

# Whoever said, "Do one thing and do it well," never played Triple Play™ Poker.

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Play three hands at a time. Play twelve different games. Play as fast as you like. Do it all on one machine. That's the kind of excitement Triple Play™ Poker dishes out. Look for it at your favorite casino.

Also try your hand at Ten Play™, Fifty Play™ and Hundred Play™ Poker, and Chase The Royal®, an intense new game with four times the royal flushes as traditional video poker games.

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# the **INSIDE** Straight™

SEE MIKE BEG  
FOR A ROYAL...



Dear Poker Professional,

Well, it's leap year 2004 and after a year of unpredictable and infuriating parity in the NFL, it appears as if the economy and coming year are looking quite healthy. Things are equally green in the "garden of poker," where we're cultivating some solid performing games and reviving some existing ones with strong growth substances!



Examples of early bloomers include our *Super Times Pay* Poker game which recently finished testing in Nevada with strong, *Triple Play*-like numbers. I've played this with my own money and really love the excitement of the frequently appearing multiplier, making my full houses pay like quads, while still being able to play my known strategy on my favorite *Double Bonus* Poker game.

The *Multi-Hand Blackjack* theme is going into test, and we think we're really onto something with this one. People love blackjack, but there just isn't enough handle produced to make money for the operator. Well, add in a little Action Gaming multi-hand flavor and guess what? You're driving handle galore, and unintimidated blackjack players are playing their hearts out, up to ten hands a pop, with no third-base player screaming about how "...you took my ten, you idiot!" We think this will also do well on your bar.

So, who out there has noticed that live poker is suddenly "the next big thing?" Capitalizing on the buzz and interest in live poker, we recently began testing our first *Hold 'Em Challenge* Poker game, which allows players to compete against two electronic opponents, again without the fear of verbal abuse, or cigarette burns often experienced in a live, smoky poker room. Timing is everything, and here at Poker Central we're on top of things.

Enough about games. Read on to find out some surprising and profitable info on progressive multi-hand games. Our resident math guru put some numbers together to show how inexpensive it is for you to create a "must play" progressive bank. As an avid progressive hunter, I was surprised to see how cheap it is to make a jackpot look "ready."

Finally, this month we're spotlighting another property that really stands out because of its strategic utilization of *Game King* platform options: the Grand Casino in Gulfport, Mississippi. John Daley, our man-in-charge and *Deuces Wild* fan, found himself quite at home and impressed – and that's no easy task for this stickler!

Read on and we hope you'll find some pearls inside. Remember, anytime you have a topic of interest to you or your players, we're here to serve you. Call, write, or e-mail us at [Mike.Fields@IGT.com](mailto:Mike.Fields@IGT.com) or [John.Daley@IGT.com](mailto:John.Daley@IGT.com).



Mike Fields



February 2004

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Video Poker News for the Casino Professional



# Five Play Multi-Strike Poker™ Game Wins “Best Slot Product” Award

The first-place award for “Best Slot Product” of 2003 went to IGT’s *Five Play Multi-Strike Poker* game during the fifth annual Gaming and Technology Conference in Atlantic City. The award was one of nine given in three categories –

Best Consumer-Service Technology, Best Productivity-Enhancement Technology, and Best Slot Product – as part of the first Global Gaming Business Gaming and Technology Awards competition.

Nominees were evaluated during the Global Gaming Expo in September. The *Five Play Multi-Strike Poker* game was also honored in January 2003 as the “Most Innovative Gaming Product of the Year” at the American Gaming Summit in Las Vegas.



Building on the success of the single-hand *Multi-Strike Poker* game, the new *Five Play* multi-hand version gives players more of the *Multi-Strike Poker* action and excitement they’ve come to expect, and gives you another prime attraction for your casino. Watch for our official game release announcement – slated for later this year – or if you can’t wait, take a look at the single-hand *Multi-Strike Poker* game, and let your imagination run wild from there!



1701 W. Charleston Blvd., Suite 600  
Las Vegas, NV 89102-2311  
702-737-7005 Fax: 737-4676  
www.VideoPoker.com  
E-mail to VideoPoker@IGT.com



|                                                |                                                           |                                                                                         |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Editor</b><br>Brian Dillon                  | <b>Graphic Artist</b><br>Laura Lockridge<br>Jesse Cushman | <b>Contributing Writers</b><br>Chris Brune<br>John Daley<br>Brian Dillon<br>Mike Fields |
| <b>Senior Graphic Designer</b><br>Mark Salinas | <b>Photography</b><br>Peter Walker                        |                                                                                         |



## International Game Technology

Sales Headquarters – IGT Las Vegas  
1085 Palms Airport Drive  
Las Vegas, NV 89119-3749  
702-896-8500 Fax: 896-8686  
Poker Hotline: 702-896-8201  
www.IGT.com  
E-mail to John.Daley@IGT.com

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## International Game Technology

Marketing  
Editorial Offices:  
IGT/Marketing/TIS  
9295 Prototype Drive  
Reno, NV 89521-8986  
E-mail to Brian.Dillon@IGT.com

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# Calculating Poker Progressives Made Easy

A while back, we treated you to a two-tab downloadable spreadsheet you could use to calculate the change in payback percentage when you alter the start/reset point for the royal flush, and/or the sequential royal flush.

We've had so many hits downloading this from the web page – and lots of positive feedback from readers like you – that we've added a third tab to the spreadsheet you can use to play around with the start/reset amount for the “ROYAL FLUSH – ALL HANDS” progressive in our *Triple Play*, *Five Play* and *Ten Play* games.

Use these tools to create killer progressives in your casino without giving away the house. You'll find the updated spreadsheet at [www.IGT.com/VideoPoker](http://www.IGT.com/VideoPoker). Run your numbers right from the web site, or right-click the link to download the spreadsheet to your desktop for instant access any time you need to crunch a percentage or two.

And, even though we have the very best intentions in making this calculator available to you, our friends in the legal department would be less than pleased if we didn't add:

“The calculations generated by this spreadsheet are an approximation only of changes in payback percentage, and must not be used for any purpose where an exact calculation would be more appropriate. IGT makes no warranty or representation regarding the approximate calculations generated, and the user of this information accepts any and all risk of loss or damage resulting from any reliance on the data generated or provided.”

That having been said,  
go forth and calculate!



## New! Multi-Denomination™ Software By Popular Demand

By John Daley

*Multi-Denomination* Version 3, or MD-3 for short, was specifically designed to address feedback – dare I say “complaints?” – from the field regarding accounting for high-hand, low-denomination games. A great example of this is *Fifty Play* and *Hundred Play* games that were set in nickels, but reported in pennies. With the new MD-3 software, they will now report in the lowest activated denomination. So, if you have a *Fifty Play* game set up for nickels, that's how it will report. No more painful conversions for accounting!

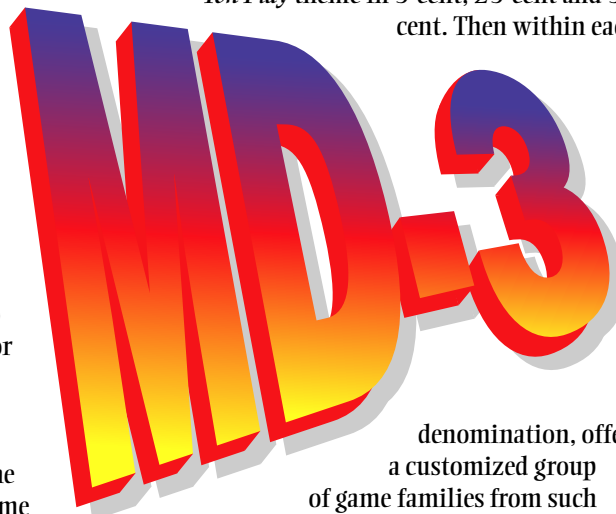
What else does this new version offer? How about the ability to group up to 12 game families per denomination, and up to nine different denominations? Think of all the possible configuration options! And when you maximize player options this way, you also maximize your profitability.

With MD-3 you can now take one game – let's say it's a *Super Times Pay* game – and offer a *Triple Play* theme in 25-cent, 50-cent, \$1, and \$2; a *Five Play* theme in 10-cent, 25-cent, 50-cent, and \$1; and a *Ten Play* theme in 5-cent, 25-cent and 50-cent. Then within each

juicier paybacks just by playing higher denominations.

Spend a little time on the front end fine-tuning your game configurations, and your customers will have all the shopping selections they'll ever need. As a bonus, players will find it easier to migrate into higher denominations once these options are available to them.

Take advantage of all the features of the new MD-3 chip. No, it's not rocket science, but it IS a sure way to improve your bottom line. If you have questions on how to option these games, don't be shy.



denomination, offer a customized group of game families from such popular favorites as *Jacks or Better*, *Deuces Wild*, *Bonus Poker*, *Double Bonus Poker*, *Double Double Bonus Poker* themes, etc. And remember, you can also use different paytables for each denomination, thus allowing gamblers a shot at

Call IGT Casino Services at 1-800-777-5101, or contact your Account Executive.



# Spotlight on...

By John Daley

Recently I had the opportunity to visit the Gulf Coast and spent some time looking at that poker market. In many of the properties I visited I heard that video poker really was not doing what it was expected to do. This was definitely NOT the case at the Grand Casino in Gulfport, where Director of Slot Operations, Brian Dolan, told me how great video poker was doing for him. Naturally, this aroused my curiosity. Why would poker be doing great for him, and yet it was not doing all that well at most other properties on the coast?

As we walked the floor it became very obvious that this property had an exceptional variety of video poker games in the casino. The Grand has also taken full advantage of the features of the *Game King* platform – offering up to 12 different game choices and as many as five different denominations all on one game box! According to Brian, coin-in more than doubled since he switched from single-denomination nickels to offering his players *Multi-Denomination* options. In addition to the variety, at this writing they either have or are in the process of getting, most of the Action Gaming themes that are approved in the state.

He also makes sure to reward the higher denomination player by optioning the machines to have an increasing payback percentage as the players increase their denomination of wager. Since the average player typically plays 3-5% below optimum, and most skilled players will play 1-2% below optimum, Brian knows that he can offer attractive paytables to increase coin-in and yet not get burned. After all, the “professional” players that can and will play optimum poker are really only interested in \$5 and above poker –

unless they find an irresistible deal in \$1 poker. It's nice to work with an operator who realizes we're in the gambling business, and that players deserve a fair chance at winning!



The Grand Gulfport has three floors. Since poker is such a strong performer – and poker players are such loyal customers – they're using video poker to draw players up to the third floor. They also have a *Triple Play/Five Play Draw Poker* machine in the high-limit area with \$1, \$2, \$5, and \$10 *Multi-Denomination* options that's doing so well that they're putting in a second

game. Their inventory of games includes *Triple Play/Five Play Draw Poker*, *Triple Play/Five Play/Ten Play White Hot Aces*, *Double Pay Poker*, and *Trade Up Poker* themes, and they're getting ready to order some *Hundred Play* and *Spin Poker* games.

One of the unique things they've done in one video reel area is to mix in one *White Hot Aces* and one *Double Pay Poker* game at the end of one of the banks. Surprise! They get very good play, and the interesting thing is they are the only two poker games in the entire section!

Brian has done a fantastic job of offering players enticing paytables — he has a number of 9/6 *Jacks or Better* and 9/7 *Double Bonus Poker* games. He even offers high-limit players a 10/7 *Double Bonus*

*Poker* choice in a single-hand game. Players have responded and have shown their appreciation for the liberal paytables with their return play. I think it's safe to say that at the Grand, Poker Rules!





# Create Killer Progressive Banks... On The Cheap!

By Mike Fields

Progressive games can provide windfall winnings for lucky players, and serious profits for your casino. Progressives will drive frequent repeat business, and can help develop a loyal following among your poker players. The big hook? That growing top award!

In the joints that I frequent, I know when the royal's high – and when it hits that certain "hot" number – I pull out my wallet. What you may not know is how inexpensive it can be to make that magic number appear ready to pop... at virtually no cost to you.

Let me show you. Normally, folks set up the quarter *Triple Play* game at a \$3,000 dealt royal reset, maybe \$4,000 at most.

In dollars, it usually resets at \$12,000. Given the fact that these hands only occur about once every 650,000 hands, the exposure is minimal and is divided among a bank of games.

Now here's the real surprise: if you started the quarter reset at \$5,000, you'd only add .1% to the payback. A \$7,500 reset adds .2%, and at \$10,000, only .3%! Do you think your quarter players might like a shot at this? They'll howl! If you don't want to give up the .3% from your side, drop your straight from five coins to four and you're more than covered.

For next to nothing you can make your progressives equally attractive for dollar players. For example, resetting that dealt

royal to \$20,000 adds barely .1%. This is exciting stuff! Go **wild** and offer a \$25,000 dealt royal and add only .15%. Do you think that kind of juicy jackpot might get some serious play? You know it will, and it costs you next to nothing. Obviously, you need to take your comp offerings into account, but you get the idea.

Run these numbers for yourself – check the exact calculation – and you'll become a believer. I think you'll find these examples are pretty darn close. If you want to add some life to an area, and to your poker players, this idea's a sure winner!



## Profitable Video Blackjack? You Bet!



Players have always liked to play video blackjack, but from an operator's perspective there's always been one problem with the game: handle. Operators haven't been able to drive enough coin-in to make money on this traditionally low-holding game. Well not any more.

We've taken the proven multi-hand patents that revolutionized video poker and added them to blackjack, creating the new *Triple Play*, *Five Play*, and even *Ten Play Multi-Hand Blackjack* games. For flexibility, we've put all three multi-hand formats on one chip. Now you can configure each version with its own set of available denominations. Voila! This is the way to make more money with blackjack, and make your players happy to boot!

Whether it's on a bar top or a traditional bank, there's a real market for this game. And whether you offer the *Triple Play Blackjack* game in dollars, the *Five Play* version in quarters, and

nickels for the *Ten Play* game, these proven play characteristics from Action Gaming have made blackjack better than ever. Depending on the payable, "Surrender" and "Insurance" are also available so your players will have a great blackjack experience at ten times the volume!

Make more money with blackjack. Or finally make money with blackjack! Call your account executive or your local poker specialist now and open up a new and profitable world of multi-hand blackjack right away.



## Put an Extra Ace Up Your Sleeve!

It's no secret that gamblers love their aces. It's one of the few top awards that players really believe they can get almost any time they play. Let's face it, in poker there's no anticipation quite like drawing into three aces!

new twist in video poker – the *Five Aces Poker* game.

This is truly a marriage of the top two attractions of video poker

into a kicker-filled game your players will surely love. No funky bonuses. No extra spins. Just a juicy new top award and lots of opportunities to hit it big with four, or even five aces.

Players also love their kicker games, especially the *Double Double Bonus* game, which is often the most popular video poker game on a casino floor. Now imagine taking the *Double Double Bonus* theme with a fifth ace slipped into the deck for a top award of 6,000 coins and you've got the hottest



Your players  
will love this game,  
because **Aces Rock!**

|                 | 500 | 1000 | 1500 | 2000 | 6000 |
|-----------------|-----|------|------|------|------|
| 5 ACES          | 250 | 500  | 750  | 1000 | 4000 |
| ROYAL FLUSH     | 100 | 200  | 300  | 400  | 500  |
| 4 ACES          | 80  | 160  | 240  | 320  | 400  |
| 4 2s, 3s, 4s    | 40  | 80   | 120  | 160  | 200  |
| 4 5s THRU KINGS | 25  | 50   | 75   | 100  | 125  |
| FULL HOUSE      | 9   | 18   | 27   | 36   | 45   |
| FLUSH           | 6   | 12   | 18   | 24   | 30   |
| STRAIGHT        | 3   | 6    | 9    | 12   | 15   |
| 3 OF A KIND     | 3   | 6    | 9    | 12   | 15   |
| TWO PAIR        | 1   | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |
| JACKS OR BETTER | 1   | 2    | 3    | 4    | 5    |

| HELD | HELD | HELD | HELD | HELD |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| A    | A    | A    | A    | A    |
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# Deliver Live Action Poker Thrills

Unless you've been living in a cave, you've probably seen live poker programs appearing everywhere on TV – on travel channels and even sports channels. With the long-standing tradition in Las Vegas of the "World Series of Poker," and the "World Poker Tour" taking to the high seas with Holland America Cruise Lines, there's never been a more opportune time to offer players a "Hold 'Em" style poker game! And better yet, one based on the king of live poker, Texas Hold 'Em.

Make the most of this surge in popularity with the *Hold 'Em Challenge* Poker game, IGT's first foray into blending "live" poker and video poker. This game is available with the player's choice of *Four Play* or *Nine Play* multi-hand formats, and lets participants pick their hand and play against two automated challengers.

The *Hold 'Em Challenge* theme is just the thing for novice poker players looking to learn Hold 'Em poker at their own pace – on a machine rather than in competition with other live players. It's great exercise

for experienced players too, providing the perfect diversion while they wait for a spot in the next table game.

If you're already offering live poker, can you think of a better way to keep those players close than to put a bank of these games outside your poker room? And if you don't offer live poker, so what?!

Everyone's seeing Hold 'Em style poker games on TV and they're bound to give this timely new hit a shot no matter where you place it on your gaming floor! When they do, they'll love it... and so will you!



## How To Win Friends and Influence Players

The *Super Times Pay Poker* theme offers all the proven action and excitement of multi-hand video poker, now with the addition of an exciting and play-enhancing buy-a-pay feature. A random multiplier of 2x to 10x occurs every 15 hands, on average. Rather than take anything away from the base payable, we've added a sixth coin bet per hand. This way, players won't dismiss the game with a passing glance at the payable. People love the *Triple Play* poker format, and this multiplier feature really adds fun to the allure of the game!

*Five Play* and *Ten Play Draw Poker* versions of the game are also included on the same chip for one daily fee. Offer players *EZ Pay Tickets* and *Multi-Denomination* options along with their favorite game families – *Jacks or Better*, *Bonus Poker*, *Double Bonus*

*Poker*, *Double Double Bonus Poker*, *Deuces Wild*, and *Joker Poker* themes – and you've got a sure winner!

In addition to improved sounds and on-screen graphics, we've created upbeat and festive glass designed to get them to try the game, and once into the action, the "super" play feature will keep them there.

