

**DEAL ME IN**

**Points On Etiquette And Prison**

Dear Mark,  
**In poker, who is supposed to show their cards first at the end of a hand? Is it the one who calls the last bet, or the player who makes the last bet?**

Justin B.

Customarily, Justin, if there has been a bet on the final round of betting, the person who makes the last wager, or raise, has to show first; the person who called waits to see what the others throw down before showing the caller's cards.

Occasionally players do check on the final round, so what happens then? Most casinos and card rooms still have the player who made the last bet or raise show their cards first, although, I have seen in a few card rooms that in this situation, the player nearest the button shows their hand first.

Dear Mark,  
**If you had to make but one bet on a roulette table, what would it be? You've mentioned in the past playing on a single zero wheel if you can find one, but is there any bet that is better than another on that table?**

Frank S.

Hip, hip, Frank, always go for searching out a single zero roulette game, as that little extra effort -- if successful -- allows you to chop the house edge from 5.26% to 2.63%. Now, that's something; you cut it in half! But your base question still remains: is there one bet that stands out over all others on a single zero game?

Yep, Frank, there's one. The absolute best bet is an "even-money" wager on a French (or single zero) wheel that offers the En Prison (Surrender) option. The house edge with this one wager is slashed to 1.35%.

And what the heck do I mean by En Prison? Guess.

The French phrase "en prison" signifies that if you're betting an even money outside wager like red, and the next number called is green 0, the dealer won't snatch your losing chips. Instead, he or she will put a small marker on top of your bet. It's then en prison, Frank; your bet is temporarily held hostage until the outcome of the next spin. If black or the green 0 appears on the next spin, you would then lose your entire original wager. But if red reappears, the dealer will remove the en prison marker and



Mark Pilarski

you are free to either pick up your bet or replay it.

By the way, Frank, when I mentioned above "one bet that stands out over all others," it's important to note that most players erroneously believe that certain wagers on a roulette table are superior to others. Not so. All bets, except one (the five-number bet, 0, 00, 1, 2, and 3) suffer the same 5.26% house edge on a double zero wheel. Switching to a single zero game guillotines the house edge about in half on every wager on the layout except for the En Prison bet.

Dear Mark,  
**I've noticed that some casinos offer more than two-times odds on the crap table. How much of the house edge am I whittling away by playing 5X or even 10X odds?**

Duncan M.

Below is the casino advantage on your total bet when taking odds combined with your pass line wager. Without placing an odds bet, the house edge is 1.41%; on 1X odds it's 0.85%; on 2X odds 0.61%; on 5X odds 0.33%, and on 10X odds 0.18%.

Dear Mark,  
**For every new hand in video poker, are you playing on a never-ending deck or is the deck reshuffled?**

Billie F.

Casinos do not use a perpetual deck in video poker. For example, on a Jacks-or-Better game, each new hand begins with a freshly shuffled 52-card deck. When you press the "play credits" button for the next hand, you're starting over with 52, new, randomly shuffled, cards.

**Gambling Wisdom of the Week:**  
 "A tour bus will disgorge another batch of brightly-dressed tourists and you see a kind of glazed, magic in their eyes as they tramp steadily toward an already sealed fate." -- Barney Vinson, "Las Vegas Behind The Tables"

Got a question about gambling? Write to: Deal Me In, P.O. Box 1234, Traverse City, Michigan 49685 - e-mail: pilarski@markpilarski.com • To order Mark Pilarski's "Hooked on Winning" audio cassettes-laminated win cards package (\$12.95 plus \$2 S&H) call 1-800-WINNERS.

**Legislators to Decide on New Graduation Requirements**

By Karen Gould

During the Thursday, December 15, Mackinac Island School Board meeting, Superintendent Jack Dehring told the board that the State Board of Education had approved to increase state high school graduation requirements Tuesday, December 13, and now legislators will take up the issue. He said Governor Jennifer Granholm recommends its approval.

The requirements include four years of mathematics and English language arts, three years of science and social studies, two credits of foreign languages, and one credit each of health/physical education and visual or performing arts.

The Island school adopted new graduation requirements earlier this year to include four years each of science and social science and one credit of both physical education and health.

Mr. Dehring said the fine arts and foreign language requirement might be difficult to implement because of the small teaching staff.

"There are going to be some issues, and they are going to be for all small schools," he said.

The new requirements are being called the Michigan Merit Curriculum. Specific classes are required in mathematics, science, and social science. For math, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, and an additional math class must be taken during

the senior year of high school. To complete the three science requirements, students must take one year each of biology, physics, or chemistry, and one additional year of science. The three years of social science must include a semester of civics and a semester of economics.

The state currently only requires one year of civics for graduation, letting local school boards adopt the other requirements.

Sarah Chambers will run again for her seat on the Mackinac Island Public Schools board of trustees in the Tuesday, May 2, election. School board trustees are elected for four year terms.

Ms. Chambers later told *The*

*St. Ignace News*, "I've enjoyed the last five years. It's been a learning experience. I plan to do the best I can for the students and staff."

Petitions for those interested in running need to be filed with City Clerk Karen Lennard by Tuesday, February 7.

Mr. Dehring said he anticipates the state will require all schools to establish a wellness committee next year. The impact will be mainly on schools with vending machines and a la carte services, he said. Such committees would limit amounts of fats and sugars in foods offered to students. The school's committee on reproductive health will be asked to take on the dual role of operating as the wellness committee, too, with middle school science and mathematics teacher Liz Burt as chair.

The board adopted a confidentiality policy recommended by the Michigan Association of School Boards that the school will not give out any social security numbers.

A meeting to discuss the feasibility of consolidating the superintendent positions in area school districts is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, January 11, at 5:30 p.m., Mr. Dehring announced.

Mr. Dehring said Mackinac Island Public School placed third in the regional Lego Robotics competition and placed 31 out of 72 in the state finals in Novi Saturday, December 10.

Robots made from Lego building blocks and programmed to perform specific tasks make up the competition's requirements. Students programmed their robot to repair an underwater pipeline, rescue a trapped dolphin, and rescue a submarine.

Team members from Mackinac Island's eighth grade class are Tymon Horn, Jane Finkel, Shelby Mosley, Roby Robinson, Jeff Roguska, Paul Fisher, Thomas Rilenge, and teacher Susan Bennett.

The school board next meets Thursday, January 26, at 6 p.m. in the school library.

**Snowy Camping Options Abound at State Parks and Recreation Areas in Michigan**

Cozy and isolated, three types of cabins are available for hearty outdoor enthusiasts eager to explore the winter wonderland, along with a host of locations that offer camping.

Camping in the cold, snowy winter months provides benefits simply not available during the summer. There's rarely a line for a hot shower and no need to buy extra ice for the cooler. The stars seem a little brighter around the campfire.

"We've expanded our mini-cabin options in this area because of demand," said Anna Sylvester, Roscommon District supervisor. "A lot more people are discovering that winter is a great time to come out to state parks and recreation areas."

Mini-cabins are open in 10 locations throughout the winter: Bay City, Fort Custer, Harrisville, Interlochen, Ludington, Mitchell, Sleeper, Tawas, and Traverse City. North Higgins Lake opens after January 2, 2006. These single-room cabins sleep four with two sets of bunk beds at a cost of \$45 a night. Many of these locations do not plow access roads, so bring the skis or the snowshoes to reach the cabin. Mini-cabins are reserved through the Central Reservation System by calling (800) 447-2757 or online at [www.midnreservations.com](http://www.midnreservations.com).

Rustic cabins also are open for adventurous types looking for resting places after a long cross-country ski or snowshoe hike. These cabins offer firewood for woodstoves and accommodate between four and 20 people. Prices range from \$55 to \$80 a night. Cheboygan, Wilderness, Ortonville, and Highland all offer winter cabin rentals. The Bass Lake Cabin at Highland offers the

modern conveniences of indoor plumbing and kitchen appliances. Rustic cabins are reserved by contacting the park or recreation area where they are located.

Port Crescent's popular three-room Camper Cabin will be open throughout the winter for \$80 a night. This cabin overlooks the Saginaw Bay and provides front-porch access to ice fishing. The Camper Cabin sleeps six adults with two sets of bunk beds and a double futon mattress. Call Port Crescent State Park at (989) 738-8663 to reserve a stay.

Check out all the locations that offer mini-cabins and rustic cabins on the Web ([www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr)) under the Recreation and Camping tab. Remember to call ahead and make arrangements to collect the keys and find out what supplies will be needed. Staffing at parks and recreation areas during the winter months is greatly reduced and interested visitors will need to call during business hours (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday).

William Mitchell State Park in Cadillac and Traverse City State Park provide modern camping with heated toilet/shower buildings and electrical hookups through the winter. Both are conveniently located near winter activities including snowmobile trails and racing events.

Semi-modern camping with electrical hookups and vault toilets is available for \$16 to \$18 a night at these campgrounds:

- Algonac State Park's Riverfront Campground
- Bay City State Park
- Fort Custer Recreation Area
- Ludington State Park's Beechwood Campground
- Rifle River Recreation Area's

Grousehaven Campground  
 •Tahquamenon Falls State Park's Lower Falls  
 •Waterloo Recreation Area's Portage Lake Campground

These campgrounds also offer a camper storage program for the weekend warrior during winter months. For \$4 a night, you can leave your camper behind during the week, unplugged and locked up, if you reserve two nights of camping on the weekends before and after your five-day storage period. The \$20 total fee is cheaper than what you may spend for gasoline towing the camper back and forth to home.

"The Intermittent Camping Program encourages people to come back for a second weekend of winter fun," said Larry Solce, supervisor at Mitchell State Park in Cadillac. "Our winter visitors love it."

For people who prefer to sleep in a snow bank, back country camping is available at Tahquamenon Falls State Park, Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park, and at Pinckney Recreation Area's Blind Lake Campground. Contact the park staff for details and a camping permit before venturing out.

**Area Barns May Be Nominated**

*\*Continued from page 20*

They may be used for one of the stated purposes, but must retain their appearance and overall character, inside and out, as a barn. Family use barns must be owned by a family or as part of a family-owned operation.

"As agriculture and land use have changed, barns are increasingly being adapted," says Vera Wiltse, Michigan Barn Preservation Network board member. "Heritage barns, those that once housed animals, are being altered for equipment storage. Where farm production has ceased, barns are being transformed into uniquely beautiful homes, restaurants, shops, art centers, and salons."

The Barn Preservation Network is increasingly getting calls, letters, and e-mails from people who own barns or have long admired certain barns and want to know what they can do to preserve them, said President Keith Bruder. He added that people in urban areas

sometimes seek rural properties not for the house, but for the space and the character of the barn.

"A well cared for barn is a sound investment," Mr. Bruder said. "In subdivisions where farms once stood, homeowners are looking at ways to incorporate farm buildings into new landscape."

Nominations for the 2006 Barn of the Year award are due Wednesday, January 11. The awards will be presented at the Michigan Barn Preservation Network's 11th Annual Conference, March 10 and March 11, during Agriculture and Natural Resources Week at Michigan State University.

Anyone can nominate a barn, or multiple barns. The Chippewa/East Mackinac Conservation District nominates a barn for the award every year, and gives a plaque to the nominee at its annual meeting and banquet in January. This year the District is nominating the John McDonald barn of Pickford.

To obtain a nomination form, contact Keith Bruder by calling (734) 461-2498, or visit the Michigan Barn Preservation Web site at [www.mibarn.net](http://www.mibarn.net).

The Michigan Barn Preservation Network's mission is to promote appreciation, preservation, and rehabilitation of Michigan barns, farmsteads, and rural communities. More information about the organization can be found at its Web site.

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