

## **The Playing Rules of the Thirteen Dragons**

The Thirteen Dragons played with the Dragon Deck is basically the same game as the Thirteen Cards played with the International 52-card pack. This game is best played with four players. Players take turn to be the banker one hand at a time (rotating in a clockwise direction) who in essence plays against the other three players for that particular hand. Often times players decide ahead of time how many banker rounds they will play. Thus one banker round means that there will be four hands played with each player having a chance to be the banker.

After it is decided that which player will start as the banker, the banker will deal all the cards to the players one at a time starting from the player to his left and dealing in a clockwise direction. After all the cards are dealt, each player should have exactly thirteen cards each, hence the name “Thirteen Dragons” of the game.

Each player shall divide his thirteen cards into three groups. The first group shall contain three cards and the second and third group each has five cards. The object of the game is to arrange the cards into the three groups each having a particular “value”. The “value” of a group of cards is synonymous with how good the “hand” is when looked upon as a three-card or a five-card poker hand. Thus for the first group of three cards, the best is a three-of-a kind in Ace (Western Deck) followed by a pair and then the by the highest ranking of the cards making up the group. For the five-card group, the highest ranking is the Royal Flush (Western Deck) followed by the straight flush, four-of-a kind, flush, straight, three-of-a kind, two pairs, one pair and the highest ranking cards etc.

With the exception of the five Feng Shui cards in the Dragon Deck, there is a one-to-one correspondence between the ranking of the groups (or hands) as stipulated above between the Thirteen Cards (Western Deck) and the Thirteen Dragons (Dragon Deck). In the Thirteen Dragons played with the Dragon Deck, the highest ranking hand is five-of-a-kind or 5 Feng Shui cards absent in the Western Deck. Thus the five-of-a kind Feng Shui is the highest ranking five-card hand in the game of Thirteen Dragons. Please refer to the instructions for playing the *Yangtze Hold'em* poker game for the rankings of the five-card hands for both the Western Deck and the Dragon Deck.

***Note that in arranging the three groups of a particular hand, the ranking of the three groups from the lowest(first) to the highest (second and then third) must be strictly complied with. Failure to do so as pointed out by any player results in the automatic loss of three tricks by that player without further comparison of the groups.***

### **The Scoring System for the Thirteen dragons game**

As mentioned earlier, each playing hand of the game has a banker and three players. It is the hand of the banker versus the individual hands of the three players that determines who is winning or losing. Thus the banker compares the three groups of his hand respectively with those of the three players on an individual basis. If the banker wins all three groups from a particular player, then he wins three tricks from that individual player. Before the hands are dealt out to the players, the wager for each trick is normally declared ahead of play. Thus each trick might be arbitrarily determined to be worth five chips each. In the example above, the player loses all three groups to the banker or he loses a total of 15 chips to him. On the other hand, another player might have won one trick from the banker and the banker has to give him five chips. When all the three players' hands are separately compared with that of the banker to determine the win-loss results, that particular hand of the game comes to an end. The banker's role shifts to the player to the left of the last banker and the game continues.

### **Special hands in the scoring system**

When a player possesses an extraordinarily good hand he can win more tricks (normally one trick) from another player every time he wins with that special hand in a particular group. The following are examples of the special hands and their scoring values:

1. Any win resulting from three-of-a-kind hand in the first group is worth three tricks.
2. Any win resulting from a full house hand in the second group is worth two tricks.
3. Any win resulting from a four-of-a-kind hand in the second group is worth 10 tricks.
4. Any win resulting from a straight flush hand in the second group is worth 15 tricks.
5. Any win resulting from a five-of-a-kind hand in the third group is worth 8 tricks.
6. Any win resulting from a straight flush win in the third group is worth 5 tricks.
7. Any win resulting from a four-of-a-kind win in the third group is worth 4 tricks.

### **More special winning hands**

The following are additional special hands that win automatically without comparing the three groups of the hands between two players:

1. Any thirteen cards without the Feng Shui card and any pair is worth 13 tricks.

2. Any three groups comprising nothing but any flush hand (including the first group of three cards) is worth 10 tricks.
3. Any three groups comprising nothing but any straight hand (including the first group of three cards) is worth 10 tricks.

**Note: The above scoring system is only a recommendation or guideline for the game and individual players can decide what the scoring system should be prior to starting the game.**