CREATING CONSONANT STRINGS

MAXEY BROOKE
Sweeny, Texas

In Dave Silverman’s list of abstemious words in the February 1972 Kickshaws, the most abstemious was CRWTH (pronounced ‘crooth’). For those of you who don’t know, an abstemious word is one without the vowels.

Ah ha! exclaims the purist. CRWTH is not a word without vowels. In this case, W serves as a vowel!

Ah ha! I answer. Let me quote you Mark Twain: "If you call its tail a leg, how many legs does a dog have? Calling a tail a leg does not make it a leg." Calling W a vowel does not make it a vowel. CRWTH remains a five consonant cluster.

If one CRWTH exists, it is logical to assume that two CRWTHS exist, giving us a six consonant cluster.

My Oxford English Dictionary defines a CRWTH as a three stringed musical instrument of the viol type. Such an instrument cannot exist in a vacuum. Logic insists that there must also be a player, a CRWTHPLAYER in fact, with a seven consonant cluster.

When the CRWTHPLAYER plays his CRWTH for a certain length of time, the strings will become worn and must be replaced. So logic demands the CRWTHPLAYER must go to the music store and buy a new set of CRWTHSTINGS which contains an eight consonant cluster.

At this point we can apply the logic law of the excluded middle by dividing everything in the universe into CRWTHSTINGS and NON-CRWTHSTINGS, a word with a nine consonant cluster.

Logically, this could probably go further, but frankly I’m...