

Title:

Las Vegas, Where We Start

Word Count:

527

Summary:

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Keywords:

Gin Rummy, Online Gin Rummy, Rummy Games, Rummy

Article Body:

Since the semifinals were scheduled to begin the next morning, the tie-breaking games had to be played that same night. Fourteen tired players reported to a banquet room at the Sands for the tie-breaking games which started about eight o'clock at night. I understand there was an additional player with 15 and 5 who, for reasons I have never learned, did not show up. Possibly he threw in the towel too soon by not waiting to find out if fifteen wins would make the grade. I won one of the six open finalist spots in the play that night. Another of the spots was won by Bert Shubin, a realtor from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, whom I was to see again in the final match. The next day I breezed along to reach the semifinals. The other three survivors were José Lass man, a Mexico City sweater manufacturer; Ronald Sleater, Sati Lake City businessman; and Bert Shubin.

The semis and finals were covered by closed circuit television cameras. The audience followed each card player on large TV screens. This acted as a slight healing balm to the kibitzers, but they stii fidgeted and whispered excitedly among themselves, casting longing glances at the area directly behind the players' chairs. Veteran gin enthusiasts called my contest with José Lass man the most exciting game of the entire Tournament. Lass man was a strong favorite to win the tournament. Earlier in the day he had eleme note Hank Green spun, editor of the Las Vegas Sun, another favorite. I was considered an underdog. Toward the end of my gin rummy game with Lass man, when we were both within twenty-five points of victory, I heard a loud cry from the audience watching play at the other table. One of the officials walked by as I was shuffling the cards. "What happened?" I asked him. He informed me, "Mr. Sleater needed a few

points to go out and made a quick knock, but Mr. Shubin undercut him."

Acting strictly on a hunch, I made a mental note that I would not risk losing the game by an undercut. I would wait for Lass man to knock or I'd get gin on him. It was a decision I was never to regret. After a few minutes I was able to knock. But I didn't. A few plays later Lass man picked a card from the deck and dropped it face down—meaning it was a hot card. Instead of putting it in his hand and studying it and taking his time, he seemed to panic and threw it in the discard pile.

I picked it up faster than I ever picked up a card in my life, went gin—and I was in the finals. Later I met Lass man. He was wandering around in a daze mumbling, "I should have won... I should have won." He sorrowfully related that he had his cards analyzed and that if I hadn't played my intuitive flash and had knocked, he had a layoff on my hand that, while it wouldn't have given him the game, would have stopped me from going out.