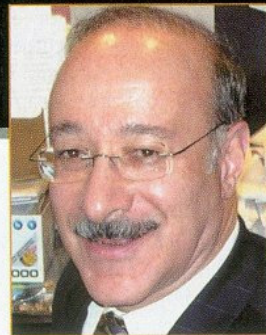


TECHNOLOGY

by Steve Karoul



Who Let the Dogs Out?

Blackjack Card Counters? Call the Bloodhound

Foxwoods Resort Casino is very fortunate to have such great team of professionals from many different backgrounds and experience. For example, one of our MIS Department staff was actually a former casino manager at Crown Casino in Australia before relocating to the United States. Greg Dean is now one of our senior systems analysts. He not only understands gaming but he also understands computer programming and analysis as well and therefore adds a new dimension or perspective to our MIS team in better understanding the gaming side of our operation. Dean is also a member of our Comp Review Committee, which helps management to better evaluate players from different aspects. The Bloodhound summary below was written by Dean as part of an in-house orientation to gaming for our MIS department. Bloodhound was written by Oliver Shubert and is distributed by Shuffle Master.

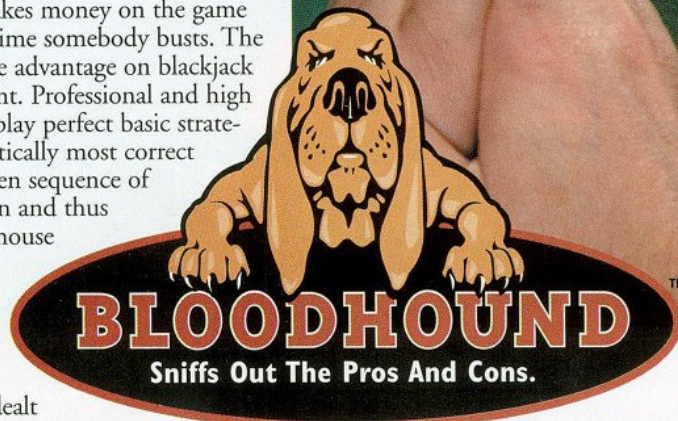
Bloodhound Back Ground

This recently introduced software formerly known as "Blackjack Voice Survey" has been around for about ten years. It measures both risk assessment and the profitability of the casino's most important blackjack players. Why would this be important?

Every casino makes money on the game of Blackjack every time somebody busts. The casino's approximate advantage on blackjack is around 1.3 percent. Professional and high stakes players who play perfect basic strategy (that is the statistically most correct way to play any given sequence of cards) bust less often and thus reduce the casino's house advantage down to approximately 0.7 percent.

Players who card count (that is observe every card dealt and determine the approximate

mix of high cards to low cards remaining in the shoe) bust even less often and therefore reduce



at 2 - 1. The betting strategy associated with card counting is therefore to bet more when the cards remaining in the shoe have a high face value (count is high) and bet less when the count is low.

presently offers a xx percent (confidential percent) return on investment through comps, Wampum points (comp dollars) and other offers to players, the longer the association with these types of skilled BJ players the less chance the company has of making a profit or making budget.

Blackjack Band

So why not just ban everybody who looks like they are card counting? The reason being is that this is a very difficult discipline to truly master. Only a very small percentage of skilled BJ players ever really achieve an actual consistent level of profitability. The good news is that everybody has the ability to learn to count cards and your local casino is the college with open enrollment and it never closes. Casino managers know full well that for most players there is far more money to be made from holding training schools teaching counting or selling books on the subject than players can actually earn from performing the counting process. Next time you visit a casino check out one of the magazine convenience stores and you will more than likely find a variety of books on card counting, basic strategy, etc. These are not there by mistake!

There are however, the few highly skilled players who through sheer skill and intelligence or from the assistance of certain electronic devices that you won't normally find available on eBay or in Walmart that help them to beat the odds. On the gaming floor when one of these players is recognized as having a "particularly good run of luck," they are flagged for surveillance to record, archive and have their trusty "dog" review the play. Bloodhound uses either voice recognition or the keyboard for data entry. The data is actually a summary of every aspect of the recorded game interaction observed on the BJ table. Sounds complicated but in fact the data entry is quite easy and in approximately 20 minutes you will have one of the most accurate summary analyses of table games play presently available anywhere for the game of blackjack.

These reports grade a variety of disciplines. Was this person a card counter and if so, how good? How well does this person play basic strategy? What is the overall casino advantage over this player and what is our expected win per hour? Was there an unhealthy association with the dealer exposing cards to be dealt? Bloodhound offers some very powerful information that definitely lets the poor old casino manager sleep a little easier at night. Especially if he knows that a



Skill vs. Luck

Recently, we actually experienced a very interesting case here at Foxwoods. We had a customer buy in for \$15,000. He finished his play that day winning just over \$100,000. He came back every day for the next three weeks and repeated his same good fortune. He won just over \$2,200,000 in approximately three weeks or so. Needless to say, "everyone" was getting very nervous and some of our non-sweating executives almost started to sweat. However, based upon our Bloodhound analysis we knew that this was an abnormal situation and that as long as the customer kept coming back that we had a reasonable chance of beating him based upon his skill level. Our CEO was not as comfortable as our casino vice president but still had confidence in the accuracy of the Bloodhound program.

The gentleman returned again and lost back the full \$2,200,000 plus an additional \$75,000 in one session. Bloodhound helped

his particular betting system was working and kept returning. However, because of Bloodhound we never "ed" his action and in fact, made him comfortable and welcome at all times which are additional reasons why returning to Foxwoods.

I have also witnessed the opposite at some casinos where they do everything they can to make the player feel uncomfortable and not want to come back. Evidently they decided to cut the player and not take a chance losing more money. Bloodhound might have been the tool to help their decision-making.

The bottom line? Don't guess. Do your homework properly, and you will be successful.

Steve Karoul is vice president of casino marketing for Foxwoods Resort Casino in Connecticut. Karoul has over 25 years of experience with top casinos both domestically and internationally. He is a contributor to several different casino