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Gambling

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By

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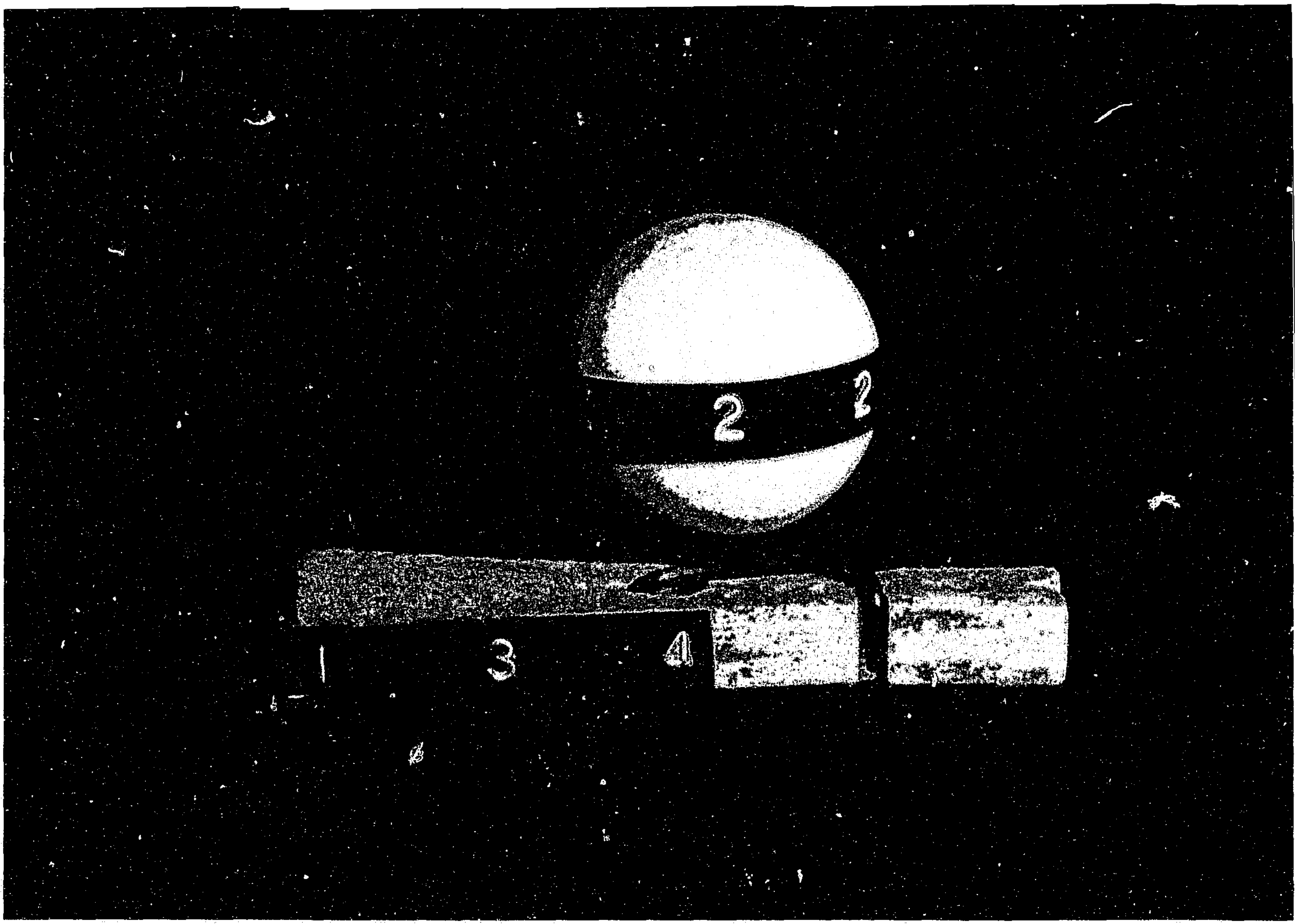

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Razzle Dazzle is often referred to as a "game" in carnivals. However, it is questionable whether it can truly be called a game, since a player has essentially no chance of winning without the operator allowing him to do so.

Razzle Dazzle can be played in numerous ways using a variety of items—marbles, dice, clothespins, ping-pong balls, darts, or Chinese sticks. Yet, whatever is used, the operation basically consists of scoring a particular number and then referring to a chart to determine a winner or a loser, e.g., scoring enough points to make 100 yards or over for a touchdown in "Play Football" or the necessary 100 miles or over to win the race in "Auto Races," depending on the player's preference. (See figs. 1 and 2.)

Carnival operators call this type of game a "flat store," in that the player "flat can't win." They are also referred to in the trade as "count stores" (since counting points is involved), "pin stores" or "peek stores" (when clothespins are used and the operator "peeks" to see what number is written on them), and "alibi joints" (because the operator can always offer an alibi as to why the player's luck has suddenly turned bad).

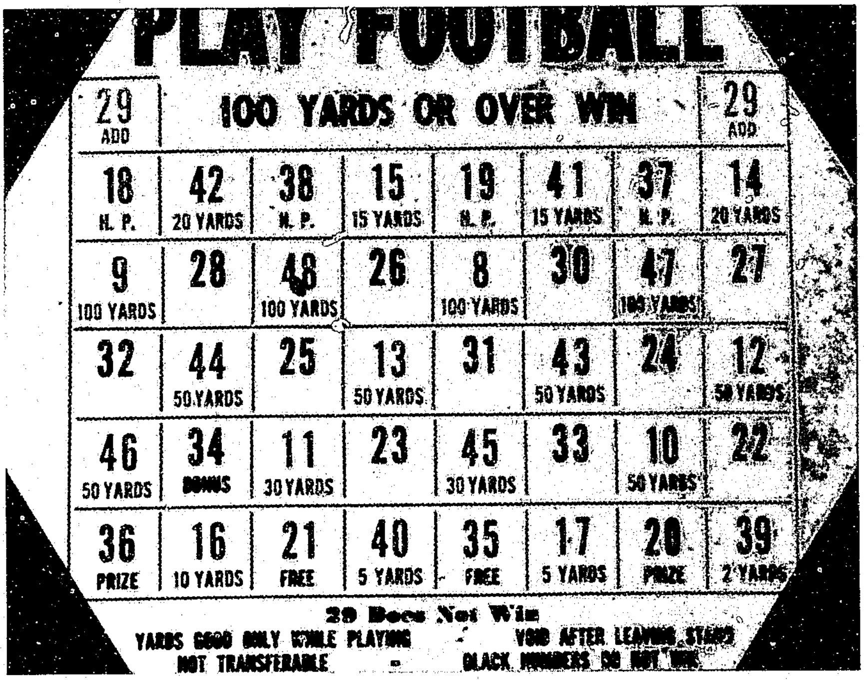
A popular version of Razzle Dazzle can be seen in figure 3. Here, eight marbles have been rolled onto a board with numbered holes. After all the marbles come to rest, the operator totals the point value of the eight holes. In this version, a player can score from 8 to 48 points. The operator will then refer to the yardage chart (see table 1) and compare the total points scored with the corresponding yardage.

The operator will usually explain that there are 41 numbers, from 8 to 48, which can be scored and which total 852 points. Considering this, a player should average 20.78 yards per play (852÷41=20.78 yards). Thus, it would appear to the unknowing and unsuspecting player that in 5 plays he would amass the 100 yards needed to win (5 × 20.78). Of course, this is not true, since this is based on the false assumption that there is an equal chance of scoring the numbers 8, 9, 47, and 48 as there is in reaching any other total.

Another look at table 1 will show that only 20 of the 41 possible scores receive points resulting in yardage. The remaining numbers are awarded no point or yardage values for one simple reason—they are the ones most likely to be thrown. However, as an incentive

Special Agent Harker

Mr. Bald



PLAY FOOTBALL

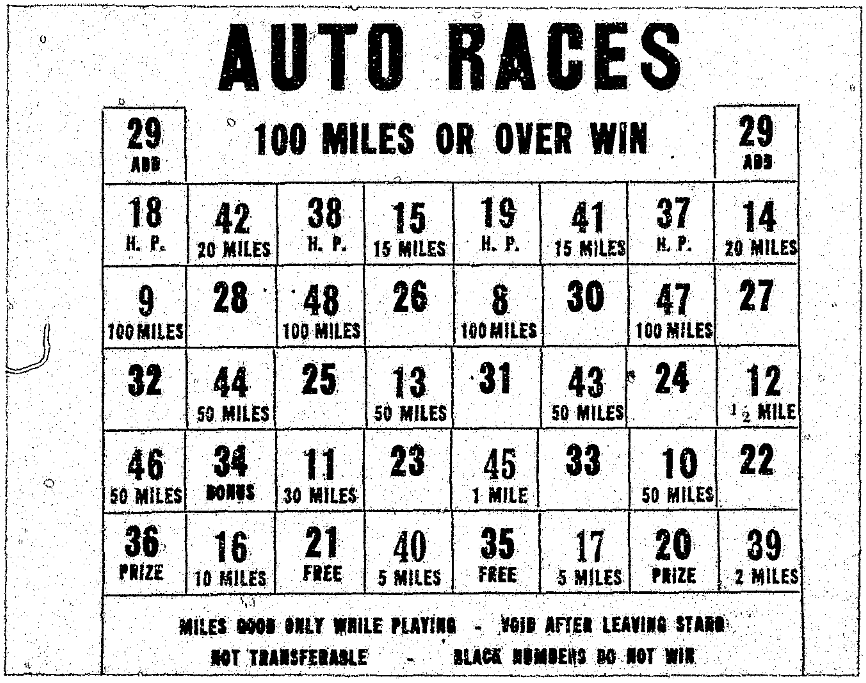
29 ADD	100 YARDS OR OVER WIN						29 ADD
18 H. P.	42 20 YARDS	38 H. P.	15 15 YARDS	19 H. P.	41 15 YARDS	37 H. P.	14 20 YARDS
9 100 YARDS	28	48 100 YARDS	26	8 100 YARDS	30	47 100 YARDS	27
32	44 50 YARDS	25	13 50 YARDS	31	43 50 YARDS	24	12 50 YARDS
46 50 YARDS	34 BONUS	11 30 YARDS	23	45 30 YARDS	33	10 50 YARDS	22
36 PRIZE	16 10 YARDS	21 FREE	40 5 YARDS	35 FREE	17 5 YARDS	20 PRIZE	39 2 YARDS

29 Does Not Win

YARDS GOOD ONLY WHILE PLAYING VOID AFTER LEAVING STAND

NOT TRANSFERABLE BLACK NUMBERS DO NOT WIN

Figure 1



AUTO RACES

29 ADD	100 MILES OR OVER WIN						29 ADD
18 H. P.	42 20 MILES	38 H. P.	15 15 MILES	19 H. P.	41 15 MILES	37 H. P.	14 20 MILES
9 100 MILES	28	48 100 MILES	26	8 100 MILES	30	47 100 MILES	27
32	44 50 MILES	25	13 50 MILES	31	43 50 MILES	24	12 ½ MILE
46 50 MILES	34 BONUS	11 30 MILES	23	45 1 MILE	33	10 50 MILES	22
36 PRIZE	16 10 MILES	21 FREE	40 5 MILES	35 FREE	17 5 MILES	20 PRIZE	39 2 MILES

MILES GOOD ONLY WHILE PLAYING - VOID AFTER LEAVING STAND
NOT TRANSFERABLE - BLACK NUMBERS DO NOT WIN

Figure 2

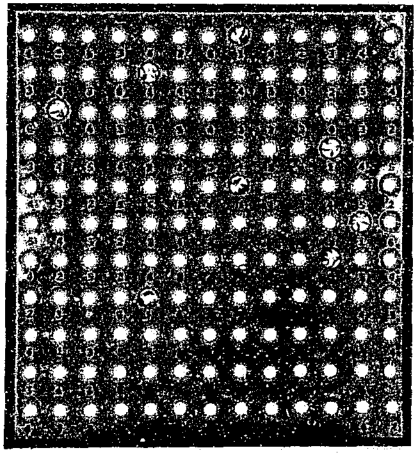


Figure 3

to keep players interested, some numbers may be marked to offer "a little extra" to a player. For example, as seen in figures 1 and 2, a total of 21 or 35 results in a free roll. A roll of 34 gives the player a bonus and totals of 20 and 36 award the player a prize which, in both cases, entitles the player to a small prize determined by the operator. Number 29 is an "add," where the player may be required to double the amount of his next roll. Although the winnings now will be 10x's the wager, it is highly unlikely that the player will win at all. The numbers 18, 19, 37, and 38 are marked "H.P.," which can mean "house prize" or "half a point," anything to inch the player even closer to his unattainable goal. Or if the player looks quite dejected, discouraged, or dry, the operator can award him a "half pint" of some beverage.

Often, some of the more frequently hit numbers, such as 33, cause the player to lose 5 points, a tactic skillfully used to keep the player in the game. With such a condition, however, there is the probability that in the long run, the player will eventually have a *minus number of points* rather than any points at all.

Table 1

Points	Yards
8	100
9	100
10	50
11	30
12	50
13	50
14	20
15	15
16	10
17	5
39	2
40	5
41	15
42	20
43	50
44	50
45	30
46	50
47	100
48	100
Total	852

However, the operator may stamp "insured" on the player's score pad, telling him that if he hits a black or losing number prior to hitting the bonus number, all points amassed up to that time will not be lost.

The operator may also claim that 20 of the 41 numbers will give a player points and that 9 of the 41 numbers will earn a bonus or prize, while only 12 of the numbers will not award the player anything. Again, this falsely assumes that the probability of throwing an 8 or a 28 is the same.

A look at the distribution of numbers on the board explains why the chances of scoring winning totals are virtually nonexistent. As is evident in table 2, there are more holes on the marble board with the point value of 3 and 4 than there are for the other numbers. Therefore, there is a greater probability of the marbles falling into the 3- and 4-point holes. This uneven distribution further enhances the odds in favor of the operator by increasing the player's chances of scoring numbers with no point or yardage values, thereby causing him to lose the game.

A study of the mathematics involved indicates that a player averages .016635 yards per roll (not counting a loss of 5 yards on 33 points). Based on this, a player would have to roll 6,011 times, on the average, to reach 100 yards rather than the 5 times promoted by the operator. This also assumes that the operator does not purposely miscount, which can easily be done when totaling 1's or 2's, or 5's or 6's if an extreme number should result.

Table 2

Numbers	Frequency
1	11
2	19
3	39
4	44
5	19
6	11
Total	143

Table 3

$$\frac{11}{143} \times \frac{10}{142} \times \frac{9}{141} \times \frac{8}{140} \times \frac{7}{139} \times \frac{6}{138} \times \frac{5}{137} \times \frac{4}{136} =$$

$$\frac{6{,}652{,}800}{143{,}259{,}982{,}035{,}730{,}560} = .0000000000464386$$

Table 4

$$\frac{11}{143} \times \frac{10}{142} \times \frac{9}{141} \times \frac{8}{140} \times \frac{7}{139} \times \frac{6}{138} \times \frac{5}{137} \times \frac{19}{136} \times 8 =$$

$$\frac{252{,}806{,}400}{143{,}259{,}982{,}035{,}730{,}560} = .0000000017646686$$

What are the chances in "Play Football" of hitting 8 or 48 (all 1's or 6's with each of the 8 marbles)? There are only 11 holes numbered 1 and 11 holes numbered 6 on the board, while there are a total of 143 holes into which the marbles can fall. In that case, the first marble would have 11 chances out of 143 of falling into a 1-point hole or a 6-point hole; the second marble, 10 chances out of 142; and the third, 9 out of 141, etc. Table 3 shows the probability of all 8 marbles falling into holes with a point value of 1 or 6. Put simply, there is a chance of this happening only once in every 21,533,787,583 rolls. By the same calculation, table 4 shows a slightly better chance of throwing a total of either 9 or 47 points, which also charitably awards 100 points or yards. In essence, either a 9- or 47-point roll could happen once in 4,533,428,965 rolls.

"...unscrupulous operators are quite ingenious . . . and can adapt almost any type of game to become a Razzle Dazzle."

The same calculation for throwing dice, as some games use or similar devices, shows the chances of winning are slightly better. Those familiar with a pair of dice realize that there are 36 ways for 2 dice to fall, but only one way to roll 2 aces or 2 six spots. Therefore, the odds of throwing either total (2 or 12) would be 1 chance in 36.

This computation is more involved for Razzle games because the player will use eight dice, desiring roles of either eight aces or eight 6's. Thus, if you raise 6 (the number of sides on the dice) to the 8th power (the number of dice being thrown) (or 6x6x6x6x6x6x6x6), the resulting number would be 1,679,616, meaning there is one chance in 1,679,616 throws of obtaining the same spot count on all 8 dice. This probability, and resulting disadvantage to the player, is not quite as bad as with marbles. Table 5 shows the various possibilities of attaining points, assuming the game is operated honestly. Again, notice the number of rolls needed to get the middle numbers—those which are more easily thrown and result in peculiar house advantages or no points to the player. For example, on the average, the total 28 will occur once in every 12 rolls, whereas 1,679,616 rolls would be needed for the total 48.

Table 5

Expected Occurrence (Dice)

		Payoff
8	should occur once in 1,679,616 rolls	100 yards
9	should occur once in 209,952 rolls	100 yards
10	should occur once in 46,656 rolls	50 yards
11	should occur once in 13,997 rolls	30 yards
12	should occur once in 5,090 rolls	50 yards
13	should occur once in 2,121 rolls	50 yards
14	should occur once in 983 rolls	20 yards
15	should occur once in 499 rolls	15 yards
16	should occur once in 273 rolls	10 yards
17	should occur once in 160 rolls	5 yards
18	should occur once in 100 rolls	House Prize
19	should occur once in 66 rolls	House Prize
20	should occur once in 46 rolls	Prize
21	should occur once in 33 rolls	Free Play
22	should occur once in 25 rolls	0 yards
23	should occur once in 20 rolls	0 yards
24	should occur once in 17 rolls	0 yards
25	should occur once in 15 rolls	0 yards
26	should occur once in 13 rolls	0 yards
27	should occur once in 13 rolls	0 yards
28	should occur once in 12 rolls	0 yards
29	should occur once in 13 rolls	Pay Double
30	should occur once in 13 rolls	0 yards
31	should occur once in 15 rolls	0 yards
32	should occur once in 17 rolls	0 yards
33	should occur once in 20 rolls	0 yards
34	should occur once in 25 rolls	Bonus
35	should occur once in 33 rolls	Free Play
36	should occur once in 46 rolls	Prize
37	should occur once in 66 rolls	House Prize
38	should occur once in 100 rolls	House Prize
39	should occur once in 160 rolls	2 yards
40	should occur once in 273 rolls	5 yards
41	should occur once in 499 rolls	15 yards
42	should occur once in 983 rolls	20 yards
43	should occur once in 2,121 rolls	50 yards
44	should occur once in 5,090 rolls	50 yards
45	should occur once in 13,997 rolls	30 yards
46	should occur once in 46,656 rolls	50 yards
47	should occur once in 209,952 rolls	100 yards
48	should occur once in 1,679,616 rolls	100 yards

In addition to the marble and dice versions described in detail, there are many other variations. One uses eight 6-sided sticks with numbers on the sides. These are stood upright and then allowed to fall, after which the points showing are totaled.

Another type employs darts thrown at a numbered board. The squares are so small that skill as a factor in playing this variation is virtually nonexistent. Some players have even been required to throw two darts together in one hand to further eliminate skill. Here, there is always a provision that a dart missing the target altogether or hitting a line (a "liner") results in either 3 or 4 points. Of course, either a 3 or 4 eliminates the possibility of an instant winner. Frequently, the lines are so thick that as much as 25 percent of the target area is comprised of lines.

As referred to previously, the "pin store" or "peek store" variety has a rack with numerous common clothespins clipped to it. The pins have 2- or 3-digit numbers imprinted in widely spaced numerals on the backsides. There is also a large cone-shaped spindle on either end of the rack. The player throws rubber jar lids trying to encircle the spindle (which is an instant winner, but nearly impossible to accomplish because of its size and the angle at which it is placed) or trying to encircle a lucky pin. The pins surrounding the spindle are invariably losing numbers. In addition, there is no reason for the numbers consisting of both 2- and 3-digit numbers except that this allows the operator to cover up either the first or last digit of the 3-digit number, thereby making it appear to be a number giving points or no points, depending on the whim of the operator. (See figure 4.) Notice that 134, the actual pin number, gives 9½ points on the chart in figure 5, whereas by covering the 1, it reads as 34, a losing number or by covering the 4, it reads as 13, a ½-point number.

A similar version uses ping-pong balls which are blown into the air in a device often used in bingo games. In fact the game is usually entitled "Bingo" on the chart. (See figure 5.)

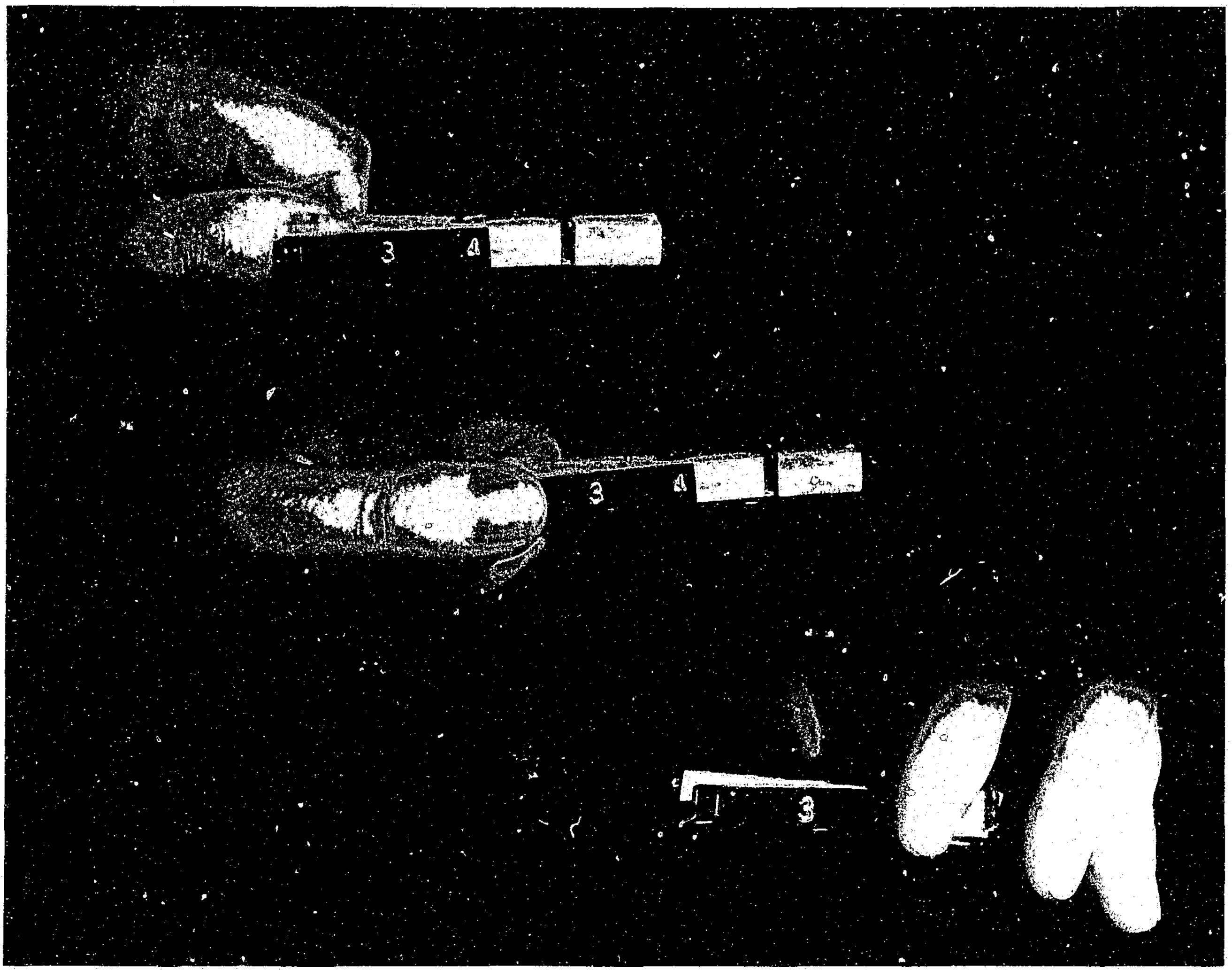


Figure 4

The balls bear the familiar, widely spaced 2- and 3-digit numbers, so that the game is run much like the pin store described previously. Notice in figure 6 that the number on the ball can read 122 (5 points), 12 (½ point), or 22 ("raise" or double up).

Undoubtedly, other varieties are being used, since unscrupulous opertors are quite ingenious in developing new types and can adapt almost any type of game to become a Razzle Dazzle.

Razzle Dazzle-type games are operated by "gangs" and "mobs" who travel about the country or set up their operations at roadside stops. The latter operations have the advantage of attracting the more affluent, intelligent "marks" (or suckers) who think they cannot possibly lose if they only put enough capital into it. Another advantage is that after the player is wiped out, he is less apt to take time to report the "theft" to the authorities, since he is usually traveling and would rather spend the time to reach his destination.

Because of the great unlikelihood of achieving winning points on the board, it seems unbelievable that a person will continue to play. In most cases, the operator employs "fair banking," cheating in *favor* of the player. The operator will quickly overcount points to allow the player to approach 100 yards. This keeps the player involved, but hardly advances his chances. Invariably, the beginning player starts out by being "awarded" 50 points. He is not likely to complain of the fast counting when he makes yards. However, any time the operator does not wish to fair bank the player, he can simply let the player count the points himself, since after only a quick scan of the board, the operator can tell whether the player has rolled almost all 1's or 6's. Thus, he will know the player cannot have achieved anything of real value.

10 POINTS OR/MORE WINS

BINGO BANK, INC.

28 BONUS RULES
PAY AND PLAY EACH TIME UNTIL YOU WIN
PLAYER IS GUARANTEED TO RECEIVE MONEY
AFTER SCORING 10 POINTS OR MORE
The only way player can lose after Scoring No. 28
is to quit before Scoring 10 points or more
Player and Operator Must Double on No. 28

BINGO BANK, INC.

PTS NOT TRANSFERABLE

141 2 PTS		39 10 PTS	26 1½ PTS	122 5 PTS	27 2 PTS	37 10 PTS		33 ½ PT
35 5 PTS	137	24 5 PTS	29 2 FOR 1	36 4 PTS	130 3 FOR 1	38 5 PTS	139	46 3 PTS
134 9½ PTS	34	123 2 PTS	138	25 1 PT	127	40 3 PTS	23	121 5 PTS
75 4½ PTS	129	12 ½ PT	126		136	13 ½ PT	140	31 3 PTS

BLACK NOS DO NOT WIN

5 MINUTE DELAY ENDS GAME
NOS 28-41-22 DO NOT WIN

Figure 5

The chart usually has a provision at the bottom that any delay (or a 5-minute delay) ends the game. However, often the operator will graciously wave this provision and put the player's name on the score sheet so that the player may leave to obtain more money.

Records have been recovered indicating substantial losses by players, often reaching hundreds or thousands of dollars apiece. Of course such records, as well as the other paraphernalia, should be seized by authorities should arrests or execution of search warrants occur. The various items used by Razzle operators may be examined and analyzed by the Gambling Subunit of the FBI Laboratory and expert testimony furnished should the need arise.

Although the basic criminal charge against a Razzle Dazzle operator may be gambling, because of the nature of the game described herein, the charge may also be fraud, false pretense, larceny, theft by trick or deception, or whatever similar offense the State law contains.

The following criteria are present in Razzle Dazzle games:

1) Vague, complicated rules—Without fail, after losing substantial sums of money, the victim realizes that he actually had very little idea as to what were the exact rules of the game, and the chart and fast-talking operator do not provide much help, such as the meaning of "add," "H.P.," "bonus," etc.

2) The conversion chart—This provides a means to divert the attention of the player from the marbles, dice, etc., to the points he hopes to achieve. It also provides an opportunity for the operator to convert the amassed numbers into the points which may result in increased wagering.

Figure 6

3) A means of doubling the bets—The doubling-up characteristic, hitting the "add" number, enables the operator to boost the wagers rather quickly from $1 into hundreds of dollars, realizing that if the amount wagered is doubled continually, even an initial wager of $1 results in a $1,024 bet at the end of just 10 plays.

4) A means of cheating (either for or against the player)—This may either be by fast counting, covering up one of the digits on the ping-pong balls or pins, or even by calling a dart thrown a "liner" when in fact it may not be.

After seeing the problems players have in winning anything, unless trinkets are given to quiet him, the importance in stopping such games is evident. Many youths lose all their money playing these games. Yet, some rackets have been known to take in thousands of dollars per player, in games involving very intelligent players. Hopefully, a greater awareness of the unfairness and crookedness of Razzle Dazzle games will assist investigators in stopping or deterring the operators from preying on unsuspecting players. **FBI**