

asking you to leave might be other than a casino employee!

Other Opportunities

Keep your eyes open for other opportunities. For example, a few years ago at Bingo Palace in Las Vegas a pit boss occasionally showed the dealer's hole card! It happened to me. The dealer's upcard was 3. The pit boss flipped the dealer's two cards over, and then the upcard was 4 (and the 3 was the hole card). Since I knew that I was playing against a total of seven, I hit my hard fifteen. I asked the dealer about this strange action of the pit boss. The answer was that Bingo Palace pit bosses did this frequently as a form of advertising.

Peter Giles says:

I found a dealer who simply could not add to 21. I busted several times and put my cards under my chips. She paid me every time. Everyone was laughing and she was looking around blankly, perhaps wondering what the joke was.

Sorting Edges of Bee Cards

On page 44 of *Casino Management*, Bill Friedman suggests a novel way of getting an edge at blackjack. It amounts to sorting edges of Bee cards.

Examine the two ends of the back of a Bee card. Are they identical? In some decks they are, but in others every card in the deck has a leading edge that is easily distinguishable from the trailing edge. Likewise the left edge is different from the right edge. Friedman suggests that as you play at a game with such cards, you align each card so that the backs of the cards have meaning to you.

Though Friedman did not use his system himself, I know a pro who has used it in a casino with good results.

Of course you must be able to get a good look at either the next card to be dealt or the dealer's hole card to use the information in the sorted edges. In hand-held games, most dealers show you neither the back of the pack nor the hole card long enough for you to read the edge. With some dealing-shoes, a person with good eyesight can see the edge of the next card to be dealt.

There are problems. You have to work out a method of turning a card end for end without being obvious about what you are doing. The dealer will maintain your alignment of the cards, except that some dealers rotate part of the deck during the shuffle, the countermeasure suggested by Friedman. However, pitching a card to a customer often rotates it. This means the aligning process must be continuous, so you will either have to play head-on or with friends who align the cards the same way you do.

Assuming it works, how should you sort the cards and how much can you gain using Friedman's system? If you can see the edge of every card in the shoe before it is dealt, the strongest play probably is to sort 10s and aces versus other cards, and have first base make a big bet when the first card to be dealt is an ace or 10. The win rate would be enormous.