

THE “Life is not fair, but. . .” GAME

GAME BASICS

The game is won by using all one's cards rather than keeping them. In fact, the numbers on cards remaining in a player's hand at the end of the game can be counted against him. (See SCORING below.) Thus it is wise to play high point cards as quickly as possible. Sometimes the game — like life — ends suddenly because someone plays the “Game Over” card, which is one of four wild cards in the deck.

STARTING THE GAME

First, each player is given four cards which he does not show to others. Each player may randomly exchange one of his cards with the deck if he feels his hand is too unbalanced. Next a card from the deck is turned over and whoever goes first can play a card of the **same color or number** if he has one. If he does not have such a card he must draw a card from the deck.

THE FOUR WILD CARDS

The four “Life is not fair.” wild cards can only be played when the player has no other card in his hand that is playable. There is a number 2, 3, or 4 on the wild cards, but they are all gray or black in color. A color match is impossible, but a player can place his wild card on top of a 2, 3, or 4 if the numbers match. Three of the wild cards require the next player to draw additional cards, either two, three, or four. The player who has to draw extra cards loses a turn.

After one of the three “Draw . . .” cards is played, the card on the top of the deck is placed on top of the stack of used cards to determine the color and number that is playable.

The special “Game Over!” card has a number two on it and can be played on top of a card of any color which has a two on it. This ends the game even though the player who played it may still have other cards. The cards in his hand are still held against him, but he is rewarded 20 points for ending the game.

The player using one of the wild cards must say, “Life is not fair, but. . .” (quoting the card instruction). If he fails to say the appropriate “Life is not fair, but. . .” line, the card is considered dead and no cards need to be drawn and the game does not end.

SCORING AT THE END

Ordinarily a game ends when one player plays his final card. The player so ending the game is rewarded 20 points, and the other players are awarded or penalized points based on the difference between 10 and the number of points on the cards still held in their hand.

For instance, if the game ends with a player holding a 2 and a 4 card he is rewarded 4 positive points since he was a good steward of most of his cards. The calculation is 10 minus 6 equals positive four.

On the other hand, if a player has a 5 and a 9 card left in his hand at the end of the game his score for the game is 10 minus 14 which is minus four. Thus he is penalized for not being a good steward of his cards.

TALK IT UP, IN A POSITIVE WAY!

Players should talk to one another in a positive way as the game is played. For instance, if a player plays a YELLOW relational card (of any number), someone might say, “I am happy to be your friend.” Likewise, if someone plays a GREEN 2 it would be good to say, “The widow's two mites were precious.”

Sarcastic talk about a player being poor for playing a GREEN 2 or being stupid for playing a BLUE 1 is not allowed. In fact, if something rude or sarcastic is said, the player who is insulted can appeal to the entire group and the player who was offensive may be required to draw two cards.

OTHER WAYS TO USE THE CARDS

See the “Life Is Not Fair” page on the toaministries.com website for other great ways to use the cards.