

Hayward's Palace Card Club is a Casino that Never Sleeps

By Kenneth Montfort
Staff Writer

Hayward's The Palace Card Club gives local card sharks the ability to play poker 24 hours a day, seven days a week and 365 days a year.

Located on the corner of D Street and Mission Boulevard, The Palace Card Club has been in business for nearly 25 years under married owners Chuck Blanchart and Katherine Bousson, who have been residents of Hayward their entire lives. The business was taken over by Bousson when her husband became sick.

The local casino offers a free 24-hour shuttle that takes players to a municipal parking garage located on the corner of D and Mission.

Accumulating a massive amount of revenue, the club offers players food from a bar-like restaurant that doesn't serve alcohol, many types of poker including "Texas Hold'em" and "Pai Gow Poker," and tournaments for serious players.

Tournaments are played every day. During the week, tournaments start at 10 p.m. with \$40 buy-ins—except on Tuesday, which has \$60 buy-ins—and on the weekend, tournaments start at noon with \$60 buy-ins.

"Our most popular game is \$3/\$6 Hold'em," said Vince Cabellero, key floor manager/tournament leader. "Meaning that \$3 is the minimum you can bet and \$6 is the most, and is played just like a regular five-card poker game."

The club welcomes many types of people into their casino. Cabellero said they get a lot of Cal State East Bay students who visit their family-owned business.

"Lately, what we're seeing is a lot of 20 and 30-somethings coming in that have watched (poker) on TV in the past three years," Cabellero said.

Cabellero estimated about 75 CSUEB students come into their business, saying that if maybe there was more to do, they might see a higher increase in business.

The casino, which offers different types of card games, has set up a particular poker game

in one corner of their establishment. "Pai Gow" poker, a game originating in Asia, gives visitors the chance to play this Texas Hold'em-like game.

Blackjack dealers are also available for the beginner poker players, and advanced games such as "No Limit Hold'em" for the everyday customers.

Cabellero added that their club has one advantage over all others in the city,

"The only way to get a license is if you buy one from someone," said Cabellero, "We are the only (casino) in Hayward to have a 24-hour license"

With no competition in town, this business keeps many visitors coming back for more card playing every day, with a facility housing nearly 200 players.

"We would like to create an atmosphere of working like a family here, like (to) work professionally and get along like a family," said Ador Vilanueva, key cashier/shift manager for nearly the past five years.

Pioneer Baseball Helps Young Ballplayers Stay Sharp

By Kenneth Montfort
Staff Writer

For a second consecutive summer, Cal State East Bay baseball coach Dirk Morrison is hosting a Pioneer-sponsored summer baseball camp for Hayward youth.

The two-week camp is broken up into two one-week sessions that give players the ability to play like college all-stars. The budding ballplayers are taught by Pioneer baseball players, including alumni and pitching coach, Andrew Pasquinelli.

"The reason we do the camp is really to educate the younger generation," Pasquinelli said. "We teach the same skills here that we do to our guys. We try to give the most quality education that we can for little guys and girls that want to play baseball."

Pasquinelli played baseball for two years at CSUEB and has been coaching for four years. This is his third year participating in the summer baseball camp and he said he enjoys every minute of it.

This year's camp had nearly 20 players during the first week, which ends today. Morrison, who also runs a camp during the winter, anticipates a similar turnout during the second week.

"Summer camps are meant as all-skills camp, while my winter camps are meant as camps for improving basic pitching and hitting," Morrison said.

Morrison has coached winter camps in mid-December for the past eight years now and says he gets more kids during winter.

Players are given a shirt, one-on-one practice and group practices for the cost of \$160 per player or \$110 per sibling. Proceeds go toward furthering the CSUEB baseball program.

"It works as a fundraiser and gets us into the community as far as local kids and families being able to come

“The reason we do the camp is really to educate the younger generation.”

Andrew Pasquinelli.

up to the campus and seeing our facility," Morrison said.

Games are played at the end of each week, and this year's summer camp plays its final game today.

The first week is basically an all-skills week while the second week gives players pointers on pitching, hitting and sliding.

"We spend a lot of time on detail, on running form, on base running," Pasquinelli said. "(If) someone runs with an open foot or a straight foot—that's a three-to-four inch difference on every stride, and the average major league player takes 17 strides and if you do the math, it's almost four feet closer."

With that kind of detail, players seem bound to improve many of their skills enough to make any parent proud.

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