

**270 • SCARNE'S GUIDE TO CASINO GAMBLING**

expensive, lesson in the art of gambling. This time it was at Black Jack and at a cost of \$59,700 (see The \$1 Million Freeze-out, pages 68 to 70).

Since the average Baccarat or Chemin de Fer player has little if any chance of spotting a slick card cheat in action, the best advice I can offer him is to keep his bets down to a minimum when not playing in a long-established casino.

The most common method Baccarat or Chemin de Fer operators use to cheat players is to insert a previously stacked packet into the card slot. Some operators have been known to switch the entire shoe containing the eight decks for a previously prepared one during play. To avoid being fleeced by such swindles, keep your eyes on the cards as they are being shuffled and placed in the shoe.

**CROOKED DEALING SHOES USED TO CHEAT AT BACCARAT AND CHEMIN DE FER**

Some crooked casinos here and abroad cheat at Chemin de Fer, Baccarat and Punto Banco by using a crooked dealing shoe. This shoe contains a hidden pocket near the mouth of the dealing box. The secret pocket holds about eight cards which are released singly by the dealer simply by squeezing the box with his left hand near its mouth when dealing with his right. The squeezing pressure opens a slit in the pocket about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch from the mouth of the dealing shoe, permitting the dealer's right thumb to touch and deal the top card of those hidden in the pocket instead of the card that should be dealt. The eight cards secreted in the pocket of the dealing shoe usually are arranged 9-10-9-10-9-10-9-10. When the big-money hand makes an appearance, the crooked dealer deals his player confederate two cards from the hidden pocket, a crooked 9 and 10 for a natural 9 count. To eliminate crooked dealing shoes, I recommend that the manufacturers of casino dealing boxes make a transparent plastic dealing box, which will prevent any cards from being secreted in the shoe's interior.

secret  
pocket?

**PRIVATE CHEMIN DE FER, OR SLOGGER**

Private Chemin de Fer, or Slogger, is a simplified and demechanized version of Chemin de Fer and was described in print for the first time in *Scarne on Cards*. With Baccarat now being played in Nevada casinos, Slogger could become a serious rival to private Black Jack when played among friends. The special virtue of the game is that the banker and player each have a 50-50 chance to win, which is not true of Black Jack. If you want to play a dead-even banking game at your next private Black Jack session, give Slogger a try; you'll like it.

The game is played exactly like Chemin de Fer, with the following exceptions:

## ROULETTE: THE GLAMOUR CASINO GAME • 223

he touches a concealed switch activating one or more of the electromagnets, drawing the ball into a numbered slot not covered by the players."

This description gave some law-enforcement agents in New Jersey a headache a few years ago. They had raided a gambling joint in a shore resort town and confiscated a Roulette table. Dry batteries hidden in the money drawer indicated that the wheel was crooked. The prosecutor wanted to introduce the wheel as evidence and needed to find the hidden electromagnets. He read several books on gambling which contained information like that quoted above, and he and the county detectives went to work with hammer and chisel in an effort to get under the numbers. They chiseled and chopped until the wheel was in a hundred pieces without finding a single electromagnet. The crooked gambling charge was finally dropped for lack of evidence.

Neither the writers, the prosecutor nor the detectives stopped to ask themselves how the electric current coming from the batteries could possibly feed into electromagnets concealed inside a spinning wheel. Inaccurate and misleading information supplied by self-styled experts who are merely guessing is worse than useless. It actually aids the cheats when it leads investigators to look for something that isn't there and causes them to conclude that the game must be honest when it is not.

The electromagnets, as the batteries indicated, were there, but they were in the table, not the wheel. This is one of the commonest methods of cheating at Roulette. There are four magnets equally spaced around the track and they are inside the woodwork of the bowl directly behind the back track in which the ball spins. Wires lead from the magnets through the batteries, which are usually hidden in the bowl or in the table's money drawer, and to the concealed switch, usually under the green baize of the table top. The switch is controlled either by a croupier or a cheat acting as a player.

The ball is gaffed with a magnetized steel core in its center. When the ball has slowed and is almost ready to drop, the cheat studies the now slowly rotating wheel. When he judges that the ball and the desired number are properly positioned, he presses the hidden control, putting the juice on for just an instant. The ball hesitates, then drops like a homing pigeon into the desired section of the wheel.

Unsuspecting players are fleeced of tens of thousands of dollars each year with wired Roulette wheels. I can't tell the occasional gambler any sure way of detecting a wired wheel while it is in operation, but I can give him a few tips as to what to watch for: The croupier in a juice joint (gambling house which has an electromagnetic wheel) can successfully operate the gaff only when the wheel is spinning very slowly. If he gives the wheel a slow spin and you see him or some other casino employee, hands on the table, watching the revolving wheel and ball with concentrated intensity just as the ball is about to drop, it's quite possible that the wheel is rigged.

"gaffed"  
is  
gambling  
slang for  
"rigged"

## BANK CRAPS: THE CASINO'S FASTEST GAMBLING GAME • 183

*Two double-deuces* used together as a pair are much stronger. They are seldom used against smart Craps shooters unless the cheat is a good dice mechanic capable of switching them in and out of the game. A pair of double-deuces gives the right bettor in a private game an edge of 80% on the point FOUR, 50% on the point FIVE and  $22\frac{2}{3}\%$  on the point SIX or EIGHT. The wrong bettor has an advantage of  $16\frac{2}{3}\%$  on the point NINE. The point TEN supplies no advantage either way.

*Two double-fives* used as a pair give the right bettor an 80% edge on the point TEN, 50% on the point NINE and  $22\frac{2}{3}\%$  on the point SIX or EIGHT. The point FOUR has no percentage edge either way.

## ELECTRIC DICE

These cubes contain steel slugs and are used over an electric magnet built into a Craps table or counter. The slugs used in transparent dice are made by gluing together  $\frac{5}{1000}$ -inch steel wires to form a grid and punching out circular disks which fit into the countersunk spots. One is inserted in each of the spots on four different sides of the die, leaving the two sides that the operator wants to favor (opposite sides like the 6 and ace) open.

The magnetic field set up by a concealed electromagnet acts and brings one or the other of the unloaded sides up. Since the load is so light and since it is on four sides, neither pivot nor water test will detect electric dice. Furthermore, their roll is not only natural but even honest some of the time. However, the moment the operator puts on the squeeze by pushing the button that controls the electromagnet concealed beneath the playing surface, the electric dice act like trained seals. They are not percentage dice; the action is completely positive. The boys who use these don't intend to give anyone a break.

On the steer-joint Craps table the magnetic plate is close to the rail and just beneath the spot where most shooters will throw the dice. The pull of the magnet is less noticeable and operates more efficiently on the cubes as they drop down from the backboard than if they were simply rolled across the magnetic spot. Throwing the dice against the rail is, ordinarily, a protective measure, but in the steer joint the reverse is true. But don't try *not* hitting the rail; you won't like what happens then either!

Electric dice may be either missouts or passers, the latter being most often used. Six-ace missouts have the disadvantages that, because they always bring up one of the numbers 2, 12 or 7, the juice cannot be applied on the first roll when 2 and 12 lose and 7 wins. Once the shooter has come out on a point he will always lose when the juice is on because 2 and 12 are no decision and 7 loses.

Electric passers on the other hand throw a variety of points. A pair of electric dice, one die having the 2-5 sides and the other the 3-4 sides open, will throw the numbers 5, 6, 8 or 9. A pair of six-ace trey-four passers will throw 4, 5, 9 or 10.

"cubes"  
is  
gambling  
slang for  
"dice"