

Return to the [referring page](#).

Las Vegas SUN

November 05, 2004

Gambler wins \$400,000 verdict in suit against Imperial Palace

By Alana Roberts <alana.roberts@lasvegassun.com>

LAS VEGAS SUN

Clark County District Judge Lee Gates has unsealed a \$400,000 verdict a jury made in favor of advantage gambler James Grosjean against the Imperial Palace in a wrongful imprisonment suit.

The jury awarded him \$99,990 in actual damages on Oct. 22 and \$500,000 in punitive damages on Nov. 1, which was capped by law at \$300,000, netting him almost \$400,000, Grosjean's attorney Bob Nersesian said. Grosjean filed the lawsuit in November of 2001 against the Imperial Palace, Caesars Palace and security company Griffin Investigations Inc. The case was later divided into two separate cases.

Jackie Brett, an Imperial Palace spokeswoman, declined to comment on the verdict.

The jury decision refers to a February 2001 incident at the Imperial Palace where Grosjean was stopped, handcuffed and detained by Imperial Palace security officials for 47 minutes, but not for advantage gambling.

Advantage gambling is when a person plays casino games with an upper hand against the casino, such as by card counting.

The security officials acted after a Nevada Gaming Control Board agent allegedly called the security officials and gave them the description of Grosjean and a man they were following who was with Grosjean, Nersesian said. The Control Board agent allegedly told the Imperial Palace security officials to contact him if they saw either man.

Instead the security officials detained Grosjean. After calling the Control Board agent -- who allegedly told them to let him go -- the security officials allegedly asked personal information of Grosjean before releasing him, Nersesian said.

Nersesian called the actions by the Imperial Palace's security officials shameful.

The Caesars Palace portion of the case, which alleges Grosjean and Michael Russo were wrongfully accused of cheating and were improperly arrested is pending in Clark County District Court. No charges were ever filed against the two. The Caesars Palace incident took place in April 2000.

Another portion of the case involving two Control Board agents in the Imperial Palace case and another two agents in the Caesars Palace case is pending before the Nevada Supreme Court.

The Control Board agents in both cases were dismissed as defendants by Gates, who ruled they were immune because they were performing their jobs. The Nevada Supreme Court will ultimately decide whether Control Board agents are immune from litigation. Nevada Gaming Control Board Chairman Dennis Neilander could not be reached for comment this morning.

Nersesian said the cases are helping to eliminate abusive practices by Las Vegas casinos of advantage gamblers.

"Historically in this community, casinos have handcuffed and taken (advantage gamblers) to the back room and that's false imprisonment, but the system has turned a blind eye to it for decades. The history is being changed. There are policy manuals that have changed in casinos. The policies say nobody goes to the back room without probable cause," Nersesian said.

Return to the [referring page](#).

[Las Vegas SUN main page](#)

Questions or problems? [Click here](#).

All contents copyright 2005 Las Vegas SUN, Inc.