

# Harrah's still interested in Rank

US gambling giant Harrah's Entertainment could be about to take another run at getting in on the action in the UK. The Nevada-based firm made an unsuccessful attempt last month to purchase a 28 percent slice of UK gambling group Rank.

Rank subsequently sold around 18 percent of its business to Malaysian gambling firm Genting and British property group Richardson Capital. However, Telegraph newspaper is reporting that Harrah's has appointed advisers to "explore strategic options in the European gambling market" including a potential bid for UK land and online casino and bingo group Rank.

Harrah's already owns London Clubs International (LCI), a UK casino operator and has appointed Morgan Stanley and Rank's former broker, Deutsche Bank, to review its European options.

Rank is currently valued at just short of USD 700 million and rejected the earlier offer from Harrah's along with a bid for its bingo operations from Duke Street Capital. Harrah's had proposed injecting the majority of LCI's casinos into Rank in return for a stake of around 28 percent in the combined group.

„Whatever happens, this is the beginning of the end for Rank,“ one analyst is quoted by The Telegraph.

Morgan Stanley and Deutsche Bank's remit extends to examining opportunities if the Government reintroduces legislation for an additional 16 casinos in Britain with the two banks also reviewing opportunities for Harrah's in mainland Europe.