

Card Player THE POKER AUTHORITY

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CHAMPION



'GAMBLEDORE' STUNS HIGH ROLLERS AT TRITON MONTE CARLO

Patrik Antonius And Bryn Kenney Score Massive Wins

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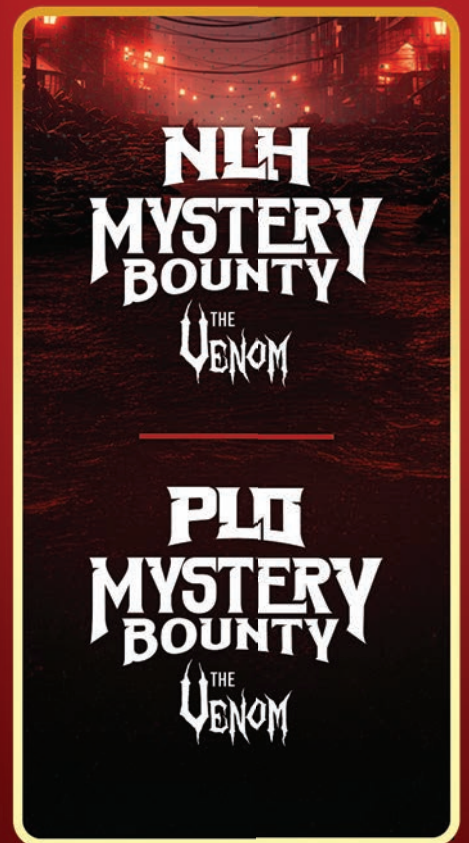
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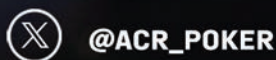
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FEBRUARY 11-20

DATE	START TIME	EVENT	BUY-IN	FEE (ON-TIME)	FEE (LATE/REENTRY)	LEVEL LENGTH
2/11	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$5K	\$100	\$300	30 MINS
2/12	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$10K	\$100	\$500	40 MINS
2/13	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$10K	\$100	\$500	40 MINS
2/14	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$10K	\$100	\$500	40 MINS
2/15	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$10K	\$100	\$500	40 MINS
2/17	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$15K	\$100	\$700	40 MINS
2/18	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$15K	\$100	\$700	40 MINS
2/19	2 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$25K	\$200	\$1,000	45 MINS

SATELLITE

2/10 1 PM \$560 NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM → POKERGO CUP EVENT #1

THE PLAYER THAT EARNS THE MOST PGT POINTS AT THE POKERGO CUP WILL WIN A \$25K PGT PASSPORT™ AND THE POKERGO CUP



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DATE	START TIME	EVENT	BUY-IN	FEE (ON-TIME)	FEE (LATE/REENTRY)	LEVEL LENGTH
4/8	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$5k	\$100	\$300	30 MINS
4/9	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$10K	\$100	\$500	40 MINS
4/10	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$10K	\$100	\$500	40 MINS
4/11	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$10K	\$100	\$500	40 MINS
4/12	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$10K	\$100	\$500	40 MINS
4/14	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$15K	\$100	\$700	40 MINS
4/15	12 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$15K	\$100	\$700	40 MINS
4/16	2 PM	NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM	\$25K	\$200	\$1,000	45 MINS

SATELLITE

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NEWS FROM THE GAMBLING WORLD

MARIA HO WINS CELEBRITY POKER TOUR CHAMPIONSHIP FOR HER SECOND CPT TITLE

By Erik Fast



Maria Ho is the star that shined brightest at the latest *Celebrity Poker Tour* event held inside the PokerGO Studio. The poker pro bested a 59-entry field at ARIA Resort & Casino Las Vegas to earn \$50,000 and her second *CPT* title of the year.

Ho had previously taken down the *CPT Game Night I* back in March. She now holds the distinction of being the tour's first-ever two-time champion.

The 41-year-old Women In Poker Hall of Fame member has more than \$4.7 million in career tournament earnings, putting her well ahead of most of the field when it comes to poker experience and accomplishments. She was squaring off against an assortment of celebrities, ranging from TV stars to professional athletes to online influencers.

Among those in the final category was Sofie Dossi, a YouTube star and contortionist who made headlines for her grand entrance in an earlier *CPT* event that saw her arrive at her seat folded up inside a small box. Dossi went on to finish third this time around, earning \$10,000 for her efforts.

Dossi got all-in with $A\spadesuit J\heartsuit$ leading the $K\spadesuit 3\heartsuit$ of Ho, who had shoved from the small blind. Dossi called off and flopped the nuts after the $K\diamondsuit Q\spadesuit 10\diamondsuit$ rolled the deck. She was a more than a 96% favorite to win the hand at that point according to *Card Player's* Poker Odds Calculator, but incredibly did not. The turn brought the $Q\clubsuit$ and the river the $Q\heartsuit$ to give Ho a running full house and the pot.

Ho held a gigantic 37:1 heads-up chip lead over Brian Quinn of the long-running *Impractical Jokers* television series. It didn't long for her to convert that advantage into the title.

Quinn managed a double up, but was soon all-in again with 4-2 trailing A-K suited for Ho. She flopped kings and nines and held from there to close out the victory. Quinn walked away with \$20,000 as the runner-up.

Other notables who participated in this event included gaming star and recent *Card Player Magazine* cover subject Tyler 'Ninja' Blevins, former NBA players Mario Chalmers and Mike Bibby, *CPT* champion Princess Love, chess streamer and burgeoning poker player Alexandra Botez, former MLB star Jose Canseco, and former NFL players Adrian Peterson and Hayes Pullard.

Peterson made it down to the final half dozen players before being sent packing with \$3,500 for a sixth-place showing, while Pullard one-upped him in fifth place for \$4,000. ♠



WOLFGANG POKER VLOG TOPS 1 BILLION VIEWS ON YOUTUBE

By Sean Chaffin

Popular YouTube poker vlogger Alexander Seibt recently announced that his “Wolfgang Poker” channel has reached 1 billion views.

After reaching the one million subscriber mark in November 2023, he now has topped 1.5 million and reached the billion-views milestone via 759 videos. Wolfgang has gained traction over the last few years by not only utilizing the shorts feature for quick hand breakdowns, but also by mixing in some travel, his love of college sports, and occasionally jumping in viewers’ home games.

In a wide-ranging interview with *Card Player* last year, Seibt detailed the entire process that goes into making a video for his YouTube channel.

“It’s almost as if you’re making a documentary every time you play,” he said. “The regular player just goes to the casino, pulls out their chips, puts them on the table, and just plays. But for me, there are so many extra steps.”

That includes taking notes while playing to document a big hand properly for the video. He also films his play as well as intros, outros, and B-roll footage. Afterward, Seibt sends the footage to a full-time salaried editor. He then reviews the final product and adds in voice-over and sound effects along with some other finishing touches.



The attention to detail and playing in lower-stakes games has proven successful.

Seibt credits the use of YouTube shorts as another key to his popularity. Shorts are quick and to-the-point, checking in around a minute, with on-screen graphics easily allowing viewers to follow the action.

“YouTube has been rewarding people for posting shorts because everyone’s attention span has unfortunately gone down because of the amount of things you can consume,” he says. “So, one-minute videos have become the next wave and I was a

pioneer in that aspect.”

Now with a billion views and 1.5 million subscribers, Wolfgang Poker leads the pack among poker vloggers, but there are some that are getting close to the seven-figure mark.

Daniel Negreanu now has 865,000 subscribers and 151 million views thanks to his summer *WSOP* vlogs, online streaming, and the launch of his new podcast. Meanwhile *WPT* ambassador Brad Owen has slightly fewer subscribers with 757,000, but has more views with 200 million.

Other active notables with big followings include Doug Polk, Andrew Neeme, Ethan ‘Rampage’ Yau, Mariano Grandoli, Ryan DePaulo, Lexy Gavin-Mather, Jaman Burton, Ben Deach, Lex Ozias, Marle Cordeiro, Greg Liow, Tim Watts, and Jeff Boski. ♠

MIKE TYSON – JAKE PAUL FIGHT DRAWS RECORD BETTING NUMBERS

By Sean Chaffin

While many viewers experienced stream buffering and the in-ring action proved less than stellar, November’s boxing match between Mike Tyson and Jake Paul drew record fight sports betting numbers, according to reports.

A representative with BetMGM told the *New York Post* that the matchup produced the highest betting numbers for any fight in history, including UFC fight cards. The eight-round “battle” that saw Paul triumph in a decision drew four times more money wagered than the next highest fight, according to BetMGM.

Apparently, much of that money was placed on Tyson.

“Paul winning was a good outcome for the sportsbook,” BetMGM senior trader Alex Rella said.

The most popular wager was Tyson to win by knockout or disqualification at +250. That was followed by Tyson taking the win by decision at +1100 and Tyson winning in the first round was the third most popular bet at 14/1.

The Netflix fight drew 60 million households who checked out the action – or lack thereof. However, the event was marred by technical issues and complaints on social media from viewers around the world who experienced repeated buffering and outages, necessitating restarting the application numerous times.

That has led to some concerns that the platform may not



quite be ready for primetime when it comes to airing major live sporting events. The platform will be home to a pair of exclusive NFL games on Christmas Day. But an NFL representative told Front Office Sports that the league has faith that Netflix will iron out any issues when the action kicks off on Dec. 25.

Netflix CTO Elizabeth Stone said in a company memo that the company will learn from the experience and fine-tune its technical strategy for future live events.

“This unprecedented scale created many technical challenges, which the launch team tackled brilliantly by prioritizing stability of the stream for the majority of viewers,” Stone noted. “We don’t want to dismiss the poor experience of some members, and know we have room for improvement, but still consider this event a huge success.” ♠

GGPoker Makes High-Stakes Games Invitation Only

By Card Player News Team

Looking for some high-stakes cash game action at GGPoker? It will help to know someone, according to reports.

The online poker site, which recently completed a purchase of the *WSOP*, has decided that all games above \$10-\$20 will now be run by private hosts and are invitation-only affairs. Players must now first contact a host to be approved and seated in one of the games.

Why would an online site want to limit who plays in their biggest games? It's the same reason why high-stakes live games have become more privatized in recent years. Simply put, the sharks eat the fish, and when there too many sharks, the fish get eaten too quickly. And the feeding frenzy gets amplified when you replace the fish with a whale.

When professionals are lining up to play against certain wealthy, high-stakes amateurs, it can often be bad for the game. And if the game is bad, it doesn't run. And if the game isn't running, the operator isn't happy.

A GGPoker representative has stated that the change came at the request of high-stakes players, however the move was not received well by others. Posters at the TwoPlusTwo forums said that GG is acting as a monopoly by limiting the opportunities for anyone to play at higher stakes.

"Now they are making a shift to not even allow the regs a



chance in the first place, funneling any pros who still want to or are forced to play on their site into lower stakes that are raked even more and being able to have full control over recreational play-

ers on their site and where their money goes," one TwoPlusTwo member noted.

"Effectively it kills the dream people have of watching high-stakes regs battling it out for tons of money hoping to end up in their shoes one day – the same route live poker has taken, making all high-stakes, public games practically obsolete, letting a small amount of people who control the game collect all the money off recreationals they recruit into their closed doors environments."

Some of the games now offered will even require players to VPIP (voluntarily put in pot) at a high enough rate or face a ban. Other games will force tighter players (nits) to pay a penalty for failing to win a pot.

Another player echoed the words of others by pointing out that players must now know someone or be a nice "fit" to get in a game.

"Quite sad, online poker used to be the real meritocracy," the player noted on Twitter. "If you thought you were the best, you could sit in the lobby vs. the best at the highest stakes. Now it will be live poker style politics." ♠

U.S. GAMING INDUSTRY SETS THIRD QUARTER RECORD WITH \$17.7 BILLION IN REVENUE

By Card Player News Team

After a record second quarter for the U.S. commercial gaming industry, the third quarter continued the trend with revenue reaching a total of \$17.71 billion. That was the industry's highest-grossing third quarter on record, according to the American Gaming Association (AGA).

This achievement marked the industry's 15th consecutive quarter of annual revenue growth, with September marking the 43rd straight month of rising year-over-year revenue. Sports wagering and iGaming remain major contributors to that growth, with online gaming revenue in New Jersey even topping live casino revenue for the first time in October.

"Q3 2024 continued gaming's momentum from the first half of the year, with online casino and sports betting driving strong growth," AGA Vice President of Research David Forman said. "At the same time, new brick-and-mortar casino openings bolstered traditional gaming, which still accounts for the bulk of industry revenue. More than a quarter of commercial revenue now regularly comes from online sources, raising the importance of continued sustainable growth with consumers in those states."

Through the first nine months of the year, commercial gaming revenue stands at \$53.24 billion, an 8% increase from 2023 and setting the industry on track for a fourth straight record revenue year.

In the third quarter, 29 of the 35 operational commercial



gaming jurisdictions increased year-over-year revenue. This resulted in an 8.9% jump in state and local taxes tied directly to gaming revenue, with operators contributing \$3.79 billion in taxes across the quarter.

Quarterly revenue from land-based gaming reached \$12.56 billion, 0.62% lower than the same quarter last year. Combined revenue from online sports betting and iGaming totaled \$5.14 billion as online gaming made up 29% of overall gaming revenue, significantly higher than in the third quarter of 2023.

Traditional gaming – Brick-and-mortar casino gaming generated quarterly revenue of \$12.38 billion, a year-over-year contraction of 0.9%.

Legal sports betting – Americans wagered \$30.3 billion on sports, generating \$3.24 billion in quarterly revenue, up 42.4%. Recent market launches in Kentucky, Maine, North Carolina, and Vermont contributed to this growth.

iGaming – Online gaming generated \$2.08 billion, marking a 30.3% year-over-year increase. ♠

POKER RECOGNIZED BY MIND SPORTS ASSOCIATION

By Sean Chaffin

The game of poker has now been recognized by the International Mind Sports Association (IMSA), a Berlin-based group founded in 2005 to “unite different mind sports federations to pursue common aims and interests.”

For many poker players and fans, the recognition may seem a little late to the party considering the strategic decision making involved with the game. But the IMSA recognition adds the World Poker Federation to the association’s other recognized mind sports including chess, mahjong, esports, and other card games.

“With a strong network of federations across more than 49 countries, we have achieved something today that is both unprecedented and definitive,” WPF President Igor Trafane said. “IMSA’s decision represents the dedication of thousands who view poker as a genuine profession and intellectual discipline. Our mission now is to build the foundation that every major sport already has: standardized regulations, professional pathways, player protections, and international competitions.”



The effort to join IMSA began in December 2022, when the WPF was accepted as a provisional member. The IMSA now makes note of poker as a discipline combining intellect, strategic thinking, and decision-making under pressure.

WPF organizers believe IMSA membership will elevate the game, providing more recognition and opportunities for players on an expanded international stage. Additional stability and growth within the industry are also goals.

“Our focus is on building a true global sports structure for Poker,” federation CEO Leonardo Cavarge said. “The World Poker Federation was built on the belief that, by joining forces, we can amplify our impact and protect the game we love.” ♠

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

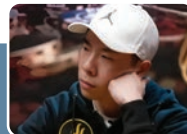
2024 Triton Super High Roller Series Monte Carlo
\$125,000 Main Event



Jonathan Jaffe
14,025,000 Chips



Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 60%
After Flop: 82%
After Turn: 89%



Wai Leong Chan
6,400,000 Chips



Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 39%
After Flop: 18%
After Turn: 11%

PREFLOP

With nine players remaining and blinds of 75,000-150,000 with a big blind ante of 150,000, Jonathan Jaffe raised to 325,000 from the hijack. Wai Leong Chan called from the big blind.

FLOP



Chan checked, and Jaffe bet 225,000. Chan called.

TURN



Both players checked.

RIVER



Chan bet 825,000, and Jaffe folded.

COMMENTARY:

With 159 entries, the 2024 Triton Poker Super High Roller Series Monte Carlo \$125,000 buy-in main event had just shy of \$19.9 million in prize money to pay out, with nearly \$15.2 million of that earmarked for the final nine. This hand occurred early at the final table, with the remaining contenders having locked up \$445,000. Of course, they all had their eyes on the title and the top prize of more than \$4.4 million. Jonathan Jaffe was the chip leader at the start of this deal, while Wai Leong Chan was the second-largest stack with fewer than half as many chips. Chan defended his big blind with a suited queen and flopped middle pair. Jaffe had nailed top pair, though, and led out for value when checked to. Chan check-called his pair of queens and the duo saw an ace hit the turn. Chan checked again, with two overcards to his queens now on board. Jaffe considered his options and ultimately decided against going for a second consecutive value bet, with his top pair having been demoted to second pair. The river brought another queen, improving Chan to trips. He fired a value bet of just a bit shy of two-thirds pot with his three queens. He was likely hoping to extract value from any A-X holdings that Jaffe might have, with some hero calls from K-X also possible. Jaffe’s K-7 was a pure bluff catcher by now, as there was essentially no chance that Chan could be value betting worse. Chan could have some missed flush draws and possibly unimproved gutshots like J-9. On the other hand, he could be value betting trips, a straight, or even perhaps A-X. Jaffe ultimately decided to fold, correctly getting away from what had become the second-best hand on the river.

NOTE: WINNING PERCENTAGES DO NOT INCLUDE TIES. ODDS PROVIDED BY [CARDPLAYER.COM/POKER-TOOLS/ODDS-CALCULATOR/TEXAS-HOLDEM](https://cardplayer.com/poker-tools/odds-calculator/texas-holdem)

RECENT BRACELET WINNER MARIA KONNIKOVA ON POKER, PENNING, AND PODCASTING

By Sean Chaffin



Best-selling author, podcast host, and now *World Series of Poker* bracelet winner – Maria Konnikova is on a roll.

The Russian-born, Massachusetts-raised Konnikova got her start as a TV producer for the *Charlie Rose Show* and as a writer for *Scientific American* while also regularly contributing to *The New Yorker*. The Harvard and Columbia educated Konnikova earned her Ph.D. in psychology and her books *Mastermind: How To Think Like Sherlock Holmes* and *The Confidence Game* frequented bestseller and award lists.

Konnikova's introduction to game theory sparked an interest in poker that led to tutoring from Poker Hall of Famer and 10-time bracelet winner Erik Seidel. By 2017 she had jumped into the game headfirst, and a year later she made headlines by winning a *PokerStars Caribbean Adventure* title.

A *PokerStars* ambassador role followed, along with more nice finishes. That included a runner-up showing on the *Asian Pacific Poker Tour* and multiple deep runs in the *WSOP* and *PCA* main events. Her 2020 book *The Biggest Bluff* chronicled her development as a player from beginner to high-stakes tournaments.

Her 2024 campaign has been her most successful, however, starting with a *WSOP Circuit* ring in January online for \$57,532. Then after cashing at *EPT Paris*, she finished second in an *EPT Monte Carlo* side event in May for another \$56,160. In September, she took fifth in the *EPT Barcelona* mystery bounty event, banking \$141,858.

A month later, Konnikova earned her first bracelet and \$68,478, taking down the \$888 buy-in *Crazy Eights* event online.

Most recently, she made a deep run in the *NAPT Las Vegas* main event at Resorts World, adding another \$39,550 to put her over \$1 million in career earnings. *Card Player* caught up with her at the November series to talk about her big year, dealing with criticism, cheating in the game, and balancing poker and podcasting.

Most wouldn't think that the New York literary scene is exactly a hub of poker interest, so Konnikova certainly stood out when she began finding card-playing success in 2018. But having a bestselling author certainly brought some added media attention to the game. Konnikova first became interested in poker and the mental aspects of the game while researching her 2016 book *The Confidence Game*.

Under the tutelage of Seidel, this writer-turned-poker-player was entering events after never having played the game before and having no real interest in card playing or casinos at all. But like many, Konnikova soon found the game engrossing from a mental standpoint – strategically and emotionally – and loved the challenges involved with making decisions, reading opponents, and competing with some of the best.

That included her recent online bracelet win, which came at a final table that included 2013 *WSOP* main event winner Ryan Riess, Women in Poker Hall of Famer Kathy Liebert, and poker podcaster Jeff Gross.

"It was pretty awesome," said Konnikova. "It's not something you can ever predict will happen. There are some incredible players who have never won a bracelet, so it was really very special to be able to achieve that."

Konnikova was playing the event from her apartment

“It’s not something you can ever predict will happen. There are some incredible players who have never won a bracelet, so it was really very special to be able to achieve that.”





in Nevada after having just flown in from New York. The experience was a bit surreal yet grueling after wrapping up the win at about 3:45 a.m.

“I was exhausted,” she recalled. “It’s one of those things where I was like, ‘Okay, just make it to the final table.’ And then I was like, ‘Okay, just make it to heads-up.’ And then I was like, ‘Okay, I really hope I can close it out because it would really suck to be heads-up and lose the bracelet.’ Then I won.”

“Everyone I knew was asleep except for my parents, who were on vacation in Paris, so they were actually up. They were really, really happy. My parents are so ridiculously supportive. Then I texted Erik Seidel so that he’d know, but he was sleeping.”

Her parents support her play, but Konnikova says they don’t really understand the poker scene quite yet. However, they have embraced the competition aspect and regularly follow along with Konnikova – win or lose.

“They love following. In fact, they follow it even after I bust. They’re like, ‘Oh, we’re rooting for the other Maria.’ I’m like, ‘No, after I bust the tournament is over. When I bust, you stop rooting,’” she says laughing. “But they’re allowed to root for the other Maria.”

There was no glass of champagne or victory cocktail after the win. Her husband was sleeping and she woke him up briefly to share the good news – but then told him to go back to sleep.

The victory was soured a bit, however, after Konnikova was criticized by *WSOP* commentator Norman Chad for utilizing the tournament’s re-entry option. Chad would later admit that his anger about the proliferation of re-entry tournaments was misplaced and expressed regret that “she was collateral damage.”

Looking back, Konnikova was still a bit baffled as to why Chad chose to use her as the target for his own beef about re-entry events. She also points out that his criticism focused on an event that didn’t actually allow for unlimited re-entries.

“Everyone re-enters,” she says. “And he’s like, ‘Well, I’m against unlimited reentry.’ I was like, ‘Dude, this was three re-entry max. This is not an unlimited re-entry event.’ The event that I final-tabled at *EPT Barcelona*, the mystery bounty where I got fifth, was unlimited re-entry but I only fired one bullet. I don’t make the rules. I think he singled me out, and whatever his motivation, the fact that he chose only the second female to win an open event in the last two years kind of says everything.”

Is winning a live bracelet next on her list?

“I’ll take another one online. I’ll take it live. I’ll take it with re-entries. I’ll take it in a freezeout. I’m not picky.”

Beyond poker, writing and media are still big parts of Konnikova’s life. She is currently writing a book about cheating and believes that poker faces some serious issues in this regard. The last couple years have seen poker pros accused of multi-accounting, use of real-time assistance (RTA), ghosting, and other forms of cheating online.

Other more high-tech cheating methods have also made news recently, including a major Siberian bot operation getting exposed and two men arrested in France for using tiny cameras hidden in their cell phones to track cards in live poker and blackjack games.

Konnikova is now committed to exposing cheaters and trying to root it out of the game as much as possible.

“There’s definitely cheating in poker, and I will not shy away from it because I think it’s so important for the integrity and the long-term future of the game to bring





bad actors out,” she says. “To be perfectly honest, I think there needs to be a zero-tolerance policy. It sucks that people like Ali Imsirovic, who’s a known cheater, is still allowed to play at the *WSOP*. What the actual fuck?”

Another medium is also occupying more of her time. In May, she and fellow poker player, writer, and founder of the *FiveThirtyEight* polling analysis site Nate Silver launched the *Risky Business* podcast from Malcolm Gladwell’s Pushkin Industries and iHeartMedia. The pair of poker enthusiasts have \$1.6 million in live tournament winnings between them, and the show focuses on the decision-making process involved with poker, politics, and other parts of life.

The experience has been a labor of love for Konnikova, even if playing in a poker tournament during an election presented some time-constraint issues that really required some juggling. (She even found the time to jump into commentary with Jeff Gross for the final table of the *GGPoker Super Million*.)

The 40-year-old credits her poker inner circle for helping to grasp the game at such a high level. Along with Seidel, some of her mentors and coaches include Phil Galfond, Nick Petrangelo, and Isaac Haxton. She is also a close friend of Farah Galfond.

“I’m very lucky that I have some incredible minds who are willing to share with me,” she says. “I think that’s so important. I don’t take it for granted.”

After a “soft launch” of the *NAPT* event in Las Vegas in 2023, PokerStars beefed up the schedule even more this year for the second trip to Resorts World. The PokerStars *Big Game* live cash game was also on the menu and

allowed players to audition for the show’s “loose cannons,” who are staked in a game against top pros and other celebrities, which included four-time Super Bowl champion Rob Gronkowski.

In the end, London’s Nick Marchington scored the win in the main event for \$765,200 topping a field of 895 entries. Konnikova was one of them, finishing 14th for \$39,550. Overall, she was pleased to not only be back on board as a PokerStars team pro, but also to generally see the brand bringing live events back to the U.S.

As a poker author and journalist, Konnikova is accustomed to asking questions and interviewing others. But now as a poker star in her own right, that dynamic has changed quite a bit. She now has to deal with regular interview requests, media appearances, social media videos, and other trappings that can come with being a brand representative.

As she continues her quest for more success in the game, what is it like seeing the tables turned and becoming the interview subject?

“You embrace it. Because I feel very strongly about being a good ambassador for poker, for women – but for the game much more broadly,” she says. “To me, it’s beyond gender. I think it’s just such an incredibly powerful force for good and I want people to see what poker actually is, as opposed to what people who don’t know much about it see it as being in the media. Even though I’m naturally introverted and would rather be kind of the one behind the scenes, I think it’s really important to speak out because I have a voice to do that.” ♠

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JEFF MADSEN STILL GETTING BETTER AFTER TWO DECADES IN THE GAME

By Craig Tapscott



Jeff Madsen launched his poker career in a way that players can only dream about. The then 21-year-old rolled into his first summer of action at the *World Series of Poker* and rattled off four top-three finishes, including two bracelets for nearly \$1.5 million along with the coveted Player of the Year award.

Almost 400 live tournament cashes later, the 39-year-old is still on the grind. He's since added two more bracelets and titles at the *Borgata Winter Open*, *California State Poker Championship*, and *L.A. Poker Classic*, and most recently took third in November's *NAPT Las Vegas* main event for \$341,750, bringing his career earnings to \$7.1 million.

Card Player caught up with Madsen to talk about a career that has seen plenty of ups, and a few downs, and why he finds himself in a good place heading into 2025.

Craig Tapscott: Fans and players haven't seen you competing for a while. What have you been up to over the last year or so?

Jeff Madsen: I didn't go into retirement, but I took some decent time off. Over the last year, I have just not played as much as usual. I've been working on getting life distractions out of the way and focused again.

CT: It certainly seemed like you were laser-focused at the final table of the *NAPT* main event.

JM: I was. I think everything kind of came together for this tournament. It helps that I was 100% in a good head space. It was the perfect time to manifest the deep run. I

definitely ran pretty well, too. But honestly, I played solidly and was super locked in.

CT: What was your biggest takeaway from the experience?

JM: I worked on my mindset. You have to be patient with your career and game. I've put in so much work in the last four or five years, so it's not surprising that it's begun to pay off. I'm getting some deep runs now and want to use it as a springboard to keep the momentum going.

I have nothing left to prove in my career. Do you know what I mean? Big scores are sometimes hard to come by for most players unless they are playing consistently in the high-roller events.

CT: How old were you when you first discovered poker?

JM: I started playing when I was 18 with my friends after we watched Chris MoneyMaker win the main event. It was the typical standard start to a poker career for kids around my age at the time.

I was always a gamer. We always played strategy video games, which translated well over to poker. I dedicated a lot of time during my first three years to reading a lot of books. I couldn't wait to turn 21, play the 2006 *WSOP* in Vegas, and take a shot.

CT: I recall that it was a fairytale start to your career.

JM: It truly was. My parents let me take some money from my college fund. (There was plenty of money in it. It wasn't like I couldn't go to college or anything if I lost it all.)

I brought \$10,000 to the series and planned to play six events. If I didn't cash in any of the six events, that was



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You have to be patient with your career and game. I've put in so much work in the last four or five years, so it's not surprising that it's begun to pay off.





Madsen's 2006 Live Poker Debut

basically it. I think it was the second event where I got third for about \$100,000. I had never seen that amount of money in my entire life. I used those funds as a springboard. I was freerolling in my mind and playing everything in the series. I was playing super aggressively and doing my best to win a bracelet.

I had a sick run in the \$2,000 event with about 1,600 people. It was a huge tournament at the time. I was able to win that. Less than a week later I was deep in the \$5,000 six-max and ended up heads-up with Erick Lindgren for the win. I was lucky to take it down. My grandfather had passed away years earlier, but my grandma passed away the same day I won my second bracelet.

My parents were going through a lot, and I'd just won all this money. My grandparents helped me get to this point by allowing me to borrow this money. There was definitely a convergence there. It felt like a spiritual thing. I felt my grandmother's presence was there.

I told people the year before that I would win a *WSOP* bracelet. I was so confident about it. That was a big part of it for me in that heads-up battle. I wasn't nervous or anything. I'd already been crushing at the series and won a bracelet. That played a huge role in my momentum.

CT: Do you recall much from the experience?

JM: I remember that I didn't take my foot off the gas. I stayed aggressive. Erick told me after the match that I had played really well. He had a tough time with me because I was playing way more aggressively than most people were at the time.

It was a very different poker game back then. There were many more three-bets and four-bets, and barreling would work more often. I just got away with a lot more back then.

CT: You were pretty much an enigma to many of the established pros.

JM: Erick was a superstar in the game. But I had the advantage of watching so much poker those first few years. I knew a little about their games, but they knew nothing about mine. It's not like I had them solved or anything, but that was my advantage against pros at the time.

CT: What happened after that first year? You had a solid bankroll and a ton of confidence in your game.

JM: I was able to hop into all different types of events right away. But I also felt like dealing with so much early success sometimes created a huge hurdle for me. I was so young, learning how to live my life and deal with the ups and downs of the game. Of course, the ego aspect was present. Also, I was trying to know myself and establish myself in my career.

I was basically flat broke by 2009. I probably had less than \$50,000 to my name for a bankroll. I was having fun and partying a lot, spending money at clubs. Vegas can be an easy city to spend a lot of money in. A lot of young people in my position end up in jail or with a drug habit or something. I never really had any terrible vices, I just wanted to have fun.

I was gambling too much in the beginning, which was probably my first downfall. I played blackjack and big Chinese poker games with the Full Tilt guys. That wasn't the best thing to do at the time.

CT: Maybe some overconfidence, aka positive tilt?

JM: I'm sure. I was on a freeroll in my mind. I was crushing. So yeah, I'm sure I did a little less studying and more just playing. I was probably playing overly aggressive and trying a little too hard.

Beyond the positive tilt, I established this very high expectation of myself. I learned that if positive tilt goes unchecked, it leads to negative tilt. You've lost a lot of your bankroll. You're no longer feeling very confident.

It leads to more of a straightforward tilt where you're just like, 'Fuck, why haven't I been winning lately?' Then that kind of steamrolls. But honestly, lots of poker players deal with this. I dealt with it on a crazier scale because of my very successful first month in poker at the *WSOP*.

I have been a lot more grounded and very consistent since I won the *Borgata Winter Open* in 2010. I was always studying and working on my game. At the same time, I was creating a coaching business and loving the process. I learned so much from simply having to teach the game.

CT: Did you ever think about quitting poker and doing something else?

JM: Not really, because I always felt myself getting better. It was more along the lines of how I am going to manage my money and get back to dominance again.

CT: How do you approach strategy study when working with your students?

JM: I'm very well-versed in the solvers and GTO. You have to be in the modern age if you're teaching poker, but I'm not just teaching GTO. You need a GTO foundation to understand how to adjust your strategy and how to exploit opponents and understand where the exploits come from.

You don't know if they're exploitable if you don't understand what GTO is because GTO is unexploitable. Everyone's exploitable, right? No one's a robot.

CT: What is the next step after that for students?

JM: They must combine the study of GTO theory with the development of their natural instincts and exploitative strategies. You are also trying not to be exploitable simultaneously. It takes time for all of that to come together for any student of the game.

CT: It sounds like you are pleased with where you are at with your game and your life. That's a powerful place to be.

JM: I agree. It's been quite a journey over the past few years, but I feel I am the best player I've ever been right now.

Find Madsen on Twitter/X @JeffMadsenobv and reach him at JeffMadsenCoaching@gmail.com. ♠

TURNING \$40 INTO SIX FIGURES: CHINO RHEEM TALKS DEGEN BEGINNINGS

Four-Time Bracelet And Three-Time WPT Champ Joins The Table 1 Podcast

By Art Parmann and Justin Young



David ‘Chino’ Rheem has seen the highest of highs and the lowest of lows during his poker and gambling career, but one thing’s for sure, he’s always in action. It started with a fake ID to get into the local tribal casinos in South Florida at age 17 and his taste for high stakes only grew after winning six figures at the Pai Gow tables on his first trip to Las Vegas. (He’d never even heard of the game before that night.)

Beyond poker and casinos, a run-in with the law as a teenager resulted in a two-week stint in an Atlanta jail cell after getting busted trying to smuggle weed back from Germany. He chalked it up to a learning experience, ultimately finding the poker world and routinely finding himself at the end of some of the biggest tournaments held over the last two decades.

Rheem’s largest score remains the \$1,772,650 he pocketed for finishing seventh in the 2008 *WSOP* main event. He also won the 2019 *PokerStars Caribbean Adventure* main event for \$1,567,100, the 2008 *Five Diamond*

World Poker Classic for \$1,538,730, the 2013 *Five Star World Poker Classic* for \$1,150,297, the 2011 *Epic Poker League* main event for \$1,000,000, and the 2016 *Hard Rock Poker Showdown* for \$705,885. In short, he’s a closer, and it has resulted in more than \$15 million in recorded earnings.

The 44-year-old recently joined the *Table 1 Podcast* to talk about his life at the table and beyond. Check out some of the highlights below or watch or listen to the full episode on YouTube, Spotify, Apple, or any podcast app.

Art Parmann: You once told me a funny story about coming back from Germany. Do you want to tell that one?

Chino Rheem: I was 18 years old and had just graduated high school. My dad said, ‘You have two choices. You can either go to college or come work in the restaurant in Germany.’

The guy who I call my uncle, because I’ve known him my whole life, he was my dad’s closest friend... they opened a sushi restaurant in Frankfurt. So, I said, ‘Let’s go to

Germany,’ and I lived there for six months when I was 18 and I loved it. It was the best decision I could have ever made. It opened my eyes to the world, and I learned a little German and got to see what was out there besides what I already knew.

And when the six months were over, and my dad had paid me and everything, he said, ‘Good job. I’m proud of you. You worked hard. What do you want to do?’



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I was a pothead. I was a stoner back then. Obviously, I wanted to go to Amsterdam. He said, 'Okay, you can go, but you've got to bring your stepmother with you.' Sure, no problem. She was cool.

We took a train to Amsterdam, and right when we left the station, the first thing I wanted to do was go to a coffee shop. They had a coffee shop literally on that strip when you leave the station by all those souvenir stores.

Justin Young: I actually just got back from Frankfurt and Amsterdam. I know exactly what you're talking about – the little red light district area.

Chino Rheem: I went straight into that coffee shop, and it had all the little weed. They're like, 'This is Jack Herer, and this is Bubble Gum, and this is that.' And I'm like, 'They do not have this in America. I am going to be the man. I'm coming back with the best weed.'

I literally bought an ounce of all different types of weed, and then we took the train ride back. My stepmom, she was cool. I smoked a joint there, whatever. She wasn't tripping. We take the train ride back to Germany. I have no idea what I'm doing. I wrap this ounce up in saran wrap and coffee beans, right?

But you could still smell it, and I could still smell it. We flew into Atlanta, we didn't fly into Miami. We had this woman sitting in the middle of me and my mom. And the whole 10-hour flight this lady's like, 'I smell something, do you guys?' And I'm just like, 'I don't know what it is.' And my stepmom is like, 'Yeah, I don't know what it is.'

I just kept trying to play it off, but it was literally in my nutsack. I didn't know where to put it. That's how naive and stupid I was.

Art Parmann: No one's going to touch there (laughing).

Chino Rheem: Now we land, and every person who flies international back then goes down these two escalators four stories high, so they take like three minutes to get down. At the bottom of the escalators are airport security with dogs – and I'm just freaking out.

Every person that gets to the bottom of the escalator, a dog sniffs them. Quick sniff and you walk by. I'm fucked. There's like 10 airport security guys. They're just talking. There's no way I could toss this over. They're just going to see it. There's another guy with a dog. I don't know what to do.

My stepmom is in front of me. She goes – little, sniff, sniff – she walks right by. Now it's my turn. Sniff, sniff, and all I hear is, 'Excuse me' and I just keep walking. I hear 'Excuse me,' again and this dog is fucking going rampant on my nutsack. Finally, I feel a hand on my shoulder, saying, 'Excuse me' and the guy stopped me. He's like, 'Can you just stand there, sir?' And the dog's just fucking going nuts and I'm dead.

He takes me in the office. Obviously, I get caught. He finds the weed and I got arrested. I thought I was going to be a slick little teenager and get away with it, and it was the dumbest thing I could have done.

One of the guys, I remember when he pulled it out because I had some prerolled joints – he's like, 'Bob, this right here is the best that I've ever smelled.' It was literally just like that. He's just talking to his other guy, 'Some good stuff right here.' He didn't even fill out paperwork. He just stuck it in his desk drawer. Then there was a sign on the door, 'If you pay a \$2,000 fine, you'll be released.'

I had \$8,000 dollars on my person. I was like, 'Okay, I'd like to pay it.' They're like, 'You can't pay it because you're



the detainee. You're being arrested.' I was like, 'Okay, my stepmom will pay it.' She goes, 'No, I won't. You can arrest him.' She was so cheap.

I was in shock. I couldn't believe it. I shouldn't admit this now, but at that time I had a genuine full-on hatred for my stepmother after that moment.

Justin Young: You're 18, your emotions got the best of you. You think you have an out for the worst thing you've ever done... and there are no outs.

Chino Rheem: Yes, and no outs.

Art Parmann: You literally, ultimately, got grounded by her.

Chino Rheem: I was in Fulton County jail for two weeks.

After moving more into poker in the coming years, Rheem began winning some tournaments despite his inexperience. He was determined to become a poker pro and began traveling with Robert and Michael Mizrachi. He credits Robert specifically with teaching him how to be a better player. After winning \$11,000 in an \$11 tournament online, Rheem jumped in a \$100-\$200 cash game to try and build his bankroll even more.

Chino Rheem: I got lucky. I ran good and I cashed money out. I had a \$20,000 bankroll to go to Bellagio (age 21 at the time). Now, I have no fucking idea what Pai Gow poker is. I've never heard of Pai Gow poker in my life.

Art Parmann: But you're a poker player. (laughing)

Chino Rheem: We are not even up in our rooms yet. Our bags are not even our room. We stop at the Pai Gow table, and it's \$25 a hand minimum. The dealer by the way, who gave me this run, still works at Bellagio.

I pull out 40 fucking dollars. I'm a nit, guys. It's \$25

minimum and you could bet the bonus. I bet \$25 and \$5 and next thing I know, I hit four aces. I get \$1,000 or something, and I have a yellow chip. I put that yellow chip in my pocket, and I'm up \$960 and I'm fucking ecstatic. But I have the little blacks and greens (chips). I still have like \$400 and I have no idea what came over me, but I'm like, 'Rob, this fucking game is cool. You never lose – two here, five here, let's go.' I'm just like, 'How much can you bet?'

'You can bet up to \$10,000.' I said, 'Rob, I'm just going to keep going until I lose.' Something came over me. I'm only playing one hand at a time, and now I have like three yellows. I bet a yellow, it wins. So I said, 'Fuck it, let's just keep going.' Next thing I know I have \$12,000 in front of me.

'Rob, this is the easiest fucking game in the world. How do people not fucking play this all day?'

I bet the max – I win. I said, 'How many hands can I play?' Two. I bet two hands. I bet \$10,000 max – I win. Rob's like, 'Oh my god, let's go.' I was like, 'Rob, fuck that. When I get scooped, I'll go. Next thing I know, I'm up \$140,000.

Art Parmann: You're up \$140,000? Oh my gosh.

Chino Rheem: This sounds like a really cool story, but it was the worst fucking thing that could ever happen to me. That was the start of Chino's degeneracy. Let's just put it like that.

So now the pit boss is coming up to me and he's like, 'Mr. Rheem, we would like to upgrade you to a suite. We've got this nice penthouse, three-bedroom suite for you guys.' We had a regular fucking room before, now they upgrade us. Finally, I got scooped. I won over \$100,000 and I was ecstatic.

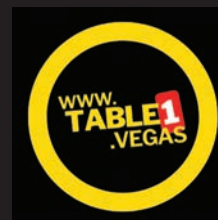
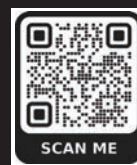


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“This is the easiest fucking game in the world. How do people not fucking play this all day? Three weeks later, I come back. I don’t even get up to my room and within five hands \$50,000 is gone.”



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This was our first time in Vegas. You know the little skinny vans [advertising] the number for the girls? We’re doing it all. The girls came. I paid for everyone. I got hustled like two dimes. This is my first experience in Vegas, and I loved it and I had a great time.

Everything was comped. They wanted me to lose money back. I didn’t. Somehow, I left with that money. I couldn’t fucking wait to come back.

Three weeks later, me and Rob came back. I come with \$50,000. I don’t even get up to my room and within five hands that \$50,000 is gone. This all happened. It’s just a part of who I am. It made me who I am today.

Justin Young: There’s a pretty famous quote. ‘When it

comes to gambling, the best feeling is gambling and winning. The second-best feeling is gambling and losing.’ When you get the taste, all you want to do is be in the action. It doesn’t matter if you win or lose, it’s about the journey of the bet.

Chino Rheem: It’s so true.

About The Table 1 Podcast

Hosted by high-stakes poker pros Art Parmann and Justin Young, the Table 1 Podcast is on a mission to make poker fun again. Tune in to see world-class pro talk poker, gambling, and all manner of life experiences on and off the felt. Visit www.Table1.vegas for the podcast, newsletter, or even to get in the game. ♠

'GAMBLEDORE' STUNS HIGH ROLLERS AT TRITON MONTE CARLO

Patrik Antonius And Bryn Kenney Score Massive Wins

By Card Player News Team



The *Triton Poker Super High Roller Series* held its most recent stop in Monaco, with 14 events taking place inside Sporting Monte-Carlo. A staggering \$118.3 million in prize money was awarded throughout the series, putting the average prize pool at just shy of \$8.5 million. Every event awarded at least seven figures, with four eight-figure prize pools among them.

Patrik Antonius Earns Career-Best Score

While **Patrik Antonius** is a Poker Hall of Famer with \$29 million in career tournament earnings, along with millions more won online and in cash games, he had his hands full with a stacked final table in the \$200,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em invitational. Some of the world's best high-stakes crushers were on hand to battle Antonius for the \$5,130,000 first-place prize, but it was a complete unknown that ended up giving him the most trouble.

After three days of play, the field of 102 had been whittled down to just two, Antonius, and 69-year-old businessman and poker novice Vladimir Korzinin. The Estonian, who admitted on the live stream that he didn't "know how to play," became a viewer favorite for his wild and unconventional decisions and was even dubbed 'Gambledore' by those in the chat for his bearded resemblance to the *Harry Potter* character.

Korzinin had Antonius on the ropes at one point, and

would have won the tournament had he found a hero call during heads-up play, but Antonius was able to fight back for the title and the \$5.13 million payout.

"Obviously, it feels really special at home," said the Finnish pro, who has lived in Monaco for more than a decade. "A bit surreal. It was not easy today."

Although Antonius normally focuses on cash games, it's been a great year on the high roller circuit for the 43-year-old former model and tennis standout. In March, he took fourth in the *Triton Jeju* \$100,000 event for \$1.7 million, and then in April, he returned home to win the €100,000 *EPT Monte Carlo* high roller for \$2.2 million.

Korzinin settled for \$3.47 million, which was only his third recorded cash. In October, he took third in a \$10,000 *EPT Cyprus* side event for \$78,300 for his first-ever in-the-money finish.

This event featured a unique format where amateur players invite poker pros to play, but are segregated in their own field to start the tournament. The field is then combined on day 3.

Plenty of notables ran deep in this event, including Brian Kim (15th), Nick Petrangelo (14th), Chris Brewer (13th), Linus Loeliger (12th), five-time *Triton* champion Mikita Badziakouski (6th), Roman Hrabec (4th), and 2022 *WSOP*

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main event champion Espen Jorstad (3rd).

'Gambledore' Gets The Win In \$150,000 Event

Just a handful of days removed from his close call in the \$200,000 buy-in invitational, **Vladimir Korzinin** managed to battle his way down to the final two in another nosebleed-stakes event. This time around, it was a \$150,000 buy-in high roller that drew 121 entries to build an \$18,150,000 prize pool.

On just his fourth recorded live tournament score, Korzinin managed to come away with the title and the gigantic top prize of \$4,350,000. He now has more than \$7.9 million in recorded earnings, with all but \$109,300 of that coming from his unbelievable one-two punch in the largest buy-in events at this series.

The enigma of a man offered no words in any requests for interviews after the big win but did leave a few notes scribbled on hotel stationery, writing, "You cannot lose, if you do not want to win and be better than everybody else."

He then signed the note as Santa Claus, another one of his nicknames earned during the series.

The top 20 players made the money in this event, with familiar faces at the final table in Sam Greenwood (8th), Dan Smith (6th), Stephen Chidwick (5th), Bryn Kenney (4th), and Fedor Holz (3rd).

Ossi Ketola was the eventual runner-up. Like Korzinin, Ketola was also a complete unknown before the series. The Finnish player with the funky hat showed up in Monte Carlo and final tabled the \$40,000 mystery bounty event for \$247,000 and then added two min cashes in high rollers worth \$183,000 and \$218,000 respectively, before making his deep run in this event.

The last hand was befitting of the bizarre tournament as Ketola and Korzinin got their chips into the middle on a board reading $Q\heartsuit J\clubsuit 10\heartsuit 7\clubsuit$. Ketola was ahead holding $Q\clubsuit 6\heartsuit$ for top pair, and Korzinin held second pair with a flush draw sitting on $10\clubsuit 6\clubsuit$.

The river brought the $9\clubsuit$ to complete the flush draw, although Korzinin was not immediately aware that he won the tournament. He thought he was accepting applause as the runner-up, but was quickly informed of the good news that he was the champion.

Ketola took home \$2,970,000 million, giving him more than \$3.6 million for the series overall.





Jesse Lonis



Alex Foxen



Artur Martirosian



Artur Martirosian

Bryn Kenney Extends Lead On All-Time Money List With Main Event Victory

When the stakes are high, **Bryn Kenney** seems to find a different level in his game. The New York native has always excelled on poker's biggest stages, finding ways to close when life-changing money is on the line.

Nowhere has the 38-year-old been more successful than on the *Triton* tour. In fact, of his \$72.4 million in recorded earnings, \$43.3 million has been won at *Triton* tournaments, including the \$20.6 million he banked in the £1 million buy-in *Triton London* Charity Invitational half a decade ago.

Kenney's latest score was worth \$4,410,000, taking down the \$125,000 main event in Monte Carlo for his fourth *Triton* title overall. Already poker's all-time money list leader, Kenney has now opened his lead over second-ranked Justin Bonomo by more than \$6 million and is \$13 million clear of the pack behind him. (See pg. 49)

"Never give up, that's the secret, for sure," Kenney told *Triton* reporters after taking down this event for his third-largest career payday. "Everyone has their roller coaster, their wave that they're on... You just got to hang on for the ride. Give it your best, don't let things get you down, and never stop fighting. I've put my life into poker. It's been quite the mountain climbing. Incredibly lucky, grateful, blessed."

The event drew 159 entries, which created a total prize pool of \$19,875,000. The final 27 players made the money, including a final table consisting of Danny Tang (7th), Jonathan Jaffe (5th), Haralabos Voulgaris (4th), and Punnat Punsri (3rd).

Punsri managed three final-table finishes during this festival, cashing for more than \$3.2 million across those scores. The Thai poker pro now has 18 final tables on the year, with two titles won along the way. As a result, he now sits in fourth place in the POY standings presented by Global Poker.

Wai Leong Chan took home \$2,970,000 as the runner-up, his third multi-million-dollar score.

Jesse Lonis and Alex Foxen Make POY Moves

Punsri wasn't the only player to make big moves near the

top of the POY rankings thanks to this festival. **Jesse Lonis** climbed all the way into second place thanks to his two final-table finishes, bringing his total up to 21 for the year.

Lonis' biggest score of the series saw him beat none other than Punsri heads-up in the \$50,000 no-limit hold'em event a couple of days prior to the main event. Lonis outlasted a field of 125 entries for \$1,502,000 and 1,122 POY points. With 8,702 points, three titles, and more than \$6.5 million in POY earnings, Lonis now trails top-ranked Adrian Mateos by 1,472 points.

The two-time bracelet winner now has more than \$14.4 million in career earnings, with this being his second-largest payday yet.

In addition to Punsri, Mario Mosbock (6th), Leonard Maue (4th), and Dan Smith (3rd) also joined Lonis at the final table.

Alex Foxen joined the top 10 in the POY standings with a win in another \$50,000 buy-in event. This victory put a fitting punctuation mark on a recent hot streak that saw the 33-year-old American poker star secure his second *WSOP* bracelet, which he won in the online series in a \$500 mystery bounty PLO event. Foxen also took second in the *WSOP Europe* €25,000 buy-in high roller and made three final tables at the recent *PokerGO Tour PLO Series II* festival.

The former college football player defeated a field of 147 entries in this event, topping fellow two-time bracelet winner Aleksejs Ponakovs heads-up to earn \$1,470,000 and 1,224 POY points. This was Foxen's 19th final table finish and second title of 2024. His 6,229 total points are good for ninth place on the POY leaderboard. That puts him one pip ahead of Ponakovs, who has made 14 final tables this year to claim the 10th-place spot in the standings.

Foxen has finished inside the top 10 for the last six years, and is looking to make it seven in a row with a strong finish to 2024.

Martirosian Triumphs Twice

This festival featured two turbo bounty events, with one being contested over no-limit hold'em and the other in pot-limit Omaha. Both were ultimately won by Russia's **Artur**



Eelis Parssinen



Brian Kim



Kayhan Mokri



Roman Hrabec



Pieter Aerts



Igor Yaroshevskyy



Ben Tollerene

Martirosian, an *EPT* champion and two-time bracelet winner.

Martirosian's first knockout title came in the \$30,000 no-limit hold'em turbo, which drew 105 entries. He walked away with \$891,000 from the main prize pool after topping a final table that included the likes of Espen Jorstad (8th), Ben Tollerene (7th), David Benefield (6th), Ren Lin (5th), and Adrian Mateos (4th).

Just over a week later, he came out on top from a field of 75 in the \$25,000 PLO turbo bounty, adding another \$525,000 to bring his career haul to nearly \$21 million.

All told, Martirosian cashed seven times for more than \$2.5 million at the series, with three final-table showings earning him 1,764 POY points. That brought his total on the year to 4,988 points, which is good for 18th place in the

standings. He has won six titles in total this year from 12 total final-table finishes.

Eelis Parssinen Proves PLO Dominance

Finnish pot-limit Omaha star **Eelis Parssinen** scored more than \$2.27 million for taking down the \$100,000 PLO event, growing his career earnings to nearly \$9.4 million. The vast majority of that money has been earned across his 42 recorded cashes in PLO tournaments.

Parssinen was already on top of the PLO money list before this win, sitting just ahead of American pro Dylan Weisman. Weisman bubbled this tournament, however, while Parssinen's victory earned him a career-best score to put him well in front of the pack with nearly \$7.4 million in PLO cashes. Weisman remains second on the list with more than \$4.6 million in PLO earnings to his name.

Parssinen was the last player standing from a field of 87 entries in this four-card clash. He outlasted big names like Alex Foxen (6th), Phil Ivey (5th), Sean Winter (4th), and Daniel Dvoress (2nd) down the stretch.

The Rest Of The Best

The series kicked off with a \$25,000 event which drew 170 entries. **Brian Kim** came out on top, earning \$941,000 for the win. This was the third-largest score yet for Kim, who finished seventh in this year's *WSOP* main event.

This was Kim's first *Triton* title after 18 previous cashes on the high-stakes tour. Kim added three more by the time the festival was done. He now has more than \$11 million in

earnings, with more than \$6.9 million of that coming from his success in *Triton* events.

Kayhan Mokri has been a tournament-closing machine over the past few months. He has made six final tables since Aug. 28, and come away with the title in four. The Norwegian's latest trip to the winner's circle came in the \$30,000 no-limit event, which had 144 entries. The \$1,005,000 top prize was the second-largest of his career, trailing only the \$1,523,386 he earned for winning the €100,000 high roller at *EPT Barcelona* in September of this year.

Roman Hrabec is also having a career-best year on the high-stakes scene. The Czech former pro hockey player's three largest scores have all come in 2024, including the \$4.3 million he locked up as the winner of the \$100,000 buy-in main event at the *Triton Jeju* stop this spring. The next pair of scores both came at this stop. He beat a field of 155 entries in the \$40,000 mystery bounty event for nearly \$1.2 million before adding another \$1.9 million with a fourth-place showing in the \$200,000 buy-in. With three titles and nine final tables, Hrabec has climbed to 15th in the POY race.

The fourth-largest prize pool of the series was created by the 131 entries made in the \$100,000 no-limit event. The \$13.1 million was paid out among the top 23 finishers, with

Belgian bracelet winner **Pieter Aerts** seizing the title and \$2.2 million as the champion. The final handful of contenders in this event included several of the most accomplished players in the game, including Steve O'Dwyer (5th), Mario Mosbock (4th), Fedor Holz (3rd), and Michael Soyza (2nd). Both Mosbock and Holz managed multiple seven-figure cashes at this series.

Ukraine's **Igor Yaroshevskyy** has earned all of his top five tournament scores in *Triton* events. His latest saw him navigate his way through a 61-entry field in the \$60,000 turbo event to secure his second title on the tour and \$862,357 in prize money.

Ben Tollerene took down his second major pot-limit Omaha tournament in just over a three-week span by emerging victorious in the \$50,000 PLO six-max event. The 82-entry field resulted in a \$4,100,000 prize pool, with \$1,070,000 for Tollerene as the champion. A month prior, Tollerene won the \$25,000 finale at the *PGT PLO Series II* for \$496,000. Just over a month before that, Tollerene also won the final event (albeit in no-limit hold'em) at the *Poker Masters*. The longtime high-stakes online cash game star now has nearly \$18 million in recorded tournament cashes after this title spree of the past few months. ♠

Triton Super High Roller Series - Sporting Monte-Carlo – Monte Carlo, Monaco

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$25,000 NLH Nov. 1-3 Entries: 170 Prizepool: \$4,250,000	1 Brian Kim	\$941,000 (1,092)
	2 Enrico Camosci	\$634,000 (910)
	3 Alexandros Theologis	\$436,000 (728)
	4 Roberto Perez	\$356,000 (546)
	5 Tom Fuchs	\$284,000 (455)
	6 Dominykas Mikolaitis	\$218,000 (364)
	7 Aleksejs Ponakovs	\$159,000 (273)
	8 Ranno Sootla	\$115,000 (182)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$30,000 NLH Nov. 2-3 Entries: 144 Prizepool: \$4,320,000	1 Kayhan Mokri	\$1,005,000 (1,008)
	2 Paulius Vaitiekunas	\$680,000 (840)
	3 Alex Kulev	\$454,000 (672)
	4 Orpen Kisacikoglu	\$371,000 (504)
	5 Patrik Antonius	\$298,000 (420)
	6 Marius Kudzmanas	\$231,000 (336)
	7 Krasimir Neychev	\$171,000 (252)
	8 Dimitar Danchev	\$125,000 (168)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$40,000 NLH KO 7-Max Nov. 3-4 Entries: 155 Prizepool: \$3,100,000	1 Roman Hrabec	\$1,182,019 (1,008)
	2 Samuel Mullur	\$983,000 (840)
	3 Morten Klein	\$558,000 (672)
	4 Luc Greenwood	\$480,000 (504)
	5 Ossi Ketola	\$247,000 (420)
	6 Artur Martirosian	\$639,000 (336)
	7 Punnat Punsri	\$196,000 (252)



Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$50,000 NLH Nov. 4-5 Entries: 147 Prizepool: \$7,350,000	1 Alex Foxen	\$1,470,000 (1,224)
	2 Aleksejs Ponakovs	\$915,000 (1,020)
	3 Marius Kudzmanas	\$922,000 (816)
	4 Dominykas Mikolaitis	\$964,000 (612)
	5 Liang Xu	\$507,000 (510)
	6 Kiat Lee	\$393,000 (408)
	7 Quan Zhou	\$291,000 (306)
	8 Lun Loon	\$214,000 (204)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$100,000 NLH Nov. 5-6 Entries: 131 Prizepool: \$13,100,000	1 Pieter Aerts	\$2,234,587 (1,320)
	2 Michael Soyza	\$2,305,000 (1,100)
	3 Fedor Holz	\$1,528,097 (880)
	4 Mario Mosbock	\$1,544,316 (660)
	5 Steve O'Dwyer	\$904,000 (550)
	6 Kiat Lee	\$701,000 (440)
	7 Roland Rokita	\$519,000 (330)
	8 Christoph Vogelsang	\$381,000 (220)



Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$30,000 NLH KO Nov. 6 Entries: 105 Prizepool: \$3,150,000	1 Artur Martirosian	\$891,000 (840)
	2 Nikita Kuznetsov	\$438,000 (700)
	3 Jamil Wakil	\$353,000 (560)
	4 Adrian Mateos	\$313,000 (420)
	5 Ren Lin	\$236,000 (350)
	6 David Benefield	\$163,000 (280)
	7 Benjamin Tollerene	\$134,000 (210)
	8 Espen Jorstad	\$111,000 (140)
	9 Paulius Vaitiekunas	\$93,000 (70)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$200,000 Invitational Nov. 7-9 Entries: 102 Prizepool: \$20,400,000	1 Patrik Antonius	\$5,130,000
	2 Vladimir Korzinin	\$3,470,000
	3 Espen Jorstad	\$2,255,000
	4 Roman Hrabec	\$1,867,000
	5 Mikalai Vaskaboinkau	\$1,506,000
	6 Mikita Badziakouski	\$1,188,000
	7 Konstantin Maslak	\$908,000
	8 Tan Xuan	\$684,000
	9 Morten Klein	\$510,000

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$50,000 NLH 7-Max Nov. 8-9 Entries: 125 Prizepool: \$6,250,000	1 Jesse Lonis	\$1,502,000 (1,122)
	2 Punnat Punsri	\$1,021,000 (935)
	3 Dan Smith	\$675,000 (748)
	4 Leonard Maue	\$556,000 (561)
	5 Daniel Rezaei	\$446,000 (468)
	6 Mario Mosbock	\$350,000 (374)
	7 Anson Ewe	\$262,000 (281)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$125,000 NLH Nov. 9-11 Entries: 159 Prizepool: \$19,875,000	1 Bryn Kenney	\$4,410,000 (1,440)
	2 Wai Leong Chan	\$2,970,000 (1,200)
	3 Punnat Punsri	\$2,045,000 (960)
	4 Haralabos Voulgaris	\$1,665,000 (720)
	5 Jonathan Jaffe	\$1,330,000 (600)
	6 Mario Mosbock	\$1,020,000 (480)
	7 Danny Tang	\$743,000 (360)
	8 Thomas Muhlocker	\$538,000 (240)
	9 Jesse Lonis	\$445,000 (120)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$60,000 NLH Nov. 10 Entries: 61 Prizepool: \$3,660,000	1 Igor Yaroshevskyy	\$862,357 (612)
	2 Alexandros Theologis	\$860,143 (510)
	3 Dominykas Mikolaitis	\$468,900 (408)
	4 Lucas Greenwood	\$360,000 (306)
	5 Aleksejs Ponakovs	\$285,500 (255)
	6 Leon Sturm	\$223,200 (204)
	7 Ren Lin	\$175,700 (153)
	8 Thomas Boivin	\$137,200 (102)
	9 David Yan	\$104,000 (51)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$150,000 NLH Nov. 11-13 Entries: 121 Prizepool: \$18,150,000	1 Vladimir Korzinin	\$4,350,000 (1,320)
	2 Ossi Ketola	\$2,970,000 (1,100)
	3 Fedor Holz	\$1,962,000 (880)
	4 Bryn Kenney	\$1,616,000 (660)
	5 Stephen Chidwick	\$1,300,000 (550)
	6 Dan Smith	\$1,016,000 (440)
	7 Tom Fuchs	\$762,000 (330)
	8 Sam Greenwood	\$562,000 (220)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$50,000 PLO 6-Max Nov. 12-13 Entries: 82 Prizepool: \$4,100,000	1 Benjamin Tollerene	\$1,070,000 (816)
	2 Michael Duek	\$736,000 (680)
	3 Anonymous	NA
	4 Quan Zhou	\$393,000 (408)
	5 Joni Jouhkimainen	\$314,500 (340)
	6 Mads Amot	\$244,500 (272)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$100,000 PLO Nov. 13-14 Entries: 87 Prizepool: \$8,700,000	1 Eelis Parssinen	\$2,270,000 (960)
	2 Daniel Dvoress	\$1,563,000 (800)
	3 Espen Myrmo	\$1,029,000 (640)
	4 Sean Winter	\$836,000 (480)
	5 Phil Ivey	\$667,000 (400)
	6 Alex Foxen	\$518,000 (320)
	7 Mads Amot	\$409,000 (240)
	8 Haralabos Voulgaris	\$311,000 (160)
	9 Jonas Kronwitter	\$231,000 (80)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$25,000 PLO KO Nov. 14 Entries: 75 Prizepool: \$1,875,000	1 Artur Martirosian	\$525,000 (588)
	2 Isaac Haxton	\$270,000 (490)
	3 Dan Smith	\$279,000 (392)
	4 Ren Lin	\$304,500 (294)
	5 Michael Duek	\$100,000 (245)
	6 Ronny Kaiser	\$108,000 (196)
	7 Richard Gryko	\$62,000 (147)
	8 Sergio Martinez	\$48,000 (98)
	9 Stephen Chidwick	\$36,500 (49)

LAWRENCE CHANG TOPS LARGEST PLO FIELD IN LONE STAR HISTORY AT TEXAS PLO ROUNDUP

By Erik Fast

Lawrence Chang



Pot-limit Omaha tournaments are booming around the globe, but the game seems to be particularly popular in the burgeoning Texas cardroom scene. Given that, it's only fitting that Champions Club Texas in Houston opted to team up with the *PokerGO Tour* to host the first-ever *PGT Texas PLO Roundup*. The festival featured a nine-event slate of four-card action, which collectively awarded nearly \$2.1 million in prize money in November.

The series' centerpiece was the ambitious \$1 million guaranteed \$3,300 buy-in main event. The tournament sported seven starting flights to choose from, with 474 total entries made by the time that registration finally closed. That turnout set the record for the largest PLO tournament field ever held in Texas. It also resulted in a \$1,422,000 final prize pool, which was paid out among the top 55 finishers.

The largest chunk of that money was awarded to eventual champion **Lawrence Chang**, who walked away with \$300,000 and the unique belt buckle trophy.

This was the first recorded six-figure tournament score for Chang, who is based in Texas. Prior to this marquee victory, his top cash was the \$25,650 he earned for a fourth-place finish in a side event at the 2019 *L.A. Poker Classic*.

Among the many notables to run deep in this event were 2019 *WSOP* main event third-place finisher Alex Livingston (44th), four-time bracelet winner Brad Ruben (43rd), six-time bracelet winner Josh Arieh (41st), high roller winners Adam Hendrix (34th) and Ronald Keijzer (30th), two-time bracelet winner Martin Zamani (32nd), 2024 *WSOP* main

event runner-up Jordan Griff (27th), Ren Lin (26th), Ben Ludlow (24th), three-time bracelet winner Sean Troha (20th), Anthony Hu (18th), Arthur Morris (15th), and prelim event winner Stephanie Chung (11th).

The final day began with seven players remaining and Chang out in front. LaDarren Banks was the first to fall (7th – \$43,000), with Sean Rafael eventually following in sixth place (\$51,000) after more than two hours of six-handed play. Rafael's overpair of kings and nut flush draw was outrun by the middle pair and wrap draw of Senovio Ramirez, who made a seven-high straight on the end to score the knockout. This was Rafael's second final table of the series, having placed second in one of the three \$5,100 buy-in high rollers held on the schedule.

Kyle Arora had moved into the chip lead at one point in the early going of the final day but found himself as the shortest stack during five-handed action. He eventually got his last four big blinds in with $8\heartsuit 6\clubsuit 6\clubsuit 4\clubsuit$ facing the $A\heartsuit J\clubsuit 8\heartsuit 3\clubsuit$ of Andrew Ige. The board ran out $K\spadesuit K\heartsuit Q\heartsuit 8\clubsuit A\clubsuit$ and Ige made aces up to eliminate Arora in fifth place (\$60,000). This was Arora's third-largest score yet.

Sterling Savill began the day as the short stack, but managed to survive to the final four. He got his final chips in with $A\heartsuit K\heartsuit Q\heartsuit J\clubsuit$ facing the $A\spadesuit 7\spadesuit 5\heartsuit 4\heartsuit$ of a surging Ige. Savill hit top two on a $K\heartsuit J\heartsuit 5\spadesuit$ flop, but Ige turned trips to take the lead with the $5\clubsuit$. The $8\heartsuit$ river then improved Ige to a flush to see Savill sent packing in fourth place (\$80,000). He now has nearly \$1.2 million in career cashes.

© PGT



Adam Hendrix



Curtis Muller



Ronald Keijzer

It was a classic PLO preflop showdown for the next big all-in, with Ramirez's $A♥ A♠ 10♥ 9♠$ facing off against Ige's $Q♥ J♣ 10♣ 8♥$ in a battle of the blinds. The first three cards off the deck were $J♠ 9♣ 2♠$. Ramirez moved all-in with his overpair and Ige called with his pair and wrap draw. The turn was the $Q♦$ to give Ige a queen-high straight and two pair. The $6♦$ completed the board and Ramirez was eliminated in third place, earning \$120,000 for his third career six-figure score.

Heads-up play began with Ige holding a nearly 2:1 lead over Chang. The lead changed hands a couple of times, but it was Chang sitting slightly ahead when the final hand of the tournament was dealt.

Chang raised on the button with $8♠ 6♥ 5♣ 4♥$ and Ige called with $A♣ J♣ 9♦ 8♥$. The flop came down $10♥ 9♣ 3♥$ and Ige checked. Chang checked behind and the turn brought an action card in the $7♣$. Ige bet with the jack-high straight and the nut club redraw. Chang potted with his ten-high straight and heart draw and Ige moved all-in. Chang called, setting up a showdown for essentially all of the chips in play. The river brought the $A♥$ to complete Chang's flush, winning him the title. Ige earned a career-high windfall of \$200,000 for his runner-up showing.

High Rollers

In addition to the main event and five other side tournaments, this series also played host to a trio of \$5,100 buy-in high rollers.

The first high roller was won by Alaskan poker pro **Adam Hendrix**, who topped 23 entries, securing \$51,750 to bring his career tournament earnings beyond the \$7 million mark. This was the 10th recorded title for Hendrix, who now has 262 in-the-money finishes to his name.

Hendrix faced plenty of stiff competition down the stretch, with six-time bracelet winner Josh Arieh placing third for \$18,400 and main event final-tablist Sean Rafael finishing as the runner-up for \$32,200.

Canada's **Curtis Muller** earned his first recorded live poker tournament title, taking down the second high roller for \$54,000. This was the second-largest score on his career behind only the \$67,700 he earned for a 155th-place showing in last year's *WSOP* main event.

This event drew 20 entries, creating a \$100,000 prize pool that was paid out among the top three finishers. Ky Nguyen finished third for \$16,000 while Arthur Morris took home \$30,000 as the runner-up.

The third and final high roller attracted 22 entries, creating a \$110,000 prize pool. The one-day affair concluded with Dutch poker pro **Ronald Keijzer** hoisting the trophy. Keijzer made a heads-up deal with Morris, who was just one day removed from his previous second-place showing, with each earning \$40,150.

This was the seventh recorded tournament title for Keijzer, who won a *WSOP* bracelet back in 2018 by taking down a \$3,000 buy-in PLO event in Las Vegas. He now has more than \$3.1 million in lifetime cashes to his name after this latest triumph.

Like Morris, Nguyen also ended up finishing in the same spot in this tournament as he did in the second high roller. He was awarded \$17,600 this time around, while Mark Ioli earned \$12,100 for finishing fourth.

More Winners

There were more than 600 entries made in the handful of side events that rounded out the series. The festival kicked off with a \$50,000 guaranteed \$300 buy-in. **Johnson Phanyaseng**

TOURNAMENTS



Johnson Phanyaseng



Alex Green



Sonny Sundara



Stephanie Chung

earned \$12,970 after outlasting a field of 197.

The second event kept the same guarantee but bumped the buy-in to \$400. **Alex Green** came out on top of the 130-entry field, pocketing \$13,160. Main event fifth-place finisher Kyle Arora placed second in this tournament.

Sonny Sundara bested 100 entries in the third event, which sported a \$600 buy-in and another \$50,000 guarantee. Sundara banked \$16,360 after dragging the final pot. LaDarren Banks earned \$9,850 as the runner-up and added another \$43,000 for his seventh-place showing in the main event later in the series.

The \$1,100 buy-in drew 179 entries to best its \$100,000 guarantee by nearly \$74,000. **Stephanie Chung** triumphed in the end, capturing the hardware and the top prize of \$40,875. This career-best score increased her lifetime earnings to more than \$425,000.

The final tournament on the schedule had a \$500 buy in. **Christian Vaca** outlasted a 30-entry field, overcoming Hayden Le heads-up to earn \$5,310 and the title. With that, a successful first run of *the PGT Texas PLO Roundup* rode off into the Lone Star sunset. ♠

PokerGO Tour Texas PLO Roundup - Champions Club – Houston

Event	Player	Payout (POV)
\$300 PLO	1 Johnson Phanyaseng	\$12,970
	2 Charles Hatley	\$8,750
Nov. 16-18	3 Stephanie Chung	\$5,130
	4 Sebastian Pena	\$3,120
\$50,000 GTD	5 Margarette Gayao	\$2,410
	6 Jason Bullock	\$2,000
Entries: 197 Prizepool: \$50,000	7 Shanice Beasley	\$1,700
	8 Eric Kim	\$1,470
	9 Richard Wasser	\$1,240

TOURNAMENTS



Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$400 PLO Nov. 18-19 \$50,000 GTD Entries: 130 Prizepool: \$50,000	1 Alex Green	\$13,160 (106)
	2 Kyle Arora	\$11,000 (88)
	3 Meikle Partin	\$5,400 (70)
	4 Nada Siddik	\$3,350 (53)
	5 Blake Barousse	\$2,580 (44)
	6 Xiaoxiao Song	\$2,200 (35)
	7 Kai Yang	\$1,930 (26)
	8 Jared Stearns	\$1,700 (18)
	9 Lacey Coffey	\$1,510 (9)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$600 PLO Nov. 19-20 \$50,000 GTD Entries: 100 Prizepool: \$52,000	1 Sonny Sundara	\$16,360 (120)
	2 LaDarren Banks	\$9,850 (100)
	3 Zhargal Tsydypov	\$6,080 (80)
	4 Ricardo Alvarado	\$4,000 (60)
	5 Ken Han	\$3,140 (50)
	6 Joshua Hale	\$2,530 (40)
	7 Jared Ingles	\$2,170 (30)
	8 Hai Tran	\$1,890 (20)
	9 Katherine Mersiovsky	\$1,690 (10)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,100 PLO Nov. 20-21 \$100,000 GTD Entries: 179 Prizepool: \$173,630	1 Stephanie Chung	\$40,875 (312)
	2 Xiaoxiao Song	\$35,875 (260)
	3 Rodney Moret-Rojas	\$18,800 (208)
	4 Rajendara Dhar	\$11,530 (156)
	5 Zhargal Tsydypov	\$8,360 (130)
	6 Curtis Muller	\$6,930 (104)
	7 Ken Han	\$5,900 (78)
	8 Johnson Phanyaseng	\$5,190 (52)
	9 Rakan Abusaleh	\$4,500 (26)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$3,300 PLO Nov. 21-25 \$1,000,000 GTD Entries: 474 Prizepool: \$1,422,000	1 Lawrence Chung	\$300,000 (1,080)
	2 Andrew Ige	\$200,000 (900)
	3 Senovio Ramirez	\$120,000 (720)
	4 Sterling Savill	\$80,000 (540)
	5 Kyle Arora	\$60,000 (460)
	6 Sean Rafael	\$51,000 (360)
	7 LaDarren Banks	\$43,000 (720)
	8 David Mzareulov	\$35,500 (180)
	9 Matthew Macioce	\$35,500 (90)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$5,100 PLO Nov. 22 Entries: 23 Prizepool: \$115,000	1 Adam Hendrix	\$51,750
	2 Sean Rafael	\$32,200
	3 Josh ArieH	\$18,400
	4 Orod Ashegh	\$12,650

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$5,100 PLO Nov. 23 Entries: 20 Prizepool: \$100,000	1 Curtis Muller	\$54,000
	2 Arthur Morris	\$30,000
	3 Ky Nguyen	\$16,000

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$5,100 PLO Nov. 24 Entries: 22 Prizepool: \$110,000	1 Ronald Keijzer	\$40,150
	2 Arthur Morris	\$40,150
	3 Ky Nguyen	\$17,600
	4 Mark Ioli	\$12,100

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$500 PLO Nov. 25 Entries: 30 Prizepool: \$12,900	1 Christian Vaca	\$5,310
	2 Hayden Le	\$3,480
	3 Bruce Walters	\$2,190
	4 Alexander Green	\$1,420
	5 Bryan Shelton	\$500



NICK YUNIS BREAKS THROUGH AT WPT BESTBET SCRAMBLE

By Erik Fast

Nick Yunis has cashed for millions of dollars on the live tournament poker circuit, but until recently, all of his largest scores had been consolation prizes. While he had several six-figure windfalls on his résumé, they had come in events where he fell just short of the title.

That all changed when the Chilean player emerged victorious from a field of 361 entries in the *World Poker Tour bestbet Scramble* \$5,000 main event.

After securing the win to add his name to the Mike Sexton *WPT* Champions Cup, Yunis collected a career-high payout of \$315,791. He now sits with nearly \$2.1 million in recorded scores to his name.

“I still can’t believe it. I’m like, ‘Am I dreaming?’ I’ve been playing for so long and I always wanted to accomplish this... a major title,” Yunis told *WPT* reporters.

This tournament featured a \$1 million guarantee that was surpassed by more than \$642,000 by the time registration closed at bestbet Jacksonville. The top 46 finishers made the money in this event, with bracelet winner Raj Vohra (41st), *WPT* champion Josh Reichard (30th), *WSOP* main event champion Joe McKeehen (17th), *WPT* champion and three-time bracelet winner Tony Dunst (16th), bracelet winner Francis Anderson (8th), and two-time *Circuit* ring winner T.K. Miles (7th) all running deep.

The final day began with three-time *WPT* champion Eric Afriat out in front of the remaining six contenders, having added to his lead when his K-J outran Miles’ A-Q in the final hand of day 3. Afriat extended his advantage even further when he eliminated Dion Jagroo in sixth place (\$71,000).

A couple of orbits after that knockout, Nicholas Funaro went for a multi-street bluff with nine high in a battle of the blinds, only to get picked off by Yunis’ two pair. Funaro, the younger brother of two-time bracelet winner Frank Funaro, earned \$93,000 as the fifth-place finisher.

A similar hand led to the downfall of Joe Jordan in this event. He also attempted a multi-street bluff against Yunis, who this time had an even stronger hand with a flopped full house. He was left with just a handful of big blinds and was soon sent packing in fourth place (\$123,000).

Yunis overtook the lead early in three-handed play, winning a big pot with a rivered king-high straight to edge ahead of Afriat. He then pulled off a river bluff shove to force Afriat off the best hand, leaving the Afriat short in the process.

Afriat was well positioned to score a much-needed double-up when he got all-in with pocket kings leading the pocket nines of recent *WPT Prime Playground* championship winner Yunky Song. The board came down 9♣ 7♣ 6♣ 5♣ 3♥ however, and Song’s top set sent Afriat home just a few spots shy of earning a record-tying fourth *WPT* title.

For now, Darren Elias remains the tour’s only four-time main event champion.

Heads-up play began with Yunis holding roughly a 2:1 chip lead over Song. The two agreed to a deal at one point that redistributed the remaining prize money a bit, setting aside \$33,000 and the title to play for.



Song managed a double-up after getting quite short, but was still at a big chip disadvantage. He slid down to just over 11 big blinds ahead of the final hand. Yunis shoved from the button with K♠ 3♥ and Song called with K♥ 5♣ from the big blind. The flop came down K♥ J♦ 4♣ to give both players top pair. The 7♣ turn added a flush draw to Song’s outs for another double-up. The river brought the 3♦ to improve Yunis to two pair, bringing the tournament to a close.

This runner-up showing gave Song his largest payday yet of \$252,059, growing his career tournament earnings to more than \$1.4 million. He also earned 1,000 POY points for what was his 10th final-table showing of the year. With 4,804 total points, Song is now ranked 23rd in the 2024 POY race presented by Global Poker.

Player	Payout (POY)
1 Nick Yunis	\$315,791 (1,200)
2 Yunky Song	\$252,059 (1,000)
3 Eric Afriat	\$165,000 (800)
4 Joseph Jordan	\$123,000 (600)
5 Nicholas Funaro	\$93,000 (500)
6 Dion Jagroo	\$71,000 (400)
7 Timothy Miles	\$55,000 (300)
8 Francis Anderson	\$42,500 (200)
9 Vimal Reddy	\$33,500 (100)

© WPT/ Katerina Lukina

PHIL BERTRAM TOPS WSOP CIRCUIT CHOCTAW MAIN EVENT

By Ryan Lucchesi

Phil Bertram picked up his first *WSOP Circuit* gold ring in November at Choctaw Casino. The victory in Oklahoma gave Bertram \$237,307 in prize money for the largest score of his career and his first win on any tour.

Although he took home a professional-sized payday, Bertram has been playing poker just as a hobby for the last decade.

"I had an awesome week, and I'm just super glad I made it this far," said an excited Bertram. "A recreational player can win."

The \$1,700 buy-in event saw a field of 944 entries over two starting flights. The top 140 entries all scored a min-cash worth \$2,294.

A total of 106 players returned for day 2, and just the final eight remained after 12 hours of play. Michael Perrone held the chip lead when the final day of play began, and Bertram was right behind him in the standings. Bertram kept the momentum going when he sent Benjamin Anderson home in eighth and busted Vincent Rubianes right behind him. Lawrence Wayne fell next in sixth place.

Zak Baron then went on a strong run that saw him take out Vincent Pratt and Robert Peacock to take the chip lead going into three-handed play. Bertram got back some ammo to work with by eliminating Perrone before the heads-up final began.

The chip advantage still stood at nearly 3:1 in favor of Baron when heads-up began, but the stacks had all but flipped when Baron got all in preflip with K-Q suited, and



Bertram had him covered holding A-7 suited. The board gave Bertram trip sevens along with the big win.

Player	Payout (POY)
1 Phillip Bertram	\$237,307 (912)
2 Zak Baron	\$158,217 (760)
3 Michael Perrone	\$110,000 (608)
4 Robert Peacock	\$78,345 (456)
5 Vincent Pratt	\$56,538 (380)
6 Lawrence Wayne	\$41,509 (304)
7 Vincent Rubianes	\$31,013 (228)
8 Benjamin Anderson	\$23,587 (152)
9 Will Pengelly	\$18,268 (76)

ARIAN KASHANI WINS UKIPT NOTTINGHAM

By Erik Fast

Arian Kashani sure feels at home playing poker at Dusk Till Dawn Nottingham. The Iranian player has now recorded his two largest live tournament scores at the venue, with his most recent triumph being a win in November's *UK and Ireland Poker Tour Nottingham* £1,100 main event.

Kashani walked away with \$254,394, blowing away the \$90,493 he banked as the runner-up in the *WSOP International Circuit England* main event under the same roof last spring. He now has nearly \$640,000 in career earnings to his name despite only lodging his first live cash in 2020.

This event drew 1,282 entries, besting the £1 million guarantee by more than £230,000. The final prize pool sat at \$1,555,630 when rendered in US dollars, with the top 193 finishers all earning a share.

WSOP bracelet winner Christopher Brammer bowed out in third place for \$113,400 when his shove was looked up by Philip Joyce. Joyce flopped the nut flush and Brammer headed to the payout window to collect his fifth six-figure score.

Heads-up play began with Kashani holding more than a 3:1 chip lead over Joyce, but a double up evened out the stacks. The two paused the action to mull over a possible deal, but ultimately decided to play on. Joyce overtook the lead and began to pull away, but Kashani doubled up with pocket fives against pocket threes to move back in front again.

In the final hand, Kashani min-raised on the button with K♦ Q♣ and then called the 22-big-blind shove of Joyce, who held 10♥ 9♥. The 9♣ 6♥ 4♦ flop gave Joyce top pair and the



lead, but the 4♣ and 8♣ on the turn and river completed Kashani's flush, bringing the event to an end.

Player	Payout (POY)
1 Arian Kashani	\$254,394 (960)
2 Philip Joyce	\$158,760 (800)
3 Christopher Brammer	\$113,400 (640)
4 Parminder Kandola	\$87,192 (480)
5 Michael Casson	\$67,637 (400)
6 Yannik Seabrook	\$52,038 (320)
7 Justin Tsui	\$40,018 (240)
8 Nathan Slater	\$30,782 (160)
9 Daniel Rudd	\$23,663 (80)

JEREMY LENZ TRIUMPHS AT WSOP CIRCUIT GRAND VICTORIA

By Erik Fast

The *WSOP Grand Victoria Casino* \$1,700 main event drew 757 entries, surpassing the \$750,000 guarantee to create a prize pool worth more than \$1.1 million. Jeremy Lenz walked away with the top prize of \$194,977 and his first gold ring as the champion.

This was the largest live tournament score yet for Lenz, a resident of nearby Dakota, Illinois, who had just five recorded cashes totaling just over \$16,000 prior.

There were six players still in contention when cards got in the air for the final day of this event, with *WSOP Circuit Potawatomi* winner Richard Bai in the lead. Bai added to his stack early after he flopped top set of kings against the middle set of queens held by Dana Bader Muse, a two-time *WSOPC* ring winner. Muse was unable to pull off the miracle after the chips went in on the flop and was knocked out in sixth place for \$38,601.

The next elimination saw Caleb King run nines into the queens of recent bracelet winner Roland Israelashvili. The larger pair held and King settled for \$50,350. Israelashvili continued to surge when he won a massive pot off Bai with quads. As a result, Bai was soon on the rail, earning \$66,514 for his fourth-place showing.

Israelashvili slid down the leaderboard before ultimately busting at the hands of Cero Zuccarello. Israelashvili earned \$88,976 as the third-place finisher, giving him \$5.3 million in earnings. This was the 11-time ring winner's 262nd cash in a *WSOPC* event.

Lenz held better than a 2:1 chip lead over Zuccarello



when heads-up play began and continued to pull away until Zuccarello ran into his pocket aces to end the tournament.

Player	Payout
1 Jeremy Lenz	\$194,977 (912)
2 Cero Zuccarello	\$120,506 (760)
3 Roland Israelashvili	\$88,976 (608)
4 Richard Bai	\$66,514 (456)
5 Caleb King	\$50,350 (380)
6 Dana Bader Muse	\$38,601 (304)
7 Ryan Johnson	\$33,405 (228)
8 Natan Lidukhover	\$27,013 (152)
9 Blake Borden	\$18,801 (76)

© WSOP / Eloy Cabacas

MARIA LAMPROPULOS BESTS LARGEST WOMEN'S TOURNAMENT HELD OUTSIDE LAS VEGAS

By Erik Fast

The *Women's Winter Festival* £100,000 guaranteed £400 no-limit hold'em main event drew 271 entries, making it the largest women's poker tournament ever held outside of Las Vegas.

Maria Lampropulos, the 2018 *PokerStars Caribbean Adventure* main event champion and winner of the 2017 *partypoker LIVE Millions Nottingham* main event, added yet another title to her résumé, emerging victorious with the title and the top prize of £20,000 (\$25,200).

The accomplished Argentinian poker player now has more than \$3.6 million in recorded tournament earnings, including two seven-figure paydays for her wins in the previously mentioned marquee events. This places her inside the top 10 on the women's all-time money list.

The impressive turnout for this event saw the top 44 finishers earn a piece of the six-figure prize pool. Among those that cashed were poker content star Caitlin Comeskey (37th) and PokerStars ambassador Jennifer Shahade (32nd).

Lampropulos survived to the final table with a middle-of-the-pack stack, but managed to navigate her way down to short-handed play. She then knocked out Lithuania's Marta Porter to take a chip lead into heads-up play with Ann-Roos Callens of Belgium.

On the final hand, Lampropulos' Q-5 outran the K-6 of Callens, making queens and tens with an ace kicker from the board to win the pot and the title. Callens earned \$15,889 as the runner-up.



Lampropulos told reporters that she had a lot of fun in the event "with the girls" as "everyone had good vibes" and was eager to see the festival grow even larger in the future.

Player	Payout
1 Maria Lampropulos	\$25,200
2 Ann-Roos Callens	\$15,889
3 Marta Porter	\$11,340
4 Franky Green	\$8,631
5 Lisa Roberts	\$6,653
6 Jennifer Steele	\$5,128
7 Kim Dockery	\$4,108
8 Celine Diot	\$3,440
9 Berivan Dag	\$2,873

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CIRCUIT RESULTS

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Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Diamond Series	1 Pavel Izotov	\$206,064 (720)
	2 Aaron Pahlawani	\$186,666 (600)
Arena Casino Tirana, Albania	3 Youness Barakat	\$109,180 (480)
	4 Anonymous	NA
€5,200 PLO Nov. 4-6	5 Burak Simsek	\$71,020 (300)
€1,000,000 GTD Entries: 203 Prizepool: \$1,060,000	6 Stanislav Melhul	\$54,590 (240)
	7 Giorgos Tsoupras	\$39,750 (180)
	8 Hristo Bogdanov	\$28,620 (120)
	9 Dimitri Steinfueer	\$23,850 (60)



© Arena Casomp Tirana

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Diamond Series	1 Youness Barakat	\$96,990 (288)
	2 Thomas Hueber	\$69,960 (240)
Arena Casino Tirana, Albania	3 Krasimir Yankov	\$45,580 (192)
	4 Christos Argyriadis	\$33,920 (144)
€5,200 PLO Nov. 9	5 Anonymous	NA
€300,000 GTD Entries: 65 Prizepool: \$323,830	6 Shamil Patel	\$21,200 (96)
	7 Anonymous	NA
	8 Velibor Jakovljevic	\$12,720 (48)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Sydney Millions St. George	1 Khanh Le	\$89,967 (720)
	2 Martin Finger	\$72,381 (600)
Leagues Club Kogarah, Australia	3 Chad Awerbuch	\$71,659 (480)
	4 Louis Luo	\$32,110 (360)
A\$2,000 NLH Nov. 5-11	5 Nathan Gray	\$22,620 (300)
	6 Craig Austin	\$16,640 (240)
A\$500,000 GTD Entries: 417 Prizepool: \$473,550	7 Henry Minh Hai Tran	\$12,805 (180)
	8 Daniel Tolomeo	\$10,270 (120)
	9 Nathaniel Hutton	\$8,580 (60)



© WSOP

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
WSOP Circuit Casino San Remo	1 Mario Perati	\$129,297 (960)
	2 Herve Gouzil	\$105,000 (800)
San Remo, Italy	3 Matteo Sbrana	\$67,242 (640)
	4 Francesco Di Domenico	\$48,374 (480)
€1,100 NLH Nov. 7-11	5 Alex Sampirisi	\$35,847 (400)
	6 Xavier Zuczkowski	\$26,670 (320)
Prizepool: \$936,357	7 Francesco DelFoco	\$20,139 (240)
	8 Jean Chiba	\$15,440 (160)
	9 Pablo Heredia	\$12,017 (80)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Florida State Championship	1 Niall Costigan	\$78,000 (480)
	2 Maxx Dansky	\$54,695 (400)
Harrah's Pompano Beach, FL	3 Rajasekar Govindan	\$24,945 (320)
	4 Bogdan Chornyy	\$20,255 (240)
\$600 NLH KO Nov. 12-17	5 Alcides Gomez	\$15,420 (200)
	6 David Rivera	\$13,235 (160)
Entries: 1,039 Prizepool: \$363,650	7 Denian Costa	\$11,055 (120)
	8 Michael Rudolph	\$8,980 (80)
	9 Nancy Birnbaum	\$7,635 (40)

TOURNAMENTS

Travis Young



© WSOP

Event	Player	Payout (POV)
WSOP Circuit Grand Victoria Casino Elgin, IL \$600 NLH Nov. 7-10 \$300,000 GTD Entries: 1,197 Prizepool: \$616,455	1 Travis Young	\$96,626 (480)
	2 Benjamin Krauss	\$59,716 (400)
	3 John Pavlik	\$43,230 (320)
	4 Andrzej Rogowski	\$31,752 (240)
	5 Andrze Nachman	\$23,666 (200)
	6 Daniel Yoshiba	\$17,905 (160)
	7 Charles Bee	\$13,753 (120)
	8 Alexander Fortcamp	\$10,728 (80)
	9 Kurt Hoerr	\$8,499 (40)

Valentin Piergentile



© Codigo Poker

Event	Player	Payout (POV)
Circuito Argentino de Poker	1 Valentin Piergentile	\$60,872 (384)
	2 Juan Oliva	\$39,100 (320)
	3 Santiago Bogghini	\$26,450 (256)
City Center Rosario, Argentina	4 Ricardo Salidias	\$19,600 (192)
	5 Julio Lopez	\$14,400 (160)
\$400 NLH Nov. 9-14 Entries: 1,071 Prizepool: \$355,522	6 Imanol Ortiz	\$11,050 (128)
	7 Claudio Fernandez	\$8,350 (96)
	8 Oscar Zorrilla	\$6,800 (64)
	9 Matias Luna	\$5,600 (32)

Timothy Chung



© PokerStars

Event	Player	Payout (POV)
UKIPT	1 Timothy Chung	\$60,102 (180)
	2 Keith Johnson	\$39,816 (150)
	3 Sandeep Shah	\$26,876 (120)
	4 Eddie Quinn	\$20,349 (90)
	5 Paul Allen	\$15,750 (75)
£3,200 NLH Nov. 13-14 £100,000 GTD Entries: 51 Prizepool: \$185,069	6 Jay O'Leary	\$12,474 (60)
	7 Parminder Kandola	\$9,702 (45)

Alexander Avila



© WSOP

Event	Player	Payout (POV)
WSOP Circuit	1 Alexander Avila	\$86,178 (480)
	2 Kenneth Hirose	\$53,258 (400)
Commerce Casino Commerce, CA	3 Jae Yong Song	\$38,774 (320)
	4 Ahram Kim	\$28,638 (240)
\$600 NLH Nov. 13-17 \$500,000 GTD Entries: 1,082 Prizepool: \$556,012	5 Michael Nia	\$21,463 (200)
	6 Brandon Nguyen	\$16,326 (160)
	7 Moshe Menzur	\$12,606 (120)
	8 Mir Gaskari	\$9,884 (80)
	9 Vuong Do	\$7,871 (40)

TOURNAMENTS



© APT

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
APT	1 Jinlong Hu	\$183,690 (912)
	2 Jun Oh	\$111,735 (760)
Casino Corona Resort Kien Giang, Vietnam	3 Do Vu	\$78,975 (608)
	4 Thang Truong	\$59,475 (456)
	5 David Erquiaga	\$46,898 (380)
VND 36,000,000 NLH Nov. 11-16	6 Hao Wang	\$35,198 (304)
VND 25,000,000,000 GTD	7 Deepankur Gupta	\$25,058 (228)
	8 Chunhao Zhang	\$17,355 (152)
	9 Ngoc Pham	\$13,728 (76)
Entries: 795 Prizepool: \$983,250		



© APT

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
APT	1 Jason Lau	\$90,865 (396)
	2 Yu Chung Chang	\$61,712 (330)
Casino Corona Resort Kien Giang, Vietnam	3 Amit Kaushik	\$40,700 (264)
	4 Sean Ooi	\$33,620 (198)
	5 Biao Guo	\$26,994 (165)
VND 80,000,000 NLH Nov. 16	6 Hayato Kitajima	\$21,164 (132)
VND 2,500,000,000 GTD	7 Jennifer Cassell	\$15,864 (99)
	8 Yita Choong	\$11,737 (66)
	9 Phanlert Sukonthachartnant	\$9,087 (33)
Entries: 139 Prizepool: \$378,603		



© PMU Poker

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
France Poker Open	1 Etienne Oliveira	\$45,760 (360)
	2 Isabel Baltazar	\$31,062 (300)
Casino du Lac de la Magdeleine Gujan-Mestras, France	3 Jonathan Therme	\$22,152 (240)
	4 David Foucault	\$16,682 (180)
	5 Anonymous	NA
€600 NLH Nov. 14-17	6 Pierre Mounic	\$10,452 (120)
	7 Jacques Bellity	\$8,372 (90)
Entries: 452 Prizepool: \$243,684	8 Romain Guenot	\$6,708 (60)



© Rungood Poker Series

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Rungood Resort	1 Preston McEwen	\$57,206 (420)
	2 John Holley III	\$38,137 (350)
Horseshoe Robinsonville, MS	3 Jonathan Turner	\$28,133 (280)
	4 Donnie Phan	\$20,980 (210)
	5 Ryan Garren	\$15,819 (175)
\$600 NLH Nov. 15-17	6 Todd Tucker	\$12,060 (140)
	7 William Latta	\$9,299 (105)
\$200,000 GTD Entries: 598 Prizepool: \$304,980	8 Jacob Foley	\$7,252 (70)
	9 Timothy Garles	\$5,721 (35)

TOURNAMENTS



Jon Andlovec and Adam Nattress

© Peppermill Casino

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Fall Poker Palooza	1 Jon Andlovec	\$59,795 (600)
	2 Adam Nattress	\$59,790 (500)
	3 Andrew Fredericks	\$31,885 (400)
Peppermill Reno, NV	4 Stephen Hein	\$23,575 (300)
	5 David Badolato	\$17,700 (250)
\$1,000 NLH Nov. 15-17 \$300,000 GTD Entries: 391 Prizepool: \$355,900	6 Charles Himes	\$14,185 (200)
	7 Travis Egbert	\$11,825 (150)
	8 Nathaniel Trimble	\$9,430 (100)
	9 Stuart Young	\$7,080 (50)



Cecilia Pescaglino

© King's Casino

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Calico Jack Tournament	1 Cecilia Pescaglino	\$40,857 (204)
	2 Axel Bayout	\$20,313 (170)
	3 Ali Nesat Cakmak	\$13,982 (136)
Kings Casino Rozvadov, Czech Republic	4 Anonymous	NA
	5 Pavel Stribrny	\$9,090 (85)
€660 NLH Nov. 17 Entries: 250 Prizepool: \$146,640	6 Fabio Franz	\$6,984 (68)
	7 Michele Tocci	\$5,081 (51)
	8 Vasyl Pidhrushnyi	\$3,683 (34)
	9 Philipp Birnstingl	\$3,044 (17)



Elian Madrigal

© Wildhorse Casino

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Fall Poker Round Up	1 Elian Madrigal	\$52,920 (420)
	2 Darrel Dier	\$38,185 (350)
	3 Volodymyr Trif	\$27,393 (280)
Wildhorse Pendleton, OR	4 Gennadiy Dvosis	\$19,715 (210)
	5 Dustin Apperson	\$13,905 (175)
\$550 NLH Nov. 16-17 Entries: 527 Prizepool: \$260,325	6 Monty Ford	\$10,376 (140)
	7 Lucas Jumalon	\$7,886 (105)
	8 Jeremie Whitesell	\$6,225 (70)
	9 Breonna Krafft	\$4,773 (35)



Abbas Pasha

© Rungood Poker Series

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Rungood Poker Series	1 Abbas Pasha	\$58,735 (360)
	2 Julie Cornelius	\$41,127 (300)
Horseshoe Council Bluffs, IA	3 Jeremy Hendricks	\$26,441 (240)
	4 James Girouard	\$17,420 (180)
	5 Cash Carpenter	\$13,414 (150)
\$800 NLH Nov. 22-24 \$200,000 GTD Entries: 403 Prizepool: \$282,100	6 Logan Cate	\$11,109 (120)
	7 Ben McCoy	\$9,309 (90)
	8 Siphonh Tran	\$7,586 (60)
	9 Jared Ward	\$5,873 (30)

TOURNAMENTS



© Holland Casino

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Master Classics	1 Eero Abbey	\$213,990 (1080)
	2 Jeroen Kalthof	\$142,459 (900)
Holland Casino Amsterdam, Netherlands	3 Erik Van Den Berg	\$101,739 (720)
	4 Mitar Saric	\$78,299 (540)
	5 Derk van Luijk	\$60,053 (450)
€3,000 NLH Nov. 19-23 Entries: 427 Prizepool: \$1,208,296	6 Totti Arosuo	\$46,036 (360)
	7 Conor O'Rourke	\$35,403 (270)
	8 Wouter Beltz	\$27,187 (180)
	9 Mateusz Moolhuizen	\$21,187 (90)



© Holland Casino

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Master Classics	1 Roope Tarmi	\$107,993 (240)
	2 Diego Montone	\$71,986 (200)
Holland Casino Amsterdam, Netherlands	3 Heskey Selva	\$42,702 (160)
	4 Juha Helppi	\$25,143 (120)
	5 Brandon Leetz	\$16,364 (100)
€6,300 NLH Nov. 22-23 Entries: 45 Prizepool: \$277,830	6 Malcom Franchi	\$13,642 (80)



© Merit Poker

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Gatsby Gala Series	1 Dawid Smolka	\$179,650 (702)
	2 Daniele Grasso	\$125,500 (600)
Merit Crystal Cove Kyrenia, Cyprus	3 Hadi Khordbin	\$80,300 (480)
	4 Bogdan Munteanu	\$60,300 (360)
	5 Georges Chehade	\$45,150 (300)
\$2,200 NLH Nov. 19-23 \$1,000,000 GTD Entries: 463 Prizepool: \$920,000	6 Ruslan Bakhtiev	\$36,200 (240)
	7 Sandra Cotescu	\$30,150 (180)
	8 Ziad Menhem	\$24,100 (120)
	9 Viktor Iarilov	\$18,050 (60)



© Merit Poker

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Gatsby Gala Series	1 Zhen Chen	\$132,300 (480)
	2 Alexandr Chernikov	\$91,500 (400)
Merit Crystal Cove Kyrenia, Cyprus	3 Simone Andrian	\$58,800 (320)
	4 Adrian State	\$43,600 (240)
	5 Fahredin Mustafov	\$32,000 (200)
\$5,300 NLH Nov. 22-25 \$250,000 GTD Entries: 103 Prizepool: \$473,800	6 Felipe Ketzner	\$26,000 (160)
	7 Angelos Michael	\$21,400 (120)
	8 Elie Saad	\$17,100 (80)
	9 Mehmet Demirkol	\$13,100 (40)

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2024 Card Player Player of the Year

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Rank	Player	Points	Titles	Final Tables	Earnings
1	Adrian Mateos	10,174	3	21	\$11,003,997
2	Jesse Lonis	8,702	3	21	\$6,562,547
3	David Coleman	8,690	5	22	\$3,747,165
4	Punnat Punsri	8,384	2	18	\$7,003,453
5	Michael Watson	7,564	4	15	\$7,430,019
6	Jeremy Ausmus	6,769	2	20	\$6,084,083
7	Jim Collopy	6,303	4	23	\$3,217,009
8	Ren Lin	6,283	1	21	\$3,275,228
9	Alex Foxen	6,229	2	19	\$4,099,332
10	Aleksejs Ponakovs	6,095	0	14	\$5,827,036
11	Dylan Weisman	5,702	5	14	\$3,419,166
12	Brock Wilson	5,510	3	17	\$2,594,852
13	Oliver Weis	5,444	3	5	\$2,560,598
14	Michael Rocco	5,183	2	10	\$2,192,388
15	Roman Hrabec	5,134	3	9	\$7,137,245
16	Matthew Lambrecht	5,121	2	18	\$1,456,497
17	Stephen Chidwick	5,107	4	19	\$4,329,279
18	Artur Martirosian	4,988	6	12	\$4,058,007
19	Daniel Dvoress	4,972	2	14	\$4,902,703
20	Sergio Aido	4,962	1	7	\$5,172,691
21	Biao Ding	4,838	2	13	\$5,650,439
22	Enrico Camosci	4,823	1	10	\$2,952,661
23	Yunkyu Song	4,804	1	10	\$1,131,167
24	Isaac Haxton	4,779	3	15	\$2,823,114
25	Seth Davies	4,774	3	15	\$7,613,774
26	Nick Petrangelo	4,731	2	7	\$5,119,470
27	Jeremy Becker	4,704	2	25	\$904,958
28	Daniel Negreanu	4,632	4	15	\$2,469,644
29	Jonathan Tamayo	4,512	1	2	\$10,180,000
30	Farid Jattin	4,475	1	10	\$1,114,373

ALL-TIME MONEY LIST



Rank	Player	Earnings
1	Bryn Kenney	\$74,056,233
2	Justin Bonomo	\$66,248,460
3	Stephen Chidwick	\$61,082,815
4	Mikita Badziakouski	\$60,150,136
5	Dan Smith	\$57,897,662
6	Jason Koon	\$57,865,226
7	Daniel Negreanu	\$53,455,934
8	Adrian Mateos	\$52,472,144
9	Isaac Haxton	\$52,327,233
10	David Peters	\$49,243,660
11	Erik Seidel	\$48,290,319
12	Fedor Holz	\$47,256,929
13	Phil Ivey	\$47,200,301
14	Steve O'Dwyer	\$46,200,100
15	Timothy Adams	\$40,497,634
16	Cary Katz	\$40,362,734
17	Nick Petrangelo	\$39,249,803
18	Sam Greenwood	\$38,236,092
19	Jake Schindler	\$37,608,559
20	Christoph Vogelsang	\$36,904,913
21	Daniel Dvoress	\$36,712,866
22	Alex Foxen	\$36,458,032
23	Sean Winter	\$33,575,429
24	Seth Davies	\$32,319,318
25	Paul Phua	\$31,155,977

The first-ever \$250,000 buy-in poker tournament was held in 2011. The trailblazing event, held at that year's *Aussie Millions*, was won by Erik Seidel for \$2.5 million. The victory grew his career earnings to more than \$13.7 million, which was good for second on the all-time money list at that point.

Now, more than a decade later, events that cost several hundred thousand dollars to enter are held multiple times each year. As a result, \$13.7 million in career scores is barely enough to place one inside the top 100 on poker's all-time money list (99th-ranked Sorel Mizzi has \$13,666,110 to his name). As of November 2024, it takes more than \$31 million in career earnings to crack the top 25.

The 65-year-old Seidel has since tripled his career haul to nearly \$48.3 million, and that's not even enough to rank inside the top 10 (the 10-time bracelet winner is currently sitting in 11th place).

Bryn Kenney holds a sizable lead thanks to the \$6 million he added across two big scores at the *Triton Monte Carlo* stop. (See pg. 28) His \$74 million total gives him a \$7.8 million advantage over second-ranked **Justin Bonomo** with \$66.2 million. Kenney is the first player to surpass \$70 million, largely thanks to his record-setting \$20,606,421 windfall in the 2019 *Triton Million Charity Invitational*. He has 11 scores of seven figures or more, with five for multiple millions.

Bonomo has also accrued several multi-million-dollar paydays (six to be exact). His largest also came in a million-dollar buy-in affair. He took down the 2018 *Big One For One Drop* to secure \$10,000,000 and his third *World Series of Poker* gold bracelet.

Stephen Chidwick and **Mikita Badziakouski** are the only other players to top \$60 million, with Dan Smith rounding out the top five by a hair over Jason Koon.

Of the top 10, nine players are still under the age of 40, with Adrian Mateos (30), and Mikita Badziakouski (32) the youngest. Daniel Negreanu at age 50 is the oldest, and currently sits in seventh place with \$53.5 million. ♠

THE SECRETS TO MAXIMIZING YOUR VALUE BETS

By Alex Fitzgerald

Maximizing value bets is one of the most crucial skills for increasing your long-term poker profits. In this article, we'll reveal key strategies for extracting the most chips from your opponents when you have a strong hand, ensuring you make the most out of every opportunity.

Bet More Rivers

This is one of the most basic ways to get more value in poker, which is why it is so staggering how many players get this wrong.

Over the last couple of years, I can only think of two river value bets I did where I seriously wonder if I was value betting too thinly. I got raised off both river bets. There's a good chance that I got bluffed in one spot. The other player I've played with more since that time, and it turns out he's solid and uncreative. It's unlikely he turned a hand into a bluff, but who knows? Maybe he ate his Wheaties on that particular day.

The other nine quintillion times I bet the river for thin value, my opponent did not even consider raising as a bluff. They saw it as a binary decision. Do I call with my mediocre value hand, or do I fold?

Most of them chose to call, because most poker players play emotionally. Calling a small bet and mucking your cards face down doesn't hurt much, but folding to a small bet and then being shown a bluff is humiliating. They call down too much hoping to avoid second-guessing themselves for the rest of the night.

However, it must be stated that 90% of your job is table selection. If you're playing against players who can use blockers on the river to raise your thin river value bets, then you can likely find a softer game elsewhere. Most local cardrooms will feature primarily recreational players. If you cherry pick what poker sites and buy-ins you play in, you'll also find mediocre players.

If someone checks to you on the river and you're fairly sure you have the best hand, bet. Most of these players do not bluff enough. They might do a bluff raise when they're pissed off, but that's it.

You are not value betting enough rivers until you accidentally value bet the second-best hand.

When In Doubt, Bet One-Third Pot

I have lost count of the number of times I've gotten overly excited with a big hand and shoved all-in. My stunned opponent, who clearly played his hand like he had a mediocre pair, folded quietly and wondered why I did something so stupid. I totally gave away the strength

of my hand.

Our hand is easy to play in no-limit hold'em. It's right in front of us. Our opponent's hand is the hand we need to play. That's the art form.

Don't look down at your huge hand and believe you're automatically entitled to huge value. If your opponent has been check-calling on a board with flush draws and straight draws, it's likely they just have one pair. They would have been tempted to raise earlier in the hand with two pair and sets to protect their hand and simultaneously get value from it. There's not many combinations of sets and two pairs to begin with anyway, and there are not many of them when they would have raised earlier in the hand with some of them.

“Most poker players play emotionally. Calling a small bet and mucking your cards face down doesn't hurt much, but folding to a small bet and then being shown a bluff is humiliating. To save themselves from second-guessing themselves the rest of the night and the embarrassment, they call down too much.”

Since you know you're targeting mostly crappy pairs, you have to think of a bet size that they won't fold those hands to.

Another way of thinking about this situation is this: What bluff bet would NEVER work here?

It's unlikely you would have missed your draw and thought to yourself, “quick! Bet one-third pot! That will get him to fold a pair!”

If your opponent stopped to think for a second, they'd realize you almost always have it when you bet small on the river. However, that's not how casual players and bad regs think. They see a one-third pot-sized bet as essentially zero.

If they call that bet with a mediocre hand and turn out to not have the best hand, they'll feel next to nothing. It's not that many chips. However, if they fold, they'll have

to wonder for the rest of the night if they folded the best hand. Most players will call just so they can sleep at night. They're paying for certainty.

Do They Have Top Pair? Bet Bigger!

Let's say the board comes A-2-4 rainbow. You have A-K offsuit. They called you out of the big blind.

When you fire the turn, you are going to want to bet bigger than 50% pot. If you overbet, they might consider folding their mediocre ace, but if you bet 50% to 100% the size of the pot, they'll feel stupid about folding top pair.

This is a great situation for you, because it's unlikely your opponent called pre flop with many twos or fours. Their most likely hand is some kind of mediocre ace. The average player HATES folding top pair. As long as you don't bet something absurd, they'll likely find a call.

Did A Draw Miss? Bet Bigger!

You raise from the cutoff with A-K offsuit. The button flats you. The board comes K♥ 7♥ 4♠. You continuation bet, and your opponent calls. The turn is the 2♣.

This is your chance to bet larger, something between 50% and 100% of the pot.

Why? When your opponent flats you on the flop with a king or a seven, they're rooting for no eight, three, or heart on the turn. When they see that absolute brick on the turn they're thinking, "excellent, that card couldn't have helped him."

It will be difficult for them to downshift from that positive feeling to, "whoa, what the hell is this larger bet?" They already wanted to gamble and call again.

Trying to get recreational players to fold the turn when all the draws missed is immensely difficult. They're likely

to say, "I bet he has a draw! I call." You can use their gambling bias against them.

Avoid All-Ins And Overbets

One final note. There are only two bets your opponents feel they need to take seriously. Those two bets are all-ins and overbets.

You need a great reason to use either of those bets versus common competition. They need to be tilted. They need to likely have a huge hand they can't fold. They have to already be pot committed.

If you don't have a great reason to use either of these intimidating bets, you can often use a smaller bet to get maximum value.

Conclusion

Maximizing value bets means taking advantage of key situations, such as betting more on the river and increasing your bets when you suspect your opponent has top pair or missed a draw. When in doubt, a one-third pot bet often works, but avoid pushing for all-ins or overbets to maintain consistent profits without risking their folds. ♠



Alexander Fitzgerald is a professional poker player and bestselling author who currently lives in Denver, Colorado. He is a WPT and EPT final tablist. He has WCOOP and SCOOP wins online. His most recent win was the \$250,000 Guaranteed on America's Cardroom. He currently

enjoys blasting bums away in Ignition tournaments while he listens to death metal. Free training packages of his are provided to new newsletter subscribers who sign up for free at www.pokerheadrush.com

IMPROVE YOUR POKER NOW!



A GUIDE FOR SERIOUS AMATEURS

**TOPHER GOGGIN
ALEXANDER FITZGERALD**

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The authors, Topher Goggin and leading coach Alexander Fitzgerald, understand these needs and have crafted a book that is perfect for such players. There are no complex hand range charts to master, solvers are conspicuous only from their absence, and the advice is given in terms that are easy to understand. This practical guide is everything you need to succeed now, without everything else you don't.



BEING THE FINAL TABLE BULLY

By Jonathan Little

I recently witnessed an interesting hand from a \$3,000 buy-in final table that demonstrates how you should use a big stack to push around your opponents. It also shows how you should actively avoid playing big pots as the middle stack against the big stack when there are numerous shallow stacks at the final table.

The stacks at the final table were:

- Hijack: 50 bbs
- Cutoff: 15 bbs
- Button: 80 bbs
- Small Blind: 20 bbs
- Big Blind: 30 bbs

The player in the hijack, who happened to be one of the best players in the world, raised to two big blinds out of his 50-big blind stack with A-Q offsuit.

A-Q is a perfectly fine hand that should be raised in all normal circumstances. Folding it, fearing aggression from the big stack or an all-in from a short stack (which A-Q would call), would be way too weak and tight.

The cutoff folded and the generally loose, aggressive big stack on the button three-bet to seven big blinds with K♥ 5♥.

This is a great spot to three-bet with a wide range including many bluffs because the initial raiser has to make a point to not go broke before the three short stacks. As the big stack, you should actively look to apply immense pressure to the middle stacks who have an extra incentive to avoid going broke due to the payout structure.

The best hands to three-bet with as a bluff are the hands that are not quite good enough to call that also contain an ace, king, or queen blocker.

When you have a blocker in your hand, it makes it more difficult for your opponent to have a premium hand due to there being one fewer strong card available. While K-5 suited is nowhere near good enough to call, it is a fine choice to use as a bluff due to the distribution of the stacks and the blocker.

Everyone folded back to the initial raiser who thought for a bit and then folded.

This fold initially seemed quite tight to me, but after thinking it through and running it through an ICM calculator, it makes sense.

If the hijack calls, the pot will be about 16 big blinds with 43 big blinds remaining in the stacks. This means that if the big stack makes reasonable bets on the flop, turn, and river, all the money will be in the pot.

Even if the flop comes ace or queen high, the hijack cannot be thrilled to put all his money in because he could easily be crushed by a premium made hand.

The hijack could opt to four-bet small with A-Q as a bluff (and A-A and A-K suited for value), but that is not necessary, especially if the short stacks are playing pots and somewhat likely to go broke in the near future. Sometimes it makes sense to take the cautious approach and move up the payout ladder.



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So, when you are at the final table as the big stack, look to apply pressure, and as the middle stack, look to avoid playing big pots.

If you want to apply more pressure to your opponents, you need to know how and when to bluff. I created a simple flowchart to help you bluff like a pro. This flowchart has 11 questions you should always ask yourself when deciding if you should bluff. I also recorded a short video that shows you how to use this flowchart by going through two hand examples!

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- Free Course: The 25 Biggest Leaks And How To Fix Them ♠



Jonathan Little is a two-time WPT winner and the 2024 PokerGO Cup champion with nearly \$9 million in live tournament earnings, best-selling author of 15 educational poker books, and 2019 GPI Poker Personality of the Year. If you want to increase your poker skills and learn to crush the games, check out his training site at PokerCoaching.com/CardPlayer.



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THERES A LOT TO CONSIDER IN DOUBLE BOARD BOMB POT PLO

By Mark Mazmanian

A game which has seen wonderful growth in popularity recently is Double Board Bomb Pot PLO. The game is similar to PLO in that a player receives four hole cards (occasionally it is played with five), and uses two from their hand and three from the community board to make the best five-card poker hand.

The twists are, rather than one board, two boards come out, and the winner of each board receives half of the pot. Additionally, the game is played bomb pot style meaning every hand regardless of position puts in an ante, and the hand proceeds straight to both flops (there is no betting round preflop). So, in an eight-handed game with a \$10 ante, the maximum opening wager (pot-limit) on the flop would be \$80.

Like any split pot poker game, the object of this game is to scoop, which brings me to a hand I recently played at the Venetian.

I was in middle position with $Q\clubsuit Q\spadesuit J\clubsuit J\heartsuit$, an exciting holding in this game that is capable of scooping a massive pot if the cards come favorably. The flops came down $Q\heartsuit 9\clubsuit 5\spadesuit$ and $K\diamondsuit 8\heartsuit 7\diamondsuit$, so I flopped top set on one board and a mid-pair with no draw on the other.

In this case, I want to play my hand very carefully since I am only currently playing for one board. If a player going for the other board happened to have a set or two pair with a heart draw, they would be a massive favorite over me since they could complete their flush and beat my Q-Q to scoop, a situation I certainly don't want to put my stack at risk for.

As such, I checked, and it checked to villain no. 1 on the button, a very splashy player who wagered \$50 with about \$300 behind. Villain no. 2 called with about \$900 behind, and I called having both of them covered. The pot was now \$230.

The turns were quite favorable, with the $9\diamondsuit$ pairing the top board and the $A\spadesuit$ coming on the bottom board.

Now I had the nut boat on the top board, and added a valuable gutshot straight draw on the other.

It is important to note that in bomb pot, every hand sees the flop, so no holding is out of a player's range as is typical when preflop betting is involved. It is entirely possible somebody could hold 9-9, for instance, though my hand is obviously very big on one board and has some potential on the other.

Villain no. 2 checked, I checked, and villain no. 1 fired \$200 with \$100 behind. Villain no. 2 called with \$700 behind, and now I had a decision to make.

The question is, what is the most profitable way to now play my hand? If I flat, what if villain no. 2 happens to hold 9-9 and have me beat? In this case there isn't much I can do since I am

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2024 Triton Super High Roller Series Monte Carlo
\$125,000 Main Event



Punnat Punsri
5,200,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 70%
After Flop: 92%
After Turn: 100%



Jonathan Jaffe
13,600,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 29%
After Flop: 8%
After Turn: 0%



PREFLOP

With six players remaining and blinds of 100,000-200,000 with a big blind ante of 200,000, Punnat Punsri called from the small blind. Jonathan Jaffe raised to 500,000 from the big blind, and Punsri called.



Punsri checked, and Jaffe bet 450,000. Punsri called.



Punsri checked, and Jaffe bet 1,200,000. Punsri called.



Both players checked.

COMMENTARY:

A few players had hit the rail since our first hand matchup featuring the final table of the *Triton Monte Carlo* main event (see pg. 13). Now, just six contenders were remaining, with each having locked up at least \$1,020,000 for surviving to the final half dozen. This hand saw Jaffe once again opening wide as the chip leader. Punnat Punsri opted for a trappy approach on the flop after defending his big blind with Q-J and flopping top pair with a jack kicker. His check-call is likely designed to under-represent his hand, allowing Jaffe the leeway to continue firing with his worst holdings. The move also keeps the size of the pot in check for those instances where his hand ends up being behind. The turn brought a king, which prompted a second check from Punsri. Jaffe fired again, perhaps hoping a second overcard might give him a shot at forcing Punsri off of something like 6-X. Despite no longer having top pair, Punsri called the bet of 57-percent pot. He was left with just 3,050,000 while the pot swelled to 4,500,000. An ace on the river added yet another overcard to Punsri's queens. He checked a third time and it was up to Jaffe to decide if he wanted to fire a third barrel or give up on the hand. Jaffe went into the tank for roughly 30 seconds, weighing the pros and cons. Eventually, he decided to wave the white flag and check, sending the sizable pot over to Punsri.

NOTE: WINNING PERCENTAGES DO NOT INCLUDE TIES. ODDS PROVIDED BY CARDPLAYER.COM/POKER-TOOLS/ODDS-CALCULATOR/TEXAS-HOLDEM

not laying down a nut boat, and the pot would be large enough for him to jam all-in on the river.

Now if I am ahead of villain no. 2 on only one board, the most likely scenario, I generally want him to fold since I will then be heads up against the button for the existing pot which has \$630 now, \$830 if I call, and would grow to \$1,030 with his last \$100 and my matching \$100. (Note, if I do decide to jam and villain no. 2 elects to call, the main pot would have \$1,130 and we would have \$1,200 on the side.)

What kind of hands do I want villain no. 2 to call with? Well, I want him to call if I have him scooped for the whole side pot, and fold if he has the bottom board so that I can compete with just the button for both sides of the pot.

On the board of $K\heartsuit 8\heartsuit 7\heartsuit A\spadesuit$ I know I have three pure outs with the offsuit tens. I also have two strong cards in the offsuit queen or jack.

(Additionally, if villain no. 2 were to fold a diamond draw, I may be able to add the $Q\heartsuit$ and $J\heartsuit$ as outs to scoop the presumably \$1,030 in the middle if villain no. 1 doesn't have diamonds.)

If villain no. 2 has a mediocre hand for that board that I could drive out, not doing so would be an error costing me potentially half the \$1,030, or \$515. And finally, if villain no. 2 happened to hold A-A or K-K, I would have three outs against him on that board and he would have one out against me on my queens full.

All things considered, I finally elected to jam all in. The button called off his last \$100, and villain no. 2 shrugged and called as well.

Everyone tabled, and I was quite surprised and thrilled to see 9-6-5-4 from villain no. 1 and 10-9-5-3 from villain no. 2. They both held nines full of fives and were drawing dead to me on the top board, and somehow my Q-Q were ahead on the other!

I was in prime position to scoop a \$2,330 pot with just one pair on one board, and for the side pot I was in even better shape as my opponent could only win with a jack or six, giving him six outs. If he missed, the button had four additional outs against me with three fours and one five.

As it played out, the river was the $10\heartsuit$ on the top board, and the $6\spadesuit$ on the bottom board, completing an open ender for villain no. 2, and him and I split. Nevertheless, this hand speaks to situational awareness, hand reading, and profit considerations in split game pot-limit poker. ♠



Mark Mazmanian has been a mixed-game specialist for more than two decades playing in games all over the country. The Las Vegas resident can be reached on IG [mazzastictl](#) or by email at markmaz17@hotmail.com.

Spicing Up Your Home Game: An Introduction

By Kevin Haney

Poker has a long and illustrious history, and while no one knows for certain when the very first hand was dealt, it probably all started with a home game. Most of us got our start in home games; the older generation may have learned five-card stud or draw at the kitchen table sitting behind a pile of pennies, while those of us who were products of the poker boom might have also gotten their introduction playing small-stakes hold'em with friends.

No-limit hold'em is the most prominent game on the planet, but limit mixed games have always had their place in home games, and they have been gaining in popularity. For example, there's a vibrant mixed game community in Minnesota with a regular crew of around 30 to 40 playing over a hundred different variants, many of which they invented themselves.

As far as what games are played, sometimes there is an organizer who establishes a predetermined mix. In other cases, most notably in *WSOP* cash games, the players who start the game will typically each get to choose a game or two. While these are not technically home games, they have that same vibe about them since the stakes are low and most players are just there for entertainment.

This new series will discuss mixed games in either a casino or a private setting that are played primarily for recreation. We will introduce and explain the rules for many new games, and also suggest ways to spice up the action while maintaining a positive atmosphere for all participants.



To start this series on spicing up your home game, I thought I would look at the spiciest home that I know of. The first thing I did was reach out to my buddy Minnesota Chris and get permission to share the Jester Casino Wheel. He was more than receptive, and quite excited to present some of his crew's creations to the community, as if he was Prometheus giving the world the gift of fire.

These Minnesota guys love poker, and when playing with them you get the sense that they truly enjoy each other's company, but also like to good-naturedly revel in the misery of others. Admittedly I'm a bit of a *Schadenfreude* myself so they are certainly part of my tribe, and I would be quite entertained by someone spinning that wheel and landing on "Pay Everyone \$20" or enduring other forms of punishment.

In addition to sometimes using the wheel to select games and/or randomly deal out pain, the Minnesota crew often incorporates other interesting twists into their games. For example, once per evening each player may have the ability to exercise an option (for a predetermined fee) on the first betting round to change the current game to another one with the same amount of cards dealt.

For example, suppose the game being played is 2-7 Triple Draw Lowball, and there is heavy action in front of you before the first draw. If you wake up to a monster high holding, you can exercise your available option, and change the game to *Dramaha High*, leaving your opponents scrambling.

Your buddy might be sitting on a low-oriented monster, but now has to ditch it, or put in more money, and then possibly

end up drawing four or five cards.

The \$20 option fee (or whatever dollar amount is chosen) can then go towards a donation pool for a worthwhile cause. The Minnesota crew ended up contributing over \$2,000 to St Jude’s Children’s Hospital. Great job everyone!

Over time we will get around to discussing most games on the wheel, and also many that are not. And as we proceed, we thought it would be fun and create debate to rank the various games based upon factors such as typical action produced, ease of understanding, balance of luck versus skill, and generally speaking, how well the games are received in the typical home game or live casino environment.

Of course, it’s all relative as any mixed player knows that there is no such thing as a bad poker game, and a bad day on the felt is usually better than doing anything else. That said, some variants are better than others, and there are some that don’t perform very well in current home or mixed game environments.

For example, Dramaha High-Dugi usually isn’t well received, and new players often have difficulty understanding the rules. I recall butchering some hands the first time playing it, but in my defense I don’t think it was explained well to me. So whenever new players require instruction, I attempt to give a more thorough treatment, but no one wants to hear a mini speech or think that extensively at a poker table. At least I don’t; anything requiring 10 seconds or more to explain is probably too long for me.

Razz can be considered a niche game. While it’s a skillful and worthwhile variant, particularly in a tournament setting, it often suffers when part of an action cash game mix. An unpopular stud variant is problematic as those who don’t want

to play it will often take a break, creating a situation where the rest of the table has very few antes in the middle to fight over. This usually kills the action and then then everyone asks to either remove the game or change it to something else.

Nowadays most players are primarily interested in the games containing more action, bigger hands, and additional possibilities that accompany the various draw, super stud, and other more exotic variants. Once players get exposed to games such as Badeucey, Super Stud Hi-Lo, Archie, and the more popular forms of Dramaha, they often get hooked and don’t want to play anything else.

But it’s important to note, these games’ popularity is rising due to the entertainment and often big pots they produce, not for some greedy desire to win money against new players who don’t know the rules.

If you don’t know how to play any of these games, but are possibly up for learning them you are in the right place. Don’t be intimidated by the weird names, learning the rules and becoming quickly competent in these “crazy games” is probably not nearly as hard as you might imagine.

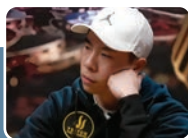
Check back next issue as we look at Dramaha. ♠



Kevin Haney is a former actuary but left the corporate job to focus on his passions for poker and fitness. The certified personal trainer owned a gym in New Jersey, but has since moved to Las Vegas. He started playing the game back in 2003, and particularly enjoys taking new players interested in mixed games under his wing and quickly making them proficient in all variants. Learn more or just say hello with an email to haneyk612@gmail.com.

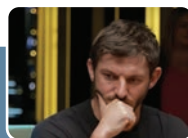
TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2024 Triton Super High Roller Series Monte Carlo
\$125,000 Main Event



Wai Leong Chan
6,100,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 71%
After Flop: 59%
After Turn: 75%



Jonathan Jaffe
10,625,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 28%
After Flop: 40%
After Turn: 25%



PREFLOP

With five players remaining and blinds of 125,000-250,000 with a big blind ante of 250,000, Wai Leong Chan raised to 525,000 from the cut-off. Jonathan Jaffe called from the small blind.



Jaffe checked, and Chan bet 500,000. Jaffe called.



Jaffe checked, and Chan bet 1,300,000. Jaffe called.



Jaffe checked. Chan moved all in for 3,775,000, and Jaffe called.

COMMENTARY:

Wai Leong Chan got home-run value in this pot, which saw him wrest the chip lead from Jonathan Jaffe. The two went to a flop with a couple of strong starting hands, with Chan raising with A-K from late position and Jaffe just calling out of the small blind with K-Q suited. It was an action flop, with a king and two low diamonds connecting with both players in a major way. Despite that fact, the betting action belied the strength of both player’s holdings. Jaffe just check-called Chan’s continuation bet of two big blinds and the turn brought the 9♥. Jaffe checked again and Chan bet just over five big blinds with his top pair, top kicker. Jaffe hung around, only to see the river bring a non-diamond ace. He checked a third time and Chan shoved for 3,775,000 into the pot of 5,150,000 with his rivered aces and kings. This development shifted Jaffe’s hand into the bluff-catcher category. Would Chan be shoving for value with a weaker A-X? Or is his range now polarized to two-pair plus and bluffs? Is Jaffe having two key diamonds in his hand a negative when considering a hero call? After a fairly short amount of time in the tank, Jaffe made the call and was shown the bad news. Chan surged into the lead, while Jaffe’s stack took a major hit. After leading for much of the day, Jaffe went on to finish fifth. He earned \$1,330,000 for his efforts, the second-largest score of his tournament career.

NOTE: WINNING PERCENTAGES DO NOT INCLUDE TIES. ODDS PROVIDED BY CARDPLAYER.COM/POKER-TOOLS/ODDS-CALCULATOR/TEXAS-HOLDEM

SCHEDULES

FOR COMPLETE TOURNAMENT RESULTS AND LISTINGS, VISIT CARDPLAYER.COM

Month	Dates	Tournament Name	Location
DECEMBER	Dec. 25-Jan. 12	New Year's Extravaganza	Venetian Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
JANUARY	Jan. 1	New Year Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino ■ Oceanside, CA
	Jan. 2-9	PGT Last Chance	Aria PokerGO Studio ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Jan. 4-20	WSOP Circuit - Choctaw	Choctaw Casino Resort ■ Durant, OK
	Jan. 6-20	Wynn Signature Series	Wynn ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Jan. 10-11	PGT Championship	Aria PokerGO Studio ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Jan. 13-Feb. 2	DeepStack Showdown	Venetian Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Jan. 16-27	WSOP Circuit - Northern California	Thunder Valley Casino Resort ■ Lincoln, CA
	Jan. 20-25	PGT Kickoff	Aria PokerGO Studio ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Jan. 22-Feb. 3	WSOP Circuit - Tunica	Horseshoe Casino & Hotel ■ Robinsonville, MS
	Jan. 30-Feb. 10	WSOP Circuit - Florida	Harrah's ■ Pompano Beach, FL
FEBRUARY	Feb. 11-20	PokerGO Cup	Aria PokerGO Studio ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Feb. 13-24	WSOP Circuit - North Carolina	Harrah's ■ Cherokee, NC
	Feb. 20-March 3	WSOP Circuit - Baltimore	Horseshoe Casino ■ Baltimore, MD
	Feb. 25-March 5	PGT Mixed Games	Aria PokerGO Studio ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Feb. 27-March 10	WSOP Circuit - Indiana	Horseshoe Casino ■ Hammond, IN
MARCH	March 5-17	WSOP Circuit - Oklahoma	Hard Rock Hotel & Casino ■ Catoosa, OK
	March 6-8	Super High Roller Bowl: Mixed Games	Aria PokerGO Studio ■ Las Vegas, NV
	March 13-24	WSOP Circuit - New York	Turning Stone Casino & Resort ■ Verona, NY
	March 19-April 8	Seminole Hard Rock Poker Showdown	Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino ■ Hollywood, FL
	March 20-31	WSOP Circuit - Las Vegas	Horseshoe Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	March 25-April 5	PGT PLO Series	Aria PokerGO Studio ■ Las Vegas, NV

AO-Add On **B**-Bonus **BIG O**-5 Card PLO 8/OB **CP**-Crazy Pineapple **H.O.R.S.E.**-Hold'em, Omaha Eight-or-Better, Razz, Seven-Card Stud, Seven-Card Stud Eight-or-Better **R.O.S.E.**-Razz, Omaha Eight-or-Better, Seven-Card Stud, Seven-Card Stud Eight-or-Better
KO- Knock Out or Bounty **LH**-Limit Hold'em **MIX**-Mixed Games **MP**-Mexican Poker **NLH**-No-Limit Hold'em
O H/L-Omaha Eight-or-Better **PLO**-Pot-Limit Omaha **RB**-Rebuy **SH/L**-Seven-Card Stud Eight-or-Better **SLH**-Spread-Limit Hold'em

CALIFORNIA

GRATON - ROHNERT PARK

MONDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$135
 6:00 p.m. NLH, \$65

TUESDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$65
 6:00 p.m. NLH, \$135

WEDNESDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$135

THURSDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$75
 6:00 p.m. NLH, \$200 KO \$25

FRIDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$200 KO \$25

SUNDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$250 (\$5K Guarantee)

OCEAN'S ELEVEN - OCEANSIDE

MONDAY-TUESDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$95 AO \$5
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$95 AO \$5

WEDNESDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$130
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$95 AO \$5

THURSDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$95 AO \$5
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$95 AO \$5

FRIDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$95 AO \$5

SATURDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$190 AO \$10

SUNDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$140 AO \$10

FLORIDA

BESTBET - JACKSONVILLE

MONDAY

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100

WEDNESDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$100

THURSDAY

7:00 p.m. PLO, \$200

FRIDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$200

SUNDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$200

BESTBET - ORANGE PARK

TUESDAY

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100

THURSDAY

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100

SATURDAY

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100

SUNDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$60

BESTBET - ST. AUGUSTINE

MONDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$80

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$80

TUESDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$80
WEDNESDAY
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$120
THURSDAY
 12:00 p.m. NLH, \$80
FRIDAY
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$180
SATURDAY
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$200
SUNDAY
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$120

OREGON

WILDHORSE - PENDLETON

TUESDAY
 6:30 p.m. NLH, \$70
THURSDAY
 6:30 p.m. NLH, \$70
FRIDAY
 6:30 p.m. NLH, \$125
SATURDAY
 1:00 p.m. NLH, \$125
SUNDAY
 1:00 p.m. NLH, \$70

NEVADA

BELLAGIO - LAS VEGAS

SATURDAY
 11:00 a.m. NLH, \$200 (\$4K Guarantee)
SUNDAY
 11:00 a.m. NLH, \$200 KO (\$4K Guarantee)
 4:00 p.m. NLH, \$200 KO (\$4K Guarantee)

TEXAS

RESORTS WORLD - LAS VEGAS

DAILY
 12:05 p.m. NLH, \$200 (\$3K Guarantee)
 7:05 p.m. NLH, \$200 (\$3K Guarantee)

WYNN - LAS VEGAS

MONDAY-THURSDAY
 12:00 p.m. NLH, \$200 (\$10K Guarantee)
 6:00 p.m. NLH, \$160 AO \$100 (\$10K Guarantee)
FRIDAY
 12:00 p.m. NLH, \$240 RB \$200 AO \$100 (\$40K Guarantee)
 6:00 p.m. NLH, \$160 AO \$100 (\$10K Guarantee)
SATURDAY
 12:00 p.m. NLH, \$300 (\$25K Guarantee)
 6:00 p.m. NLH, \$160 AO \$100 (\$10K Guarantee)
SUNDAY
 12:00 p.m. NLH, \$200 AO \$100 (\$25K Guarantee)
 6:00 p.m. NLH, \$160 AO \$100 (\$10K Guarantee)

TCH SOCIAL - AUSTIN

MONDAY
 1:00 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$2K Guarantee)
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$20 RB \$20 AO \$20 (\$3K Guarantee)
TUESDAY
 1:00 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$2K Guarantee)
 7:00 p.m. PLO, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
WEDNESDAY
 1:00 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$2K Guarantee)
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$120 (\$5K Guarantee)
THURSDAY
 1:00 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 7:00 p.m. PLO, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
FRIDAY
 1:00 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$140 AO \$100 (\$10K Guarantee)
SATURDAY
 1:00 p.m. NLH, \$20 (\$3K Guarantee)
 6:00 p.m. NLH, \$150 (\$5K Guarantee)
SUNDAY
 11:00 a.m. NLH, \$60 (\$2K Guarantee)
 5:00 p.m. NLH, \$250 KO (\$10K Guarantee)

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

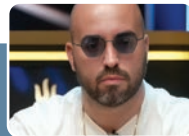
2024 Triton Super High Roller Series Monte Carlo
 \$125,000 Main Event



Wai Leong Chan
 9,900,000 Chips



Winning Percentage
 Before Flop: 66%
 After Flop: 66%
 After Turn: 77%



Bryn Kenney
 11,400,000 Chips



Winning Percentage
 Before Flop: 33%
 After Flop: 34%
 After Turn: 23%

PREFLOP

With five players remaining and blinds of 150,000-300,000 with a big blind ante of 300,000, Wai Leong Chan raised to 600,000 from the cutoff. Bryn Kenney called from the big blind.



Kenney checked. Chan bet 500,000. Kenney called.



Kenney checked. Chan checked.



Kenney bet 975,000. Chan folded.

COMMENTARY:

Bryn Kenney made something out of nothing in this pot. He defended his big blind facing a raise from Wai Leong Chan, who was in a virtual tie for second chip position while Kenney sat alone at the top. Kenney flopped a gutshot straight draw, which was apparently enough, in this instance, to float Chan's continuation bet with. The turn paired the bottom card from the flop and Kenney checked a second time. Chan, having not connected in any meaningful way, opted to pump the brakes and check behind. The 9♣ completed the board and Kenney, with absolutely no show-down value to speak of, opted to seize his chance at buying the pot. He fired just a bit over a one-third pot bluff on the end. "Doesn't even need to go big. This bet [is] just designed to fold out ace highs, king highs, queen highs," noted Triton commentator Henry Kilbane from the booth. The tactic worked like a charm, as Chan quickly got away from his Q-10 high to send the pot over to Kenney. These two went on to battle heads-up later on in the day, with Kenney ultimately coming away with the title and the top prize of \$4,410,000. Chan earned \$2,970,000, which was his third multi-million-dollar payday. Kenney extended his lead on poker's all-time money list with nearly \$72.4 million, while Chan grew his career haul to nearly \$15.9 million.

NOTE: WINNING PERCENTAGES DO NOT INCLUDE TIES. ODDS PROVIDED BY [CARDPLAYER.COM/POKER-TOOLS/ODDS-CALCULATOR/TEXAS-Holdem](https://cardplayer.com/poker-tools/odds-calculator/texas-holdem)



Action Card - A card that causes an increase in betting.

Air - A bad hand with little to no value.

Angle (Shooting) - An unethical play used to gain information or an advantage.

Backdoor - A draw needing two streets to complete.

Balance - Playing different hands in the same way so opponents can't read you.

Bankroll - The amount of money you have to play poker with.

Barrel - A continuation bet followed by a bet on the turn and/or river.

Blocker - Holding one of your opponent's outs.

Bluff Catcher - A weak hand that can only beat a bluff.

Bounty - A prize earned for a knockout in a tournament.

Brick - A blank card that is unlikely to have helped.

Broadway - A straight to the ace.

Bubble - The time period right before a tournament reaches the money.

Burn - A card that is removed by the dealer to prevent cheating.

Calling Station - A loose, passive player who rarely folds.

Chip Race - Coloring up the smallest chips in circulation during a tournament.

Chop - A split of the pot.

Coin Flip - A situation where the odds for each player are roughly 50/50.

Collusion - Working with another player to cheat.

Continuation Bet - When the preflop aggressor makes another bet on the flop.

Crying Call - A call from a player who does not believe his hand is best.

Dead Money - A player with no chance of winning. Also, extra money in the pot.

Donk Bet - An early position bet by a player who was not the aggressor in the previous betting round.

Drawing Dead - When your hand can no longer win.

Drawing Live - When your hand is behind but can still draw out.

Effective Stack - The smallest stack among two players in a heads-up pot.

Eight-Or-Better - A qualifier common in high-low split games.

Equity - The mathematical expected value of your hand.

Expected Value - The weighted average of what you should profit in the long run.

Family Pot - When every player at the table sees the flop or fourth street.

Felted - To lose all your chips, such that there are none left on the felt.

Float - To call with a weak hand with the intention of bluffing later.

Freeroll - A tournament with no buy-in, or a tournament stake with no makeup.

GTO - Game Theory Optimal play aiming for an unexploitable strategy.

Gutshot - An inside straight draw.

Hero Call - Calling with a relatively weak hand when you suspect a bluff.

Hollywood - Exaggerating and overacting to sell strength or weakness.

Horse - A player financially backed by someone else.

ICM - The Independent Chip Model assigns monetary value to tournament chips.

Implied Odds - The additional chips you expect to win if your draw improves.

Juice - Rake, or the fee collected by the house or casino.

Kill - A button that temporarily increases the stakes of the game.

LAG - A loose, aggressive player.

Limp - To enter a pot by calling the minimum bet rather than raise.

Muck - To fold.

Nit - A rock, who rarely takes risks or gives action, and only plays premium cards.

Nuts - The best possible hand on a given board.

Open - To bet first.

Orbit - A full rotation of the blinds at the table.

Overbet - To make a bet that is more than the current size of the pot.

Overcall - To call a bet after others have already called.

Paint - A face card jack, queen, or king.

Pat - A hand that no longer needs any more draws.

Polarized - When a player's range is split between either very strong hands or air.

Quarter - To win 1/4 or 3/4 of a pot by tying a hand in a high-low split game.

Rabbit Hunt - To look at future cards after folding and the hand is complete.

Railbird - Someone who hangs out on the sidelines of a poker room.

Rainbow - Three or four cards of different suits.

Range - The possible starting hands a player might have given their action.

Ratholing - Going south or sneaking your chips off the table during the game.

Scoop - To win both halves of the pot in a high-low split game.

Semi-Bluff - To bluff with a drawing hand that could improve to the best hand.

Slowroll - To delay or avoid showing when you have the best hand.

Snow - Holding on to bad cards in draw poker in order to bluff.

Straddle - A voluntary bet placed before the deal to increase pot size and incentivize action.

TAG - A tight, aggressive player.

Tell - A detectable change in a player's behavior that gives away the strength of their hand.

Tilt - Frustration or anger that leads to poor play.

Variance - The statistical measure of how results differ from expectation.

VPIP - The percentage of hands voluntarily played preflop.

Wet Board - A dynamic board with many several possible draws.

Wheel - A five-high straight.



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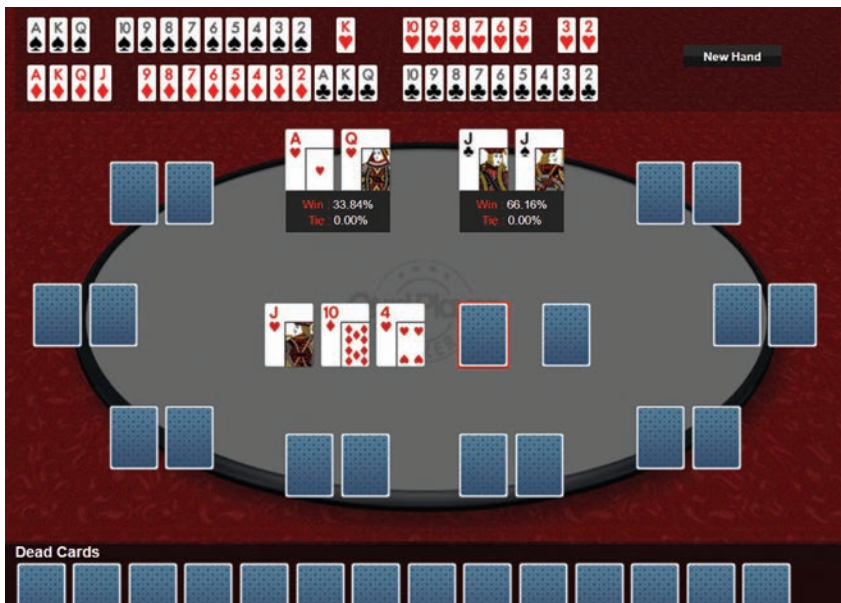
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POKER ODDS



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CALCULATING ODDS

Outs	Situation	After The Flop	After The Turn
21	Straight And Flush Draw, With Two Overcards	70%	45%
20		68%	43%
19		65%	41%
18	Straight And Flush Draw, With One Overcard	62%	39%
17		60%	37%
16		57%	35%
15	Straight And Flush Draw	54%	33%
14		51%	30%
13	Flush Draw With Gutshot	48%	28%
12	Flush Draw With One Overcard	45%	26%
11	Straight Draw With One Overcard	42%	24%
10		38%	22%
9	Flush Draw	35%	20%
8	Straight Draw	32%	17%
7		28%	15%
6	Two Live Overcards	24%	13%
5		20%	11%
4	Gutshot Straight Draw	17%	9%
3	Need To Pair Kicker	13%	7%
2	Pocket Pair Needs To Make A Set	8%	4%
1	Set Needs To Make Quads	4%	2%

HAND MATCHUPS

Situation	Example	Odds	Percent
Higher Pair vs. Lower Pair	J♠ J♣ vs. 7♥ 7♦	4.09-1	80.3% vs. 19.7%
Pair vs. Two Over Cards	7♠ 7♣ vs. A♥ J♦	1.23-1	55.1% vs. 44.9%
Pair vs. Two Under Cards	Q♠ Q♣ vs. 9♥ 7♦	4.77-1	82.7% vs. 17.3%
Pair vs. One Overcard	J♠ J♣ vs. A♥ 7♦	2.50-1	71.4% vs. 28.6%
Two Higher Cards vs. Two Lower Cards	Q♠ J♣ vs. 6♥ 5♦	1.70-1	62.9% vs. 37.1%

*Approximate Percentages

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ACES ON A DRAW HEAVY BOARD

By Jonathan Little

Join more than 120,000 players worldwide who have taken their game to the next level. To develop your poker skills and learn how to crush games, check out PokerCoaching.com/CardPlayer.



You're eight-handed in a \$10,000 buy-in live tournament with a 125,000 stack at 500-1,000. UTG raises to 2,500, and it folds to you on the button with A♦ A♥.

Question 1: Should you call, reraise to 6,000, reraise to 8,000, or reraise to 12,000?

Answer: This is not a spot to get tricky or do anything out of the ordinary. Simply put in a normal three-bet to roughly 3x the initial raise, as you would do with the rest of your three-betting range. If you were shallower, you could go smaller because then you would not need to three-bet as large in order to get your entire stack in by the river when you feel inclined.

You reraise to 8,000 and UTG calls. The flop comes Q♦ 9♦ 2♣ and UTG checks.

Question 2: Should you check, bet 10,000, bet 14,000, or bet 20,000?

Answer: This flop is good enough for you such that you can bet and even call a raise. While you lose to a few hands like sets and Q-9 suited, you beat almost everything else. Choose a medium size so you don't force your opponent to fold underpairs and gutshot straight draws. 10,000 or so is a nice size in this spot.

You bet 10,000 and UTG calls. The turn is the 4♣ and UTG checks.

Question 3: Should you check, bet 12,000, bet 22,000, or bet 44,000?

Answer: Normally when there are two flush draws available, you want to bet on the larger side to get full protection against the draws and win the maximum against one-pair hands, but in this spot, having the A♦ blocks many of the logical draws your opponent could have. So, you don't need to be quite so concerned about being against a draw (even though plenty of draws are still possible).

Your opponent is likely to have a queen or a nine, so make a medium bet they cannot fold against.

You bet 22,000 and UTG calls. The river is the 5♥ and UTG checks.

Question 4: Should you check, bet 20,000, bet 40,000, or go all in?

Answer: When all the draws miss, aces are an excellent hand to go all in with. There are a lot of busted draws your opponent can reasonably put you on, which will result in them calling with lots of one-pair hands that you crush.

If you somehow knew your opponent would always fold a queen to an all-in, perhaps a smaller bet would be better, but that is rarely the optimal strategy once the stack-to-pot ratio becomes roughly 1:1 or shorter.

You go all-in and your opponent instantly folds, presumably with a busted draw. Oh well, you weren't getting called anyway. ♠



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