

# CALIFORNIA RAMBLING AND GAMBLING

by Michael Moore

**"Hunting for the rarest of rare in the toughest neighborhood in town."**

Emeryville is a small town on the border of Oakland. In the 1800's the area was the stopping point for passengers coming out west. The Santa Fe Rail Line and an old stagecoach road intersected at San Pablo Avenue and Adeline. Hotels, bars, brothels, and gambling joints were booming during that time. When the stage quit running and the railroad stopped its service the hotels, bars and brothels died, but the gambling survived.

The Oaks Card Club in Emeryville is one of the oldest and largest card lounges in Northern California. But, the other club on San Pablo is where I found a chip that made my heart skip a beat. The King Midas is owned by the Asian Mafia and not the place for a "honky" to hang out. There have been murders, kidnapping, extortion charges, they've been raided, shut down and you name it. And in case you don't know me, I'm a former Marine Vietnam Veteran and I aint scared of nothing and this place scares me. I have ran to my car after a big win at this club.

The only reason I ever played at the King Midas was to find the error \$1 Chipco with Kings on both sides and the double sided Tile. They have a low limit game everyday and I have always felt fairly safe as long as it's light out. Once the error \$1 chips dried up, I quit gambling at the club.

A few months ago I went into the club to pick through some of there \$10 Chipco's with the King on one side and the Pai Gow Tiles on the other. I was looking for the chips in the best condition. The last chip I turned over had Tiles on both sides. My mouth dropped open. I couldn't believe it. I turned the chip over a couple of times to make sure. I went to the cage and bought \$1000 worth of chips and went through them. After \$7,000 of turning over every chip, I found two more Tiles. Then I was told I could not buy anymore chips. I tried to explain what I was doing but they couldn't understand. They figured I had some angle I was working so they told me to leave.

I found out later that the only game they used the \$10 chip was in a high stakes, \$30-\$60 limit hold'em game on Friday nights. After several other tries to buy chips at the cage with some success, I managed to find two more Tiles. I was again told to either play in a game or get out.

There had to be a double sided King. My dilemma was, do I risk \$5,000 to play in a game where I know they will team up against me just to find a chip. I took the big gamble. I systematically went through \$27,000 worth of chips in three days, turned a small profit gambling, and survived to find three Kings and seven Tiles all totaled. Everyone down there thinks I'm a nut. When I think about it, I think so too.



Michael Moore, P.O. Box 6856, Terra Linda, CA 94903 PH. (415) 479-3540