

Tell Us What
You Think



the **INSIDE** Straight™

It's Poker Time!

As always, there are lots of things happening in the world of poker and the world of IGT. Our goal is to stuff this issue with useful news and information about items that matter to you!

One of the big initiatives IGT's new and growing poker department is putting into practice is that of simplifying the way you do business with us. After hearing what a pain it has been for customers to sign the five-page agreement accompanying each and every EPROM, we have implemented a simplified "master" contract that enables you to get new, multi-hand poker products without stacks of five-page contracts, legal reviews, and the accelerated deforestation of Malaysia! We're a big company, but we're listening and trying to improve our working relationship wherever and whenever we can.

We've also begun an educational campaign this quarter emphasizing the importance of getting idle Action Gaming enhanced poker EPROMs back to us. If we don't get the unused chips back, the bills continue. We're also working hard to improve the billing process, in an effort to reduce the number of mistakes and unexpected "back bills" you may sometimes receive. When we get the old, unused chips back and log them into our system, those bills stop immediately. We recently mailed a laminated "How to Return Multi-hand Poker Chips Cheat Sheet" to all of our customers, and we hope you will make sure that the person you put in charge of returning these EPROMs reads it and understands how important it is to get those chips back to us.

On the product side, we were all very proud to see that our *Chase The Royal* game took second

place in the most innovative game category this year at the American Gaming Summit 2002 awards competition. This theme is out in the field now where players can become acquainted with it, and we'll soon see if they like it as much as the panel!

Also in this issue, get ready for the *Austin Powers™ Poker* game, coming soon. Not a video slot – this is poker! It's a very cool game that comes in standard multi-hand play style, enhanced by Austin material and a couple of groovy bonus games that Bob Dancer loves and is writing about in *Strictly Slots* magazine. More inside.

Keep the cards, letters, and comments coming, and thanks for all of the support you give us!



Spring

2002

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Video Poker News for the Casino Professional



Simplifying The Multi-Hand Poker Process . . .

You said it. You're right. And we agree with you: signing a separate contract for each and every single transaction – whether it's a swap or the conversion of a new game – is way too much work! Recently we sent out a new "Master Agreement" for all of our multi-hand poker products including *Triple Play Draw Poker*, *Hundred Play Draw Poker*, and the like.

The new agreement will enable us to keep the "master" contract on file and all future changes – once you have the new agreement on file – will be done on a simple one-page supplement. This should streamline things at your end and ours. We appreciate all of the positive feedback we've received regarding this improvement in the process. Please keep those suggestions coming!

Another area we've examined is the procedures for tracking EPROMs, and making the billing process more accurate. Surprisingly, we found that many customers have been uncertain of what to do with unused multi-hand poker EPROMs, which explains why we often have billing confusion at the end of the month.

The multi-hand poker product line is unique in that Action Gaming – from whom we license the multi-hand poker

patents – expects to get paid for all the chips that are in the field. As the licensor of their games, IGT is forced to serve as bill collector, bean counter, and shepherd for all those itty-bitty chips out there! We are the "go-between" for all active chips in the field, as well as those that aren't being used, those sitting on a shelf, or that are in transit.



If you've ever wondered why we sometimes make billing errors, it's usually a direct result of so much "manual" counting of EPROMs, and our need to know where they are and whether they are "active" or not. One of the easiest ways to make the billing more accurate is to promptly return any unused or idle chips back to us. Often the importance of their return is not emphasized. However, until we receive them back and log them as "returned," our

accounting computers think they're still out there and "active."

This can result in the accounting computers printing bills that charge for more chips than you actually have installed on the floor. Then we play the "he said, she said," credit/debit game, which is a nuisance for everyone involved. The multi-hand poker contracts do state that unused chips must be sent back to us in order for billing to cease. Sometimes this point gets lost between the Slot Operations office and the tech shop.

To bridge that gap, we're trying to help in a couple of ways. We recently sent all of our clients a laminated sheet with "how to" instructions for the return of chips, and a toll-free number to call when questions arise (1-888-777-5101). Please post this in your tech shop so you'll find it easier to return EPROMs. This should ultimately also improve the billing situation. We're also making coffee coasters with the message, "Return Your Unused Chips," to serve as a reminder. These will be sent to you in April, and we hope these extra steps we're taking help.

Comments and suggestions are always welcome at VideoPoker@IGT.com.

It's in the Cards for *Austin Powers™ Poker*

How about a few hands of Strip Poker with *Austin Powers™* and the *Fembots™*? Yeah Baby!

Seriously though, we're so excited about this hot new theme that we've created a deck of cards lifted right off of the *Austin Powers™ Poker* game. With summer coming and road trips likely, here's a fun way to pass the time with all of your favorite characters from the movies. We've exchanged those boring old kings and queens with images from the movies, including

Austin's favorite hotties Felicity and Vanessa as the queens, Dr. Evil as the kings, the mischievous henchman as the jacks, the "Man of Mystery" himself as the "Ace," and last but not least – the Fembots™ substitute for the jokers.

These fun playing cards are available now for the price of a simple e-mail to VideoPoker@IGT.com. Remember to include your address so we know where to send the cards. Grab a deck while they last and have a smashing time, Baby!!!!



Test Your Knowledge of



(Part 1 of 2)

By Bob Dancer

The *Deuces Wild Bonus Poker* theme is one of the video poker games where the correct strategy differs a lot depending upon which exact pay schedule you find on the machine. Let's compare two separate pay schedules as an example:

	4-4-3	5-3-2
Royal Flush	800	800
Four Deuces	200	200
Royal Flush w/ 2	25	20
5 of a kind	15	12
Straight Flush	9	9
4 of a kind	4	5
Full House	4	3
Flush	3	2
Straight	2	2
3 of a kind	1	1
Optimal Return	98.91%	98.94%

The chart lists the one-coin returns for each game – except for the royal flush, which shows the proportionate one-coin return assuming you play maximum coins. Here we see two games found in all parts of the country, each returning almost exactly the same amount for optimal play. Although these pay schedules would be considered “tight” by the standards of Las Vegas casinos, they would be considered “loose” in many other places.

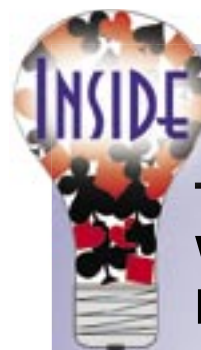
The part of the pay schedule that makes the biggest difference in the strategy is highlighted in the table. The first game is labeled 4-4-3, because those are the values in the highlighted area. Similarly, the second game is labeled 5-3-2.

Here are five everyday hands to play. We'll save some tougher hands for Part II of this *Deuces Wild Bonus Poker* payable comparison, scheduled for the next issue of *The Inside Straight* newsletter. Your assignment, should you decide to accept it, is to play each of these hands against each of the pay schedules. See how your strategy changes!

Note that no suits are shown for wild deuces, as these cards are an exact substitute for any other card of any suit.

Q1:	K♥ K♠ J♦ J♣ 5♥
Q2:	6♥ 7♥ 8♥ 9♣ A♦
Q3:	2 6♦ 7♦ 8♦ A♦ (flush)
Q4:	2 2 5♣ 6♣ 9♦ (straight)
Q5:	K♠ Q♠ J♠ T♠ 9♠ (straight flush)

(Answers on page 5)



The Deuces Wild Bonus Poker® Game

– by Chris Brune, IGT Game Design

Game variations add spice to the video poker experience, and offer players interesting payable possibilities. The *Deuces Wild Bonus Poker* game is wildly popular, and features a payable structure that is pleasantly different from any other poker game.

One note of caution: if you've been playing another game and decide to try your luck with *Deuces Wild Bonus Poker*, it'll pay you to spend a minute or two studying the payable so you can adjust your play strategy accordingly. Here are the odds of receiving a paying hand on the deal, and on the draw . . .

	DEAL	DRAW
ROYAL FLUSH NO WILD	649,740	43,456
FOUR DEUCES	54,145	5,356
ROYAL FLUSH WITH WILD	5,415	524
FIVE OF A KIND	4,165	322
STRAIGHT FLUSH	1,257	195
FOUR OF A KIND	82	16
FULL HOUSE	205	38
FLUSH	180	48
STRAIGHT	42	17
THREE OF A KIND	7.3	3.7
NOTHING	1.25	1.79

Using the Full House (FH) in this example, a player would expect to be dealt a FH once every 205 hands on average. The same player would expect a FH after the deal and subsequent draw every 38 games on average. This compares with a draw average of 87 games for *Jacks or Better Poker*, and a 92-game draw average for *Double Double Bonus Poker*.

Note: the “DRAW” column was calculated using the optimal playing strategy for a standard 99.7% *Deuces Wild Bonus Poker* payable. The “DRAW” column varies from payable to payable due to changes in optimal playing strategy.





Does Poker!

Get ready for some serious shagging, Baby! Just in time for the release of the next *Austin Powers*™ movie, here comes the *Austin Powers*™... *POKER* game. That's right – the *Austin Powers*™ *Poker* game is loaded with surprises that entertain players while satisfying their desire for real poker action.

This is not a video slot game. And it is not just a poker game. It's a dynamic, fun, themed collection of poker games, using traditional paytables and exciting bonuses, all based on the popular "Man of Mystery." It offers two traditional proven poker types, *Triple Play Poker* and *Ten Play Poker*. It also deals up two brand new poker games with unique math proposition bonuses that result in more four-of-a-kinds, more full houses, and more royal flushes – without reducing the appeal of the base paytable.

All the games utilize the popular images and sounds from the wildly successful *Austin Powers*™ movies. The traditional face cards and jokers used in a conventional deck of cards have been replaced with animations of your favorite characters from the *Austin Powers*™ movies. Austin adorns the Aces, of course, in a classic animated pose!

Traditional multi-hand game play is accented with a huge library of sounds from the films. The catchy "Soul Bossa Nova" theme song is interrupted when a winning combination is dealt. When dealt three-of-a-kind, Austin proclaims, "Yeah Baby!" Two pair inspires Dr. Evil to gloat, "It seems the tables have turned, Mr. Powers!" Get three Aces and Austin will shout, "Smashing Baby," "Groovy Baby," or he'll ask, "Shall we shag now or later?" Such interactive encour-

agement enhances the thrill of receiving a winning hand on the deal, and adds an extra measure of anticipation to the game.

The bonus games are laced with Austin lore and amusement, but also include some great gambles. When playing the *Austin Powers*™ *Triple Play Poker* theme with the *Mini-Me* bonus, dealt three-of-a-kinds spawn six free additional pairs of three-of-a-kinds with their own bonus pay schedule.

When this occurs, music plays and Dr. Evil proclaims, "I shall call him Mini-Me." On screen, six additional pairs of the three-of-a-kind appear, and you have a chance not only to advance the original three *Triple Play Poker* hands, but also the six new hands.

In the *Ten Play Draw Poker Number Two* bonus, any time you are dealt three suited cards to a royal flush, the voice of Robert Wagner – who played the character of Number Two in the movie – calmly states, "I have a business proposition for you," and gives you the option of trading your ten active hands for 50 hands, all holding the same three, suited cards. Fifty shots at the royal!

That's 40 extra hands for free! Players will love this opportunity to nail the elusive royal flush.

Bob Dancer, an industry expert on video poker, recently played both games in our lab



and had this to say: “I enjoyed playing these games...” and “I liked both versions [of the *Austin Powers™ Poker* bonus games] for different reasons. The *Mini-Me* bonus gets you to the bonus round much more quickly, but the possible bonuses are ‘only’ on four-of-a-kind. The *Ten Play Draw Poker Number Two* bonus game regularly gives you 50 pops at a 1,080-to-1 royal flush.”



Dancer's complete game review will appear in *Strictly Slots* magazine in April or May. Keep an eye out for the article! The *Austin Powers™ Poker* game will be available around April or May in Nevada, and in the summer elsewhere. The *Austin Powers™ Poker* theme is a \$15/day game with no minimum, and a one-time license fee of \$500. For more information, please call your poker specialist, your IGT Account Executive, or send us an e-mail at VideoPoker@IGT.com.



Dancer's Answers

(Answers to the *Deuces Wild Bonus Poker* game quiz on page 3)

In each case I list the correct answer and how much more it is worth than the second best answer – assuming you are playing max coins on a dollar machine.

A1: KKJJ in 4-4-3 (67¢) and KK or JJ in 5-3-2 (24¢). The critical factor here is how much the full house returns. When the full house returns four-per-coin-bet, go with the two pair. When it only returns three, pick either pair but not both, and shoot for a four-of-a-kind or better.

A2: 678 in 4-4-3 (18¢) and 6789 in 5-3-2 (6¢). The dissimilar return for the same flush makes all of the difference here.

A3: 2678A in 4-4-3 (\$3.51) and 2678 in 5-3-2 (\$1.06). The difference in the value of the flush strikes again.

A4: 2256 in 4-4-3 (22¢) and 22 in 5-3-2 (45¢). Don't even think about holding a straight with two wild deuces showing in either game. That error would be worth more than \$5.

A5: KQJT in 4-4-3 (\$53.93) and KQJT in 5-3-2 (\$51.17). This is a classic nerve-racking choice. Is it right to be a “gambler” and go for the royal? Or be a “chicken” and keep the straight flush?

Deuces Wild Bonus Poker is the only game in video poker where the “gambler” choice is correct on this hand. This is, keep four-card royal flush over a five-card straight flush. The reason, of course, is the relatively low value of the straight flush in this game. On a five-coin basis, the four-card royal is worth between \$96 and \$99 (depending on the pay schedule). When you compare that to a \$45 straight flush, it's not contest. In most other video poker games, the value of the four-card royal is similar, but the value of the dealth straight flush is \$250. it's right to be a “chicken” in those games!

Well, how did you do? These weren't particularly tough hands. Remember, the average reader of this newsletter is smarter and more educated than the average player in the casino. if you can't get a perfect score, think how hard it is for them! This is why these games traditionally hold more than 2% better than optimum. Many players know these games are looser than slots – and are attracted to them for that very reason. But knowing that and being able to play accurately are two different things.



Double Pay™ Poker

Poker Pointers™ Brochure

Love the smell of fresh ink? Then request a copy of the latest *Poker Pointers* brochure – this one featuring the *Double Pay Poker* theme – just in from the printer. You'll be treated to a colorful, screen-by-screen game demonstration with an easy to understand explanation of how this popular game is played.

To request a copy, send us your name and address in an e-mail to: VideoPoker@IGT.com.

While you're at it, we also still have a supply of *Poker Pointers* brochures for the recently introduced *Chase the Royal* game theme. Get your hands on a copy and find out why AGS awarded this hot theme second place honors in 2002.

If you have not yet seen the games featured on our *Inside Straight* CD-ROM *PromoPak*, then ask for one of these, too! Slide it into your computer's CD drive and you'll be able to select and view a brief video presentation of any one of the five poker games included on the CD:

- *Chase the Royal*
- *Millionaire Triple Play Poker*
- *Hundred Play Draw Poker*
- *Flex Play Poker*
- *Double Pay Poker*

This CD is an effective tool for brushing up on the nuances of each game. There's even a generic video segment on how to play poker. Just ask for *The Inside Straight PromoPak*, and get to clickin'!



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The *Austin Powers™ Poker*, *Chase the Royal*, *Five Play Draw Poker*, *Flex Play Poker*, *Hundred Play Draw Poker*, *Millionaire Triple Play Poker*, *Ten Play Draw Poker*, *Triple Play*, *Triple Play Draw Poker*, and *Triple Play Five Play Draw Poker* games utilize U.S. Patent Nos. 5,823,873; 6,007,066; 6,098,985; and other patents pending that are licensed from Action Gaming, Inc., and must be operated under separate license agreements with IGT.

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The game descriptions, photos, artwork and machine details depicted in this newsletter are subject to change subsequent to publication.

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In spite of our best efforts to keep our mailing list up-to-date, we inevitably receive returned mail that was undeliverable for one reason or another. Please help us keep our list clean. Check your mailing label to make sure the details shown are correct. If we've taken liberties with the spelling of your name, gotten creative with your street address, or if your job title or other information has changed, please let us know. Or, if you're on the bottom of a routing list and would like to receive your own free copy of this newsletter in a timelier manner, just drop us an e-mail request at VideoPoker@IGT.com and we'll add you to the list. Be sure to include your name, title, company affiliation, street address with city, state or province, and zip code... and phone number, please. You can also call us at (702) 896-8204. Thanks for checking!





Reserve Your PromoPak Now!

Need one more reason to love the new *Austin Powers™* Poker game? Then get your MoJo in motion and request a copy of the hottest new *PromoPak* going – this one featuring the Shagmaster himself, *Austin Powers™* – and you'll have your reason!

This video on CD-ROM highlights game play for the standard 3- and 10-Play Poker games, as well as the special Mini-Me and Number Two bonus games that are available in the *Austin Powers™* Poker theme. The video clips show how the different games and bonuses work, and give a fun demonstration of some of the special features, memorable sounds, and animated visual effects that are designed to entertain players and build a loyal following.

To reserve your copy of the *Austin Powers™* Poker *PromoPak*, simply send an e-mail request to VideoPoker@IGT.com, or phone (702) 896-8204, today. You'll see – it's the next best thing to actually playing the game!



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Tickets Click With Video Poker Players

How are some of the newer

poker games being received in the real world? We asked Marcus

Suan, Corporate Vice President of Slot Marketing for Coast Resorts, to share some of his experiences.

IGT: Why do you think *Triple Play Poker* and other multi-hand poker games have stayed so popular for so long?

Suan: "My theory is bottom line, new items are coming out every week in the video slot type of machines. The *Triple Play Poker* game is unique. Someone is not coming out every day with a new triple-play machine."

IGT: Do you notice any trends occurring in the poker market?

Suan: "The only trend I see is Action Gaming and its trend... it's basically been the same exact item for 15 years. I don't know what all we can do with it and the new types... They're a bit too complicated and a little cumbersome. I think the basic program is here to stay, unless someone comes out with another triple-play type of machine. So no, I don't see a trend developing."

IGT: Several years ago, bill acceptors on slot machines created a revolution in casino currency handling. Today, our *EZ Pay Ticket* System is taking cash handling technology to the next level. How have your players taken to using *EZ Pay* tickets?

Suan: "We opened Suncoast with as many ticket-type machines as we could, which were all IGT, over 90% of the floor. The property so far has been – to my knowledge – the best opening and best-run casino in operations. That part of it, ticket-in/ticket-out – smooth as a kitten. It's a brand new property with no issues. Terrible Herbst also did it. The Palms has done it, and Green Valley Ranch, so ticketing is definitely here to stay. People have accepted it very, very well. That's not a complaint with customers."

IGT: Why do you think it's been more of a difficult transition for places that didn't have it?

Suan: "The only other place we have – we're converting half the floor at the Orleans and half the floor at the Gold Coast [to the *EZ Pay Ticket* System] – we're slowing down because the type of machines, the multi-game, multi-denomination is a different format, different layout than the old 13" *Player's Edge* machines. We're getting more comments about that than ticketing. Actually, we haven't had any complaints about ticketing..."

IGT: What's your favorite poker game?

Suan: "If you're looking for the most popular poker machine on the floor, it's the standard *Double Double Bonus Poker* game. That's probably the most popular machine in the history of gaming. That and *Triple Play Poker* are the best machines on the floor, no doubt. You don't want to have too many of them, though; you don't want to saturate the floor. Not everybody likes to play them, but the win-per-day is definitely the biggest on the floor."

Thanks, Marcus, for sharing your insights. Coast Resorts casinos are a great success story in themselves, and IGT is proud to be represented so well with slots and video poker games, and the *EZ Pay Ticket* System.



CASINOS TAKE ACTION!

"Action Gaming products have been a welcome addition to the poker mix at Mohegan Sun. We have found that Action games appeal to a wide variety of our players and the games have a great deal of earning potential."

Frank Neborsky,
Vice President of
Slot Operations,
Mohegan Sun

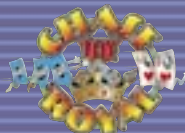
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