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Finding a Video Poker Bug Summary

The article, “Finding a Video Poker Bug Made These Guys Rich- Then Vegas Made Them Pay”, tell the story of how two men, John Kane and Andre Nestor, discovered a game-exploiting glitch in a popular poker video game, and exploited said glitch to extraordinary levels. Virtuoso pianist, John Kane, had a history of gambling. He had lost so much money to gambling that machines, that he had accumulated enough points to pay for his very own machine, serviced by technicians. When Kane was playing on a gambling machine at a small Chinese place, he discovered a glitch that would enable him to win a jackpot prize without needing a new hand. The glitch that he utilized enabled him to retroactively change the denomination level of the gamble that he made. Simply put, what the glitch allows the user to do is gamble continuously using small amounts of money, and then changing what money had been gambled afterwards after a good hand was earned. The glitch was tied to the double-up function on the gambling machine.

After discovering the glitch, Kane decided to phone up one of his friends, Andre Nestor. The pair decided to take a trip to several casinos to test the glitch, including the Hilton, the Tropicana, the Luxor, and others. However, the pair discovered that the glitch only worked at the Freemont casino. Kane decided to test and see why the glitch had only worked at the Freemont boxes, and eventually discovered that the glitch was tied to the “double up” function. Without the double up feature, the bug would not work. Elated, Kane called up Nestor and told him about the glitch, and the pair took a trip to Vegas to gamble. There, they also discovered that one could win the jackpot prize using the same hand several times, even piggybacking off of other players’ winning hands. At the end of their gambling spree, the pair had won several thousand dollars. In their hotel room at the end of the night, the pair argued over splitting the prize, driving a rift between the two.

Eventually, the pair split up due to these arguments. Nestor went to Pennsylvania to gamble a bit more, while Kane went on a winning spree through Vegas. Eventually, Kane was caught, and was thrown in jail for a day. Worried for his friend, Kane called up Nestor, warning him not to continue the glitch. Nestor ignored his friend, and continued gambling, to the point where he was caught, as well. The pair faced federal charges, which were eventually dropped.

I think that the pair did not do anything illegal. Despite the fact that they were “cheating”, the did not do anything illegal. They were simply playing the game, and found a way to play the game better. It’s not as if the two hacked into the machine and forced it to give them money- they just simply abused a pre-existing bug in a broken system. They had not broken any laws of any sort, and as a result, neither were punished for an extended period of time.