

Antarctic Hold'em (Solution)

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First, we need to understand the rules of the game, in particular how each hand is scored. The feeder answers are the hand names, which provide semantic clues for the hand rules. We figure out the scoring rules using these clues combined with the provided examples.

Two of the rules are standalone:

- MIXED BAG - The hand must contain one of each suit. Score the sum of the hand
- LOW CARD - Score the value of the lowest card in the hand

The other four rules hint at a rock-paper-scissors relationship between the four suits:

- TASTY SNACK (Penguins beat fish) - 5 times a penguin card minus a fish card
- DEEP WATERS (Fish beat sun) - 4 times a fish card minus a sun card
- SNOWMELT (Sun beats snow) - 3 times a sun card minus a snow card
- FROSTBITE (Snow beats penguins) - 2 times a snow card minus a penguin card

Note that the 6 letters given on the cards are also first letters of the 6 hand names. This sets up a correspondence, assigning a feeder letter to each card.

A 	L	A 	I	A 	E	A 	S
2 	O	2 	T	2 	P	2 	N
3 	W	3 	E	3 	W	3 	A
4 	C	4 	S	4 	A	4 	C
5 	A	5 	N	5 	T	5 	K
6 	R	6 	O	6 	E	6 	M
7 	D	7 	W	7 	R	7 	I
8 	F	8 	M	8 	S	8 	X
9 	R	9 	E	9 	T	9 	E
10 	O	10 	L	10 	A	10 	D
J 	S	J 	T	J 	S	J 	B
Q 	T	Q 	D	Q 	T	Q 	A
K 	B	K 	E	K 	Y	K 	G

At the poker tables, the rules are similar to Texas Hold'em - penguins form the highest scoring 4-card hand from among the 4 communal cards and their one pocket card. Under these rules, each penguin has a unique pocket card that gives the indicated score (and no higher score).

A	2	3	4		40	J	B
					9	3	E
					22	Q	T
					2	2	O
2	3	6	Q		9	5	N
					31	10	A
					50	2	P
					12	6	O
3	7	J	Q		34	4	C
					5	5	K
					12	9	E
					10	5	T
A	9	J	Q		2	2	P
					55	Q	A
					32	A	I
					18	6	R

The answer is **BET ON A POCKET PAIR.**

Author Notes

This was surprisingly the first solved meta in the hunt by any team, with only 1 feeder answer. 6 teams solved with 3 or fewer feeders released. I expected this to be a tough one given that it was hard to guess the game rules without the semantic clues provided by feeders, and the feeders were also needed for the letters of the answer. It turned out that if you did manage to guess the rules early (which none of our testers did), then you could get to a difficult but possible wheel of fortune to get the answer. Not many teams made this leap. I think that having

this long-shot opportunity to solve metas early is a fun consequence of our design of releasing metas at the start of the hunt, and am happy with how it turned out with only a few teams getting it out of sequence.

As more teams solved metas, we saw the expected trend where the meta whose feeders all came out first overtook this one in solve count.