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TWO CENTURIES OF DANISH TAROK RULES

The card game called Tarok[1] has been played in Denmark for several centuries. Around 1770 it was played at the royal court – and a few years ago a new Royal Tarok club was founded through the initiative of Prince Henrik, who knew of the French version of the game, Tarot, from his native country. The game as we know it today is different from the game of the past, however, and the intention of this paper is to show what has been changed.

Unfortunately there are only a few hundred Tarok players in Denmark. That does not mean that we feel like an oppressed minority. On the contrary, we rightly believe that we are privileged in having the opportunity to play this (admittedly very special) card game with 78 cards and the peculiar goal of winning the last trick with the lowest trump or one of the four kings (ultimo).
And after an evening of tarok we can only agree with the military surgeon *Bendz*, who around 1840 wrote:

The need to survey such a large number of cards, together with the precision and skill that this game demands, whether you yourself want to "do something", or you want to prevent one of the other players from "doing something", evokes an attention and excitement that makes Tarok the most interesting, but also the most difficult of all known card games.

In 1899, in a book about Tarok, *Emil Wolff* uses exactly the same words, but with a small

[1]Throughout this paper I shall use the Danish name when referring to the Danish version of the game

addition: *Not without justification this game is called the game of the intellectual.* One can only agree.

In his ”Ny og fuldstændig dansk Spillebog” from 1847, in which several different card games are described, the author, *Martin Schwartz*, also mentions Tarok:

This game is not very widespread as it is more difficult to learn than most card games, and the greater number of cards (78) requires an uninterrupted and exhausting attention which most players will not be prepared to offer.

In 1889 *M. Basta* describes several card games in his book, including Tarok:

This game is not as widespread as it deserves to be, even though I dare say it deserves first place among card games.

In the 20th century the game has not gained much ground, and there is no doubt that the authors, who have described the rules of the game and instructions about how to play it, have been disappointed at the scattered following, but at the same time remained enthusiastic about the game, which can be seen in the scripts by *R.L. Borch* (1920), *J.V.V. Hermansen* (1926 and 1943), and *O. Oldfeldt* (1961).

The game of Tarok is too little known in this country, and yet it is the finest, funniest and most interesting card game known, while at the same time the most difficult. It is the “Chess” of card games.
With its 78 cards including scus and scat, Tarok offers a truly astronomical number of combinations, so it will always remain new.
Tarok is the most exciting game, one in which it is possible to achieve great results, even with apparently bad cards.

Tarok is played in many countries, but there are considerable variations in how the game is played, and it is reasonable to maintain that there is such a thing as a special Danish version. If you buy a set of cards from France you will see that the rules of the game are different from those we play by in Denmark. It is possible to find descriptions of Tarok in several countries on www.pagat.com., but it must be kept in mind that through the years the rules have changed – and, furthermore, that there are small differences among the Danish clubs.

It is remarkable that Tarok has had widespread support in military circles, though we are not sure why. This connection with the military still exists – the four clubs in Jutland all originate in military institutions: in Fredericia and Aalborg they are the local regiments, in Aarhus the Vestre Landsdelskommando (VLK), and in Hjørring the Hærens Materialkommando. It was the intention that half of the members should come from the military, but over the years civilians have gained a majority. Apart from these four clubs there are a few smaller clubs and, as mentioned, a new club has been formed, the Royal Tarok Club. In Aarhus there used to be another small club, but they have joined the VLK.

The first handbook about Tarok is from around 1840, written by *Jacob Christian Bendz*, who was a military surgeon in Randers. It is remarkable that the books published in the first 60 years of the 20th century were also written by army officers. Two of these (*Borch* (1920) and *Oldfeldt* (1961)) are only available as typed copies and cannot be found in

libraries. *Hermansen's* book from 1926 can be found in some public libraries, but his second edition can only be seen in the reading room at the Royal Library in Copenhagen. Fortunately these have all been transferred to CD by the VLK. Apart from these there are a few small guides, one written in the sixties by *Poul Jensen* (who was known to have made a catalogue of all known Tarok players in Denmark), a short guide from the VLK in 1970, and one by *Knud Andersen* in 1989. In 1988 my own book "Tarok, en vejledning i det ædle kortspil" (Tarok, a Guide to the Noble Game) was published.

Some years ago there were discussions about forming a Danish Tarok Union, but with no result. In 2010, however, an agreement to form a union was reached, and during the discussions it was agreed that a new set of rules should be written. That work was also an opportunity to look through old and new literature about the game, enabling the tracking of all the changes that had taken place during the years since 1786. These changes are seen in many facets of the game (how to discard, payment, pools (cups), declarations, fines etc. and also in the nature of the game), but there is no doubt that these changes have made the game more amusing and interesting. There have been changes in the rules for discarding, for the price of funding and payment for last trick and ultimo (and lost ultimo), and for the counting of points after a game. Also, several declarations have been dropped. In the following an account of what has happened will be given.

With one exception, all books before 1899 are so-called game books, which describe several games including Tarok. But they are not very instructional, whereas the book by *Jacob Chr. Bendz* from around 1840 contains good instructions for playing the game, and much good advice can be found there.

The oldest book is "Nyeste danske Spillebog" from 1786 by *Joh. Chr. Meyer*. New editions were published in 1802, 1829 and 1868. The descriptions of Tarok in these four editions are very similar. In 1847 *Martin Schwartz* wrote "Ny og fuldstændig dansk Spillebog" and in 1889 another game book was published, "Anvisning til hurtigt og sikkert at lære de moderne Selskabsspil" by *M. Basta*. The last game book is from 1900: "Anvisning til hurtigt og sikkert at lære de moderne Selskabsspil" by *C.G. Schiellerup.* However, none of these multigame books can be used as serious instructions in Tarok, so the first <u>real</u> Tarok-book was the one written by *Bendz.* The next book about Tarok (and only Tarok) was written by the director of Kjøbenhavns Tarokklub, *Emil Wolff.* I have in vain tried to find something about this club through libraries, archives and newspapers; they have all been very helpful, but with no result. But it is interesting that *Wolff* did not belong to the military.

In the following sections we will go through different aspects of the game to highlight the developments, as you will find many essential differences mentioned between the game of today and the game of two centuries ago. Most players will be certain to find that these changes have resulted in a more interesting and exciting game.
Going through these papers shows that the game we know today was developed during the last ten years of the 19th century. Small changes were made later, the most important of which are found in the rules for discarding.

About cups – or pools.

Pools are first mentioned in the book by *Bendz*. Evidently he did not himself play with pools, but in his description he mentions that ”someone” had introduced pools for kings and the pagat (trump 1). About these pools it is said that the pagat pool is formed by the payment of 10 points from every player, though to the king pool only 5, and every time a new game is started the dealer must pay 5 to every pool. If a player loses his pagat he must pay 5 to the pool and 5 to his opponents, but if it is lost in the last trick he has to pay them 15 and then double the amount in the pool. If a king is lost during the game there should be no payment, but if he is lost in the last trick the player has to pay 10 to his opponents and double the pool. But it is remarkable that there is no information about payment from the pools in ultimo (last trick on pagat or one of the kings) or how to handle the pools when you finish, and there is no information about the possible payment of fines to the pools. *Basta's* book gives the same values, and it can be seen that the pools are used for awarding prizes to the winner of an ultimo, but still nothing about how to handle the content of the cups when finishing the game.

10 years later *Wolff* writes that the pools should be formed by the payment of 20 to both pools from every player, in ultimo the pool is emptied, and if an ultimo is lost in the last trick, the pool must be doubled. The same rules are found in *Schiellerup's* book.

Introducing the pools had another consequence – formerly fines had to be paid to the opponents, but that was changed so that the guilty party had to pay to both pools.

Dealing.

It is evident in all the papers that cards are dealt from right to left, 5 cards in every portion with the last 3 cards belonging to the dealer. If there is the wrong number of cards, another round must be dealt, and the dealer has to pay 5 to every pool, though normally the counting and drawing of a card can restore things. With the introduction of pools came the rule that the dealer should pay 5 to every pool, and furthermore *Wolff* mentions that the dealer has to place the pools to his right, and if he forgets he has to pay a fine of 5 to every pool.

In the game book from 1829 it is said that if a player only has one or two taroks the game does not count, and cards must be dealt again. Neither *Bendz* nor *Schwartz* or *Basta* say anything about a hand without taroks. But in all of the following papers you will find that a player with a hand without a numbered tarok can declare a new dealing.

Declarations.

Declarations are compulsory, and certain defined combination of cards must be declared. Unfortunately some of the descriptions in the old papers are vague. It is worth noting that *Bendz* is the only one who mentions the option to omit a declaration. Now the rule is that if a player forgets to declare or gives a false declaration he will be fined and he will not be allowed to perform an ultimo.

Today we have tarok-, matador- and court card declarations (half, full and overfull), but formerly several other types of declarations were used.

In the game book from 1829 one finds a *declaration of 10 taroks or more*, but nothing about whether it is with or without the pagat. Later on it becomes compulsory to declare

with or without the pagat. 10 taroks shall be paid with 10, if there are more than 10 taroks the payment rises by 5 for each one.
Matadors: fool+pagat and tarok 21 form 3 matadors, payment of 10. If tarok 20 is also in the hand we have 4 matadors etc., and the payment for each extra is 5.
4 court cards in one colour is called *full cavalry* and is paid with 10 – if the fool is in the hand the payment is 20. 3 court cards in one colour is called a half, payment of 5 and with the fool a payment of 10.
Matadors from below consists of tarok 2+pagat+fool, to be paid be paid with 10, and if the hand has a tarok 3, we have 4 – the payment for extra 5.
7 kings - a remarkable configuration. The cards in this special declaration are the four kings, tarok 21, pagat and a fool. For 3 of these should be paid 5, if there are 4 the payment is 10 etc.
Furthermore *4 queens* gives a payment of 5, with a fool 10, and the same for *4 chevaliers* and *4 knights.*

But in the paper by *Bendz* it is a bit different. We find a declaration of *4 kings* paid with 10 and with the fool, *full cavalry 15. 3 kings+ fool* a *half cavalry* or a *half kingdom,* paid with 5. Later we find a full cavalry called *thoroughbred cavalry* or a *full kingdom.* In one of the instructions the fool is not necessary for a half declaration, and the payment is not augmented, if the fool is on hand. There was a special rule saying that if the forehand had declared a full cavalry, the following player could only declare half cavalry if the 3 court cards were in a row.
Added to that came a declaration of *ladones* (ladones are all the small coloured cards, there is a total of 40). If a player has 16 ladones he should be paid 10, + 5 for every extra.

In 1889 *Basta* wrote a warning in his game book not to expand the declarations beyond tarok-, matador- and court card combinations: to go further with declarations must be absolutely rejected, as the declarations would then play too large a part in the value of the game.

You also find this point of view in the book by *Wolff* (1899) in which he describes the declarations. Here we find that many of the former declarations have been dropped, and his set of declarations is what is used today. In the book we find a ”notice”:

”Formerly it was to a much larger extent normal to declare, and some very peculiar declarations were given; if you had pagat + fool + tarok 21 (3 matadors) and tarok 19, 17, 15, the fool was used to replace taroks 20, 18, 16 etc. and in this way, using the so-called ”*springscus”* (jumping fool), you could achieve 9 matadors; it is a highly puzzling perception of the influence of the fool which is presented here, and it is immediately evident that such a use of the fool is based upon a misunderstanding. Regarding court cards, 3 court cards without fool were declared, and if there was a fool the value was doubled. Regarding kings, up to 7 kings were declared, consisting of 4 kings, pagat, fool and tarok 21. 4 queens, chevaliers or knights were declared. As the declarations played a disproportionate part regarding win and loss when permitting honours to such an extent, the players sometimes tried to counteract this influence by introducing another declaration, giving bad cards an advantage and honouring *ladones* if there were 16 or more. And using the fool for supply or replacement was allowed. It is evident that all these declarations revealed too much information about the game, and when it was sometimes the custom to show the taroks if there were 10 or more, in order to let the opponents control the number, then the game could as well be played with open cards.”

Discarding.

When dealing is completed, the dealer will have 28 cards, and his opponents 25. Before the dealer declares, he has to withdraw 3 cards, and these cards will go out of the game. He has the advantage that only he knows what has been discarded, and when discarding he can try to improve his hand so that it helps him reach his strategic goals. There are of course rules for discarding, what is permitted and what is prohibited, and during the years these rules have been modified. Apart from the ”clean rules” much can be said about the art of discarding, but here we will only look at the rules, and will omit considerations about what is best discarded, and when – even if experience has shown us that it can be difficult to choose which 3 out of the 28 cards to take out of the game.

It could be said that some things have not changed during the years, some things have been modified, and that as late as 2010 it had been decided that the rule to permit discarding the fool in a trial of tout should be dropped. So the rule now is that the fool must never be discarded.

The chart below, based on the various instructions, shows what the rules were, and what they are today.

		KINGS	DECLARED	TAROK 21	TAROKKER	PAGAT	FOOL
GAMEBOOK	1829	no	no	no	yes*	yes	yes
BENDZ	184?	no	no	no	yes**	yes	no●
SCHWARTZ	1847	no	?	no	yes	yes	yes
BASTA	1889	no	?	no	yes**	yes	no●
WOLFF	1899	no	no	no	yes**	yes	no●
SCHIELLERUP	1900	no	no	no	yes**	yes	no●
BORCH	1920	no	no	no	yes**	no	no
HERMANSEN	1926	no	no	no	yes**	yes	no●
HERMANSEN	1943	no	no	no	yes**	yes	no●
OLDFELDT	1961	no	no	no	yes**	no	no
VLK	1970	no	no	no	yes**	no	no
POUL JENSEN	196?	no	no	no	yes**	yes	no●
MØLLER	1988	no	no	no	yes**	no	no●
K ANDERSEN	1989	no	no	no	yes**	no	no●
2010	2010	no	no	no	yes**	no	no

All of the instructions agree that kings must not be discarded, while there is uncertainty about discarding from declared cards in two of the papers before 1900.
It has been generally accepted that it is prohibited to discard from declarations – unless the card is so valuable that it is impossible to avoid. And in that case the card from a

declaration that has been discarded must be made known.
Tarok 21 has been protected by all instructions.
Taroks may be discarded under certain conditions:
*Taroks can be discarded only if the hand contains 3 – which could be 2 and the fool. If there are 3 and the fool, then the fool will not be counted as tarok. But if you find only 2 and no fool, you are not allowed to discard them.
**Discarding taroks is permitted only if it is possible to clear the hand of tarok. If there are 3 taroks and the fool, then the fool is not counted as a tarok. The other players may ask if taroks have been discarded, and in most clubs it is the rule that, apart from telling that taroks are laid, it must also be told how. But some feel that this is a bad solution, as they do not have to tell how many taroks have been discarded.

It was not until 1920 that *Borch* suggested that the pagat could not be discarded, but in *Hermansen's* two books from 1926 and 1943 it is allowed. In 1961 *Oldfeldt* wrote the same as *Borch.* A few years later *Poul Jensen* published a short introduction to the game, and in his paper the pagat could be discarded, but by 1989 that changed, and now it is prohibited. During the last 50 years VLK and other clubs in Jutland have played by a rule saying that the pagat could not be discarded. Nevertheless it is possible on the Internet in 2011 to find a Danish web page where it says that you may discard the pagat!
With regards to the fool it is evident – apart from a couple of the early papers – that this card cannot be discarded. But there was an exception. If the dealer had such high cards that he thought that he could play tout (all 25 tricks), he was allowed to discard the fool. But if he did so he had to declare what he had done. ● indicates the papers where this special rule is mentioned.

In 2010 it was agreed that the best solution would be to not allow discarding the fool at all.

If a player makes an error in discarding (wrong number, discard from declaration) he has to pay a fine, and the actual game will be cancelled unless the two other players agree that the error will have no influence on the outcome.

Ultimo cards and last trick.

Today's rates have not always been in use. Looking at the old rates it is evident that with their payment the ultimo did not have the same value as today – and without pools had even less value. It was not until *Wolff* in 1899 that reasonable rates, not only for ultimo, but also for the last trick, were prescribed.
In the oldest instructions the payment for losing a king during a game was either 5 x 2 or zero, last trick with a king gave only 10 x 2, and if you lost a king in the last trick, you had to pay 10 x 2. If you were able to get the two last tricks on two kings you got 15 x 2, and if it was possible to make the three last tricks with three kings the prize was 20 x 2. If the pagat was saved during a game you got 5 x 2, and you had to pay the same amount if it was lost.
Making the last trick with the pagat gave 15 x 2 – and the same should be paid if lost in the last trick. One of the instructions has only 10 x 2.
It should be noticed that *Bendz* mentions pools, and that if you lose an ultimo card in the last trick you have to double the pool, but he does not mention that by winning you can

empty the pool. At the same time he writes that the prize for ultimation can be augmented either by setting a higher payment (30 for the pagat, 25 for a king) or by establishing pools. So the thought that ultimo, and the loss of an ultimo card in last trick (”bagud”), should cost something was introduced many years ago.
In 1889 *Basta* indicated that it is possible to raise the rate for ultimo and ”bagud” to 30 for a king and 40 for the pagat. Today we find 40 and 45.
Last trick with another card than the ultimo cards is the most frequent end of a game, and experience tells us that the player who has got the last trick most times in an evening, will probably be the player who has won most. But in the earlier papers it is not indicated what to pay. It was first around the last decade of the 19th century that a payment of 20x2 comes forward.
With some smaller changes the rates we find in the book by *Wollf* have been used for more than 110 years.

The fool.

In the eastern part of Denmark it is called scusen (from Italian: scusa), in the western part sciesen (French: l'excuse). This last name is first mentioned in 1847 by *Schwartz*, who names it ”Skysen”, or as it is generally called, ”Skisen”.
Due to the rules for its use this card has many possibilities for influencing the game, just as it has great significance in the declarations. The game book from 1829 says that you cannot hold this card longer than the third to last trick, but it is only after *Borch* that we find a rule that says it can be ordered into play in the third to last trick.
In the 19th century there was a phenomenon called ”springscusen”: If you had 3 matadors and tarok 19 and 17, then the fool could replace tarok 20 as well as 18, so that you had not just 3 matadors, but 7. However, this very special configuration has been abandoned.
In the section about discarding it is seen that only one of the papers gives free permission to discard the fool, while all others only permit that in case of intended tour. And now it is agreed that the fool must not be discarded.
There are, of course, rules for the use of the fool, and only minor changes have been made during the years. But it might be interesting to see what the rules are today:

- It can never take any tricks
- It may be used as tarok or in any of the colours
- It is counted as tarok in declarations of tarok and matadors
- It is part of half an overfull declaration in colours and kings
- It can be part of more than one declaration at the same time
- If the hand only holds the fool and no numbered taroks, it shall not be counted as tarok (right to call new deal)
- It must not be discarded
- Any player can demand that it be played in the third to last trick
- It must never be played in the second to last trick
- If the situation should arise that the fool has to be played out in the last trick, the following player has to open the play
- If the fool is called in the third to last trick and it has been played earlier in the game, the player who has demanded the fool must pay 20 to both pools.
- If the fool is played out in a colour which neither opponent has, the player to the

right is allowed to rename it, but he must first declare that he does not have the desired colour, and when the third player declares to be without the colour, he can rename the fool. If he just lets it pass without remarks, the third player may rename it.

- The player who has the fool in his hand takes it into his own heap of tricks by exchanging the played fool with a card from the heap. But if the fool falls in the last trick, the player who wins the trick takes it.

Nolo (no tricks)

Nolo may be a very amusing game, which today is honoured with 25 x 2, and it excludes a synchronous ultimo by one of the two other players. In 1828 the prize was 26 x 2, but later on it became more profitable, especially because three different possibilities arose: If it was announced from the beginning of the game that a nolo was intended, you could earn as much as 86 x 2. If announced later, just before the thirteenth trick, it paid 56 x 2, and, finally, if it was not announced at all, 31 x 2. But, if you had announced and did not succeed, you had to pay. The habit of announcing nolo disappeared more than 100 years ago.

It should be noticed that even if nolo excludes an ultimo, it does not exclude a ”bagud”. It could be one of the other two players or the nolo player himself – in the last case he has won his nolo and should be paid, but at the same time he has to pay for his ”bagud”.

Tout.

Tout – to get all 25 tricks – is mentioned in all instructions, though they all agree that it is unlikely to happen. *Borch* writes: An odd legend among Tarok players is that the lucky player who wins tout will be made an honorary member of Dansk Tarokklub (Danish Tarok Club), but as such a club does not exist, this honourable prize surely belongs, just like the tout, to the world of fantasy.

The legend might come from *Wolff* (director in Kjøbenhavns Tarokklub) who in his book 22 years earlier wrote that the happy winner of a tout would become an honorary member of the club mentioned.

However, we came very close in the Hjørring Tarokklub. A player had taken the first 24 tricks (both the opponents tried to play nolo), and in the last trick he had to play the fool, thinking that he freely could name it – which he could not, so he did not win an ultimo, but had to pay a nolo.

Counting.

Counting after every game (except nolo, where no counting is done) was not always done the way it is today. In the 19th century pagat, fool, tarok 21 and the court cards had higher values, but around 1900 the values and the way of counting were changed. At that time

the values of ultimo and last trick were rather small, and a greater emphasis was placed on counting than today, where obtaining a high count is a secondary goal.
Both the older and the newer instructions warn against placing too much emphasis on counting. It is often emphasized that one must not – just to get a good count – take a trick from a partner to prevent the enemy from getting a cheap lead in the game. But admittedly it will be very sad if one evening you are forced to pay for the counting.

The old rates were:

pagat, fool, tarok 21 and kings	5
queen	4
chevalier	3
knight	2
3 blank cards	1

The counting procedure was unique: One of the point-giving cards should be followed by 2 blank cards. If two counting cards were followed by one blank, you had to withdraw 1, and if three counting cards were together, you had to withdraw 2.
In all there were 78 points; anything above 26 was a win, and anything below was a loss to be paid.
With *Wolff* the rates were changed and the counting became easier:

Pagat, fool, tarok 21 and kings	4
queen	3
chevalier	2
knight	1
every trick (including the 3 discarded cards)	1

Here there are also 78 points. In the first part of the 20th century the payment was as it used to be, but later on the smallest payment was 5, calculated from 26, so that if you had between 24 and 28 you would not pay or be paid.

Fines.

Errors cannot be avoided during some games. Some of these are of minor importance, while others are so serious that the game must be cancelled. There are different fines for these errors depending on their importance, but generally most authors agree that there might be situations when an error has no practical influence. In such cases it is reasonable to let the play go on, but the player who has made the error has to pay for it.
Through the years the rates have been raised, but no changes have been made during the last 70-80 years.
Until it became normal to play with pools the culprit had to pay the fine to both opponents, but now he has to pay to both pools, and a new fine was introduced: A small fine of 5 x 2 if the dealer forgot to move the pools before starting the game. The examples below are not a complete catalogue, but are chosen to illustrate the development. The only rate that has not been changed is the payment for errors in dealing (5 x 2), but as this also demands a new deal, it is generally accepted that the players count their cards, and the error will be cleared by drawing a card.
In 1829 breaking colour cost 5 x 2, after a few years it rose to 15 x 2, in 1889 to 20 X 2, but

since around 1920 40 x 2.
A forgotten or incorrect declaration used to be paid with 5 x 2, now it is 40 x 2.
Errors in discarding used to be 20 x 2, now they are 40 x 2
A few more fines have been introduced: If you declare before the dealer, if you play before you are to pay etc. it will cost 20 x 2 – and if the fool is called after it has been played you have to pay 20 x 2.

About win and loss.

I have been unable to find anything about rates in the 19th century. The first mention of a rate is in *Hermansen's* book from 1926: ½ øre pr. point. Later on this had been increased to 1 øre. During a normal evening win/loss will be around 2-3 kr. which is a moderate amount – and a sum around 10 kr. is an exception. So this is not gambling. However, one club in Jutland had a member who found that to be too tame, so he founded a small club where the price pr. point was 1 kr., and I think (as I know him from my school time) that he would like to go to 10 kr.
But that is absolutely not the idea of the game. Of course, it is fun to win, but we do not play for money, no we play - in the words of *Hermansen* – because:

Tarok is the finest, noblest, most exciting and entertaining of all games

In 1906 -1908 on board the ship of the "Danmark-expedition" time was spent playing Tarok

Are more changes wanted?

As seen above, the years have seen changes in the rules of the game – and we feel that these changes have made the game more interesting and exciting. The last change was in 2010, when an agreement was reached to prohibit discarding the fool.
Even if the rules are rather simple, it is still possible to imagine situations when different rules could be an advantage, frequently based on a game with a special course. Last autumn there was a discussion about the payment in connection with a "bagud", where the player who loses a "bagud" has to pay, while one of the others gets the last trick. Until now it has not been normal to pay for that, and in my opinion it should not be done. This "bagud" may be due to two things: Either the player has in some way fooled himself, or he has been destroyed through an elegant defence by his opponents. Furthermore it can be maintained that this is not a game won, but a game lost, and it is the lost game that should

be paid.
In the Dansk Tarokforbund a set of rules are being prepared. These rules are to be followed in arrangements in the union, but they should be regarded as a guidance, as clubs may have small differences in their rules, e.g. by omitting counting, not informing about the number of taroks discarded, etc. These rules may be regarded as local rules which have been in existence for many years and which the players want to uphold.

Different instructions in Tarok have been mentioned above. Apart from the game books we find the first printed instruction by *Bendz* around 1840, and 60 years later *Wolff* is the first to include examples in his instructions. Later we find examples in *Hermansen's* two books – and the two typewritten instructions by *Borch* and *Oldfeldt* contain many. Apart from *Hermansen's* book from 1926 these books are rather difficult to find. The latest book was published in 1988, written by *Hans J. Møller*. It is sold out from the publisher, but a small number is available in the Hjørring Tarokklub. Furthermore there are small books of instructions by *Poul Jensen* and *Knud Andersen* – and last, but not least, an instruction book from the VLK.
As it is so difficult to get hold of many of these papers, they have been digitized by the VLK, just like the new edition of the book from 1988. Of course it would be nice to have it in print, but that would be unrealistic.

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