

# Harrah Employs Largest Force in Nevada

By RUSSELL NIELSEN  
United Press International  
RENO, Nev. (UPI)—William F. Harrah, the acknowledged king of the casinos, lives in a world of superlatives. He demands the finest, the biggest, the fastest, the most. If

it isn't the best, he doesn't want it. This tall, slender, taciturn man applies this expensive philosophy to his business, and it has lifted him from a small-time bingo and card game operator to czar of chance in Ne-

vada's wide-open gambling industry. Ask him if he hauls \$40 million a year to the bank from his glittering pleasure palaces at Reno and Lake Tahoe and he'll reply, "Could be." He employs the largest work force in the state and spends millions

for the world's largest restored automobile collection, his racing cars and boats, and lavish entertainment and promotion policies. Harrah, 52, once studied mechanical engineering at the University of California at Los An-

geles. He quit and went to work for his father who was operating a "circle game," a game of chance similar to blackjack, at Venice, Calif. "The place wasn't doing too well," he recalls. "Dad wanted to close it, but I talked him into selling it to me."

Made a Club Pay  
He soon had the club in the black, but it was closed periodically by the authorities since circle games were only "semi-legal." He migrated to Reno where the law gave stability to gaming.

In 1957 he opened a bingo game and within a few years became one of the top operators on "Casino Row." But it was in 1955, when he set up shop at Lake Tahoe, that business really boomed. Lake Tahoe had been a resort area since the days of the Comstock lode at Virginia city, but most business operated only during the summer. Harrah noted the seasonal operations did well and seized the opportunity

to buy one which nestled against the California border, only a short drive from the heavily populated San Francisco Bay area. He applied Reno-style operating methods to his new enterprise which in 1958 expanded into a new complex he proudly calls the finest and most luxurious casino in the world.

"We had no idea of getting as big as we are," Harrah says. "We got lucky once in a while." There was business acumen, too. Harrah's snowplows cleared the roads winding through the High Sierra. He chartered fleets of buses to bring customers, virtually free, from coastal areas. His huge theater-restaurant featured top names in show business, and his casino lounge staged round-the-clock entertainment.

Plans Hotel  
Harrah recently announced plans to build a 23-story hotel adjacent to his present plant. Others are expanding or building new operations, and the once-sleepy south shore is becoming one of the country's most popular pleasure spots.

Harrah's love of mechanics has been turned into a promotional tool. "I was always interested in anything that moved, and if it moved fast, so much the better," he says. He hurls his sleek Ferrari at breath-taking speeds over the mountain highway between Reno and Lake Tahoe. He enters a Ferrari in various racing events and his driver was undefeated last season. He sponsors the \$25,000 Tahoe Unlimited Hydroplane Regatta and his entry, Tahoe Miss, which was built in his own shops, is a strong contender for national honors. He also sponsors a highly rated amateur golf tournament.

Harrah's pride and joy, however, is his \$4 million collection of early American and foreign cars. It contains some 300 rare or unusual automobiles, many of which have been restored exactly to their original lustre and beauty in his shops. He is an expert in this field and can cite specifications of every car in his collection. His decision to

buy a certain car is based on what it represents to him, classic styling features, or some unique engineering feat. The auto collection is so popular with visitors he intends to move it to a better location here and make it the center of a "big Disneyland-type complex."

Harrah has spent a fortune on research to determine how to attract customers and make them return. They are treated to neat attention - getting gimmicks such as colorfully uniformed, white-gloved janitors sweeping up litter or wiping smudges from gleaming slot machines. In Reno, a plush carpeted pathway spans an alley between his two casinos. Air curtains replace conventional doors, and passers by can hear the click of silver dollars, the clatter of slot machines and the dice dealers crying "It's a winner."

"People generally are good and they gamble for the fun of it," he said. "I would say 99.9 per cent of them don't figure to win, but they want a good time and hope they'll get lucky and pay for their trip."

"It isn't fun to lose too much, though, and everyone should adjust himself to his own level of what he can afford to spend." Harrah is a conservative, compared with some "high roller" gamblers operators who wager many thousands of dollars with each other. "Once or twice a year I'll visit a casino and risk \$500 or \$1,000 before the show, and maybe that much afterward." Harrah is "absolutely certain" his operation is the best in Nevada, but doubts it will ever be just what he wants. "I'm very happy with myself, but I am disappointed because I never seem to have things exactly the way I like," he says. "I'll think of something that should be done, and it is. But then something else comes along. There's always something else I want to do and I never seem to catch up." "But I did, I would be disappointed, too. There would be nothing to look forward to."



SHOW HALTED—During the past six weeks black bears have visited the home of Forest Ranger Earl Casher, who puts feed out for them. Because of a drought bears have had slim pickings in their natural state. The animal show which nightly drew

crowds near State College, Pa., had to be halted because Casher feared someone would break through the clothesline barrier and be injured by the animals. (UPI)

WEEK END AT DAVID  
WASHINGTON (UPI)—President Kennedy intends to spend the week end at Camp David, Md. The White House said Wednesday the Chief Executive expected to fly to the secluded camp in the Catoctin mountains Saturday afternoon and return to Washington Monday morning.

## Gas Pipeline Near Completion in Area

Construction of the natural gas pipeline connecting Grants Pass, Medford and Ashland by California-Pacific Utilities company has been practically completed, according to V. V. Lyman, division manager. "While waiting for El Paso Natural Gas company to complete the natural gas main transmission line from Eugene to Roseburg and Grants Pass, our contractors are proceeding with the job of cleaning up the

rights-of-way as soon as possible," Lyman said. "Barring a diverse weather conditions, it is expected that El Paso Natural Gas company will complete its part of the project in time to bring natural gas into Roseburg during the middle of October and into the Rogue valley the first week in December," the manager pointed out. "The number of large industrial firms in the southern Ore-

gon area that have made arrangements to convert to natural gas just as soon as it is available far exceeds our original estimates," Lyman said. "The savings to be enjoyed by the firms using natural gas will place them in a much more competitive position to secure additional business from more distant customers and the end result should be a bolster to the economy of the whole area in general," he said.

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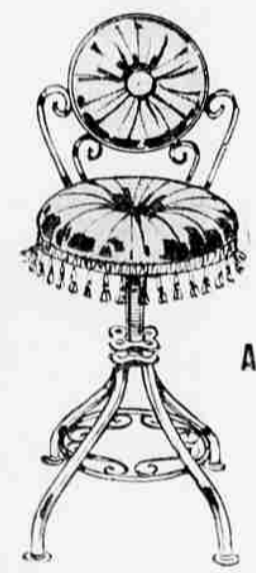
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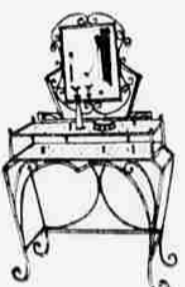
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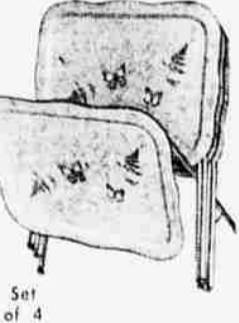
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