

About Klawerjas

Introduction

Klawerjas is one of the most popular card games in South Africa, traditionally played on a social level at home (kombuis klawerjas), universities and colleges as well as competitively in organised league structures in certain parts of the country namely Western Cape, Eastern Cape & Uitenhage Region.

The game was brought to South Africa by the Dutch and is for 4 players who play in pairs(partners), sitting opposite each other. Klawerjas (Klaverjassen in Dutch) is also the national game of the Netherlands and has been played there for several centuries. The game has a number of variants, named after the cities where they originated: **Amsterdam**, **Rotterdam** and **Utrecht**.

Similar card games as Klawerjas, Klaverjassen or Trick-Taking card games are being played around the world. Some of these games can be played by 2 or 3 people with the basics being virtually the same and the card values being that of Klaverjassen.

We will be concentration on the South African version. You will find that klawerjas terms are a mixture of afrikaans and english - like the Dutch language.

The Deck

A 32 card pack is used, consisting of the cards A, K, Q, J, 10, 9, 8, 7 in each of the usual four suits - spades, clubs, hearts and diamonds. Note that on the cards the corner indices are usually **A** (Aas) for the ace, **K** (Heer) for the king, **Q** (Vrou) for the queen and **J** (Boer) for the jack.

In addition to the playing cards you should also have ROEMTES or Bonus Cards which consists of:
One 2 / Two 4's / Two 5's
Reason for the Two 4's & Two 5's: In New play you could count less than 50 and have a 40/50 Roemte open. In Old Play you might have a situation where "Stuk" & a Twenty is roemed or a 50.

The Ranking and Values of the Cards

In each hand one suit will be trumps. The ranking of the cards and their values are different in the suit chosen as trumps from the other suits. The ranking, from high to low, and the card values are as follows:

	high	low
Trump suit rank:	jack	nine	ace	ten	king	queen	eight	seven		
card values:	20	14	11	10	3	2	0	0		
Other suits rank:	ace	ten	king	queen	jack	nine	eight	seven		
card values:	11	10	3	2	1	0	0	0		

This gives 141 points in the pack in total + 5 laas trek(five point awarded to the counter who picks up the last SLAGGIE OR TRICK). = 146.

The Object of the Game

The object of the game is to score as many points as possible in a specified time period. Each player is dealt 8 cards. The dealer will open his last card indicating what trumps is. Each stroke must have a combined total of 146 points - including VYF(5) LAAS TREK. In each hand the object of the game is for the player (and partner) to collect 100 points to enable them to go on one or two strokes on the BOOM. If a counter counts 100 points and his opponent less than 50 points then he goes on two(2) strokes else one(1) stroke. If you fail to score 100 points the game will continue into old play or "OU JOL" until you count 100. The first one to score 100 points, including roemte, go on the BOOM. Points are collected by taking tricks containing valuable cards or points.

The Deal

The cards are shuffled by the dealer and cut by the person to his left. The dealer deals anti-clockwise, not as single cards, but in 3 groups as illustrated : 3-2-3 or 2-3-3 or 3-3-2.

The dealer opens the last card, facing up, in front of him which will indicate what trumps is for that round.

The Play

The player to the right of the dealer starts the play. The other three players must follow suit if possible. If no trumps are played, the highest card of the suit led, according to the ranking order listed above, takes the trick. If the trick contains trumps, the highest trump wins. The player taking the trick leads the next trick and so on. If you cannot follow suit and the card which is winning the trick so far has been played by the opposing team then you must beat this card with a trump if you can. If they are winning with a trump, you must play a higher trump if you can. If you have no higher trump you must throw away a card of another (non-trump) suit. You are not allowed to undertrump "ONDER TROEF"(play a lower trump) unless your hand consists entirely of trumps. If you cannot follow suit and the card which is winning the trick so far is your partner's, then you may play any card of any suit, except that if your partner's winning card is a trump, you are not allowed to undertrump unless your hand consists entirely of trumps. If trumps are led then subsequent players must play trumps or any card if they have no trumps at all.

Bonus Points/Roemte

The bonus points for taking a combination of cards in a trick are called "**ROEM**". The commonest type of **ROEM** is an unbroken sequence of cards in a suit. The possible roemte are as follows:

- Three cards of the same suit - 20 bonus points (7,8,9 or 8,9,10 or 10,J,Q etc)
- Four cards of the same suit - 50 bonus points (7,8,9,10 or 8,9,10,J or 9,10,J,Q etc)
- King and queen of trumps (stuk) - 20 bonus points
- Four kings, queens, aces, jacks or five tens - 100 bonus points: (2 strokes in new play and old play " OU SPEEL/ OU JOL" - if opponents count less than 50 else 1 stroke in old play. (Only Four jacks & Five tens can play 2 strokes in "OU SPEEL/OU JOL")

Note: Five Tens / Vyf Eners or Vyf Tieners are five cards of the same suit in unbroken sequence.

There is also a bonus of 5 points for the team who take the last trick.

Scoring

At the end of each hand the points in one hand add up to 146 (141 for the cards and 5 bonus points for the last trick).

Terminology

Boer - Jack of Trumps

Manel - The nine of trumps

Roemte - Bonus points

Stuk - The King and Queen of trumps

Twintig - 3 cards in unbroken sequence.

Vyftig - 4 cards in unbroken sequence.

Five Tens – 5 cards in unbroken sequence.

Boom - The set of 5 strokes.

AF - Penalising

Points or 2 - 2 points

Four - 4 points