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## Psychic dealer knows what's in the cards

On a lazy Saturday afternoon at Bill's Casino in late January, six college-age blackjack beginners sit at a table in the back of the room. For about a half-hour, they seem content to bet the table minimum, sip free cocktails and make small talk with the dealer and each other.

As the dealer's shift winds down, the player at third base decides to spice things up a little.

"I just have a feeling," he said, the proverbial gambler's premonition. The stocky, 20-something man wearing a golf shirt and a baseball cap then pushed a good portion of his red \$5 chips into the betting circle. The player at first base nodded and did the same.

Both shot the dealer a nervous glance, hoping she would condone their decision to let it ride. Instead, Dayle Schear shook her head in disapproval. The psychic — yes, a psychic blackjack dealer — had a feeling of a different sort.

She dealt them a 19 and 20, respectively. The third-base player smirked confidently.

Showing a six, Schear flipped over a two. She then drew another two. Four. Seven. Twenty-one.

The players groaned in unison, a loser's harmony that drowned out the sound of Schear swiping away and stacking their chips. They had met the Stateline casino's "Beat the Psychic Blackjack Dealer" challenge — from 2-4 p.m. Saturdays — and lost. Even so, perhaps sensing an added entertainment value for a few rounds of 21, they left the table smiling.

"I still had fun," said Sam Brown of Sacramento, one of the players. "She was a lot nicer than a lot of the (jerk) dealers you run into at other casinos."

For Schear, it was another day's work combining her two passions — dealing cards and telling the future. She left the table smiling.

"I love taking people's money," she said. "I just love it, love it, love it, love it. I'm a house dealer ... and they love me, too."

Shear's new hybrid job came from a casino executive's idea to blend her unusual set of skills. The result has been a successful marketing vehicle for the psychic's stage show at the casino and a dangling carrot for gamblers eager to try a new way to beat the house.

Not that you should bet the mortgage on the next hand. In order to meet gaming regulations, Schear can't forecast the cards until after the bets are placed. The two-deck game has a \$100 limit, and Schear says her accuracy is "about 50-50."

That hasn't stopped gamblers from waiting in line for seats at her table since the small casino in Lake Tahoe introduced the game about a month ago.

"She usually has a full game," said Tim Tretton, the director of operations at Bill's Casino who came up with the psychic gaming concept. "This was done strictly for promotion and to have some fun." It has worked on both counts, he said.

It's not all about the cards, anyway. Schear often delves into her practice of psychometry — gathering feeling about the past or future while holding an object — while pitching the cardboard. For instance, she told a young woman that although she was ambivalent about her blackjack hand, she had a feeling the player's car was about to break down.

"When?" asked the woman, who had just bought a new Volkswagen Beetle.

"Come see the show," said Schear, who performs at 7 p.m. Thursday through Saturday at William's Back Door Blues Club in the casino. Schear picks guests to come on stage and answers questions in the hour-long show. She'll tackle just about any subject, though she won't predict the stock market or sporting events.

The blackjack game has generated somewhat of a media buzz; Schear says she has been contacted for interviews by several publications, and "The Tonight Show With Jay Leno" has inquired about Schear making an appearance.

Shear hasn't shied away from the attention. Already, the publicity has helped her land a gig filling in for David Brenner in Las Vegas, and she's banking on more good, for lack of a better word, fortune.

"I'm going for a billboard ... whoever gives me a billboard first, I'll go with," she said. "Please print that. I need my boss to see that."

Shear, a Lake Tahoe resident for 30 years, dealt cards for a living at Harveys but lost her job when a bomb damaged the casino in 1980. She then decided to exploit her psychic skills, which she claims are a genetic gift passed down for generations in her family.

She started by examining lie detector tests for local law enforcement and reading tarot cards on a radio show. Her reputation grew, and soon she was being hired to help out with high-profile cases.

She once was credited for saving the life of a 90-year-old woman who had gone missing from a nursing home — Schear discovered the woman's whereabouts — and a TV station rented her expertise during the O.J. Simpson trial. She nailed the trial verdict and subsequent events pertaining to Simpson, too.

She has been featured on TV shows such as "Hard Copy" and "Extra," and she has written four books that are available for sale at her shop.

Tickets for Schear's show are \$15, and the club requires a one-drink minimum. For more information about the show, call Bill's Casino at 588-2455 or visit [www.harrah.com](http://www.harrah.com). For more information about Schear, visit [www.psychicdayleshear.com](http://www.psychicdayleshear.com).

-By Josh Nagel

