

BINGO LINK

The only magazine produced for the bingo industry

Issue 59 Autumn 2002

The Bingo bride
Her perfect day to remember



Cashing in
The future of cash handling



Competitions!
Win some furry friends!

The Bingo Industry's Finest



The excitement is mounting as one of the bingo industry's most important dates draws near. The search to find the 2002 'Bingo Caller of the Year' will reach its goal at the Mecca Bingo Club in Wandsworth on Sunday 24 November. This prestigious event will see the elite of Britain's bingo callers being put through their paces so that the judges can choose one winner to take the coveted title.

Winner takes all: Ian Carroll from Gala Kilmarnock celebrates his win in the Scottish Bingo Caller of the Year regional final

And what a job those judges have had. It all started with a massive sifting process from over 100 entries to select which entrants would make it through to one of the five regional finals. Judges had to read entry forms from each contestant and view the accompanying videos. That's one hell of a lot of viewing hours to get through in one day!

Those making it through the first selection process were then notified that they were through to the regional

finals. For those chosen, it must have been a real kick of excitement as they know that to have got this far means that the title is within their reach.

This year's competition has been supported by Halls, who have provided a generous supply of Soothers, to

[Continued on Page 6](#)

Visit us online at
www.bingo-association.co.uk

Global gaming expo

This year's Expo event got off to a great start with an opening ceremony at the world renowned Caesar's Palace. Those attending were eager to report that Elvis is alive and has taken part in a cloning experiment!

This annual Vegas show has become the most important exhibition in the gaming industries' calendar, all around the world. Covering all aspects of gaming and related services, the event provides both an exhibition and a programme of seminars, in addition to the main conference. In just two years since the event's inception, the G2E exhibition floor has expanded from 375 companies in

133,330 square feet, to 616 exhibits in 190,400 square feet for 2002. This year's preliminary gate figures on day one indicate a similar trend for attendees. There were 8,183, compared to the 5,996 for day one in 2001.

Bingo is one of America's favourite pastimes and is now a multi-billion dollar business world-wide. From the plush bingo halls of Europe, to the many variations of the game throughout the world, bingo has become a major player in the gaming industry. In recognition of its growing importance, this year's Expo featured a 'Bingo Pavilion' and bingo seminar programme.

The 'Bingo Track' seminar programme was designed to offer crucial information on the latest developments in bingo, enabling gaming professionals to grow their businesses. Among the topics covered in the Bingo Track were regulatory issues like electronic bingo and printed ticket operation; how successful clubs attract and retain players; and how to keep bingo in the mainstream.

The Bingo Pavilion provided a dedicated floor area for exhibitors, who included Jenosys Technologies, Game Tech International Inc., Bettina Corp., Atlantic Gaming Inc., Millennium Games, Miami Tribe of



All shook up: This year's Expo attracted interested parties from all aspects of the industry

Oklahoma, Tabco/The Bingo Paper Company, Planet Bingo, Daktronics, Electronic Gaming Solutions and Edward Thompson.

UK National Game Chief

[Continued on Page 7](#)

Bingo
THE BINGO ASSOCIATION

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Make a million for Macmillan Cancer Relief see page 12

The National Game

Quarterly News and Update from Chief Executive, Paul Talboys.



Exciting times!

I am pleased to be able to share with you all the exciting news of our first £1 million National Game, scheduled for Sunday 22 December. This new prize value has been made possible by limit changes that came into effect this August.

In the weeks running up to this UK first, club managers and operators will receive a number of communications to keep you all up to date on the support activities and materials that will be arranged to assist with promoting the game.

However, it is important that we do not overlook October's Big Game in the excitement and anticipation of the £1 million game.

Our latest 2002 television commercials have been given their second airing, returning to screen in late August for a period of six weeks. Preliminary survey results are encouraging and show that they continue to be well received by audiences. They will be aired again in the week preceding our next Big Game, on Sunday 27 October. As the advertisements feature the web address, clubs should remember to keep checking for new online membership applications through their NGMW.

Table talkers to support October's £500,000 game are now being produced, featuring the two characters from the recent television advertising. Quantities of these should be with you by the time you are reading this. You should also re-use the light-box posters and door stickers that were supplied to you earlier on in the year, which featured the same characters. Additional limited quantities of these

items are still available if you require them.

I would like to thank all those who completed and returned the questionnaires we circulated concerning prizes and the timing of intervals. Of those who replied, more than half felt that the current number of prizes provided by the National Game is about right. However, there was a definite feeling among all those who responded that the value of Zone Prizes needed to be reviewed, with many suggesting that the main National Prize be capped and additional prize funds directed to the Zone prizes. As many of you may be aware, this is exactly what will now happen, from 4 November. Thanks once again for your time

on this.

Caller of the Year 2002 is currently at the regional final stage, with plenty of fresh faces appearing alongside many of those we already recognise. This year's final will

be compered by Lesley Joseph (Dorien from *Birds of a Feather*), who helped ensure a lively and spirited final on one other previous occasion. The final takes place on Sunday 24 November and I hope to see a great many people there.

As this is the last issue of *Bingo Link* for 2002 I would like to get in early and wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Our next issue will be out in January 2003.



National Bingo Game: key statistics

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Total prize money since the game began | £702,181,997 |
| Total prize money played for in 2001 | £50,176,626 |
| Total prize money played for in 2002 to date | £34,277,727 |

Biggest games for 2001

| | |
|---|---------|
| Sunday 25 March with ticket sales of | 859,989 |
| Sunday 23 December with ticket sales of | 832,467 |

Biggest game to date for 2002

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------|
| Tuesday 30 April with ticket sales of | 940,039 |
| Tuesday 28 May with ticket sales of | 915,514 |

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Diary



27 October

NBGA Big Game for up to £500,000

2-10 November

The Bingo Association Game For Life Week

TBC

The Bingo Association regional meetings

24 November

Caller of The Year Final, London

22 December

NBGA Big Game, the UK's first £1 million bingo game

21-23 January

The ATEI, Earls Court, London

29-30 January

Euro Amusement Show, Fiera di Genova, Genoa, Italy.
www.EuroAmusementShow.com

Drop us a line with any key dates or events readers should know about.

Bingo in the news

The second quarter of 2002 got off to a great start for 'bingo in the news', with April being a particularly successful month for coverage. This was greatly helped by the Chancellor of the Exchequer's announcement in the April Budget Statement that he was considering abolishing bingo duty.

Regional press coverage, which is a key aspect of promoting both bingo and the National Game, saw best results in the West Midlands region for April and May and in the South and South East for June.

The list below shows written media coverage only and does not include radio and television exposure achieved.

Number of press hits by month

| Number of stories | April | May | June |
|---------------------------|-------|-----|------|
| National papers | 30 | 4 | 3 |
| Consumer magazines | 6 | 2 | 2 |
| Regional dailies/weeklies | 156 | 151 | 83 |
| Electronic media | 3 | 0 | 13 |
| TOTAL | 197 | 157 | 101 |

For support with National Game winner coverage, please contact National Game Regional PR support on 01438 718 500

Ultimate safety award for Gala Group

Gala Group has been presented with a British Safety Council Sword of Honour, following a recent ceremony at the historic Goldsmiths' Hall, London. With recent media focus firmly on accidents that take place at work and the need to reduce them, Gala Group, as one of only 40 organisations world-wide presented with Swords of Honour, has recognised the importance of such issues for business.

The Sword of Honour recognises organisations that have implemented some of the best safety systems in the world. Only organisations that achieve the maximum rating in the Council's Five Star Health and Safety Management System Audit are eligible to apply and must prove they have a culture of aiming for best practice, which emanates from the boardroom down.

Each year only about 100 companies are eligible to apply, completing a questionnaire covering eight key areas of safety activity. The applications are then judged by an independent panel. Andrew Daft, Gala's Health and Safety executive said: 'I'm delighted that our rigorous procedures have resulted in improved practices and this prestigious award.'



Top honours: David Ballard (centre), Director General of the British Safety Council, presents the award to Andrew Daft, Catherine Low, Sue Moores and Louise Helliwell

In congratulating Gala, David Ballard, Director General of the Council, was very pleased that safety issues had been treated seriously: 'You have shown you are truly world class by adopting best practice. If every business followed your example, industry in the UK could save up to £18 billion per year by cutting the costs of accidents, lost production, sick leave, compensation, fines and court cases.'

The Report of the Gaming Board for Great Britain 2001-02

The Gaming Board's annual report is out and shows that only 75% of certificates of consent applications (where the applicant already held an earlier certificate) were determined within six weeks of receipt. This was 5% below the performance target.

The report states: 'Targets were met or exceeded in four of the six areas. Two just failed: the Bingo Section had an unusually large proportion of complex applications whilst Certification Section underwent a complete change of case working staff.'

Copies of the Gaming Board's Annual Report may be accessed on the Board's web site at www.gbgb.org.co.uk



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Abolition of duty still on course?

Following initial consultations with The Bingo Association and visits to a number of bingo clubs, HM Customs and Excise has decided to issue a consultation document.

As many of you in the industry will already be aware, the consultation document, entitled *The Modernisation of Gambling Taxes: Consultation on the Abolition of Bingo Duty*, was made available at the beginning of September, marking the start of a two-month consultation period. During this time Customs and Excise will be seeking the views of 'bingo clubs, trade bodies, their advisers, players and other interested parties'. The key areas under consultation are:

- The Government's proposal to introduce a gross profits tax, similar to those introduced for betting and pools taxation.
- What they believe the rate of this new tax should be.
- Whether the Government should change the VAT treatment of par fees.
- How the Government should define 'gross profit'.
- How the Government could reduce compliance costs.
- When the reforms should be introduced.
- Whether there is any need to review the current scope of bingo taxation.

Many people reading this may have already received a copy of the

document, but for those who have not, copies are still available from HM Customs and Excise offices at New King's Beam House, 22 Upper Ground, London, SE1 9PJ (020 7865 4701) and from their website www.hmce.gov.uk

The Bingo Association has been working hard on members' behalf to prepare for, and then make a submission to, Customs and Excise. A key part of this preparation has been a number of meetings with representatives from Customs and Excise and the appointment of The Henley Centre to work with the Association. The Henley Centre is carrying out a study that tests various models and scenarios for

HM Customs and Excise

taxation in order to identify a system that will deliver maximum net benefits to the industry overall.

It is anticipated that this work will be completed by mid-to-late-October and those wishing to respond to the consultation individually may like to delay their response until they have had the opportunity to consider the outcome of The Henley Centre's work. As soon as the report is completed, it will be made available on The Bingo Association website (www.bingo-association.co.uk).

The deadline for consultation responses remains 31 October 2002.

Appointments

Peter Cox has been appointed Director of Operations at GamCare to allow Paul Bellringer to take on the role of Chief Executive.

Paul Bellringer explained: 'Significant interest to establish a code is coming from operators of both terrestrial and e-gaming applications and GamCare is currently working with a number of them to establish a realistic yet high standard for their venue or site. In order that GamCare is able to respond to the increasing number of requests for help, we have adjusted the organisation's structure.

'As Director of Operations, Peter Cox will be responsible for the day-to-day running of GamCare. This will allow me, and other members of staff as appropriate, to respond to this new challenge of assisting the gambling industry to prepare for the new licence requirements.'

BACTA has appointed Phil Jarrod as Chief Executive following the departure of Julien Rychlik. Jarrod has a background in the pools industry and is an experienced general manager. He has previously been Managing Director of various UK and European-owned companies but for the last three years has been self-employed working as a consultant.

Association President Keith Smith commented: 'In welcoming the appointment of Phil Jarrod I must also thank Julien Rychlik for his contribution to the Association over the last three years, particularly the Gambling Review and for the growth of membership. BACTA faces many future challenges that I am sure we will meet.'

Soccer Fan Calls The Right Number

Bingo caller Sarah Downes showed her support for her favourite 'legs eleven' when she became a Sky Sports Soccerette for the day.

Sarah, 23, from Nelson near Abercynon, was featured on the *Soccer a.m.* television programme wearing the shirt of her Premiership heroes Leeds United.

The programme, a preliminary to the afternoon's big matches, interviews a different girl every Saturday morning. Candidates have to appear in a football shirt, talk about their favourite team and tell the panel about themselves.

Sarah, who is the main stage caller at the Top Ten Palace Bingo Club in Ystrad Mynach, is Sky Sport's third Soccerette of the season. She first wrote to the *Soccer a.m.* show over a year ago. She said: 'I didn't hear anything and I had forgotten all about it. Then I got a phone call on a Wednesday to ask if I was still interested. It all



Bingo caller Sarah (right) and her boss Carl Prosser. Sarah became a Soccerette on Sky Sport's *Soccer a.m.* TV show

happened really fast after that. By the Friday of that week I was in London, and being interviewed in the studio the next morning! It was great fun.'

Sarah's whole family loves football – but that's where they start to differ. She supports Leeds United, her brother is a Coventry fan, her Mum cheers for Newcastle, whilst her Dad's loyalties lie with Liverpool. Sarah told us: 'I've been to see Leeds play five times but they've lost every time. I was hoping that

appearing on the programme in my Leeds shirt might have brought them some luck, but sadly it wasn't to be. Birmingham beat us 2-1.'

Sarah's boss at the bingo club, Carl Prosser, said: 'Sarah's a lovely girl and very popular with our members here. Football team loyalties became irrelevant when we saw Sarah on the telly. She was the only one we cheered for that day!'

Electronic bingo at Mecca



Electronic bingo will launch at Mecca Quay in Glasgow later this month, where there will be 60 electronic positions to play at in a specially designed 'Electronic Bingo lounge', complete with bar

Electronic Bingo is exactly that – bingo played electronically on a console rather than with conventional bingo books. Instead of buying bingo books, customers use their membership card to purchase bingo games, find a seat in the Electronic Bingo Lounge and then they're

ready to go. They won't even need a dabber!

Playing electronic bingo

- When customers arrive in the Electronic Lounge, they make their way to the customer service point.

- Their membership card is topped up and they are ready to play the National Game, Link Games and all main-stage bingo games.
- They will need to remember to top up their card to Cashline too.

- Once they have purchased their books they need to find a seat.

- Once the card is entered into the console it will ask customers for their pin number.

- In order to play, they then select the appropriate screen, Cashline, main-stage bingo and so on.

- Each time a number is called, the customer touches anywhere on the screen and the ticket will be automatically marked.

The Electronic Bingo card has a number of other uses, including:

- Obtaining statements.



A member of staff shows a player how to get to grips with the new electric bingo console



Screen star: electronic bingo is easy to play, and also fulfils a number of added functions

- Collecting winnings, which are paid directly onto cards.
- Withdrawing winnings or topping up the card at service points.

After the session has finished, the 'leave' icon is pressed on the screen and

the card is removed. Players can then service their card (top up, collect winnings and so on) at any of the service points. It is Mecca's intention to roll out this exciting new way to play bingo across its estate.

Thinking of Seating ?

On-Site Refurbishment ?

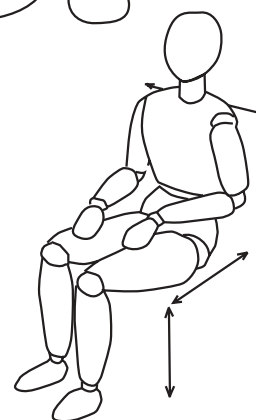
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Well done! Last year's Bingo Caller of the Year winner Alan Stockdale congratulates Ian Carroll on his victory in the Scottish Bingo Caller of the Year regional final



The Roll of Honour

Whoever wins the competition and claims the title will know they have beaten some of the finest bingo callers in the country. The roll of honour, detailing those who made it to the Regional Finals, names 25 of the best and their Clubs. Well done to them all.

Regional Finalists

Scotland

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| John Walsh | Gala, Dundee |
| James Cook | Mecca, Fountainbridge, Edinburgh |
| James O'Kane | Gala, Glenrothes |
| Ian Carroll | Gala, Kilmarnock |
| Roy Cunningham | Gala, Falkirk |

North

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Karen Winstone | Walkers, Selby |
| Andy Tate | Testos, Durham |
| Brian Gillatt | Gala, Burnley |
| Jason Dale | Top Ten, Cumbria |
| Patrick Bowler | Gala, Morecambe |

Midlands

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Max Rayner | Mecca, Norwich |
| Crystal Lucas | Palais, Nottingham |
| Peter Winterton | Gala, Wednesbury |
| Kelvyn Davies | Mecca, Stoke |
| Ryan Jackson | Gala, Hereford |

Wales

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Peter Lewis | Castle, Newport Road, Cardiff |
| Paul Stephenson | Empire Bingo, Neath |
| Peter Wilson | Mecca, Cwmbran |
| Colin Baker | Castle, Canton, Cardiff |
| Tricia Keen | Gala Club, Cardiff |

South

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ricky Denton | Mecca, Wood Green |
| John Clarke | Club Grand, Bournemouth |
| Dawn Milton | Mecca, Harlow, Essex |
| Mike Barnes | Leo Leisure, Eastleigh, Hants |
| Graham Wibrew | Gala, Crawley |

Regional Hosts

The judges would like to thank the following clubs that hosted the regional finals and all the staff at these clubs who made everyone very welcome and gave their assistance.

Carlton Bingo Club, Livingston
 Cosmo Bingo Club, Stalybridge
 Walkers Bingo, Mansfield
 Castle Bingo, Bridgend
 Gala, Brighton

● **Look out for full coverage of the Final in the next issue of Bingo Link.**

The Industry's Finest

◆ Continued from Page 1

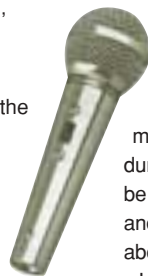
help callers and players at all regional heats keep their vocal cords ready for action.

For the first time in the history of the competition there was a lady caller in every regional final, with the exception of Scotland.

Event organiser and judge Gloria Pattinson said: 'The standard of competitors gets better every year. We see entrants from previous years who show new confidence gained from the experience of having been in the competition before; but it's also nice to see lots of new faces in

the regional finals.'

As those chosen from the regional finals count down the days to the grand final in London in November, they can dream about taking the title and winning the fantastic prize of a luxury holiday in Los Angeles and Las Vegas where they may get the chance to call a game in a Vegas casino – and where they might also choose to blow the £500 spending money that comes



with the title!

As an ambassador to the bingo industry, the winner will be trained as a media spokesperson and, during their year of office, will be invited to take part in TV and radio interviews to talk about the industry.

In the meantime, the five finalists (who were being selected as this issue went to press) need to focus on what the judges will be looking for: that special X factor, which puts one person head and shoulders above another. We wish them all good luck.

Global gaming expo

Continued from Page 1

Executive Paul Talboys attended this year's event, along with a number of other UK delegates from the bingo and gaming sectors, and was pleased to see that bingo had at last been singled out for some special and positive treatment.

'Seeing an entire section given over purely to bingo is a great boost to those involved in the business,' he said, 'as, for a great many years, casinos have been seen to be the main players. The Bingo Pavilion covered nearly a third of the entire



exhibition space.'

'The exhibition itself provides a good overview of what is new. This year it was clear that many companies had been refining their products and services, and further integrating the use of computer based technology.'

'Legislation was also a strong theme which evidently needs to be addressed, as it appeared in both the main

conference and seminar programmes.'

He continued: 'It is clear the UK is not the only country whose gaming laws need updating and amending. The advent of gaming (gambling, rather than console playing) on the internet, is something that has very clearly highlighted the anomalies that exist around the world. If UK-based compa-



Testing times: Visitors to the Expo event in Las Vegas were tempted to try the new machines and formats

nies are to have a fair chance in this online market, it is vital that de-regulation here in the UK is thorough and exact. Like many other countries, we have legal definitions set 50 to 60 years ago that are just unable to accommodate what technology is

now making possible.' Machines were also a key area of the exhibition, with all present showing the latest formats available and contributing considerably to the noise and flashing light factor.

Further details of this event can be found on the G2E 2002 web site at www.globalgamingexpo.com

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Managing the readies

The majority of gaming and gambling activity remains cash based, which can be both a blessing and a blight. But as debit and credit cards, online gaming and the security issues of cash lead us towards virtual and plastic money, how much longer will cash remain king?



Over the past few years the bingo industry has changed radically. Not only by trying to attract a younger customer base, but by the masses of hi-tech wizardry that has been introduced into clubs to make the running of a bingo session smoother and more efficient. Those clubs participating in the National Game and Dream Ticket will already be aware of the automated cash reconciliation service that is offered alongside these games and the benefits that electronic reconciliation can bring.

The handling of cash and the integration of cash management systems has become an area of considerable importance to cash-based businesses such as bingo. As technology has improved and customers have demanded more, standards have risen among suppliers. One supplier, Cummins-Allison, has gone from strength to strength and now supplies around 95% of bingo clubs in the UK.

When it was first introduced over ten years ago, Cummins-Allison's JETSORT range revolutionised the process of cash counting within clubs. Machine collection was drastically reduced both in terms of time and manpower. As their reputation for producing durable, reliable and hard-working machines grew, so did their customer base within the bingo industry. JETSORT has moved with the times, and current machines have a touch screen, exact bag stops and, among other features, the ability to download a count directly into a PC, offering massive time savings to the operator as well as reducing the human error factor. The most popular model within bingo clubs is the 4200, which counts and sorts mixed coins at 3,000 coins per minute.

The coin-ops sector is also now starting to see machines with note acceptors. As these become more commonplace, the amount of

mixed notes is likely to increase dramatically. This is set to cause similar problems to those experienced with coin counting before machines were introduced. However, the problem of counterfeiting is also a far greater issue with notes.

Cummins-Allison has produced the JETSCAN, with counterfeit detection, to count and sort mixed notes in one easy operation. It is ideal for counting money from a note acceptor or change machine and can operate independently or linked to a JET-SORT or existing software.

Developments have not only affected how cash handling is managed by businesses, but have also had a huge impact on how cash is dispensed and obtained by

range of AWP machines supplied to bingo clubs. Leisure Link customers are offered machines on rental, with the benefit of not having to sign up for long-term leases. Clubs also receive a share of the convenience fee charged to customers for using the machines.

ATMs offer bingo players a convenient way to access their cash at a time and place to suit themselves. From the operators point of view, ATMs help boost profits as any money withdrawn from a machine in a club, is likely to be spent there.

Scott Tod Developments, which has been working with the bingo sector for over 20 years, has also recognised the value of resident ATMs to the leisure sector.

ATMs have had a huge impact on the relationship people have with their cash

customers. There is an entire generation out there who know nothing of the Friday afternoon queue at the bank to get cash for the weekend and who can't conceive of life without the Hole-in-the-wall and 24-7 worldwide access to cash.

Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) have had a huge impact on the relationship people have with their cash. They have also enabled people to be far more impulsive about what they wish to spend, where, when and how. A considerable number of businesses, in a range of sectors, have found their success is greatly influenced by their proximity to an ATM. Leisure Link, the largest leisure machine management company in the UK, believes bingo clubs are no exception and can boost their income by installing ATMs on their premises. They have added ATMs to their portfolio of products to complement the

In a period of rapid change, where new technology brings an ever-increasing spectrum of leisure activities, Scott Tod Developments has continually been impressed with the professional and ambitious strategies



Left: An Automated Teller Machine (ATM), ideal for clubs. Right: The popular 4200 counting machine

features



Left: Some clubs prefer to use the more compact 1000 model which counts mixed coins at half the speed, but takes up less space

laid down by the leading bingo operators. Scott Tod Developments' Managing Director Nicholas Tod says: 'We are delighted that the leading players in the leisure industry such as Gala, Mecca and Shipleys continue to buy our machines over our competitors. The additional ser-

vice that we provide in operating our machines with full service and maintenance guarantees is also proving to be very popular with other companies, as we are able to ensure minimal downtimes of machines.'

The range of equipment currently offered by Scott Tod Developments

covers cash handling products, such as ATMs, cashless systems and note/coin sorting equipment. Clients for ATMs include Scottish & Newcastle, Megabowl, Georgica and Bass – all of whom are realising the increased revenue potential of ATMs on their sites.

All this technology, delivering great results, might also increase that well known problem of the customer who fills their machines with loads of credits just before closing.

The problems associated with asking players to leave machines are well known; however, Coincheck Electronics have the technology! The RF is a device that disables the coin mechanism and prevents it from accepting any more coins.

The unit is attached to the coin mechanism of a gaming machine that can be disabled via a radio signal. Although the RF units would need to be fitted to every single coin mechanism, it could give the operator the ability to prevent players from filling up machines with credits five minutes before premises are due to close. This simple piece of technology could eliminate some of the problems associated with closing time, though not all. Happy counting!

Meeron
The game keeps getting better

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Just the ticket for Bingo bride

As well as crossing off the days to her wedding, a Winsford bride-to-be was crossing off numbers on a bingo ticket when she chose to hold her hen party at a bingo club.

Alison O'Mara, from Wharton in Cheshire, invited 35 friends to join her at her favourite nearby night spot, The Top Ten Club in Dingle Lane, Winsford, to share her favourite pastime – bingo.

The club pulled out all the stops to make sure Alison's special evening went with a swing. The girls took over the balcony area where club manager David Ryder laid on the bubbly and presented Alison with flowers and wedding presents.

And Alison's friends didn't go home empty-handed. Several of the party hit the jackpot, taking away a total of over £500 in prize money.

Alison, a Production Administration Officer who is at the club every Friday night, said: 'I'm just mad



about bingo. I love it. It's the best night out ever! I've been playing since I was a kid and I get withdrawal symptoms if I miss a week.

'A few of the party are regular players and were able to show the others – I call them the bingo virgins – how to mark their cards. I was a bit nervous about it but we had a great

night. Everybody said what a brilliant idea it was. They didn't even mind me telling them they could only laugh during the intervals. I didn't want them getting me barred because they were making too much noise!'

night. Everybody said what a brilliant idea it was. They didn't even mind me telling them they could only laugh during the intervals. I didn't want them getting me barred because they were making too much noise!'

As we went to press Alison, 30, and husband-to-be Ray Waldecker, 37, were looking forward to tying the knot at Rookery Hall, near Nantwich. Bingo-mad Alison tells us she was even thinking of popping into the club on her big day for a quick game. She said: 'We're off to Portugal for our honeymoon. I'm going to miss a whole week of bingo! I don't know if they play bingo there but I'll find a game if I can!'

Ray, a logistics manager, who met his future wife over ten years ago at a night club in Winsford, also plays bingo with her occasionally. It was Ray's mum who first introduced Alison to the Dingle Lane club.

Club manager David Ryder said of the evening: 'This was the first hen party we'd hosted and we all enjoyed it as much as Alison and her friends did. It was a novel idea and we did our best to make it a night to remember.'

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So why not move into the "Pink" with PH Toys Ltd and contact us now.



Telephone – 01724 290640, Fax – 01724 868582, Email – sales@phtoys.co.uk

features

Fantastic fundraisers go for the Macmillan million!

The first week of November sees the third Game for Life Week get underway, with bingo clubs throughout the UK raising money for The Bingo Association's current charity partner, Macmillan Cancer Relief. Clubs will be organising free games with 'Bertie the Bingo Beagle' as a cuddly prize, and players making donations to Macmillan.

This is just the start for many clubs, who will be organising other activities such as kiss the caller, fancy dress nights, bed pushes and pub crawls.

Quayside Club in Lossiemouth, winner of one of last year's fundraising awards, has already held a fun day for its members and their children. 'There were stalls and games of all kinds, and even a disco,'



Dr Winnie Ewing, MSP presents Lossiemouth Quayside Bingo Club with their Macmillan Fundraising Award

dimension to its fundraising this year, with a ten-kilometre fun run along Blackpool's famous seafront. Gala clubs are also going a step further, pledging £1 to Macmillan for every single club admission on Monday 11 November.

If you are taking part in Game for Life Week, why not try something new this year? Every extra penny raised will bring us a little bit closer to our target of £1 million for people with cancer.

If you have any questions about Game for Life Week, please speak to Fiona Jackson or Catherine Fleuret on 020 7840 4648/9

explained James Allan, the club's director. 'In one day we raised more than £1,400 towards Game for Life.'

The Rank Group, owner of Mecca Bingo Clubs, added an extra



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competitions

Last issue's winners

Firm support

Paul Ryan from Beach Bingo Club in Denny, **N G Griffiths** from Argos Social Club Llanelli and **Stuart Morton** from the Beach Bingo Club in North Shields have all won a McKenzie Super Roll back support.

New home for Chuckie

Rug Rats favourite, Chuckie, will be settling into his new home with Gary Oakes from the Cosmo Eccles Bingo Club.

What a picture!

Dave Jackson from the Astoria Bingo Club in Hull will be snap happy when he receives his new camera, perfect for capturing those Game for Life Week moments.

Many Thanks to Mobilis Health Care, PMS International and Just Everything for providing such great prizes and their continued support of Bingo Link.

Win a fantastic furry friend!



We've got two very colourful characters looking for new homes. Spiro the dragon and Cobra the snake are up for grabs courtesy of PH Toys Ltd. This cuddly duo are part of the extensive range of plush toys featured in the PH Toys range.

If you would like to 'adopt' either Spiro or Cobra, send your name, address and club name to:

PH Toys Offer, Bingo Link,
Lexham House, 75 High Street,
Dunstable, Beds LU6 1JF

● The winner will be selected at random and entries must be received by 15 December 2002

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**Do you have any news
items or features that
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◆
**Next issue published
January 2003**

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tBs



Version 5

Over the past 18 months many operators have discovered the benefits of ECM's latest software package for the SRCe, the industry-standard MCB controller. Here are a few of the innovations included:



- **Multi-Card**
Take full advantage of deregulation
- **Cash Prizes in Prize Bingo**
£15 prizes with intelligent "hot-swap" to maximise tax savings
- **Variable Fees**
Automate your parlee variations according to participation levels
- **APM minimisation "Smart" Minimum Prize**
Use stake to eliminate or reduce your APM budget
- **Previous Games Viewer**
Settle customer disputes and save time with this pop-up feature
- **Stage Link Countdown**
Maximise your valuable interval time before Link Games
- **Enhanced Jackpot System**
Drive participation volume with automated Jackpots & Bonuses
- **Fixed Prize Cash Bingo**
Play Cash Bingo games for high-value goods

Main Stage Prompt

The benefits of alerting the caller to a potential winner have long been available on MCB. ECM will be launching a new feature for the RNGe during the Autumn that provides this same facility for paper bingo. Complaints from players about missed claims are difficult to avoid, but now ECM technology helps you do just that. A subtle on-screen alert allows the caller to be extra vigilant for claims when it matters most, helping both the operator and the player to ensure fair play. Once a claim is lodged, an accurate and rapid check can then use the information already available to avoid those embarrassing repeat checks. Main Stage Prompt will be available very soon for all clubs with RNGe and XSC equipment. (subject to minimum requirements)

e-Box

ECM are pleased to announce the first third-party content provider for the e-Box Touchscreen Gaming platform. GameTech International agreed the deal at the recent Global Gaming Expo in Las Vegas. Pictured below at the show are Rick Van Hasselt of GameTech, together with the UK party consisting of Paul Whitbread of ECM; Paul Talboys, CEO of NBGA; Derek Westcott of ECM and Jeff Harris of Castle Leisure. The agreement allows GameTech's range of "entertainment" games content to be brought to the e-Box platform. Paul Whitbread commented: "This agreement represents our first major step in porting third party content onto the e-Box technology platform. I'm confident this will help establish the e-Box multi-player touchscreen system as the logical choice for the bingo club operator." In a reciprocal deal,



GameTech will be distributing ECM's MCB technology in Canada. Several operators are now keen to make use of the technology that's so popular in the UK.

TED

The Gala Club at Surrey Quays, London was the setting for the latest launch of TED, the electronic bingo ticket minder, on Sunday 22 September. A busy session was enhanced by over 12% of the tickets sold being played on the ECM product. Several TED players were winners and the first was Christine Mason pictured here with Craig Hobson, the General Manager.

Christine, who has played at the club since it opened five years ago, won the second game of the night netting her prize money.



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