

Mississippi casino, slot player argue over USD 1 million jackpot

Jackson, Mississippi – A Mississippi woman thought she had won a slot machine jackpot when a display lit up USD 1 million, but the casino says the maximum payout was clearly posted: USD 8,000.

Florida Eash, of Biloxi, took her fight over the jackpot amount to the state Supreme Court on Wednesday, arguing that she won USD 1 million. Attorneys for IP Casino said a programming mistake caused the machine to register an erroneous USD 1 million jackpot.

Eash was playing a USD 5 Double Top Dollar machine on Feb. 19, 2006, when she hit a jackpot. A display informed her she had won USD 1 million, according to court records, and the machine also sent a signal to the casino's slot accounting system indicating a USD 1 million progressive jackpot was pending.

The Mississippi Gaming Commission found that Eash should get USD 1 million, but a judge later ruled for the casino.

„When a patron sits down to play a slot machine, such as the slot machine at issue, and looks at the payout schedule of that machine, the patron cannot expect the recovery of anything other than what it shows at that time on the faceplate of the machine,“ Circuit Judge Roger Clark said in his ruling.

Scott E. Andress, an attorney representing IP Casino, said the Gaming Commission ignored its rulings in previous jackpot disputes that only posted maximum jackpots are to be paid.

„Nowhere did she see she could win more than USD 8,000 when

she walked up to that machine," Andress said. He said the Gaming Commission has never ruled that human error entitled a player to a jackpot.

Eash attorney Paul M. Newton said each dispute must be judged on its own merits.

„The casino was sloppy in its operation and that takes us into another area. That the casino has made an error means a different decision may arise," Newton said.

Eash has not collected any money so far.

The state Supreme Court did not immediately issue a decision.