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Vol. 33/No. 19  
September 9, 2020



## Daniel Dvoress Seizes The First \$1 Million Top Prize of the 2020 World Series of Poker

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Card Player (ISSN 1089-2044) is published biweekly by Card Player Media LLC, 6940 O'Bannon Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89117. Annual subscriptions are \$39.95 U.S. (\$59.95 U.S. for two years), \$59.95 Canada, and \$75.95 International. Remit payment to CUSTOMER SERVICE, CARD PLAYER MAGAZINE, PO BOX 434, CONGERS, NY 10920-0434 or call 1-866-587-6537. Periodicals postage paid at Las Vegas, NV, and additional mailing offices USPS #022-483. POSTMASTER: Send all address changes to CARD PLAYER MAGAZINE, PO BOX 434, CONGERS, NY 10920-0434.

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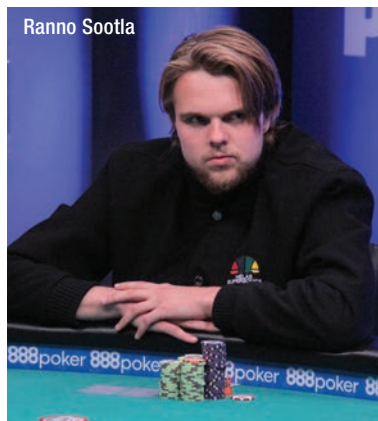
# the INSIDE STRAIGHT

News, Reviews, and Interviews From Around the Poker World

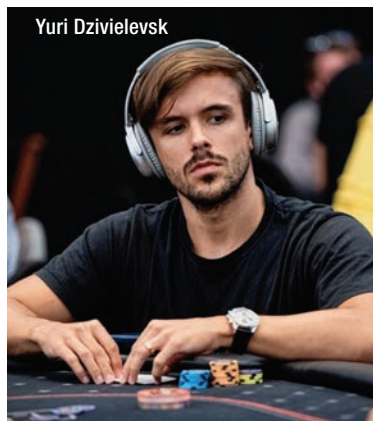
## MORE THAN \$85 MILLION HAS BEEN PAID OUT ALREADY DURING THE 2020 WORLD SERIES OF POKER ONLINE

139,868 Entries Have Been Made Through The First 59 Events,  
With 26 Tournaments Left To Play

By Erik Fast



Ranno Sootla



Yuri Dzivilevsk



Eoghan O'Dea

The first-ever *World Series of Poker Online* is now more than two-thirds of the way through its schedule of 85 gold bracelet events. Through the first 59 tournaments, a total of 139,868 entries have been made to build \$85,176,238 in total prize money paid out to players around the world. There are still 26 events remaining on the schedule, including many of the tournaments with the largest guaranteed prize pools, such as the \$25 million guaranteed \$5,000 buy-in main event. The previous issue of *Card Player* magazine featured an in-depth look at the first half of the series. Below is a look at the biggest stories from the *WSOP Online* events that have wrapped up in recent weeks.

### Huge Fields, Huge Paydays

There have been five events that have exceeded 4,300 entries during the international-facing segment of the *WSOP Online*. The largest of all was the record-setting \$100 buy-in 'Opener' event, which drew 29,306 entries to become the largest-field bracelet event in the history of the series. There have been several other tournaments to draw staggering numbers in recent weeks. The online version of the popular 'Colossus' event saw 12,757 entries of \$400 made, creating

a prize pool of \$4,796,632. The huge turnout resulted in this being the eighth-largest field in *WSOP* history. In the end, Estonia's **Ranno Sootla** emerged victorious with his first gold bracelet and the top prize of \$595,930.

The next largest turnout so far this series came in a \$150 buy-in no-limit hold'em freezeout event held on August 9th. By the time registration closed for that event, 9,835 entries had been made to create a prize pool of \$1,357,230. The lion's share of that was awarded to eventual champion **Anatoly Suvarov**, who secured his first bracelet and \$183,526, or roughly 1,223.5 times the \$150 buy-in.

The first-ever online running of the popular 'Millionaire Maker' tournament saw 6,299 total entries made, blowing away the event's \$5 million guarantee to create a final prize pool of \$8,976,075. Canadian poker pro **Daniel Dvoress** captured his first bracelet and the \$1,489,289 top prize as the champion. For more info on his victory, check out the cover story of this issue.

The only non-no-limit hold'em event to surpass the 4,300-entries mark was the \$400 buy-in pot-limit Omaha 'PLOSSUS'. The event saw 4,356 entries made to build

Yuri Dzivilevsk | photo courtesy of partypoker LIVE.



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a prize pool of \$1,637,856. Brazilian poker pro **Yuri Dzivielevski** came out on top in the end to earn \$221,557 and his second bracelet, having won the \$2,500 Omaha eight-or-better and seven-card stud eight-or-better split event held at the 2019 *WSOP*.

#### Like Father, Like Son

When it comes to father-and-son duos finding success at the *WSOP*, **Doyle Brunson** and **Todd Brunson** are on a level of their own. The two have 11 bracelets between them, with Doyle supplying 10 of those wins, including two main event victories. *Card Player's* own **Barry Shulman** and **Jeff Shulman** are also among the most prolific duos, with Barry having won two bracelets including the 2009 *WSOP Europe* main event, while Jeff made the final table of the main event twice in a single decade.

Irish poker pro **Eoghan O'Dea** scored a huge victory this series to further the case for himself and his father, **Donnacha O'Dea**, being among the very best father-son duos in the history of poker. Eoghan overcame a field of 2,005 total entries to take down this year's *WSOP Online* \$400 buy-in pot-limit Omaha event. For the win, the 2011 *WSOP* main event sixth-place finisher earned his first gold bracelet and the top prize of \$100,945. According to the *WSOP's* records, he was just the sixth player from his home country of Ireland to win a bracelet, joining his father on that prestigious list.

Donnacha won his bracelet in the 1998 \$1,500 pot-limit Omaha rebuy event, defeating **Johnny Chan** heads-up to secure the title and a \$154,800 payday. Like his son, Donnacha also made the final table of the main event, finishing in sixth place in the 1983 world championship that was eventually won by **Tom McEvoy**.

#### Keeping The Streak Alive

At least one player has earned two or more bracelets during the *WSOP* each and every year since 2000, when **Chris**

**Ferguson** kicked off this run by taking down both a \$2,500 seven-card stud event and the main event. **Alek Stasiak** has extended this streak into its 21st consecutive year by winning the 2020 *WSOP Online* \$1,000 no-limit hold'em event less than two weeks after emerging victorious in the \$1,111 'Every 1 For COVID Relief' no-limit hold'em event.

Stasiak defeated a field of 2,323 to win his first bracelet and \$343,204 in late July. He added the second piece of hardware and another \$273,505 by overcoming 2,006 total entrants late on August 6 in another large-field no-limit hold'em event. Stasiak's two victories earned him a total of \$616,708, the fifth most of any player so far this series.

#### The Big Finish

The final few weeks of the inaugural *WSOP Online* are set to feature a number of the largest events planned for the series. The centerpiece of the schedule is certainly the \$25,000,000 guaranteed \$5,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em main event, which kicks off with the first of 20 starting flights on Aug. 16. Players will start with 50,000 in chips and initial blinds of 125-250 and an ante of 25. The starting flights will feature 30-minute levels, with the length increasing to 40 minutes per level on day 2.

The players that survive their starting flight will combine into one field for day 2, which gets underway at 6:30 PM GMT on Aug. 30. Play will continue until just 40 players remain. They will return on September 5 to play down to a winner in what could very well be the largest tournament in online poker history, in terms of prize money awarded.

There is also a \$10,000,000 guaranteed \$25,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em high roller event which kicks off on Aug. 23rd and a \$5,000,000 guaranteed \$10,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em tournament starting on Sept. 6. With plenty of gold bracelets and money left to be won, the final few weeks of the *WSOP Online* are sure to bring an exciting conclusion to what has been an action-packed series. ♠

## ONLINE GAMBLING OUTLOOK SECURES MGM RESORTS A \$1 BILLION INVESTMENT

By Steve Schult

Despite reporting a 91 percent drop in revenue during the second quarter due mostly to the coronavirus-induced shut downs nationwide, MGM Resorts received a 10-figure investment from a prominent holding company.

InterActive Corp bought a 12 percent stake, worth about \$1 billion, in the Las Vegas-based gaming giant.

Despite a lack of revenue at its brick-and-mortar facilities, billionaire Barry Diller's IAC purchased the stake in MGM because of its outlook on the online gambling market.

"MGM presented a 'once in a decade' opportunity for IAC to own a meaningful piece of a preeminent brand in a large category with great potential to move online," said Diller in a letter to shareholders.

According to a *Fox Business* report, Diller also stated that he had been looking to enter the online gambling space "for a while" and that the industry was worth \$450 billion on a global scale. IAC is a New York-based holding company that owns brands in more than 100 countries.

With larger gambling hubs hurting as tourism declines



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and revenue drops from restrictions stemming from new safety protocols, the online space, where legal, has thrived.

While New Jersey casinos were shut down, Garden State online operators reached record levels of revenue and the state's most successful online casino, Golden Nugget, recently secured a partnership in Michigan. The partnership will allow the company to operate in the state when its online gambling market is launched either later this year or early 2021.

In June, the most recent month with available data, New Jersey online casinos won \$84.9 million from gamblers, sustaining all-time high levels, while Pennsylvania netted \$55.8 million. According to some analysts, Michigan's online gaming market is worth \$650 million in annual revenue, roughly on par with Pennsylvania's numbers. ♠

# LAS VEGAS CASINOS EXPERIENCE STEEP REVENUE DECLINE IN FIRST MONTH BACK SINCE SHUTDOWN

By Steve Schult

In the first month that brick-and-mortar gambling returned to the Silver State since the coronavirus-induced shutdown, Nevada casinos experienced a 45.5 percent drop in revenue.

According to numbers released by the Nevada Gaming Control Board, the state's gross gaming revenue in June was \$566.8 million. Gov. Steve Sisolak allowed casinos to resume operations, with several restrictions in place, June 4. It was the first time casinos were operational since Sisolak ordered them closed in mid-March.

It was a stark drop from the \$1.04 billion that casinos won from gamblers in June 2019 but is a welcome sight to operators and employees alike com-

pared to the mere \$5.8 million won by casinos in May and \$3.6 million in April. Both April and May's numbers represented a greater than 99 percent revenue decline year-over-year.

Despite making up the largest chunk of the state's gambling revenue, the Las Vegas Strip experienced the largest percentage drop over anywhere else in the state. The area is more reliant on tourism than other parts of the state and the absence of large mid-week conventions has clearly hurt the Strip casinos.

Strip casinos won \$238.3 million from gamblers, a 61.36 percent decrease from the same period last year. Downtown Las Vegas, likely the

second-largest tourist reliant area in Nevada, won \$23.2 million, good for a 55.56 percent drop. Clark County was down 51.36 percent with its \$441 million in earnings.

Outside of Clark County, casinos experienced much smaller drops in revenue as those areas are more reliant on locals and less so on out-of-town visitors. Both North and South Lake Tahoe saw revenues fall more than 20 percent, but every other region saw just single digit percentage dips.

With a drop in business revenue comes a decrease in tax revenue as well. The state collected just \$344,027 in gambling taxes, compared to \$56.5 million for this period last year. ♠

## Four Las Vegas Casinos May Stay Closed

By Steve Schult



Four Las Vegas casinos may stay closed for good, according to a report from the *Las Vegas Sun*.

In an earnings call in early August Frank Fertitta III, CEO and chairman of Red Rock Resorts, the parent company of Station Casinos, said that Palms, Texas Station, Fiesta Rancho and Fiesta Henderson will remain closed for the foreseeable future.

"We don't know if or when we're going to reopen any of the closed properties," said Fertitta on the call. "We think it's too early to make that decision."

Station Casinos opened 16 of its 20 Las Vegas properties when Gov. Steve Sisolak authorized gambling operators to resume business on June 4. Before the official reopening was announced, Station officials said that those four properties would not reopen when they were first eligible to and that the company would take a gradual reopening approach with its properties.

The stated approach was similar to how Caesars

Entertainment and MGM Resorts handled its Vegas reopening, as both companies only opened a couple of properties on the Las Vegas Strip while gauging demand in a post-COVID-19 market.

But Station Casinos hasn't reopened those four properties, even after some positive economic news.

While net revenue was down 76 percent from the second quarter of 2019, EBITDA for the 16 casinos opened by the company actually jumped 47 percent year-over-year for the second quarter.

Fertitta said that those numbers are thanks to the fact that gambling revenue is their main source of income. Many of the properties cater to locals, as opposed to tourists coming from out of town.

The company doesn't have any properties on the Las Vegas Strip, and Palms is one of their two off-strip casinos. Palace Station is the other.

"We're primarily a gaming company that happens to have hotel, catering and convention business as an amenity," said Fertitta. "Primarily, 80 percent of our business comes from the casino, so we're able to have the results that we had in the short-term without strong hotel, catering and convention. Hopefully those will return as we get the COVID-19 crisis under control, but our primary business is suburban Las Vegas local business." ♠

# CASINO SHUTDOWN COSTS PENNSYLVANIA \$424 MILLION IN TAX REVENUE

By Steve Schult

Thanks to its casino shutdown of more than three months, the Pennsylvania government lost about \$424 million in tax revenue.

According to research done by the Allegheny Institute, the shutdown cost Pennsylvania brick-and-mortar casino operators \$968.8 million in revenue. With the current structure of Pennsylvania gaming taxes, that would equate to \$424.4 million in taxes.

According to a *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* report, the study estimated casinos would have earned \$143.5 million during the second half of March, \$415 million in April and May and another \$140.3 million in June, just in slot machine revenue.

Slot machine revenue is taxed at a higher rate than typical table games with the state taking 52 percent of the gross revenue. Table games are taxed at a 16 percent clip. No other state collects as much tax revenue from the gambling industry as the Keystone State.

During the 2018-2019 fiscal year, the state collected more than \$1.2 billion from slot machine revenue alone.



The study cited that online casinos helped alleviate some of those losses during the closure, but online numbers couldn't come close to even putting a dent in what the state missed out on from the brick-and-mortar shutdown.

"Although online gaming revenue from slots, table games and poker rose to record setting highs, the total intake from January through June (\$206.6 million) doesn't even cover a quarter of the estimated losses from slot and table games," the report read.

The study also looked into the costs of casino workers being laid off or furloughed. According to numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 70 percent of the amusement and entertainment industry was out of work. These workers were likely collecting unemployment benefits, which puts a further strain on the state's decline in tax revenue.

During the 2018-2019 fiscal year, there were 16,717 people employed by the state's 12 casinos. Of those workers, only "a few managers and maintenance crews" stayed employed through the closure. ♠

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# 2020 Card Player Player of the Year

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### A Look At Players Making Waves On The Live Tournament Circuit

| Place | Players           | Points | Final Tables | Winnings    |
|-------|-------------------|--------|--------------|-------------|
| 1     | Vincent Wan       | 2,280  | 1            | \$909,420   |
| 2     | Farid Jattin      | 2,177  | 6            | \$1,205,493 |
| 3     | Anton Suarez      | 2,100  | 1            | \$1,000,000 |
| 4     | Cary Katz         | 2,095  | 8            | \$2,420,543 |
| 5     | Kahle Burns       | 1,956  | 6            | \$2,923,988 |
| 6     | Ngoc Hoang        | 1,900  | 1            | \$909,420   |
| 7     | Aaron Van Blarcum | 1,896  | 8            | \$1,854,522 |
| 8     | Sam Greenwood     | 1,881  | 6            | \$1,357,807 |
| 9     | Tim Adams         | 1,857  | 6            | \$5,904,777 |
| 10    | Brian Altman      | 1,848  | 3            | \$542,866   |
| 11    | Michael Addamo    | 1,806  | 5            | \$2,143,310 |
| 12    | Pablo Silva       | 1,800  | 1            | \$1,000,000 |
| 13    | Christian Rudolph | 1,750  | 1            | \$620,000   |
| 14    | James Romero      | 1,736  | 2            | \$745,000   |
| 15    | Erik Seidel       | 1,686  | 5            | \$669,649   |
| 16    | Eric Afriat       | 1,680  | 1            | \$394,120   |
| 17    | Alex Foxen        | 1,597  | 6            | \$1,603,559 |
| 18    | Nino Ullmann      | 1,540  | 2            | \$370,609   |
| 19    | Stephen Chidwick  | 1,537  | 6            | \$1,043,973 |
| 20    | Gareth Pepper     | 1,520  | 1            | \$690,000   |

83

#### Nicholas Pupillo - 83rd Place (859 points)



Nicholas Pupillo had a breakout year on the live tournament circuit in 2019, making 15 final tables and winning two titles to finish in 16th place on the Card Player Player of the Year leaderboard. The American poker pro kept his high level of play up in the starting months

of 2020, beginning with a final-table finish in the *Aussie Millions* \$10,000 AUD main event. Pupillo placed eighth in that tournament out of a field of 820 entries to earn \$122,875 USD and 380 POY points just a few weeks into the new year. In February he made three final tables, starting with a seventh-place showing in a \$600 buy-in no-limit hold'em event at the *World Series of Poker Circuit Potawatomi* festival for \$2,696 and 39 points. Two weeks later he finished as the runner-up in a \$300 six-max no-limit hold'em side event at the *Heartland Poker Tour St. Louis* stop for another \$6,126 and 96 points. He then made his way to Las Vegas and finished as the runner-up in the \$2,200 buy-in event at the *WSOP Circuit Rio* series for \$55,085 and 260 points. His last recorded live tournament cash before the coronavirus outbreak resulted in a shutdown of the live tournament circuit came in a \$1,100 buy-in side event at the *World Poker Tour Rolling Thunder* series. He finished seventh for \$6,630 and 84 points to climb into 83rd place in the POY standings, with 859 points and \$193,412 in POY-qualified scores.

84

#### Michael Soyza - 84th Place (855 points)



Only 21 players managed to accrue more than \$1 million in POY-qualified tournament earnings this year before the live-circuit shutdown. Among those players is Malaysian poker pro Michael Soyza. He kicked off his campaign this year with a fifth-place showing in the \$100,000 AUD

buy-in super high roller at the *Aussie Millions*, earning \$292,118 USD and 250 points for his deep run in that event. In March he made a pair of final tables at the *MILLIONS Super High Roller Sochi* festival. In a three-day span, he managed to finish second in the \$50,000 buy-in short deck event for \$561,780 and 425 points, and then fourth in the \$100,000 short deck event for another \$300,000 and 180 points. With \$1,153,898 in year-to-date earnings and 855 points accumulated, Soyza currently sits in 84th place in the overall rankings. Soyza now has more than \$8.4 million in career tournament earnings, despite only committing to playing the live circuit in 2016.



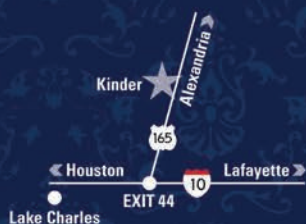
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# POKER STORIES PODCAST

*With Jennifer Harman*

Poker Stories is a long-form audio podcast series that features casual interviews with some of the game's best players and personalities. Each episode highlights a well-known member of the poker world and dives deep into their favorite tales both on and off the felt.

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**Age: 55**

**From: Reno, Nevada**

**Live Tournament Earnings: \$2.6 Million**

## Top Live Tournament Scores

| Date       | Tournament                                    | Place     | Winnings  |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| March 2005 | WSOP Circuit \$10,000 Championship            | 2nd Place | \$383,840 |
| March 2008 | WPT \$10,000 Bay 101 Shooting Star            | 3rd Place | \$330,000 |
| Dec. 2004  | WPT \$15,000 Five Diamond World Poker Classic | 4th Place | \$299,492 |
| May 2002   | WSOP \$5,000 Limit Hold'em                    | 1st Place | \$212,440 |
| June 2010  | WSOP \$10,000 Stud 8/OB                       | 3rd Place | \$173,159 |

Jennifer Harman is one of the most prolific card players in history, having competed for higher stakes than nearly anyone else in poker. The Reno-native used to play card games around the family dinner table, before becoming hooked on poker while working her way through college. After moving to Los Angeles, she began to grind her way up the cash game ranks, determined to play the biggest game available. She eventually made her way to Las Vegas, and found her place at table one at Bellagio, and later Bobby's Room among some of the most legendary players of all time.

Harman was one of the most important players for The Corporation, which was a group of poker players who pooled their money together to take on billionaire banker Andy Beal in a series of seven-figure heads-up matches. At one point in the series of games, Harman beat Beal three consecutive sessions, winning \$3 million each time, and even took him on at stakes of \$100,000-\$200,000 when he returned for more action. Harman has two *World Series of Poker* bracelets, the first coming in the 2000 \$5,000 no-limit 2-7 lowball event, and the second coming in the 2002 \$5,000 limit hold'em event. The accomplishment made her the first woman to win two open events in *WSOP* history. In 2015, she was inducted into the Poker Hall of Fame.

Highlights from this interview include the acoustics of live poker, mom's bar room pinochle games, burying the printing press in the backyard, not using her degree in biology, the recognizable cadaver of Reno, hand shakes, using her fake ID to play, finding poker in an LA grocery store, setting her eyes on the biggest game in the room, the non-issue of gender, Phil Ivey's struggles at \$400-\$800, Doyle Brunson's nickname for her, Chip Reese's \$300k practical joke, investing in the Corporation while in surgery, proving Amarillo Slim wrong, losing her bracelets twice, the rigorous filming schedule of reality TV, the Poker Hall of Fame, seven-figure pots at \$100k-\$200k, profiting off of Daniel Negreanu's tournament success, being cheated in a New York home game, betting the wrong side with David Oppenheim, working as a "songwriter," and the perks of Air Force One.

## The Transcript Highlights

### On Why She Chose Poker Over A Career In Medicine

**Julio Rodriguez:** What was the plan in college?

**Jennifer Harman:** I wanted to be a doctor. I got a degree in biology, and then... You know, I had an anatomy and physiology class, and they brought the cadavers in, and I just couldn't handle it.

I remember one cadaver being brought in... he was actually a local from Reno, and half of the class knew him. They were just freaking out, and it bugged me.

**JR:** Well maybe they do that on purpose, to weed people out, but it seems a little early in the process to scare [potential doctors] like that.

**JH:** So I just had a hard time dealing with [death], patients dying, and things like that. I just had to scrap it. I couldn't do it. And also, I wanted to be a surgeon, and I have this tremor in my hand where I always shake. It's helped me in poker, but my hand just shakes, and I don't think anybody would want me operating on them. So what I really wanted to do was actually impossible for me to do physically.

But I remember a hand of no-limit deuce. I made a big hand, and this guy bet and I just moved in. My hands were shaking so much that he insta-called me. He thought I was bluffing. There are other players in the game (more familiar with me) that will now just take their hand and put it on my hands to calm them down.

### Chip Reese's \$300,000 Practical Joke

**JR:** In the book [The Professor, The Banker, and The Suicide King], Michael Craig mentions a moment when you flew back to Las Vegas from your vacation in Italy [thinking that Andy Beal had come back to town], but it ended up being a practical joke, and Andy wasn't actually there. I'm wondering if you ever found out who put you up to that.

**JH:** I think it was Chip [Reese]. But you know, it really didn't matter because when I flew back, there was an amazing game, and I think I ended up winning \$80,000. That whole week, I think I won over \$300,000.

So it worked out well for me, and I didn't even find out it was a joke until later. I had no idea, because they never told me. But I did so well that week... play as many practical jokes as you want on me.

**JR:** Well that's brutal that you had to spend New Years alone, but I guess if you got a quarter of a million in your pocket out of it, then it's all for the better.

**JH:** Exactly. It puts things into perspective.



### On Investing In The Corporation While In Surgery

**JR:** During one of [Andy's trips] to Vegas, you weren't there because you were in surgery getting a kidney transplant. But while you were under, they called (ex-husband) Marco [Traniello] to make the decision on whether or not to invest. That seems crazy to me that he would have to make that decision while you were indisposed.

**JH:** Yeah, because Marco really wasn't a risk taker. He had a really hard time making that decision. Also, one of the requirements when Andy came was that you had to post up your money. It had to be there. Obviously, he couldn't do that, so another player in The Corporation said they would post it for me.

It was a really hard decision for him, and thank god he made the right [call]. I remember I was in recovery for a while. I had just woken up in a fog, they had just wheeled me back into the room. I don't even know if my new kidney works. Marco says, 'Andy's in Vegas,' and I said, 'Are we in?'

**JR:** What would you have done if you had woken up and found out he decided to pass?

**JH:** I would have killed him. He would have had to deal with my wrath, and my wrath can be harsh! ♠

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# THIS WEEK'S BIG WINNER

## Kristen Bicknell Scores Her Third Career WSOP Bracelet

By Card Player News Team



Kristen Bicknell is now just the fourth female player ever to win three *World Series of Poker* gold bracelets, joining the likes of Barbara Enright, Vanessa Selbst, and Nani Dollison as a three-time champion at the summer series. The Canadian poker pro outlasted a field of 892 entries to win the 2020 *WSOP Online* \$2,500 six-max no-limit hold'em event, earning the hardware and the top prize of \$356,412.

Bicknell won her first bracelet back in 2013 by taking down the \$1,000 Ladies no-limit hold'em championship for \$173,922. Three years later she won her first open-field bracelet for defeating a field of 2,158 entries in a \$1,500 bounty no-limit hold'em event. That title run earned her \$290,768. The former Supernova Elite grinder now has more than \$5.4 million in recorded tournament earnings.

With a strong turnout, this event's prize pool swelled to \$2,118,500, with the top 116 finishers earning at least \$6,022 for making the money. Among the big names to make deep runs were bracelet winner Danny Tang (21st - \$11,697), two-time bracelet winner Norbert Szecsi (14th - \$15,958), David Jackson (\$21,771), and Chris Kruk (10th - \$21,771).

Here are five key hands from the final table.

### Tournament – 2020 WSOP Online Six-Max NLHE

Buy-In: \$2,500 • No. of Entries: 892 • Prize Pool: \$2,118,500 • First Place Prize: \$356,412

HAND  
NO. 1

Short-Stacked Bicknell Finds A Double

|                             |                                |    |    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|----|----|
| 9♠                          | 9♥                             | 2♦ | 2♥ |
| 6♠                          | 6♥                             | 2♦ | 2♥ |
| Kristen Bicknell<br>706,128 | Belarmino DeSouza<br>7,963,534 |    |    |
| Q♣                          | 3♠                             | 3♦ | A♣ |
| Q♣                          | 3♠                             | 3♦ | 4♦ |

Blinds – 40,000-80,000 with a 10,000 ante

#### The Action

Bicknell was one of the shortest stacks at the final table, but found a good double up opportunity during seven-handed play. DeSouza raised to 160,000 from under-the-gun, and Finck called from middle position. Bicknell then shoved for 696,128, and DeSouza went into the tank before opting to move all in and isolate. Finck folded, and DeSouza showed pocket deuces. Bicknell was well ahead with pocket nines, and more than doubled up when the board rolled out safely.

HAND  
NO. 2

Higgins Exits In Fifth Place After Losing Coin Flip

|                               |                            |     |     |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-----|-----|
| A♣                            | K♣                         | 10♥ | 10♦ |
| A♣                            | K♣                         | 10♥ | 10♦ |
| Kristen Bicknell<br>2,675,617 | Simon Higgins<br>1,213,312 |     |     |
| A♠                            | 9♣                         | 4♣  | 2♥  |
| A♠                            | 9♣                         | 4♣  | J♣  |

Blinds – 60,000-120,000 with a 15,000 ante

#### The Action

Higgins moved all in from under-the-gun for his last 1,198,312 and Bicknell reshoved behind him to isolate for more. Higgins showed down pocket tens and was flipping for his tournament life against Bicknell's A♥K♥, but the flop of A♠9♣4♣ was a disaster for him. Not only had Bicknell flopped top pair, but her nut flush draw also killed one of Higgins's two remaining outs. The turn and river fell 2♥J♣, and Higgins was eliminated in fifth place, earning \$102,887.

**HAND NO. 3****Bicknell Gets Lucky To Bust Jiang****The Action**

Bicknell raised to 264,000 on the button and Jiang three-bet shoved from the big blind for 2,193,233. Bicknell made the call with A♥ J♦, only to see she was dominated by Jiang's A♣ K♠. Fortunately for her, the flop brought the J♥, which vaulted her into the lead. Jiang had three outs to catch up, but failed to get there, ending his tournament run in fourth place for \$140,365.

**HAND NO. 4****Bicknell Catches A Big Bluff To Double****The Action**

DeSouza limped in from the small blind and Bicknell raised to 592,000. DeSouza called, and the flop fell 10♠ 9♠ 5♥. Bicknell continued with a bet of 416,000, and DeSouza called. The turn was the 7♥, and this time Bicknell checked. DeSouza bet 1,382,000, and Bicknell made the call. The river was the 3♥, and Bicknell checked once again. DeSouza moved in, and Bicknell called off the rest of her stack with pocket jacks. DeSouza could only show K♠ 6♠ for a busted flush and straight draw, giving Bicknell a 3:2 chip lead in the heads-up match.

**HAND NO. 5****Bicknell Turns Trips To Eliminate DeSouza For The Title****The Action**

Bicknell limped the button and DeSouza checked his option. The flop fell K♥ 5♦ 2♣ and DeSouza checked. Bicknell bet 200,000, and DeSouza raised to 837,500. Bicknell called, and the turn was the 5♥. DeSouza led for 1,062,500, and Bicknell called. The river was the J♠, and DeSouza shoved for his last 3,575,632. Bicknell quickly called and showed Q♠ 5♣ for trips, while DeSouza only had K♦ 9♦ for top pair. DeSouza banked \$261,249 for his runner-up showing, while Bicknell pocketed \$356,412 and nabbed her third career bracelet.

**Final Table Results**

|    |                   |           |
|----|-------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Kristen Bicknell  | \$356,412 |
| 2. | Belarmino DeSouza | \$261,249 |
| 3. | Ilya Anatsky      | \$191,494 |
| 4. | Dong Jiang        | \$140,365 |
| 5. | Simon Higgins     | \$102,887 |
| 6. | Jerome Finck      | \$75,416  |
| 7. | Patrick Semrau    | \$55,280  |
| 8. | Paul Barnes       | \$40,520  |
| 9. | Nikita Kalinin    | \$29,701  |





## TWO-TIME WSOP BRACELET PLO8 WINNER NATHAN GAMBLE: “POKER IS ABOUT BEING SOCIAL”

By Steve Schult

As a relative unknown to the poker world in 2017, Texas native Nathan Gamble thrust himself into the spotlight by winning his first *World Series of Poker* bracelet. Gamble bested a field of 830 entries to earn \$223,339 in the \$1,500 pot-limit Omaha eight-or-better event.

Three years later, in the midst of a pandemic, the *WSOP* was moved online and final tables were live streamed on Twitch. For the \$600 pot-limit Omaha eight-or-better event, *WSOP*'s lead commentator David Tuchman asked Gamble to be his co-host on the stream.

Gamble accepted the invitation, but ultimately couldn't fulfill his duties. He had made the final table himself, and ended up winning his second bracelet in the same game he conquered a few years prior. Gamble defeated 883 entries and earned another \$89,424 to go along with another piece of *WSOP* gold.

Gamble sat down with *Card Player* to discuss beating games online at a young age, his time in the military, how to build a network in poker, and his plans to give back to the mixed-game poker community.

**Steve Schult:** Let's just start with a little bit of your poker backstory. How did you find the game? When did you start playing?

**Nathan Gamble:** I started playing when I was about 12 years old. It was just me watching my Dad and



his friends sitting around the kitchen table. That was about a year before Moneymaker, I think. They were playing “baseball” and “chase the spade” and whatever. Then Moneymaker happened and they all started playing no-limit [hold'em].

And somehow, as a 12-year-old kid, just sitting around and watching them, I convinced them to let me play. I started playing free money online and then my Dad gave me like \$11 on UltimateBet to play some tournament. For some reason they canceled the tournament and as a kid you're like, 'Oh man, Dad. Do you need this money back? It's \$11.' And he said, 'Keep it Son. You're good.'

So my first bankroll online was literally \$11. I ran it down to \$1.57 and I told myself, 'I need to take this

seriously.' I started searching around for other games and I played “Royal Hold'em” on UltimateBet. It was basically the ultimate short-deck poker. It was just tens through aces. It was limit, but I just found that people sucked at it.

They just didn't know anything about it and somehow at 11 years old, I figured out how to beat them. In about two months, I turned that \$1.57 into about \$1,600 or \$1,700. So I started playing with my Dad and his friends for like \$20 cash game buy-ins.

This will tell you how old this is. But I took a USB drive into my high school because I was in theatre. I would go into a back room when I wasn't needed and I would plug it into their computers, download the UB client onto the computer off of the thumb drive, play on UltimateBet for like an hour and a half, delete it, because you know that you can't get caught. And then end up doing the same thing the next day.

**SS:** That's a crazy amount of money for an 11-year-old kid to have. I couldn't imagine having \$1,600 at that age. Did either of your parents worry about you having a gambling problem?

**NG:** Like I said, I would play with my dad and his friends, but then we also found these underground card rooms around us. Whether it was at people's houses or an apartment that they would rent out so that they could

“For a year or two straight, I would literally just play 50 sit n’ goes a day of pot-limit Omaha eight-or-better. And I think that’s how I transitioned to having the skills I do.”

run solely a poker game around there.

I was going with him at like 13, 14, 15 years old. I think it was my sophomore year and I had finals the next morning. We were out together until like 5 a.m. and we get home at like 6 a.m. He says, ‘Oh, you have finals in an hour, right?’ I said, ‘Yeah’ and he said, ‘Good luck with that. I’m going to bed.’

He was always supportive and enjoyed it.

My Mom... it took a long, long time to convince her. And I didn’t realize until I talked to her about it as an adult. And the reason was because I had money, you know. I didn’t have responsibility and she was more worried about me getting into drugs or doing nefarious acts with it. Not so much about the gambling, the poker, but having money as a kid.

**SS:** How did you end up playing pot-limit Omaha hi-lo? When did you start playing it and what made you so good at it?

**NG:** I played no-limit as a kid. Just going up to WinStar in Oklahoma and playing \$1-\$2 no-limit. But I had that background online of limit Omaha eight-or-better and PLO8 and all the other limit games of just being a kid and being curious.

But I actually dealt an underground game that was limit Omaha eight-or-better for probably a year and a half. From 18 or 19 [years old] until about 20 or 21 [years old], I guess. I dealt limit, and then in college, I was still playing online, but I found sit-n-go’s. I played PLO8 sit-n-go’s. I don’t know why that attracted me. I still don’t know what it was. But I just played those sit-n-go’s. I’d probably get in 50 or 100 reps a day of like a \$10 sit-n-go.

For a year or two straight, I would literally just play 50 sit-n-go’s a day of PLO8. And I think that’s how I transitioned to having the skills I do. Because PLO8 is gone. There is no online site that is reputable in the U.S. that offers PLO8 sit-n-go’s or tournaments on a daily basis. It’s really difficult for someone else to come along and learn how to be good at those games.

I was just fortunate enough that I

just kind of stumbled into something that I enjoy and I’ve gained a lot of knowledge from.

**SS:** You mentioned after your first bracelet win in 2017 that you were in a last longer with Calen McNeil, Leif Force, and a few other pros. Given your background in the military, I didn’t think you had the stereotypical upbringing online. How did you build a poker network with guys like that while you were serving?

**NG:** I definitely don’t have a traditional background, that’s for damn sure. So, let’s see. The first time I ever played at the *World Series of Poker* was in 2011. I played three tournaments and I took 12<sup>th</sup> in the very first one I ever played. A \$1,500 PLO event. I had only played a couple events and I had met Calen in one of those events.

He was just a regular guy. He won his bracelet maybe a year or two after that. And he took third after that. He was just someone I met at the first table I played at the *WSOP*. Just a phenomenal guy. Real easy-going personality. But I didn’t know most people in that last longer. It was just their reputation and another person vouching.

**SS:** Did you even have a poker network back then? Did you have people to talk with about the game? Do you have one now? Is it even important to have?

**NG:** When I won my first bracelet, 100% no. I didn’t know anyone in the poker world. That was my coming out to the world of poker. It was kind of like, ‘Hey, this guy kind of knows what’s going on.’

Since then, I started playing more professionally. I got out of the military in 2016. I started playing PLO at the Aria for about two years and then the biggest progression in my career, has been since last year. Especially in building a network.

In March or April of last year, 2019, I started playing mixed games at Aria. \$4-\$8 limit mixed games. Just bullshitting and getting around and trying something new, because PLO wasn’t going the best and I want to try something else. From there, I worked my way up to \$80-\$160 during the summer. So \$4-\$8 in March to \$80-

\$160 during the *WSOP*.

We moved the game from Bellagio over to the Wynn in September of last year. But through the game I’ve gotten to know Brandon Shack-Harris, Ali Nejad, Max Pescatori, Joe Tehan and just a slew of people who have extensive results in the game and it’s been fantastic to meet those people and be able to bounce ideas off them.

I took eighth last year in the mixed Omaha event and I met Carol Fuchs, who has a bracelet. She’s the nicest lady in the entire world. I love her to death. And she’s connected me just by being herself. That’s how I got the commentating opportunity. Now I know Norman Chad and David Tuchman. So from April last year until now, it took about three or four months of growth to go from about \$4-\$8 limit to about \$80-\$160 and it expanded my entire network to something I’m still just shocked at.

**SS:** There are so many players at the table that just sit silently with headphones on. How important is it to engage with other people at the table? It seems like being an outgoing, friendly person has thoroughly helped your career.

**NG:** I think at the end of the day, poker is about being social. It’s about being around people and interacting. People are trying to win money and then they will also get pissed off at people who have private games. Those people that are in private games, have other skills. They have the ability to interact with people and network.

They have the ability to get the fish into the game and make them have fun. Jean-Robert Bellande is a prime example. The people he attracts to that game, he’s not attracting them because they are going to win money. It’s a skill that’s overlooked in poker.

You can be a crusher in no-limit. You can wear your hoodie and have your sunglasses on and run your solvers, but it’s not going to get you the best games. It’s not going to get you human interaction or interaction that actually matters. It’s just another skill in the toolbox. And yeah, I think for me, it’s because I’m genuine. I have a passion for this. That’s why I’m good at it.

“You can be a crusher in no-limit. You can wear your hoodie and have your sunglasses on and run your solvers, but it’s not going to get you the best games.”



I’m not going to try and bullshit anyone. I’m not going to try and go out of my way to get in contact with someone. It’s because people see that I care about this and I’m going to do right by them.

**SS:** How did your experiences in the military shape you as both a person and a poker player?

**NG:** It’s funny. I’m actually writing a book right now because my grandfather was in World War II. I’m trying to figure out what he taught me, what the military taught me, and what it has given me. I know as far as poker, there are so many people that are angry out there.

You’re playing \$1-\$2 no-limit or even \$5-\$10. They lose a bet, they lose their stack, they lose everything. It doesn’t matter. They are angry at the world. If they win a pot, they are angry they didn’t get more.

My time in the military was in South Korea. They are under threat of war from North Korea on a daily basis. There are rockets fired over the lines. There were soldiers that got their legs blown off when I was over there in 2015. And you see what that has done to a country. You travel extensively and you see that where we live right now has it better off than most places.

What it has taught me is that you’re in a multi-billion-dollar casino, with money that you should be able to lose, and you have a beautiful cocktail server, a competent dealer, and friendly people around you. And then you look at what other countries are doing and where they are at in life. And how they are barely surviving. How are you pissed off? How are you angry at the table?

You’ll never find me angry at the table. It doesn’t matter. You are in the best position you could possibly be in. It’s just given me a larger perspective.

**SS:** You are clearly at the forefront

of PLO8 strategy and made a rapid ascent up the mixed-games ladder. Do you think it is beneficial for poker players to learn non-hold’em games? If so, why? And where do you see the poker landscape going in regards to game popularity?

**NG:** I think there is a 100 percent correlation between games. Learning the base of one game helps you in all the others. Even if you are a no-limit player, learning other games will help you in no-limit. Learning mixed games, you may suck at one or two or even 20 of them. Just by playing other games, you’ll always be better.

As far as the future of mixed games versus no-limit hold’em, the most difficult thing that we are encountering right now, and Melissa Burr touched on it in one of her columns for you guys, is that I went from playing \$4-\$8 to playing \$20-\$40. There is no bridge between \$4-\$8 and \$20-\$40. There is no \$10-\$20 game in any part of [Las Vegas]. And then that \$20-\$40 transitions into a \$40-\$80. So now there is no gap between that \$4-\$8 and the \$40-\$80. So trying to get people involved in mixed games is so, so, so difficult right now.

Because you say, ‘Hey, come hang with the guys, have a couple beers, and win or lose a couple hundred bucks. Oh. You enjoyed it? Come play \$40-\$80 and win or lose thousands.’ There is ‘no bridge,’ is what she called it. And that is something that I’ve been actively working to fix.

Me and Ali [Nejad] are the statesmen for the \$80-\$160 game. We did all the work. We call the casinos. We want to make sure that we had a home. But I was also the one that if anyone came up to me and said, ‘Hey, that game is too big. \$80-\$160 is too big.’ I would say, ‘Let me help you. Let me help you build a \$10-\$20 or a \$20-\$40 or whatever it is.’

I’ve reached out to several people and worked on having correct blind structures, getting players together, building player bases. And it hasn’t taken off yet, but I’m still trying. I want to build that bridge. Because otherwise it is terribly doomed. How do you put people in an \$80-\$160 game if they don’t know what they are doing?

That’s what I want to do right now in poker. Is give back. I’ve been a part of this for 18 years. I want to be a spokesperson to help grow poker. Back in January of this year, I started working at the Wynn poker room. I’m one of their floor people transitioning to the operations side. It’s not because I need the money. It’s because I want to learn the industry from a different perspective and find a way to help promote it. And find a way to give back and make it better.

**SS:** Why do you have this desire to give back to the game like this? You mentioned how you meet a lot of angry people in a poker room. What drives you to help poker grow?

**NG:** I’ve always been someone that’s a doer. If I see something wrong or a person that needs help, I step in. This industry has given me so much personally and there have been people along the way that have owed nothing to me but given me everything to succeed and thrive. The only way to keep advancing as a society and as a community is to give back in whatever capacity you can. When I was young, I emailed people like Alec Torelli, Michael Mizrahi, and Justin Bonomo.

A few of them responded and gave me thoughtful, well-executed responses. That gave me insight and a boost of confidence to continue on this journey. If I have even a small amount of notoriety right now, I want to use it to help promote the game, to help bring people into the mix game community, and to continue improving. ♠



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# DANIEL DVORESS SEIZES THE FIRST SEVEN-FIGURE TOP PRIZE OF 2020 WORLD SERIES OF POKER ONLINE

The Canadian High Roller Won The 'Millionaire Maker' For His First Bracelet and \$1,489,289

By Erik Fast



The *World Series of Poker* first introduced the *Millionaire Maker* event in 2013. The idea behind the event was simple: host a tournament with an affordable buy-in of \$1,500 and guarantee that the eventual champion will walk away with at least \$1 million.

The tournament was an instant success, drawing a record single-day turnout in its first running to guarantee its inclusion on the *WSOP* schedule from that point forward. The 2020 *WSOP Online* included the popular event in its schedule of 85 bracelet tournaments, and its popularity carried over from the brick-and-mortar world to the internet. The event attracted a total of 6,299 entries across 15 starting flights, blowing away the \$5 million guarantee to create a final prize pool of \$8,976,075.

In the end, the lion's share of that money was awarded to high-stakes tournament professional Daniel Dvoress. The 32-year-old Canadian earned his first *WSOP* gold bracelet and the massive top prize of \$1,489,289 and as the champion. Dvoress was the first player to secure a seven-figure payday during this year's *WSOP Online* series.

The *Millionaire Maker* has largely lived up to its name since its inception. Of the seven prior winners of this tournament, six of them had not yet surpassed the million-dollar mark in career earnings until their win. Jason DeWitt,

who won the tournament in 2016, was the only player with more than seven figures in career cashes prior to taking down this event.

Dvoress stands out among this group, as he had accumulated a whopping \$15.7 million in live tournament earnings prior to his winning this event. Dvoress regularly posts hundreds of thousands of dollars in buy-ins in a matter of days while battling it out on the international super high roller circuit. The Mississauga, Ontario native graduated from the online scene to playing the biggest live tournaments in the world in a matter of years, accruing his eight figures in cashes despite only recording his first live tournament score in 2013.

Dvoress has devoted a lot of his focus as a poker pro to live tournaments in recent years, but capturing a title at the *WSOP* was apparently not high on his list of priorities.

"Winning a bracelet wasn't on my radar until quite recently, as I don't attend the *WSOP*. Given the circumstances this summer, with the *WSOP* being online, it suddenly became something on my radar," Dvoress told *Card Player* after his victory. "But if you asked me two weeks ago how I would do it, I definitely would have thought that a smaller-field high roller event would be my best shot at a bracelet. It feels amazing to have done it in such a large

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"I definitely had to rather quickly unlearn a lot of the things I got accustomed to while playing in tough high roller fields over the years," admitted Dvoress. "I knew I would be able to get away with quite a lot, so I played more aggressively than I would have in a tougher field."

field event."

Dvoress broke the mold with his victory in this event, becoming the first high-stakes regular to defeat the massive field the *Millionaire Maker* has drawn each and every year. Here is a look back at how the huge event played out.

#### Setting The Final Table

This event featured 15 total starting flights, with the first kicking off on Sunday, July 26. There were anywhere from two to three flights held each day forward until the final flight began on Sunday, Aug. 2. The flights averaged just shy of 420 entries each, with the final total growing to 6,299 by the time registration officially closed. As a result, the total prize pool of nearly \$9 million was set to be awarded to the top 764 finishers in this event, with each and every player at the final table guaranteed a six-figure payday. Both the second and first-place finishers would cash for more than a million dollars.

The final starting flight of this event was still playing out when day 2 action got underway. More than 900 players remained when cards got back in the air, with play set to continue until the nine-handed final table was decided. By the first break of the day, the money bubble was just 100 eliminations away from bursting. Roughly an hour after action resumed, the money bubble burst and the remaining players all guaranteed themselves at least \$2,115.

Plenty of big names made their way near the top of the leaderboard in the early hours of day 2, including 2016 *WSOP* main event sixth-place finisher Kenny Hallaert, two-time bracelet winner Michael Addamo, Leon Tsoukernik, Dan Shak, Isaac Haxton, and six-time bracelet winner Daniel Negreanu, who ultimately finished in 39th place for \$12,911.

Dvoress was among the top ten in the chip counts by the time the field had been narrowed to around 50 players. More than a week after the first cards were dealt in this event, with roughly 6,150 eliminations having taken place, the field was finally down to the amount of players that normally constitute the entire player pool for the high-stakes events Dvoress regularly plays.

"I definitely had to rather quickly unlearn a lot of the things I got accustomed to while playing in tough high roller fields over the years," admitted Dvoress when asked about playing in this larger field event with a notably lower buy-in than he plays on average. "I knew I would be able to get away with quite a lot, so I played more aggressively than I would have in a tougher field."

Fellow high rollers Isaac Haxton (20th - \$28,951) and Michael Addamo (16th - \$40,204) hit the rail as the march to the final table continued, leaving Dvoress as the lone regular participant of the six-figure buy-in super high roller circuit left in this event.

Dvoress secured the final two knockouts of the day, busting 'Bot Marley' (11th - \$77,534) and Manuel Ruivo

(10th - \$77,534) to take the chip lead heading into the final table. His 92,476,846 stack was good for nearly 31 big blinds with the stakes to resume at 1,500,000-3,000,000 with an ante of 300,000 when the final table reconvened.

There were a couple of highly accomplished players set to join Dvoress at the final table. 2018 *partypoker LIVE MILLIONS Russia* champion Anatoly Filatov had nearly \$4.9 million in recorded cashes prior to this event. He entered the final table in fifth chip position. Short stack Ronny Kaiser had more than \$1.8 million in scores ahead of making this final table, including wins in the 2017 *PokerStars Championship Barcelona* main event and the 2011 *European Poker Tour Tallinn* main event.

#### Final Table Chip Counts

| PLAYER              | CHIPS      | BIG BLINDS |
|---------------------|------------|------------|
| Daniel Dvoress      | 92,476,846 | 31         |
| Alejandro Caridad   | 64,001,642 | 21         |
| Neville Endo Costa  | 43,132,236 | 14         |
| Michael Nugent      | 37,076,246 | 12         |
| Anatoly Filatov     | 22,480,138 | 8          |
| Tomasz Cybulski     | 16,604,499 | 6          |
| Aneris Adomkevicius | 13,452,228 | 5          |
| Caio De Almeida     | 12,558,546 | 4          |
| Ronny Kaiser        | 10,506,666 | 4          |

#### Making The Millionaire(s)

Being the chip leader in a no-limit hold'em event can be exhilarating, but the advantage inherent to leading can also result in additional psychological pressure to win the title. Dvoress said that he didn't experience too much pressure of this kind, though, despite the bracelet and the massive top prize on the line.

"Despite having the chip lead there were two realities I had to face. First, yes - I was the chip leader, but I only had about a third of the chips in play, so there was a lot more work to be done in order to win, and victory was nowhere close to guaranteed. Second, the average stack was about 10 big blinds, so I knew that would have a big negative impact on my edge, and I'd need variance to be on my side to win," said Dvoress. "So rationally, I didn't feel a lot of pressure to win, per se. However, I did put a lot of pressure on myself to play my best, and I knew that I would have to play a different game than what I was used to for the last five or so years of my poker career. I knew I'd have to make a lot of deviations, and trust my intuition to make plays I normally wouldn't make."

In order to be in the best mindset possible heading into the final table, Dvoress turned to Elliot Roe, an expert in mental optimization who has worked with a number of top poker players including Fedor Holz, Brian Rast, and Alex



**Dvoress had accumulated more than \$15.7 million in live tournament earnings prior to his winning his first WSOP gold bracelet and the massive top prize of \$1,489,289.**

Foxen.

"I had a session with [him] right before playing the tournament which, in basic terms, consisted of an assisted meditation that was directed at optimizing my mental approach to my game plan for the final table. I knew exactly what I needed to do, and I wanted to make sure that I executed optimally."

Five of the nine players at the final table were returning to stacks that amounted to less than 10 big blinds when play resumed, including both Filatov and Kaiser. Dvoress' own stack may have had more playability, but with the majority of his opponents being so short, he had to rely on some past experience grinding hyper turbo sit-n-go's to help guide his approach when cards got back in the air after five days off.

"Given the stacks at the final table, as well as the amount of money being played for, I felt like I was the most experienced player at the table, so everything really came together for me," Dvoress confided. When asked how things might have been different than a typical high roller final table, he said, "This final table played out much tighter than the final tables I'm used to, especially when you consider how short stacked a lot of the players were."

"In high rollers, you usually see stacks more or less flying in when players get short, because they don't want to give up any potential edge, even if [that means] they have to gamble," he continued. "Here, I had to be careful and tighten up on the hands I'd be willing to call off with, and at the same time I was mindful of the fact that people might want to gamble a bit less, so I could play looser than I am used to with the chip lead."

Aneris Adomkevicius was one of five players to start the day with six big blinds or fewer. He was the first to be knocked out, hitting the rail after his A-K failed to beat out the pocket nines of Alejandro Caridad. He earned \$107,671 for his deep run in this event.

Tomasz Cybulski was the next to fall. He got the last of his stack in with A-6 offsuit and ran into the pocket sevens of Michael Nugent. Cybulski settled for \$149,523 as the eighth-place finisher. Ronny Kaiser had managed to outlast two opponents despite entering the final table with just four big blinds. He got the last of his stack in with 7♥ 7♦ and received a call from Anatoly Filatov, who held A♠ J♠. Filatov spiked a jack on the flop and held from there to eliminate Kaiser in seventh place (\$207,644).

Dvoress earned his first elimination when his J♠ 6♦ outran the A♦ 8♥ of Neville Endo Costa, who had just a bit more than two big blinds to start the hand. Endo Costa was ahead pre flop, but the J♥ 9♠ 9♣ J♣ 9♥ runout gave

Dvoress jacks full of nines to lock up the pot. Endo Costa was awarded \$288,356 as the sixth-place finisher.

Five-handed play continued for a while before the next knockout took place. Alejandro Caridad shoved for just shy of 13 big blinds from the cutoff with Q♥ J♣ and Dvoress called with pocket eights from the big blind. Dvoress' hand held up and Caridad was eliminated in fifth place (\$400,412).

The very next hand Dvoress shoved from the small blind with 5♣ 4♦ and Michael Nugent called from the big blind with A♦ 2♣. Dvoress made a full house by the river and Nugent earned \$556,095 for his strong showing in this tournament. Dvoress' elimination spree continued when his pocket fives held up against the A♠ K♥ of Anatoly Filatov. Neither player improved by the river and Filatov's run in this event ended in third place (\$772,251).

With that Dvoress took more than a 4:1 chip advantage into heads-up play against Brazil's Caio De Almeida. The match lasted just two hands. Dvoress extended his lead by winning a sizable pot without showdown in the first hand. After the final deal, De Almeida got all-in pre flop for around five big blinds with K♦ 8♦ and Dvoress called with the K♥ Q♠. The board came down 6♣ 5♦ 3♣ 7♥ 3♥ and Dvoress' K-Q high was enough to earn him the pot and the title. De Almeida took home \$1,072,428 as the runner-up finisher. This was truly a 'Millionaire Maker' for De Almeida, as the Brazilian had never before recorded a live tournament cash for more than five figures.

The nearly \$1.5 million Dvoress earned as the champion of this event was the second-largest score of his career, behind the \$4,080,000 he took home as the champion of the 2019 *Super High Roller Bowl Bahamas* \$250,000 buy-in event. He now has more than \$17.2 million in recorded tournament scores to his name.

**Here is a look at the payouts awarded at the final table:**

| PLACE | NAME                | EARNINGS    |
|-------|---------------------|-------------|
| 1     | Daniel Dvoress      | \$1,489,289 |
| 2     | Caio De Almeida     | \$1,072,428 |
| 3     | Anatoly Filatov     | \$772,251   |
| 4     | Michael Nugent      | \$556,095   |
| 5     | Alejandro Caridad   | \$400,412   |
| 6     | Neville Endo Costa  | \$288,356   |
| 7     | Ronny Kaiser        | \$207,644   |
| 8     | Tomasz Cybulski     | \$149,523   |
| 9     | Aneris Adomkevicius | \$107,671   |

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# THE BEST CELEBRITY POKER PLAYERS IN HOLLYWOOD

By Houston Curtis

From all my years playing in high-stakes cash games and rounding several Hollywood home games I often get asked the question, “Who is the best celebrity poker player you’ve ever played with?” And although I almost always avoid answering this question with any real detail, today is the day that I’m finally gonna spill a big fat can of Hollywood beans!

Before I start naming names, we need to establish some rules. First off, how do we define a “Hollywood Celebrity” who I have played poker with? Well, there is the obvious record of A-listers who have played in the games from time to time, but in Hollywood, celebrity does not necessarily mean the person has to be an actor, rock star, or sporting idol. Tinseltown also celebrates the movie mogul producers, tabloid headline makers, run-amuck trust fund types, billionaires, captains of industry, and frankly, anyone who can get seated on the patio at the Ivey in Beverly Hills when there are no reservations left, or be ushered past the lines and straight to the VIP bottle service at the hottest clubs in town.

There’s a ton of sucking up to be done in Hollywood and plenty of people are puckering up 24 hours a day, seven days a week with the intention of kissing the right person’s ass. If you really want to know who the hottest celebs are in Hollywood, just follow the paparazzi around... they know all the dirt. But as far as poker playing celebs, you’ve come to the right source.

I’ll be eliminating two celebs from the list due to what I would call “over qualification.” If you’ve read my book or my previous columns, you can probably guess one of the celebs being eliminated is my former partner in crime, Tobey Maguire. Why? I consider Tobey to be far beyond the level of a casual or even passionate Hollywood celeb poker player. I’ve played in many big cash games with some of the top pros in the world from the famous to the infamous, and Spider Man can hold his own with pretty much anyone.

Secondly, I am eliminating Jennifer Tilly, simply because I feel she has now officially become more of a “poker personality” than an actor. Her core business these days seems to be poker related, whereas none of the other celebs on my list can make such a bold claim.

My primary criteria for this list is that I have had to have played with these players multiple times in a serious cash game setting. While I’ve played in tournaments and/or enjoyed conversing about poker with players such as Jason Alexander, Ray Romano, or Don Cheadle, without tangling in a serious cash game I wouldn’t have enough information on their ability to make a fair assessment of overall skill.

I could have easily done a top 10, but for the sake of time and space, I kept it to five. Some honorable mentions would definitely include actor Hank Azaria, tennis legend Pete Sampras, and film director Steve Brill.

## No. 5 James Woods

Coming in at no. five is Oscar-nominated thespian James Woods. Woods was nominated for two Academy

Awards, one for Best Actor for his work in Oliver Stone’s *Salvador* and for Best Supporting Actor for Rob Reiner’s *Ghosts of Mississippi*. He is the recipient of two Primetime Emmy Awards for the television movies *Promise* and *My Name Is Bill W*. My two favorite Woods performances would be his role in *Contact* alongside Jodie Foster as the skeptical Michael Kitz and of course his role as the scumbag hustler/pimp, Lester Diamond in Scorsese’s masterpiece, *Casino* opposite Sharon Stone, Robert De Niro, and Joe Pesci. I’ve spent an ample time at the table with Jimmy. He is a fun, super tight, yet very skilled player to play against.

Woods went to MIT, and is probably the most intelligent celebrity I’ve spent time with on the felt. The one thing about Woods that makes him tough to play with is his uncanny ability for table talk. Woods can talk your ear off when you are in the middle of a decision. I’ve seen him distract players through conversation causing them to make horrible plays. All the while, his own choices at the table are always methodical and well-executed.

One thing that makes James Woods much like any other poker player is his passion for telling bad beat stories. One time I was walking through the Bellagio and he spotted me from the center of the poker room and flagged me down. After making his way through a sea of tables and fans who wanted his autograph, he proceeded to share about 30 minutes’ worth of bad beat stories from his last two hours at the table. But hearing James Woods share a bad beat story is decidedly much more entertaining than listening to your average rent-grinding pal who just lost his lunch money. The money means nothing to Jimmy, but winning means everything... and he’s a formidable opponent.

## No. 4 Todd Phillips

My number 4 pick is acclaimed writer/director Todd Phillips. Todd is probably one of the hottest directors in Hollywood right now. We remember him for movies like *Old School* and *Road Trip*, but it was the incredible gamble he took when making *The Hangover* that really put him on the map. Todd gave up a \$7 million dollar director’s fee in order to have casting control and the freedom to make an R-rated comedy. The result was the largest R-rated comedy in movie history and a more than \$100 million dollar payout for Todd. If that wasn’t enough, he recently directed the no. one rated-R film of all time with *The Joker* starring Joaquin Phoenix, which



has grossed over \$1 billion.

I've played with Todd for years, starting back in my Hollywood Park days when he would drop by from time to time to play pot-limit. Much like the way Todd has taken strategic gambles in his career, he does the same at the poker table. He is not scared of a huge bluff or even slow playing a big hand if the circumstances are in line for a big payout. Todd was one of the founding members of our original game (that the film *Molly's Game* was based on, and that my book *Billion Dollar Hollywood Heist* is about). It was during the run of our game that he also finished fifth in the 2005 WPT Legends of Poker championship event, bringing him a cool \$250,000 cash along with some serious home game bragging rights. Todd's biggest weapon at the table is his incredible sense of humor. He is so damn funny that he can make a player forget they are playing for tons of money.

### No. 3 Ben Affleck

In terms of legitimate A-list movie stars, Affleck is definitely the best aside from Tobey Maguire. Affleck's antics at the poker table have been widely reported. We know he has been banned from casinos for counting cards at the blackjack table, and he too has a legit tournament cash from winning \$356,000 and the title for the 2004 California State Poker Championship held at the Commerce.

To those who feel that one or two cashes isn't that much to write home about, consider this. Guys like Affleck and Phillips don't play tournaments nearly as often as the average semi pro, so their cash percentage by comparison is impressive. I was there when Ben was learning the game and getting schooled by cash pros like Gabe Thaler, up to his first high-stakes private games in Beverly Hills with myself, Pete Sampras, Asher Dan, and Rick Fox. But it wasn't until Ben became a regular in my game with Tobey that he became a serious threat at the table. I don't think Ben picked up the game as quickly Tobey did, but over time he has steadily become one of the most feared actors to sit down at the table. He's not afraid to make the big call or the big bluff and from what I've seen, he's been more right than wrong when lots of money was on the line. Ben was definitely a winner in our game.

### No. 2 Nick Cassavetes

For those of you who don't know who Nick Cassavetes is, let me start by explaining that this guy hails from pure Hollywood royalty. His mother was legendary actress Gena Rowlands and his father was actor and legendary film director John Cassavetes, the guy who basically invented the "independent" film genre by casting a rotating group of his close friends into personally financed



films including his wife, Peter Falk, Ben Gazzara, and Seymour Cassel. Much like his father, Nick's reputation as a director has garnered him much praise from the film community. He directed *The Notebook* which is probably one of the most famous romantic films of all time, but it was Nick's grittier films that gave him a daring reputation as a film maker. This was personified in the TV series *Entourage* when Cassavetes played himself and pushed Vincent Chase to do his own dangerous life-threatening stunts. In the same series, there were scenes featuring Nick as well as Rick Salomon playing poker on set, which is pulled straight from real life.

Aside from what we know as "Molly's Game," the biggest game in town was always held at Nick's house and is still going off every week to this day. While Nick's game didn't play quite as big as our main game, it was huge and always a good time. Nick has a very commanding presence, standing 6'6" with a menacing giant skull and crossbones tattoo across his chest. Nick is not afraid to gamble and he absolutely hates to lose! He once won a big prop bet with Tobey who bet him he couldn't get six-pack abs in a short amount of time. Nick pulled his shirt off right at the table in front of everyone and Tobey was forced to admit defeat.

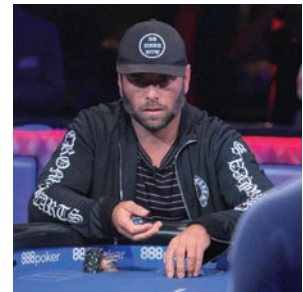
Nick's personality is such that many players don't like to play big hands with him for fear of upsetting him. He's not the kind of guy you want to see pissed. I never played soft against Nick but we always liked each other, even though my style of play put me on the second tier of his weekly invite list. One time, Nick and I chopped up Brandon Davis before the game started in a classic two on one hustle that I will never forget.

### No. 1 Rick Salomon

Beyond the shadow of a doubt Rick Salomon takes the top spot on my list. He was responsible for putting the final nail in my coffin when I lost a million dollars in one night, a scene more-or-less recreated in the movie by Harland Eustice, the character based on me.

Rick is, of course, the guy who filmed the underground sex tape of himself and Paris Hilton titled *One Night In Paris*, but that's not the half of it. He's also been married to Shannon Doherty of *Beverly Hills 90210* and *Charmed* fame, and was also famously married and divorced from Pam Anderson, not once, but twice! The guy is affectionately called "Scum" by his friends. He's famous for being a bad boy, but known by the Hollywood A-listers and elites for being a man of his word. If you shake Rick's hand over any amount of money, it's just as good as signing a contract in blood. And that is something you rarely see in Tinseltown these days.

His wild drug antics are also the stuff of legend. Hell, the night he took me down he had done more cocaine in 10 minutes than I had ever seen in my life up to that point. But somewhere along the line, Rick said to himself, "If I ever smoke crack again, I'm checking myself into rehab for a year." And that's exactly what he did. If you've read my book and think I've lived a colorful life, I promise you... the book Rick Salomon could write would be like an action-packed roller coaster thrill ride into the world



of Hollywood and high-stakes gambling. The dude has no fear, and when his discipline is on go mode, Rick is as skilled as any cash pro I've ever met.

Andy Beal, the billionaire banker who took on the Corporation for millions of dollars and was chronicled in the book *The Professor, The Banker And The Suicide King* by Michael Craig, reportedly lost \$40 million to Rick, causing Pam to sue to him for her share. It's all true, but it isn't even half the story behind Salomon's true tales at the table! Maybe one day he will let me share the rest of his mind-blowing exploits... but until then, you will have to trust me when I tell you, Rick Salomon is hands down the best Hollywood celeb I've ever played against.

In my next column, I'll be spinning tales about the top 5 **WORST** celebrity poker players I've ever played with! You might be surprised and shocked to see the names on that list! Trust me, you won't want to miss it. Be sure to check out all of my *Card Player* supplement videos at [www.kardsharp.com/cardplayer](http://www.kardsharp.com/cardplayer).

And remember... stay sharp! Stay Kardsharp! ♠



Houston Curtis, founder of **KardSharp.com** and author of *Billion Dollar Hollywood Heist* has lived a successful double life as both a producer and card mechanic for nearly 30 years. His credits include executive producing gambling related TV shows such as *The Ultimate Blackjack Tour* on CBS, *The Aruba Poker Classic* on GSN, and pioneering the poker instructional DVD genre with titles featuring poker champion Phil Hellmuth. Barred for life from Las Vegas Golden Nugget for "excessive winning" at blackjack, Houston is one of the world's most successful card mechanics and sleight-of-hand artists of the modern era. Curtis, who rarely plays in tournaments, won a 2004 Legends of Poker no-limit hold'em championship event besting Scotty Nguyen heads-up at the final table before going on to co-found the elite Hollywood poker ring that inspired Aaron Sorkin's Academy Award-nominated film *Molly's Game*. Curtis resides in Phoenix, Arizona where in addition to running a production company and independent record label, he is also a private gaming/casino protection consultant to clients across the globe seeking insight into master level card cheating tactics via advanced sleight-of-hand technique. To reach Houston for a speaking engagement, consulting or production services send email to [stacked@Kardsharp.com](mailto:stacked@Kardsharp.com)



## HURRY UP AND THINK AHEAD

By Greg Raymer

*Please let me encourage you to reach out to me with article ideas and questions for future columns. You can Tweet to me at @FossilMan, or send me an email to [info@fossilmanpoker.com](mailto:info@fossilmanpoker.com).*

You're playing some no-limit hold'em. It could be a cash game, or a tournament. A first player bets, let's say 10 units (could be \$10, \$100, 10,000 tournament chips, whatever). Their opponent, the second player, now raises all-in for 25 units.

As you watch, the first player now erupts in anguish! They can't believe this happened and now they don't know what to do. They may start asking the second player, "what do you have?" Then the first player spends the next several minutes agonizing over their decision.

I don't know about you, but I hate when this happens. In fact, I feel like the first player is stealing those minutes from my life. I understand they honestly don't know what to do. However, I still hate them for wasting our time.

Their mistake is not whether they get it right with respect to calling or folding to this all-in raise. Their mistake was in not thinking ahead.

Every time you make a decision in poker, you should be thinking ahead about what happens next. When you raise preflop, you should have a good idea how you will respond if somebody reraises, and what you will do on various flops. When you bet the flop, you

**"Every time you make a decision in poker, you should be thinking ahead about what happens next."**

should already be thinking about how you'll respond to a check-raise, or what you will do with various turn cards that might be dealt. It's not mandatory that you have every single step fully mapped out in advance, but you should have some idea how you will handle the more likely possibilities.

The big mistake made by our first player is they did not consider one of the most likely possibilities. What will they do if the second player raises all-in for 15 units more? If instead they had bet 10 units, and the second player had raised all-in for 200 units, that is probably unexpected. I understand why they need some extra time to figure out what to do. But when the raise is a more typical amount, that is something they should have thought about before betting.

It's not just that this failure to think ahead can waste our time. It will also lead to making some huge mistakes. I often see a player call a bet or raise, where it is clear they do not believe their opponent. They think the other player is bluffing, or over-valuing their hand. But then, when the opponent makes a bigger bet on the next street, after the dealer puts out an apparently meaningless card, they agonize and fold.

Again, the mistake is not the fold.

Nor was it the previous call. The mistake was in the combination of these two decisions, the result of not thinking ahead. When they called the first bet, what was their plan for the next street? The truth is, many players don't have a plan. They make each decision in isolation.

Not planning ahead almost guarantees they will make a mistake. Imagine I choose to defend my big blind with 10-9 against your preflop raise. You bet the flop of K-10-6, and I call. We get dealt an offsuit 2 on the turn, and you go all-in for a pot-sized bet. My only smart play is to call, because if I am going to fold now, why did I call on the flop? It certainly made no sense to call on the flop hoping to catch another ten, or an nine. That is only five outs, not enough to make a smart call. And if I think you have me beat, then I should have folded on the flop.

Yet, I see this exact mistake all the time. The player calls on the flop, and then folds on the turn after an extended tank. Often, it is for risk averse reasons. They just don't want to risk so many chips. However, whatever their reason, they should have figured that out on the flop, and folded then.

In my experience, players who bet

the flop, and have only a pot-sized bet left, will often go all-in on the turn. If you believe they have you beat, then fold on the flop. If you don't believe this, then call now, and again on the turn. Your decisions should add up to a sensible plan. Failing to think ahead all but guarantees an inferior result.

Now don't play slowly, but do take a few extra seconds, and think ahead. While you're waiting for other players to act, that's the perfect time to be thinking ahead. What will I do if they check to me, what will I do if they bet, etc.? The more you think ahead, the better you will play, and the better your results will become. Think ahead, and play smart! ♠



Greg Raymer is the 2004 WSOP world champion, winner of numerous major titles, and has more than \$7 million in earnings.

He recently authored "FossilMan's Winning Tournament Strategies," available from D&B Publishing, Amazon, and other retailers. He is sponsored by Blue Shark Optics, YouStake, and ShareMyPair. To contact Greg please tweet at him using @FossilMan or go to [www.FossilManPoker.com](http://www.FossilManPoker.com).

## LOSING DOESN'T HAVE TO BE PAINFUL

By Jonathan Little

*I am in the process of writing a complete, in-depth guide to tournament poker and I just wrote this section about dealing with loss. I would love to hear what you think about it on Twitter @JonathanLittle.*

Losing is never enjoyable. However, it doesn't have to be painful. There are various mindset shifts you can make to minimize the pain to the point that it is essentially irrelevant.

Most people never give themselves a chance to make it as a poker player because when they lose, they get sad, go on tilt, or quit. The most important thing you can do when playing tournaments for a living is to deny yourself an emotional connection to any individual tournament or series of tournaments. People often talk about their "tournament life" and how it is of the utmost importance to preserve it. They usually blind off, conceding any chance of winning a tournament they might have won if they had risked death a few times.

Remember, any individual tournament is just one of the thousands of tournaments you will play over the course of your life. I was lucky in that I developed this mentality early due to playing thousands of sit-n-go tournaments each month. If I lost a game (which I knew would happen about 2,600 times each month based on my volume), I would simply open another game and play again. It was not a big deal.

Live poker is quite a bit different because you may fly across the country or world to play one tournament, forcing you to be at least somewhat invested in it. That said, the concept still applies. When you lose, don't beat yourself up, especially if you did nothing wrong.

A tournament is just a tournament. Losing a few (or a lot) of them in a row



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does not make you a loser at life. Experiencing losses from poker, which is certain to happen, does not mean you are a loser at life, just like winning a tournament does not make you a winner at life. Do not associate losing with failing, because they are completely different things.

I vividly remember one instance where I was emotionally invested in a tournament. In the *World Poker Tour* main event at Foxwoods, six months after winning my second *WPT* title, which I also won at Foxwoods, I busted in 55th place. A win would have given me my third *WPT* title, made me the first player to win back-to-back main events at the same casino, and made me a huge favorite to win the *WPT* Player of the Year title two years in a row.

Instead of making history, I lost. But I was fine with the result. I played my best and made good use of every situation. That usually will just not be enough to bring home the title most of the time due to the way tournaments are structured. Once you accept that most of the time there simply is not anything you can do, you will learn to see losing in a more positive light.

Many recreational players comment to me about how it is difficult to have this mindset when they do not get to play too often. I used to think they were silly, but after I had my two children and stopped playing so many live tournaments, their concerns became more real to me. That being said, just because you have other things going on in life and do not get to play many tournaments does not mean you should play the ones you get to play poorly. Quite often, the right play is to be aggressive, and if your mindset stops you from making the right play, you must accept that you are giving up equity in exchange for getting to sit at a table for a little while longer. I don't know about you, but I have better things to do than sit at a table and give away my money. Instead of giving away your money, fix your mindset and realize poker is a long-run game.

Make a point to play well within your bankroll. A full discussion on bankroll management will be presented in the book, but for now know that the players who complain the most about losses are usually playing well above their means. For example, if you have an \$800,000 bankroll and lose a \$10,000 buy-in tournament, it is not too big of a deal because you still have 79 buy-ins left. If you have a \$5,000 bankroll and lose a \$1,000 buy-in tournament, you just lost 20 percent of your bankroll, which can (and probably should) cause great emotional trauma. The solution to this problem is to be smart and play within your bankroll.

Studying the math inherent to poker tournaments may help you get accustomed to losing. If you play 1,000 tournaments, even if you get in the money quite frequently, you will only cash 25 percent of the time, which means you will not get in the money 75 percent of the time. Many of the best players only get in the money roughly 18 percent of the time, which means 82 percent of the time they walk away with nothing. However, when they do get in the money, they usually have a large chip stack that gives them a chance to win one of the top prizes, more than making up for all the small losses.

Another way to view poker tournaments is as a lottery where when you buy in, you get some number of tickets based on your skill level. If you have an edge, you get more tickets and if you are at a disadvantage, you get fewer tickets. As a simplistic example, a breakeven player gets 10 tickets, a player with 50 percent ROI gets 15 tickets, and a player with -30 percent ROI gets 7 tickets. Everyone then shows up, plays their best, and a winner is chosen at random. As long as you have a proper bankroll and are playing with an edge, even if there are tons of tickets to pull from, you should be thrilled to be involved, even though you will lose most of the time.

Finally, make a point to get some experience. It is hard to know what a long losing streak feels like until you have been there. I have lost \$150,000 at poker tournaments in two different years. While this may seem like a huge amount to lose, it was only 30 buy-ins or so, which is a normal, quite mild, downswing. I have also won \$2 million in two different years, which more than makes up for the losing years.

I am incredibly lucky in that I had terrible results in my first year as a live tournament pro. If I had started off on a huge winning streak, I may not have been adequately prepared to handle the even worse downswings that would come later. Many young players start their careers strong and end up going broke because they have no clue how to handle losing streaks. If you know a losing streak will come at some point, you will be prepared when it inevitably strikes. ♠



*Jonathan Little is a two-time WPT champion with more than \$6 million in tournament winnings. Each week, he posts an educational blog and podcast at [JonathanLittlePoker.com](http://JonathanLittlePoker.com), where you can get a FREE poker training video that details five things you must master if you want to win at tournament poker. You can also sign up for his FREE Excelling at No Limit Hold'em webinars at [HoldemBook.com/signup](http://HoldemBook.com/signup)*

## BADUGI: PLAYING AGAINST A RAISE

By Kevin Haney

As in all poker games, we must tighten up when another player has opened for a raise before it is our turn to act. There are two main questions to answer, how much should we tighten up, and should we tend to incorporate a three-bet only strategy, or is cold-calling acceptable?

Let's tackle the second question first as the answer will impact the overall range of holdings that will continue against an open. In general, cold-calling can be problematic in Badugi for a couple of reasons.

With the vast majority of our pat hands we are highly incentivized to limit the field and slow playing rare

monsters doesn't make sense because if your opponent is drawing they will simply check to you. In addition, smooth calling mediocre three-card badugis will make your holding somewhat transparent which is quite an impediment in a game where the best draw is also the best made hand.

The only real advantage to smooth-calling three-card badugis is to prevent ourselves from escalating the pot when we have a pre-draw equity disadvantage. However, when your opponent has the best hand with a three-card badugi they are not likely to put in the fourth bet as you could

easily have a badugi. Thus, in this case only one extra bet is going into the pot.

Meanwhile there are several reasons to incorporate a re-raise or fold strategy:

### 1. Creation of Dead Money

Three-betting will often produce a heads-up pot and create dead money. When the blinds fold you are only putting in 40 percent of the money thus even if your holding is slightly behind the original raiser's range you are not necessarily taking the worst of it especially when you have position.

### 2. It Doesn't Make Sense to Slow Play Badugis

When you stand pat it's clear that you have a badugi thus slow-playing monster pat badugis is not possible. Weaker badugis are very vulnerable in multi-way pots thus we should re-raise any pat hand we choose to play to increase the odds of getting the pot heads-up. The times we are lucky enough to hold a monster our opponent will still give us action because medium and weaker pat badugis far outnumber premium holdings.

### 3. Multi-way Action is Generally Discouraged

Badugi is a limit game and similar to most one winner limit games proper strategy is geared more towards winning pots and not future bets. We already know that most dealt badugis are vulnerable and prefer heads-up pots, so re-raising them is clear.

A premium draw such as A♥ 3♣ 4♦ plays well in either a heads-up or multi-way pot, however, it's probably better played short-handed to increase the probability that we win the times we don't improve. In a multi-way field, a badugi is usually required to win thus mostly negating the power

of your premium draw.

### 4. Less Incentive to Pull Action Players Into the Pot

When playing pot-limit Omaha high and holding A♥ K♠ J♥ 9♣ you may prefer to cold-call in position instead of re-raising because that could potentially eliminate an "action" player who may hold a dominated draw. If someone is destined to go broke with non nut flushes and straights, we potentially lose a ton when we prevent them from entering the fray. Similarly, in Omaha eight-or-better you don't really mind bad low draws coming in against you when you hold A-2-3-4.

In Badugi, hands are independent so there is a less incentive to try and pull another player into the pot with the A♥ 3♣ 4♦. When you just cold-call an opener it doesn't really benefit you to let in a player with 5♥ 6♠ 8♣ that would have otherwise folded. If they make an eight badugi you are left drawing to five outs. Also on the first draw you could make a jack or queen badugi and wish that the pot was not multi-way.

### 5. Having the Betting Lead Can Help Steal Pots

When you re-raise and draw one an opponent will typically put you on a strong tri hand. They may know they can be a big underdog with one draw left and make a semi-tight fold on the turn sometimes enabling you to win with the second-best hand.

Your snowing lines also become more believable. By re-raising you have represented a strong tri which has plenty of showdown value on its own thus the story that you have a badugi is more credible. While it may be your strategy to re-raise with any three card badugi that you continue on with but your opponent may not realize this.

## TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2020 World Series of Poker Online  
\$2,500 Six-Max No-Limit Hold'em



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 32.0%  
After Flop: 45.0%  
After Turn: 27.0%

Belarmino De Souza  
15,845,441 Chips



Kristen Bicknell  
6,454,559 Chips



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 68.0%  
After Flop: 55.0%  
After Turn: 73.0%

### PREFLOP

With two players remaining and blinds of 80,000-160,000 and an ante of 20,000, Belarmino De Souza limped in from the button. Kristen Bicknell raised to 592,000. De Souza called.

FLOP



Bicknell bet 416,000.  
De Souza called.

TURN



Bicknell checked. De Souza bet 1,382,000. Bicknell called.

RIVER



Bicknell checked. De Souza moved all-in. Bicknell called for 4,064,559.

## ANALYSIS

Kristen Bicknell entered heads-up play in the 2020 *World Series of Poker Online* \$2,500 six-max no-limit hold'em event with her opponent Belarmino De Souza holding roughly a 5:2 chip lead. The 33-year-old Canadian poker pro had already won two bracelets and was just one elimination away from becoming the fourth female player in history to win three, but would have to claw her way back into the match against her Brazilian opponent. In this hand Bicknell picked up a monster in pocket jacks and raised to 592,000 after De Souza had limped in from the button with K-6 suited. De Souza made the call and picked up a flush draw and an overcard on a ten-high flop. Bicknell followed up her preflop raise with a continuation bet of 416,000. De Souza called and the turn brought the 7♥, which gave him a gutshot straight draw to go along with his flush and overcard outs. Bicknell checked the turn, perhaps deciding that her hand wasn't strong enough to bet all three streets for value given how this board texture was fairly likely to have improved De Souza's limp-calling range from the button. De Souza seized on the opportunity to take over the betting lead and fired 1,382,000. Bicknell called and the river brought the 3♥, which completed a possible backdoor heart draw. Bicknell checked with her overpair, having seemed to elect to turn it into a bluff catcher. De Souza missed all of his outs to end up with just king high at the river. He opted to turn his hand into a bluff and moved all-in, looking to apply as much pressure as possible to Bicknell's one-pair type hands. She went deep into the tank, but ultimately made the call to double up and take the lead. She went on to win the event for \$356,412 and her third *WSOP* bracelet.

NOTE: WINNING PERCENTAGES DO NOT INCLUDE TIES. ODDS PROVIDED BY [CARDPLAYER.COM/POKER-TOOLS/ODDS-CALCULATOR/TEXAS-Holdem](http://CARDPLAYER.COM/POKER-TOOLS/ODDS-CALCULATOR/TEXAS-Holdem)

### 6. Re-Raising from Small Blind will often Eliminate the Big Blind

It is much preferable to be heads-up and avoid possibly having both the worst absolute and relative position in a three-way pot. If the button has the betting lead and the big blind is also in the hand you aren't closing the action and thus have to fear a raise from behind. And the times you do make a strong a holding and check-raise the button the big blind can get out relatively unscathed.

### 7. Running Into Monster Hands is not a Great Concern

Suppose we hold 3♥ 4♠ 6♣ on the button and re-raise a cut-off opener. For us to have less than 30 percent equity in the hand he would have to be holding an eight badugi or better and these hands are almost as rare as pocket aces in hold'em.

From the cut-off position most players will be playing any pat badugi and against that range you have approximately 40 percent equity. When holding a badugi your opponent will often put in the fourth bet and from that point on due to current and implied odds you have an easy decision to take all three draws and try to beat it. If your opponent does not four-bet his weaker badugis then you just received a nice bit of information.

When your opponent has the better three card badugi your equity is in some range between 38-47 percent. However, as previously discussed he will not often put in the fourth bet as he is an underdog to a badugi and by doing so he will be somewhat transparent that he holds a premium tri.

### 8. Frequent Re-raising Slows Down Opponents

When you are more often punishing your opponents with re-raises this can have the effect of slowing down your opponents. Hopefully this will reduce the frequency with which they open their marginal holdings allowing you to open up more pots against the blinds in position. Dissuading opponents from constantly stealing your button is advantageous in any poker game.

All things considered it seems best to play tight but aggressive on the first betting round and incorporate a three bet or fold strategy. It is easy to implement and while we may be taking slightly the worst of it with the bottom of our range as a whole our entire range will benefit. However, when employing this strategy we should play slightly tighter overall than we would if we also had a flatting range.

### Three Betting Ranges

When a player opens for a raise from UTG and we are

in either the hi-jack or cut-off we should play quite snug; in this situation playing a range of ten or better badugis and A-3-6+ is probably correct. This may seem overly tight, however, the raiser is originating from a power position and there are still many players left to act on their hands.

However, when we are on the button versus an early position open we can play somewhat looser as we are guaranteed best position and only the blinds are left to act. In this case re-raising jack or better badugis, any six tri, or A-2-7/A-3-7 appears reasonable. Against a range that is fairly strong we are probably taking the worst of it with the weaker tri holdings but we have position and as already mentioned premium three card badugis are not often putting in the fourth bet.

With the button versus a cut-off we can open up a bit further and three-bet queen or better badugis and 3-4-7+ tri holdings. In the small blind versus a button open (that is often very D2 heavy) a reasonable three-betting range is any badugi, any seven tri and A-2-8/A-3-8. In this situation we can also get aggressive and also re-raise our best A-2/A-3 hands containing blockers such as A♥ 2♠ 4♠ 6♠.

There are exceptions to every rule and sometimes from the small blind it makes sense to simply smooth-call. This would be the case when an early position player opens and we have a rough six high tri or a hand like A-4-7. We are partly invested in the pot and can make big holdings where the lack of position won't really adversely affect us. In this situation since our hand is relatively face up thus we should tend to play straight forward and fold turns unimproved.

As it is in all poker games, playing the right mix of holdings against a raise and setting up mostly profitable situations is critical to your success in Badugi. ♠



Kevin Haney is a former actuary of MetLife but left the corporate job to focus on his passions for poker and fitness. He is co-owner of Elite Fitness Club in Oceanport, NJ and is a certified personal trainer. With regards to poker he got his start way back in 2003 and particularly enjoys taking new players interested in mixed games under his wing and quickly making them proficient in all variants. If interested in learning more, playing mixed games online, or just saying hello he can be reached at [haneyk612@gmail.com](mailto:haneyk612@gmail.com).

## CRUISING IN 2020

By Linda Johnson

As someone who has spent at least six months every year traveling (mostly cruising) for the past 20 years, I am actually enjoying being home since February. That said, I do miss cruising. I have been asked if I will resume cruising once the cruise lines go back into operation, and the answer is most likely yes.

I have been following closely how the cruise industry (especially my favorite cruise line Royal Caribbean) has reacted to the pandemic. Even before the CDC shut down the cruise industry, Royal Caribbean had implemented extra safety measures such as requiring all passengers to go through a health screening and have their temperatures

checked before boarding the ship, sanitizing all public areas every 30 minutes, hiring extra medical staff on each ship, etc. Royal Caribbean recently established a "Healthy Sail" panel whose priority is to review every detail of every department's operation in order to develop unprecedented standards to keep crew and passengers safe. The panel consists of some of the best minds and leaders in public health, biosecurity, epidemiology, hospitality, and maritime operations. I am eager to see what the "new normal" in cruising will be.

One thing is for sure... I really miss all of our Card Player Cruises guests and staff. Many of them have become

“One thing is for sure... I really miss all of our Card Player Cruises guests and staff. Many of them have become close, close friends and are like family to me.”

close, close friends and are like family to me. One thing that has happened on every one of our cruises over the past 28 years is a fun welcome party on embarkation and a farewell party at the end of the cruise. On every cruise, we watch and listen in order to create a top 10 list of the funniest things our passengers said or did during the voyage. At the farewell party, we surprise guests and call them up to the stage to receive a silly gift while we announce what they said or did to have earned the award.

Since we all need a good laugh these days, I have looked back at some of my favorite top 10s over the years and will share them with you in no particular order (recipients' names have been concealed to protect the guilty).

1. Do you think I can find a place to buy some jewelry in the Caribbean? (There is a jewelry store on every corner!)
2. Has this ship ever sank?
3. Does Viagra work on a cruise ship?
4. Since so many of your passengers are from Las Vegas, why don't we cruise from there?
5. I gained so much weight this week that the bed sheets are tight.
6. I'm eager to go to Nassau to see the Johnson Space

Center (I think he meant NASA).

7. My stretch pants don't have a choice.
8. I'm hungry...I haven't eaten in at least 15 minutes!
9. Gilligan's Island is the reason I overpack. (young people may have to google Gilligan's Island)
10. Why don't the inside cabins have windows?  
And of course, Alaska cruises have their own list:
  1. On which side of the ship will the whales appear?
  2. When will the Northern Lights come on?
  3. Are the glaciers out all year long?
  4. I took the whale watch excursion...we went to Walmart!
  5. The people on this ship are so old, the late show is at 7 p.m. ♠



Linda Johnson is a WSOP bracelet winner and member of the Poker Hall of Fame, the Women in Poker Hall of Fame, and WPT Honors. She is available to host tournaments, seminars, and charity events. Please contact her at [cardplayercruise@aol.com](mailto:cardplayercruise@aol.com) with questions or

comments.

## TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2020 World Series of Poker Online  
\$1,000 No-Limit Hold'em Championship



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 33.0%  
After Flop: 72.0%  
After Turn: 84.0%

Nahrain Tamero  
12,146,296 Chips



Norman Michalek  
30,373,704 Chips



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 63.0%  
After Flop: 10.0%  
After Turn: 7.0%

### PREFLOP

With two players remaining and blinds of 250,000-500,000 and an ante of 50,000, Nahrain Tamero raised to 1,000,000 from the button. Norman Michalek called from the big blind.

FLOP



Michalek bet 850,000.  
Tamero called.

TURN



Michalek bet  
1,850,000.  
Tamero called.

RIVER



Michalek moved all-in.  
Tamero called all-in  
for 8,396,296.

### ANALYSIS

Nahrain Tamero had just a handful of recorded live tournament cashes to her name when she made the final table of the 2020 WSOP Online \$1,000 no-limit hold'em championship, the closing tournament of the US-facing segment of this year's online series. Tamero navigated a field of 2,126 total entries in the event to make the final table in third chip position. She earned two knockouts at the final table to grow her stack, but was outchipped by nearly a 3:1 margin by the time she made it down to heads-up play against Norman Michalek. While Tamero had only five prior live tournament cashes, Michalek had 94 under his belt, with more than \$450,000 in earnings accrued along the way. Despite both a chip and tournament experience advantage for Michalek, Tamero proved more than up to the challenge. In this hand she opened from the button with 6-4 suited and flopped top pair and a gutshot straight draw. Michalek had defended with Q-4 offsuit and picked up the same straight draw. He bet 850,000 into the pot of 2,100,000 from out of position and Tamero just called in position. The turn brought the J♠ and Michalek fired the second barrel of 1,850,000. With second pair and a gutshot, Tamero called to see the river. The 2♦ paired the board and Michalek moved all-in, putting Tamero to the test for the rest of her stack with a larger than pot-size shove. Tamero's hand was a pure bluff catcher but, given the betting action, Michalek was fairly likely to have either a monster or nothing. He'd have been more likely to pot control with a hand that had some showdown value. Tamero made the tough call for her tournament life and doubled into the chip lead.

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

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|           |                  |                                       |                                           |
|-----------|------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| SEPTEMBER | Sept. 7-27       | DeepStack Showdown Poker Series       | Venetian Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV   |
|           | Sept. 27         | No-Limit Hold'em Tournament           | Lucky Chances ■ Colma, CA                 |
|           | Sept. 28-Oct. 20 | Card Player Poker Tour                | Bicycle Casino ■ Bell Gardens, CA         |
| OCTOBER   | Oct. 5-18        | DeepStack Showdown                    | Venetian Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV   |
|           | Oct. 8-11        | MSPT Michigan                         | FireKeepers Casino ■ Battle Creek, MI     |
|           | Oct. 23-25       | South Dakota State Poker Championship | Silverado Franklin ■ Deadwood, SD         |
|           | Oct. 29-Nov. 1   | MSPT Wisconsin                        | Potawatomi Hotel & Casino ■ Milwaukee, WI |
| NOVEMBER  | Nov. 6-16        | Card Player Poker Tour                | Seneca Niagara Casino ■ Niagara Falls, NY |
|           | Nov. 13-23       | Gold Rush Poker Series                | Lucky Chances ■ Colma, CA                 |

**AO**-Add On **B**-Bonus **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 **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

## ARIZONA

## TALKING STICK RESORT - SCOTTSDALE

## MONDAY-FRIDAY

10:15 a.m. NLH, \$125

## SATURDAY-SUNDAY

10:15 a.m. NLH, \$200

5:00 p.m. (\$2K Guarantee)  
NLH, \$80 AO \$20 KO \$25  
8:00 p.m. (\$2.5K Guarantee)  
MP, \$30 RB \$10 AO \$10  
(\$1.5K Guarantee)  
10:00 p.m. NLH, \$60 RB \$50 AO \$40  
KO \$10 (\$2K Guarantee)

## FRIDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$50 AO \$20  
(\$2K Guarantee)  
4:00 p.m. NLH, \$40 AO \$30  
(\$5K Guarantee)  
5:30 p.m. NLH, \$65 AO \$50  
(\$5K Guarantee)  
7:00 p.m. NLH, \$90 AO \$70  
(\$5K Guarantee)  
10:00 p.m. NLH, \$60 RB \$50 AO \$40  
KO \$10 (\$2K Guarantee)

## SATURDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$65 AO \$50  
(\$20K Guarantee)  
2:00 p.m. NLH, \$90 AO \$70  
(\$20K Guarantee)  
4:00 p.m. NLH, \$115 AO \$90  
(\$20K Guarantee)  
10:00 p.m. NLH, \$60 RB \$50 AO \$40  
KO \$10 (\$2K Guarantee)

## SUNDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$40 AO \$30  
(\$10K Guarantee)  
1:30 p.m. NLH, \$65 AO \$50  
(\$10K Guarantee)  
3:00 p.m. NLH, \$90 AO \$70  
(\$10K Guarantee)

## CHUMASH CASINO - SANTA YNEZ

## MONDAY

10:15 a.m. NLH, \$40  
7:00 p.m. PLO, \$0 AO \$20

## TUESDAY

10:15 a.m. NLH, \$40  
7:00 p.m. NLH, \$60

## WEDNESDAY

10:15 a.m. NLH, \$40  
7:00 p.m. NLH, \$50

## THURSDAY

10:15 a.m. NLH, \$50 KO \$10  
7:00 p.m. NLH, \$40

## FRIDAY

10:15 a.m. NLH, \$40  
7:15 p.m. NLH, \$150

## SATURDAY

1:15 p.m. NLH, \$120 (\$5K Guarantee)

## SUNDAY

1:15 p.m. NLH, \$100 KO \$25  
(\$3K Guarantee)

## COMMERCE CASINO - COMMERCE

## MONDAY-THURSDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$65 (\$2.5K Guarantee)  
6:00 p.m. NLH, \$65 (\$3.5K Guarantee)

## FRIDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$65 (\$2.5K Guarantee)  
6:00 p.m. NLH, \$150 KO \$50  
(\$5K Guarantee)

## SATURDAY

1:00 p.m. NLH, \$150 (\$15K Guarantee)

## SUNDAY

1:00 p.m. NLH, \$65 RB \$50  
(\$10K Guarantee)

## GARDENS CASINO - HAWAIIAN GARDENS

## MONDAY

12:15 p.m. NLH, \$30 RB \$10 AO \$10  
(\$8K Guarantee)  
6:45 p.m. NLH, \$10 RB \$10 AO \$10  
(\$3K Guarantee)

## TUESDAY

12:15 p.m. NLH, \$75 AO \$40  
(\$5K Guarantee)  
6:45 p.m. NLH, \$75 AO \$40 KO \$25  
(\$5K Guarantee)

## WEDNESDAY

12:15 p.m. NLH, \$75 AO \$40 KO \$25  
(\$5K Guarantee)  
6:45 p.m. NLH, \$75 AO \$40

## CALIFORNIA

## BAY 101 - SAN JOSE

## MONDAY

9:30 a.m. NLH, \$130

## TUESDAY

9:30 a.m. NLH, \$130

## WEDNESDAY

9:30 a.m. NLH, \$150

## THURSDAY

9:30 a.m. NLH, \$130

## FRIDAY

9:30 a.m. NLH, \$150

## SATURDAY

9:00 a.m. NLH, \$250

## SUNDAY

9:00 a.m. NLH, \$150

## BICYCLE CASINO - BELL GARDENS

## MONDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$70 AO \$20 KO \$20  
(\$2K Guarantee)  
5:00 p.m. NLH, \$75 (\$2.5K Guarantee)

## TUESDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$50 AO \$20  
(\$2K Guarantee)  
5:00 p.m. NLH, \$30 RB \$10 AO \$10  
(\$2.5K Guarantee)

## WEDNESDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$50 AO \$20  
(\$2K Guarantee)  
5:00 p.m. NLH, \$65 AO \$20  
(\$2.5K Guarantee)

## THURSDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$50 AO \$20

9:30 p.m. (\$5K Guarantee)  
NLH, \$70 AO \$20  
(\$1K Guarantee)

**THURSDAY**  
12:15 p.m. NLH, \$50 AO \$40  
(\$4K Guarantee)  
6:45 p.m. NLH, \$75 AO \$40 KO \$25  
(\$6K Guarantee)  
9:30 p.m. NLH, \$70 AO \$20  
(\$1K Guarantee)

**FRIDAY**  
12:15 p.m. NLH, \$90 (\$4K Guarantee)  
6:45 p.m. NLH, \$115 RB \$50  
(\$30K Guarantee)

**SATURDAY**  
11:00 a.m. NLH, \$50 RB \$20  
(\$5K Guarantee)  
3:00 p.m. NLH, \$100 RB \$50  
(\$5K Guarantee)

**SUNDAY**  
12:15 p.m. NLH, \$75 AO \$40 KO \$25  
(\$5K Guarantee)  
3:00 p.m. NLH, \$50 AO \$40  
(\$3K Guarantee)

#### **HUSTLER CASINO - GARDENA**

**MONDAY**  
7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100 AO \$40 KO \$25  
(\$2K Guarantee)

**TUESDAY**  
7:00 p.m. NLH, \$80 RB \$40  
(\$2K Guarantee)

**WEDNESDAY**  
7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100 AO \$40 KO \$25  
(\$2K Guarantee)

**THURSDAY**  
7:00 p.m. NLH, \$80 RB \$40  
(\$2K Guarantee)

**FRIDAY**  
7:00 p.m. NLH, \$80 RB \$40  
(\$2K Guarantee)

**SATURDAY**  
3:00 p.m. NLH, \$80 RB \$40  
(\$2K Guarantee)

#### **LUCKY CHANCES - COLMA**

**MONDAY**  
9:30 a.m. NLH, \$120 AO \$10  
(\$3K 1st Place Guarantee)

**TUESDAY**  
9:30 a.m. NLH, \$200 AO \$10  
(\$4K 1st Place Guarantee)

**WEDNESDAY**  
9:30 a.m. NLH, \$120 AO \$10  
(\$3K 1st Place Guarantee)

**THURSDAY**  
9:30 a.m. NLH, \$120 AO \$10  
(\$3K 1st Place Guarantee)

**FRIDAY**  
9:30 a.m. NLH, \$120 AO \$10  
(\$3K 1st Place Guarantee)

**SATURDAY**  
9:30 a.m. NLH, \$120 AO \$10  
(\$3K 1st Place Guarantee)

**SUNDAY**  
9:30 a.m. NLH, \$250 AO \$10  
(\$8K 1st Place Guarantee)

#### **OAKS CARD CLUB - EMERYVILLE**

**MONDAY**  
6:15 p.m. NLH, \$150

**WEDNESDAY**  
6:15 p.m. NLH, \$185

**SATURDAY**  
11:00 a.m. NLH, \$185

**SUNDAY**  
1:00 p.m. NLH, \$235

#### **OCEAN'S ELEVEN - OCEANSIDE**

**DAILY**  
10:00 a.m. NLH, \$55 AO \$5

### CONNECTICUT

#### **FOXWOODS - MASHANTUCKET**

**MONDAY**  
10:00 a.m. NLH, \$100  
6:00 p.m. NLH, \$120

**TUESDAY**  
10:00 a.m. NLH, \$120  
2:00 p.m. NLH, \$100 KO \$25  
6:00 p.m. NLH, \$120 (\$10K Guarantee)

**WEDNESDAY**  
10:00 a.m. NLH, \$100  
2:00 p.m. NLH, \$120 KO \$50  
6:00 p.m. NLH, \$120 (\$15K Guarantee)

**THURSDAY**  
10:00 a.m. NLH, \$120 KO \$25

**FRIDAY**  
10:00 a.m. NLH, \$100  
2:00 p.m. NLH, \$100 KO \$25  
6:00 p.m. NLH, \$160 (\$8K Guarantee)  
8:30 p.m. NLH, \$100

**SATURDAY**  
9:00 a.m. NLH, \$60  
11:00 a.m. NLH, \$180 (\$8K Guarantee)  
5:00 p.m. NLH, \$140 (\$5K Guarantee)  
8:30 p.m. NLH, \$120 KO \$50

**SUNDAY**  
9:00 a.m. NLH, \$60  
12:00 p.m. NLH, \$140  
5:00 p.m. NLH, \$230

#### **MOHEGAN SUN - UNCASVILLE**

**MONDAY**  
10:00 a.m. NLH, \$85 KO \$25  
2:00 p.m. NLH, \$75  
6:00 p.m. NLH, \$100

**TUESDAY**  
10:00 a.m. NLH, \$75  
2:00 p.m. NLH, \$85 KO \$25  
6:00 p.m. NLH, \$120 (\$10K Guarantee)

**WEDNESDAY**  
10:00 a.m. NLH, \$75  
2:00 p.m. NLH, \$85 KO \$25  
6:00 p.m. NLH, \$100

**THURSDAY**  
10:00 a.m. NLH, \$75  
2:00 p.m. NLH, \$85 KO \$25  
6:00 p.m. NLH, \$120 (\$5K Guarantee)

**FRIDAY**  
11:00 a.m. NLH, \$75  
2:00 p.m. NLH, \$100  
6:00 p.m. NLH, \$120

**SATURDAY**  
11:00 a.m. NLH, \$150

5:00 p.m. NLH, \$120

**SUNDAY**  
11:00 a.m. NLH, \$200 KO \$50  
5:00 p.m. NLH, \$120

### FLORIDA

#### **BESTBET - JACKSONVILLE**

**FRIDAY**  
12:00 p.m. NLH, \$160

**SUNDAY**  
12:00 p.m. NLH, \$160

#### **PALM BEACH KENNEL CLUB - W. PALM BEACH**

**MONDAY**  
12:15 p.m. NLH, \$70 (\$2.5K Guarantee)  
6:30 p.m. NLH, \$70 (\$2K Guarantee)

**TUESDAY**  
12:15 p.m. NLH, \$70  
6:30 p.m. NLH, \$70

**WEDNESDAY**  
12:15 p.m. NLH, \$100 (\$3K Guarantee)  
6:30 p.m. NLH, \$100 (\$2K Guarantee)

**THURSDAY**  
12:15 p.m. NLH, \$100 (\$2K Guarantee)  
6:30 p.m. NLH, \$100 (\$1.5K Guarantee)

**FRIDAY**  
12:15 p.m. NLH, \$120 (\$10K Guarantee)  
6:30 p.m. NLH, \$40 AO \$20  
(\$8K Guarantee)

**SATURDAY**  
12:15 p.m. NLH, \$120 (\$5K Guarantee)  
6:30 p.m. NLH, \$40 AO \$20  
(\$5K Guarantee)

### ILLINOIS

#### **RGC POKER (for locations see RGCPoker.com)**

**DAILY**  
1:00 p.m. NLH, \$40  
5:00 p.m. NLH, \$80  
6:30 p.m. NLH, \$40

**SATURDAY**  
2:00 p.m. NLH, \$180

### LOUISIANA

#### **COUSHATTA CASINO & RESORT - KINDER**

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

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

**FRIDAY**  
7:00 p.m. NLH, \$120

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

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

### MARYLAND

#### **LIVE! CASINO & HOTEL - HANOVER**

**MONDAY**  
12:15 p.m. NLH, \$120 KO \$25  
7:15 p.m. NLH, \$140

**TUESDAY**  
12:15 p.m. NLH, \$140  
7:15 p.m. NLH, \$120 KO \$25

**WEDNESDAY**

## SCHEDULES - DAILY TOURNAMENTS

12:15 p.m. NLH, \$130

7:15 p.m. NLH, \$130

### THURSDAY

12:15 p.m. NLH, \$150

7:15 p.m. NLH, \$160 KO \$50

### FRIDAY

12:15 p.m. NLH, \$220

7:15 p.m. NLH, \$320 KO \$75

### SATURDAY

11:15 a.m. NLH, \$300

7:15 p.m. NLH, \$150

### SUNDAY

11:15 a.m. NLH, \$100

6:15 p.m. NLH, \$130

### MGM NATIONAL HARBOR - OXON HILL

#### MONDAY

11:15 a.m. NLH, \$140 (\$3.5K Guarantee)

7:15 p.m. NLH, \$240 (\$6K Guarantee)

#### TUESDAY

11:15 a.m. NLH, \$140 (\$3.5K Guarantee)

7:15 p.m. NLH, \$140 (\$3.5K Guarantee)

#### WEDNESDAY

11:15 a.m. NLH, \$140 (\$3.5K Guarantee)

7:15 p.m. NLH, \$140 (\$3.5K Guarantee)

## MICHIGAN

### FIREKEEPERS CASINO - BATTLE CREEK

#### MONDAY-WEDNESDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$40

6:30 p.m. NLH, \$40

### THURSDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$40

6:30 p.m. PLO/NLH, \$60

### FRIDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$40

6:30 p.m. NLH, \$60 AO \$20 AO \$20

### SATURDAY

6:30 p.m. NLH, \$125 KO \$25

### SUNDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$140/\$240/\$500

6:30 p.m. NLH, \$40

## NEVADA

### SAHARA - LAS VEGAS

#### SATURDAY & SUNDAY

1:00 p.m. NLH, \$120 RB \$100

### VENETIAN HOTEL & CASINO - LAS VEGAS

#### MONDAY

12:10 p.m. NLH, \$150 (\$4K Guarantee)

6:10 p.m. NLH, \$125 KO \$25 (\$2K Guarantee)

#### TUESDAY

12:10 p.m. NLH, \$150 (\$4K Guarantee)

6:10 p.m. NLH, \$200 KO \$50 (\$4K Guarantee)

#### WEDNESDAY

12:10 p.m. NLH, \$150 (\$4K Guarantee)

6:10 p.m. NLH, \$125 (\$2K Guarantee)

#### THURSDAY

12:10 p.m. NLH, \$150 (\$4K Guarantee)

6:10 p.m. NLH, \$125 KO \$25

(\$3K Guarantee)

### FRIDAY

12:10 p.m. NLH, \$200 AO \$100

(\$10K Guarantee)

### SATURDAY

12:10 p.m. NLH, \$340 (\$12K Guarantee)

6:10 p.m. NLH, \$125 (\$2K Guarantee)

### SUNDAY

12:10 p.m. NLH, \$250 (\$7K Guarantee)

6:10 p.m. NLH, \$125 (\$2K Guarantee)

## NEW YORK

### SENECA NIAGARA - NIAGARA FALLS

#### MONDAY

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100 (\$2K Guarantee)

#### TUESDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$45

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$45

#### WEDNESDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$80

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100 (\$2K Guarantee)

#### THURSDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$60

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$60

#### FRIDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$80

#### SATURDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$20 (\$1K Guarantee)

11:00 a.m. NLH, \$150

#### SUNDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$60

# TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2020 World Series of Poker Online  
\$1,000 No-Limit Hold'em Championship



Nahrain Tamero  
30,542,592 Chips



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 62.0%  
After Flop: 83.0%  
After Turn: 93.0%



Norman Michalek  
11,977,408 Chips



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 37.0%  
After Flop: 17.0%  
After Turn: 7.0%

## PREFLOP

With two players remaining and blinds of 250,000-500,000 and an ante of 50,000, Nahrain Tamero raised to 1,000,000. Norman Michalek called from the big blind.



Michalek checked. Tamero bet 1,000,000. Michalek check-raised to 2,500,000. Tamero called.



Michalek bet 2,750,000. Tamero called.



Michalek moved all-in for 5,677,408. Tamero called.

## ANALYSIS

Nahrain Tamero had picked off a huge bluff by Norman Michalek to take the lead during heads-up play for a *World Series of Poker* bracelet. Despite having a big bluff called earlier, Michalek demonstrated that he was more than ready to keep his foot on the gas in this hand. Tamero min-raised from the button with the K-8 offsuit and Michalek defended his big blind with 5-4 offsuit. Michalek flopped the low end of a gutshot straight draw on a K-8-6 flop with two diamonds and checked from out of position. Tamero made a value bet of 1,100,000 with her flopped top two pair. Michalek check-raised with his weak draw, likely looking to draw folds from the weaker segment of Tamero's continuation betting range that had not connected. Tamero made the call and the turn brought the Q♦, completing the possible flush draw from the flop. Michalek's check-raise on the flop would be consistent with said flush draw or a big hand like a set or two pair. He fired a second barrel of 2,750,000 and Tamero made the call with her kings and eights. The river brought the 10♠ and Michalek, who had made it to the river with five high, committed to his bluff and moved all-in for 5,677,408. Tamero made the quick call to take down the pot and the title, earning \$310,832 and her first bracelet. Michalek took home \$192,073 as the runner up for the largest score of his career.

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

6:00 p.m. NLH, \$125 (\$2.5K Guarantee)

**TURNING STONE - VERONA****MONDAY**

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$50

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$65

**TUESDAY**

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$50

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$15 (\$1K Guarantee)

**WEDNESDAY**

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$65 KO \$10

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$65

**THURSDAY**

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$65 KO \$10

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$15 (\$1K Guarantee)

**FRIDAY**

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$100 KO \$25

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$50

**SATURDAY**

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$65

4:00 p.m. NLH, \$100 KO \$25

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$25

**SUNDAY**

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$50

6:00 p.m. NLH, \$30

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AND UPDATES CAN BE VIEWED AT[EASTERNPOKERTOUR.COM](http://EASTERNPOKERTOUR.COM)**NORTH CAROLINA****HARRAH'S - CHEROKEE****MONDAY**

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

10:00 p.m. NLH, \$50

**TUESDAY**

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

10:00 p.m. NLH, \$50

**WEDNESDAY**

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100 KO \$25

**THURSDAY**

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

10:00 p.m. NLH, \$45

**FRIDAY**

5:00 p.m. NLH, \$135

**SATURDAY**

11:00 a.m. NLH, \$250

**SUNDAY**

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$80

2:00 p.m. NLH, \$250

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

10:00 p.m. NLH, \$45

**OREGON****WILDHORSE - PENDLETON****TUESDAY**

6:30 p.m. NLH, \$35

**THURSDAY**

6:30 p.m. NLH, \$55

**SATURDAY**

1:00 p.m. NLH, \$75

**SUNDAY**

1:00 p.m. NLH, \$35

**SOUTH DAKOTA****SILVERADO FRANKLIN - DEADWOOD****THURSDAY**

6:30 p.m. NLH, \$88

**SATURDAY**

2:00 p.m. NLH, \$44

**SUNDAY**

3:00 p.m. NLH, \$33

**TEXAS****CELEBRITY CARD CLUB - ODESSA****TUESDAY**

7:00 p.m. PLO, \$50

**THURSDAY**

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$60

**WISCONSIN****POTAWATOMI - MILWAUKEE****TUESDAY**

6:15 p.m. NLH, \$80

**THURSDAY**

6:15 p.m. NLH, \$125

**SUNDAY**

12:15 p.m. NLH, \$150

# TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2020 World Series of Poker Online  
\$150 No-Limit Hold'em FreezeoutAnatoly Suvarov  
26,446,440 ChipsWinning Percentage  
Before Flop: 65.0%  
After Flop: 78.0%  
After Turn: 80.0%David Edelstein  
71,903,560 ChipsWinning Percentage  
Before Flop: 34.0%  
After Flop: 22.0%  
After Turn: 20.0%**PREFLOP**

With two players remaining and blinds of 600,000-1,200,000 and an ante of 120,000, Anatoly Suvarov limped in from the button. David Edelstein checked his option.

Edelstein checked.  
Suvarov bet 1,200,000.  
Edelstein called.Edelstein checked.  
Suvarov checked.Edelstein bet  
2,400,000.  
Suvarov called.**ANALYSIS**

The 2020 *World Series of Poker Online* \$150 buy-in no-limit hold'em freezeout event attracted a massive field of 9,835 total entries, creating a seven-figure prize pool that resulted in the top two finishers earning six-figures despite the affordable buy-in. The eventual winner was set to earn \$183,526 and a *WSOP* bracelet, while the runner-up would take home \$127,872. The \$55,654 difference between the two top spots represented 371 buy-ins to this event. With all that on the line, Anatoly Suvarov picked off a bluff with third pair on a four-flush board in this hand to help close the gap on David Edelstein, who had wrested the lead from him during heads-up play. Suvarov began the hand by limping in with K-7 off-suit from the button. Edelstein picked up the lowly 4-2 offsuit in the big blind and checked his option. The 7-6-2 flop with two clubs gave both players a pair, but Suvarov's sevens were best. Edelstein check-called a bet of 1,200,000 with his bottom pair and the turn brought the 8♣, making a flush possible. Edelstein checked and Suvarov checked behind. The A♣ on the river brought both an overcard and a fourth club to the board. Edelstein, likely deciding his bottom pair was not good enough to just try to showdown on this board, elected to bet 2,400,000. Suvarov had just the third highest pair on the board, but he had to consider the type of hands Edelstein would bet in this spot. Would he be all that likely to value bet an eight or even a rivered ace when any lone club in Suvarov's hand would make a flush? Probably not. Instead, Edelstein's bet was likely polarized to either flushes or bluffs. Suvarov made the call and took down the pot. He went on to defeat Edelstein heads-up, securing the bracelet and the \$183,526 top prize.

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

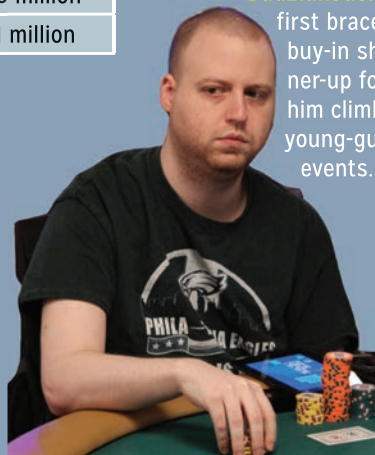
## UNDER 30 YEARS OLD, OVER \$3 MILLION IN WSOP BRACELET EVENT EARNINGS

| Rank | Player              | Earnings       |
|------|---------------------|----------------|
| 1    | Fedor Holz          | \$11.9 million |
| 2    | Joe McKeehen        | \$10.5 million |
| 3    | Scott Blumstein     | \$8.1 million  |
| 4    | Daniel Ott          | \$4.7 million  |
| 5    | Mikita Badziakowski | \$3.9 million  |
| 6    | Jake Balsiger       | \$3.9 million  |
| 7    | Adrian Mateos       | \$3.5 million  |
| 8    | Michael Addamo      | \$3.1 million  |

**Joe McKeehen** is one of just two players under the age of 30 to have won three *World Series of Poker* bracelets. The 2015 *WSOP* main event champion topped a field of 6,420 entries in the big dance to win his first piece of hardware and just shy of \$7.7 million. He won his second bracelet in 2017, taking down the \$10,000 limit hold'em championship for \$311,817. This year he came out on top in the \$3,200 buy-in high roller event during the *WSOP Online*, adding another \$352,985 to his lifetime totals. As a result, McKeehen's career earnings grew to more than \$11.2 million, making him just one of two players currently younger than 30 with eight figures in earnings at the series. **Mikita**

**Badziakowski** fell just short of winning his first bracelet in the *WSOP* buy-in short deck event, finishing runner-up for \$210,249. The young-guns with success events.

of winning his *Online* \$10,000 finishing run-score helped on this list of in bracelet



## WSOP EARNINGS BY COUNTRY

| Rank | Country            | WSOP Earnings   |
|------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1    | United States      | \$2.8 billion   |
| 2    | Canada             | \$222.8 million |
| 3    | United Kingdom     | \$167.3 million |
| 4    | Germany            | \$121.3 million |
| 5    | France             | \$89.7 million  |
| 6    | Russian Federation | \$69.6 million  |
| 7    | Australia          | \$52.2 million  |
| 8    | Brazil             | \$41.6 million  |
| 9    | Italy              | \$39.9 million  |
| 10   | Sweden             | \$38.6 million  |

The vast majority of *World Series of Poker* gold bracelet events in history have taken place on American soil. Players from the **United States** have an undeniable home-field advantage at the series, and it's shown up in the numbers. Americans have cashed for more than \$2.8 billion in *WSOP* events, by far the largest amount of any country in the world. More than half of the bracelets won so far this year during the *WSOP Online* have gone to Americans. The next highest *WSOP* earnings total belongs to **Canada**. Players from the Great White North have cashed for more than \$222.8 million throughout the history of the series. There have been five bracelets won by Canadian players so far this year, including Daniel Dvoress's victory for nearly \$1.5 million in the 'Millionaire Maker.' Canada's strong showing so far in 2020 has helped maintain its hold on the second-place spot. **Brazil** has seen a number of its citizens make deep runs this year. There have been four Brazilian bracelet winners and three runners-up from the country to this point. With \$41.6 million in collective *WSOP* cashes, Brazil now sits in eighth place on this leaderboard.



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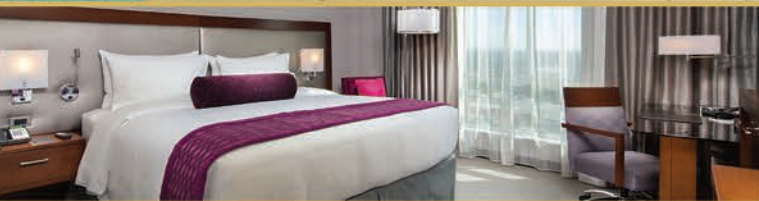
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