

5 tips to beat blackjack from a gambler's mathematician

By Thomas Moore, Las Vegas Sun

Michael Shackelford is a gambling aficionado and a mathematician. As the owner of the The Wizard of Odds website, the former actuary and adjunct professor of casino math at the UNLV has spent countless hours calculating the odds and figuring out strategies for most of the games in casinos.

Shackelford says the biggest misconception people have about blackjack occurs when every player at a table loses. More often than not, they'll blame the player on third base – the last person to make a decision at the table – for their loss.

“The fact of it is, no matter how the last player to act plays their hand, it is just as likely to help as to hurt the table,” Shackelford said. “People have a selective memory and only remember the things that fit the paradigm that they believe in. If the dealer pulls a 21, they like to point at someone to blame for it and I think that's the psychology of why this myth exists.”

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