

Spring break in Vegas for Carolina gamblers

Going for the big one; luck, wit against cards

By CHIP PEARSALL
Staff Writer

When the great migration from Chapel Hill to southern climes begins in March, Dee Mudd and Sandy Finch won't be going along.

Instead of joining that sun-starved caravan, the UNC sophomore and junior will be headed out to where the deer, the antelope and the one-armed bandits play — Las Vegas — to bask under the artificial glare of crystal chandeliers and settle down to the business of blackjack.

Their vacation is in the cards.

"We're not making a big deal out of this," Mudd said Tuesday as he and his roommate relaxed in their apartment and talked about their upcoming trip. "We just wanted to do something different."

They are not professional gamblers, or even local hustlers. Neither had played seriously before a Christmas excursion took them to the green felt-covered tables of Paradise Island, Bahamas. There, amid the stoic dealers, free drinks and mahogany roulette wheels, their spring vacation plans were born.

"When we got back from the Bahamas, we knew we wanted to go to Las Vegas," Finch said. "Dee and I aren't addicted to gambling, but we might not have a chance to do this after we get out of school."

They are practicing now, hoping to better their chances of winning in America's gambling heaven. In the Bahamas, they walked into the Paradise Casino after reading some gambling literature and learning rules and odds. Still, the plush emporium was intimidating.

"The first time you go in is nerve-wracking," Finch said, laughing. "I was petrified — I'd never seen so many cards flying so fast at one time."

Belying up to one of the blackjack tables, the pair was introduced to the central figure in the frantic activity surrounding them: the dealer.

"Everybody that works there is great to you, except the dealers," Mudd recalled. Rarely speaking to the gamblers, the dealers whip cards out to them at a legendary rate. With eight players (including the dealer) at a table, he can dole out the cards (two to each player) in 12 to 15 seconds, Mudd said.

"They never smile. I heard one lady ask a dealer if he ever smiled."

"He told her, 'Lady, do you smile when you wash clothes?'"

After the initial shock wore off the duo settled down to the business at hand. The atmosphere was tense.

"A lot of the time, nobody talks," Finch said. "They use hand signs to show the dealer whether they want a hit or not."

But on the other hand, the players at a table often get to know each other as the evening wears on, and talk among themselves between hands and while the dealer is paying off or (more likely) collecting.

"The other players become your friends," Finch said. "It's everybody against the dealer, and you really feel that."

Typically, their luck ran from dismal to fairly good. Finch said he lost heavily the first night, recouped his losses the next day and finally ended the five-day spree losing a little more than he initially put down.

With Mudd, things were different. He was substantially ahead until the last couple of nights, when free drinks took their toll. He wouldn't say how much he lost, but smiled ruefully and admitted he came home without a nickel in his pocket.

Although they stayed around the \$5-per-hand minimum bet, Mudd and Finch had glimpses of the

wheeler-dealer world of high-stakes poker. One man sat with what Finch estimated to be \$3,000 worth of the casino's heavy chips in front of him. Another bet \$250 each on two hands for one-and-a-half hours — about 80 hands. When they saw him, he was winning.

"Whenever there was big money, there was a big crowd," Mudd said.

Regardless of who was paying what though, the action in the casino was continuous and the atmosphere was reminiscent of a James Bond movie, *Casino Royale*.

"Everything there was first-class," Finch said. "The chips had special club markings on them, the roulette wheels were solid mahogany and everything on the tables was marked out on the green felt. It was really nice."

Perhaps the crowning touch was that there were no clocks anywhere. "You could play for 20 minutes and feel like you had been in there for an hour — it was that tense," Finch said.

Both agreed that the trip was a "damn good time" and expect the same in Las Vegas, where expenses will be lower and more outside activities will be available.

"You've got to go with the attitude that you're going to lose some, but you're going to have a good time," Mudd said. "It's a challenge, and it's entertaining."

They offered some advice for their peers who will visit gambling spots during break.

"Know the rules before you go," Mudd said. "Set your limit and walk away when you get to it. It's easy to keep on playing when you're winning, but when you're down, it's impossible to walk away."

"If you come out ahead, fine," Finch said. "If you lose some, just chalk it up to a good time and remember you're just there for the fun of it."

Dance marathon will benefit MS

Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority will sponsor a Dance-a-Thon from noon until midnight Saturday. Shabazz and Crosswind will provide live band music for the event, which will be in Great Hall, Carolina Union.

Individuals over 16 years of age and organizations wishing to participate in the Dance-a-Thon are to solicit sponsors who may pledge any amount desired for each hour danced. Forty percent of the proceeds will go to the UNC undergraduate library, while 60 percent will go to the multiple sclerosis foundation.

Sponsor cards may be obtained at the union, the Franklin Street post office and the Campus Y from noon to 5 p.m. today and from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday.

Prizes will be awarded to the individual and the organization raising the most money, the individual with the most sponsors and the winner of the dance contest Saturday night. There also will be door prizes awarded throughout the day.

During a supper break from 6 to 7 p.m., food will be available for the dancers. Fifteen minute breaks will be provided each hour during the dance. Participants also may ask to have partners assigned.

Admission to watch the event will be 50 cents per person and 75 cents per couple.

Hurricanes for happier holidays

From time to time, people ask me whether I've heard of this or that drink. Quite often I answer "No." Because there are so many bars in the United States, it is impossible for me (without the aid of a teletype), to keep up with the number of mixed drinks being created and served. Many of these drinks are "house specials," which start with a basic recipe and end with the secret addition of other liquors, fruit juices and sweeteners. This is the reason why some of the recipes you find in a bartender's guide don't taste exactly like those you might have had in Las Vegas or New Orleans.

People visiting Atlanta are likely to visit the bars of The Underground for

weekend bartender

By CARL R. FOX
Drink of the Week:
The Hurricane

some of the city's liquid delicacies. The one most often tried, which differs so much from the standard recipe, is The Hurricane. I'm going to give you what I've found to be *one* pleasing variation

from the standard. I hope that you will enjoy it.

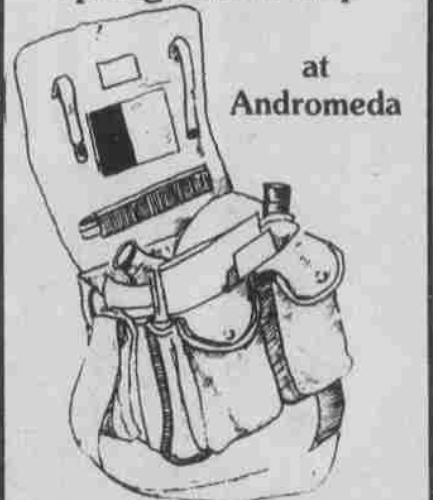
Ingredients for the Drink of the Week: The Hurricane: 2 ozs. light rum; 2 ozs. gold rum; 1 oz. lime juice; 2 ozs. pineapple juice; 4 ozs. orange juice; 2-3 ozs. passion-fruit syrup; ½ oz. 151 rum. Combine all ingredients, except 151 rum, in a shaker with a few cubes of ice and shake until ice cold. Strain into a tall cooler or Hurricane glass with a few cubes of ice. Float 151 on top. Sit down

and enjoy it; standing may be hazardous to your health.

NOTE: Be sure to use passion-fruit syrup. Passion-fruit juice will NOT do. Fowler's is about the only place it is available in Chapel Hill.

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The Super Bag is available in grey, chocolate brown, black, and blue. It expands to a spacious 15½" by 13" by 8", \$29.95. Medium size bag in grey, blue, and black — \$21.95. Small bag in blue, maize, and green — \$16.95.



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