CARD PLAYER
For Those Who PLAY TO WIN!
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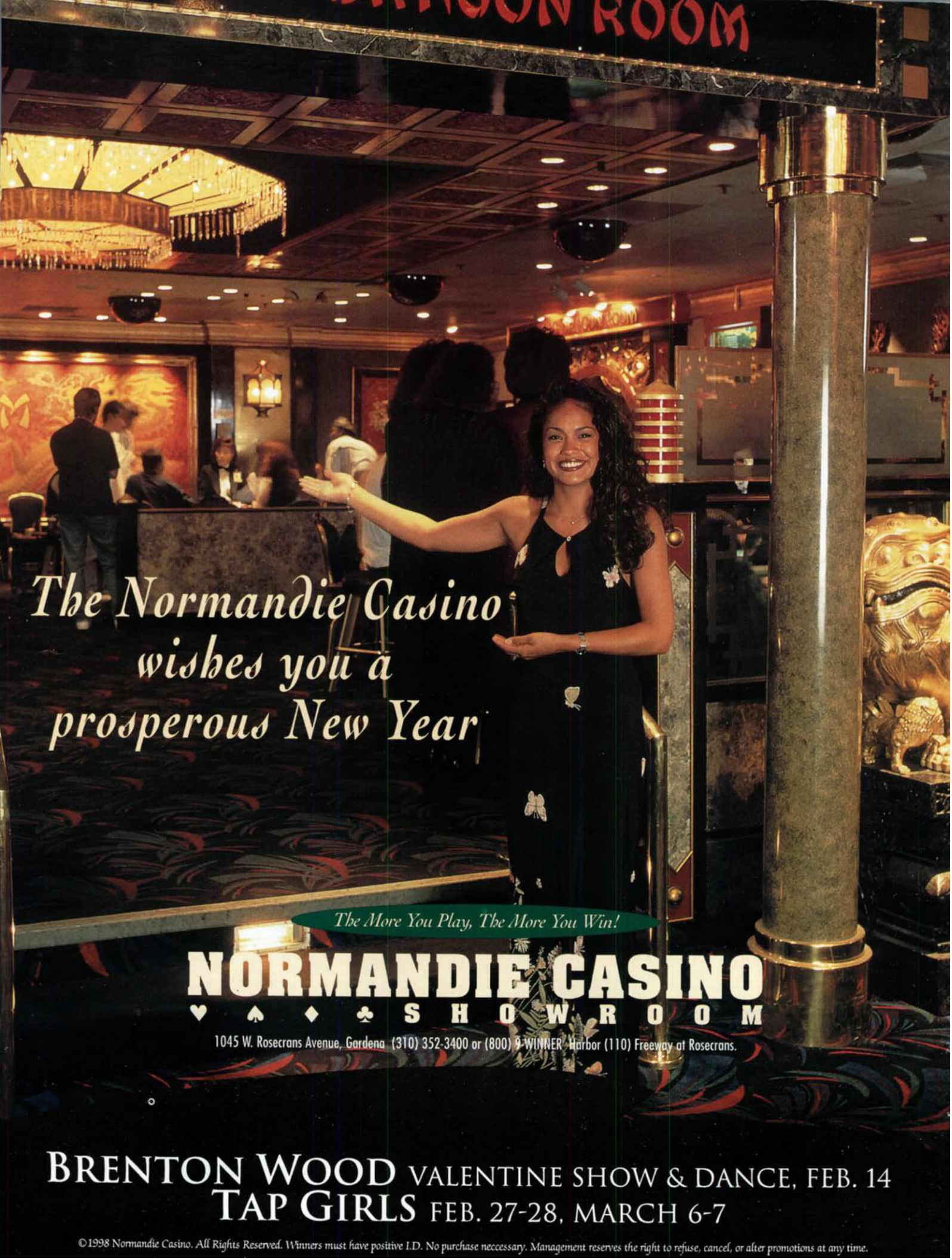

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The Publisher's Pen

Linda Johnson

In the last Publisher's Pen, I addressed some changes that I would like to see implemented in poker rooms in 1998. Here are a few more suggestions for ways to improve the poker industry.

1. Better control of absentee players — Although there are some people who like shorthanded games, most players seem to prefer playing at a full table. Many cardrooms have strict policies and methods of monitoring how long players are allowed to be gone from the table before their chips are picked up and a new player is seated. These policies should be enforced and cardrooms without rules regarding "lobbyers" should adopt them.

It would be considerate if players would be courteous in regard to leaving the table. If you came to play, sit down and play. Don't leave the table excessively by doing such things as running to the sportsbook every few minutes. The worst offender, of course, is the player who goes to eat for an hour or more or lobbies for a long time, then comes back and picks up his chips without playing another hand.

2. An end to excessive whining and bad-beat tales — There is a sign that hangs on the wall of the Oceanside Card Casino that reads "No Sniveling." I would like to see this sign in every cardroom in the world. And why do players insist on telling bad-beat stories? We've all had our share of beats, and having to listen to other people's stories is a beat in itself. (By the way, did you hear the one about ...?)

3. Drawing for the button in a new game — Whenever a new game using a button is started, players should draw a card to see who gets the button. Many cardrooms already do this, and after all, why should the player in the No. 2 seat always start with the big blind?

4. Going all in — Players should not be able to declare themselves all in when they still have chips on the table that are playable. Playing the smallest chip that is used in the game is the guideline for all-in purposes. For example, in a game that uses $1 chips, a player should not be allowed to be all in until he has put his last dollar into the pot. In a game that uses $5 as the smallest chip, players must go all in in increments of $5. This means that a player with six $1 chips remaining must put $5 into the pot before he can be all in. It also means that he can bet only $5, not $6. This stops players from taking shots by betting more when they like their hands, and by declaring themselves all in when they don't.

The poker community is constantly changing. I'm sure that 1998 will be a good year for poker players.

♠ ❤ ♣ ◆

Congratulations to the new Crystal Park President Leo Chu and Vice President John Sutton on the reopening of Crystal Park Casino in Crystal City, California. On opening day, a variety of games and limits up to $15-$30 were spread. Both players and management seemed optimistic about the future of the club.

♠ ❤ ♣ ◆

The first major tournament of the year, the *Carnivale of Poker* at the Rio Suite Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas appears to be a smashing success. Kudos to Tournament Director Carol Trimble and Tournament Coordinator Steve Morrow for assembling a first-class management team to help with their first joint venture. A tremendous turnout of players has yielded impressive prize pools and a large menu of side games and satellites.

Now, let's play poker.◆

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Pictured on the cover are Fantasy Springs Casino Cardroom Manager Robert Nichols (center) and Cardroom Supervisors (left to right) Judy Winter, Mike Sisson, Jim Pierre, Marty Heathershaw, "Snake" Reynolds, and Jackie Fleming. See the story on page 50.

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If You're Not Still a Novice, But Not Yet a Pro, Let Me Increase Your Profit Today

For everything you know, there was a time before you knew it. That's important, and I'm going to repeat it. For every single thing that someone else is stupid for not knowing, there was a muffled moment in your own life when you didn't know it, either. And there are definable instances in our lives before which we are ignorant and after which we are informed.

Why am I telling you this? I don't know. Maybe I should take it back and start this column off in a different direction. Let me think. No, let's just stick with this and see where it leads.

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Somewhere along the poker path — between total ignorance, where we all begin, and total mastery, which still is somewhere beyond the horizon when we die, there is a point where we are now. Look around you. This is your spot on the path. Here, you will rest, and then you will walk forward some more and will become an even better player. This is how it will be for you, but not for everyone. Some people stop along the poker path and can't find their compasses. They are apt to hike backward, revisiting places where their games were much weaker.

But not us. You and I take poker seriously, and because we do, I'm going to reveal two selected lessons that you eventually will learn on the poker path. These are things that you may not have mastered yet. They are, perhaps, ahead of you on the path, but I'm going to transport you directly to those places now. Here are the two things that I believe most medium-skilled players need to work on.

By medium-skilled, I mean someone who is capable of winning a small amount of money, but who often loses or breaks about even for long stretches of time, even for years.

➢➢➢ **1. You don't have to play in that game.** The main reason that most break-even players don't earn a lot of money isn't that they lack the skills to win. The reason is that they aren't applying the skills they have in the right games. You just can't imagine how important game selection is.

Now, a lot of you who know me will say, "Hey, Mad Genius, I see you playing in tough games all the time. I don't see you driving all over the universe trying to find the best poker games." OK, fine. I don't do it. I'm bad. Are you finished with interrupting now? Good. Even I should spend a lot more effort finding good games, but I probably can get by without doing that, because — frankly — the games *all* look good to me. Still, it doesn't make much sense for me to play in a game in which I expect to average $50 an hour if there's a game in which I can expect to average $500 an hour. Come to think of it, I'll work on this aspect of my game this year. That's powerful advice when I see it typed right in front of me.

Anyway, about *you*. If you're no longer a novice, but not a professional player, game selection may be the key to winning money. Without using any selection, you'll probably lose dramatically. By using selection moderately, you'll probably lose a little or break even. But by using game selection prudently and consistently, you probably will be a winner from now on.

Suppose that you were in business and wanted to set up shop. It's been said of businesses that cater to the public that the three main advantages you can have are location, location, and

location. Fine. So, what does this have to do with poker? Plenty. If you're trying to earn money at poker, you *are* a business. But you don't have a location, right? Sure you do. In poker, your business location is wherever the game is. So, unlike opening a storefront and carefully choosing a location that will be profitable over the years, in poker, you have the advantage of being able to select your location again and *again* every time that you choose to play.

A good poker location simply is one with weak players who are enjoying the game. Good signs are a lot of friendly talk and some laughter. Silence generally is a sign of a serious game among serious opponents who are not planning to giggle and give you their money gladly. Avoid silence.

When you have a choice of games, choose the one that has the weaker and looser players. You want lots of callers in the pots and not too many raisers. It's much easier to win from players who call too often but don't raise when they have the advantage. These loose but timid players are the ones you should seek.

But the main part of this secret is: *You don't have to play at all.* If you're a top professional player, you can sit in the toughest games without losing significantly. If you're an average player, though, and you take my advice to be more selective, there's something that you must know. You are going to lose money in most tough games; you're just not good enough yet to handle them. There may come a day when you will be good enough, but that day is not now. Now is when you need to accumulate a bankroll, and you can do this only by avoiding the games in which you will lose.

So, simply, always remember that location is important in your poker business, and that you don't have to play *today*. Unlike that shop owner who must open his door day after day no matter what, you won't harm your future profit if you take off and go fishing.

➢➢➢ **2. Don't let losing bother you.** Sure, you've heard me talk about this before. I often have said that the main key to poker success is simply to play your best game all the time. The difference between playing your best game *all* the time and *most* of the time is so monumental that I don't think you'd believe me if I tried to give dollar examples.

Let me just say that most players who lose a little money overall at poker would be significant lifelong winners if they simply played their best game all the time — but they don't. Losing can be frustrating, and players tend to become desperate in an attempt to get even or return to their highest level of profit. Players who lose hands that they expected to win often become mentally unstable — temporarily, I mean. They play too many hands; they call bets unwisely; and they bluff too often and at the wrong times.

These things tend to turn moderate losses into huge losses. Players need to believe that the money they're adding to the loss is as important as other money. It doesn't feel the same. Most smaller-limit players who lose $387 do not feel any more damaged than they would have had they lost $327. That extra $60 seems to disappear and have no significance, and as a consequence, they don't play the same critical game of poker that they would have had they been losing $5. At that point, cashing out a $5 loser or cashing out a $55 winner *does* make a measurable difference to them. And it's the same $60, just as real and just as spendable.

Players who have advanced down the poker path, but who are not yet winners, need to realize that their main enemy is likely to be themselves. How can I talk in such general terms about a whole group of break-even and small-losing players? It's easy. What I'm saying is true for almost every single member of that enormous group of players. That's why I said it, and I'm glad that I did.

I've talked about the *Threshold of Misery* at my seminars. This is what you cross when you've lost more than what you envisioned was likely in a poker session. Beyond the Threshold of Misery lies a land of danger, where you can add to your disaster without feeling any more agony. That's because your capacity for agony has been maximized. Anything added is unfelt.

People will argue that trimming $60 off that $387 loss that I mentioned isn't as good as *winning* $60. They'll tell you that if you *win* $60, you can spend it. But you can spend the other $60, too. In fact, it's really the same thing — exactly the same thing. That's right, it's not *almost* the same thing, or the same thing in some theoretical sense, but *exactly* the same thing. It's just as real and just as spendable.

Spendable? How can you spend money that you don't have? But, my friend, you *do* have it. You don't believe it? Let's pretend that you lost that $387 instead of the $327 that you might have lost had you continued to play your best game. Now, you're heading for home feeling battered, but I walk up to you and say, "Here. I think that you could have done a little better tonight, so here's $60." I hand you three $20 bills and disappear beyond the door before you can react.

"I can't believe this," you mumble aloud. "The Mad Genius just handed me $60 for free. I think that I'll go buy me one of those instant cameras." But then, it dawns on you that you could have done the same thing yourself. You could have lost $327 instead, and then you could have spent your own $60 on the instant camera. Hey, I guess that money *won* and money *not lost* are really the same, you realize.

OK, so it's not going to happen. I'm not going to give you $60, and you don't have any guarantee that you would have saved exactly $60 if you'd played properly. It's just an estimate. But you get the point, right?

Here's another thing: If you want to start winning today, stop letting your losses bother you. If you play your best game, losses *won't* bother you, because you won't have yourself to blame. It's easy to shrug off a loss if you've done everything that you're supposed to do. It's not so easy to shrug it off if you caused it or added to it.

➢➢➢ **Make it a new poker lifestyle.** I want you to win, and there are only two things that I'm asking you to do for me:

1. Make game selection your top priority, starting now — and remember, you don't have to play today.

2. Don't let losing bother you — and it probably won't, unless you neglectfully add to your own losses.

If you're anywhere along the main part of the poker path — not a novice and not a pro — these two things can bring you profit quite suddenly. You'll see.◆

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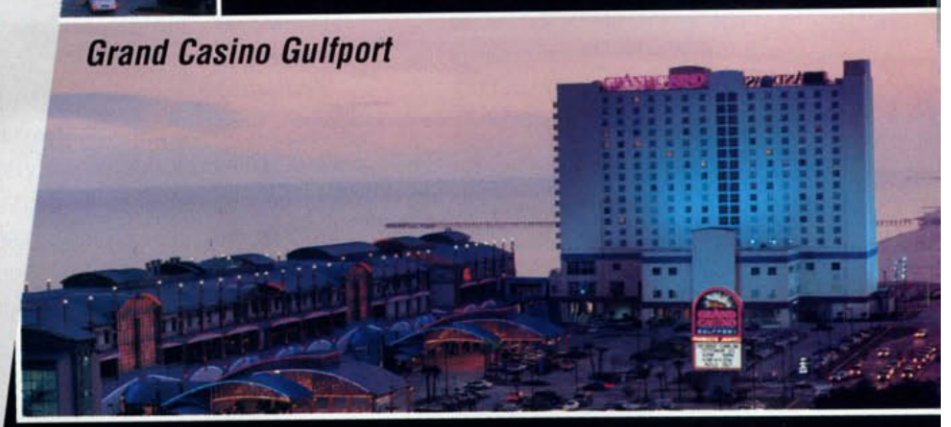

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REAL POKER

Roy Cooke

Perception, Deception, Respect, and Results

I've written before about the pretty young woman who is traveling the poker circuit and making a small living in the middle-limit poker games. She and her boyfriend have come back to Vegas from California after a brief stop in their home state of Arkansas, and they're getting by. You may remember that she considers herself to be a student of the game, and that it is personally important to her that other players respect her ability. She looks like what she is — a sweet, kind young woman with good values. But the environment and frustrations of the poker world have made her a little bitter, and have given her a hard edge that she didn't have before.

That desire for respect has been part of her poker problem. As an attractive, sweet-looking person, she has certain tools available at the poker table that other players don't have. These tools relate to the other players' perceptions of her as a player.

Female players, especially sweet-looking, attractive female players, can exploit cultural tendencies in male players. There are certain men who consciously or subconsciously can't handle being beaten by a woman. They press harder against women players than they do against other men, run uphill more, and take hands farther. They just can't tolerate it when a woman takes them down. A smart woman will identify this tendency, and will use the philosophy of the Japanese martial art Aikido, and will let these players beat themselves.

Other men have a different conscious or subconscious tendency when playing against women. They have been taught from childhood that women are the weaker, fairer sex, and that it is wrong to beat up on them. This tendency leads many men to soft-play against women. They don't check-raise as often, don't bluff as much, and are less inclined to knuckle down when heads up. Against this kind of player, my young friend is better off taking marginal hands farther, because she doesn't have to fear paying for it.

And then there is the sex issue. To some men, attractive women are sex objects. They will do anything to impress a pretty young woman. Even when there's virtually no chance of bedding a woman, there always is the tiniest flicker of hope in these men that affects their play. It puts more swagger into their game and they definitely go out of their way to impress the woman without hurting her. This, too, can be exploited. Even men can exploit it — getting attractive dealers or cocktail waitresses interacting with the table can have a profoundly positive effect on the mood and tempo of the game.

These all are ways that my friend can exploit opponents at the table. You'll notice that none of them have much to do with winning the respect that she so desires from the other players, but they sure have something to do with winning the chips. She, like other female players, should take advantage of one of the most important components of the game in determining her style of play — table image. Used correctly, her value of aggression generally is going to be lower. She is going to find herself paid off more but raised less, and she needs to adjust her game accordingly.

Of course, this part of the game doesn't apply to women only. How

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people play against you is directly related to how they perceive you. You may remember Full-Value Al, of whom I've written. He has a style of play that calls for putting in lots of volume with the worst of it or only marginally the best of it. This style and his personality mean that his game is built around the idea of confusing his opponents. Thus, they have a tendency to call when perhaps they should fold — and Al gets his full value.

Then there's my best friend/worst student from Florida. He plays a lot of hands, does a lot of three-betting, and makes a lot of moves and jukes. Like Al and my young woman friend, he's going to get run down a lot. For him, this is a special problem, because he has a hole in his game the size of the Grand Canyon. If you run him down several times, he has a tendency — actually, more than a tendency — to go on stone-cold screaming tilt.

While playing with him on a gaming cruise ship in Florida, I saw an example of this. In an hour, he leaked back a $600 win, losing four consecutive pots in which he'd flopped top pair with top kicker or better to opponents who had flopped no pair or no draw, but who had caught runner-runner to beat him. He was close to even and was a little antsy and cranky. The boat was about to return from international waters, and the poker room manager had just announced, "Last three hands."

My friend was one off the button. The only good player in the game had just gotten up, protecting a $200 win. The field mucked to the player to my friend's right, a weak-loose dealer who had no chance in the game, who limped. My friend looked down to see 10-8 offsuit and raised — not a play I liked. Everyone mucked but the limper. When the flop came 8♦ 8♥ 7♣, my friend looked like a hero. The player/dealer checked and my friend bet. The turn card was the 6♠. His opponent checked, my friend bet, and he got check-raised. He thought for a minute, and then three-bet the pot. When he was flat called, he wasn't worried about a straight or a full house, but he was concerned about an eight with a better kicker. The river brought a five. The limper led and my friend reluctantly paid him off. There was a four-straight on the board — any nine or four beat him. He didn't think that he had a winner, but he wasn't laying down trips, either.

His opponent turned over the 4♠ 3♠. He had caught runner-runner with a river gutshot to make the appropriately named idiot end of the straight. Once again, his opponent had flopped no pair and no draw and had caught runner-runner to beat him.

My friend lost it and went totally nuts. He started muttering to himself, and cashed out a $40 loser for the five-hour session. Then, he went off on the player about how badly he played, what an idiot he was, and how he had cost himself a lifetime in tips. What did the dealer think he was doing, making a move in a spot like that with virtually no outs? And on and on and on. My friend was making quite a fool of himself. Criticizing the bad play of opponents is the worst play in poker. He knows better. He really is a genuinely nice guy, but you sure couldn't tell it at that moment.

Of course, he had brought it upon himself. He is extremely aggressive in a spot like that. During his tirade, the player/dealer shrugged and said, "I thought that you had ace high or something and would lay it down." My friend's style of play invites that kind of action. People are going to call against him when they should fold, and that means that he's going to get a lot of bets in with the best of it, but also is going to get run down a lot. That's not a great overall strategy for a guy who's prone to tilt. The best news for my friend was that the ship was coming into port and the night was over. He was in a perfect frame of mind for his opponents to exploit his emotional weaknesses and make him go off for thousands.

Like my young woman friend, like Full-Value Al, and like you, my Florida friend needs to learn that you cannot force people to react the way that you want them to. You have to take the image that you have, manipulate it as best you can, and work with it to get the results that you want. And it's not about winning respect. It's about winning chips.◆

Editor's note: Roy Cooke played poker professionally for 16 years. He currently owns and operates a real estate business in Las Vegas. Please see his ad on page 50.



Tom McEvoy's Tournament Talk



Home for the Holidays After Poker and Politics

"There's no place like home for the holidays" goes the Christmas song that you hear high school choirs singing in the malls during the yuletide season. After being on the road for more than two months of intensive tournament action, I can verify the truth of that line. I recently returned from the East Coast to my home in Las Vegas just in time to celebrate the holidays with my family and friends. Of course, I also met some old friends on the East Coast, one of whom is Dino Moustakis, who won the $500 no-limit hold'em event at Foxwoods. Using his fine sense of timing and some adroit play, Moustakis overcame his severe sight handicap to edge out his opponents. A tip of the hat to this fine East Coast player.

After the tournament, I took the three-hour bus ride to New York City, where I spent a few days visiting my daughter Melanie, who works in the offices of the Democratic party in the Big Apple. She introduced me to a dynamic lady and master politician, Ruth Messinger, who headed up the Democratic ticket in the recent mayoral election.

Politics and poker may seem to be worlds apart, but sometimes I wonder. There are times when a politician has to play his cards just right to steal votes away from his opponent, and there are times when a poker player has to make some political maneuvers at the table to win a pot. For example, at Foxwoods, where the fields for the seven-card stud events were exceptionally large, the better stud players probably stole some pots in the late stages of the tournaments to win extra chips from their opponents.

Two types of steals that you can try in the late stage of seven-card stud tournaments are the ante steal and the delayed steal. The antes usually are quite high in the late stage, making it worth taking the extra risk to pick up a few pots against tight players. For example, suppose that you have a king showing with an A-8 in the hole. Your king is the highest upcard and all of your cards are live. No one has called the forced low-card bring-in, and only one or two other players are yet to act after you. This is a prime opportunity to try an ante steal. Fire in a bet. Under the best of circumstances, everyone will fold and you will pull in the antes to build your stack.

But suppose that you get called by an opponent with a four showing. What should you do on fourth street when he catches what appears to be a bad card (a nine, for example) and you catch a scary-looking card such as a jack or 10 (which doesn't help you)? Fire a bet with your two high upcards in hope of picking up the pot.

If your opponent again calls with a raggedy front like 9-4, you are faced





with a judgment call as to what to do on fifth street. If you catch another scare card such as a queen (giving you an inside-straight draw), and he catches a random seven, for instance, go ahead and bet again. If he calls you this time — or worse yet, if he raises — you must seriously evaluate your next move. If he raises, you are in a very bad situation with only an inside-straight draw against a hand that probably has a minimum of one big pair, and possibly two pair or even trips. Your adversary would have to be very brave to put in a total bluff on fifth street with his ragged boardcards against your strong front.

Now, suppose that he catches a suited connector to his doorcard on fifth street and you catch a bad card, such as a deuce or trey. You must check to him, hope for a free card, and pass if he bets. In this situation, it makes no sense to continue representing strength that you don't have.

Another type of late-action steal is the delayed steal. When you're playing heads up against an aggressive opponent, you occasionally can limp in with the higher upcard and "nothing" in the hole. You're hoping to catch a threatening-looking card, such as a suited connector or a facecard, on fourth street so that you can bet into him on the strength of your board. Naturally, this play will work better if he catches a blank or a nonthreatening card.

If you have been making frequent raises against the low card, the delayed steal often will prevent your opponent from making too many resteals against your third-street raises. By limping in on third street rather than raising his low card, you may create some confusion in his mind regarding the strength of your hand. For example, if I have a 10 showing against the low card's deuce or trey, I sometimes will limp in rather than raise him. Then, if I catch a facecard on fourth street and he catches an eight or some other nonthreatening card, I will bet into him, which probably will allow me to steal the pot.

Seven-card stud is a game of strong-looking boards. Capitalize on them when you get them, but be reluctant to play *against* them in the late stage of a tournament, especially against several opponents. You need a very strong hand to continue. Even if you suspect that a player is on a bluff or semibluff, if he catches one or two powerful-looking facecards to go with the unmatched one he already has, you're taking too much of a risk to continue playing hands such as medium pairs, for example. Remember that the best players in the world get bluffed more frequently than their weaker compatriots, because they are more capable of making a big laydown.

For now, I'm laying down politics and poker in favor of a warm fireplace and a good Stephen King novel. I wish you all a great '98, and I hope to see you in the winner's circle many, many times.◆

Editor's note: Do you have a tournament question or a play-by-play analysis? Send your questions to Tom McEvoy c/o Card Player, or to his E-mail address: pokerplus@powernet.net.

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Puggy Pearson

Walter Clyde "Puggy" Pearson is a living legend in the gambling world. He is a former world poker champion and a member of the Poker Hall of Fame. He is proud to be known as "the world's greatest scuffler."

To become a legend, you must be widely known, widely acclaimed, and unique in character. To be a gambling legend, you must be a successful longtime high roller, and one about whom stories abound. Certainly, Puggy ranks at the top of the list in all of these categories.

Puggy's reputation at the poker table, however, is not the greatest, and deservedly so. He himself is not proud of the way that he "loses it" at times with the dealers. Sadly, this negative image is all that many people see, but there is a lot more to Puggy than meets the eye.

For example, when he hears about a dealer's kid who is sick, or a dealer's or player's spouse who has died, he is the first person in line to offer help. I've seen him on numerous occasions literally take his hat off and go around the poker room collecting money for those in need of help. He considers all gamblers to be family, and never has missed a gambler's funeral or has failed to offer assistance to his family. He also has helped out many gamblers who have gone broke by lending them money to get back into action. So, underneath that hard head of his, he is a teddy bear with a warm heart who is a soft touch for those who need help.

Puggy was born in the hills of Tennessee nearly 70 years ago. (His birthday is Jan. 29.) He came from a large, poor family ("We had to move every time the rent came due.") and dropped out of school at a young age. (Once, at a roast for Puggy, a speaker quipped, "Puggy's senior year was the fourth grade.") His education was truly the school of hard knocks.



Puggy Pearson (left) and Mike Sexton

After two hitches in the Navy, Puggy set out to be the world's greatest gambler. He moved to Las Vegas in 1961, and for 25 years, he played in the biggest poker games in town against the greatest players in the world, and consistently cashed out racks of chips. But poker isn't Puggy's only claim to fame. His talent at pool, gin rummy, and golf are extraordinary. (And, unlike most of us, the more that he bets, the better he plays!)

I probably have played more poker and golf with Puggy in the past 10 years than anyone else. (Ironically, unlike poker, Puggy has the greatest temperament on a golf course of anyone I have ever seen.) Just thinking about Puggy and golf makes me smile. The golf stories that you might have heard about Puggy — that he never has had a bad lie in 20 years, never has lost a golf ball, or, just coincidentally, always has had the fastest cart on the golf course (all cart boys love Puggy) — are mostly untrue, but everyone has golf stories about Puggy. One of my favorites occurred about five years ago in Las Vegas.

Our foursome consisted of Puggy, Tommy Fischer, a professional golfer from the senior tour, and me. (The pro had finished in the top 10 on the money list for five consecutive years at that time, and was giving Puggy four strokes a side.) That day, Puggy hit only three greens in regulation, yet got the ball up and down on virtually every hole. He shot 75 and beat the pro for $7,000.

Back in the clubhouse, as the pro was writing out Puggy's check, he said, "Puggy, I've played golf all over the world for more than 30 years with the greatest golfers who ever lived, and I can tell you, none of them can chip and putt like you do." Puggy broke into a huge grin, reached across the table and picked up his check, wiggled that cigar of his, and said, "You should have seen me 10 years ago!"

Another testament to Puggy's putting ability came up in a discussion about the greatest putter in the world during a high-stakes poker game. The following question was posed: "If you had to choose someone to make a 10-foot putt, and if he missed it, you would be killed, who would you choose to putt it?" Well, the first player chose Jack Nicklaus, the next guy took Ben Crenshaw, and then it was Doyle Brunson's turn. Without hesitation, he said, "Puggy Pearson." As everyone stared at Doyle, he emphatically continued, "That's right! Puggy Pearson. He's the greatest pressure putter I've ever seen. I'll tell you one thing about Puggy — he won't dog it. He might not make it, but you'll get a good roll for your life."

Puggy recently was a guest on a radio talk show, and the host asked what advice he

Continued on page 100

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DAVID SKLANSKY

FIGHTING FUZZY THINKING

Let's say that you won $55,000 in 1997. Does that mean that you can count on winning that kind of money year in and year out, or that you possibly were just lucky? I have discovered an *extremely simple* way of dealing with this question, while still being quite accurate. Though based on more esoteric mathematics, we do not need to know it in order to apply this method.

In a nutshell, if you want to get a pretty good idea of how accurate your results are to date as far as predicting the future is concerned, just follow these simple steps:

1 Make note of your total results (hopefully, in the plus column).

2 Count the number of sessions that you played to achieve these results. (If you played some very short sessions, you should count them as a half-session or less. If you played some very long sessions, count them as two.)

3 Estimate the largest swing that you can expect to have in a typical session. For instance, your estimate for $10-$20 hold'em might be $1,200. For the purposes of this calculation, you should ignore fluky huge wins or losses that might occur once a year. You also should not count an especially large swing that occasionally would result after an extremely long session.

4 Multiply the normal large swing for a typical session by the *square root* of the number of sessions that you played. This number is (approximately) the amount that your actual results may be off from your true long-term results.

Thus, in the $10-$20 example given, if your largest one-day swing is about $1,200, your total results for 361 days could be off by as much as $1,200 x 19 = $22,800 (19 is the square root of 361). If you won that $55,000 for the year playing $10-$20 almost every day, it is conceivable that you really rated to win as little as $32,200.

In other words, all you need do is multiply a typical large one-session swing by the square root of the number of sessions to see how far off your actual results may be from what you really can expect to win. If one day can swing $500 from normal, four days can swing $1,000, 16 days can swing $2,000; 36 days can swing $3,000, and so on.

This method, once again, isn't perfect, but it's close — and it's a heck of a lot easier.◆

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Major Tournament Schedule

Event #	Date	Event
	Sunday, March 8	Open for Satellites at Noon
1	Monday, March 9	$540 Poker Dealers World Championship, Limit Hold'em
2	Tuesday, March 10	$540 Limit Hold'em
3	Wednesday, March 11	$540 No Limit Hold'em
4	Thursday, March 12	$540 Omaha High-Low
5	Friday, March 13	$540 7-Card Stud High-Lo
6	Saturday, March 14	$540 Limit Hold'em
7	Sunday, March 15	$540 Pot-Limit Hold'em
8	Monday, March 16	$540 Pot-Limit Omaha w/t
9	Tuesday, March 17	$540 7-Card Stud
10	Wednesday, March 18	$540 No-Limit Hold'em w/
11	Thursday, March 19	$540 Omaha High
12	Friday, March 20	$540 Razz
13	Saturday, March 21	$540 Limit Hold'em Shoot
14	Sunday, March 22	$540 Low Ball
15	Monday, March 23	$540 1/2 Hold'em – 1/2 C
16	Tuesday, March 24	$1,080 7-Card Stud
17	Wednesday, March 25	$1,080 7-Card Stud High-
18	Thursday, March 26	$1,080 Omaha High-Low
19	Friday, March 27	$1,080 No Limit Hold'em
20	Saturday, March 28	$1,080 Limit Hold'em
21	Sunday, March 29	$1,080 Pot-Limit Hold'em
22	Monday, March 30	$1,080 Pot-Limit Omaha
23	Tuesday, March 31	$540 Limit Hold'em
24	Wednesday, April 1	$5,080 Championsh
	Thursday, April 2	No-Limit Final

All Tournaments start at 1:00 p.m. sharp

Evening Tournament Schedule

All tournaments (except for the ladies events) are $100 + 20 and have one optional re-buy. Ladies events are $200 + 25 with no re-buys.

Event #	Date	Event
1	Tuesday, March 10	Limit Hold'em
2	Wednesday, March 11	No-Limit Hold'em
		Limit Hold'em
		No-Limit Hold'em
		Limit Hold'em
		No-Limit Hold'em
		Omaha High-Low
		Limit Hold'em
		Ladies 7-Card Stud
		Limit Hold'em
		No-Limit Hold'em
		Limit Hold'em
		No-Limit Hold'em
		Omaha High-Low
		Limit Hold'em
		Ladies Hold'em
		Limit Hold'em
		No-Limit Hold'em
		Limit Hold'em
		No-Limit Hold'em
21	Monday, March 30	Omaha High-Low

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Lou Krieger ON STRATEGY

New Year's Resolutions, 1998

Last December, I offered my annual New Year's resolutions, and invited readers "...to accompany me by adopting any of my resolutions as your own." Well, 1997 is nearly history, and it's time for my annual report card and self-assessment, along with a listing of some things I'd like to improve on next year.

Learn Another Game (Grade: B) — Last year, I gave myself a grade of C–, but this year I made some progress and rated myself a B. At this juncture, I've played enough seven-card stud/8 to write a few articles about it, and placed in the money in three of the five seven-card stud/8 tourneys I entered in 1997. Nevertheless, I'm far from being an expert at this game, and each time that I sit down to play, it's a learning experience. Since there seems to be a burgeoning interest in seven-card stud/8, it is a lot easier to find opportunities to play than in years past. In the Los Angeles area, $20-$40 seems to be the game of choice. This makes for expensive lessons, but it quickly teaches one to err on the side of caution — particularly when uncomfortably ensconced in a pack with a few other players, only to be jammed by another opponent who has a lock on his side. When you find yourself *guessing* whether you will win your side, you have no business in the pot.

I planned to play enough Omaha/8 to feel like a favorite in that game also, but there just are not many Omaha/8 games to be found in the Los Angeles area. I entered two tournaments with mixed results. I finished fourth in one of them, but was eliminated early and easily in the other. I still have a lot to learn about Omaha/8, so don't look for any pearls of wisdom from me for quite some time. I'm just not all that fond of the game. Hand selection seems to be the area of strategic demarcation that separates winners from also-rans. In spite of my limited experience, I've discovered that lots of players love this game because with four cards in their hand, they usually can find some reason to see the flop. Actually, I've found just the opposite to be true. If the starting cards don't coordinate, there's no reason to see the flop, and even when your starting cards look very promising, I believe that there's seldom much of a reason to toss in a preflop raise. No matter how many times I play this game, and regardless of how disciplined I like to consider myself, when eliminated from tournaments, I usually can trace it back to getting involved — and trapped — in a hand that I should have avoided in the first place. My new ground rule for Omaha/8 is this: If I even begin to question whether or not I have a playable hand, I don't play!

For 1998, I resolve to continue playing seven-card stud/8, to continue improving at it, and to continue writing about it in this column. I also resolve to play more Omaha/8, providing that there are games to be played in the Los Angeles area. I also resolve to play more pot-limit poker during 1998. My sole experiences with pot-limit were a few tournaments, and a small pot-limit game at BARGE. I enjoyed those games, and will look for situations in which I can play — and learn — while not hurting myself too badly in the process. I'll keep you apprised of my progress.

Never Go On Tilt; Never Play Less Than My Best (Grade: B+) — This is a recurring resolution — as it was last year, as it is this year, and as it will be in future years. While I believe that I've achieved my personal goal of not going on tilt, there were times during the year when I played at less than my best. While my emotions were under control, I know that I don't make good decisions when I'm tired. It's tough enough to beat this game when you are at your best, but when running on empty, or near it, it's impossible. When not at my best in 1998, I resolve to get up, get away from the table, and return to play another day.

Narrow the Target (Grade: B) — You can't provide your opponents a big target at which to shoot and expect to win very much money. Narrowing the target is another way of saying that taking the worst of it too often puts too much money at risk in unfavorable situations.

I did a good job of narrowing the target in 1997, but I could have done better — hence, a grade of B, not A. I need to become even more selective about the hands I play, and this selectivity should be more situationally *dependent*. Calling in middle position with suited connectors like 9♣ 8♣ can be a good play or a bad one. If you're in a game in which pots are routinely raised, this is not nearly as good a hand as it is in a game in which raising is rare, for two reasons. First, raising inhibits the number of callers who have yet to act. There are lots of situations in which players will call for one bet, but will release their hand

if forced to cold-call a raise. Second, while these kinds of hands have the potential of becoming very big hands, it doesn't happen all that frequently. To justify an investment in speculative hands like these, you should be able to see the flop for a bargain price, not a premium. It's also a good idea to have a full complement of opponents, to ensure that you'll get paid off handsomely when you're lucky enough to make a big hand.

Face it, a pair of aces is an investment; a hand like 9♣ 8♣ is speculation, pure and simple. If you are going to take a flyer, always make sure the rewards justify the risk. For 1998, I resolve to limit the number of times that I put myself in speculative situations in which the risk outweighs the reward.

Model Successful Behavior and Play (Grade: A) — This, too, is a continuing resolution — and is one that doesn't give me too much trouble. I gave myself an A last year and an A this year as well. In fact, I won't settle for less than this. This may be a bit easier for me than it is for most players. As a columnist for this magazine and as an author of two poker books, I'm fairly well-known and believe that I have a certain image to uphold. Nevertheless, that doesn't seem to have deterred highly paid professional athletes, other celebrities, and even some well-known poker players from making complete asses of themselves in public. But shame and public humiliation are two things that I can live without, and you'll never see me throw cards, insult dealers, or otherwise embarrass myself in casinos or public cardrooms. For 1998, I resolve to continue to maintain a high standard of personal behavior and ethical conduct. I will model my behavior and playing style after players I admire — those who are professionals in their approach to the game, who do not curse, throw cards, or insult dealers or fellow players, and who play well and are winning players throughout their careers. I will watch them play, will read their books, will learn from them, and will attempt to discern the secrets of their success, in hope that some of it will rub off on me.

Keep in Touch (Grade: A) — In 1996, I answered letters from 114 readers; that was every letter that I received. I resolved to do so again in 1997. Last year, I connected to the Internet, and considering E-mails along with letters, I corresponded with more than 1,000 players. I am regularly in touch with players in Australia, Canada, England, Switzerland, and South America, and I love it. As long as these fingers can dance along my keyboard, I'll respond to every E-mail and letter I receive.

I wish you well in the new year, and hope that 1998 brings your wishes to your doorstep — but I rather suspect that we'll have to go and search them out for ourselves.◆

My new book, More Hold'em Excellence: A Winner for Life, now is available. Personally autographed copies are available through the publisher, B and F Enterprises at (702) 798-6361. If you'd just as soon have an unsigned copy, you also can order through Card Player, Gambler's Book Club, ConJelCo (on-line), or any of the other usual sources. My first book, Hold'em Excellence: From Beginner to Winner, currently is in its fourth printing, and is available at gaming bookstores or through Card Player.

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A Nonsmoker's Lament
Part II — Where There is Smoke, There is a Game

By Alan Nakamura

Editor's note: This is the second of a three-part article by a nonsmoker. In the spirit of providing "equal time," Card Player invites anyone with opposing viewpoints to submit an article for publication consideration.

In Part I of this three-part article, I wrote about my fantasy poker game with public smokers, but this article, Part II, is reality.

After playing in public cardrooms throughout the country for two decades, I have found that more than one game is played at the poker table. One of the most arcane is the one played by creatures recognizable to us by the fire in front of their faces — smokers. These smokers are making the following social statement: "I am knowingly and selfishly engaging in my pleasurable addiction at the expense of your health and comfort." However, they do all that they can to appear sympathetic to our discomfort by playing *the game*.

Here are a few outstanding examples of the comments I have heard from the players of this *game* after I have expressed *my* discomfort. I also have included one of my typical counters to these feeble attempts at consolation:

1. You shouldn't come here if you don't like smoke.



My response: No, you shouldn't come here if you smoke. This is a poker club, not a smoker club.

2. I'm sorry.

My response: No you aren't; otherwise, you wouldn't be smoking.

3. I'm sorry, I didn't know that you don't like smoke.

My response (with an apologetic smile after spitting on his face): I'm sorry, I didn't know that you don't like spit.

4. It's not my fault. I can't help it that the air is blowing your way (pleading whine included).

My response (with a helpless look after grabbing a handful of coleslaw from my lunch plate and tossing it onto his head): It's not my fault. I can't help it that gravity is pulling your way.

5. Why don't you buy a fan?

My response (with a sympathetic smile after pouring water on his head): Why don't you buy an umbrella?

Note: In reality, smokers should buy the fans. They should bear the full burden of protecting others from their addiction, just as dog owners should bear the burden of purchasing and using pooper-scoopers for their messy dogs. It's amusing how smokers have the victims conned into fronting the expense for defending themselves against the smokers' fumes.

6. Do you smoke?

My response: Do I look stupid?

Yes, believe it or not, these are some of the actual inane comments made by smokers to me at the poker table. Maybe you have heard some of them. Are you surprised? Are my responses harsh?

Think about it. Smokers are dispensing a well-known carcinogen in our immediate vicinity for no other purpose than their personal gratification — something that they "sensibly" could do at home without forcing our public participation. The fact that they don't do the "sensible" thing is a testament to their blatant and arrogant lack of consideration.

Keep in mind that water, spittle, and coleslaw have yet to be proven detrimental to one's health when applied to the surface of one's body to the same degree that smoke is applied to the interior of our bodies. I believe that since we are within our rights to counter one harm with an equal one, we certainly have the right to do so with a lessor one. (That is, if someone attacks us with a knife, no one can fault us for using mace.)

The fact that people tolerate smoking in public places defies logic completely. It merely shows the power of social conditioning when someone gains a foothold by starting a trend that no one objects to initially and then that trend becomes established as accepted despite its lack of sensibility. This also can be observed with customs such as sending Christmas cards, giving children candy on Halloween, tipping, wearing high heels, emergency/war taxes that remain in effect after the emergency/war is over, the use of pesti-

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cides, and so on.

Aside from the fact that the detrimental effects of cigarette smoke are well established, think about how ridiculous it is to allow people to have a burning object among a crowd of people. People jump out of multistory buildings to get away from smoke inhalation. If I build a small campfire in front of me at a poker table, will the players silently tolerate it? If I bring my pet skunk to the table, will players and management silently tolerate *that*?

Public smokers are a type of social vermin similar to people with AIDS who knowingly have sex with others for their selfish personal pleasure while ignoring the implications of transmitting a harmful substance in doing so.

However, smokers will do anything to get others to passively accept their abusive behavior, just as a child will try to placate you by making a cute face when he feels guilty about something he's done wrong. This is another facet of *the game*. Subsequently, I have noticed that smokers will act overtly friendly, or will tell a few extra jokes, or will try to become buddies with their neighbors before lighting up.

The fact that casino management condones smoking is irrelevant as a justification, since it assumes a degree of intelligence associated with this position that is unwarranted. Smokers smoke arrogantly under this "color of authority" as though it gives them the "right" to do something wrong. If the authority under which they act is flawed, then their actions also are flawed.

Nevertheless, card clubs play an integral role in maintaining *the game*. Note how they have spent so much effort to "clean up" the game of poker by the use of dealers, floormen, cameras, and rule books, yet have done nothing substantial to clean up the mess caused by smoking. Despite all of the ubiquitous data available against cigarette smoke, they still are "behind the times" in modernizing this aspect of the casino environment. The classic association of poker games with smoke is illogical, archaic, and unnecessary.

Some clubs make a big deal of their new ventilation systems as a panacea to nonsmokers, but this is a farcical attempt, since it does nothing to address the drift smoke from a nearby smoker that wafts into a neighbor's face. This is merely another aspect of *the game*.

Some clubs have a conspicuous sign banning pipes and cigars due to "customer request," but this, again, is another try at *the game*. Did the writer forget to include cigarettes on the sign? Aren't there at least as many public objections to cigarette smoke as there are to pipes and cigars? Shouldn't such an oversight be corrected? Isn't it entirely inconsistent to ban one and not the other?

Some clubs add insult to injury by actively selling cigarettes via vendors, shops, and machines. They are promoting a form of drug addiction and are getting away with it. How can that be? And note how they astutely take advantage of the situation by selling fans to nonsmokers! It must be paradise to be able to work both sides of a deal.

Just to be fair, however, one of the reasons *the game* still exists is that nonsmokers have not voiced their opinions and objections aggressively enough. They are partly to blame for passively accepting their plight.

For example, people who kindly ask smokers to blow their smoke away from them or to move their ashtray, or act apologetic/guilty, or merely use a fan to defend themselves are doing a grave disservice to nonsmokers in general. Kindness merely reinforces the illusion that smokers have a "right" to smoke, and that they now have the opportunity to do something very special for you by giving way to your request. Unfortunately, this is one situation in which rudeness and contempt are necessary to make a point. It is one thing if there is a chance that someone doesn't realize that he is harming another. Then, a kind remark or gesture is in order. However, if *you* know that *he* knows and he persists in harming you, then kindness makes a mockery of the situation. I always assume that smokers know, just as I assume that they know when I spit on them that I'm not doing them any favors. However, I caution you to always use a lesser degree of harm than they are using against you, so that you never will be in the wrong despite their protests. For example, if you run out of coleslaw, just fan their smoke back into their faces or pour water into their ashtrays. These gestures can only be construed as being defensive in nature, so they are argumentatively unassailable, whereas smoking is offensive in nature.

After arriving home from enough poker sessions inundated with smelly clothes, smelly hair, and dark lungs, it shouldn't be too difficult for *you* to develop an attitude shift in the direction that I have taken. Just keep in mind this bit of wisdom: Smokers who smoke in private are merely suicidal, but smokers who smoke in public are homicidal.◆

Next time: How can we all win?

Editor's note: The author has expressed some extreme confrontational responses to smokers in this column; that is, spitting in one's face, dumping coleslaw on one's head, and pouring water on one's head. Card Player certainly does not condone these types of responses.

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Poker

Roy West



Hi. Come on in. Today I have some simple Cajun food — red beans and rice. Delicious.

A while back, I made a short statement in one of my columns: *"Losing at poker is meaningless. It just doesn't matter."* Many good folks thought that I had lost my balance. Isn't winning money the object of the game? Well, sure, but ...

Today, let's talk about the psychology of your money — actually, the psychology of *you* and your money as a *combination*.

Let's start with another of Roy's Rules: "Never go broke." I seem to be overstating the obvious, but if you don't have money, you can't play. It's just that simple. I'd like to be able to make it more complicated so that you could scratch your head and ponder over it for a while. If it were more difficult, you probably would value it more highly. (Maybe I can make it more difficult so that you'll think of it as being more valuable.)

There are many important facets to the game of poker, and one of them is the handling and monitoring of your bankroll. I've interviewed many world-class poker players, and every one of them agrees about the importance of a close understanding of your bankroll. After all, it is the most important tool of your trade, or hobby, as the case may be.

Winning usually is not a problem for a poker player, but losing can be. You don't have to *cope* with winning, but you do have to cope with losing. So, let's consider losing.

There are many otherwise good poker players who are up and down financially — mostly down, and who always seem to be scrounging for a bankroll. And there are many players with less ability who are able to stay in action without the deep financial valleys, and who build on their bankrolls.

One world-class pro told me, "You have to be able to get up and take a loss before you get stuck so deep that it devastates you."

Many players will take a small win and will be out the door, but tomorrow they might be stuck for two or three buy-ins and will be digging for another and another, trying to get even. At that point, it's almost hopeless. So, try this thought from another poker pro: "Stay to win, but don't stay to lose. Be able to take a loss and get out of the game before it's hopeless. I make that one of my top priorities for profitable poker."

If you have a bad day (and we all do from time to time), you'll have a chance to overcome it tomorrow — if you can "get up and take a loss before you get stuck so deep that it devastates you." But if you go off for big money today, it probably will take you three or four winning sessions just to get it back — and there's no guarantee that tomorrow won't bring another loss. That's a very deep hole to dig for yourself.

When you're losing, you might want to consider that your game is off somewhere. Maybe you took a beat and it affected your play without your even realizing it. You might have become a bit less aggressive after getting a couple of hands cracked, so you don't make a raise when you normally would. Maybe you're just being outplayed. Or, maybe your game is in top form, but your cards aren't holding up — it's just not your day. If you're losing, something is wrong somewhere. Unless you can quickly discover what that is, you'll be better off getting up and absorbing the loss. Tomorrow is another day — you hope, a better day.

So, it will be helpful if you look at poker as *one continuous game during your entire lifetime*. The game of poker already was going the day that you were born, and it will continue after you are gone. The game always is being played somewhere. The fact that you come to the game and leave the game at various times is inconsequential. There is no conclusion. Therefore, being ahead or behind for a certain session is of no real importance, so your play will not be based on winning every day, but on winning in the long run. With that in mind, a loss on a given day will not be as upsetting to you. You'll be back to continue winning.

I'll be back next time with more on handling a loss, and maybe will look at the problems of winning. Problems? We'll see. Now I require rest to think about it. Great red beans and rice, right? Kill the light on your way out.◆

Editor's note: Roy West is a successful Las Vegas poker teacher. His medium- and low-limit strategy book 7 Card Stud is a best seller. See his ads on pages 76 and 105.

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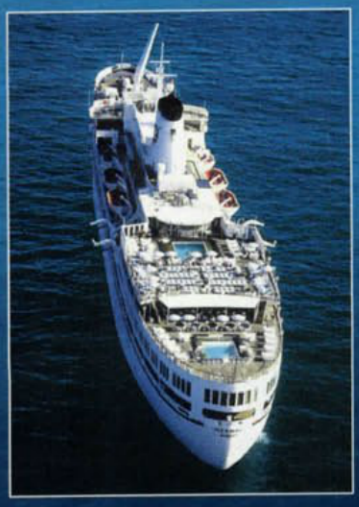





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Susie Isaacs

Chip Chatter

Cruise Chatter — Part II

In the last issue, I told you about a zillion things that a nonpoker-playing cruiser can do for entertainment on a *Card Player* cruise. I then told you a few stories about the wonderful people you can meet and get to know on a *Card Player* cruise. The only problem is that the other columnists refused to give up their column space — even for just one issue — so that I could have 47 pages to tell you about all of them. So, I'll have to tell you as much as I can in the space allotted me.

First-time cruiser Mike Matusow said, "I really didn't know what to expect. I never dreamed that I'd be having so much fun!" This comment was made at 3:30 p.m. on the first day of the cruise ... before we left port!

On the second day of the cruise, Ed Newton remarked, "We did so much and had so much fun that we got so tired yesterday that we could barely play poker until 4 a.m."

As Greg Petriv from Toronto played hold'em, he also was busy visiting, telling and listening to jokes, and having a good time in general. The dealer continually had to ask him, "Bet or check?" After the fifth time, Petriv asked no one in particular, "How does the dealer always know what I have? He keeps telling me I better check, and he is exactly right!"

At our first port, Puerto Vallarta, a huge group of card players, organized by our great party-planning, fun-loving, poker-teaching, organizing guru Linda Johnson, went on a wonderful tour of the island with many fun stops. The first stop was at a bungee jump. I never have been accused of being a daredevil, nor do I have a death wish, so I am not included on the list of "jumpers." The number of brave souls grew as first one and then another made the free-fall and not only survived, but came down the ramp with tremendous comments about their experiences. Though a few were weak in the knees and looked a little pale around the gills, without exception, their reactions were those of exuberance. Jesse Hollander was almost breathless as he said, "I wanna do it again ... *now*! Awesome! Magic! Spiritual!"

Applause and cheers erupted from the onlookers as each jumper survived to tell his story.

On his way up the ramp to the jumping platform, Mike Matusow yelled down to a friend to tell him the location of his will. On his way back down the ramp, he blurted, "Omigod, what a rush! Omigod, what a rush. Omigod, what a rush."

As Kenna James slowly went up the ramp with his head hung low, someone said, "He looks like he's going to the gallows."

As he came down, he mumbled, "What a rush!"

Elsie Fenerty, one of only two daring female jumpers, though weak and wobbly after her experience, exclaimed, "Such a rush! Best experience I've had in many years."

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Debbie Burkhead, the other courageous female (who is afraid of heights), decided to challenge herself as an initiation into the AAA Club — Alcohol, Anywhere, Anytime. On her way up the ramp, her mumbled comment was, "Tell Mom and Dad I love 'em." On her way down, her voice was loud and clear. "Incredible! Unbelievable! Glad I didn't wet my pants."



One of the bungee-jumping daredevils takes the dive.

Other valorous, stouthearted, and fearless card players (or perhaps they all were members of the Burkhead-founded AAA Club) included Keith Watkins, Greg Giardina, and Linda Williams (the first one to jump).

One card player who didn't take the plunge but wanted to was 75-year-old Peter Fisher. He said, "I really wanted to, but with my heart condition, I was afraid I'd die and embarrass everyone ... not to mention putting a damper on the party."

Chuck Humphrey from Palm Desert, California, who recently retired from a legal practice, was discussing the pleasure that he was enjoying after retiring and now playing poker on a semiprofessional level. A fellow player asked, "Exactly what is a semiprofessional poker player?"

Humphrey replied, "A guy who puts in as many hours as a professional player — but doesn't *have* to win."

Howard "Tahoe" Andrew always brings a very special guest on the cruises, his mom, Sibyl Fisher from Walnut Creek, California. I was instructed not to mention her age, but Tahoe has been accused of acting older than she is, especially when he catnaps at the poker table. He always denies the accusation, however, on this cruise, a player caught him on film.

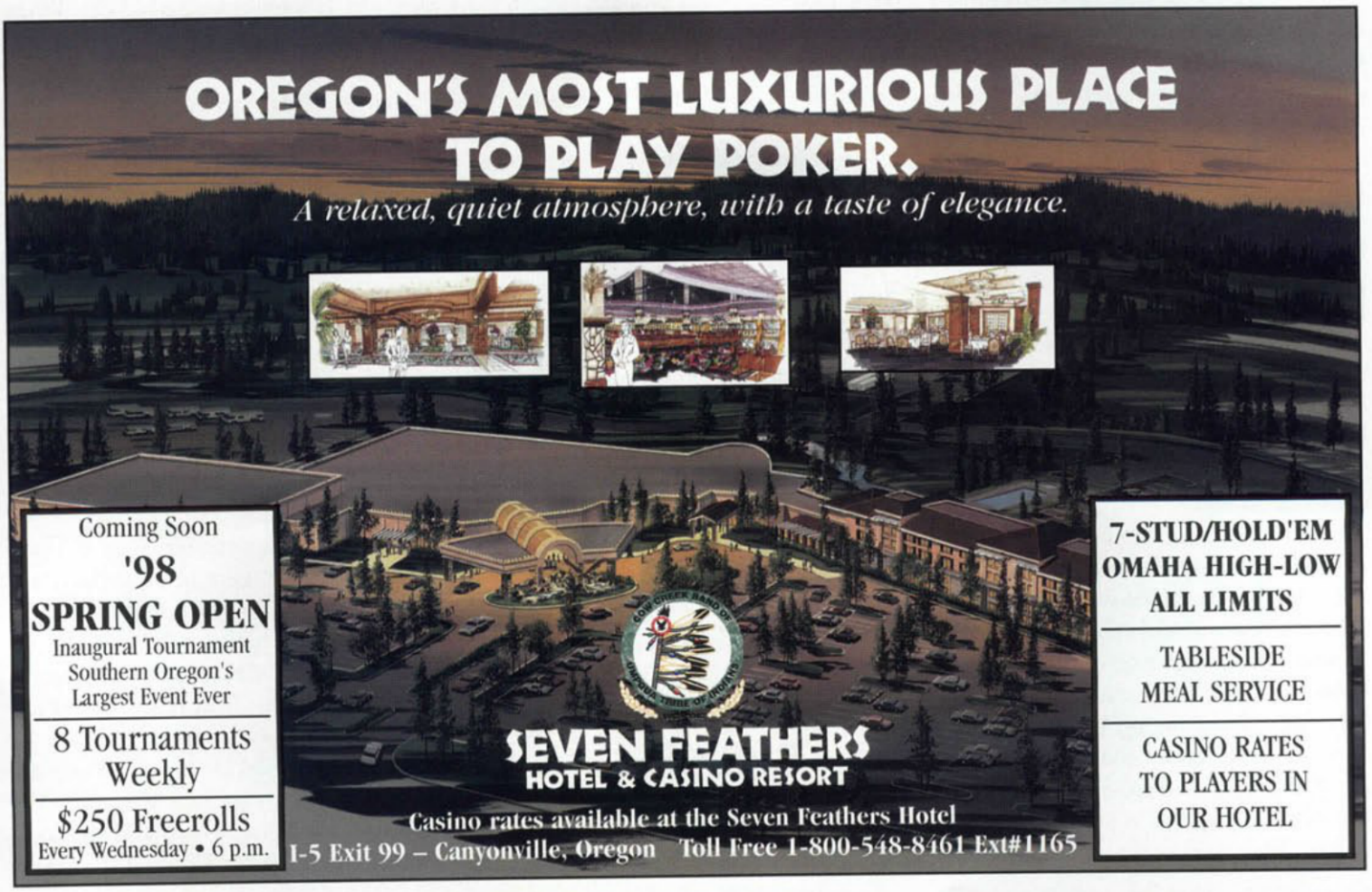
On the cruises, there are two "dress-up" (not mandatory) nights. The transformation of poker players from poker attire to dress-up attire often is astonishing. On one such evening, Tahoe told an acquaintance that he looked like $20, to which the acquaintance responded, "And you look like change for a dollar!" Poor Tahoe, it seems like everybody picks on him. It's just such fun.

On a stroll through the poker room on their way to the nonsmoking dining room, Sibyl saw someone smoking and was shocked. "I didn't know anybody smoked anymore!" she exclaimed. "I quit 100 years ago."

I'll have more next issue on nicknames, tattoos, and eating yourself silly on a *Card Player* cruise.

On another subject: I've said it before and I'll say it again, and I not only

Continued on page 92





Read 'em and Laugh



MAX SHAPIRO

A Day at Bad Conduct School

Everyone knows I am an extremely polite poker player who never would dream of making a negative remark about all the buffoons and jackasses who always draw out on me. But, even I have my limits, and one evening I suffered a beat so horrible that even now my pulse races when I think about it. How did I react? Is a confession booth handy?

I threw cards!

Well, I didn't exactly throw them — I just sort of laid them down a little bit hard. OK, so the cards landed three tables away and sliced off somebody's nose. It wasn't my fault that they got caught in an air current. Anyway, a floorman ran up, scowled at me, and thrust a paper in my hand.

"Is this a buffet comp?" I asked hopefully.

"No, you fool. It's a bad conduct citation. You hereby are barred from this casino until such time as you attend Bad Conduct School to wipe out your ticket."

"Forget it," I huffed. "I'll save $500 a week by not playing, which I'll spend on cultural stuff like the opera. And I'm sure I'll meet a much higher class of people," I added, staring at the unconscious idiot who drew out on me.

For a while I went to every opera, ballet, and art museum I could find, but I soon lost interest. The operas were all the same; the performers would stab themselves and then spend a half-hour complaining in song about how they were dying ... in Italian, yet. Ballet threw me off because the guy dancers were prettier than the girl dancers. And a guard in a gallery got real snotty just because I spilled a little coffee on a Rembrandt.

After about a month, I gave up. I had to get back in action, so I bit the bullet and agreed to go to "Bad Players School." When I got there, I saw that it was located in a former grade school classroom that was furnished with old-fashioned children's desks, the kind with those inkwells where boys used to dip the braids of girls sitting in front of them.

But there weren't any freckle-faced little girls with pigtails in *this* class. Instead, every short-tempered, card-throwing, dealer-baiting, cussing poker problem child in the Western world was sitting scrunched up in the kid-sized seats, mean and miserable. It looked like a casting call for one of those old *Dead-End Kid* movies.

Our instructor was Mr. Manners, a prissy nerd in a neat suit who looked like a cross between Mr. Rogers and Pee-Wee Herman. Standing under a framed photo of Berry Johnston, patron saint of all well-behaved poker players, he sternly glared at us and delivered his sermon.

"We live in a time of terrible manners," he began, "where baseball players spit on umpires and basketball players kick photographers. But poker is different — it's a gentleman's game."

This surprising statement was greeted with retching and gagging. Several players ran outside to throw up.

"Here is an example," Mr. Manners continued, unperturbed. "Imagine that you have just suffered a very bad beat. What do you say to the player who has drawn out on you?"

The students looked at each other blankly. Finally, "Super Mario" Esquerra ventured a guess. "How could you play such a dumb hand?"

"No, no, *no*!" Mr. Manners screamed, stamping his feet. "We pat the table like gentlemen and politely say, 'Nice hand.'"

A few more players dashed out to toss their cookies, but our teacher pressed on. Wagging a finger at us, he lectured: "All of you have been very bad boys, and poker no longer can tolerate the sort of behavior that has brought you here. During this class, we will study your offenses, show why they are unacceptable, help you understand and correct their underlying causes, and send you back to card casinos as well-behaved, model citizens."

He smiled in satisfaction at the eloquence of his little speech. "Now then," he asked, "are there any questions?"

Big Denny raised his hand. "When do we eat?"

Wincing, Mr. Manners examined his folder. "Ah, you would be Mr. Denny. Let's see ...

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you are here for splashing chips, threatening players, breaking cards, dumping a bottle of ketchup on a dealer's head ..."

"It wuz soy sauce," Big Denny corrected him indignantly.

"... biting several players, and challenging Mario Esquerra to a fight."

"He challenged *me*," Big Denny protested.

Super Mario jumped up and raised his fists. "You wanna fight?" he yelled, right on cue.

The two antagonists squared off, but Mr. Manners promptly calmed them down with a liberal application of pepper spray. He smiled angelically as they convulsed and thrashed on the floor in agony. "You see how much better it is to settle one's differences in a civilized manner?" he asked.

Shoving the two squirming bodies into a corner, he looked at his folder again. "Mr. Bonetti?" he inquired politely.

"Yeah, whaddaya want?" came a surly grunt from the back of the room.

"Oh, dear," Mr. Manners sighed, "you seem to have been cited for commenting unfavorably on the ancestry of a dealer."

"Whaddaya talkin' about?" Bonetti protested. "All I did was call some dealer a #xo!x#o who dropped out of a tree."

Mr. Manners swooned and had to revive himself with a bottle of smelling salts. "We live in a democracy, Mr. Bonetti, where all men are created equal."

"Not dat scum a da oith," Bonetti raged.

"Oith?"

"Yeah, oith. Ya know, like da planet we live on."

"Mr. Bonetti," the instructor said, "you are to take this chalk and write 100 times on the blackboard: '*The dealer is my friend*!'"

Bonetti turned white. "Oh, what a hoitful thing to do to someone," he sobbed.

Next on Mr. Manner's list was Dirty Wally. "Hmm, you don't seem to be charged with anything specific, Mr. Wally. You're just cited for being an all-around aggravation."

Wally erupted in outrage. "Hey, do you know who you're talkin' to? I've won 175 tournaments. I've had 12 wives. I almost made it real big in the movies. I drive a new car every year. Do you know I once dealt poker to Al Capone? I'm the best hold'em player in the country. I give poker lessons. I'm also the world's best sweater. I'll sweat you for $25 an hour. I ..."

Mr. Manners held his hands to his ears in pain. "You're dismissed, Mr. Wally. Here's your graduation certificate." Dirty Wally took it and walked out without missing a beat. Down the hall and out into the street, he still could be heard counting off his accomplishments: "I was the heaviest baby ever born in Chicago. I ran tournaments at the Jackpot Casino. I ..."

Our instructor noticed that Phil Hellmuth also was cited for nonstop talking. But rather than let *Hellmuth* get started, Mr. Manners quietly handed him his graduation certificate and looked for the next name on the list. It was Men "The Master" Nguyen, who somehow had managed to twist his bolted-down seat backward into his standard playing position. Nguyen was cited for getting into arguments in 87 straight tournaments. But even worse was the confusion that his name presented, since 82.5 percent of his countrymen also were named Nguyen.

Mr. Manners made a swift determination. "There are too many Nguyens," he decided. "Henceforth, you will be known as Men 'The Master' Cohen."

"Cohen?" The Master asked, staring in disbelief at the new name on his graduation certificate.

"Ah, how simple things are once a little thought and common sense are applied," Mr. Manners congratulated himself.

Reading down the list, our instructor swiftly dispensed remedies. Action Al, unable to stay put in a game for five minutes before wandering off, would have to play handcuffed to his chair. Ralph the Rattler would be fined $100 every time he moaned, "I guess you got me," when he bet the nuts. And so forth. Finally, Mr. Manners got to me.

I fell to my knees. "I'm so sorry I threw cards," I apologized. "It will never happen again."

Mr. Manners waved me off. "Oh, everybody throws cards from time to time," he said. "Your offense is that you write so poorly that you create trouble by putting players in a hostile mood."

"You mean ..."

"Yes. You got sent to the wrong school. I'm transferring you to Bad *Writers* School."◆

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Poker for Gamblers

By Steve Fox

"Manifest destiny" once characterized the inevitable progression of settlements from the Eastern Seaboard to the West Coast of the United States. Today's casino industry may be undergoing a worldwide version of the same concept. Each new territory that is carved out encourages neighbors to add gaming for several reasons: tourism, tax revenue, retaining currency in the country, and attracting new business.

In the United States, where gambling is most competitive, casinos offer proportionately more machine play than in years past. Earlier casinos made table-game play supreme, and quality players earned benefits depending on the volume of their action. Machine players were not viewed with much favor. Several factors have caused a reversal in thinking:

1. Machine play has increased while table play has diminished, possibly because *(a) players are not encouraged to play table games; (b) table games are not changing as fast as machines; (c) computer familiarity has reduced technological fear; (d) machine play is being rewarded; and (e) machines have become more challenging.*

2. Management of casinos has become more dependent upon accountants, who prefer the simple formulas of machine results over complex ideas such as "theoretical hold."

3. Software tracking combined with marketing programs is more reliable than pit boss memory.

4. Regulators and auditors prefer the protected results of machines rather than the more suspect table-game revenues.

While switching to machine play may display higher profits initially, casinos with more diverse entertainment are yielding the best overall results. Consequently, table play remains a key factor in the casino game mix. At the 1997 World Gaming Expo, Ted Gottlieb of Win Cards and Vic Taucer of Southern Nevada University discussed reasons why table-game play has lagged behind machines. They believe that casinos have been lax in player education and in developing explanatory layout designs, and have been slow in integrating table-player tracking with current systems. Ease of play explains why machines have taken pre-eminence, but intimidation by poorly trained personnel and fear of embarrassment certainly are contributing factors to the decline of table play.

As more people have become exposed to gambling, casinos have raced to offer bigger and better experiences. Sophistication of 21 players has eaten into hold percentages. Conventional table games such as roulette and wheel of fortune no longer sustain the interest of the jaded player. Novel ideas and modifications of old standards keep the casino edge sharp. At each Expo, a plethora of ideas and games abounds, since the success of Caribbean Stud™ and Let it Ride™ have proven that money can be made with patented table games. Hence, a new industry is born.

What makes a "good" game, and why should your favorite casino spread this game? Most new games attempt a twist on old games, and because video poker is hot, table versions are common. Blackjack, baccarat, roulette, and craps are the basis for many table games. However, I prefer to concentrate on poker. From the poker department's standpoint, advantages of poker table games would be: new players from increased interest, retention and income from waiting players, and management recognition of poker's impact on other casino functions.

What constitutes a viable table game is debatable. Some of the criteria I use are: *(a) ease of explanation and play; (b) duration of typical player participation (player perception of win potential); (c) simplicity of layout; (d) house return (and accuracy of calculations); (e) cost of installation; and (f) likely regulatory reaction*. From the casino's perspective, adding a new game usually necessitates replacement of an existing table. The new game must represent a greater net profit, possess or easily establish a good support base, perform as advertised, and be available through a dependable supplier.

This year's Expo showcased numerous poker variations, but the three that I believe are worth investigating are: Western Stud (The Old West Gaming Co.), Three Card Poker (Prime Table Games), and Hold'em Fold'em (Go Gaming Inc.). Western Stud introduces high-low values, making it an excellent teaching tool for split poker while offering a profitable waiting seat for split players who are not yet in live action. Three Card Poker is simple, fast, and profitable for the house, using the illusion of numerous payouts. Hold'em Fold'em features wild-card deuces, giving players bigger hands more frequently, thus attracting home poker players. All utilize some sort of leveraged pay scale, similar to a video machine. All emphasize strategic input from players, allow longer play times, and have efficient hold figures to be attractive to casinos.

If your club has poker or you are looking for the next new hit, perhaps these games are the answer.◆

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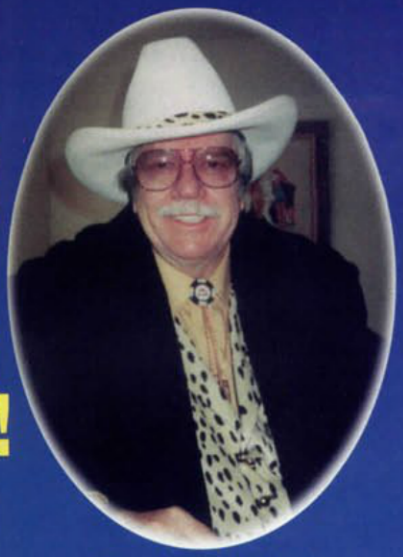

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Schedule of Events

Fri.	Jan. 23	12:00 noon	**SATELLITES BEGIN**
		6:00 - 7:30 p.m.	**WELCOME PARTY**
Sat.	Jan. 24	9:00 a.m.	**SATELLITES**
		1:00 p.m.	**DAY ONE TOURNAMENT - Pot Limit Hold-em** ..... $500 + $40
Sun.	Jan. 25	12:00 noon	**DAY TWO TOURNAMENT FINAL TABLE**
		2:00 p.m.	**SUPERBOWL PARTY**
Mon.	Jan. 26	7:00 p.m.	**SUPER SATELLITE** for Final 2-Day Event (Rebuys & Add-on) ..... $100 + 10
Tues.	Jan. 27	9:00 a.m.	**SATELLITES**
		1:00 p.m.	**DAY ONE TOURNAMENT - Pot Limit Omaha** (Rebuys & Add-on) ..... $300 + 25
Wed.	Jan. 28	12:00 noon	**DAY TWO TOURNAMENT FINAL TABLE**
		6:00 p.m.	**COCKTAIL PARTY & BUFFET**
Thurs.	Jan. 29	9:00 a.m.	**SATELLITES**
		1:00 p.m.	**DAY ONE TOURNAMENT - Pot Limit 1/2 Hold-em and 1/2 Omaha** ..... $1000 + $60
Fri.	Jan. 30	12:00 noon	**DAY TWO TOURNAMENT FINAL TABLE**
		7:00 p.m.	**SUPER SATELLITE for Final 2-Day Event** (Rebuys & Add-on) ..... $100 + $10
Sat.	Jan. 31	9:00 a.m.	**SATELLITES**
		1:00 p.m.	**FINAL TWO-DAY EVENT TOURNAMENT** **DAY ONE TOURNAMENT - Pot Limit Hold-em** ..... $2000 + $75
Sun.	Feb. 1	12:00 noon	**DAY TWO TOURNAMENT - Pot Limit Hold-em** **FINAL TABLE**
		6:00 p.m.	**AWARDS BANQUET**
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Cappelletti On Hold'em



Tales From the Connecticut Woods — Part II

Several weeks after writing Part I of this column, I returned to Foxwoods during the *World Poker Finals* tournament. Since I had some family business in Rhode Island, I decided to spend a day at Foxwoods and play in one of the limit hold'em events, which attracted 376 players.

For the past several years, although I have done very well in the satellite tournaments, I consistently have been knocked out of the main events with three or four tables remaining. My plan was that after going through the usual formality of getting myself knocked out of the tournament, I then would get down to the real business of playing in Foxwoods' luscious $5-$10 Omaha high-low game with a "kill." Several of my friends who have played in that game actually are considering moving to Connecticut.

The tournament started at 4 p.m. When my pocket jacks held up twice in a row for big pots, I knew that it was going to be a good day. More than eight hours later, well after midnight, we finally were down to nine players, who would restart "the final table" at noon the next day. I was the chip leader with $43,000, and Daniel Negreanu of Toronto, the eventual winner, was second with $40,000.

At high noon the next day, the final table started out squeaky tight. Most hands consisted of a raise before the flop and everyone folding. After about an hour of play, four of the smaller stacks had been eliminated and Negreanu and I each had stacks of about $50,000 plus. Then came a fatal hand in which I made a decision that probably cost me the tournament.

With five players remaining, the game had loosened up. In first position at the $3,000-$6,000 limit, Negreanu raised before the flop to $6,000 and the next player folded. Holding pocket nines on the button, I reraised to $9,000, hoping to fold the two blinds and go heads up.

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Marsha Waggoner, the small blind on my left, who had been admirably nursing a short stack from the outset, paused a few moments then declared, "I'm not thinking about folding; I'm thinking about raising!" But, she finally called. The big blind folded and Negreanu called.

The flop came J-J-2. They both checked to me. I made the obvious bet. I might have the best hand, and one or both of then might fold. I certainly did not want to give a free card! Even if they were trapping, they probably would wait until the next round to raise, so by betting now, I kept "control." Unfortunately, they both called. I hoped that they both had high cards (but not a jack or a pair of tens).

The turn card was a queen, a terrifying card, which was almost as bad as an ace or a king! They both checked to me. Should I make the $6,000 bet or not? Think it over before reading further.

Since they both probably started with high cards, it seemed fairly likely that one of them had a queen or a jack. If I bet, not only might I lose the extra $6,000 bet, but if either of them raised, I would have to fold and forego the chance of catching a nine on the river. If I thought that I still was ahead, I should bet to prevent a free card (as I might lose to an ace, a king, or a 10 on the river).

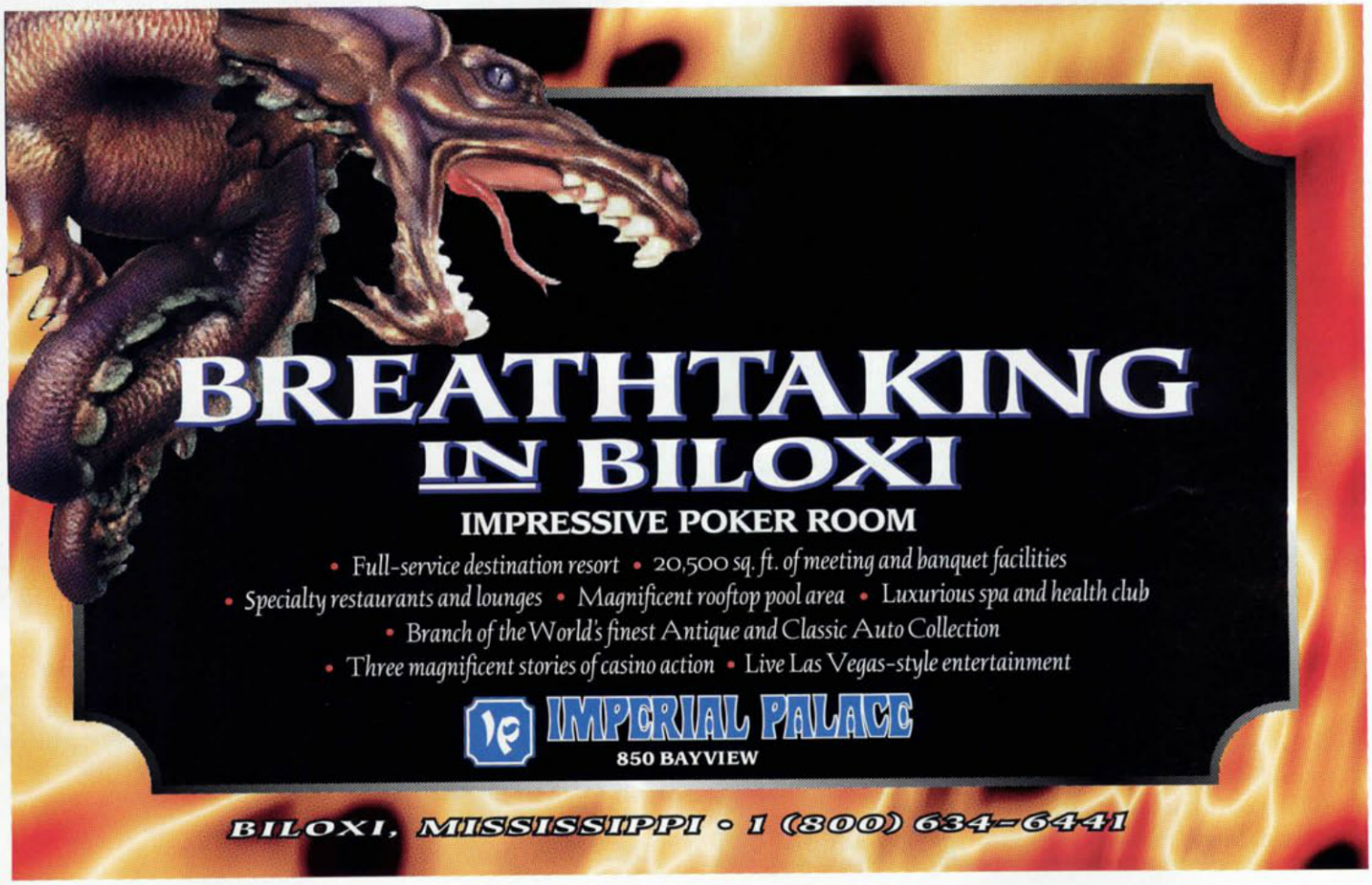
Was it too optimistic to think that they each had nothing but an ace, king, or 10 (unpaired) holding, with which they might call anyway? If true, an ace, king, or 10 would be less likely on the river. Finally, both players had shown previous propensities for cheap showdowns rather than big betting and frequent bluffing. Hence, they might well check it out after the last card.

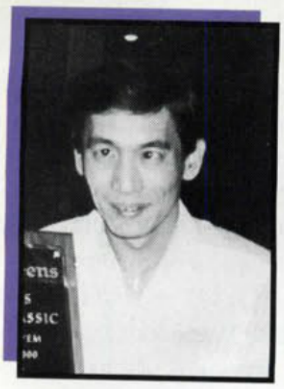
Another way of looking at it is the "budget" approach. Does my hand in this situation merit investing yet another $6,000? If so, should I bet it now as a preventative (planning to fold if raised or on a next round bet), or should I check and consider calling a bet (a possible bluff) after the last card? Since there was a fair chance that one or both of them already had me beat, that a raise confrontation was not that unlikely, and that less than a quarter of my chips were in the pot ($12,000), I decided to avoid a possible big fray. I shrugged my shoulders (a false "tell" that I had set up) and checked.

The last card was a brick, a five. Waggoner checked. Negreanu bet the $6,000. Was he bluffing or had he been trapping? I thought that he had something, probably an A-Q or K-Q (consistent with his earlier actions). As I was deciding, Waggoner, on my left, picked up her last few chips and apparently was planning to call all in. Most holdings with which she would call would have me beat. I clearly was right to fold and continue to hold my losses.

Negreanu showed pocket fives. The last card "brick" had given him a miracle full house. Waggoner had called him with A-K. If I had bet after the turn, Waggoner probably would have called with her last few chips, but Negreanu would have to have been extremely optimistic to call! So, if I had bet, I probably would have won $27,000 instead of losing $12,000. Hence, I would have been on the right side of the 2-to-1 chip lead instead of the wrong side. But note that the bet would not have protected me from an ace or a king on the river. Please feel free to send me your comments and opinions.

Perhaps Lady Luck did not like my choice. Within the next dozen hands, with four players remaining, I raised twice before the flop with a K-J and with A-8 suited. Both times, I made top pair on the flop. The bad news was that on each of these hands, one of my opponents happened to hold pocket aces. Oh well, I finally got to play in the hot Omaha high-low game.◆





Interview

WITH A CHAMP:

CHAU GIANG

BY DANA SMITH

Chau Giang is cooking up more than Chinese delicacies these days. The former chef is following a different recipe than he used in the restaurant business to steam his opponents and bake up some tasty poker pots for himself. The 1993 *World Series of Poker* ace-to-five lowball champion graciously left a $75-$150 game recently in Las Vegas at 8:30 p.m. sharp to keep our scheduled appointment. We found a couple of empty seats in the casino's sportsbook, where we talked about poker, winning big and losing big, taking it home, and leaving it on the table.

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Although both of his parents are Chinese, Giang was born in Vietnam. In 1980, he moved across two continents to Colorado Springs, Colorado, where he became a cook in a Chinese restaurant. He continued working diligently, but "wasn't making any good money, not enough to pay the bills," and decided to find something better to do. "Something better" turned out to be playing low-limit poker in the local cardroom. That decision has paid off in spades for the personable Giang, a professional poker player who has since moved to Las Vegas, where he regularly plays high-limit poker.

Chau Giang: My parents warned me many times not to gamble, but I love to gamble. Since I was 18 years old, I had been playing poker in Vietnam, five-card no-limit poker, for pretty high stakes. Then when I came to the United States, I began working pretty hard as a chef in Colorado Springs, but I wasn't making enough money. The first time that I sat down in a game in the cardroom there, I started playing $1-$5 limit dealer's choice — Omaha, hold'em, and seven-card stud. Fortunately, I learned pretty quickly, and within two years' time, I became a real player and began to make good money — a lot more money than I was making as a chef.

Dana Smith: Is that when you switched from cooking to playing poker?

CG: Yes. I began making my living playing $1-$5 poker, and then I started playing a lot of pot-limit Omaha, high and high-low split. But after two years, we didn't have a game. Too many people were losing and losing. That's when I began thinking about moving to Las Vegas. I came into town and started playing $20 hold'em at the Horseshoe. I made $100,000 the first year I lived here.

DS: Then what happened?

CG: I moved up to higher limits, playing higher and higher, up to $500-$1,000. Those games don't happen all the time, though, mostly when some big spenders come into town. Sometimes we play $800-$1,600 hold'em and seven-card stud combined. Tonight we're playing $75-$150 seven-card stud, stud eight-or-better, and Omaha high-low.

DS: Do you prefer the split games?

CG: I love all games, so I will play any of them, but my best game is Omaha split. I also play in the $300-$600 H.O.S.E. game (hold'em, Omaha high-low, seven-card stud, and stud eight-or-better).

DS: You also have played tournament poker, right?

CG: Yes, I love to play tournaments, and I used to play a lot of them. I won the *World Series* ace-to-five lowball title in 1993. That same year, I won the limit hold'em tournament at the *Diamond Jim Brady* at the Bicycle Club Casino. In 1992, I won a limit hold'em title at the *Queens Classic* here in Las Vegas. I've made a lot of money in tournaments.

DS: But you haven't played any tournaments for the past four years. Why not?

CG: Because I don't like to travel and leave my wife and kids at home. Two of my children live with us here in Vegas, and the third one lives in Vietnam. Also, I have to get up on time for the tournaments and then have to play very long hours, and I don't like doing that. In the ring games, I can begin playing when I want to and can go home when I get tired. I am a night person and usually come in at about 7 p.m. and play until midnight or longer, depending on how the game is going.

DS: When you won the ace-to-five lowball title at the *World Series*, was there a hand that was especially memorable for you?

CG: Yes. Brian Nadell, Brent Carter, and I were the final three. I had been playing really well. Then, I was dealt a pat 10. Brian raised me and I raised him back. He called me, all in. I stood pat and didn't draw a card. I made him break a better pat 10 than I had, and he caught a facecard on the draw. That was the last hand that we played.

DS: Do you have some advice for poker players who want to move up?

CG: When you move up, you have to play really well. At the table, I hear people say, "Poker is luck." That is 100 percent wrong. If they are losing, it is because they're doing something wrong. Poker is skill, it isn't luck. In the long run, day after day after day, you cannot get lucky all the time.

DS: Are there some poker players whom you especially admire for their skill?

CS: Yes — Chip Reese and Doyle Brunson. I think they're the best poker players in the world. I've played against them for high limits. I didn't do any good playing with them, but I learned a lot from them. The lessons were worth it.

DS: Some people say that the Oriental player has a special mindset, that he thinks differently from the Western player. Is there any truth in that from your point of view?

CG: Poker is poker, whether the player is English, Chinese, or American. A smart player always stays in action; he knows how to preserve his bankroll and he stays off the rail.

DS: Have you ever been on the rail?

CG: Yes, I've been there, and do you know why? In about three years of playing poker tournaments, I won about $1 million. Then, I wanted to play baccarat. I played and lost more than $1 million. I went totally broke. Now I have come back into action again in poker, and I never will do that again. I learned a big lesson.

DS: When you went broke, how did you get back into action?

CG: Some friends loaned me money and I was able to build my bankroll back up very quickly. In two months, I was able to win $150,000. Then, I promised my wife that I never would gamble at baccarat again. Now I'm playing poker regularly and doing very well at it.

DS: Was baccarat alluring to you because of the gamble to it? The excitement?

CS: It is a gamble. There is no skill. The house always has the edge. I was playing too high, losing $80,000 or more a night. That's why I went broke. I have advised all of my friends never to do that.

DS: Are most of your friends in Las Vegas people with whom you play poker, or are they Vietnamese?

CS: Most of my close friends are Vietnamese, although I have a lot of good friends in the poker world. We see each other every day and talk and play poker.

DS: Did you learn to speak English in Vietnam before you came to the United States?

CS: No, not at all. When I came here, I didn't know how to speak English, so I went to school in Colorado Springs for about two years, where I took ESL (English as a Second Language).

DS: So, you were sitting at poker tables in Colorado and didn't know a word of English?!

CS: That's right, but I understood the language of poker — pass, check, raise ... ◆

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Caribbean Poker Cruise Questions and Answers

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Join *Card Player Cruises* on its next poker cruise departing March 22 to the fabulous Caribbean. If you're thinking of coming along but find yourself needing more information, following are the answers to some of the most commonly asked cruise questions:

What is a poker cruise?

It is an opportunity to take a great vacation with your card-playing friends and to see new places at the same time. A poker cruise offers all of the same activities of any other cruise, plus more — there's a poker room aboard for you to enjoy whenever you're in the mood.

How does the poker room on a cruise compare to your local cardroom?

Card Player employs highly skilled, professional dealers and staff. They are handpicked for both their dealing abilities and their personalities. Tournaments are offered as well as free instruction. *Card Player* will spread any game at any limit that the players want to play. Typically, you will find hold'em at limits of $2-$4, $4-$8, $10-$20, $20-$40 or higher, and pot-limit, Omaha eight-or-better at limits from $2-$4 up to $20-$40, H.O.R.S.E. at $15-$30 or $20-$40, Chinese poker from $5 a point and higher, and seven-card stud at various limits depending on the demand. Oftentimes, limits get as high as $50-$100 or higher.

Who goes on poker cruises?

Everyone from kitchen-table beginners to veteran poker players. A majority of cruisers are recreational players, and you will find the poker room atmosphere to be extremely friendly and warm.

How much does this cruise cost?

The cruise-only fare begins at the low price of just $649 per person based on double occupancy. Port charges are an additional $125. This incredibly low price includes your cabin, all the food you can eat, lots of shipboard activities, and nightly Las Vegas-style entertainment.

My sailing mate does not play poker. What else is there to do on a poker cruise?

Many people go on these cruises who don't play poker. Activities abound from morning to night, including shuffleboard, trivia, ping-pong, skeet shooting, horse racing, contests, movies, and dancing. There also is a full-service casino, gymnasium, two swimming pools, sauna, duty-free shopping mall, discotheque, a variety of lounges, video game room, and a children's activity program. Massage and beauty facilities are available if you really want to pamper yourself.

What is the itinerary for this cruise?

Costa Cruise Line's Costa Romantica departs from Fort Lauderdale, Florida, on March 22, and sails to the exciting destinations of San Juan, St. Thomas/St. John, Serena Cay/Casa de Campo, and Nassau. There will be plenty of time to explore these ports on your own or through organized group tours.

Describe the Costa Romantica.

It is a five-star ship that was launched in 1993. It features oversized staterooms, almost $20 million in original works of art, Italian-accented cuisine, an extensive array of facilities and amenities, and is considered to be one of the most beautiful and comfortable ships afloat.

How do I sign up?

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Limit Texas Hold 'Em

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EARLY BIRD TOURNAMENT:
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$30 for $20 buy-in for tournament players!
PRIME RIB TUESDAY
Play two hours and receive a free dinner!
(Must start between 5 pm and 7 pm.)
BEGINNERS POKER
$1-$2 Hold 'Em, 6 pm-midnight
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WEDNESDAY
EARLY BIRD TOURNAMENT:
Omaha High-Low Split

THURSDAY
EARLY BIRD TOURNAMENT:
7-Card Stud
BEGINNERS POKER
$1-$2 Hold 'Em, 6 pm-midnight
$1 collection

FRIDAY
EARLY BIRD TOURNAMENT:
Crazy Pineapple

SATURDAY
EARLY BIRD TOURNAMENT:
Limit Texas Hold 'Em
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Tuesday ....No-Limit Texas Hold 'Em
Wednesday ..Omaha High-Low Split
Thursday .....7-Card Stud
Friday .....Crazy Pineapple
Saturday .....Limit Texas Hold 'Em

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GAMBLING AND THE LAW®



I. Nelson Rose

Will California Tribes Get (Legal) Slots?

"Curiouser and curiouser!"

— Alice's Adventures in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll

The question of whether tribes in California will be able to operate gaming devices is an issue of politics, not law.

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) requires a state to negotiate with its federally recognized tribes to allow the tribes to operate any form of gambling permitted by the state. California law does not permit slot machines. But, because California has a state lottery, it is possible that state law may allow video lottery terminals (VLTs). Tribal VLTs would have to be linked to create a parimutuel pool and would be required to pay out with printed credit slips instead of cash.

VLTs, like conventional three-reel slot machines, video poker, and video pull-tabs (facsimiles of paper pull-tabs played on a screen), are classified as Class III under the IGRA. Class III games may not *legally* be operated unless authorized by a tribal/state compact. California never has agreed to such a compact.

Without a compact, it is a felony to bring or operate gaming devices on Indian land. The question of criminal liability was settled by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in May 1996, when it reinstated more than 20 major federal felony charges against the former managers and directors of the company that ran Casino Morongo. Four non-Indians pleaded guilty to bringing in video poker, keno, and "Pot-o-Gold" gaming devices, and faced sentences of two to five years in prison.

Although it is settled that uncompacted gaming devices are illegal slot machines, there have been few attempts to remove the machines, and even fewer arrests. Congress took away the state's power over gambling on Indian land when it enacted the IGRA. The only outside authority with the power to close Indian casinos, which the tribes like to call "tribal government gaming," is the federal government, meaning the local U.S. attorney.

In August 1994, Janet Reno, the attorney general of the United States, sent a letter to all U.S. attorneys telling them to meet with local tribal leaders to arrange for the removal of all uncompacted Class III gaming. "Our overall goal is the peaceful termination of illegal operations within a brief but reasonable time," Reno wrote. At the time, there were an estimated 5,000 uncompacted gaming devices in California. Today, more than three years later, 32 tribes are operating an estimated 12,000 to 14,000 Class III gaming devices without compacts in the state.

The U.S. attorneys have remarkable independence. As a dramatic example, Alan Bersin, U.S. attorney for the Southern District of California, agreed in July 1994 to let the Sycuan, Viejas, and Barona bands continue to operate Class III gaming devices without compacts until all court appeals were ended, as long as the tribes agreed not to bring in any more machines. California's other three

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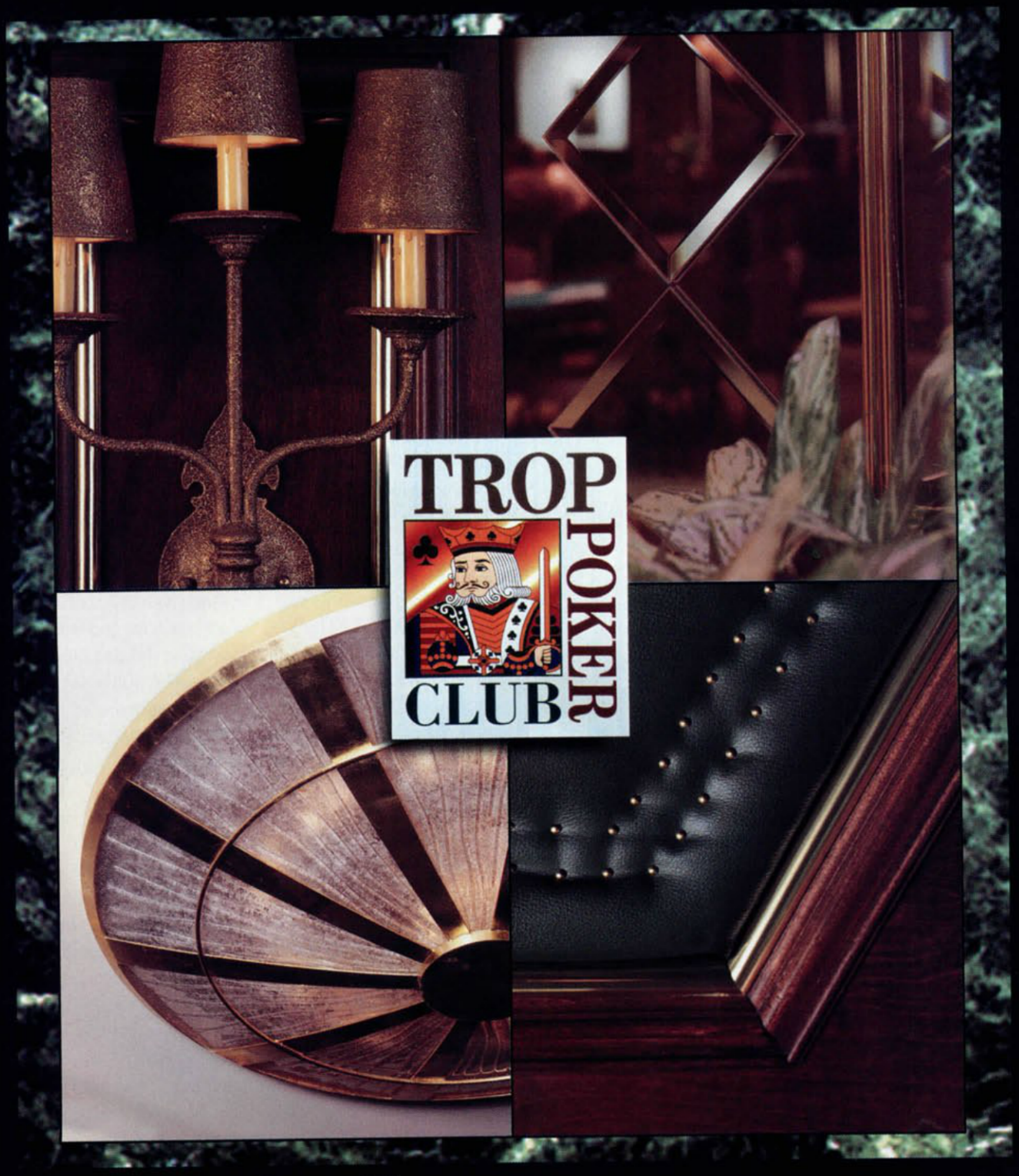

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U.S. attorneys, in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento, criticized Bersin for possibly setting a dangerous precedent. They were right. For the next two years, no attempt was made by any U.S. attorney in the state to close down any tribal slot machines.

State officials got their hands slapped by federal courts when they tried a raid. Gov. Pete Wilson was so frustrated that he said that he never would allow slot machines on Indian land in California, even if ordered by a court. This created the potentially amusing picture of a governor being carted off to federal prison for contempt.

It was thus a surprise to learn in October 1996 that Gov. Wilson was talking with the Pala Band near San Diego about creating a model compact that would allow tribes to have gaming devices. The governor opened negotiations after the June 1996 ruling by the California Supreme Court that keno was a banking game, not a lottery. Gov. Wilson's advisors apparently misread the decision as requiring the state to allow tribes to have gaming machines, as long as the game played is a lottery. Actually, the court specifically refused to decide or even to discuss whether the state lottery could operate gaming machines like VLTs.

The U.S. attorneys, seeing that compact negotiations finally had begun, decided to put on some heat. They told the tribes in their areas that they had until May 1, 1997, to reach compact agreements with the state. Naturally, nothing happened on May 1. The U.S. attorneys gave the tribes a second extension, and then a third. However, the deadlines pushed the gaming tribes into a massive, successful public relations campaign. The idea of slots on reservations was endorsed by a majority of both houses of the state Legislature, 50 members of Congress, and a unanimous San Diego County Board of Supervisors.

The campaign even swung over newspapers, which traditionally are anti-gambling. The *San Diego Union-Tribune* editorialized against Gov. Wilson, declaring, "We simply don't understand his stance. Parimutuel betting in video machines is no different from parimutuel betting at Del Mar racetrack." You know that the tribes are winning the public opinion battle when they convince a newspaper that there is no difference between a slot machine and handicapping a horse race.

The tribes also have won over at least two U.S. attorneys. Alan Bersin in San Diego and Paul Seave in Sacramento announced that they are not going to ask for any more machines to be removed. Bersin cited three tribes voluntarily removing 16 percent of their 2,600 gaming devices, and exchanging some of their house-banked slots for parimutuel machines.

There now is enormous pressure on Gov. Wilson to strike a deal, but these two U.S. attorneys have removed any incentive that their tribes have to negotiate. The tribes are not about to remove any more machines on their own. Each gaming device is bringing in $30,000 to more than $100,000 every year. If you are operating a few hundred, or a few thousand, of these gaming devices with no outside regulation, and the only law enforcement officials with the power to close you down told you there is no deadline — what could you gain by signing a compact with the state?◆

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VIDEO POKER Values

LEE FROME

Video Poker Players Face a Bleak 1998

Video poker players of the world, don't ignore these words: 1998 promises to be a year of crisis for us!

One of our most precious casino games is in immediate danger of extinction, and nobody (except possibly yours truly) seems to be aware of the danger.

While there are concerned citizens actively demonstrating against the pollution of our air and water, and the decimation of trees and animals, I haven't yet seen even one picket sign or billboard protesting the ongoing pollution of video poker, which I have long believed would be America's National Game of Chance.

Make no mistake about it, the virus that threatens to wipe out video poker, as we know it, has been unleashed, and if it continues its infectious ways, the game that made our casino times so pleasant and made Las Vegas our video poker heaven will be transfigured into a mere "slot machine."

The "thinking man's" game that has been as clean as driven snow, because a deck of cards has certain incorruptible statistical properties, now is being married to a gimmicky "reel" or "wheel" or "tunnel," which has its own secret set of statistical properties.

This nefarious virus has been developed in several strains in the engineering laboratories of several game manufacturers. All of the strains produce the same effect; that is, they wipe out the player's ability to develop an optimum strategy or even to distinguish what the machine's payback is. They do this by introducing what is known as "bonusing" techniques, in which many of the pay lines are made conditional upon some nonrandom event that controls a multiplier. To make matters worse, the multipliers are deliberately displaying values that mislead the players into thinking that they really are benefiting from the "bonus," when, in fact, the average multiple is far less than the players imagine.

In simple terms, they give the casino the capability of reducing the payback without changing the posted pay tables. Thus, we may have the bleak prospect of seeing a row of machines with identical pay tables, each paying back for whatever the casino has preset them.

Furthermore, casinos all over America can claim that their machines have better paybacks than those traditionally found in Nevada, and nobody will be able to contest those claims.

Reel slot players have tolerated this type of "virtual reel" flimflam for more than 10 years, when the games evolved from purely mechanical construction to microprocessor-driven designs and the acceptance of the Telnaes technique for generation of high jackpots on reel slots.

We video poker players were protected by the requirements that the cards had to be dealt in a truly random selection process and the pay lines had to be defined on the machines. Video poker on our machines played just like it would play on our kitchen tables. On this foundation, we could determine the optimum strategy and the payback for every machine that we saw.

With the new "bonusing" machines, the pay lines are shown as minimum values, and the "multipliers" are determined by a secondary process that is not necessarily a random selection. In fact, this secondary process is not defined at all in statistical terms on the glass, so the overall payback on the game is unknown to both the players and the game analysts, and is known only by the manufacturer and the game operator.

The last chapter of this story most likely will be written in 1998. If these "bonusing" video pokers succeed in drawing enough players away from the conventional high-payback machines, our old favorites will disappear. If we continue to seek out and play only our current favorites, the lower-paying "bonusing" machines never will become the standards. They simply will become more toys for the reel-slot aficionados. The choice is up to you.◆

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Fantasy Springs Casino Continues to Flourish

Owned and operated by the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians (who took the fight for Indian gaming to the Supreme Court), the Fantasy Springs cardroom in Indio, California, has been in operation longer than any cardroom on an Indian reservation in the United States. According to Robert Nichols, cardroom manager for the past six years, "Fantasy Springs began as a cardroom in the fall of 1980. Today, it's a central feature in our 90,000-square-foot Vegas-style casino. We are proud of our reputation. Dedication, professionalism, and consistency are qualities that have made Fantasy Springs Casino a premiere place to play."

Located in the beautiful Coachella Valley, just east of Palm Springs, the cardroom offers elegant decor, a large variety of games and limits, weekly tournaments and major events, random double and triple jackpots daily, progressive jackpots, tableside food and beverage service, skilled dealers, and, Nichols stresses, "the friendliest players in the world."

Players have their choice of seven-card stud, seven-card stud high-low split, hold'em, Omaha high-low split, five-card Omaha high-low split, pan, pai gow poker, Fantasy Poker, Fantasy "21", and Fantasy pan 9. And whether they want to enter one of 15 weekly poker, pan, and "21" tournaments, or just brush up their game, they can improve their play by taking a class. Classes include free entry into a morning tournament with lunch and prizes.

"We run a very competitive and progressive operation," stated Tournament Director Phil "Sunshine" Reed. "We like to be leaders; we like to set trends; and we like to see players win. We paid out more than $400,000 to players in 1997," he added.

Fantasy Springs also is known for its special events and giveaways. On Dec. 6, the first of three BMWs was given away. Two more will fall into lucky hands on Feb. 22 and May 1. Upcoming activities include a three-day poker tournament Feb. 6-8 called the *Hold'em Olympics No. 2*. Table gaming also will be expanded in the near future, both in the cardroom and the pit games area.

From its beginnings as a cardroom, Fantasy Springs has evolved into a very popular casino in the desert. Guests enjoy more than 800 video pull-tab gaming machines, twice-daily bingo, satellite parimutuel wagering, live championship boxing, a 24-hour restaurant, a lounge, live entertainment, and frequent special promotions.

"We've worked hard to earn a reputation for good service, friendliness, a comfortable environment, and lots of prizes and high payouts," Nichols concluded. "The only change that we plan to make is to get even better!"◆

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Mike Caro
The legendary
"Mad Genius of Poker"
— The world's foremost authority on poker strategy, psychology, and statistics.

If you only started playing poker in the last five years, you may be confused about who Mike Caro is. You probably know him as a leading poker columnist and author. Maybe you've attended his recent seminars.

But long-time serious players know that Mike Caro is much more than this. Before he became known as "America's Mad Genius," he was called simply the "Mad Genius of Poker." And for good reason.

It was Mike Caro who began using computers for optimal-profit poker analysis in the seventies. It was Mike Caro whose artificially intelligent computer player, ORAC, electrified the poker world 14 years ago by playing flawlessly against the top world-class players alive. It is Mike Caro whose research and advice is still demanded privately by many of the world's top professionals. And there's so much more!

Mike Caro's has written rules that profoundly affect how poker is played today. At 53 — and still considered one of the best players in the world — Caro is determined to continue to turn out more winners than anyone else in history.

He esimates that over $100 billion* is lost at the poker tables every year. While we await his breakthrough series of *Play-By-Play* books and videos, his proven classic products still provide the tools that give you the best shot at that fortune. *Modern Gaming Info* offers those products — with free shipping.

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* Conservative estimate, based on 30 milion players, 19 sessions per year, 65% losers, mean loss of $271.

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__ **Brunson's Super/System -- A Course in Power Poker** / $50.00. (This 600-page hardcover poker bible started the march to winning poker science 20 years ago. Legendary twice world champion Doyle Brunson teams up with his chosen experts — including Chip Reese, David Sklansky, Mike Caro, Bobby Baldwin — to present the ultimate course in stud, hold 'em, lowball, and more.)

__ **Caro's Guide to Brunson's Super/System** / $19.95. (Just released. This report-style Guide lists important stopping-off points, adding play-by-play, tips, and explanations from Mike Caro, who was on Brunson's 1977 Super/System project team. 88 large pages show 176 book pages side by side.)

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Aunt Sophie Raises on the Flop

By Michael Wiesenberg

Aunt Sophie, Sara, and I relaxed in our booth in the coffee shop of the Anaheim Club. Sara continued studying for her night class in French literature, reading at the moment Moliere's *Le Misanthrope*, an indication that she would not likely be participating in the ensuing discussion.

Aunt Sophie signaled the waitress to replenish our cups. "Tell me about raises," she started, "in Omaha/8 before the flop. Sometimes the pot you see capped and other times six or seven passive one-bet callers you get."

"That," I replied, "is an interesting phenomenon. Arising from it is that there are situations in which I might flat call with some hands for one bet, and yet other times cap it if there already are three bets. Of course, this is my own personal style for certain live games at this club. I don't necessarily proffer this as general advice."

"Whenever he uses woids like 'proffer,'" Aunt Sophie stage-whispered to Sara, "get ready for a lecture."

"I know," responded my lissom paramour without looking up from her tome.

"Basically," I bore on, gamely ignoring the effrontery, "I count on the fact that there are a number of players whose raises preflop don't mean specifically that they have A-2, or even a good hand necessarily. Even when I have a raising hand and there has not yet been any raising, I usually limp if there is anyone after me who has not acted yet and doesn't have a blind. Since the button has a theoretical blind — the drop — I don't start considering initiating preflop raises until just in front of the button. The theory behind this not raising in a so-far unraised pot is that I want everyone to have a chance to get involved in the hand before the raising starts. If they fold after the raises, they leave dead money in the pot, and if they call the raises, the pot will be big and lots of players will be pot-stuck."

"Another coffee you'll have, Saraleh?" inveigled Aunt Sophie, apparently not focusing on my "poils a wisdom," as she was wont to call them, but was totally engrossed, I knew.

"Now," I continued, "if someone raises in front of me, I'll consider reraising with hands with which I want to thin down the number of callers, especially hands containing two aces plus high cards, or hands like A-K-K-X, where X is a queen, jack, deuce, or trey. With these hands, the overpair alone has a chance of standing up if the number of players is small, and an unimproved set has a much better chance against a small field even if a straight or flush is possible. If I'm in one of the blinds, including the button, I treat this as a situation in which I'm not going to lose callers and reraise with most hands that I think have an advantage at this point. If it's three-bet in front of me, no matter my position, I either cap it or fold. What I'm trying to do is build a big pot when I hold a hand that has an advantage against a large field. In general, I rarely play a hand for one bet with which I am unwilling to call raises. I try not to fall into the trap that a lot of Omaha players do of calling one bet with a marginal hand, and then having to call subsequent bets for the supposed money odds, or having to abandon the one bet when the betting gets fierce. The exception might be coming in when in a blind for a fraction of a bet, particularly when there's no one left to raise, or hardly anyone."

"Ah," said Aunt Sophie, "you hardly ever get in light. It's that first decision that is the most important."

"Yes," I agreed. "And I three-bet or cap it because it gives the appearance of action, which is something you want in a good low-limit Omaha game. Often, the times that I put that third bet or cap in are in a situation in which the pot was going to be capped anyway, so I might as well be known as someone who is willing to cap the pot. This is something that the tight and the passive-weak players don't do. You're not going to make money with an extremely tight reputation, and you won't be able to capitalize on that reputation to make many bluffs. Big pots loosen up the game, and encourage the action players to start raising, which is all good for the game."

"So," commented Aunt Sophie, "you look like one of the live ones, but you're really not."

"Well," I temporized, "I doubt that I've ever been confused with a live one, but I often am thought of as an action player. Here's a caveat, though. Preflop raising may not be the best idea for those new to Omaha, especially if they are having problems with discipline or with figuring out whether a hand is good enough to proceed after the flop. It's too easy to confuse with just betting for the sake of betting, and adopting the same caution-to-the-winds strategy as the real live ones. This sort of raising must be done selectively."◆

My thanks to Stephen Landrum, ace Omaha/8 maven, who suggested much of the strategy for this installment, and others in the series.

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Tales From the Felt



1997 Player of the Year: Men Nguyen

BY NOLAN DALLA

Introduction: How do we determine poker's most successful tournament player during the past year? Do we calculate the number of final-table appearances made by each player? Or, is success measured only by tournament victories? Perhaps total money won should be the ultimate symbol of achievement. Indeed, there are many plausible factors that we could use to determine 1997's Player of the Year. Based on these considerations, I devised a rating system that awards points based on several primary factors. The "Dalla Rating System" is designed to identify patterns of overall consistency and superior achievement during the course of the 1997 12-month period.

Tournaments: There were 28 major poker tournaments that were held in the United States in 1997. All tournaments were either special one-time competitions, or — in most cases — annual events. Buy-ins ranged from $50 up to $10,000. The list of major tournaments includes more than 320 individual events in hold'em, Omaha, Omaha high-low split, seven-card stud, seven-card stud high-low split, razz, five-card draw, and lowball.

1997 Major Tournaments Included in the Rating System

Queens Poker Classic VII (Four Queens Hotel & Casino)
Golden Gate Classic (Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo)
L.A. Poker Classic (Commerce Casino)
Peppermill Spring Tournament (Peppermill Hotel & Casino — Reno)
Winnin' o' the Green (Bicycle Club Casino)
National Championship of Poker (Hollywood Park Casino)
New England Poker Classic (Foxwoods Resort Casino)
World Series of Poker (Binion's Horseshoe Hotel & Casino)
Masters of Poker (Normandie Casino)
California State Poker Championship (Commerce Casino)
Circus Circus Summer Classic (Circus Circus Hotel & Casino — Reno)
Pot of Gold Summer Tournament (Reno Hilton Hotel & Casino)
San Francisco Open (Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo)
California Open (Crystal Park Casino)
The Orleans Open (The Orleans Hotel & Casino)
Seniors World Championship of Poker (Oceanside Card Casino)
Heavenly Hold'em Tournament (Commerce Casino)
Hall of Fame Classic (Binion's Horseshoe Hotel & Casino)
Legends of Poker (Bicycle Club Casino)
Card Player Panama Canal Cruise (Card Player Cruises)
Queens Summer Classic (Four Queens Hotel & Casino)
L.A. Poker Open V (Normandie Casino)
Big Poker Oktober (Bicycle Club Casino)
Ten Days of Poker Tournament (Lake Elsinore Resort & Casino)
Peppermill Fall Tournament (Peppermill Hotel & Casino — Reno)
Holiday Bonus Tournament (Commerce Casino)
Pot of Gold Fall Tournament (Reno Hilton Hotel & Casino)
World Poker Finals (Foxwoods Resort Casino)

Note: Since the European Poker Players Association has devised its own rating system (and the EPPA scoring system provided a workable model for my system), I did not include the highly competitive European events in my tabulations. There is relatively little crossover play between Europe and North America (with some notable exceptions in the largest events). For this reason, European tournaments are not included in this rating system. In future years, it might be appropriate to include all tournaments worldwide. However, for the time being — with apologies to my friends across the Atlantic — the method of determining overall consistency will be limited to U.S.-based events.

The Dalla Rating System: My goal was to design an impartial rating system that emphasizes overall tournament consistency and repeated in-the-money finishes. The system uses a numerical score in which more challenging events are weighed with higher point totals. The cumulative scores of all in-the-money finishes during the year were added together to determine poker's most prolific tournament players. Points were awarded based on three primary factors:

1. *Place finished* — Rating points were awarded to each player based on his/her finish in every event. For a first-place finish, 100 base points were awarded; 90 points were given for second place; 80 points for third, and so on. Only in-the-money finishes were recorded. In the largest tournament events — in which more than 10 places received prize money

— places No. 10 and lower were given 10 points each. I aspired to reward high finishes, while not overemphasizing winning the event outright. Although prize money usually is weighed disproportionately in favor of the tournament winner, the goal of this project was to reward in-the-money finishes in multiple events as a far more meaningful indicator of overall consistency.

2. *Number of entrants* — The higher the number of entrants, the greater the challenge it is to make the final table. Obviously, smaller fields are not as burdensome to overcome as larger fields. Therefore, I devised a scale that uses numerical values ranging from 1 to 3. For any event up to 100 entrants, the numerical factor is 1. Thereafter, for each 10-player increase, the factor increases in multiples of .1 (note the decimal). The maximum factor is 3. For example, an event with 230 entries has a factor of 2.3. An event with 300 or more entries has a factor is 3. Note: Although rebuys and add-ons are important considerations in the total prize pool, they do not affect the rating system.

3. *Level of competition* — Obviously, some tournament events are more highly competitive than others. Accordingly, it was necessary to make some qualifying judgment to give greater weight to tournaments comprised of top professionals over those with primarily novice players. Since we cannot determine the skill levels of each player in every tournament, I devised a workable indicator that awards rating points based on the amount of the buy-in for each event. Since many lower buy-in events from $50 to $499 are largely comprised of amateur players, these events received a numerical factor of 1. Events with buy-ins ranging from $500 to $2,499 were given a factor of 2. Events with buy-ins higher than $2,500 were given the maximum factor of 3. Again, only the original buy-in is counted.

Now, to determine a point score for an in-the-money finish, let's take an extreme example — the $10,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em world championship at the *World Series of Poker*. The 1997 winner, Stu Ungar, received the following points based on the formula:

100 (his first-place finish is worth 100 points) **x** (multiplied by) **3** (312 entries — 3 points maximum) **x** (multiplied by) **3** ($10,000 buy-in — 3 points maximum) = **900 total points**

Therefore, winning poker's world championship is equivalent to 900 rating points, or (in other words) winning nine events at the $100 level (with less than 100 entrants). Admittedly, this judgment calls for some subjective reasoning that is open to criticism, and perhaps, correction. However, based on the tournament results calculated prior to devising this system, I concluded that Ungar's single 1997 tournament victory did not merit his being included on a list of players who are being noted for high levels of consistency. Therefore, I used the 900 base score for poker's premier event as a working model for establishing parameters for smaller events.

Let's take one more example: T.J. Cloutier finished fifth in the $500 pot-limit hold'em event at the *Queens Poker Classic* (there were 65 entrants). So, to determine Cloutier's score for this event, the calculations are as follows: 60 (fifth-place finish) x 1 (number of entrants) x 2 (level of competition) = **120 points.**

1997 Player of the Year Results: Thousands of players entered more than 320 events in the major 28 tournaments. Technically, every single player who entered an event of any kind was eligible to make the list. I decided that the top player on the list rightfully deserves Player of the Year honors. I added the rating points from every tournament finish (no small task) to determine a cumulative final score for each player. Although a large number of players performed admirably in smaller events (including many amateurs), most did not accumulate rating points above the score of 500. Other players scored well in one or two big events but did not establish the overall pattern of consistency that I was seeking over the course of a year. Again, Stu Ungar is the best example here. Many of these players scored in the 500-1,000 point range. Nevertheless, 26 players scored in excess of 1,000 points.



Men Nguyen

Following are the results of the 1997 year in tournament poker.

The Top 12

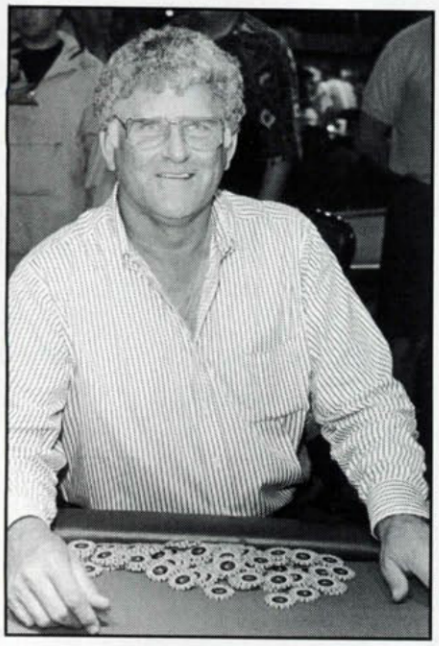
(Based on the rating scale of 1997 finishes in 28 open tournaments)

1. Men Nguyen, Bell Gardens, CA ..... 3,341 points
2. T.J. Cloutier, Dallas, TX 2,411
3. Max Stern, Las Vegas, NV 1,999
4. Kathy Liebert, Las Vegas, NV 1,909
5. Brent Carter, Oak Park, IL 1,644
6. Mel Judah, London, England 1,602
7. John Bonetti, Houston, TX 1,551
8. Kevin Song, Hacienda Heights, CA 1,518
9. Eskimo Clark, New Orleans, LA 1,457
10. Mike Laing, Franklin, PA 1,370
11. Scott Nguyen, Las Vegas, NV 1,318
12. Ken Flaton, Henderson, NV 1,215

Comments: A discussion of this rating system and the results would not be complete without a few candid observations about each of the finalists.

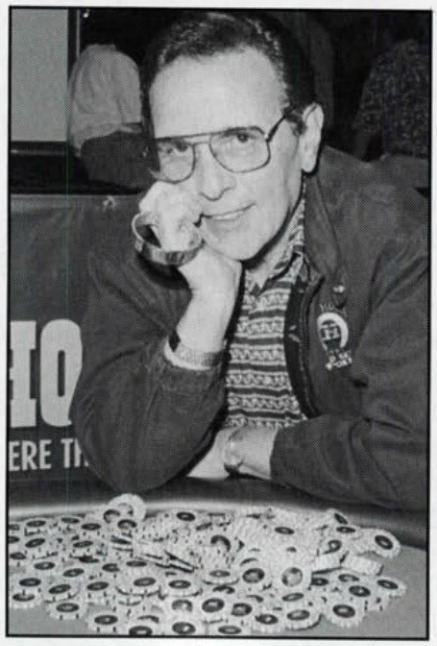
1. Men Nguyen — By any measure, 1997 was an astounding year for Men Nguyen. One of the most consistent tournament players in the business today, Nguyen began the year in January by winning the Best All-Around Player award at the *Queens Poker Classic*. He later won the same award at the *Legends of Poker* tournament — and again at the *California State Poker Championship*. Nguyen's yearly record included a staggering 26 final-table appearances and seven first-place

victories. Since his '97 achievements did not include any *World Series of Poker* titles, his record and point total — 930 points above his nearest competitor — are even more astonishing. Nguyen has won virtually every type of competition at every level. After a similarly successful year in 1996, Nguyen must be considered as the top tournament player in the world today — a man who's at the top of his game. It will be quite a personal challenge for Men "The Master" to equal his success in the coming year, and certainly no less interesting for us to watch.



T.J. Cloutier

2. T.J. Cloutier — Perhaps the most consistent tournament player of the last decade, Cloutier once again proved why many consider him to be the best all-around player in the game. During his lifetime, Cloutier has won more than 100 major titles. No other player has been as consistent for as long at the highest level of poker than Cloutier — whose tournament reputation was first established 12 years ago with his second-place finish to Bill Smith in the 1985 *WSOP*. In December, Cloutier concluded yet another impressive year by winning $30,375 at the *World Poker Finals* in the $300 limit hold'em event. A former professional football player, Cloutier would appreciate his analogy to Dan Marino or John Elway — phenomenal players who have established great career statistics, but who have yet to win the biggest contest of all. Since Cloutier has won more *WSOP* money than any other player of those who have not actually won a world championship, many followers of the tournament circuit believe that 1998 may be the year that Cloutier finally wins poker's most coveted prize. We shall see.



Max Stern

3. Max Stern —Stern has long been acknowledged as being one of poker's most popular players among his peers, and by any measure, one of the game's most diverse talents. He always seems to save his best performance for poker's biggest events. He made 12 final-table appearances and was buoyed by multiple victories at the 1997 *WSOP*. Stern won $117,000 in the $2,500 seven-card stud high-low split event, $140,000 in the $1,500 seven-card stud event, and $237,000 in the $3,000 no-limit hold'em event.

4. Kathy Liebert — The only female to make the top 12, Liebert has established herself as one of poker's most consistent tournament performers. Her second-place finish in the $3,000 no-limit hold'em event at this *year's World Series of* Poker gave her $123,690. She went on to finish second in five other events, third in two, and fourth in three more. Liebert's ability to make upper-echelon finishes at each final table demonstrates a steady acumen for playing her best game against the toughest players in tournament poker.

5. Brent Carter — Carter's appearance on the list certainly is no surprise. Although he plays relatively fewer events than many of his competitors, his record indicates an impressive overall performance — so much so that in-the-money finishes have become routine. With 10 final-table appearances in 1997, if number of events played were taken into account along with results, Carter likely would have one of poker's best return-on-investment ratios. He is another veteran who seems destined to repeat his success year after year.

6. Mel Judah — Judah is the only non-American-based player on the list (although Max Stern resides outside the continental United States on occasion). He made seven final-table appearances, although he also played in few events. Judah's greatest success was at this year's *WSOP*, where he won $176,000 in the $5,000 seven-card stud event, and finished third in the $10,000 world championship event, netting another $371,000. One must wonder what his record would be if he played full time on the tournament circuit.

7. John Bonetti — Long revered as being one of poker's most aggressive players, Bonetti won two major events, with his best performance being a $40,400 win in the $1,000 seven-card stud event at the *Hall of Fame*. He placed high in several other events

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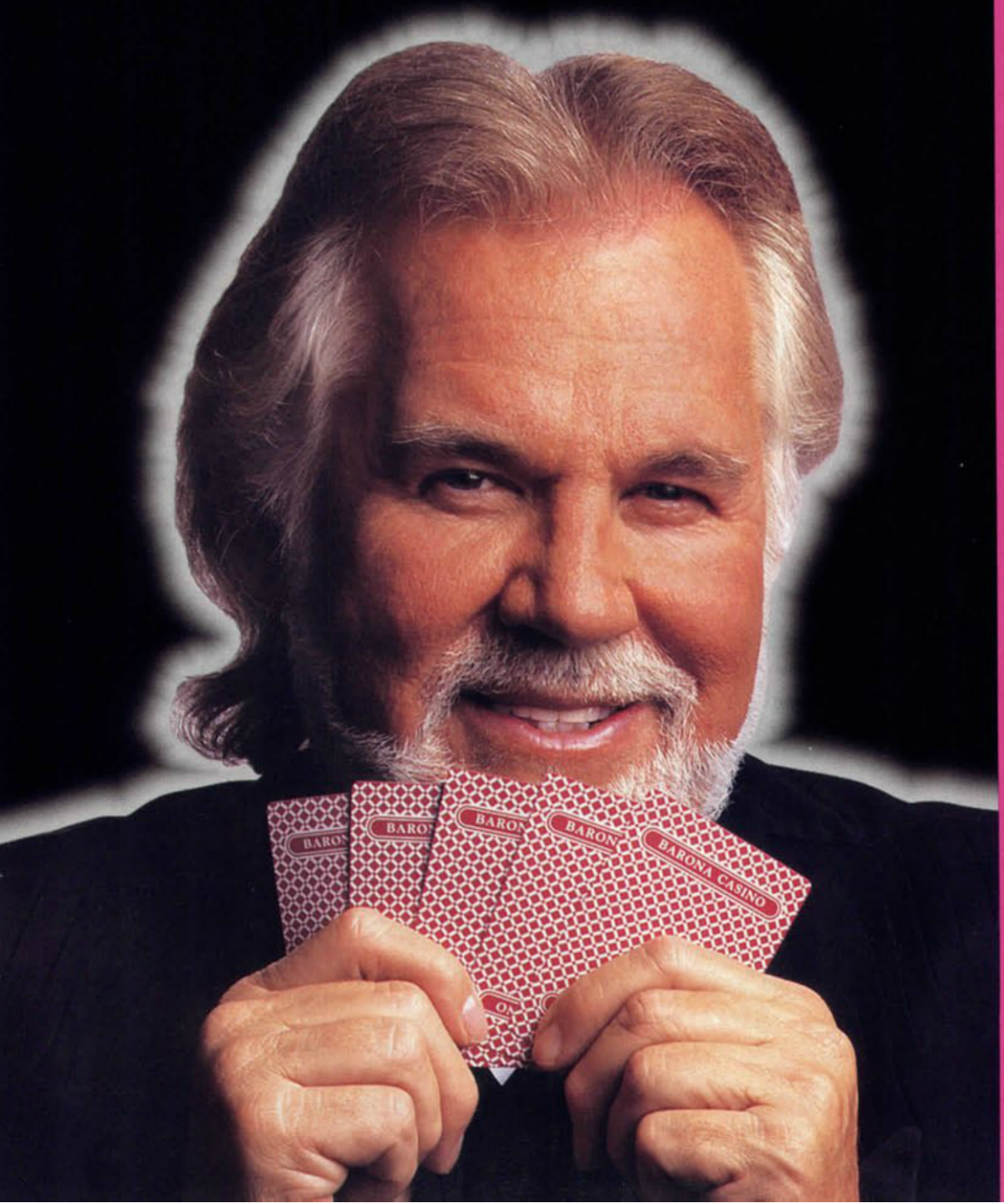

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during the year, and then in December, won $49,500 at the *World Poker Finals* in the $500 limit hold'em event. It was just another great year for a man who has become a living legend.

8. Kevin Song — The year began rather sluggish for Song, but he picked up momentum quickly, and by the time of the *Hall of Fame* tournament in August, he had won a staggering $581,000.

His two biggest wins came in the $2,000 limit hold'em event at the *WSOP*, and in the $5,000 no-limit hold'em event at the *Hall of Fame*. We shall see if Song continues to be a consistent force through 1998 and moves into the elite status of the game's premier players.

9. Eskimo Clark — Clark made 11 final-table appearances, and is another player who seems to play virtually every game at an expert level. He won $19,200 at the *Big Poker Oktober* tournament, defeating 387 entrants. He also finished 19th in the $10,000 world championship event at the *WSOP*. Expect to see Clark have an even bigger year in 1998.

10. Mike Laing — Laing was one of the hottest players in the game a few years ago, and he doesn't seem to be slowing down. Widely acknowledged by his peers as one of the most respected tournament players of the 1990s, he won $78,000 in the $1,000 limit hold'em event at the *Hall of Fame*. Laing — who seems to excel particularly in major hold'em events — is another player for whom it seems to be just a matter of time before he wins the world championship.

11. Scott Nguyen — The youngest player on the list, Nguyen's biggest payday in 1997 came in the $2,000 Omaha high-low split event at the *WSOP*, where he won $156,950. With 10 final-table appearances, Nguyen seems to be ready to ascend to poker's supreme hierarchy. We will expect to see him many times at the final table in 1998.

12. Ken Flaton — Oddly enough, 1997 began as Flaton was at the top of his game. Fresh off his victory in the *U.S. Poker Championships* in November 1996 (which netted him $500,000), Flaton continued to cash in throughout the year. His biggest paychecks were at the *California State Poker Championship* ($52,451) and the *Hall of Fame* ($52,800). He also won the $500 limit hold'em event at the *L.A. Poker Classic* for another $44,200. There are some who insist that Flaton is one of the best combined "ring game" and "tournament" players in poker today. "Skyhawk" once again will fly into a new year with confidence.

Conclusion: In future years, I would like to compose a Player of the Year column that will run at the conclusion of each calendar year. The honor will include a plaque that will be inscribed with the name of the yearly winner. In this inaugural column, I have attempted to award rating points based on what I believe to be objective and pertinent criteria. However, if tournament organizers, players, or other readers have suggestions for ways to improve the rating system, I will consider alternatives — and if necessary, will make modifications that will effectively determine poker's most successful player of the year.◆

Nolan Dalla may be contacted at: NolanDalla@aol.com.



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MONDAY, MARCH 9
Noon—Limit Hold 'Em
$225 Buy-in+$200 Re-buy

TUESDAY, MARCH 10
Noon—Omaha Hi-Low Split
(8 or Better for Low)
$120 Buy-in+$100 Re-buy

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11
Noon—No Limit Hold 'Em
Terminator Event
$120 Buy-in+$100 Re-buy

THURSDAY, MARCH 12
Noon—1/2 Hold 'Em
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FRIDAY, MARCH 13
Noon—Limit Hold 'Em
$120 Buy-in+$100 Re-buy

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2	Sat	2/7	2:30pm	7 CARD STUD	$ 300+30
3	Sun	2/8	2:30pm	LIMIT HOLD'EM SHOOTOUT	$ 300+30
4	Mon	2/9	4:30pm	OMAHA HI-LO SPLIT	$ 300+30
5	Tue	2/10	4:30pm	LOWBALL	$ 300+30
6	Wed	2/11	4:30pm	POT LIMIT HOLD'EM	$ 300+30
7	Thur	2/12	4:30pm	7 CARD STUD HI-LO SPLIT	$ 300+30
8	Fri	2/13	4:30pm	NO LIMIT HOLD'EM	$ 300+30 (Rebuys 1st 3 Levels)
9	Sat	2/14	2:30pm	LIMIT HOLD'EM	$ 400+30
10	Sun	2/15	2:30pm	OMAHA HI-LO SPLIT	$ 500+40
11	Mon	2/16	4:30pm	7 CARD STUD	$ 500+40
12	Tue	2/17	4:30pm	LOWBALL	$ 500+40
13	Wed	2/18	4:30pm	LIMIT HOLD'EM	$ 500+40
14	Thur	2/19	4:30pm	7 CARD STUDHI-LO SPLIT	$ 500+40
15	Fri	2/20	4:30pm	NO LIMIT HOLD'EM	$ 500+40 (Rebuys 1st 3 Levels)
16	Sat	2/21	2:30pm	LIMIT HOLD'EM	$ 500+40 (Rebuys 1st 3 Levels)
17	Sun	2/22	2:30pm	POT LIMIT HOLD'EM	$ 500+40
18	Mon	2/23	4:30pm	7 CARD STUD	$1000+60
19	Tue	2/24	4:30pm	OMAHA HI-LO SPLIT	$1000+60
20	Wed	2/25	4:30pm	LIMIT HOLD'EM	$1000+60
21	Thur	2/26	4:30pm	NO LIMIT HOLD'EM	$1000+60 (Rebuys 1st 3 Levels)
22	Fri	2/27	4:30pm	LIMIT HOLD'EM	$ 300+30 (Rebuys 1st 3 Levels)
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Mon	Feb 9	8:00pm	LOWBALL	$ 60/40
Mon	Feb 16	8:00pm	LOWBALL	$ 60/40
Fri	Feb 27	1:30pm	LOWBALL	$ 60/40
Fri	Feb 27	8:00pm	LOWBALL	$ 60/40

Win a Guaranteed $1060 Seat in the Ladies World Championship of Poker.

Fri	Feb 13	8:00pm	7 CARD STUD	$ 30/20
Sat	Feb 14	8:00pm	7 CARD STUD	$ 30/20

Players who win a super satellite must play in that designated event.
Seats are non-transferable, non-refundable, and non-negotiable.
Players winning additional seats will receive tournament buy-in chips.

$100,000

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1st PLACE:
$35,000
Plus a Seat in the World Series of Poker

MINI SATELLITES

FEBRUARY 6-27
$30/ $20
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nyone and to alter or cancel tournament at anytime.

Never have the words "down and dirty" been so inappropriate.

The Mirage Poker Room has such an engaging atmosphere and excellent service, it's no wonder we're often dealing to a full house.
For reservations and information, call (800) 77-POKER or (702) 791-7291. Poker Room manager: Doug Dalton.



Riverboat Report

By Ron Koziol



Although the new year is well under way, there are some items of interest to riverboat gamblers that still are left over from last year. Among them is the late-year ruling by the Missouri Supreme Court that gambling boats not contiguous to either the Missouri or Mississippi River don't conform to state law. Directly affected are the Station Casinos $300 million complex, the Flamingo Hilton in Kansas City, and Riverport Center, a joint venture of Harrah's and Players International, which spent $286 million to build a four-casino complex in Maryland Heights, a suburb of St. Louis. There's no indication that any of the boats will be closed as the matter continues to wind its way through the courts, before the state gaming commission, and probably into the legislature.

Missouri gamblers already are burdened with a $500 loss limit per cruise, as well as a simulated cruise schedule. Casino operators say that they will attempt to get the legislature to drop the restrictions, even though it might be a difficult task, since 1998 is an election year, when gambling issues traditionally are ignored.

The good news for Missouri gamblers is that 24-hour weekend gambling was approved by the state gaming board and began early last month at all but two of the state's 16 floating casinos. The exceptions are in Caruthersville and St. Joseph. Previously, the casinos could stay open for 21 hours a day. And poker players in particular now will be able to take part in major tournaments on the Admiral casino boat in St. Louis. The first big Texas hold'em tournament was held in late November, and it attracted 160 players, about 30 of whom came from surrounding states. The buy-in was $150 and the winner walked off with $5,266.

One of the drawbacks to attracting out-of-town tournament players to Missouri is that prepayments are not allowed by state regulators, and some players are reluctant to travel a long way in hope of getting a spot. Smaller tournaments resumed in mid-December on the Admiral, including a Monday evening $50 buy-in for hold'em and Omaha players, and a Thursday night event for seven-card stud players.

Illinois legislators decided late in the year that riverboat gambling casinos should pay higher taxes to help fund education in the state. The flat 20 percent tax on adjusted gross revenues has been replaced by a sliding scale tax of between 15 percent and 35 percent. Since the four Chicago-area boats each make $100 million or more in casino revenues annually, they'll get hit with the maximum tax. After the new tax was passed, casino owners threatened layoffs and curtailment of hotel and other expansion projects.

However, neither the taxes nor the threats should in any way affect area gamblers, who still will benefit from the fierce competition for the Chicago-area gambling dollar. That competition should grow even more now that Harrah's has bought rival casino owner Showboat Inc. for $1.2 billion. Included in the purchase is the Showboat Casino in East Chicago, Indiana. Harrah's already operates a successful riverboat gambling operation 30 miles to the west in Joliet, Illinois. It now joins the Empress with riverboats in both Joliet and Northwest Indiana.

Chicago-area poker players will have to be content with doing their playing at the Showboat and the Hollywood Casino in Aurora, Illinois. Plans for that long-discussed poker room on one of the Empress' two riverboats in Joliet have been canceled. And it doesn't look promising for poker on any other Illinois riverboats. A check with the state gaming board shows that there are no plans by other boats to open poker rooms at the present time.

The Showboat's 11-table poker room continues to be the most popular in the area, with an October rake of $466,634. But there could be some competition very shortly, as the Majestic Star, with its new and bigger boat just a mile away in Buffington Harbor, awaits the final OK to open a poker room with eight to 10 tables. Plans call for the room to be located on the third deck at the front of the boat. A nearby slot area is completely segregated from the room, noted Bob Everhart, marketing manager. Majestic Star's new boat has 43,000 square feet of casino space, and averaged almost 10,000 passengers a day and gaming revenues of more

than $315,000 a day in November. Both figures are increases over the much smaller old boat.

Argosy Gaming Company's new riverboat in Lawrenceburg, Indiana, near Cincinnati, is operating at full capacity now that a new pavilion, entertainment complex, and 1,800-car garage has been completed. The turn-of-the-century-designed paddle wheeler has 75,000 square feet of casino space on three decks, and is equipped with 1,733 slots and 98 table games.

Much to the chagrin of gambling supporters in both Switzerland County and Crawford County, the Indiana Gaming Commission has delayed for another six months the awarding of the 10th and final riverboat gambling license for the Ohio River. Apparently, the Commission believes that it's still too soon to know how a third boat in Switzerland County would affect the two other boats in a Southeastern Indiana market that is dependent on the nearby Cincinnati area. There also have been concerns that a boat in Crawford County in the Louisville, Kentucky, metropolitan area would draw customers away from a boat planned across the river from Louisville and from Casino Aztar in Evansville. Crawford County is located between both areas.

The town of Osceola, 50 miles west of Des Moines, is getting its own riverboat. The $45 million project, set for completion in the summer of 1999, has been approved by the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission, and will include a boat that can accommodate 1,500 gamblers in its 28,000-square-foot casino. A 60-room hotel and an RV park also are in the plans. The boat will be docked on the north end of West Lake, which is west of Interstate 35.



Reno Report

By Susie Isaacs

Circus Circus Announces New Cardroom Manager ... Circus Circus Casino Manager John O'Looney recently promoted Penny Hubbell to the position of poker room manager. Hubbell has been in the casino business dealing blackjack and poker, and working as a poker supervisor in both Reno and Tahoe since 1978. She joined Circus Circus as a poker dealer in 1991 and served as tournament co-director for two years.

Due to the renovation and remodeling of Circus Circus, the popular ladies tournaments, always the grand finale of the *Circus Circus Spring and Fall Tournaments*, have not been offered on the tournament trail lately. In a recent interview with Hubbell, she stated, "The ladies tournaments were always close to my heart. I adore all the ladies. High on my priority planning list for 1998 is to reintroduce the seasonal tournaments. I know so many of the ladies, love them, and want their spouses and them to come back and visit us at Circus Circus."

In addition to a bad-beat jackpot, Circus plans to pay cash immediately for high hands, including $10 for four of a kind, $25 for a straight flush, and $50 for any royal. Games regularly spread at Circus Circus include $1-$4 seven-card stud, and $3-$6, $4-$8, and $6-$12 Texas hold'em.

New Cardroom Manager at the Peppermill ... Reno casino veteran Charlie Bates recently was named the new cardroom manager at the Peppermill in Reno. Bates joins the Peppermill management team after 20 years of casino experience, primarily in the field of poker.

Bates' first priority, in addition to offering the poker player great action, special promotions, and tournaments, is to host a *Player Appreciation Day*. This unusual poker party will take place Feb. 1 beginning at noon, and you are cordially invited. Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres will be served all day, and beginning at noon and continuing every hour on the hour until midnight, there will be a drawing for $25. Seated poker players will receive drawing tickets. If a player's name is drawn more than once, he will collect more than once. Eat, drink, be merry, and win money — join Charlie Bates and the Peppermill poker staff for the *Player Appreciation Day* party.

Bates soon will be introducing a progressive bad-beat jackpot — with a twist. "It will be a bad-beat jackpot for games up to $10-$20 limit," Bates explained, "but we also want to reward any player who makes a big hand. Even if he doesn't take a bad beat on it, he will win a portion of the jackpot. Any player making a

royal flush will receive 6 percent of the jackpot; a straight flush will win 3 percent, and quads will win 1 percent. If, in fact, it is a bad-beat hand, it will be 100 percent of the jackpot money."

The annual *Peppermill Spring Poker Tournament* still is in the "all systems go" mode with no changes. See the Peppermill ad for details. That's good news for all tournament players, and Bates has more great news: Plans are on the drawing board to reintroduce the summer tournament. If present room arrangements and time allotments become definite, the 1998 *Peppermill Summer Tournament* will follow *Hot August Nights*. For the first time in Peppermill poker tournament history, one day of the summer tournament will have a '50s theme, with prizes for the best-dressed poker players. Exact dates and details will be forthcoming.

Also on the drawing board in the Peppermill poker room are satellites for the 1998 *World Series of Poker*. Again, dates, times, buy-ins, and other details will be available in an upcoming issue of *Card Player*.

The Peppermill regularly spreads $1-$4 seven-card stud, and $3-$6 and $10-$20 hold'em. The weekends offer great action in the higher limits, including $15-$30 and $20-$40 hold'em. In the higher-limit games, there is a rule that all players love: no flop, no drop, and a $2 max.

Casino room rates are available to poker players not just at tournament time, but all the time. Just call the poker room and make the request.

$32,000 Bad-Beat Jackpot Hit at Circus Circus ... The hold'em bad-beat progressive jackpot was hit recently when David Jose Garcia's jack-high straight flush was beaten by Mo Kadhodae's king-high straight flush. Garcia won $16,000, Kadhodae took home $8,000, and eight other players at the table each won $1,000.



Circus Circus bad-beat jackpot winners Mo Kadhodae (left) and David Jose Garcia (right) receive their winnings from Poker Room Manager Penny Hubbell.

Crystal Park Hotel & Casino

Current Weekly

Bets & Bounties

Tournament Schedule

• Re-buys for the first three levels •
• Single or Double Add-ons •

DAY	EVENT	BUY-IN
Mon. 10:30am **$1500****	Limit Hold'em	$10+$5 Entry with Re-Buys
Tues. 10:30am **$1500****	Omaha H/L	$10+$5 Entry with Re-Buys
Wed. 10:30am **$1500****	Limit Hold'em	$10+$5 Entry with Re-Buys
Thurs. 10:30am **$1500****	7-Card Stud	$10+$5 Entry with Re-Buys
Friday 10:30am **$2000****	Limit Hold'em	$15+$5 Entry with Re-Buys
Friday 7pm **$2000****	Mexican Poker	$15+$5 Entry with Re-Buys
Sat. 10:30am **$2000****	1/2 Hold'em 1/2 Omaha H/L	$15+$5 Entry with Re-Buys
Sun. 4pm **$5000** GUARANTEED	Limit Hold'em	$50 Buy-In+$10 Entry No Re-buys

$29.95
Players Room Rate (Based On Availability)

*Receive One $5 Bounty Coupon For Each Person You Eliminate In The Tournaments Mon.-Sat. and One $10 Bounty Coupon For Sund. Tournaments. To Be Used When Buying Into Any Live Game After The Tournament.• Good For Date Of Issue Only.
**Estimated Prize Pool.

For more information please contact the concierge desk or any floor person.

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Atlantic City Scene

By Alan Sless

Miscellaneous news in Atlantic City ... Because of a change in state law, 390 poker dealers at the Tropicana and Taj Mahal will stop sharing tips with dealers elsewhere on the casino floor. Since gaming was legalized in Atlantic City, all casino game dealers have shared their tips, as required under the Casino Control Act.

The floor dealers, those who deal such games as blackjack and baccarat, aggressively sought the change because they were losing money in the shared-tip pool.

This is a big loss to poker dealers. Their tips now will go into a separate pool of gratuities from poker players. When the Casino Control Commission moved to create separate poker tip pools, it limited the action to casinos with at least 25 poker tables and 25 other gaming tables, so the change affects only the Tropicana and the Taj Mahal.

Some dealers started organizing a lobbying effort to get the legislature to let each poker dealer keep his or her own tips.

Sen. William Gormley says that the legislature should amend the law to allow poker dealers to keep their own tips. He said that he would push such an amendment in the next session, and would seek input from both the Casino Control Commission and the Division of Gaming Enforcement.

Both Will Espin, vice president of poker/simulcast operations at the Tropicana, and Larry Clark, executive vice president of casino operations at the Taj Mahal, favor letting poker dealers keep their own tips.

A $14.5 million stadium is under construction for the Atlantic City Surf, one of six teams slated to begin play in 1998 in the Atlantic League of Professional Baseball. Also, a $50 million renovation will convert the old Atlantic City Convention Hall into an arena for concerts, sporting events, and the *Miss America Pageant*.

Trump Taj Mahal ... On Jan. 31, the Taj will host another HBO fight featuring Bernard Hopkins vs. Simon Brown. The last HBO fight at the Taj was one of the most controversial in years when Shannon Briggs was given the decision against George Foreman. Now, Foreman's promoters are calling for a formal investigation into the match. Immediately after the decision, Foreman announced he would fight no more.

Christmas is the season of giving, and give the Taj Mahal did when two lucky slot players hit life-changing jackpots during Christmas week. On Christmas Day, a 54-year-old Cassel Berry, Florida, man hit a $1 *Megabucks* machine for $4,227,309 after playing about $450. Coincidentally, just two days earlier, a 58-year-old Mays Landing, New Jersey, woman hit a *Quarters Deluxe* machine for $889,231.

Tropicana ... What started with a couple of hold'em buy-in events has snowballed into a full-fledged tournament calendar that includes seven-card stud, seven-card stud high-low, and the return of the ladies night freeroll. In November, 144 winners took home more than $66,000 in cash, and Trop Poker Club hats and T-shirts.

The response to the Trop's tournaments has been so positive that more events have been added to the current lineup:

Mondays, 12:15 p.m. — seven-card stud .... $30+$10
Tuesdays, 7:15 p.m. ..... — seven-card stud .... $10+$10
Wednesdays, 6:15 p.m. — hold'em ..... $50+$10
Fridays,* 4:15 p.m — hold'em ..... $100+$15
* Last Friday of each month only
Saturdays, 1:15 p.m. — seven-card stud high-low . $40+$10
Sundays, 1:15 p.m. ..... — seven-card stud .. $100+$15

The *Ladies Freeroll* has been reinstated on Thursdays at 8:15 p.m. In November, 155 players vied for the title of Club Champion. Results were as follows for the final table:

1. Tom Freidel $1,000
2. Sue Friedman 800
3. Rafat Azab 700
4. Joan Dvoskin 500
5. Ricky Tse 400
6. Mike Miklinevich 300
7. John Christodoro 200
8. Vincent Camuti 175
9. Steven Kavky 150
10. Reddy Knopf 125

October Club Champion Sue Friedman narrowly missed becoming the first back-to-back champion.

The Tropicana also had some big slot winners in November. Philadelphia teacher Monica Biscardi hit a *Megabucks* jackpot for $6,649,490 when she was in

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Harrah's is well known as the friendliest poker room in town with the ***BEST*** low-limit games.
REGULARLY SPREADING
$1-$2-$4 Hold'em • $1-$4-$8-$8 Hold'em
$1-$5 Seven-Card Stud

New Graveyard Promotion

- $100 Daily Giveaway for most points from midnight till noon 7 days a week.
- One point for full house, Two points for 4 of a kind, Three points for a straight flush, Four points for a royal flush.

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town for the Veteran's Day holiday. The 26-year-old fifth grade teacher had invested just $9 when she lined up the four winning symbols on the reels. On Thanksgiving, Charles Fulton, of Chester, Virginia, hit a *Diamond Deluxe Quartermania* machine for $504,748.

Harrah's ... To celebrate the successful debut of its all-new marketing program *Total Gold*, Harrah's heated up the remainder of 1997 by giving away a whopping 10 million-point prize pool. Through Jan. 2, *Total Gold* cardholders at Harrah's automatically earned one sweepstakes entry for every 100 same-day points that they earned while playing Harrah's slots. On Jan. 26, 86 lucky winners will be chosen to receive prizes ranging from 10,000 to 1 million points. "*Total Gold* truly is the next generation of casino rewards programs here today," said Harrah's Vice President of Marketing Susan Schneider. "Not only does it offer the most competitive cashback in the business, but with *Total Gold*, players have the added flexibility of using their points at any Harrah's location nationwide."

With regulatory approval secured, Harrah's national co-branded VISA card now is available at its flagship Atlantic City property. The card, which is the first in the casino industry to be directly tied to a national customer rewards and recognition program, offers users the opportunity to receive Harrah's *Total Gold* points with every VISA purchase that they make and to redeem those points for cash or other merchandise at any Harrah's property.

Resorts ... Resorts recently sponsored the Atlantic City Polar Bear Club's annual pilgrimage into the Atlantic Ocean on New Year's Day. More than 50 members of all ages participated in the frigid dip.

Resorts displayed a spectacular gingerbread holiday winter wonderland throughout the holidays. The display featured 18 separate gingerbread buildings, including a lighthouse, boathouse, and other nautically themed stores.

Casinos with heart, and more ... The profits from Resorts' Polar Bear T-shirts benefited the Pediatric AIDS Clinic at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

A two-week fundraising effort by Tropicana employees raised more than $72,000, which will be distributed to more than 30 United Way agencies. The campaign was headed by Casino Customer Service Senior Secretary Donna Esher and Floorperson Jerry Marciano.

Members of the Claridge chapter of the National Management Association recently donated 100 gifts to Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. The gifts ranged from toys for small children to presents for preteens.

Harrah's once again teamed up with the Atlantic County Nutrition Project. For the 13th year, Harrah's employees and their families volunteered to serve holiday meals at six local nutrition sites. Harrah's also picked up the cost of the meals and provided each senior with a gift.

Mr. Al's Best Buys

• The top-ranked Atlantic City casino hotel restaurant is Resorts' Le Palais, according

Crystal Park Hotel & Casino

$24,000

IN

Freeroll Tournaments

January 5 - 28

Enter one of the following freerolls using your Crystal Points

MONDAYS at 7 pm

$2,000 Freeroll

Limit Hold'em Tournament

1 Crystal Point* + $10 Entry**

TUESDAYS at 7 pm

$2,000 Freeroll

Pan-9 Tournament

1 Crystal Point* + $10 Entry**

WEDNESDAYS at 7 pm

$2,000 Freeroll

Limit Omaha Hi/Lo Tournament

1 Crystal Point* + $10 Entry**

*Your first Crystal Point is FREE when you sign up for a Crystal Point Card...your start to many benefits.
** No Re-buys.

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to the 1998 Zagat Survey of New Jersey Restaurants. In fact, Le Palais was ranked the No. 1 restaurant in the state of New Jersey for service. Two-for-one offers are available in the Entertainment Book.

• Harrah's Atlantic City is offering first-time guests an opportunity to increase their rewards up to tenfold. With its new *10X Your Points* program, Harrah's *Total Gold* card members can have their level of same-day cash points multiplied up to 10 times based on the level of points they earn during their first trip.

• 99-cent draft beer and 99-cent margaritas at the Los Tres Hombres Cantina in the Wild Wild West Casino are available with newspaper coupon.

California Ramblings

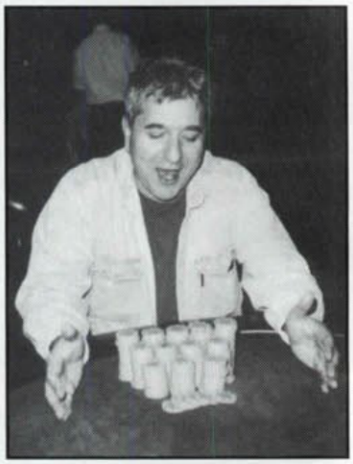
Lake Elsinore Resort and Casino ... Results of the recent *Holiday Classic* poker tournament were as follows:

$60 limit hold'em
(one $50 rebuy)
Entrants: 174
Prize pool: $17,940

A 12-way split resulted in each of the following players winning $1,405: Hung Truong, Bob Ingraham, Mike Nguyen, Makram Merhom, Ade Boentaran, Marty Hicks, Suad Dalipagic, Curtis Hockaday, Eugene Krank, Robert Turner, Emil Colitis, and James Flanagan.

$60 Omaha high-low split
(one $50 rebuy)
Entrants: 80
Prize pool: $7,900

1. Tony Megna $1,900
2. Phil Sandoval 1,700
3. Ann Brown 1,700
4. Eric Random 630
5. Walter Smiley 555
6. Tony Yoshida 470
7. Steve Stephens 400
8. John Baccarella 315
9. Jessie Lacsamana 235



Tony Megna

$60 limit/no-limit hold'em
(one $50 rebuy)
Entrants: 83
Prize pool: $8,430

1. Phil Sandoval $2,025
2. Frank Delaney 2,020
3. Brandon King 1,500
4. Ade Boentaran 680
5. Bill Scott 595
6. Tony Phan 505
7. Anthony Tran 420



Phil Sandoval (left) and Frank Delaney

8. J. J. Volpe 335
9. Evelyn Jones 250
10. Steve Smith 100

The *Little Big Bucks* tournament is coming Jan. 16-17. It will feature two $30 buy-in plus $5 entry fee limit hold'em events (two $20 rebuys), each of which guarantees $5,000 in prize money.

The *Drive for Five* tournament, featuring guaranteed prize money of more than $80,000, will be held Jan. 28-Feb. 1. A $5,000 bonus will be paid to anyone placing in the top three positions in all five tournaments.

The tournament's events will include limit hold'em, seven-card stud high-low split, limit/no-limit hold'em, and Omaha high-low split. Buy-ins will range from $60 plus $15 entry fee to $150 plus $15 entry fee.

A total of $1,500 in overall-point-winner money also will be awarded ($1,000 for first place and $500 for second).

Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo ... The holidays meant more than lots of turkey and cranberry sauce to players at Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo, as they continued to win money at the *Monday Night Football Tournaments*. Results were as follows:

Dec. 15
Entrants: 85
Prize pool: $10,000

1. Taylor Dwyer $4,000
2. Nancy Blaystein 2,500
3. Will Walsh 1,200
4. Paul Evans 700
5. Ken Irving 500
6. Kelly Estrella 400
7. X. Anoenson 300
8. Afshin Gousneh 200

Dec. 22
Entrants: 85
Prize pool: $10,050

1. Leo Buccianella $4,020
2. Peter Dittmar 2,512
3. Matthew Tom 1,206
4. Mariano Sano 703
5. Not available 502
6. Ken Robbins 402
7. Dennis Ty 301
8. Not available 202
9. Lilia Rayosoplsol 101
10. Yolanda Rouche 101

Dec. 29
Entrants: 98
Prize pool: $11,350

1. Not available $4,540
2. Leni Allen 2,837
3. Michael O'Conner .. 1,362
4. Aurelio Estralla 794
5. Beau Thomahong 567
6. Kim Thomas 454
7. Arnie Schapiro 340
8. Joe Reinhardt 228
9. Aileen Claire 228

Chinese New Year will get a double celebration at Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo this year. On Jan. 24, a car and cash totaling $25,000 will be given away from 2 p.m. to 2 a.m. The drawing for the car will take place at 2 a.m. Then on Chinese New Year's Eve, Jan. 27, another $15,000 will be given away beginning at 6 p.m. and continuing until 2 a.m. "We also will be giving out $5,000 in *Lucky Money* envelopes throughout the evening," stated Executive Director of California Games Meng La. "And at midnight, the traditional Lion Dance will be performed." The Tranz Band also will play in the Palace Room.

Hollywood Park Casino ... Upcoming simulcast dates in both the Hong Kong Turf Club and the Finish Line Lounge are: Saturday, Jan. 17, 9:30 p.m.; Thursday, Jan. 29 — Chinese New Year; and Saturday, Jan. 31, 9:30 p.m.

Atlantic City
Monte Carlo
Las Vegas
Reno
Brooks

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Persian stars Leila, Artoosh, Shahrum K., and Ema & Vazgen will appear Jan. 24 in an evening of Persian entertainment, cuisine, and atmosphere.

Bicycle Club Casino ... 1,700 needy youths up to age 12 from the city of Bell Gardens recently were selected by the Bell Gardens Unified School District (based on need) to attend the Bicycle Club Casino's Christmas extravaganza. Guests were treated to visits by Santa Claus and a host of favorite cartoon characters; a Christmas lunch; a commemorative photo of themselves with Santa; a real circus, including clowns and pony rides; and a stocking and gift giveaway to each and every child.

For 13 years, the Bicycle Club Casino has been the single largest supporter of the city of Bell Gardens. To date, more than 15,000 children from the city of Bell Gardens have enjoyed this special Christmas Day event courtesy of the club.

Ten lucky *Triple Cashpot* winners rang in the new year by taking home their share of $18,000.

Super pan 9 players from all over Southern California will compete on Friday, Jan. 30 at 7:30 p.m. for a first-place prize worth more than $48,000 — a 1998 Mercedes-Benz M-Class. This sport utility vehicle currently is on display in the Pavilion. The buy-in for this Super pan 9 tournament is $50 and the entry fee is $5. Multiple rebuys will be available during the first hour only.

Mexican poker players will compete in January and February for $10,000 in cash and prizes. Players can collect between one and seven Mexican poker drawing tickets, for 11 different qualifying hands, depending on the difficulty of each hand. Twenty Mexican poker drawings will be held on Friday, Feb. 20 starting at 8 p.m. The grand prize drawing winner will get $2,500.

Two newly constructed smoking lounges were opened for customers at the Bike on New Year's Eve. One lounge is located in the Pavilion and the other one is located at the Live Oak Entrance, near the tournament area. Each lounge is appointed with leather furnishings, and each has a dedicated air system.

Attention all 1997 *Legends of Poker* champions. The official *Legends of Poker* rings are finally in and are ready to be picked up. If you placed first in any *Legends of Poker* event in 1997, please see or call Tournament Director Rick Cloward. The *LOP* rings are gold with a black onyx stone, and are engraved with "Legends of Poker Champion 1997." Each winner's name is etched on the inside. If you're curious, you'll find one on Rick Cloward's finger.

The New Crystal Park Hotel and Casino ... The New Radisson Crystal Park Hotel and Casino opened its doors Dec. 26 with new ownership and management in place and with a commitment to making the location one of the best in the business.

All aspects of the operation opened Dec. 26, including the hotel, casino, and food and beverage facilities. The casino floor opened with 60 poker and California games tables in action.

"The casino is really about the players and what they enjoy. We've taken what we know about players and have tried to tailor casino programs to suit them," said Crystal Park President Leo Chu.

Among the new opportunities for players is the new Crystal Points Card. Players enrolling in the program will receive points for hitting designated hands, which they will accumulate to put toward great prizes, free buy-ins, and other rewards.

Bets & Bounties daily tournaments will reward winning players for each person they knock out of a tournament with bounty coupons that are good for buying into any live game after tournament play. Tournament action takes place seven days a week with estimated prize pools ranging from $1,500 to $5,000. Games played in tournament action include limit hold'em, Omaha high-low split, seven-card stud, and Mexican poker. Each Sunday features a $5,000-guaranteed limit hold'em tournament with a $50 buy-in, $10 entry fee, and no rebuys.

Bets & Bounties tournament players also are eligible for a special hotel room rate of $29.95 on the night of the tournament. Buy-ins range from $10 to $15, with a $5 entry fee and rebuys. Each player begins each tournament with $300 in tournament chips. Single or double add-ons are available as well as rebuys for the first three levels.

The New Radisson Crystal Park Hotel and Casino also



offers a new dining option, the supreme luncheon buffet. The extensive buffet includes salads, entrees, carving stations, and desserts for $7.95.

Ocean's Eleven Casino ... The casino's newest addition, The Special Events Showroom, will open during the latter part of January. A grand opening is being planned for the 6,000-square-foot room that will be used for small conventions, city meetings, seminars, banquets, fundraisers, and functions and tournaments. In addition, it will feature local artists.

Chinese poker is now being spread at Ocean's Eleven Casino.

The casino will host a *Super Bowl* party on Sunday, Jan. 25 that will feature food and drinks in addition to the football action.

Normandie Casino ... Weekly tournaments are being held Monday through Friday at 2:30 p.m. See a floorman for details.

Chinese New Year will be celebrated on Thursday, Jan. 22 with a party in the showroom featuring the band Les Fanatiques, dancing, and food.

On New Year's Eve, 12 winners shared cash prizes totaling $35,000. They were Lowell Kent ($8,000), Donald Scarbro ($1,750), Jin Hyo So ($3,000), Eligio Lingard ($1,000), Bonito Chua ($4,000), Sione T. Koloamatangi ($5,500), Rosalinda Rivas ($1,000), Wang Wenkuei ($1,500), Mike Tjong ($1,500), Jack Yakabi ($1,000), Oscar Ganales ($5,750), and Efen Quizon ($1,000).

Normandie employees recently were treated to a holiday party with two bands, dancing, and door prizes. Nine employees who have worked 20 years or more at the Normandie were awarded checks and plaques by General Manager Ron Sarabi. They are Clara Sullivan (35 years), Susan Long (32 years), Bob Seitz (30 years), Filemon Landeros (28 years), Carolyn Carson (27 years), Barbara Leslie (27 years), Hana Hunter (23 years), Claude Morey (22 years), and Steve Smith (20 years). Additionally, Maxine Whelchel, a cashier, was named Employee of the Year.

The outdoor smoking terrace is now open for players who smoke. It is conveniently located near the casino.

Normandie employees and players are mourning the passing of Russell Miller, the owner of the Normandie Casino and a pioneer of gaming in California (see page 88).

Oceanside Card Club ... Poker legend Puggy Pearson's 70th birthday will be celebrated at Oceanside Card Club Jan. 23-30 with *The Ultimate Gambling Challenge* (golf, backgammon, gin, pool, and poker) and *The Hustler vs. The Scuffler.*

The Ultimate Gambling Challenge will feature competition in golf, backgammon, gin, pool, and seven poker tournaments. The tournament events will include limit hold'em, no-limit hold'em, seven-card stud, razz, seven-card stud high-low split eight-or-better, Omaha high-low



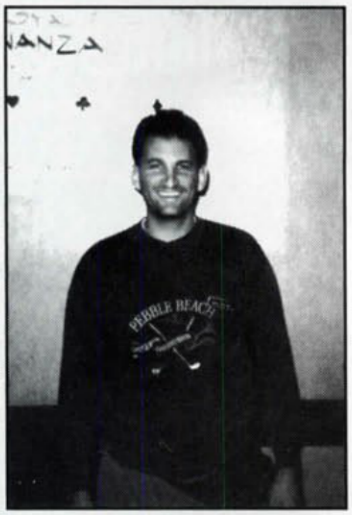
split, and pot-limit Omaha high-low split. All events will have a buy-in of $100 plus $40 entry fee — except the pot-limit Omaha high-low split event, which will have a buy-in of $500 plus $65 entry fee.

The Hustler vs. The Scuffler will feature a special heads-up event between *Hustler Magazine* Publisher Larry Flynt and Puggy Pearson.

All of the poker tournaments will feature a very unique structure, details of which can be obtained from tournament coordinator Steve Pearson at Oceanside Card Club.

Reduced room rates will be available to players.

California Grand Casino ... The *Super Bonanza* hold'em jackpot of $35,200 was hit recently when Rick Baldaramos' eight-high straight flush was beaten by a jack-high straight flush. Baldaramos won $17,600 and the other seven players at the table each pocketed $2,514.



Rick Baldaramos

New England News

By Bob Delisle

Foxwoods promotions ... The *Bad-Beat Jackpot* promotion at Foxwoods has been so successful that two other promotions have been developed for the months of February and March. February will be *Royal Raffle* month, in which a guaranteed $250 will be given away Monday through Friday at 9 p.m. Drawing tickets are awarded for high hands received during the previous day's play, with a full house receiving one ticket, four of a kind receiving three tickets, a straight flush receiving five tickets, and a royal flush receiving 10 tickets. If the raffle winner is present in the poker room during the drawing, the prize is doubled to $500. March will be *Car Giveaway* month, when Foxwoods poker players will be given a chance to win a new sport utility vehicle or its cash equivalent. Players will receive a drawing ticket when making hands of aces full or better. The drawing will be held on April 1.

Mohegan vision statement ... Mohegan Tribal Chairman Roland Harris recently shared plans for the future of the Mohegan Sun Casino. While Harris mentioned construction of a hotel, entertainment center, and other additions, there are no immediate plans in the works for any of these now, according to a casino spokesman.

Massachusetts poker ... The almost-never-ending story of the Wampanoag Indians of Massachusetts opening a casino in the Fall River area of the Bay State is running true to form, with a last minute postponement of a March 1, 1998, groundbreaking. New plans call for a June 1, 1998, start for the Class II casino. No explanation from the Wampanoag's financial backers, Carnival Cruise Lines, was forthcoming. Final plans call for a 1,200-seat bingo hall and a 20-table poker room. Politics is suspected to be the reason for the delay, as Massachusetts Attorney General L. Scott Harshbarger, a staunch foe of gambling, has threatened the tribe with court action if it proceeds.

Happy birthday ... Athena Kocay of Norwich, Connecticut, recently was playing poker on her birthday in the Mohegan Sun when her name was announced as one of the grand prize winners in the Sun's autumn giveaway. The unexpected birthday gift was $25,000.

It pays to be there ... While at Foxwoods, regular high-low stud player Sal Amato won $5,000 in the grand prize drawings of the *Fall into Autumn* giveaway recently.

Sixth anniversary ... Feb. 15, 1998, will mark the sixth anniversary of Foxwoods Resort Casino, and as part of the celebration of the event, Foxwoods will offer the *Sixty Day $600,000 Giveaway*. Beginning Feb. 2 and continuing through March 31, Foxwoods will give away up to $5,000 twice a day. To enter, players must present a Wampum Card at Sweepstakes Headquarters.

Vegas News and Views

By Steve Radulovich

Palace Station ... A total of 32 players qualified for the most recent $1,000 seven-card stud high-low split freeroll tournament. Results were as follows:

1. Jeanne Bellissimo $500
2. Carol Jacobson 250
3. Steven Dresbach 150
4. Steve Urbanetti 100

Also, $25 buy-in vouchers for a stud high-low split game were awarded to the fifth- through eighth-place finishers as follows: Jack Selby, Dan Christian, Bert Price, and Marty Jacobstein.

On Sunday, Jan. 18 and Sunday, Jan. 25, five drawings per day will be held in the poker room for a $100 *Super Bowl* bet certificate. The certificate can be used to make any *Super Bowl* bet that is being offered by the sportsbook (straight bet, parlay, proposition, and so on). Drawings will be held on Jan. 18 at noon, 2 p.m., 4 p.m., 6 p.m., and 8 p.m., and on Jan. 25 at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., noon, 1 p.m., and 2 p.m.

The casinowide *$100,000 Bank Card Giveaway* currently is in progress through Jan. 23. At 9 p.m. on Jan. 16 and Jan. 23, drawings will be

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Triple Play	4 Aces without the joker
Hold'em & Stud	Aces-full or better
Omaha	Four-of-a-kind
Hi-Lo Split	A Bicycle for low
Pan	8 or better when out

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Designated Hand Winners' coupons will be drawn for a $1,000 cash prize eight times daily. (Four in the California Games section & four in the Poker section.) If the winner is not present, we'll draw a "lucky seat" for $300 and roll-over the remaining $700 into the following Sunday's *BIG PROGRESSIVE CASH BACK* Prize Pool.

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Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays & Sunday Progressive Drawings

California:	❶ 10 am	❸ 2 pm	❺ 7 pm	❼ Midnight
Poker/Pan:	❷ 11 am	❹ 3 pm	❻ 8 pm	❽ 1 am

held for one player to win a $10,000 gold card and for 15 players to win a $1,000 card. Winners must be present to win.

The cards can be used like any regular credit card, and winners can shop at any location that accepts such cards.

While drawing tickets can be earned for play throughout the casino, poker players can earn a drawing ticket by making a hand of aces full or better.

Monte Carlo ... The poker room's *Progressive Super Board Jackpot* promotion — in which hands of any four of a kind, a straight flush, or a royal flush are awarded super progressive jackpots — is proving to be very successful, as an average of 15 winners a day are being rewarded.

The poker room's $1-$5 seven-card stud high-low split eight-or-better game with a 25-cent ante is being spread regularly and has become one of the room's most popular games.

Rio ... The *Carnivale of Poker* currently is in full swing and will conclude on Jan. 22-23 with the two-day $5,080 buy-in no-limit hold'em championship. At press time, only a handful of events had been completed, and the turnout has been astounding. Early indications are that another successful major tournament has debuted on the major tournament trail. Results from most events of the inaugural *Carnivale of Poker* will be reported in the next issue.

The Orleans ... Poker players can win an Orleans poker room jacket when making a royal flush and an Orleans hat or T-shirt when making a straight flush.

Riviera ... The *High-Hand Giveaway* promotion currently is awarding $900 a day in high-hand cash. In order to qualify for the high-hand awards, a player must make jacks full or better.

Separate high-hand awards are given in seven-card stud and in hold'em. In each game, the three highest hands from noon to midnight and from midnight to noon receive cash as follows: first place — $100; second place — $75; and third place — $50.

Additionally, a $50 bonus is awarded to anyone who makes a royal flush.

Four Queens ... Details of the *Queens Poker Classic VIII*, March 8-April 2, are as follows. Satellites will begin at noon on Sunday March 8. Monday, March 9 will feature the $540 buy-in *Poker Dealers World Championship* limit hold'em event.

The tournament's 23 regular events will begin on Tuesday, March 10. Tournament events will include limit hold'em, no-limit hold'em, Omaha high-low split, seven-card stud high-low split, pot-limit hold'em, pot-limit Omaha, seven-card stud, Omaha high, razz, lowball, and half hold'em-half Omaha high-low split.

Buy-ins for all events will be either $540 or $1,060, except for the two-day no-limit hold'em championship, which will be $5,080.

All tournaments will start at 1 p.m. sharp. Evening minitournaments will start at 7 p.m. sharp. Supersatellites will start at 9 p.m.

Prize money will be awarded as follows:

- 200 entries or more — three tables will be paid
- 100 - 199 entries — two tables will be paid
- 50 - 99 entries — one table will be paid
- less than 50 entries — five places will be paid

A special room rate of $39 per night will be available to tournament players, as well as complimentary food and beverage in Magnolia's Veranda.

Circus Circus ... Hold'em shootout tournaments with a $17 buy-in are being held every day at 10 a.m.

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A Study Guide for Poker Players

By Dave Whelan

Frequently overheard in poker rooms everywhere are statements like, "I've played poker for 30 years and I ain't read no poker books." "They make their living writing books, not playing poker." "If they really knew anything, they would keep it a secret." "Those who can, do; those who can't, teach."

First of all, to put some of this to rest, there is a tremendous amount of personal reward gained from sharing knowledge. It's the same feeling that you get when you stand back and gaze after you finish waxing your car, or when a business strategy that you planned finally succeeds. You know what I mean if you ever have walked out of a classroom where you've experienced the eye contact and have seen the facial expressions of students with whom you have just enjoyed good communication.

Personally, I think that if I buy a book that helps me win one good pot, it has paid for itself. Recently, during a $10-$20 hold'em game, I won a pot of more than $700 because I had applied a concept that I had picked up in a book that cost me $29.95.

Some of us get more from our books than others do, just as some mechanics are better than others. Research conducted in the '60s showed that college students who got better grades actually spent one-third less time studying than others. This might lead you to believe that they were just smarter; however, IQ testing did not reinforce this. What was discovered was that the ones with better grades knew how to study more efficiently.

Poker books are like any other tool: Unless they are used properly, they simply will not get the job done. It seems to me that many players who buy poker books read them very haphazardly. That, in itself, isn't too damaging, but it means that they receive far from maximum value for their purchases. The problem, as I see it, is this: Just the fact that a new book is in their possession gives some players the incentive to take daring strides into games that they have no business playing. Maybe they think that there's some sort of magic that comes with mere ownership of the book. You see them sit smugly at tables, unarmed.

If we wish to get maximum bang for our book bucks, we will have to rethink how to use our books. While we are at it, let's not sell short the wealth of information that can be gained from articles in poker periodicals, such as *Card Player*. To get maximum benefits from these texts, the study process should be broken into five steps.

Step 1. Read. This is the obvious part that most of us do anyway, but it should be done in an environment that is free of distractions and interruptions (no loud television or screaming kids). With normal retention, we will benefit to some extent from this step. We will absorb small amounts of knowledge that seem to fit our mindset.

Step 2. Application. We take what we have gained and go out and play poker. Hopefully, we receive positive reinforcement, which is a very important part of any learning process. This step is based on the "Gestalt Field Theory," derived from research conducted in Europe. In the teaching of vocational skills, it was concluded that if classroom time is intermingled with periods of time in the workplace, the learning was much more effective.

Step 3. Reread and highlight. Most poker books are written like any other textbook, with each paragraph containing a key point and the rest of the paragraph consisting of analogies or comparisons to make the student understand the key point. The trick is to identify and highlight the key points. This is important because the student then becomes actively involved in the learning process. If the key point is obvious to you or already is in your poker repertoire, you might not want to highlight it, because it could be just a distraction during future review. Upon completion of this step, you now have a quick and easy reference for future use.

Step 4. Reapplication. More on-the-job training, so to speak.

Step 5. Review. This can be done as often as necessary. Other research shows that average students retained 50 percent of subject matter one hour after exposure and less 25 percent after 48 hours. To improve on these retention percentages, review is imperative.

I recently played an Omaha high-low event at a major tournament that paid 18 places. We were down to three tables and were getting ready to combine to two. We went on a break, during which time I called my wife to let her know that I was still in the hunt. Jokingly, I said, "I wish that I had read the book more closely on what to do in the later stages of a tournament on a short stack." She responded by asking if I wanted her to read it to me. Suddenly it hit me, and I said, "No, just read me what I have highlighted." From this, I gained information that helped me vary my strategy and make it to the final table as chip leader, and ultimately to a negotiated second-place finish worth $25,000.

I now have a briefcase full of magazine articles and copied book pages filed neatly in clear plastic notebook inserts that goes with me whenever I travel to play poker. Another advantage of having this ready reference library is that when we think that we are running badly, many experts recommend taking some time off to review before returning to the tables. Since many poker players mistake playing badly for running badly, this review (made easier by highlighted key points) could uncover a deviation from solid play that will help to correct a problem.

If you follow the procedures recommended in this article, your poker skills should improve, or at worst, you could have a lot of newsprint with which to line the bottom of your bird cage.◆

Poker Player's Crossword Puzzle

By Michael Wiesenberg

ACROSS

1. Claremont, California, college, or a newscaster
5. Sweetened fruit drinks
9. Slow person
14. Marvel Comics hero with a hammer
15. Supercomputer
16. In poorer health
17. Station on a network
18. Something found in the hole
19. Fencing rapiers with three-sided blades
20. The point at which you see the other guy's cards
22. Rents
23. Kip
24. Suicidal wife of Rudra: Hindu mythology
25. State positively
28. The guy who isn't supposed to win your pot
32. Take care of a benefactor after you win
33. 17th-century Dutch painter
34. Eggs
35. Alan Young's co-star on late-night cable
36. Rose oil
37. Latex trees
38. Bird found mostly in crossword puzzles
39. Streamlined
40. Saw logs
41. Someone going south
43. Guys who give action?
44. Caught the best card
45. Afternoon show
46. Make sure a particular player gets a hand
49. Cardroom middle management
53. The tops
54. Having no slack
55. Where the congregation sits
56. French impressionist; *Olympia* was his masterpiece
57. What a card player may think he needs to get even
58. Increases
59. Journal item
60. On-tap items
61. What your opponent hopes to put in your stack

DOWN

1. Rocky _____
2. We're in for it, now!
3. Relative of 38 across
4. Tried to make a hand that wouldn't even win

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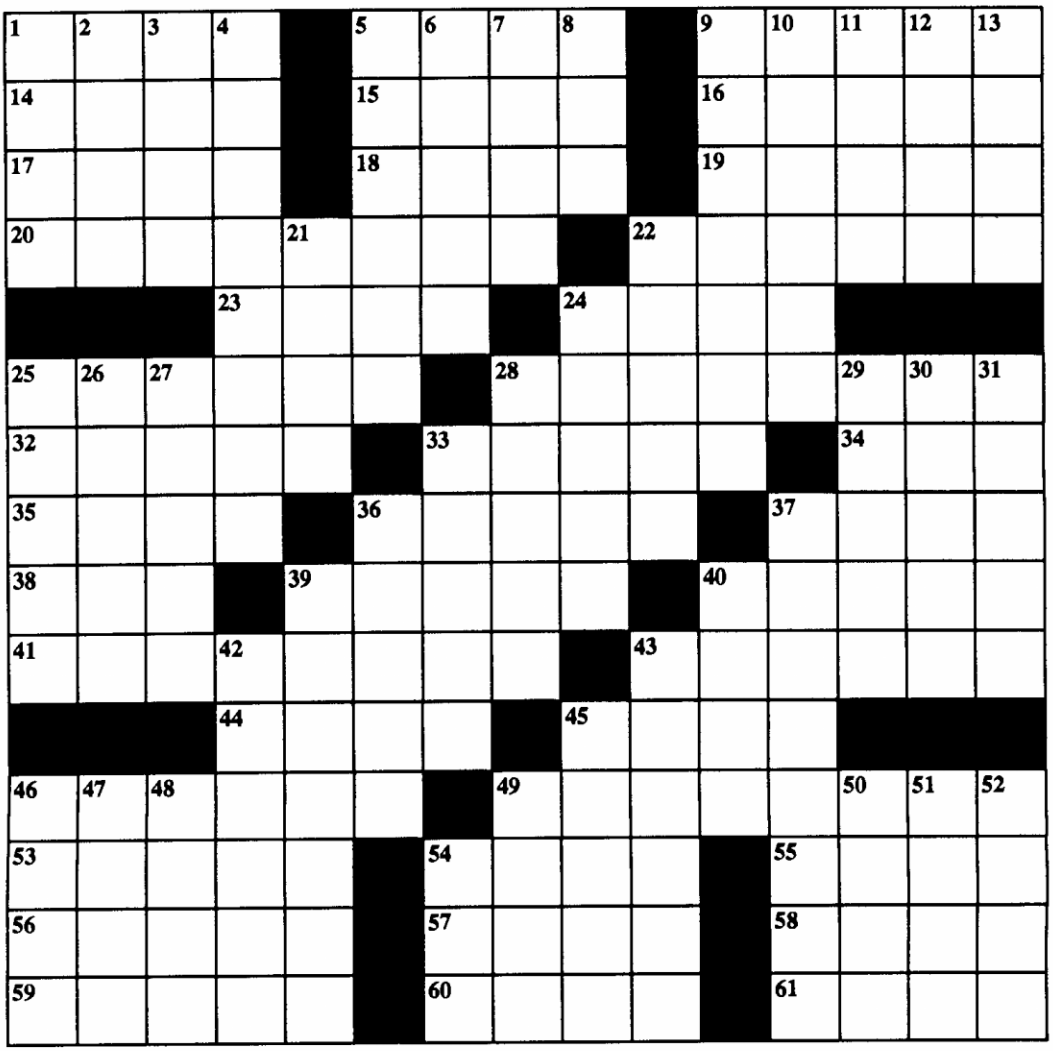
5. What the Ancient Mariner did to the wedding guest
6. Doesn't stand pat
7. What you might do while you learn
8. Barrett, Pink Floyd founder
9. Add something to the pot
10. What wins most lowball pots
11. Mars, to the ancient Greeks
12. Mm hmm...
13. Not more
21. Rowboat
22. Loader
24. In a trick-taking game, the lead of a singleton in a suit other than trumps
25. Weapons supplier
26. 18th-century California missionary
27. Exhausted
28. Complete
29. Grief
30. Out in the open
31. Neon and xenon
33. Peel's partner
36. First popular talk-show host
37. Describing a pot that defaults to the blind
39. High-denomination chips
40. Hot tubs
42. Bikini top
43. Certain bridge players
45. The Bank Dick ("... accent grave")
46. Administrative division of ancient Attica or modern Greece
47. Dash
48. " ____ that a Shame?"
49. The long ____
50. Catch on to the activities of a card thief
51. What you were when you sat down to play
52. Empty item
54. La preceder



SOLUTION ON PAGE 93



By Diana Plante

Mexican Chili-Pasta Medley

After a long day of shopping or playing poker, this is a great recipe that is quick, simple, and hearty.

1 8-ounce package Martha Gooch Pasta Medley
1 pound ground beef (or ground turkey, if desired)
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/4 cup chopped green pepper
1 garlic clove, minced
1 16-ounce can tomatoes, undrained, cut up
1 16-ounce can kidney beans, drained
1/2 cup sliced black olives
1 15-ounce can tomato sauce
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1-2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
shredded cheddar cheese, if desired

Cook pasta according to directions on package. Drain, rinse with hot water. In large saucepan, brown ground beef, onion, green pepper, and garlic. Drain. Stir in tomatoes, kidney beans, black olives, tomato sauce, chili powder, salt, and pepper. Gently stir in cooked pasta. Cover, simmer 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally until thoroughly heated. Serve in bowls. Sprinkle with cheese, if desired.

Enjoy.

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Fresh Apple Cake

I think that you'll like this cake for the winter season. It is very moist and tasty, and the smell of the baking apples in the kitchen is wonderful. This recipe takes a little time, but the end results are worth it.

3 cups chopped cooking apples
1 1/4 cups salad oil
1 3/4 cups sugar
3 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 teaspoon salt
2 1/2 cups flour
1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon cloves
1 cup chopped nuts

Wash, core, and chop apples and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine oil, sugar, and eggs. Beat until creamy. Beat in vanilla.

Sift dry ingredients. Add to sugar mixture and mix until well blended. Fold in apples and nuts. Pour into a greased and floured angel food pan or a large bundt pan. Bake at 375 degrees for about one hour and 20 minutes, or until done. To test for doneness, insert a toothpick. If it comes out perfectly clean, the cake is done.

I take the cake out 5 minutes early, since the cake will bake awhile after being taken out of the oven. I also find that the texture, moisture, and taste are fine without any kind of topping. If you would like something on top, however, I suggest using a fine sprinkle of powdered sugar or a light glaze. I also have made cinnamon whipped cream for a fine topping.

Enjoy.

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Jan 13, Tue	• Pot Limit Hold'em		$1000 + 60
Jan 14, Wed	• Seven Card Stud		$1000 + 60
Jan 15, Thu	• Seven Card Stud - 8 or Better		$1000 + 60
Jan 16, Fri	• Omaha - 8 or Better		$1000 + 60
Jan 17, Sat	• Limit Hold'em		$1500 + 70
Jan 18, Sun	• No Limit Hold'em	(1 Optional Rebuy)	$1000 + 60
Jan 19, Mon	• Pot Limit Omaha	(Rebuy 3hrs.)	$1000 + 60
Jan 20, Tue	• Pot Limit Hold'em	(1 Optional Rebuy)	$1000 + 60
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Win Bets by Handicapping the Human Element at the Races

SPORTS BETTING BY THE BOOK



BY JACK RUBIN

If you can trust the human element in the horse racing game, you just might be able to pick up on some clues that will lead to winning plays. And the only way that the human element shows up honestly is through money wagered. That's one thing that cannot be hidden. The odds cannot be kept a secret.

Racetrackers have expressions for money showing on particular horses, and for the opposite, money not showing where it was expected to appear. When a horse looks like it should be heavily backed by the public, but isn't, it is said to be "dead on the board." Likewise, another that is not expected to attract much money, but does, is said to be "alive and taking money."

A good example took place in the final race one day at the recently concluded Bay Meadows meeting. The favorite was listed in the morning line at 2-to-1, but was expected to go off at much smaller odds than that. As post time drew near, this horse was listed at 7-to-2. Dead on the board?

Another horse in the race was listed on the overnight sheet at 8-to-1, and it should have been even a bit higher than that. The board read 3-to-1. Alive and taking money? The second early-line choice had been listed at 3-to-1. It now was at 5-to-1 on the board. Another being ignored by the public?

Besides the 8-to-1 horse that was bet down to 3-to-1, there were three others in the race with odds that were considerably less than they should have been. Two were listed at 20-to-1 in the morning line and should have been more like 50-to-1. However, they were

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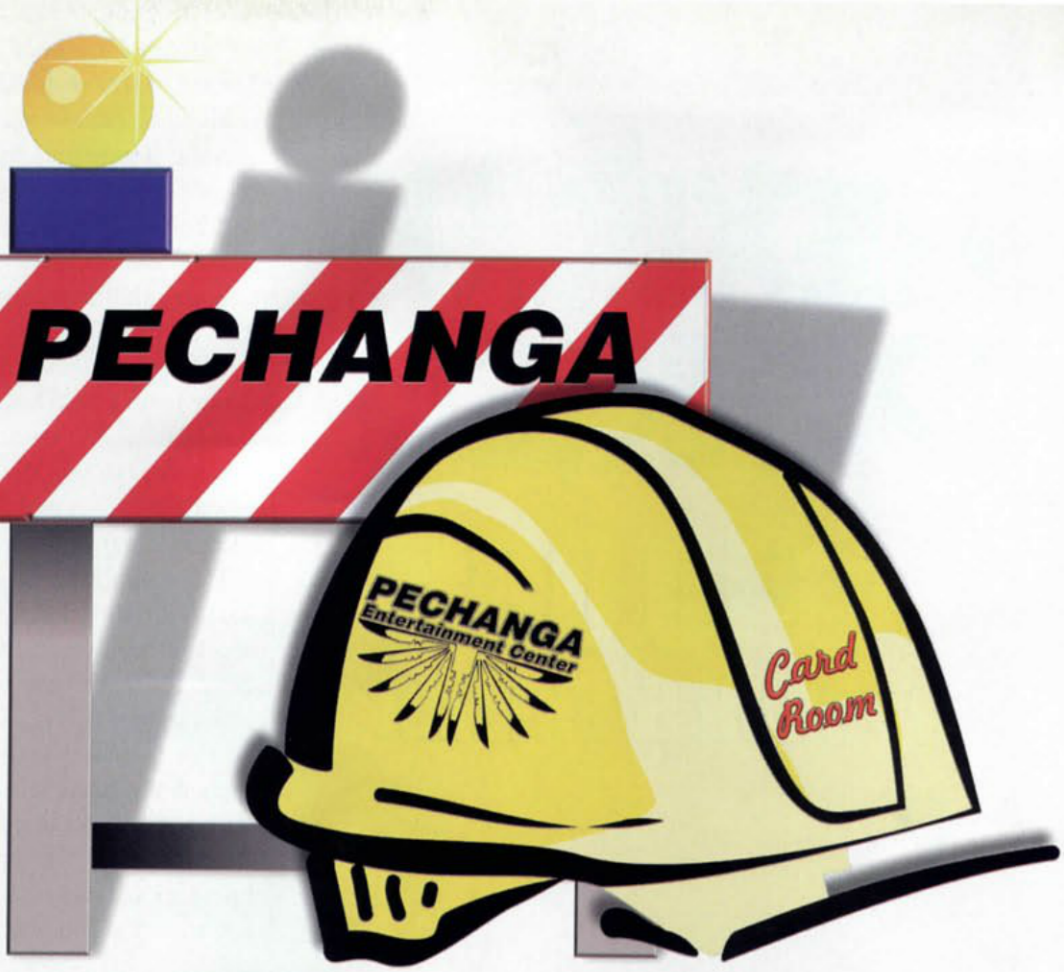

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at 11-to-1 and 15-to-1. The other had been listed at 30-to-1 and should have been closer to 100-to-1 in the actual betting. Instead, it was at 14-to-1.

My final thought was that the really "live" horse in the race was the "long shot" that now was bet down to 3-to-1. The other potential live horses were the ones that were bet down to 11-to-1, 14-to-1, and 15-to-1. This seemed like a perfect trifecta key, using the 3-to-1 shot and boxing the other three underneath (for second and third position) for a total cost of $12 on the $2 trifecta level. That meant that the key horse would have to win and any two of the three others boxed underneath would have to finish second and third in order to complete a winning ticket.

Needless to say, the 3-to-1 shot won easily by about five lengths and returned $8. The 11-to-1 and 14-to-1 shots were second and third, and the $2 trifecta payoff was $750.

This example helps to make the point that human beings are involved rather deeply in the horse racing game. Favorites and short-priced horses do nothing for the bettors, especially bettors who also are owners.

If a trainer tells the owner that his horse looks like he should be able to win, everything then depends upon the horse's odds. If the horse is listed as the favorite, the trainer isn't giving the owner anything of value. And if that horse should lose, look how ridiculous the trainer appears. And even if the horse should win, the payoff is so small that the whole thing just wasn't worth much at all.

However, if the trainer points out a horse listed at 8-to-1 that should be even higher in odds, he is offering something of value. If stable money knocks the odds down and that horse returns only 3-to-1, well, that's the breaks, and at least the money went into the pockets that mattered most.

When betting owners or connections believe that their horse has a strong chance of winning, money will show. Horses listed at 20-to-1 may go off at 6-to-1. Horses that should be low-odds favorites and short-priced contenders may drift up in odds when ignored by the knowledgeable bettors. In these situations, playing against "dead" favorites and supporting "live" long shots provides the bettor with an inside track at great value.

The initial indication is a favorite at higher odds than listed in the morning line. The overnight sheet in all racebooks lists the early odds, and those numbers also are indicated on the wallboards for each race. During the betting at anywhere from about five to 10 minutes before post time, look at the actual odds and compare it to the morning line.

See which horses are considerably less in odds than listed on the sheet. Those horses are taking unnatural money. See which horses are at the same or considerably higher odds than listed. Those horses are being avoided.

Yes, it is true that horses often win at higher odds than listed, and many players search out such "overlays." However, in approaching the racing game and attempting to seek out the "inside" or "information" horses, money is the only true indicator of human intentions.◆

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Expected Value and the Anti-Peter Principle

All professional gamblers rate games according to the "expected value." This concept, in fact, is so important to gamblers that, as with Yahweh of old, you rarely hear the words spoken — just the initials E.V.

No professional ever would place a bet on any game if he or she didn't think that the E.V. was positive. Professional gamblers don't gamble, they bet only on what they believe are sure things. There often are arguments among pros about how to figure out the E.V. Pros want to know what the precise E.V. is of a game, whether the risk outweighs the E.V. , or whether the E.V. of one available game is higher than that of another game. These arguments arise from the fact that the factors that determine the E.V. of a game are based on assumptions that are less than perfectly accurate.

These days, a blackjack player can easily run off a computer simulation of a few million (or a few hundred million) hands to test his system under very precise game conditions, thus arriving at the E.V. of that game. But real-world conditions never match computer simulation conditions. If I tell my computer to deal 75 percent of the cards between shuffles, that's precisely where the electronic "cut card" will be placed to signal a shuffle. Human dealers don't cut with this precision, and as most knowledgeable players know, a 5 percent change in the actual level of penetration will have a drastic effect on the E.V.

Likewise, my computer is going to play my counting system perfectly. I won't ever make a dumb mistake, lose the running count, miscalculate the true count, forget a strategy index number, purposely misplay a hand because the pit boss is watching, miss an incorrect payment on a bet, or do any of dozens of other things that happen in real-world casinos but never in computers.

For gamblers in games other than blackjack, figuring the E.V. is even more difficult. Tournament players, poker players, and sports and horse bettors always must factor in the skill level of the competition — something that blackjack players don't have to consider.

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Many years ago, at one of the University of Nevada gambling conferences, noted author Stanford Wong presented a paper in which he "proved" that a blackjack player using the Kelly Criterion would win at only half the rate of his expected value. If this sounds like a contradiction of what the term "expected value" means, it struck author Peter Griffin as illogical also. Griffin published a rebuttal to Wong's paper at the same conference that essentially stated that the expected value of the expected value is the expected value.

I know many pro gamblers who would refute this Gertrude Steinism on empirical evidence. Keith Taft — notorious computer electronic whiz whose ingenious devices plagued the casino industry for many years, until the anti-device laws were first passed in Nevada and New Jersey in the mid-1980s — told me that based on his team's results with its shuffle-tracking computers, "Your expected value *usually is about* half of what you estimate it to be."

"Why is this, Keith?"

"I don't know, Arnold. I just know that the experience of our computer teams over the long haul — and I'm talking about many teams over years of play — was to win about half of what we predicted based on our computer simulations."

I believe that what is at work in the world

of professional gambling is a principle that has been known in the business world for decades as the "Peter Principle." This principle states that each person in a corporation will rise to his own level of incompetence. As Lawrence J. Peters postulated in 1969 in his book of the same title, people who succeed in the corporate world continually are promoted to positions of greater authority, until they reach the level at which they no longer excel — and that's where they stay. Every position, therefore, ultimately is filled by a person who underperforms.

Professional gamblers, despite their hard-nosed image, are in fact the world's most die-hard optimists. These are people who are willing to bet everything they have on themselves. Blackjack players continually try to learn more complex systems so that they can beat tougher games, until their mental and psychological talents "peter out" in games that are beyond their capacity. And that's where they stay. There are lots of big-money blackjack players who make less money with black-chip play than card counters with less talent make with green-chip play. The black-chippers resign themselves to smaller spreads, more camouflage, and shallower deck penetration in order to prove to themselves that they can succeed at that level.

Poker players, likewise, continue to go up the ladder until they find themselves pitted against players they can't easily beat, and that's where they stay. Poker players who could make a comfortable living in $20-$40 games struggle to survive in $100-$200 games.

So, as 1998 begins, here's a new year's resolution for all of you professional gamblers that could earn you more money this year than any other strategic play that you might try: *Take one step down!* This is the "Anti-Peter Principle."

If you're playing blackjack and are spreading from $100 to $200, move down to green ($25 chip) play and see what happens to your actual win rate. Do you find that you can spread more aggressively? Use less camouflage? Play with less emotional involvement?

And simplify your system! If you're fighting with a multilevel count, are attempting to side-count aces, or are using a hundred strategy indices — give yourself a break — go back to the simple high-low count. Forget the ace side-count. Toss out most of those rarely used index numbers. Play fast with confidence and aggression. Do you find that you make more money even at lower stakes?

If you're a poker player, go down a level to the games where you know that you're the best player at the table, where you know that your opponents all are struggling at their own level of incompetence. Don't you find that you make more money even though the pots are smaller? Are you playing this game for the "image" of being seen as a contender with the big players, or are you in it for the money?

A number of gamblers recently have told me that they were really hoping to move up a level to bigger games this year. I think that most might be wiser to either stay put or move down a level into bigger profits. Happy New Year!◆

Card Player readers can use the coupon in this issue to get a discount on Arnold Snyder's 1998 revision of "Blackbelt in Blackjack." See the ad on page 106 to take advantage of this offer.



Skipping Along



"Skip Straights" in this column in the Dec. 1, 1995, issue of *Card Player* focused on those enticing seven-card stud starting hands in which the three cards are separated by single open ranks — that is, all three cards working for a straight, but no consecutive ranks — and are of three different suits. That column looked into the strength of such hands, and concluded that against a single opponent, A-Q-10 will win nearly 54% of the time, Q-10-8 about half the time, and on down to 6-4-2 at around 41% of the time. In a seven-player game, A-Q-10 will come out best more than 16% of the time, with K-J-9 right around "par" for seven players, and on down to 6-4-2 at less than 10%. So, any such mixed-suit, skip-straight starting hands lower than Q-10-8 in heads-up play or lower than K-J-9 with seven players are better "skipped." Even 5-3-A with the ace doesn't rebound enough — to less than 48% heads up and only approximately 13% with seven players. Here, we will narrow our focus to just the K-J-9 with seven players and its chances for improvement.

First, what do we mean by K-J-9 rating "right around 'par' for seven players"? Well, a "par" hand is one that will come out best about one-seventh of the time. In 7 million "Monte Carlo" computer simulation tests pitting a starting K-J-9 against six random opposing hands, our K-J-9 scored 1,000,199, just barely more than par of 1 million — such close results as to allow us only a shaky confidence of about 7-to-5 as to whether K-J-9 is *really* better than par. Those of you with suitable computer programs, such as Mike Caro's *Poker Probe*, might like to run further tests.

Here is a table that compares how often a starting K-J-9 of mixed suits and a random hand will end up with the various ranks of final poker hands.

Rank of Hand	Random Hand	Start K-J-9
Straight flush	0.03%	0.01%
Four of a kind	0.17%	0.07%
Full house	2.60%	1.50%
Flush	3.03%	0.70%
Straight	4.62%	8.33%
Three of a kind	4.83%	3.65%
Two pair	23.50%	19.90%
One pair	43.82%	44.95%
Nothing	17.41%	20.90%

The numbers in this table for the K-J-9 are rather unimpressive, except for the 8.33% straights. And it's those straights, about one time in 12 compared to only about one in 21 or 22 for a random hand, that provide the K-J-9 with at least approximately 40% of its winners.

OK, how about improvement? Well, with a K-J-9 to start — let's say that it's K♠ J♥ 9♦ — you pretty much need to fill in one of the "holes" in your straight, or at least pair up, or you're probably *gone*. A good little test-your-intuition challenge here is the question of what's the *best* fourth card for you to catch?

Are you saying that it's a *queen* in suit with one of your K♠ J♥ 9♦; that is, Q♠, Q♥, Q♦? No, not even close, but I'll not keep you in suspense — it's the K♥. The K♥ pairs your king in suit with your J♥, having a slight edge over the K♦ in suit with your 9♦ because of when you do catch three more of the suit. And even a 10 is a better catch than a queen, as a 10 offers some extra straight chances, jack high. After the suited kings, the next best catches are suited tens — 10♠, 10♥, or 10♦ —then the unsuited K♣, and then even the unsuited 10♣. Then, finally, come the queens, suited or unsuited, which are better than pairing your jack or nine.

A suited king would increase your three-of-a-kind, full house, and four-of-a-kind chances from 3.65%/1.50%/0.07% up to 8.14%/5.37%/0.28%, while still keeping alive some chances for straights and flushes. Against six random opponents, K♠ J♥ 9♦ plus either the K♥ or K♦ in your first four cards would boost your winning chances from around the par of 14.3% (that is, one-seventh) up to 24% to 25%. Even the unsuited 9♣ for a fourth card would be a significant improvement, too, to better than 20%.♦

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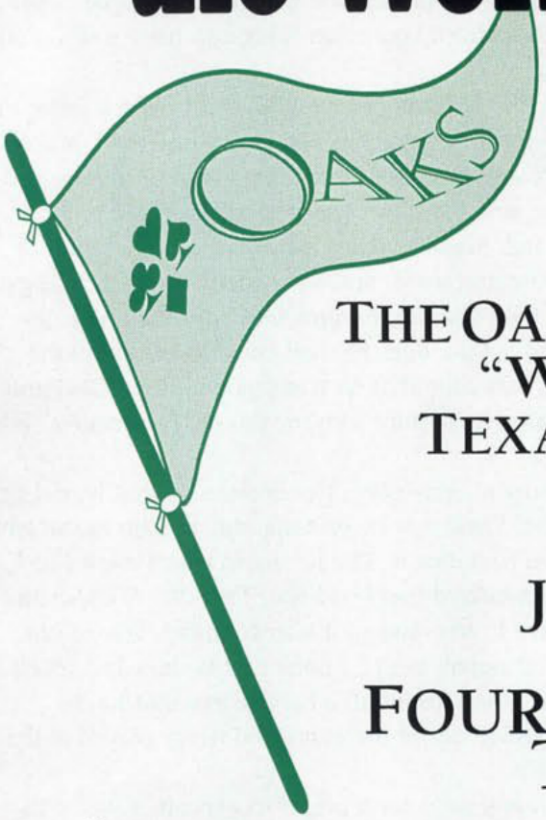

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All About POKER From The Coach

By Bob Ciaffone

The String Bet

I have had a couple of people ask me lately to clarify poker's rule governing the string bet. Their comments suggest that the rule prohibiting string bets is being enforced rigidly and perhaps unfairly. My poker experience has revealed that a lot of people, including floorpeople and dealers, do not fully understand either the rule or the way that it should be enforced. Consequently, the sensible thing for a player to do is understand the rule and make sure that he or she does nothing that could lead to getting a bad ruling.

I am told that the term "string bet" is borrowed from the now extinct gambling game of faro. The string-bet rule is a necessary part of poker that is designed to prevent a player from making a partial bet, picking up unauthorized information, and then taking unfair advantage by increasing the amount of the wager. This could be done either by changing a call to a raise or, if the limit is not fixed, by increasing the size of the bet.

The simplest version of the string-bet rule states that a player must indicate at the time that a wager is made that he is raising, or his wager will be considered only a call. There are many acceptable ways of showing one's intention, such as saying "raise," putting the combined bet and raise into the pot at the same time, announcing the total amount of the bet and raise, and so on.

The one thing that is clearly a violation is putting only the amount of a call into the pot in silence, reaching back for more money, and then raising.

I have been playing poker for more than 45 years, and I do not believe that I ever have seen a player deliberately try to take advantage of the rules by changing a call to a raise. What I have seen on numerous occasions is an inexperienced player making a string bet in ignorance and losing the right to raise the pot. String-betting is the hallmark of the rookie, not the person who is trying to circumvent the rule.

If a player clearly makes a string bet, he should be informed of the rule and required to take back the raise. But in borderline and unclear cases, the player should be given the benefit of the doubt. Anybody who makes a string bet is likely to be a greenhorn who should be encouraged by being able to play in a friendly atmosphere. Newcomers to any game should be treated as welcome participants, not as people who are made to feel uncomfortable and disadvantaged because their ignorance of the rule will be exploited against them to the fullest.

Frankly, I have seen many occasions when dealers, floorpeople, and even cardrooms lean over backward to be rigid in enforcement of the string-bet rule. I myself have been prevented from raising a couple of times by people with this type of mentality. Let me tell you how a professional poker player (and an authority on poker rules) can have a string bet called on him.

In incident No. 1, I was playing in a limit hold'em game in a Las Vegas casino that since has been sold, renamed, and no longer has a cardroom. I was in the big blind. Someone had raised the pot, and there were several callers. I put in the amount of a call, made a vigorous upward gesture with the thumb of my betting hand, and went back to my stack to get the chips for the raise. By the time that I got the chips, the dealer had put out the flop. He had failed to knock on the table, alerting everyone that he was going to deal. Obviously, he had not seen my gesture with my thumb. I, of course, asked to get a ruling.

The floorperson came over. The dealer said that he did not see my gesture. I said that he was the only person at the table who had failed to notice it. The floorman asked me if I had said "raise." I admitted that I had not. Then the floorperson said, "You have to say raise or it is a string bet. We do not recognize hand signals here." I think that he failed to speak the truth, because I then gave him a hand signal that he did recognize. I cashed out of the game and never played in that cardroom again.

There are many ways for a player to indicate a desire to raise the pot besides saying "raise." He can use a phrase such as "going up," "two bets," "let's play for more," and so on. He can even make some sort of gesture that is clearly understood to mean that a raise is coming. All of these things are perfectly legal, however, they all leave you open to getting a bad ruling, as I did. My suggestion is to not use any method that should be legal but possibly could get you an adverse ruling.

In incident No. 2, which happened about a decade ago, I was playing in a Southern California cardroom that was infamous for its rigid enforcement of rules, against both employees and patrons. Since that time, it has undergone both a change of management and philosophy, recognizing that it should be trying to capture customers and retain employees.

I was playing in a $30-$60 limit hold'em game that was being played with $5 chips. It was fourth street, so a bet was six chips and a raise was 12 chips. Someone bet, and I wanted to raise. I grabbed a handful of chips and made my raise with a nice clean motion, laying out stacks of three chips each. Alas, I had grabbed only 11 chips, so my fourth pile was short one chip. I went back to my stack and got another chip to complete my bet. A fellow who was not in the hand said "string

bet," and we had to get a ruling. I told the floorperson that my intention to raise the pot was obvious to all. The floorperson said that the rule in the club was that a player must put out the full amount required to raise or it was a string bet. He was both courteous and a bit apologetic about the rule, but said, "This is the rule in our cardroom, and you need to abide by it, so please don't do that anymore." That was my baptism to the notorious "California string-bet rule."

In 1987, when the Las Vegas Hilton rule book first came out, Cardroom Manager Tom Bowling adopted my suggestion that the string-bet rule should require a player to raise the pot if he puts in half a bet or more toward a raise. In my incident, therefore, I should have been required by the rule to put in one more chip rather than take back five chips already in the pot. Besides, information had been conveyed to everyone at the table that I wanted to raise, and other players were going to take that into account when deciding whether to call or to raise themselves.

If a player bets but does not put the full amount required into the pot, should you (A) prevent him from betting, (B) give him a choice of either completing the bet or throwing away his hand, (C) require that he make the amount proper? The right answer is (C) for a bet, and it also should be (C) for a raise.

It was only recently that the major Southern California cardrooms made a unified set of rules, and now they use the rule that half a bet or more toward a raise put into the pot is the same as saying "raise." This rule is entirely consistent with the concept that poker should be a game that is played by ladies and gentleman, and that you must do what you say you are going to do. Putting in an amount that makes it appear that you are trying to raise should require you to do it.

No rule is perfect. The rule on string bets that I just mentioned is almost problem-free. The only situation in which I have ever seen a problem arise is when a bet is two chips, which makes a raise four chips. A player sometimes puts in one more chip than he intends to. Thus, he puts in three chips when he's intending to put in only two chips. In the Hilton rules, we allowed for this, stating that an excess of only one chip did not require one to raise. Maybe you don't need to specify this exception in the rules if you train your floorpeople and dealers not to be too rigid in applying the rule in this type of situation. It is particularly important when the little blind needs one chip to call and throws two chips into the pot. This could easily be a nervous greenhorn who forgot that he already was in for one chip. It would be sinful to require such a player to raise the pot.

Big-bet poker has its own rule governing string bets. A player who announces "raise" may continue to put chips into the pot until his hands come to rest outside of the pot area to indicate that he is finished. This rule is used because in big-bet poker, a player may be betting an amount so large that it is physically impossible to do so in one motion.

Many dealers and floorpeople do not know or understand this rule, because the typical cardroom features this type of poker only during a tournament. A big-bet player needs to take extra pains to guard against a bad ruling. Therefore, you should do one of the following things after saying "raise":

1. Specify the amount that you are going to raise. For an all-in bet (in which you are unlikely to know the exact amount that you are going to be raising), simply say, "I'm raising all in."

2. Assemble the full amount that you are going to raise in an area outside of the pot, then push the whole amount in at one time.

3. Cut some chips into the pot, and hold them with your other hand after putting them in. Before reloading, say, "more coming," and reach back to get the remainder being wagered. You may keep doing this little routine until you are through betting the full amount.

For you big-bet players, if you say "raise," reach back and put chips into the pot, and then reach back quickly and grab some more to be wagered, you are following the letter of the law but are doing something stupid. You are relying on your fellow man to know as much about the rules of big-bet poker as you do. If you were a boxer, would you ignore the ref's warning to protect yourself at all times? If you did so, you might find yourself on the canvas from a blow thrown after the bell, and possibly lose the fight. In a no-limit poker game, you also should be warned to protect yourself at all times. Do not become a victim of someone's ignorance, because you should know better than to allow that to happen. Do not gamble that the cardroom staff will not make an error when you can easily protect against such an event.◆

Editor's note: Bob Ciaffone is available for poker lessons. He may be reached at (517) 792-0884, or by E-mail at coach999@concentric.net. His books Pot-limit and No-limit Poker and Improve Your Poker are available through Card Player.



The Tin Box

By Leo Cummins

Some were calling it a grudge match. Others were calling it a lovers' quarrel that moved to the poker table. Whatever it was, it generated a lot of buzz in the poker rooms around town, because most players knew and were fond of Megan Sullivan and Danny Henderson.

At the center of the poker room, velvet ropes separated a single table from the six rows of spectator seats that surrounded it. A sandy-haired man in the front row tilted his head to the spectator next to him. "I remember the night that Megan and Danny met," he said. "It was three years ago. One of the players at our hold'em table busted out, and a few minutes later, this beautiful redhead slides into the open position. She flashes a fetching smile and says that her name is Megan. Everyone was immediately taken by her — especially Danny.

"From the moment she sat down, the table loosened up. The pots got bigger and the laughter got heartier. And when they weren't eyeing their cards, Megan and Danny were eyeing each other. At one point, Megan reached over and removed Danny's cowboy hat. 'Ha!' she said. 'Curly hair; I like that.' And then she placed the hat on top of her own mound of red hair. She was the life of the table.

"She also was a good player. As the game progressed, the stacks of chips in front of her grew larger. About an hour and a half into the game, she won one of the largest pots of the night. After tipping the dealer, she racked her chips and said, 'Time to call it a night.'

"'You come back now;' one of the players said.

"'Oh, I intend to,' she said. 'I live in Vegas now.'

"All eyes were on her as she moved to the back of the room to cash in.

"'Hey!' Danny said. 'She took my hat.'

"Moving to the cashier's area, Danny exchanged a few words with Megan. She laughed and placed Danny's hat back on his head. After a few more words, Danny came back to the table and racked his chips.

"'Leaving you folks now,' he said smiling. 'Seems I've got myself a dinner date.'

"And that," the man said, "is how it all began."

"And I'll tell you how it ended," a woman said from behind them. "Danny was afraid of making a commitment."

Turning, the man frowned. "Margaret, you don't know what the hell you're talking about."

"Don't I though?" she responded. "After that first night, they became practically inseparable. And when Megan asked my advice about setting up housekeeping with Danny, I reminded her that it isn't wise to show a man all of your cards before he makes a commitment — if you know what I mean."

"They weren't playing poker," he said. "They were playing house."

"That's the point. Megan was tired of playing. She wanted to settle down."

"You're saying that Danny didn't?"

The woman shook her head. "Why should he? He already had Megan to come home to without the benefit of a marriage certificate."

The man snorted.

"Things went from bad to worse between them," she said, "and Danny finally moved out and began to take up with a cocktail waitress.'"

The man smiled. "Saw them together a few weeks ago. She's a looker."

The woman poked him on the arm. "Shows you what kind of taste you have in women."

The spectator asked, "If they broke up, how come they're playing tonight?"

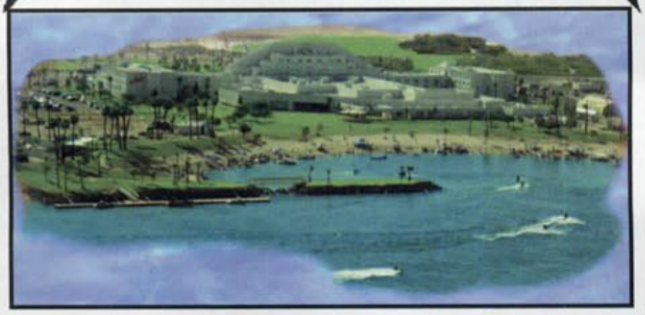
"It was Danny's idea," the man answered. "He wants to settle who the best player is."

Just then, the poker room manager moved to the playing table.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he announced, "we are pleased to host a head-to-head game between Megan Sullivan and Danny Henderson."

As their names were announced, Megan and Danny moved from the rear of the room to a polite rippling of applause. Megan wore a blue denim dress with a silver Indian belt. Her red hair was upswept, and was held in place with a silver barrette. She

Discover Paradise



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looked beautiful and nervous.

Danny wore black slacks, a white polo shirt, and his trademark cowboy hat. He looked handsome and confident.

The manager continued. "The game is no-limit Texas hold'em — with a $20,000 buy-in. The blind is $50 with a $100 minimum on the flop."

Danny unzipped a small leather portfolio and handed a bundle of hundreds to the manager. Megan did the same from her purse. After verifying the amounts, the manager pushed stacks of black and green chips in their direction.

"Let the game begin," the manager proclaimed.

As the first hand was dealt, Danny removed a small tin box from the leather portfolio and placed it next to his chips.

Leaning back, the man said to the woman, "Danny is going to clean her clock."

"A hundred dollars says you're wrong," she said.

"You've got a bet," he said.

The first few hands were indecisive, then Danny bet $500 on a flop of J♣ 8♦ 6♦. Megan raised $2,000. Danny called. The hand played out with Danny winning with an ace-high flush to Megan's jack-high straight.

"Megan blew it," the man said. "She had her straight on fourth street but called instead of raising. Gave Danny a chance to draw his flush. Game won't last if she's going to play like that."

But it did. Megan caught Danny with a series of second-best hands until she had between $7,000 and $8,000 of his chips on her side of the table.

Finally, the decisive hand was dealt.

The dealer flopped the A♥ J♥ 9♠. Megan bet $5,000 and Danny called.

Fourth street brought the 9♦. Megan bet another $5,000 and Danny called. This left him with a small pile of blacks and greens and the tin box in front of him.

The audience held its breath as the dealer flipped over the fifth and remaining card. It was the 2♣.

The woman leaned over to the man. "She's got him now," she said. "My guess is, she's got a full house."

Before Megan could bet, Danny pushed his remaining chips and the tin box into the pot. "All in," he declared.

The dealer counted Danny's chips and Megan matched them.

"What's in the tin box?" Megan asked.

"A little something extra if you win," Danny replied. "You've been called. What do you have?"

Locking her eyes on his, she turned over her two holecards — A♠ A♦.

"Aces full," the dealer announced. Turning to Danny, he asked, "Danny?"

Danny studied his holecards for a moment, then flipped them aside facedown on the table. "Good hand," he said.

There was a mixed reaction from the crowd as the dealer pushed the mound of chips and the tin box over to Megan.

Picking up the box, Megan asked Danny, "Can I open it now?"

"That's the plan," he said.

Megan opened the box and removed a diamond ring. The emerald-cut stone was at least 3 carats. She looked at Danny in surprise. "Is this what I think it is?" she asked.

"It is," he replied.

"Aren't there some words that go along with it?"

Reaching over the table, Danny took Megan's hands and asked, "Will you marry me?"

Her green eyes sparkled. "You can bet on it," she said.

At Megan's words, pandemonium broke loose in the poker room.

"You owe me $100," the woman said to the man.

"Maybe I do and maybe I don't," he replied.

In the excitement, the dealer forgot to pull Danny's holecards back into the deck, and they still were facedown on the table.

"Let's take a look at what he folded."

Leaning forward, he turned up the corner of Danny's holecards.

"A pair of nines," the woman said in amazement. "He had four nines. He had the winning hand and didn't show it. Why in the world would he do something like that?"

"Maybe it was the only way he knew to make a commitment," he said.

"Well, if that's the case, it's the most romantic thing you'll ever see in this poker room," the woman said.

"Probably," he said. "As far as our bet goes, Megan was declared the winner, but Danny had the winning hand. So, why don't we call it a wash and I'll take you to dinner?"

"About time you asked," she said smiling. Glancing at the well-wishers surrounding Megan and Danny, she said under her breath, "Make that the second most romantic thing."

"You say something?" he asked.

"Only that we've wasted a lot of time getting our own game to the table."

Putting her arm through his, she led him out of the poker room and into the beginning of a new kind of game for both of them.◆



Russell L. Miller: 1907-1997

By Blaine Nicholson



The Miller family (left to right): Lawrence, Gregory, Russell, Stephen, and Russell Jr.

Russ Miller was a winner, a winner in his family life and a winner in his business life. One of his major achievements was his family, and sharing in that achievement every step of the way was his wife of 54 years, Mary. She was the former Mary Ellen Anderson. They had four sons, 12 grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter.

One of Miller's major goals was to have his sons join him in his business, and he achieved that goal. Today, all four of his sons — Russell Lee Miller Jr., Lawrence Miller, Gregory Miller, and Stephen Miller — are active managing partners in the Normandie Casino.

Miller was born in 1907 in Kansas City, Missouri. His father was a butcher by trade who had a dream of moving his family to Los Angeles, but money was hard to come by so he stopped to work six months in Denver and six months in Salt Lake City to earn enough money to make a fresh start in L.A. Miller was 7 at the time. He went to Menlo Avenue and Vernon Avenue grammar schools, and to Manual Arts High School.

One of Miller's first jobs was in Ernie Primm's Edgemont Club at 18th and Flower in Los Angeles. In 1936, Primm and Miller opened the Embassy Club, the first legally licensed card club in Gardena. When the Monterey Club opened, Miller became a partner.

In 1945, he became a partner in the Normandie Club on Western Avenue in Gardena. In 1978, he became the sole owner. It was in 1982 that Miller decided to move and build a new Normandie on Rosecrans Avenue, where it is located today.

As each son joined the business, Miller began to relinquish some of the day-to-day operation of the club. However, he was never far away and always kept a watchful eye on the business.

Miller was his own best goodwill ambassador. He greeted customers with a smile, a handshake, a pat on the back, and often a story. His employees respected him. The Normandie always has been known as being one of the best places to work in the industry. Today, it has more than 800 employees.

If Miller had an obsession, it was baseball. He was known as "Lefty" Miller on his high school baseball team. His interest in baseball lasted throughout his life. He enjoyed taking his sons to Dodger baseball games and coaching them on his team in the Ladera Little League. He and his wife, Mary, took trips to Vero Beach, Florida, to watch the Dodgers in spring training. Dodger management, coaches, and the team's medical doctors were his friends.

Another lifelong interest of Miller's was classic films. His home video library includes just about every MGM musical ever made. His favorite singers were Michael Crawford, of *Phantom of the Opera* fame, and Frank Sinatra.

He was a good skipper, guiding his business through the rough seas of political uncertainty, difficult partners, fierce competition, and bad economic times. The business survived and prospered, and his family survived and prospered. The ship and crew now are in the good hands of his sons.

Miller loved horse racing. He never missed an opening day at Santa Anita if he could help it. Santa Anita always opens on Dec. 26, the day after Christmas. Miller must have had a hot tip that he couldn't resist, because on Dec. 26, 1997, he went to the big track in the sky. We don't know if his horse came in or not, but we do know that he left here a winner.◆

Poker

New Year's Eve

Double jackpots from 5pm-7pm. $10,000 added to the first jackpot of 1998 in poker

Super Bowl Sunday

Jan. 25, 1998 Double Poker Jackpots from kick-off to game's end. Free hot dogs, chips, & soda.

Monday Night Football

Double jackpots from 6pm-9pm. Free hot dogs, chips, & soda from 4pm to kick-off to all seated players. Drawing for "The Big Game in San Diego" tickets on Monday, Jan. 5, 1998 at 8pm.

Double Poker Jackpots

Sundays from Midnight to 6am, Mondays from 11am to 2pm, and during Monday Night Football from 6pm to 9pm.

Far Out Fridays

Every Friday in January from 2pm to 10pm High Hand of the hour in Poker will get you a chance to win cash and/or prizes up to $1,000!

New Year
$5,000 Poker Free Roll

Tuesday, Jan. 27 at noon, registration at 11am. Complete your freeroll entry card be receiving 7 stamps starting Jan. 1st through Jan. 26th. NOTE: Only 1 entry per customer (non-transferable).

Blackjack

New Year's Eve

$10,000 added to the first jackpot of 1998 in "21".

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Far Out Fridays

Every Friday in January from 2pm to 10pm every suited Blackjack will get you a chance to win cash and/or prizes up to $1,000!

Every Blackjack

Will receive an entry to win $250 from 9am-5pm Mon. through Thurs. Cash Drawings every hour!

Showdown Poker

The progressive jackpot starts at $25,000!

$5,000 "21" New Year Free Roll

Thursday, Jan. 29th at noon, registration at 11am. Complete your freeroll entry card by receiving 7 stamps starting Jan. 1st through Jan. 26th. One stamp for: suited BJ, three 7's, 6-7-8 suited, and 7-card charlie. NOTE: Only 1 entry per customer (non-transferable).

Wacky Wednesdays

(Cash prizes from $25 to $500 for every Blackjack.) Weds. 8pm-10pm. To find out if there will be a Surprise Wacky on Monday, you have to be at San Manuel on Wednesday!

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- **"University Win"**
- **Chinese New Year: Jan. 27th**
- **Valentine's Day: Feb. 14th**
- **Mardi Gras Celebration**

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Breakfast With Bill Seymour

By Bill Alan

It's the first week of the *World Poker Finals*, the most prestigious East Coast poker tournament of the year, at Foxwoods Resort Casino. Just about everyone who matters in the game is here for two weeks: world-class poker players like John Bonetti, Jim Boyd, T.J. Cloutier, Tom McEvoy, Mike Sexton, John Spadavecchia, Marsha Waggoner — and Bill Seymour.

Foxwoods is home to me, and each year, I put in a four-day weekend at the *World Poker Finals* plus a couple of one-day trips to play in a few of the smaller buy-in events and to be an observer of all of the bigger ones. Each year, I make an effort to make friends with one of the major players.

Four or five years ago, it was Jim Boyd. We've become close friends since that time, and I'm pleased to note that I also have become quite friendly with his delightful mom, Barbara, and his father, Dave. (A couple of years ago, Jim wasn't feeling up to playing in the main event — a $6,000 buy-in stud tournament — but Dave got into it via a supersatellite and made the final table. He nearly won it. Dave's strictly a recreational player. It's a classic case of the acorn and the tree.)

This year, I wanted to get to know Bill Seymour better, but you don't just walk up to one of these giants of the game during a major tournament and try to get him involved. These players' minds are on just one thing — and it isn't casual conversation. Besides, it's impossible to hold any kind of a conversation in a cardroom. Someone always is involved in a hand, whether it's one they're playing, one they're watching, or one with which they got beat up on yesterday. Plus, with a Bill Seymour, half the people passing by have their own tales to tell.

I guess that everyone is either sleeping late or already has had breakfast by the time I get down to the restaurant, as the room is nearly empty. A few minutes after I'm seated, Seymour walks in, alone — I've got him all to myself in a quiet place.

Seymour and I were casual friends. We had played against each other at ATLARGE II in Atlantic City last spring, and at FARGO at Foxwoods, where we both had made the final table in the limit stud event.

For my money, Seymour is one of the top 10 players in the game today. Apart from his well-known skills at the table, he has an uncanny ability to put fear into you simply by staring you down, sometimes for several minutes, before he comes over the top of you. He's looking for a tell, of course, and if you've got one, he'll find it. Never mind whether he calls you, raises you, or folds, as those several minutes can turn you into jelly. You age quickly.

We talked for about an hour, but not all that much about poker. I tend to be a motor-mouth, but not this morning. I just sat back, focused, and listened.

Unlike some top professionals, Seymour believes in giving some-

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thing back to the game by sharing his vast experience with some of the younger players and helping them to sharpen their games. He talked this morning about Andy Bloch and Bill Turner, two people he considers to be part of the next flight of top-ranked professionals.

Seymour said, "I'm trying to get Turner off a couple of bad tells. For example, when he's got a hand, he tends to stiffen up physically. He sits upright in his chair and looks intense. When he doesn't have a hand, he sits back, relaxed, almost slumping."

Apart from telling me how much respect he has for Bloch's game, Seymour focused on the respect that he has for Bloch as a person. Some of us who know Bloch only slightly wonder why a guy with two degrees from MIT and a brilliant career going for him would give it all up and go back to school (and not to just any school, but Harvard Law School.) Seymour clued me in. Bloch is becoming a lawyer because he wants to get involved with underprivileged people who need help. Imagine, a young man, still in law school, whose focus is on helping people rather than making a lot of money. My respect for Bloch previously centered around his strong game. It now centers around him as being a splendid human being.

Seymour also talked about other things, one of which was how he "almost" became a millionaire.

Years ago, Seymour had designed a unique calendar that was intended to be sold through NFL teams as a fountainhead of information about each team and the game. He was to get a royalty of $1 apiece if the calendar got off the ground. He first presented it to the Buffalo Bills (in the O.J. Simpson days) because they were right in his backyard, a short drive from his home in Syracuse. It turned out that all such things had to be approved and licensed by the NFL, with a $1,500 nonrefundable application fee involved. Seymour took all of the necessary steps and had a meeting set up with the decisionmaker at the NFL at 10 a.m. one morning. This NFL official was going to sign all of the papers and place an initial order for 100,000 calendars. Seymour got there about 15 minutes early, and there was a lot of activity going on and an ambulance parked in front of the building. It turns out that the NFL official had had a heart attack and had died.

Shortly afterward, Seymour arranged an appointment with the man's replacement, but the new man had too much on his plate, having just stepped into the job, to find the time to consider Seymour's proposition, and the whole thing eventually died a slow death.

Seymour commented, "With all due respect, couldn't that guy have waited just an hour more before he had that damn heart attack?"

I could tell from the tattoos on his arms that Seymour and I had a least one more thing in common — the United States Navy. It turns out that this moderately frail-looking man had put in his Navy time with the toughest and most dangerous duty that branch of service has to offer — the UDT, Underwater Demolition Team, the forerunner of today's Navy Seals.

Later in the week, I bought 10 percent of Seymour in a $1,500 event. He won it, and I cashed in for a lot of money. However, as the years go by, that's not what I'll remember about this year's *World Poker Finals*. I *will* remember one of the most fascinating conversations I have ever had with anyone in my long life. And I've got a new — and important — poker friend.

Mike Sexton, can I buy *you* breakfast at the *World Poker Finals* next year?◆

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Sun.	Jan. 18	Hold'Em	$25 RBs/1st hr
Mon.	Jan. 19	Pan	$49 w/RBs
Mon.	Jan. 19	Partner's Hold'Em	$49 w/1RB
Wed.	Jan. 21	Hold'Em	$49
Sun.	Jan. 25	Limit Hold'Em	$330
Mon.	Jan. 26	Pan	$49 w/RBs
Mon.	Jan. 26	Partner's Hold'Em	$49 w/1RB
Wed.	Jan. 28	Hold'Em	$49
Sun.	Feb. 1	Hold'Em	$25 RBs/1st hr
Mon.	Feb. 2	Pan	$49 w/RBs
Mon.	Feb. 2	Partner's Hold'Em	$49 w/1RB
Wed.	Feb. 4	Hold'Em	$49

Partner's Hold'Em tournaments start at 6:00 pm.
All other tournaments start at 11:15 am.

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Chip Chatter

Continued from page 31

believe it, I know it to be a fact. *Poker players are a fantastic, generous segment of society.* The latest proof comes from the RGP Internet newsgroup. As you may recall, the subject of my Dec. 12, 1997, "Chip Chatter" was J.R. Rose, a former cardroom manager who hasn't been seen around for a while, as he is terminally ill. His attitude is great and his only complaint is that of boredom. Some *Card Player* readers jumped on the bandwagon and started an Internet campaign to help Rose acquire a computer to begin entertaining himself on the "net." For details, contact pwestley@jps.net. Donations to help Rose begin "surfing the net" and to help him with medical expenses may be sent to the *Card Player*, Attn: J.R. Rose Fund, 3140 S. Polaris Ave., Suite 8, Las Vegas, NV 89102. Please make checks payable to J.R. Rose.◆



Tahoe Andrew — caught in the act, snoozing between hands

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14 T	H	O	R	■	15 C	R	A	Y	■	16 W	O	R	S	E
17 N	O	D	E	■	18 C	A	R	D	■	19 E	P	E	E	S
20 S	H	O	W	21 D	O	W	N	■	22 L	E	A	S	E	S
■	■	■	23 D	O	S	S	■	24 S	A	T	I	■	■	■
25 A	26 S	27 S	E	R	T	■	28 U	N	D	E	R	29 D	30 O	31 G
32 R	E	P	A	Y	■	33 S	T	E	E	N	■	34 O	V	A
35 M	R	E	D	■	36 A	T	T	A	R	■	37 U	L	E	S
38 E	R	N	■	39 S	L	E	E	K	■	40 S	N	O	R	E
41 R	A	T	42 H	O	L	E	R	■	43 S	P	O	R	T	S
■	■	■	44 A	C	E	D	■	45 S	O	A	P	■	■	■
46 D	47 E	48 A	L	I	N	■	49 H	O	U	S	E	50 M	51 E	52 N
53 E	L	I	T	E	■	54 T	A	U	T	■	55 N	A	V	E
56 M	A	N	E	T	■	57 R	U	S	H	■	58 E	K	E	S
59 E	N	T	R	Y	■	60 A	L	E	S	■	61 D	E	N	T

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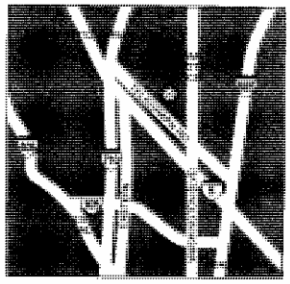

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Holiday Bonus Tournament

In the last issue, results of the first five events of the *Holiday Bonus Tournament* at Commerce Casino in Commerce, California, were reported. Following are the results of the tournament's final five events. The Best All-Around Player award was captured by Anthony Tran, who pocketed $5,000 for the honor.

$100 limit hold'em
Entrants: 203 • Rebuys: 244 • Prize pool: $44,700

1. Anthony Tran $16,539
2. Hon Le 8,493
3. Ping Li 4,247
4. Vic Sobrepena 2,682
5. Andy Lin 2,017
6. Jay Reisler 1,564
7. Stephen Naideth 1,117
8. Prapart Thamara Tayanomo 894
9. Van Pham 715

$100 seven-card stud high-low split
Entrants: 95 • Rebuys: 101 • Prize pool: $19,600

1. David Levi $7,840
2. Abnir Ismael 4,508
3. Suphin Chea 2,352
4. Jun Parado 1,372
5. Ken Davis 1,176
6. Restie Bagaygay 980
7. Emilio Barella 784
8. Hoang Ta 588

$200 limit hold'em
Entrants: 127 • Rebuys: 128 • Prize pool: $51,000

1. Dung Pham $20,400
2. Vafa Kamau 10,200

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January 31-February 27 - These two days will prove to be two of the most rewarding. Cash prizes totaling $10,000 will be given away between 12 noon and 3am.

February 28 - Don't miss your chance to win the big one - a brand new 1997 **Mazda Miata.** The Poker Showdown begins at 10pm.

For Poker Room and tournament information, call **(602)-802-5081.**

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3. Max Stern 5,100
4. Jun Parado 3,060
5. Kathleen Watterson 2,295
6. Joe Burke 1,785
7. Jack Jiang 1,275
8. Hoang Ta 1,080
9. Steve Flicker 816

$200 no-limit hold'em

Entrants: 84 • Rebuys: 122 • Prize pool: $41,200

1. Amir Vamedi $16,480
2. Rusty Mandap 9,476
3. Michael Chang 4,944
4. Randy Holland 2,884
5. Al Barbieri 2,266
6. Dung Pham 1,854
7. Ron Melrose 1,442
8. Daniel Seligman 1,030
9. Bill Scott 824

$300 limit hold'em

Entrants: 173 • Rebuys: 189 • Prize pool: $108,600

1. Restie Bagaygay $43,440
2. John Juanda 21,720
3. Mahamad Jalad 10,860
4. Makram Merhom 6,516
5. Casandra Flicker 4,887
6. Michael Chang 3,801
7. Barry Schwartz 2,715
8. Rusty Mandap 2,172
9. Larry Carver 1,520
10. Jack Jiang 1,520

Best All-Around Player Awards

1. Anthony Tran $5,000
2. Al Barbieri 3,000
3. Hasan Habib 2,000
4. Rusty Mandap 1,500
5. Amir Vahedi 1,000

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LAS VEGAS' TOP 10 VALUES

By Las Vegas Advisor

History has shown that a good percentage of the rock-bottom room rates that are available during the first three weeks of December extend into January, and this year is no exception. Circus Circus has $25 rooms Sunday through Thursday until Feb. 12. Excalibur is advertising $39 rooms Sunday through Thursday through Jan. 22. Call around for your best deal.

The shrimp cocktail at Golden Gate (No. 2) is the best appetizer or snack in Las Vegas. The little bay shrimp fill the cocktail glass to the brim, the cocktail sauce is the best in town, it's available any time of the day or night, and it's only 99 cents.

The $2.95 steak dinner (No. 3) at Ellis Island is a "filet-cut" sirloin (a thick slab that's easy to cook to order), and comes with soup or salad, baked potato, and garlic bread. The whole dinner is available 24 hours a day, and you don't need a coupon to get it. We keep trying new steak meal deals, but it seems that the more we try, the better this one looks.

The best-buffet battle royal continues to rage. Of Las Vegas' four top groaning boards, the Rio's Carnival World, Texas Station's Market Street, and Main Street Station's Garden Court all have basked in the Top 10 glow. Only Fiesta's Festival Buffet (No. 4) has yet to have its moment in the sun. But now, based on a trip to the Wednesday night seafood buffet, its time is at hand. We sat for two hours, gorging on all of the steamed and fried clams, mussels, oysters, snow crab legs, peel-and-eat shrimp, seafood gumbo, and baked, stir-fried, broiled, grilled, and wokked fish we could cram in, while leaving room for the usual excellent barbecued meats and poultry, Mongolian grill, Caesars salad, fancy coffee bar, and desserts.

The Sunday brunch in Ti Amo at the Santa Fe (No. 5) holds its own in the center of the Top 10. For a mere $12.95, you pretty much get everything in the cupboard (and the liquor cabinet): pasta, pizza, omelets, carved filet mignon, smoked fish, clams on the half shell, fresh fruit, fine desserts, and a Bloody Mary and coffee liqueur bar. And with the $3-off coupon from the *Las Vegas Advisor* package, the price is rolled back to $9.95.

Arizona Charlie's steak-and-eggs special (No. 6) is served in the Sourdough Cafe 24 hours a day for all of $2.49. If you've got a beef with the beef, you can opt for a big ham steak instead.

The Palace Station funbook (No. 7) contains $17 in gambling coupons, including $5 match-plays for blackjack, craps, and roulette, and $25 for $20 buy-ins for slots and live poker. It also has coupons for $2 off the buffet and a free margarita. You need an out-of-state ID or the voucher from the *Las Vegas Advisor* coupon book to get it. It's so good that it's the only funbook we accepted for the 1998 Pocketbook of Values.

Comedy Funhouse (No. 8) at the Four Queens is going into its fourth month as one of the best loss leaders in Las Vegas. You get 75 minutes of stand-up comedy performed by two top-flight comedians (and an emcee) for a one-drink minimum ($3.50).

Enter the Night (No. 9) at the Stardust now is the best-value extravaganza in Las Vegas. You can get in for as little as $29.85 inclusive, at least 25 percent less expensive than any comparable show in town.

The free souvenir photo at Binion's Horseshoe (No. 10) has been Las Vegas' No. 11 value forever; this month, it pops back onto the list. All you have to do is show up between 4 p.m. and midnight at the display of a hundred $10,000 bills (near the stairs going down to the coffee shop) and pose for the camera. Your picture is snapped, digitized, and printed out on a color printer. The whole process takes 10 minutes, and it's free; upward of 150,000 people a year have their pictures taken there.

1

Post-Holiday Room Rates

• $0-$39 • January

2

Shrimp Cocktail

• 99 cents • 24 hours
• Golden Gate

3

Steak Dinner

• $2.95
• 24 hours
• Ellis Island

4

Buffet

• $3.00, $8.99, $12.99
• Daily • Fiesta

5

Sunday Brunch

• $12.95 • 11 a.m.-5 p.m.
• Santa Fe

6

Steak and Eggs

• $2.49 • 24 hours
• Arizona Charlie's

7

Funbook

• Free • Daily
• Palace Station

8

Comedy Club

• $3.50 • 7:30 and 9:30 nightly
• Four Queens

9

Enter the Night

• 29.85 • Saturday-Thursday
• Stardust

10

Souvenir Photo

• Free • 4 p.m.-midnight
• Binion's Horseshoe

Gila River CASINOS ARIZONA

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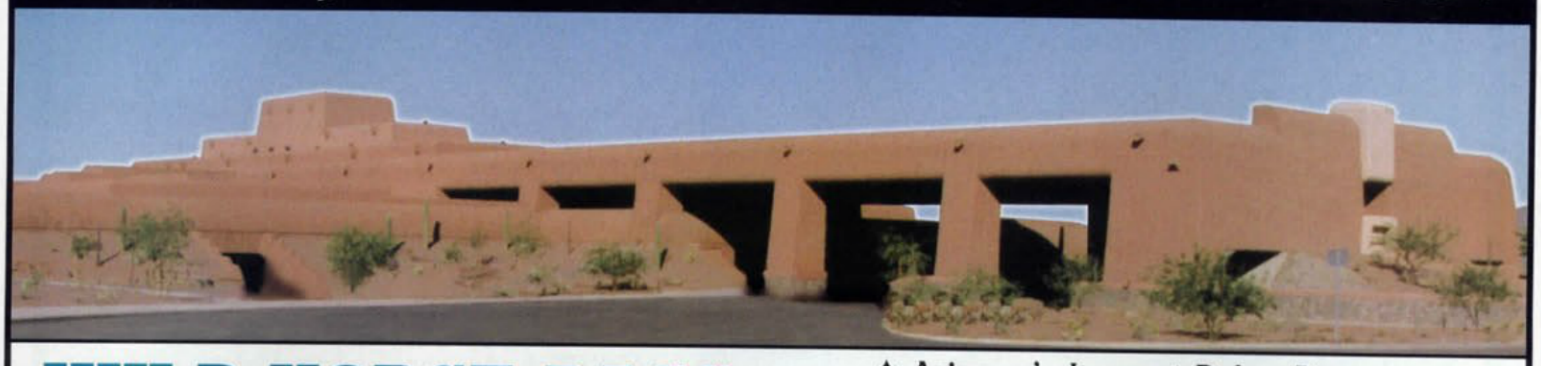

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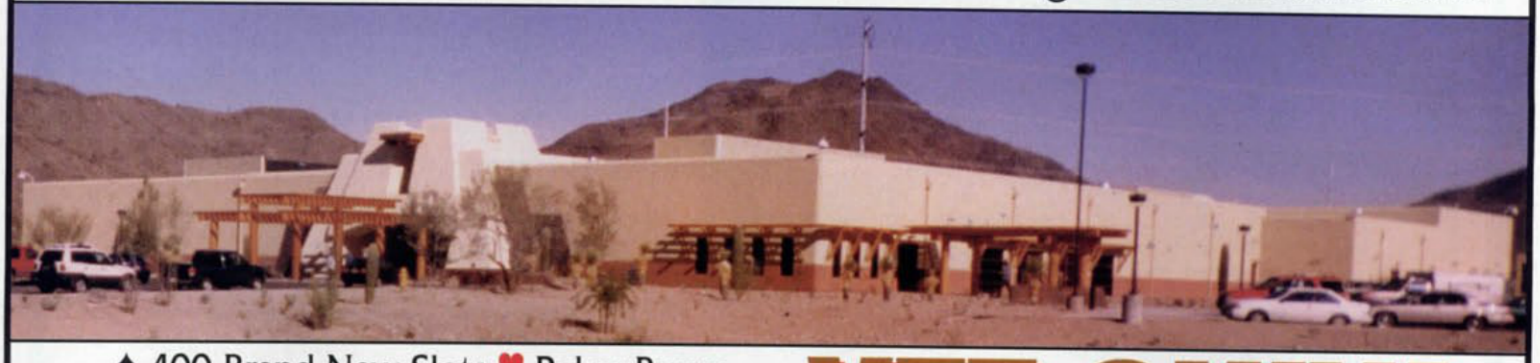

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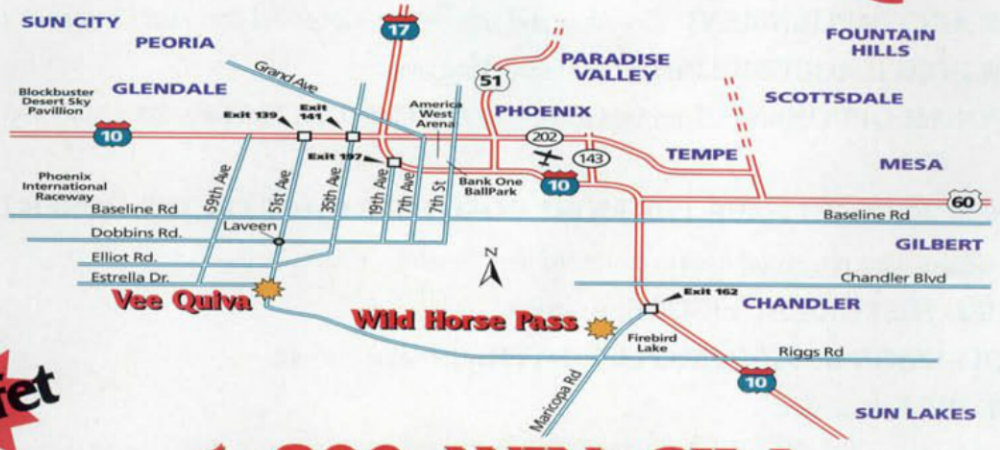

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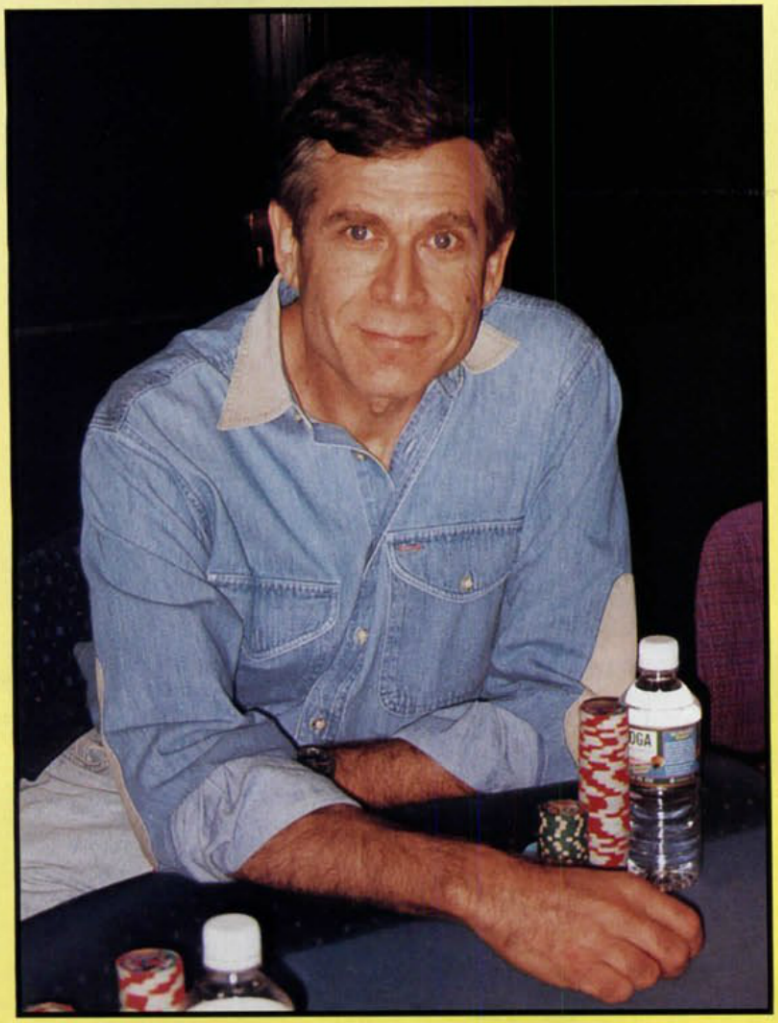
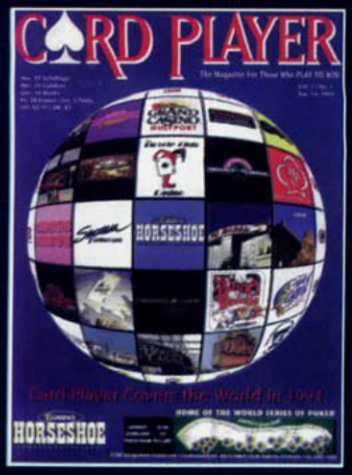


STEVE BRECHER

Editor's note: Getting to Know ... is an ongoing feature that provides a brief personal profile of some of poker's well-known personalities.

DATE OF BIRTH: November 10, 1945
BIRTHPLACE: San Diego, California
NICKNAME: brec
MARITAL STATUS: Single
CHILDREN: None
HOBBIES: Aviation; Internet/Usenet
FAVORITE MOVIE: *Henry V (Ken Branagh)*
FAVORITE ACTOR: Mel Gibson
FAVORITE TRAVEL SPOT: Galena Creek Park, Toiyabe National Forest (near Reno)
FAVORITE PLAY: The Miracle Worker
FAVORITE POKER GAME: Hold'em
TURN-ONS: Paronomasia — and, of course, dictionaries
TURNOFFS: Inconsiderate smokers
AMBITIONS: To win a major tournament
PREVIOUS JOB: Securities trading; computer programming
CURRENT JOB: Table captain
MOST MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT: Creating and marketing successful computer software products
MOST MAJOR POKER ACCOMPLISHMENT: Breaking even
TOUGHEST POKER OPPONENT: Tommy Grimes, Bobby Hoff, Carl McElvey, Bill O'Connor, Hershel Zalewski
PERSON CONSIDERED TO HAVE THE MOST POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE POKER INDUSTRY: Alan Arms and others who reformed casino poker to end "snatch" raking
MOST ADMIRED HISTORICAL FIGURE: Aristotle
CHOSEN PROFESSION IF STARTING LIFE OVER: Same as current
RULE TO LIVE BY: Fair dealing
QUOTE: "When levity and cruelty play for a kingdom, the gentler gamester is the soonest winner."



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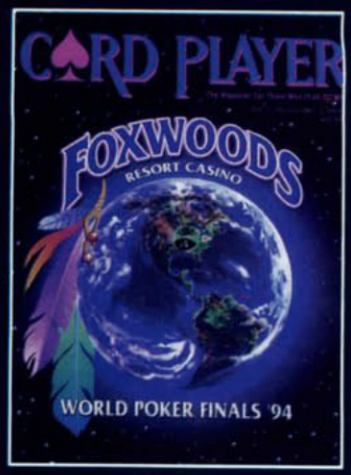

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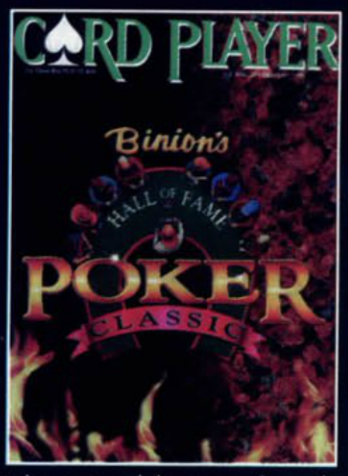

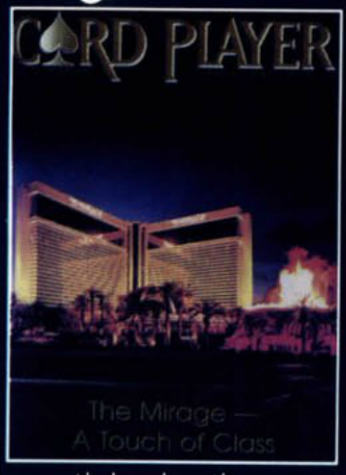

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Continued from page 16

could give to up-and-coming poker players just starting out. Puggy answered, "Well, the steam factor is what busts all gamblers, so, certainly, money management is important, but the best advice I can give them is something that took me 35 years to learn, and that is that you'll never have nothin' until you learn to make a mule out of your money." (In other words, you must learn to invest your winnings.)

About two years ago, I wrote a song about the legendary Puggy Pearson. It is sung to the tune of the theme song of another legend from the hills of Tennessee — Davy Crockett. The chorus (and title of the song) is sung between each verse. It goes like this:

Puggy, Puggy Pearson,
King of the Gambling World

Born in a shack in the hills of Tennessee, he was one outta nine in a big family. Dropped out of school while in the fifth grade, and joined the Navy to see how the world was made.

He learned real fast this was his cup of tea, all those suckers in the U.S. Navy. He loan sharked, booked craps, and shot lots of pool, and the way he played poker, well this was no fool.

He left the Navy as a very rich man, and he wanted to gamble with the best in the land. So he packed his bags and headed out west, to prove to the world that he was the best.

He always played in the highest games in town, got broke many times, but you couldn't keep him down. From gin rummy, backgammon, to all the games you know, he's just a big shark in a world of minnows.

He became world champ of the poker world, and to all the scufflers, he has a heart of gold. He loans out his money and stakes railbirds too, he's the greatest friend a gambler ever knew.

He learned to play golf, it's a hustler's dream, and in no time at all became a golfing machine. A reporter once asked him, "How good do you play?" "I shoot whatever it takes to get the money that day!"

He's the gamblinest man you ever did see, this backwoods boy from the hills of Tennessee. He'll play any man any game he can name, and he landed himself in the Hall of Fame.

Happy birthday, Puggy, and many more! Take care.◆

Editor's note: See California Ramblings for details of Puggy's 70th birthday party at Oceanside Card Club.

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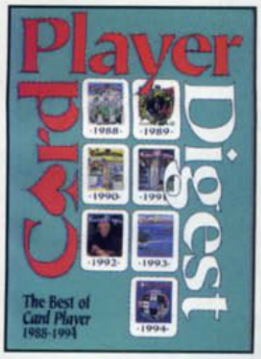

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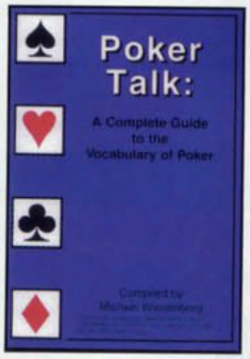

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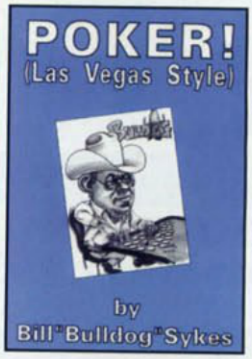

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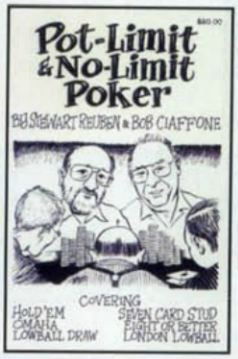

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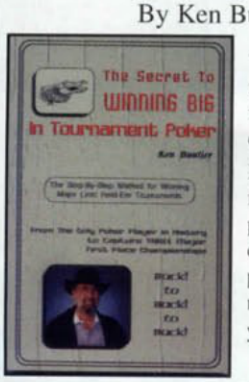

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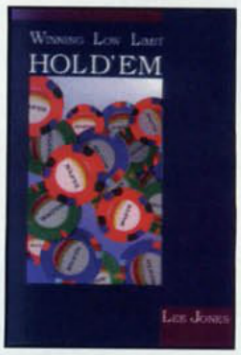

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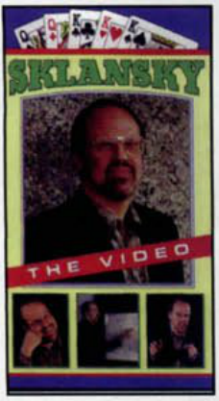

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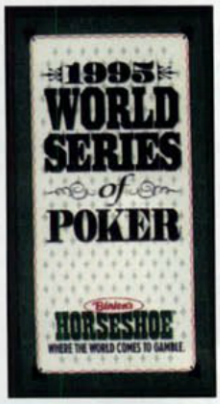

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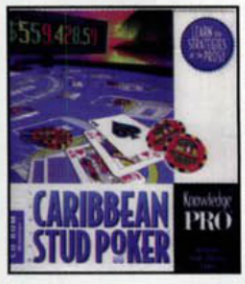

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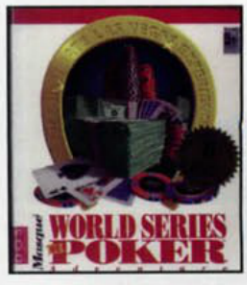

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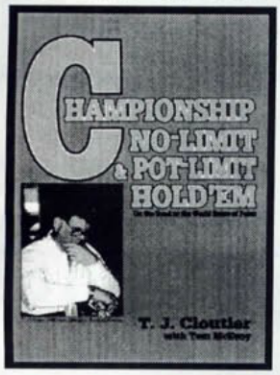

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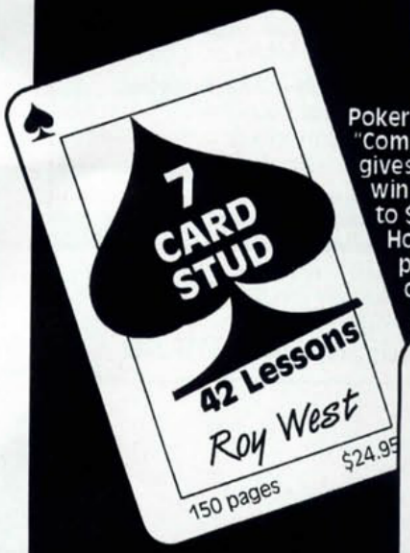

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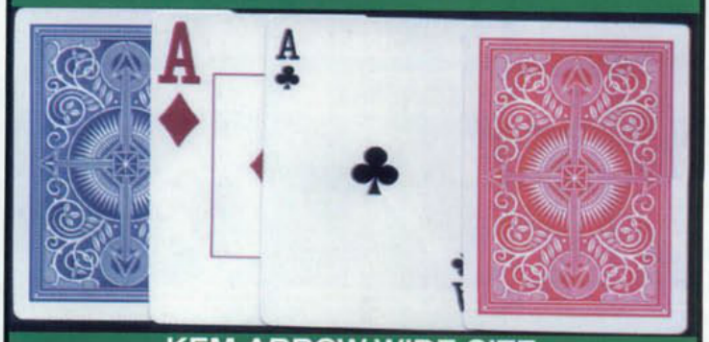

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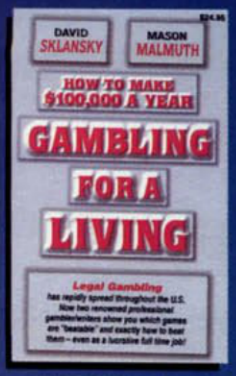

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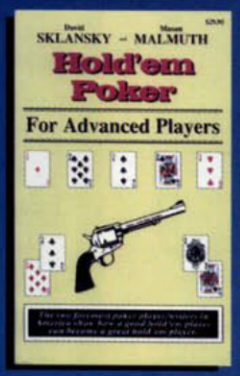

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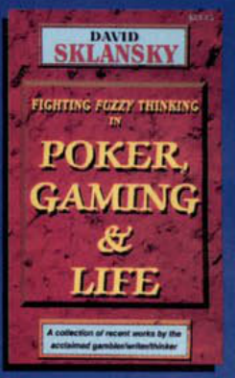

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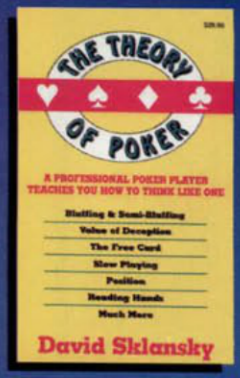

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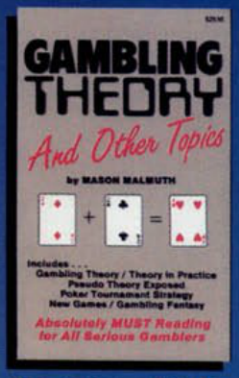

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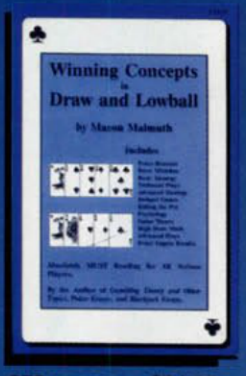

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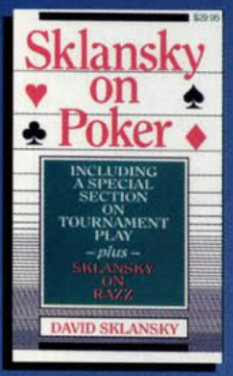

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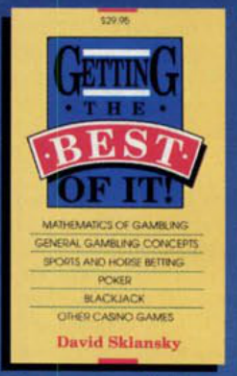

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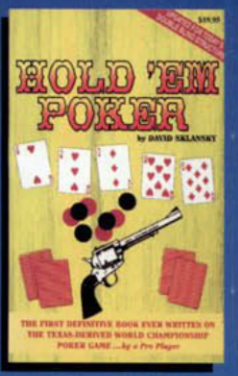

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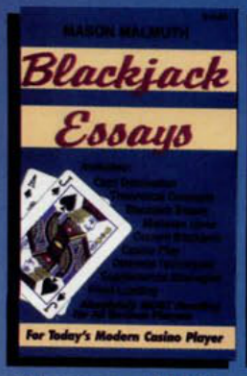

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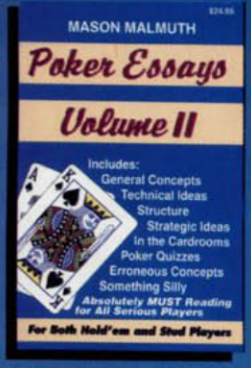

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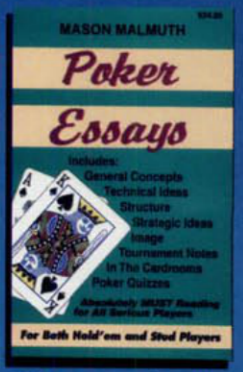

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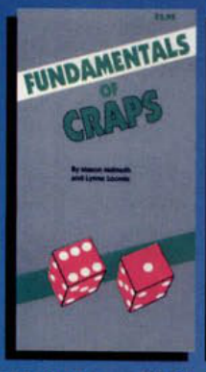

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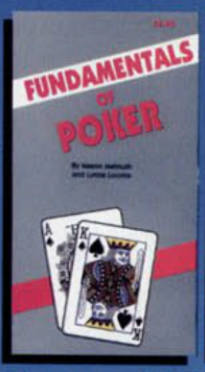

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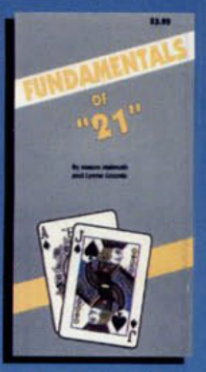

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CARD PLAYER

TOURNAMENT TRAIL

1998 MAJOR POKER TOURNAMENTS

Carnivale of Poker	Rio Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV	Jan. 2-23, 1998
International Pot-Limit Rendevous	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	Jan. 23-Feb. 1
Golden Gate Classic	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo, San Pablo, CA	Jan. 31-Feb. 8
L.A. Poker Classic VII	Commerce Casino, Commerce, CA	Feb. 3-March 1
Winnin' o' the Green	Bicycle Club Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	March 5-16
Peppermill Spring Poker Tournament	Peppermill Hotel & Casino, Reno, NV	March 6-13
Queens Poker Classic VIII	Four Queens Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV	March 8-April 4
National Championship of Poker	Hollywood Park Casino, Inglewood, CA	April 4-12
World Series of Poker	Binion's Horseshoe, Las Vegas, NV	April 21-May 14
Masters of Poker VI	Normandie Casino, Gardena, CA	May 30-June 8
California State Poker Championship	Commerce Casino, Commerce, CA	June 11-27
Orleans Open	The Orleans Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV	July 11-26
Heavenly Hold'em Tournament	Commerce Casino, Commerce, CA	July 28-Aug. 7
Hall of Fame	Binion's Horseshoe, Las Vegas, NV	Aug. 12-26

1998 SPECIAL EVENTS

Little Big Bucks Tournament	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino, Lake Elsinore, CA	Jan. 16-17
Drive for Five Tournament	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino, Lake Elsinore, CA	Jan. 28-Feb. 1
Hold'em Olympics II	Fantasy Springs Casino, Indio, CA	Feb. 6-8
Sweethearts Tag Team Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	Feb. 14
St. Patrick's Day Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	March 17
Eastern Caribbean Poker Cruise	Card Player Cruises, Las Vegas, NV	March 22-29
Rat Pack Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	April 17-19
Classy Ladies Poker Weekend	Hyatt Regency, Lake Tahoe, NV	April 25-26
Fun in the Sun Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	May 22-25
Alaska Poker Cruise	Classic Poker Cruises, Las Vegas, NV	Aug. 2-9

TOURNAMENT TRAIL

National & International

ARIZONA

MON	11AM	Harrah's Ak-Chin	Stud	Freeroll
TUE	11AM	Fort McDowell	King of the Hill Satellite	$20
TUE	11AM	Harrah's Ak-Chin	Stud	Freeroll
TUE	7PM	Fort McDowell	Stud	$25
WED	11AM	Fort McDowell	King of the Hill Satellite	$20
WED	11AM	Harrah's Ak-Chin	Hold'em	Freeroll
WED	6:30PM	Harrah's Ak-Chin	Alternates (crazy pineapple/hold'em)	Freeroll
THU	11AM	Fort McDowell	King of the Hill Satellite	$20
THU	11AM	Harrah's Ak-Chin	Hold'em	Freeroll
THU	7PM	Desert Diamond	Alternates	$30
THU	7PM	Fort McDowell	Stud	$25
FRI	11AM	Fort McDowell	King of the Hill Satellite	$20
FRI	11AM	Harrah's Ak-Chin	Stud	Freeroll
SAT	1PM	Harrah's Ak-Chin	Flop Games	Freeroll
SUN	10AM	Desert Diamond	Hold'em	$25
SUN	Noon	Harrah's Ak-Chin	Alternates (stud/hold'em)	Freeroll

COLORADO

MON	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Hold'em	$10
TUES	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Stud	$10
WED	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Stud	$10
FRI	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Stud H/L	$10
SAT	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Stud	$10
SUN	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Stud	$10

CONNECTICUT

MON	Noon	Mohegan Sun	Hold'em	$35 RB $15
MON	7PM	Foxwoods	Hold'em	$35
MON	7PM	Mohegan Sun	No-Limit Hold'em	$20 RBs $10
TUE	7PM	Foxwoods	No-Limit Hold'em	$35 RB $20
TUE	7PM	Mohegan Sun	Stud with Bounty	$35 RB $20
WED	7PM	Foxwoods	Stud	$35
THU	Noon	Foxwoods	Stud	$35 RB $20/$30
THU	7PM	Foxwoods	Stud (3rd Thu.-qualify)	Freeroll
SAT	10AM	Mohegan Sun	Stud	$35 RB $20
SUN	9:30AM	Mohegan Sun	Stud	$20
SUN	Noon	Foxwoods	Alternates stud/hold'em	$60 RB $40/$60

IOWA

MON	7PM	CasinOmaha	Omaha H/L	Freeroll RB $5 AO $5
MON	7PM	Meskwaki Casino	Stud(4th Mon)	$20 RB $10 AO $15
WED	7PM	CasinOmaha	Alternates	$5 RB $5 AO $5
WED	7PM	Meskwaki Casino	Hold'em	$30 RB $15 AO $20
THU	Noon	Meskwaki Casino	Stud(1st Thu)	Freeroll RB $8 AO $12
THU	6PM	Meskwaki Casino	Hold'em(3rd Thu)	Freeroll RB $10 AO $15
SUN	1PM	CasinOmaha	Alternates	$22 RB $10 AO $10

LOUISIANA

TUE	6PM	Grand Casino Coushatta	Tournament of Champions (qualify)	Freeroll
WED	6PM	Grand Casino Coushatta	Hold'em	$25 RB $10 AO $20
SAT	Noon	Grand Casino Coushatta	Hold'em (1st Sat.)	$75 RB (1) $75
SAT	Noon	Grand Casino Coushatta	Hold'em (3rd Sat.)	$100 RB (1) $100

MISSISSIPPI

MON	1PM	Casino Magic (Bay St. Louis)	Hold'em/Stud (alt.)	Freeroll RB $20
MON	4PM	Grand Casino (Gulfport)	Hold'em Freezeout	$45
MON	7PM	Silver Star (Philadelphia)	Stud/Hold'em	$25 RB $10 AO $10
TUE	11AM	Casino Magic (Bay St. Louis)	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
TUE	Noon	Grand Casino (Biloxi)	Hold'em	$5 RB $20
WED	Noon	Grand Casino (Gulfport)	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $15
WED	4PM	President Casino (Biloxi)	Stud	$15 RB $10
WED	7PM	Casino Magic (Bay St. Louis)	1/2 Hold'em-1/2 Stud	$15 RB $10
WED	7PM	Silver Star (Philadelphia)	Omaha	$25 RB $10 AO $10
THU	Noon	Grand Casino (Gulfport)	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $15
THU	1PM	Casino Magic (Bay St. Louis)	Omaha	$15 RB $10
THU	4PM	President Casino (Biloxi)	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
THU	7PM	Silver Star (Philadelphia)	Hold'em	$25 RB $10 AO $10
FRI	Noon	Grand Casino (Biloxi)	Hold'em	$5 RB $20
FRI	6PM	Casino Magic (Bay St. Louis)	Hold'em (qualify)	$15 RB $10
SAT	10AM	Silver Star (Philadelphia)	Ladies Stud/Hold'em (1st Sat.)	$20 RB $10
SAT	10AM	Silver Star (Philadelphia)	Ladies Hold'em (3rd Sat.)	$20 RB $10
SUN	10AM	Grand Casino (Gulfport)	Stud	$15 RB $10
SUN	11AM	Silver Star (Philadelphia)	Stud H/L	$25 RB $10 AO $10
SUN	Noon	Grand Casino (Biloxi)	Omaha	$10 RB $15

NEW JERSEY

MON	Noon	Tropicana	Stud	$40
MON	1PM	Resorts	Stud	$40
WED	6PM	Resorts	Varies	Varies
WED	6PM	Tropicana	Hold'em	$60
FRI	4PM	Resorts	Hold'em	Varies
FRI	4PM	Tropicana	Hold'em	$115
SAT	12:30PM	Resorts	Mixed H/L	Varies

NEW MEXICO

MON	6:30PM	Inn of the Mountain Gods	Pot-Limit Hold'em	$37
TUE	6:30PM	Cities of Gold	Stud H/L Shootout	$20
WED	6:30PM	Cities of Gold	Hold'em Shootout	$20
WED	6:30PM	Inn of the Mountain Gods	Hold'em	$17 RB $15
THU	6:30PM	Cities of Gold	Omaha H/L Shootout	$20
FRI	6:30PM	Cities of Gold	No-Limit Hold'em	$30 RB (1) $20
SAT	6PM	Cities of Gold	Omaha H/L Shootout	$20
SUN	2PM	Inn of the Mountain Gods	Omaha H/L	$37
SUN	6:00PM	Cities of Gold	Omaha Shootout	$20

NORTH DAKOTA

MON	7PM	Dakota Magic	Omaha H/L	$25 RB $10
WED	7PM	Dakota Magic	Stud H/L	$25 RB $10
THU	2PM	Dakota Magic	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
SAT	2PM	Dakota Magic	Omaha H/L	$20 RB $10
SUN	2PM	Dakota Magic	Hold'em	$25 RB $10

OREGON

MON	11AM	Spirit Mountain	Hold'em	$20 RB (2) $10
MON	Noon	Seven Feathers	Stud	$1 RB $5
TUE	11AM	Spirit Mountain	Hold'em	$20 RB (2) $10
TUE	Noon	Seven Feathers	Hold'em	$1 RB $5
TUE	6PM	Seven Feathers	Omaha	$22 RB (2) $10
WED	11AM	Spirit Mountain	Hold'em	$20 RB (2) $10
WED	Noon	Seven Feathers	Stud	$1 RB $5
WED	7PM	Spirit Mountain	Omaha H/L	$27 RB (2) $20
THU	11AM	Spirit Mountain	Hold'em	$20 RB (2) $10
THU	Noon	Seven Feathers	Hold'em	$1 RB $5
THU	6PM	Seven Feathers	Hold'em	$22 RB (2) $10
FRI	11AM	Spirit Mountain	Hold'em	$20 RB (2) $10
FRI	Noon	Seven Feathers	Stud	$1 RB $5
SUN	11AM	Spirit Mountain	Stud	$25 RB (2) $20

SOUTH DAKOTA

MON	5PM	Dakota Sioux	Stud	$15 RB $10
TUE	5PM	Dakota Sioux	Hold'em	$10
TUE	7PM	Gold Dust	1/2 Hold'em-1/2 Stud Freezeout	$35
WED	1PM	Dakota Sioux	Stud	$10
THU	5PM	Dakota Sioux	Omaha	$10
THU	7PM	Gold Dust	Hold'em Freezeout	$30
FRI	5PM	Dakota Sioux	Dealer's Choice	$10
SAT	Noon	Dakota Sioux	Pineapple H/L	$10
SUN	1PM	Dakota Sioux	Hold'em	$25

WASHINGTON

MON	10AM	Drift On Inn	Hold'em	$10 RB (2) $10
TUE	10AM	Drift On Inn	Hold'em	$10 RB (2) $10
WED	10AM	Drift On Inn	Hold'em	$10 RB (2) $10
WED	5PM	Pastime Poker	Omaha H/L	Freeroll RB (5) $10
THU	10AM	Drift On Inn	Hold'em	$10 RB (2) $10
THU	5PM	Pastime Poker	No-Limit Hold'em	Freeroll RB (5) $10
FRI	10AM	Drift On Inn	Hold'em	$10 RB (2) $10
FRI	5PM	Pastime Poker	Hold'em	Freeroll RB (5) $10
SAT	10AM	Drift On Inn	Hold'em	$10 RB (2) $10
SAT	Noon	Pastime Poker	Omaha H/L	$10 RB (4) $10
SUN	10AM	Drift On Inn	Hold'em	$10 RB (2) $10
SUN	Noon	Pastime Poker	No-Limit Hold'em	$10 RB (4) $10

EUROPE

Some casinos in Europe hold ongoing weekly tournaments. Due to the fact that these tournaments are subject to change at any time, *Card Player* suggests that you check with the casino of your choice about its tournament schedule prior to your visit.

NEVADA TOURNAMENT TRAIL

LAS VEGAS/LAUGHLIN/MESQUITE

MONDAY

8 AM	Boulder Station	Hold'em Freezeout	$23
10 AM	Circus Circus	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10 AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10 AM	Rio	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10:30 AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em Shootout	$17
11 AM	Gold River-Laughlin	Hold'em Shootout	$12
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$17
Noon	The Orleans	Omaha H/L	$20 RB $10
2 PM	Casa Blanca-Mesquite	No-Limit Hold'em	$20 RB $10
3 PM	Stardust	Hold'em	$30 RB (1) $20 AO $20
7 PM	Gold River-Laughlin	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $20
7 PM	Sahara	Hold'em	$22 RB $10
7 PM	Sunset Station	Stud	$15 RB $10
7 PM	The Orleans	No-Limit Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7:35 PM	Avi-Laughlin	Stud	Freeroll RB $10 AO $15

TUESDAY

10 AM	Circus Circus	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10 AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10 AM	Rio	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10:30 AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em Shootout	$17
11 AM	Gold River-Laughlin	Hold'em Shootout	$12
Noon	Boulder Station	Hold'em	Freeroll
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$17
Noon	The Orleans	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
2 PM	Casa Blanca-Mesquite	Stud H/L	$15 RB $10
5 PM	Santa Fe	Team 1/2 Hold'em-1/2 Stud Freezeout	$44
7 PM	Plaza	Omaha H/L	$20 RB $10 AO $10
7 PM	Riverside-Laughlin	Hold'em	$25 RB $20
7 PM	Sahara	Crazy Pineapple	$22 RB $10
7 PM	Sunset Station	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
7 PM	The Orleans	Stud	$20 RB $10
7:35 PM	Avi-Laughlin	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10 AO $15

WEDNESDAY

10 AM	Circus Circus	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10 AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10 AM	Rio	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10:30 AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em Shootout	$17
11 AM	Gold River-Laughlin	Hold'em Shootout	$12
Noon	Boulder Station	Omaha	Freeroll
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$17
Noon	Sunset Station	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
Noon	The Orleans	Omaha H/L	$30 RB (1) $20
2 PM	Casa Blanca-Mesquite	No-Limit Hold'em	$20 RB $10
3 PM	Stardust	No-Limit Hold'em	$25 RB $20 AO $20
7 PM	Gold River-Laughlin	Crazy Pineapple H/L	$15 RB $20
7 PM	Sahara	Hold'em	$22 RB $10
7 PM	The Orleans	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7:35 PM	Avi-Laughlin	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10 AO $15

THURSDAY

10 AM	Circus Circus	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10 AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10 AM	Rio	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10:30 AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em Shootout	$17
11 AM	Gold River-Laughlin	Hold'em Shootout	$12
Noon	Boulder Station	Hold'em	Freeroll
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$17
Noon	Stardust	Half Stud/Half Hold'em	Freeroll
Noon	Sunset Station	Omaha	$25 RB (1) $20
Noon	The Orleans	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
2 PM	Casa Blanca-Mesquite	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $10
7 PM	Col. Belle-Laughlin	Hold'em	$25 RB $20
7 PM	Sahara	Pan Elimination	$15 RB $10
7 PM	The Orleans	Omaha H/L	$20 RB $10
7 PM	Gold River-Laughlin	Hold'em	$25 RB $20
7:35 PM	Avi-Laughlin	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10 AO $15

FRIDAY

8 AM	Boulder Station	Hold'em Freezeout	$23
10 AM	Circus Circus	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10 AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10 AM	Rio	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10:30 AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em Shootout	$17
11 AM	Gold River-Laughlin	Hold'em Shootout	$12
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$17
Noon	Sunset Station	Half Hold'em/Half Omaha	$25 RB (1) $20
Noon	The Orleans	Omaha H/L	$20 RB $10
1 PM	Riverside-Laughlin	Hold'em	$25 RB $20
2 PM	Casa Blanca-Mesquite	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
3 PM	Stardust	Hold'em	$25 RB $20
5 PM	Santa Fe	No-Limit Hold'em Freezeout	$55
6 PM	Riviera	Omaha	$25 RB (1) $10
7 PM	Gold River-Laughlin	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $20
7 PM	Plaza	No-Limit Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7 PM	The Orleans	Hold'em H/L	$20 RB $10
7:35 PM	Avi-Laughlin	Stud	Freeroll RB $10 AO $15

SATURDAY

10 AM	Circus Circus	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10 AM	Rio	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10:30 AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em Shootout	$17
11 AM	Gold River-Laughlin	Hold'em Shootout	$12
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$17
Noon	The Orleans	Hold'em	$30 RB (1) $20
1 PM	Ligouri's	Stud H/L Split	$15 RB $10
2 PM	Co. Belle-Laughlin	Omaha H/L Split	$25 RB $20
7 PM	The Orleans	Stud H/L Split	$20 RB $10

SUNDAY

10 AM	Circus Circus	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10 AM	Rio	Hold'em Shootout	$17
10:30 AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em Shootout	$17
11 AM	Gold River-Laughlin	Hold'em Shootout	$12
Noon	Boulder Station	Omaha	Freeroll
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$17
Noon	The Orleans	No-Limit Hold'em	$30 RB (1) $20
12:30 PM	Sahara	24 Hand Pan	$25
1 PM	Ligouri's	Stud H/L Split	$15 RB $10
7 PM	Riverside-Laughlin	Games alternate	$25 RB $20
7 PM	The Orleans	Hold'em	$40 RB $20

RENO/TAHOE

MONDAY

9 AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10 AM	Harveys Tahoe	Hold'em Shootout	$10
7 PM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em	Freeroll

TUESDAY

9 AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10 AM	Harveys Tahoe	Omaha H/L Shootout	$10
Noon	Harrahs Tahoe	7-Card Stud	$12 RB $10
7 PM	Reno Hilton	Limt Hold'em	$15
7:30 PM	Hyatt-Lake Tahoe	Crazy Pineapple H/L	$25 RB (3) $20

WEDNESDAY

9 AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10 AM	Harveys Tahoe	Hold'em Shootout	$10
7 PM	Harrah's Tahoe	Hold'em	$12 RB $10
7 PM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em	Freeroll

THURSDAY

9 AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10 AM	Harveys Tahoe	Omaha H/L Shootout	$10
Noon	Harrah's Tahoe	Omaha H/L	$12 RB $10
7 PM	Reno Hilton	Limit Hold'em	$25
7:30 PM	Hyatt-Lake Tahoe	Hold'em	$25 RB (3) $20

FRIDAY

9 AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10 AM	Harveys Tahoe	Hold'em Shootout	$10
Noon	Harrah's Tahoe	7-Card Stud H/L	$12 RB $10
3 PM	Hyatt-Lake Tahoe	Crazy Pineapple H/L	$55 RB (4) $50
7 PM	Harrah's Tahoe	No-Limit Hold'em	$12 RB $10

SATURDAY

9 AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17

SUNDAY

9 AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
6 PM	Harrah's Tahoe	Alternating Stud/Hold'em	$12 RB $10
7 PM	Peppermill Reno	Omaha H/L	$35 RB $30

ORLEANS OPEN

July 11-26, 1998

July 11-26, 1998

The ORLEANS

Las Vegas, NV

CALIFORNIA TOURNAMENT TRAIL

MONDAY

9AM	Pechanga-Temecula	Stud	$12
10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Hold'em	$5 RB (2) $5 AO $5
10AM	Club One-Fresno	Hold'em	$5 RB $5 AO $10
10AM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em	$15 RB $10, $20
10AM	L.A. Casino-Los Angeles	Hold'em Shootout	$13
10AM	Lake Elsinore Resort	Hold'em	$12 RB (1) $10
10AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Hold'em	$23 AO $10
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Omaha H/L	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Hold'em (bounties)	$12
10AM	Village Club-Chula Vista	Omaha H/L	$5 RB $10
10:15AM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Stud H/L	Freeroll
11AM	Bay 101-San Jose	Pan	$49 w/RB
11AM	Crystal Park-Crystal City	Limit/N-L Hold'em (bounties)	$20 RB $15
11AM	Jok-erz Wild-Petaluma	Stud	Freeroll
11AM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Hold'em/No-Limit Hold'em	$25 RB $10
Noon	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	Omaha H/L	$13 RB $10
Noon	O.C.C.-Oceanside	No-Limit Hold'em	$12 RB $10
2PM	Barona-San Diego	Stud H/L	$10 RB (1) $10
2:30PM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	Stud	$15 RB $10
3PM	Card Parlour-Templeton	Double Joker H/L	$4 RB $4
6PM	Bay 101-San Jose	Ladies Hold'em	$49
6PM	Cher-Ae Heights-Trinidad	Hold'em	Freeroll
6PM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
6:30PM	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	No-Limit Hold'em	$13 RB $10
7PM	Card Parlour-Templeton	Double Joker H/L Freezeout	$30
7PM	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo	Hold'em	$55 RB (1) $50
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Omaha H/L	$12
7PM	Win River-Redding	Stud	$13 RB (2) $10
7:30PM	Barona-San Diego	Hold'em	$16 RB $10
7:30PM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Hold'em	$25 RB $20

TUESDAY

9AM	Pechanga-Temecula	Omaha H/L (8)	$12
10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	No-Limit Hold'em	$5 RB (2) $5 AO $5
10AM	Club One-Fresno	Crazy Pineapple	$5 RB $5 AO $10
10AM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em	$15 RB $10, $20
10AM	L.A. Casino-Los Angeles	Hold'em Shootout	$13
10AM	Lake Elsinore Resort	Omaha	$12 RB (1) $10
10AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Hold'em	$23 AO $10
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Crazy Pineapple	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Omaha H/L (bounties)	$12
10AM	Village Club-Chula Vista	Hold'em	$5 RB $10
10:15AM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Omaha H/L	$13
11AM	Crystal Park-Crystal City	Omaha H/L (bounties)	$20 RB $15
11AM	Garden City-San Jose	Hold'em	$25
11AM	Jok-erz Wild-Petaluma	Hold'em	Freeroll
11AM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Hold'em	$25 RB $10
Noon	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	Hold'em	$13 RB $10
Noon	Cache Creek-Brooks	Hold'em	$25 RB $20
Noon	O.C.C.-Oceanside	Hold'em H/L	$12 RB $10
1PM	Soboba Casino-San Jacinto	Hold'em	$12 RB $10 AO $10
1:30PM	Commerce Casino-Commerce	Pan	$30
2PM	Barona-San Diego	Hold'em	$10 RB (1) $10
2:30PM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
3PM	Card Parlour-Templeton	Double Joker H/L	$4 RB $4
6PM	Cher-Ae Heights-Trinidad	Hold'em	Freeroll
6PM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	No-Limit Hold'em (2nd & 4th)	$55
6PM	Lodi Casino-Lodi	No-Limit H/L Split	Freeroll RB $10
6PM	Lucky Derby-Citrus Heights	Bad-Beat (3rd Tue.)	RB (2) $10
6PM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
6:30PM	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	Stud H/L	$13 RB $10
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7PM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Omaha H/L	$13
7PM	Garden City-San Jose	Pan	$45 RB (1) $20
7PM	Lake Elsinore Resort	Omaha	$22 RB (1) $20
7PM	Pechanga-Temecula	Hold'em	$15
7PM	Players' Club-Ventura	Omaha H/L	$35 RB (2) $30
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Hold'em (bounties)	$22
7PM	Win River-Redding	Hold'em	$13 RB (2) $10
7:30PM	Barona-San Diego	Stud H/L	$16 RB $10
7:30PM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Bounty Hold'em	$25 RB $20
7:30PM	Winner's Circle-Santa Rosa	No-Limit Hold'em	$5

WEDNESDAY

9AM	Pechanga-Temecula	Hold'em	$12
10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Omaha H/L	$5 RB (2) $5 AO $5
10AM	Club One-Fresno	Bounty H/L	$5 RB $5 AO $10
10AM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em	$15 RB $10, $20
10AM	L.A. Casino-Los Angeles	Stud Shootout	$13
10AM	Lake Elsinore Resort	Hold'em	$12 RB (1) $10
10AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Hold'em	$23 AO $10
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Stud H/L	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Hold'em (bounties)	$12
10AM	Village Club-Chula Vista	Hold'em	$5 RB $10
10AM	Win River-Redding	Stud H/L	$5 RB (1) $5 AO $100
10:15AM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Omaha H/L	$13
11AM	Bay 101-San Jose	Hold'em	$49
11AM	Crystal Park-Crystal City	Hold'em (bounties)	$20 RB $15
11AM	Jok-erz Wild-Petaluma	Omaha	Freeroll
11AM	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo	Omaha H/L	$13 RB $10
11AM	Garden City-San Jose	Lowball	$110
11AM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Omaha H/L	$25 RB $10
Noon	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	Stud	*$13 RB $10*
Noon	O.C.C.-Oceanside	Omaha H/L	$12 RB $10
2PM	Barona-San Diego	Stud H/L	$10 RB (1) $10
2:30PM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $10
3PM	Card Parlour-Templeton	Double Joker H/L	$4 RB $4
6PM	Cher-Ae Heights-Trinidad	Hold'em	Freeroll
6PM	Lodi Casino-Lodi	No-Limit Lowball	Freeroll RB $10
6PM	Lucky Derby-Citrus Heights	Omaha H/L	$15 RB (2) $10
6PM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
6:30PM	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	Omaha H/L	$13 RB $10
6:30PM	Soboba Casino-San Jacinto	No-Limit Hold'em	$12 RB $10 AO $10
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7PM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Hold'em	$20
7PM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Cr. Pineapple H/L	$25 RB (1) $20 or (1) $30
7PM	Lake Elsinore Resort	Hold'em	$22 RB (1) $20
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Omaha H/L	$12
7PM	Win River-Redding	Mystery Tourney	$13 RB (2) $10
7:30PM	Barona-San Diego	1/2 Hold'em-1/2 Stud	$16 RB $10
7:30PM	Commerce Casino-Commerce	Pan	$40
7:30PM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Hold'em	$25 RB $20
7:30PM	Winner's Circle-Santa Rosa	Mexican Stud	$5
8PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10

THURSDAY

9AM	Pechanga-Temecula	Hold'em	$12
10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Hold'em H/L	$5 RB (2) $5 AO $5
10AM	Club One-Fresno	Omaha H/L	$5 RB $5 AO $10
10AM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em	$15 RB $10, $20
10AM	L.A. Casino-Los Angeles	Omaha H/L Shootout	$13
10AM	Lake Elsinore Resort	Omaha	$12 RB (1) $10
10AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Stud H/L	$23 AO $10
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Stud H/L (bounties)	$12
10AM	Village Club-Chula Vista	Omaha	$5 RB $10
11AM	Crystal Park-Crystal City	Stud H/L (bounties)	$20 RB $15
11AM	Jok-erz Wild-Petaluma	Hold'em	Freeroll
11AM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Stud H/L	$25 RB $10
Noon	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	Lowball	$13 RB $10
Noon	O.C.C.-Oceanside	Pineapple H/L	$12 RB $10
1PM	Soboba Casino-San Jacinto	Omaha H/L	$12 RB $10 AO $10
1:30PM	Commerce Casino-Commerce	Pan	$30
2PM	Barona-San Diego	Hold'em	$10 RB (1) $10
2:30PM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
3PM	Card Parlour-Templeton	Double Joker H/L	$4 RB $4
5PM	Cache Creek Casino-Brooks	Hold'em	$10 RB (1) $10
6PM	Cher-Ae Heights-Trinidad	Varies	$35 RB (1) $30
6PM	Lake Bowl-Folsom	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $5
6PM	Lodi Casino-Lodi	No-Limit Lowball	Freeroll RB $10
6PM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
6:30PM	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	Hold'em	$13 RB $10
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Omaha	$50
7PM	Garden City-San Jose	Hold'em	$115
7PM	Lake Elsinore Resort	Omaha	$22 RB (1) $20
7PM	Outpost Casino-San Ramon	Omaha H/L	$55
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Stud H/L	$12
7:30PM	Barona-San Diego	Omaha/Pineapple	$16 RB $10
7:30PM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Hold'em/No-Limit Hold'em	$25 RB $20
8PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10

FRIDAY

9AM	Pechanga-Temecula	Hold'em H/L	$12
10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Crazy Pineapple	$5 RB (2) $5 AO $5
10AM	Club One-Fresno	Lowball	$5 RB $5 AO $10
10AM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em	$15 RB $10, $20
10AM	L.A. Casino-Los Angeles	Stud Shootout	$13
10AM	Lake Elsinore Resort	No-Limit Hold'em	$12 RB (1) $10
10AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Omaha H/L	$23 AO $10
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Omaha H/L (bounties)	$12
10AM	Village Club-Chula Vista	Hold'em	$5 RB $10
10:15AM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Omaha H/L	$13
11AM	Crystal Park-Crystal City	Limit/N-L Hold'em (bounties)	$20 RB $15
11AM	Jok-erz Wild-Petaluma	Stud H/L	Freeroll
11AM	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo	Hold'em	$13 RB $10
11AM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Bounty Hold'em	$25 RB $10
Noon	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	Stud H/L	$13 RB $10
Noon	O.C.C.-Oceanside	H.O.P.	$12 RB $10
2PM	Barona-San Diego	Omaha H/L	$10 RB (1) $10
2:30PM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	Crazy Pineapple H/L	$15 RB $10
3PM	Card Parlour-Templeton	Double Joker H/L	$4 RB $4
5PM	Cache Creek-Brooks	Stud	$5 RB (1) $5
6PM	Lodi Casino-Lodi	No-Limit H/L Split	Freeroll RB $10

CALIFORNIA TOURNAMENT TRAIL

FRIDAY, Cont.

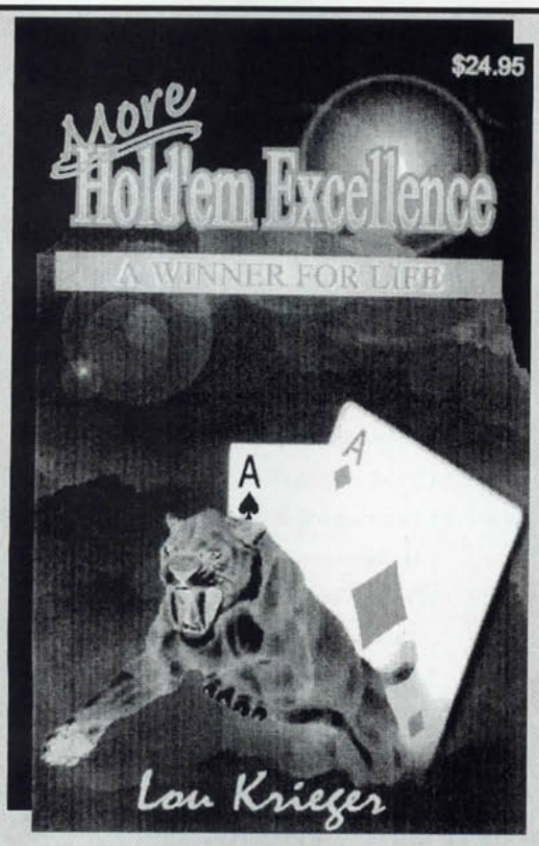
6PM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
6:30PM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$22
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7PM	Crystal Park-Crystal City	Mexican Poker (bounties)	$20 RB $15
7PM	Lake Elsinore Resort	Hold'em	$17 RB (1) $15
7PM	Outpost Casino-San Ramon	Hold'em	$25 RB $10 AO $25
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Hold'em (bounties)	$15
7:30PM	Commerce Casino-Commerce	Pan	$30
7:30PM	Winner's Circle-Santa Rosa	Hold'em	$5
8PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10

SATURDAY

10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Hold'em	$5 RB (2) $5 AO $5
10AM	Lake Elsinore Resort	Omaha	$12 RB (1) $10
10AM	Soboba Casino-San Jacinto	Hold'em	$12 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	Freeroll
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Hold'em (bounties)	$23
10AM	Village Club-Chula Vista	Hold'em	$5 RB $10
10:15AM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Hold'em	$13
11AM	Crystal Park-Crystal City	Hold'em/Omaha H/L	$20
11AM	Jok-erz Wild-Petaluma	Hold'em	Freeroll
11AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Hold'em	$22 RB $10
11AM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Stud	$25 RB $10
Noon	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	No-Limit Hold'em	$13 RB $10
Noon	Club One-Fresno	Hold'em	$5 RB $5 AO $10
Noon	Players' Club-Ventura	No-Limit Hold'em	$25 RB (2) $20
Noon	Pleasure Point-Santa Cruz	Hold'em (1st Sat./qualify)	Freeroll
Noon	Pleasure Point-Santa Cruz	Omaha H/L (3rd Sat./qualify)	Freeroll
1PM	Oaks-Emeryville	Varies	$55 RB $50
2PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$50
2PM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em	$28 RB $20 AO $10
2PM	Jackson Rancheria-Jackson	Hold'em	$12 RB $10
3PM	BJ's Card Parlour-Atascadero	Hold'em H/L	$30 RBs
3PM	Card Parlour-Templeton	Double Joker H/L	$4 RB $4
3PM	O.C.C.-Oceanside	Hold'em	$12 RB $10
3PM	Outpost Casino-San Ramon	Hold'em	$55
4PM	Sal's Town-Rosamond	Hold'em	$5 RB $10
5PM	Lucky Derby-Citrus Heights	No-Limit Hold'em	$55
5:55PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Stud H/L (bounties)	$15
6PM	Lake Bowl-Folsom	Omaha H/L	$25 RB $10
6PM	Lodi Casino-Lodi	No-Limit H/L	Freeroll RB $10
6PM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
6:30PM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em (bounties)	$22
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7PM	Lake Elsinore Resort	Hold'em	$17 RB (2) $15
7:30PM	Winner's Circle-Santa Rosa	Limit Hold'em	$10 RB (1) $10
8PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10

SUNDAY

10AM	Soboba Casino-San Jacinto	Hold'em	$12 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$13
10AM	Village Club-Chula Vista	Hold'em	$5 RB $10
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Varies (qualify)	Freeroll
11AM	Bay 101-San Jose	Varies	Varies
11AM	Garden City-San Jose	Hold'em	$33
11AM	Jok-erz Wild-Petaluma	Omaha	Freeroll
11AM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Hold'em	$25 RB $10
Noon	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	Crazy Pineapple H/L	$13 RB $10
Noon	Lake Bowl-Folsom	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $5
1PM	Card Parlour-Templeton	Omaha	$10 RB $10
1PM	Oaks-Emeryville	Hold'em	$110 RB $100
3PM	BJ's Card Parlour-Atascadero	Crazy Pineapple H/L	$30 RBs
3PM	L.A. Casino-Los Angeles	Mexican Poker	Freeroll
4PM	Crystal Park-Crystal City	Hold'em (bounties)	$60
4PM	Sal's Town-Rosamond	Hold'em	$5 RB $10
5PM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em (1st & 3rd)	$30 RB $20 AO $10
5PM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Omaha/8 (2nd & 4th)	$25 RB (2) $15
5PM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$22
5PM	Winfall Casino-Tehachapi	Hold'em	$20
6PM	Lodi Casino-Lodi	No-Limit Lowball	Freeroll RB $10
6PM	Sundown Casino-Sacramento	Hold'em	Freeroll
6:30PM	Bicycle Club-Bell Gardens	Headhunter Hold'em	$15 RB $10
6:30PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Omaha	$50
6:30PM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$27
7PM	Outpost Casino-San Ramon	Omaha H/L	$55 RB (2) $55
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Ladies Only (varies)	$12
7:30PM	Barona-San Diego	Stud H/L	$16
7:30PM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Stud H/L	$25 RB $20



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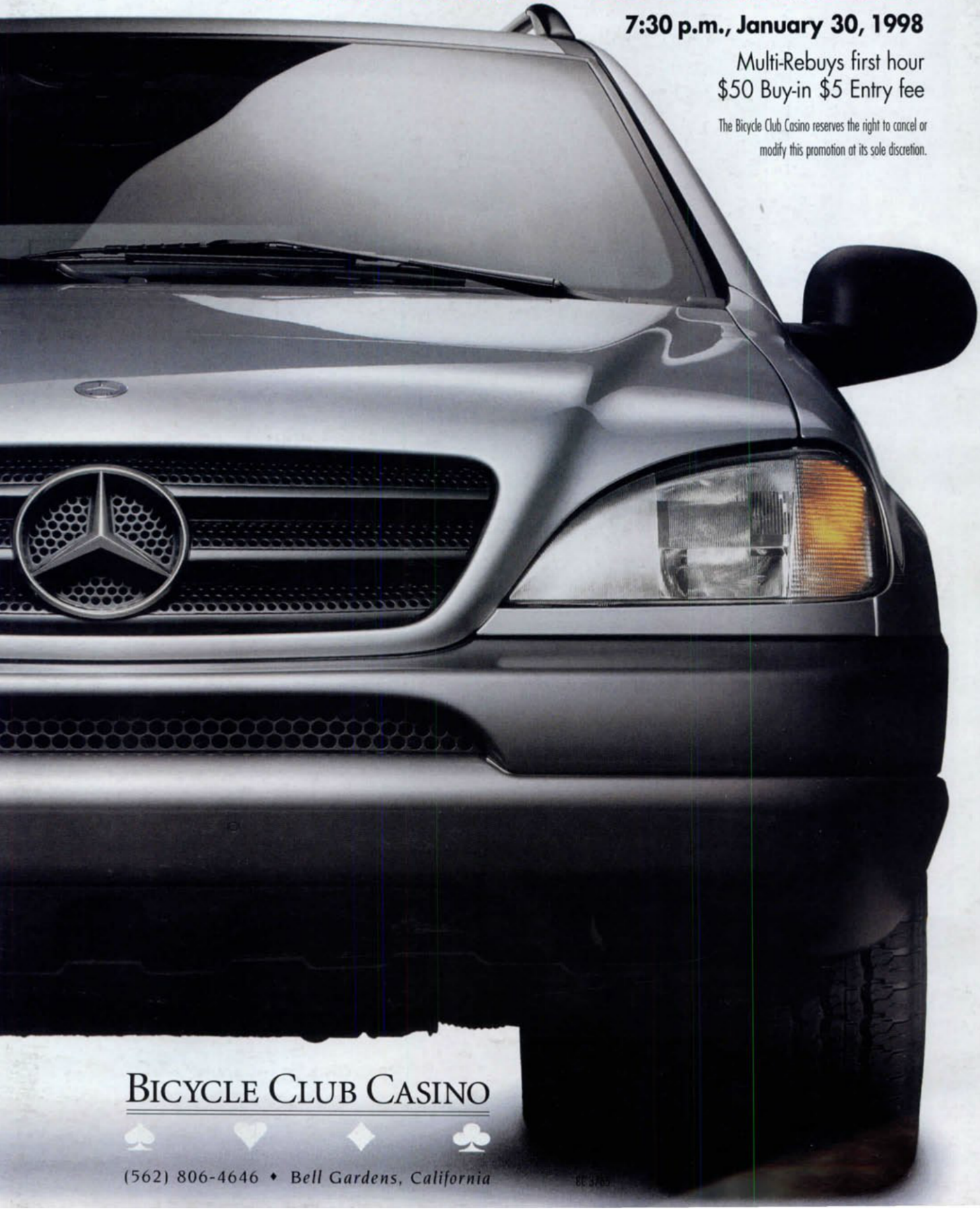

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