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The History Of Chuck–A–Luck

By Adel Awwad

Chuck A Luck is a gambling game that employs three dice and a wire cage or cone–shaped chute.

The dice used are standard six–sided cubes numbered from 1 to 6 at each side. The chute, which can be made of either leather or metal, is usually called a `horn'.

The use of metal chutes in the game of Chuck A Luck is associated with the so–called tinhorn gamblers, who were actually gamblers with little money, thus the choice of metal over the higher–priced leather. An early version of the game was played by the dice being thrown or "chucked" – hence the name. A heavy welded metal birdcage device eventually became the standard use where only the dealers are allowed to turn the cage.

The Chuck A Luck cage has been loosely interchanged by many with any birdcage tumbler. This is only true on the basis of the game's definition as long as there are three dice in the cage. Cages are also used for other games such as High/Low (Under and Over) but with a different number of dice.

Origins of Gambling and Gaming in the US

Long before casinos came to be, card, dice and gaming table possession were outlawed in some places. As time passed, laws were relaxed to allow casual gaming or games for purely recreational purposes and not for trade. However, general hostility toward professional gamblers took a long time to go away and sometimes resulted in lynching.

There were places, however, that accepted gambling as a harmless form of recreational activity. Legal gambling took the form of card, dice and animal racing games that were perceived to be proper gentlemen's diversion. The wide appeal of gambling is attributed to its association with the frontier spirit, which relies on high expectations, risk–taking and opportunism.

Lotteries were widespread and used mainly to raise revenues. Some of the earliest and most prestigious universities such as Harvard and Yale were established using proceeds coming from lotteries. Dice and card games in taverns and roadhouses slowly initiated casino gaming. Casinos were established as the population increased.

The History Of Chuck–A–Luck

During the highest point of California gambling, Faro was the most popular game played in saloons; followed by several dice games such as high/low, chuck a luck and grand hazard. The spread of settlers beyond California expedited the spread of gambling as well. Since then, laws have been enacted across the country in a bid to bestow respectability and recognition of legal gambling.

Origins of Chuck A Luck

Chuck A Luck is an old game that originated in English pubs. It was then known as "Sweat Cloth" and was introduced in the US sometime around 1800 as "Sweat". It also became known by several other names such as "Chucker Luck", "Chuck–Luck" and "Chuck" during the mid–to–late 1800's. It was only after 1900 that it was called "Birdcage" and eventually "Chuck A Luck".

"Sweat" was played using a cup and three dice, which were thrown. Due to allegations of cheating by

operators in the use of weighted or trick–shaped dice and the practice of trick dice throwing, the cup was replaced by a birdcage–like device which was flipped several times by the dealer and displayed the results when the cage stopped and the dice dropped.

Chuck A Luck took a more advanced form through "Grand Hazard", another type of dice game. The main difference lies in the layout. At present, the game can be found only in a handful of casinos worldwide, overshadowed by more recent versions of the simple dice game. Casino dice games have indeed come a long way, considering that tossing up dice holds traces of the ancient cult, being associated with the rituals of fortune telling.

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How To Play Chuck–A–Luck

By Adel Awwad

Gambling is defined as playing games of chance or skill, especially when money or anything else of value is wagered on the outcome, or betting money or valuables on an event of any kind. Though Chuck A Luck appears as a harmless dice game, it still is a form of gambling as the outcome is based on chance and bets represent money. If you intend to enjoy playing the game and hope to do some winning, it would do well to learn the art of gambling.

It is a fact that certain games played mainly in gambling casinos such as slot machines have the odds

The History Of Chuck-A-Luck

arranged to favor the house, which results in the players losing more than winning in the long run. No betting system that purports to guarantee winning ever made a dent in any casino. In the case of Chuck A Luck, which is a dice game, how is it possible to devise a betting system based on a dice which has no memory at all?

In gambling, one should be prepared to lose. It is a good practice not to over-bet beyond one's entertainment money and to refrain from making side bets. One would fare better in trusting the odds rather than feelings or hunches. Good gambling etiquette does exist and respect is expected from all players. Gambling debts should always be honored.

Playing the Game

The old-west version of the game used three dice, a birdcage, and a felt or oilcloth lay out numbered 1 to 6. Players put their bets on one of the six betting sections. When all bets are down, the birdcage is flipped several times by the dealer. The result is displayed once the cage stops moving and the dice drop.

When one die shows the value bet, the player wins even money (1-to-1). Two of the dice showing the number bet would mean that the player is paid double his bet (2-to-1) and when three of the dice ends up showing the number bet, it would mean that the player wins triple his bet (3-to-1). All bets placed on numbers not shown on the displayed dice are considered lost. The dealers then proceed to collect all losing bets and pay winning bets. This done, the dealer declares the game open for the next round, a signal to the players to place their new bets.

The layout provides a decorative circular area on the players' left side (which is the dealer's right side) where the cage is positioned. The cage is welded closed and the dice are neither removable nor changeable. The only person that can turn the cage is the dealer.

Chuck A Luck is a dice game where the basic object is to tumble three dice in a cage and bet on how they will land once the cage comes to a stop. There are four different ways of making bets in casinos and these are 'any number', 'field', 'over 10' and 'under 11'. The winning procedure for 'any number' is the one described above. A 'field' bet is betting that all dice will add up to one of the numbers featured on the field. An 'over 10' and 'under 11' bet means betting that the sum total of the dice will be greater than 10 or less than 11 respectively.

The Chuck A Luck table placement, whereby players stand up to play, is meant to encourage betting once or twice instead of playing for an extended period of time. Moving and altering bets are allowed

until the "No More Bets" sign appears, at which point all bets stand as they are. More modern versions of Chuck A Luck are the 'Big Six' and 'Crown and Anchor'.

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