

Casino cheats used hi-tech scam

London (Reuters) – Two men and a woman were sentenced on Monday after pleading guilty to trying to defraud a casino using what police said was a scam they had not seen before in Britain.

The sting, which involved micro-cameras and earpieces, netted the gang 250,000 pounds.

Two members of the gang, a man and a woman, would sit down at a table and play three-card poker. One would use a micro-camera pointed towards the croupier that was secured to the inside of his forearm under his sleeve.

The footage from the camera was beamed via a transmitter, attached to the man's middle by a support belt, into a computer monitor in a nearby van.

The monitor was viewed by a third person who instructed the players, who were wearing hidden earpieces, whether to bet or not.

The van had two monitors, the first had a live feed and showed the action in real time. This was then copied and a second monitor was used to slow the footage down to review the cards dealt by the croupier.

At least six casinos were believed to have been targeted in the London area over a period of many months.

Yau Yiu Lam, 45, of Edgware, was jailed for nine months at Southwark Crown Court.

Fan Leung Tsang, 41, from Paddington and Bit Chai Wong, 39, of Swiss Cottage were given nine-month suspended sentences and 150 hours community service. All were banned from casinos.

They had pleaded guilty at a hearing last month to one count of cheating, breaching the Gambling Act 1845.

Casino security staff became suspicious when a small white Ford van was spotted on a number of occasions close to other casinos in the weeks before the gang were arrested.

Security staff called police and the Metropolitan Police's Gaming Unit started their investigation.

Wong's success became too conspicuous to security staff when in one week she turned 31,000 into 69,000 pounds. This was also passed onto the Gaming Unit who focused their investigation on her.

Police believe the men were the technical brains behind the operation and the woman's role was as an established player who was a trusted face in casino circles.

On the night they were arrested, the gang made over 3,500 pounds in 50 minutes at just one casino.

„These three people executed a sophisticated system that allowed them to cheat at least one casino out of a significant amount of money,“ said Detective Inspector Darren Warner, in charge of the Met's Gaming Unit.

„The unit believes the method was the first of its kind to be found used in the UK.“