TORONTO STAR
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'Computer nerd' outsmarts casino Wins $200,000 pot - twice in a row

CP
352 mots
20 avril 1994
The Toronto Star
TOR
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A2
Anglais

MONTREAL (CP) - Ask **Daniel Corriveau** how he beat staggering odds to win $400,000 at the Montreal casino and he'll talk about a butterfly flapping its wings in Beijing.

After the computer consultant hit a $200,000 jackpot twice in a row playing electronic Keno 10 days ago, the casino shut down the popular lottery-type game and started an investigation. He has yet to collect.

"I'm confident I will get the money," Corriveau said. "It's a normal process for the casino to be investigating."

Celebrated by Quebecers as a mild-mannered genius who beat the system, the province's latest hero is a computer nerd who claims to have used "chaos theory" to defy mind-numbing odds at the casino.

The arcane mathematical concept, which the 40-year-old Corriveau found himself expounding on television, is based on the notion that random-looking data aren't so random.

One of the theory's axioms is that if a butterfly flaps its wings in Beijing, it will have an effect on the weather system in New York City.

The rules of Keno are less esoteric. Placing bets of between $2 and $5, gamblers try to pick some of the 20 numbers that are drawn from an 80-number pool in the computerized game.

On April 10, Corriveau managed to pick 19 of 20 numbers twice in a row, a feat not accomplished even once since the casino opened last October.

Corriveau said he discovered "a bug in the system" that made the Keno odds more player-friendly.

Corriveau visited the casino about a dozen times over four months, writing down the winning sequences of numbers. The brainy bettor plugged the data in to his home computer and put on his thinking cap.

"I found the same 19-number sequence twice in 240 draws," he explained. "That proved the weakness in the system."

"The computer should have waited another million draws, another 40 years, before coming up with the same number again."

Photo: **Daniel Corriveau**

Document TOR0000020080216dq4k00dkk

