores more points wins after 4 matches, in order to give every player the advantage to deal (*Quattro scartate*).

Bolognese Tarocchino – Rules



How to play

- 1. Select your team:** the game is played by four players divided in two couples facing each other. To chose your partner, put all the cards facedown on the table and pick one. The two who pick the highest cards play together, facing each other, and may chose in which part of the table to sit. The one who picked the highest card is the first to deal the cards.
- 2. Distribution of the cards:** the dealer shuffles the deck and passes it to the player on his left, who cuts the deck. Then the dealer distributes 15 cards to the players, giving them 5 at a time, going anticlockwise. At the end, two cards remain, which belong to the dealer.
- 3. Discard:** the dealer must discard two out of his 17 cards that he will put in his tricks (*prese*) and will count towards his scoring at the end. He can choose to discard any card in his hand except for the four Kings and the four Tarots. When he has discarded his cards he knocks on the table, and may say: "fatta" ("done"). In this way he becomes the *scartatore* ("discarder").

Bolognese Tarocchino – Rules



How to play

- 4. Gameplay:** the player to the right of the *scartatore* plays a card placing it face-up in the middle of the four players; the other three, in order, must “follow suit” (i.e. play a card of the same suit) or, in case they cannot, a trump. If they lack both the leading suit and trumps, only then may they play any card they wish. The player who played the highest card wins the four cards and put them in his tricks. He will be the first player in the next round. At the end of the game, the couples count their tricks.
- 5. Playing the *Matto*:** the *Matto* is a special trump that allow his possessor not to follow suit, be this trumps, or any other. At his turn the possessor may show the *Matto* and put it directly in his tricks. At the end of the game he shall give to the player, who won the trick in which the *Matto* was played, any card which he prefers among his tricks.

Bolognese Tarocchino – Rules

Values of the cards

Trumps, as suggested by their name, are the highest cards, and rank as follows:

Angel, World, Sun, Moon,

numbered trumps from 16 to 5,

the four Moors,

last but not least, *Bégato*, the lowest trump.

The four Moors have the same value: the one played last wins. From this rule comes the local saying “Moro ammazza moro” (“Moor kills moor”).

As mentioned above, *Matto* does not win cards nor is won.

Swords and Batons rank according to their value: King, Queen, Knight, Jack, 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, Ace.

Coins and cups are somewhat inverted: King, Queen, Knight, Jack, Ace, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.



Bolognese Tarocchino – Rules

Scores

The game in itself is very simple, while the most complex part is the counting procedure.

At the end of the game there are three phases in counting the scores, which seem to have stratified over the centuries and consist of (1) the collection of single cards and (2) their combination in sequences and *cricche* (groups of equal rank).

The 62 cards are divided between 20 *figure* and 42 *cartacce*:

Tarocchi and Kings are worth	5 points each
Queens	4 points each
Knights	3 points each
Jacks	2 points each
Every pair of <i>cartacce</i>	1 point

Any *figura* must be counted in pairs with one *cartaccia*.

Thus, the whole deck is worth 87 points.

For the beginners the procedure of counting the two types of combinations (sequences and *cricche*) can be simplified by using a chart at the end of the match so as to check with the partner which combinations the couple scored.



Bolognese Tarocchino – Rules



Scores

These are the most antique (late 15th century) scoring procedures which have survived until today. Since at least the late 16th century an important variant was played with a superimposed counting system which was discontinued between the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century. Other games for two to six players are still played in Bologna and its provinces with the same basic rules.

Advanced rules

While the game in itself is completely explained here, there are additional rules that enrich the game, which concern other aspects like the communication and the gesture of players, and which can be better understood after some matches. These are generated by the fact that talking during the game is forbidden or, at least, strictly regulated. So, there are also rules that discipline the gesture and talking of players, specifying how they can interact. These rules are made in order to preserve the interpersonal complexity of a game in which playing in teams could challenge your strategical, intellectual and emotional skills.

Further implications

As we said, the Tarocchino Bolognese is a very old game and is played basically with this set of rules since the Renaissance, with just minor changes that occurred in later periods. The strategic complexity of the game assured it a great popular success, and as the game grew in popularity, it became a social rite that gathered the different levels of the society at the playing table, crowding bars and taverns, teaching many skills to mostly illiterate people. Such a large and intense use refined the set of cards, regulated gestures and lexicon of players according to the place's and period's costumes, charging it with cultural values.

The game that we play today in Bologna is thus the result of centuries of cultural stratification and of an intellectual work of refining, which makes it a true legacy of the Italian gaming culture, that, in this case, survived uniquely in Bologna.

Denari / Coins



Re / King



Regina / Queen



Cavallo / Knight



Fante / Jack



Asso / Ace



Sei / Six



Sette / Seven



Otto / Eight



Nove / Nine



Dieci / Ten



Coppe / Cups



Re / King



Regina / Queen



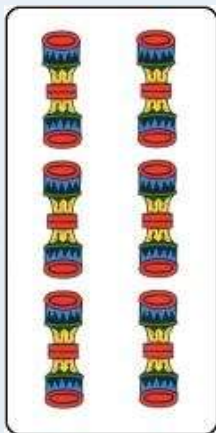
Cavallo / Knight



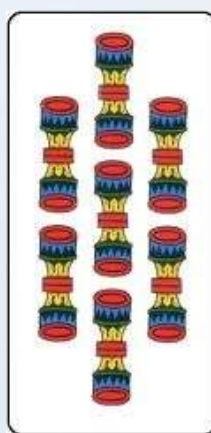
Fante / Jack



Asso / Ace



Sei / Six



Sette / Seven



Otto / Eight



Nove / Nine



Dieci / Ten

Spade / Swords



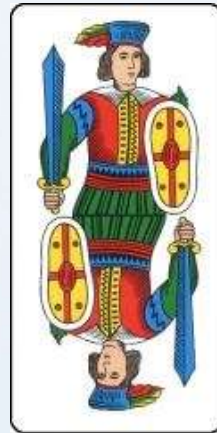
Re / King



Regina / Queen



Cavallo / Knight



Fante / Jack



Dieci / Ten



Nove / Nine



Otto / Eight



Sette / Seven



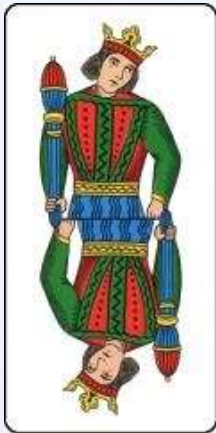
Sei / Six



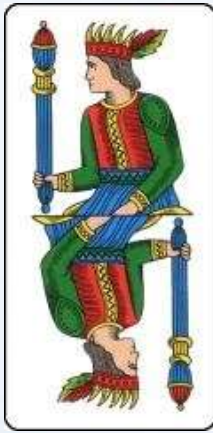
Asso / Ace



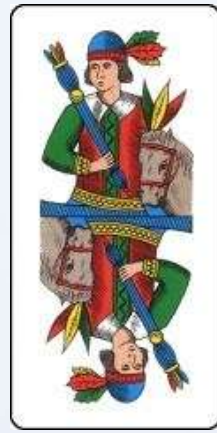
Bastoni / Batons



Re / King



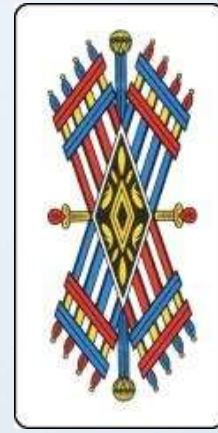
Regina / Queen



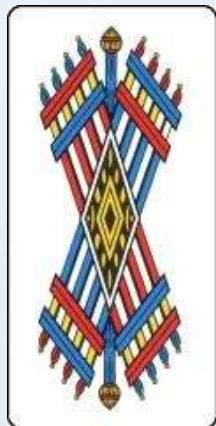
Cavallo / Knight



Fante / Jack



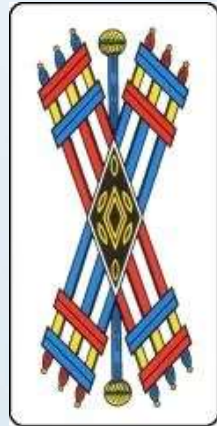
Dieci / Ten



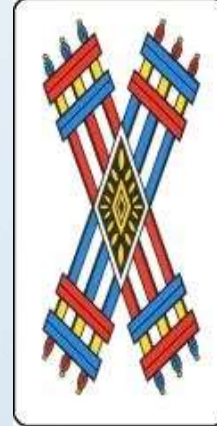
Nove / Nine



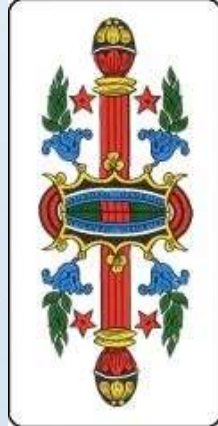
Otto / Eight



Sette / Seven

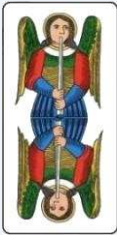


Sei / Six



Asso / Ace

Trionfi / Trumps



Angel



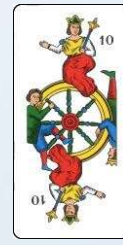
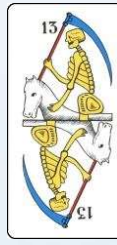
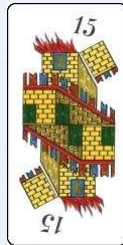
World



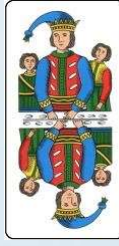
Sun



Moon



Four Moors

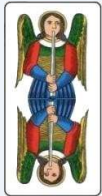


Bégato



Matto

Calcolo cricche / Calculation "cricche" MAX 5



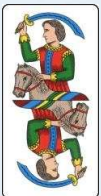
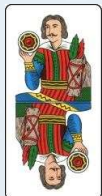
4 Tarocchi = 36 pts
3 Tarocchi = 18 pts



4 Kings = 34 pts
3 Kings = 17 pts



4 Queens = 28 pts
3 Queens = 14 pts



4 Knights = 26 pts
3 Knights = 13 pts

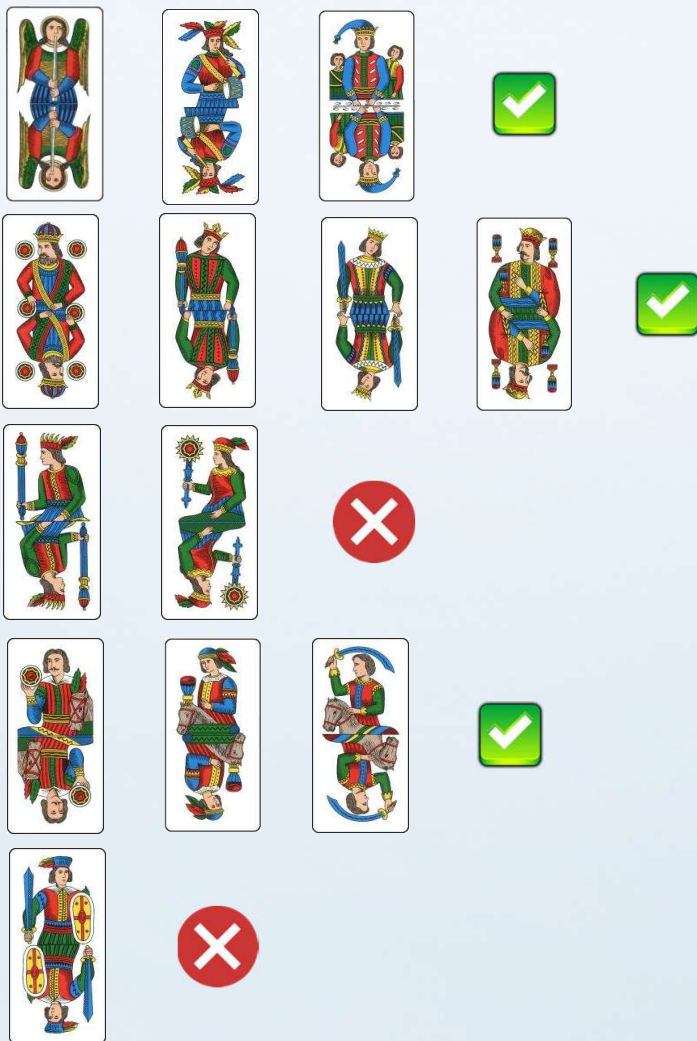


4 Jacks = 24 pts
3 Jacks = 12 pts



IF 3 or more
"cricche":
Total * 2

Esempio di calcolo cricche / Example of calculation "cricche" [IF 3 or more Total * 2]



3 Tarocchi = 18

4 Kings = 34

3 Knights = 13

Total = 65

N. of "cricche" = 3

Grand Total = 65 * 2 = **130**

Calcolo Sequenze / Calculation "sequences" MAX 7



1

2

3

4

5

To 5

+

+

+

+

6

At least 3 cards



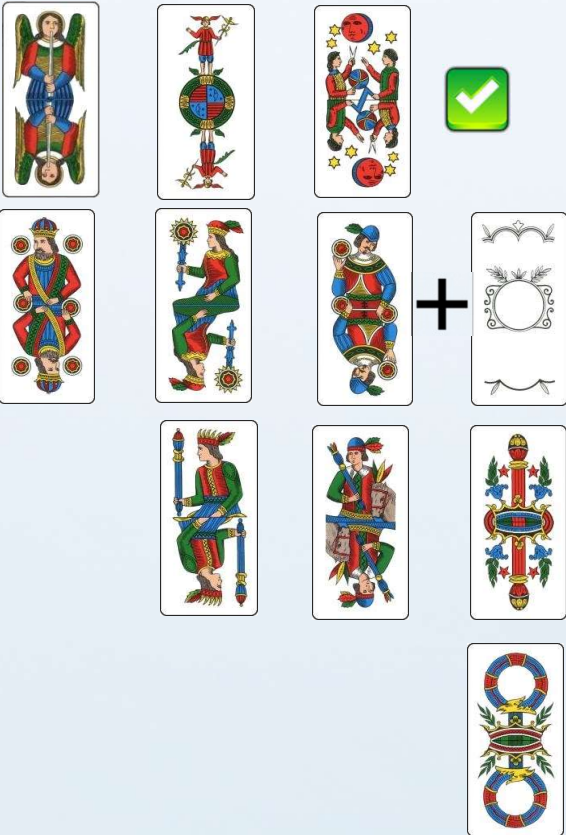
IF 3 or more "sequences":
Total * 2


7

Esempio di calcolo sequenze / Example of calculation "sequences" [IF 3 or more Total * 2]



At least 3 cards



 The King is missing



3 Ace

3 Trumps = 5+5
 4 Coins = 5+5+5
 3 Aces = 5+5

Total = 35

N. of "sequences" = 3

Grand Total = 35 * 2 = **70**

Acknowledgments

The **Accademia del Tarocchino Bolognese** thanks all the participants of the evening for their involvement and interest in our antique tarot game.

A special thanks is due to **Marco Tibaldini** for proposing and engaging in the organisation of this event.

We also thank the **Centro sociale Giorgio Costa** for having so kindly accepted to host the Tarocchino evening.

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