

# The Sydney Morning Herald

## THE DIARY

### BASTARD A HIT

It may be hard times for the theatre in Sydney, but *Lying Cheating Bastards*, a one-man show at Old Fitzroy Hotel in Woolloomooloo, is packing them in.

The play, a story of redemption by pack of cards, began incongruously enough at sea when the director and co-writer **Nicholas Hammond** met **James Galea**, a Sydney actor-cum-magician who was performing song and dance and legerdemain on a cruise ship off Hawaii.

Hammond, a veteran writer and actor, turned Galea's life story into a take on Sydney's seedy gambling underbelly. "I always win," Galea's character tells audiences while he deploys shyster card tricks and the shell game. "I never go against the percentages, I control the

variables and I don't leave anything to chance. Oh yeah, and I cheat."

Those who have gone to Woolloomooloo to see it include the film director **Bruce Beresford**, the playwright **David Williamson**, the writer **Helen Garner** and the TV producer **Peter Faiman**.