4.3. SIMPLIFIED BASIC STRATEGY

By Dan Pronovost

Dan Pronovost is the owner and president of DeepNet Technologies, makers of a wide range of blackjack training products and software. Dan recently released a new e-Book, Blackjack Count Master which uses a series of exercises based on his software to teach readers how to master card-counting in blackjack. Their web site is: www.HandheldBlackjack.com. Dan is the creator of the new card counting system Speed Count, which is being taught in the Golden Touch Blackjack courses by Henry Tamburin: www.GoldenTouchBlackjack.com

For some recreational blackjack players, spending many hours memorizing strategy tables or complex count systems is simply too much bother. Although many blackjack players know that there is such as thing as perfect basic strategy and card counting, very few people actually take the time to learn these methods.

For these players, the challenge is to learn the easiest possible playing strategy that minimizes their disadvantage at the blackjack tables. This article provides a scalable set of simplified blackjack rules and shows the cost of using this system.

Designing the rules

In issue #30 of this newsletter, we explored the impact of using a single set of basic strategy tables for all blackjack games, regardless of rules. Surprisingly, it was determined that the impact on your earnings was fairly small, even when playing with the worst 'match up' of rules to casino conditions.

With this knowledge, our goal is to come up with a single, *simple* set of blackjack rules that can be mastered in minutes, and plays well in all games. Rather than memorize complete tables, players can simply apply these easy rules as the hands are played.

To further simplify the process of learning the plays, the set of rules is made *scalable*: players can start with the first rule, and add on new rules as they are comfortable. As each new rule is added, the casino's advantage is diminished.

It is important that we analyze our rules to make sure that they minimize our losses while providing the most simplicity. To do this, we ran simulations in Blackjack Audit, a blackjack simulator from DeepNet Technologies, to compare the expectations[3] for different games at each step in our rules. With a good rule set, the casino's edge over the player will lessen as we add rules, leaving us with a minor and acceptable increase in losses.

Simplified blackjack strategy

After running many simulations with different rules and comparing the resulting expectations, we came up with the following set of simple rules that deliver good results

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[3] The expectation is the percentage of each bet you should expect to win or lose, on average, given a specific set of casino rules and play method.