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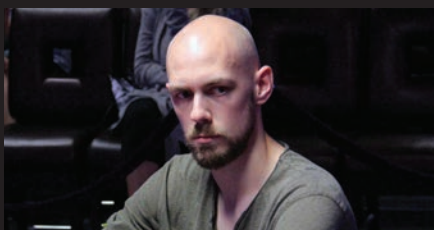
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April 20, 2022



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April 28 - May 1

Mystery Bounties from \$500 - \$50,000

Date	Time	Event	Buy-in	Level
Thursday, April 21	12PM	Event #1 NLH Day 1A	\$560	20,000
Friday, April 22	12PM	Event #1 NLH Day 1B	\$560	20,000
Saturday, April 23	12PM	Event #1 NLH Day 1C	\$560	20,000
Sunday, April 24	12PM	Event #1 Final Day - Live Streamed		
	1PM	Event #2 NLH w/\$100 Bounties	\$460	15,000
Monday, April 25	12PM	Event #3 NLH	\$260	12,000
Tuesday, April 26	12PM	Event #4 NLH Monster Stack	\$360	20,000
Wednesday, April 27	12PM	Event #5 NLH	\$660	20,000
Thursday, April 28	12PM	Mystery Bounty NLH Main Event Day 1A	\$1,680	25,000
Friday, April 29	12PM	Mystery Bounty NLH Main Event Day 1B	\$1,680	25,000
Saturday, April 30	12PM	Mystery Bounty NLH Main Event Day 1C	\$1,680	25,000
Sunday, May 1	12PM	Mystery Bounty Final Day - Live Streamed		
	1PM	Event #6 The bestbet 500	\$500	20,000

Main Event will be live reported by PokerNews and the final table will be livestreamed on bestbetLIVE
Satellites into Event 1 run until April 22nd and satellites into Main Event run until April 29th.



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NEWS FROM THE GAMBLING WORLD



NFL SUSPENDS PLAYER CALVIN RIDLEY OVER PARLAY BETS

By Joe Mattia

The National Football League has suspended Atlanta Falcons star wide receiver Calvin Ridley indefinitely for betting on NFL games.

Ridley, who is now suspended through at least the end of next season, reportedly bet on parlays. At least one of his parlays involved his own team, but he bet on them to win, not lose. The league also found that Ridley didn't take advantage of any "inside information" when gambling.

The total sum in question was only \$1,500.

Ridley expressed dismay at the harsh one-year suspension, which includes the forfeiture of his \$11.1 million salary. He has the right to appeal the suspension, but it's unclear if he will do that.

According to the NFL, Ridley placed the bets when he was taking time away from the team to focus on his mental health.

Ridley addressed the incident on Twitter, saying, "I know I was wrong, but I'm getting one year! I bet \$1,500 total. I don't have a gambling problem."

Ridley, drafted 26th overall in 2018 out of Alabama, has 248 receptions for 3,342 yards and 28 touchdowns over four seasons with the Falcons.

The league put out a statement on the suspension.

"There is nothing more fundamental to the NFL's success — and to the reputation of everyone associated with our league — than upholding the integrity of the game," NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell wrote in a letter. "This is the responsibility of every player, coach, owner, game official, and anyone else employed in the league. Your actions put the integrity of the game at risk, threatened to damage public confidence in professional football, and potentially undermined the reputations of your fellow players throughout the NFL."

"For decades, gambling on NFL games has been considered among the most significant violations of league policy warranting the most substantial sanction," he added.

Of course, this strict anti-gambling policy flies in the face of recent developments, which include several NFL teams partnering with casinos and the league itself inking deals with numerous sports betting operators.

According to Goodell, Ridley "promptly" admitted to the betting when approached by the league.

The Falcons issued a statement on the action taken against the receiver.

"We were first made aware of the league's investigation on Feb. 9," the franchise said. "We have cooperated fully with the investigation since receiving notice and support the league's findings and actions. We are moving forward in the 2022 season with the decision that was made."

The last NFL suspension for gambling was handed out in 2019 to Arizona Cardinals player Josh Shaw, who placed some bets at a Las Vegas casino while he was on the injured reserve list and not active. ♠



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Las Vegas Sportsbook Blames ‘Leaked’ Info For Tom Brady Bets

By Joe Mattia

Some sportsbooks are apparently facing potentially substantial losses from futures bets placed on Tampa Bay before legendary QB Tom Brady unretired on March 13.

According to a report from the *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, the Westgate SuperBook is one of many sportsbooks on the hook for some pain based on Brady's decision.

Westgate SuperBook vice president Jay Kornegay believes something at least mildly shady happened ahead of Brady's announcement.

The Las Vegas sportsbook had listed Tampa Bay at 60:1 to win the Super Bowl and 30:1 to win the NFC. One gambler bet those lines heavily, and even bet it again after the SuperBook lowered the odds slightly.

But then came Brady's decision.

"There's not a doubt in my mind that they knew he was coming back when they placed those wagers," Kornegay said. "And these were not casual bettors. They would be categorized as educated bettors. It wasn't a guy with a Tom Brady jersey at the counter. It was a player that we would describe as sharp. With that type of play and the announcement we heard that he was unretiring, there was information that was shared prior to his official announcement."

"There is no doubt in my mind that information leaked sometime in the middle of last week," he added. "This is concerning. I don't think I've ever said the NFL really needs

to investigate something. But this is something they need to look into and how it got out, because there are many books that took some sizable wagers in the middle of last week."

Following Brady's unretirement, Tampa Bay futures odds were 10-1 to win the Super Bowl and 5-1 for the NFC title, according to the report.

The sportsbooks aren't the only ones fuming over Brady's retirement reversal. There have been numerous reports of an unknown fan who purchased his last touchdown football for a whopping \$518,628 at auction, only to find out later that day that Brady would be returning to the NFL.

The NFL legend and future Hall of Famer was drafted in 2000 by the New England Patriots, where he won six of his seven Super Bowl championships. He was named league MVP three times, and holds several career records, including wins, attempts, completions, touchdowns, and yards. ♠



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THE WSOP SAYS IT'S UPPING PAY FOR POKER DEALERS

By Joe Mattia

The *World Series of Poker* has put out the bat signal, calling for more dealers for the upcoming summer poker festival. In fact, they are hoping that a pay increase will help them meet the demand.

The annual tournament series that awards the most prestigious prizes in poker will be held on the Las Vegas Strip for the first time ever, moving away from the Rio Casino-Hotel. The nearly two-month series will be held at convention space at both Paris Las Vegas and Bally's.

The *WSOP* said it has 600 tables, so a large staff will be needed. The Caesars Entertainment-owned announced "a new pay structure with increasing wages for all prospective dealers."

Starting pay for all dealers will begin at \$12.50 an hour with a \$100 bonus after "successfully completing" a first shift.

"Additionally," the presser continued, "dealers will be paid a guaranteed \$15 per down for all tournament hold'em-only bracelet and side events along with a guaranteed \$20 per down for all tournament non-hold'em bracelet events."

"Furthermore, if any additional dealer funds are leftover at the end of the *WSOP* they will be paid out as a bonus



based on the total number of downs worked throughout the entire series."

A "down" refers to a 30-minute time period when dealers are at a table before being "pushed" to the next. So, a *WSOP* dealer could make upwards of \$52.50 per hour if they deal mixed games, plus their share of any additional tips left by the players.

The 2022 version of the annual poker festival kicks off May 31 and concludes July 20.

Those interested can apply at caesars.com/careers or email wsopstaff@caesars.com. ♠

Station Casinos Breaks Ground On New \$750 Million Property In Las Vegas

By Joe Mattia

For the first time in a reported 16 years, Station Casinos is building a brand new casino-resort in Las Vegas.

Station Casinos, represented by 300 of its team members, conducted a ceremonial groundbreaking for the upcoming Durango Casino & Resort in early March.

The property, slated to open in 2023, will be located on 50 acres in the southwest part of Las Vegas, just off the 215 Beltway and Durango Drive.

The groundbreaking ceremony included Red Rock Resorts, Inc. Chairman and CEO Frank Fertitta III and Vice Chairman Lorenzo Fertitta, among other executives. Red Rock Resorts is the parent company of Station Casinos.

"Station Casinos is bullish on the local and overall Las Vegas gaming market, which is why we are investing \$750 million in Durango Station," President Scott Kreeger said.

"This brick-and-mortar investment will create thousands of construction and permanent jobs, generating tens of millions of dollars in economic impact and tax revenue to the state and county."

The company is selling the Palms Resort near the Strip



for \$650 million in order to help finance the development.

Station Casinos bought the land for just shy of \$37 million back in 2000 from Jim Rhodes, a developer known for the very large Rhodes Ranch housing community down the street, as well as Tuscany Village in Henderson. The project was scheduled for 2009, and even given an opening date of 2011, but the land sat empty as Station navigated their way through the Great Recession.

Durango Casino & Resort will initially have 83,000 square feet of gambling space, 20,000 square feet of convention space, and 211 hotel rooms. A sportsbook is planned, but a poker room was not mentioned. The second phase of construction will see an additional hotel tower added with 240 rooms, more gaming space, and a movie theater. ♠

FEDERAL LEGISLATION FILED TO RAISE 'OUTDATED' TAX THRESHOLD ON SLOT WINS

By Joe Mattia

On March 3, a group of federal policymakers from casino states announced the introduction of a new bill to raise the IRS reporting threshold on slot winnings.

Representatives Dina Titus (Nevada), Guy Reschenthaler (Pennsylvania), Anthony Brown (Maryland), Mark Amodei (Nevada), and Steven Horsford (Nevada) introduced the Shifting Limits on Thresholds (SLOT) ACT.

"The current threshold for reporting slot winnings was set at \$1,200 in 1977 and has not been updated in the 45 years since," Rep. Titus said in a statement. "If indexed for inflation, the threshold would be around \$5,000. Due to inflation, the number of jackpots hitting that threshold, triggering a shutdown of the machine and necessitating excessive paperwork requirements for the patron, has increased dramatically.

"This creates an unnecessary burden on the gaming industry, an economic driver for Southern Nevada and other communities nationwide where slot machines exist. While I believe appropriate taxes should be collected on winnings, raising the threshold would reduce paperwork and ensure this is accomplished more efficiently."

Rep. Reschenthaler added: "The 1977 slot jackpot reporting threshold hurts both Pennsylvania's gaming



industry and its patrons. Because the threshold has not kept up with inflation, it has resulted in a drastic increase in reportable jackpots, which trigger tax burdens for winners and compliance burdens for casinos. Increasing the threshold will eliminate this onerous red tape."

The proposal has the backing of the American Gaming Association.

"Today's legislation is an important and commonsense step to modernize gaming regulations while supporting our industry's full recovery," stated AGA President and CEO Bill Miller.

Rep. Brown of Maryland said in a statement:

"We need to ensure our tax code is keeping up with the times, particularly when it comes to the gaming industry. Updating a 45-year-old threshold on slot winnings is common sense and good governance, that both reflects the decades of economic changes since 1977 and reduces excessive paperwork and reporting requirements." ♠

MASSACHUSETTS PASSES \$1 BILLION IN CASINO TAX REVENUE

By Joe Mattia

Casinos in the Bay State won \$86 million from gamblers in February, according to figures released by regulators.

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission said that Plainridge Park Casino, MGM Springfield, and Encore Boston Harbor collectively had a strong month against patrons.

The month was so strong that it brought the state's tax revenue from casino gambling to \$1.018 billion since the three properties opened, a significant achievement for the state.

"My colleagues at the MGC and I are pleased to highlight this milestone," said MGC Chair Cathy Judd-Stein. "When the legislature passed the expanded gaming act in 2011, they envisioned a regulated gaming industry in the Commonwealth that would serve as an economic driver while promoting responsible play."

Plainridge Park Casino, a slots facility, is taxed on 49% of gross gaming revenue. MGM Springfield and Encore Boston Harbor are taxed on 25% of gross gaming revenue.

"Just over 11 years since this law was signed, the Commonwealth has collected over \$1 billion in total taxes and assessments from casinos operating in Massachusetts," Judd-Stein added. "This revenue has and continues to benefit the Massachusetts economy by bolstering local aid, funding transportation and infrastructure projects, ensuring essential community mitigation initiatives are backed, and that the health and safety of the industry and those who engage with it are a top priority."

February's gaming revenue of \$86 million was up from \$67.4 million in February 2021, although the casinos were still impacted by the pandemic in early 2021.

The casinos themselves generated a total of \$1.01 billion in gaming revenue in 2021, an all-time high. ♠

HIGH-STAKES POKER PRO ACCUSED OF RUNNING ILLEGAL SLOTS IN CALIFORNIA

By Joe Mattia

A *World Series of Poker* bracelet winner has been accused of operating illegal slot machine gambling in the state of California, according to an indictment.

Gal Yifrach, a poker player with more than \$2.1 million in live tournament earnings, has been charged with running an illegal gambling business in California "involving supplying, operating, and maintaining video slot machines and devices" and laundering the proceeds using chips from a legal poker room near his home, according to a federal indictment first obtained by *The Daily Beast*.

Yifrach has been a longtime regular in high-stakes cash games, including on *Live at the Bike!* and *Hustler Casino Live*. Neither the Bike nor Hustler has been accused of any wrongdoing in the case.

Authorities allege that Yifrach operated unlicensed slot machines "from various locations" in the Golden State. The illegal gambling business allegedly went on from March 2018 to July 2020.

The 34-year-old won his *WSOP* bracelet the same year that his alleged illegal gambling business kicked off. Yifrach took down the 2018 \$3,000 six-max no-limit hold'em event, overcoming a field of 868 total entries to win \$461,798.

Reports at the time described him as a "Los Angeles entrepreneur."

Last *WSOP*, Yifrach earned the biggest score of his career, banking \$495,305 for third place in the \$50,000 buy-in high roller event. He also has a *WSOP Circuit* ring that he won back in 2017.



The feds have accused him of laundering the slot machine money through poker games at a Southern California card room. He allegedly traded the ill-gotten cash for poker chips, later converting the chips into checks.

Ironically, Yifrach also allegedly owned a laundromat in San Jose until 2019.

His co-defendants are Nick Shkolnik, Shalom Ifrah, and Yosef Yitzchak Beshari. Shkolnik is also a poker player with more than \$1 million in career tournament earnings. He has a *WSOP Circuit* ring of his own, along with a *Heartland Poker Tour* title.

The indictment includes the forfeiture of assets, including more than \$500,000 and three real estate properties in California. Each defendant faces up to 25 years in federal prison if convicted. ♠



THE GREATEST 50 POKER PLAYERS OF THE LAST 50 YEARS

AS VOTED ON BY THE CARD PLAYER STAFF

By Julio Rodriguez

The National Basketball Association celebrated their 75th anniversary last October with the announcement of the 75 Top Players of All-Time.

While obvious choices such as Wilt Chamberlain, Michael Jordan, and LeBron James had everyone in agreement, there were others on the list that sparked debate. (Most notably, choosing the younger Anthony Davis over the veteran Dwight Howard.)

Of course, we love a good debate here at *Card Player*, especially if the topic is poker. So why not take a crack at naming the 50 greatest poker players of the last 50 years? After all, we are 'The Poker Authority,' and our staff of writers include some of the most experienced journalists and players in the game.

And it should be easy enough to settle in an afternoon, right?

When I told the columnists and staff about this project back in January, I naively assumed that it would be easy, and that there would be some sort of consensus in the group.

As their selections started rolling in, however, I realized just how difficult it would be. As it turns out, comparing players across different time periods and different disciplines is hard, and largely subjective. At least in the NBA, they are all playing the same game, but in poker, you have to consider tournaments vs. cash, live vs. online, and even hold'em vs. mixed games.

It wasn't as simple as picking our favorite 50 of the 60 members of the Poker Hall of Fame. Nor could we just check the all-time money lists, both for live and online tournaments. Even a good number of *WSOP* bracelets didn't guarantee a spot. Some of the biggest winners ever were even left off. There just isn't enough room for everyone, and some harsh cuts had to be made.

The Methodology

Why 50?

While *Card Player Magazine* has been around 35 years, the modern game of poker, as popularized by the *WSOP* in the early 70s, has been around the last 50 years. (More or less. Also, 50 is a nice, round number.)

This, of course, eliminated some of the true pioneers of the game from contention, such as English rules master Edmond Hoyle and old west gunslinger “Wild Bill” Hickok. My apologies also go to columnist Kevin Haney’s pick of George Devol, a riverboat gambler who won an astonishing seven-figures playing cards before the turn of the 19th century.

Even though 99 percent of all poker hands in history have been played in the last 20 years, there are three main eras of modern poker.

There are the old-school players, who competed in back rooms and helped to popularize the game in the ‘70s and early ‘80s. Then there’s the pre-boom players who came after, somehow discovering the game without the help of Chris Moneymaker and the hole-card camera. And then we have the post-boom generation, which was able to cram a lifetime of experience into their heads with the easy accessibility of online poker.

When evaluating these players, voters were asked to keep these eras in mind. The Wright Brothers’ original Flyer would get smoked by a Lockheed Martin F-16V in a head-to-head race, but nobody could touch the Wright Flyer in 1903, nor would the F-16 ever have been developed without it.

There is little doubt that a top player today would clean up against the best players 50, 25, or even 10 years ago. But that doesn’t take away from the dominance those players displayed in their day.

The Poker HOF may have an age requirement of 40, but there was no such restriction put on the voters for this list. That being said, longevity was factored in, with those “standing the test of time” having an edge over those who may have won big in a short period.

We had to resist the temptation to have a recency bias and pick those players who happen to be in the midst of a hot streak, although we’re sure that a few of these pros will make us look foolish in the coming years for leaving them off the list. (But then again, there have been

several examples of players who could not sustain their initial success, or just decided to sail off into the sunset with their winnings.)

There’s also something to be said for visibility. While tournaments are tracked, cash game results are generally not. Live players are also easier to recognize than their often-anonymous online counterparts.

Finally, players were chosen on the basis of their skills and accomplishments, and not on their contributions to the game off the felt. While growing poker’s popularity is admirable and worthy of the HOF, it alone won’t get you on this list, which is strictly reserved for the crushers. This is the greatest 50 poker players, not the greatest 50 poker ambassadors.

The Demographics

There were 107 players nominated in total. After tallying the votes, 22 players made everyone’s list. There were also another 11 players that got picked on all but one ballot, and another four with a significant number of votes.

That left 70 (mostly-deserving) players for the remaining 13 spots. A daunting challenge.

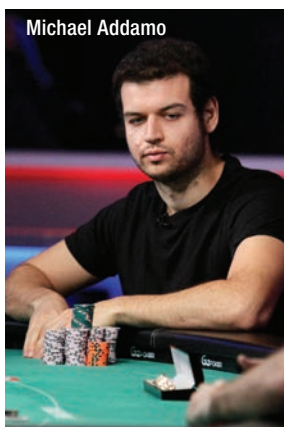
Everyone had their favorite, or even those they felt strongly should not get in, but ultimately the field was whittled down to the chosen ones... *Card Player’s* official Greatest 50 Poker Players of the Last 50 Years! (At least for now... ask us again in 10 years.)

With most of the action happening in the States for much of poker’s modern history, it’s no surprise that the list is dominated by Americans. There are 16 foreign-born players, however, representing Spain, Iran, Canada, Germany, Indonesia, China, Australia, Belarus, Finland, Vietnam, Russia, and the U.K.

The vast majority of players are aged between 30 and 50, but four of the players selected are still in their 20s, while eight players are 60 years or older, and three are no longer living.

Of the players currently in the top 50 of the all-time tournament earnings list, 23 made the cut. Of the 60 members of the Poker Hall of Fame, 18 were chosen, (although we suspect over a dozen more will get in once they’re eligible.)

Here we go!



Timothy Adams

You could make a similar argument for fellow Canadian high rollers Mike Watson, Mike McDonald, Daniel Dvoress, or Sam Greenwood, but we’ll give the first spot on this list to Tim Adams. The 35-year-old has been playing the game for half of his life, winning millions online under the name ‘Tim0thee’ while also stealthily racking up another \$26.3 million in live tournament earnings. Adams has a *WSOP* bracelet, a *Triton* title, and is also a two-time *Super High Roller Bowl* champion. He is currently second on Canada’s all-time money list and 19th overall.

Michael Addamo

‘Wait, didn’t you just talk about *not* having a recency bias?’ That’s true, but even though Australian Michael Addamo was *the* tournament superstar of 2021, winning almost every high roller event on the calendar, he was



Patrik Antonius



Mikita Badziakouski



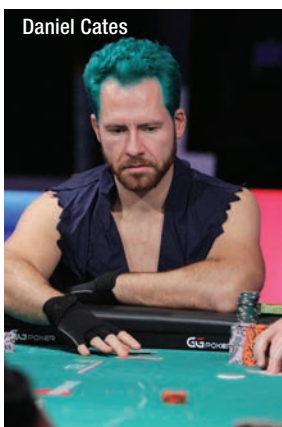
Billy Baxter



Justin Bonomo



Doyle Brunson



Daniel Cates

also dominating online since first turning pro back in 2012. The 28-year-old former chess prodigy already has four *WSOP* bracelets, a *Super High Roller Bowl* title, and is the reigning *Poker Masters* champion. Addamo has \$17.7 million in live earnings recorded. That's good for first place on Australia's all-time money list and 26th overall.

Patrik Antonius

As a former model and tennis standout, it's surprising that Patrik Antonius ended up in poker, especially from his native Finland. But he was a winner right away and was one of online poker's first high-stakes stars, even back in 1999. He won *EPT Baden* in 2005, and then started taking on all comers, both online and live. Antonius is the second biggest online cash game winner ever, and broke several records for largest pot size during the height of the poker boom. Despite focusing on cash, the 41-year-old has still managed to win \$12 million in tournaments, which is first place for Finland.

Mikita Badziakouski

While some of our columnists wanted recent high roller breakout star Ali Imsirovic, others felt that at 27 he was just a little too green for the list. Instead, the nod went to Belarusian tournament star Mikita Badziakouski. The 30-year-old came out of nowhere in 2015 and hasn't stopped winning, bringing his live tournament earnings to \$33.5 million. That's more than 10 times his closest competition in Belarus, and no. 11 overall. Badziakouski has a *WSOP* bracelet, and the

short deck poker standout also plays in some of the biggest cash games spread online.

Billy Baxter

Originally a pool hall gambler and sports bettor, Billy Baxter found poker at 18 and never looked back. Now 82, the Georgia native has put together a résumé that includes seven *WSOP* bracelets. Baxter is considered one of the best lowball players ever and in fact, all of his bracelets have come in some variant of the game. Only Phil Ivey has won more non-hold'em events. The man who once staked Stu Ungar is also responsible for lower taxes for tournament poker players, having sued the U.S. government back in 1986.

Justin Bonomo

Justin Bonomo broke out on the scene at 19, making the televised final table of *EPT Deauville*. The former *Magic: The Gathering* standout shook off an online poker scandal, and then established himself on the live circuit. The Virginia native has performed incredibly well in big buy-in events, winning three *Super High Roller Bowls* and dozens of high rollers, as well as four *WSOP* bracelets. Most notably, he pocketed \$10 million in the 2018 *Big One For One Drop* event. Although the race is still on, the 36-year-old currently leads the way on the all-time money list with more than \$59 million.

Doyle Brunson

When Doyle Brunson first started playing poker alongside fellow legends 'Amarillo' Slim and 'Sailor' Roberts, he didn't have the luxury of plushy casino games. That came later after years of paying his dues on the backroads of Texas. The former NBA prospect and school principal is tied for second all-time with 10 *WSOP* bracelets, including both the 1976 and 1977 main event. Almost 30 years later, he would add a *WPT* title, all the while playing in some of the biggest cash games ever spread. Although he is mostly retired these days, at 88 he is the oldest living player on this list.

Daniel Cates

The most eccentric member of our 50 is Dan 'Jungleman' Cates. The Maryland native played video games as a kid before switching to online poker at 17. He steadily rose the ranks, forcing himself to beat the top players at each level before jumping in stakes. He



Johnny Chan



Stephen Chidwick



T.J. Cloutier



Shaun Deeb

was only 20 when he started playing the biggest games online, and has remained there ever since, making him the third biggest online cash winner ever. Last year, sporting blue hair and a *Dragon Ball Z* costume, Cates took down the *Poker Players Championship* for his first WSOP bracelet. The 32-year-old now has \$10 million in live earnings.

Johnny Chan

Poker legend Johnny Chan was 11 when he came to the United States from Hong Kong, and started playing cards with the staff at his family's restaurant. He dropped out of college in Houston and moved to Las Vegas to turn pro, earning his first bracelet in 1985. Chan won back-to-back WSOP main events in 1987 and 1988, the second of which was immortalized in the 1998 movie *Rounders*. He would have won it a third time the next year, if it weren't for a young Phil Hellmuth. The 65-year-old is tied for second with 10 total bracelets.

Stephen Chidwick

The late Dave 'Devilfish' Ulliott was among the first English players to find success in the States, but nobody else from the U.K. has won more than 32-year-old Stephen Chidwick. The WSOP bracelet winner and U.S. *Poker Open* champion started his career online as 'stevie444,' but has since become the most successful European high roller with a massive \$38.5 million in earnings. That's good enough for no. 6 overall, and is nearly double that of his next closest competitor on the U.K. list in Sam Trickett with \$21.7 million.

T.J. Cloutier

T.J. Cloutier was born in California and got to play in the Rose Bowl for UC Berkeley before competing in the Canadian Football League. He then moved to Texas to work on oil rigs. The poker game he was playing on the side proved to be more lucrative, so he made the switch. In his four decades of play, Cloutier was a constant on the tournament trail, racking up more than 400 cashes. Our shoutouts go to Men Nguyen and 'Miami' John Cernuto, two other ironmen of the live circuit, but the 82-year-old Cloutier edges them out with his six WSOP bracelets and four main event final table appearances.

Shaun Deeb

Thankfully this wasn't a popularity contest. Always



Antonio Esfandiari



Chris Ferguson

willing to speak his mind and call out the poker community, the 36-year-old Shaun Deeb has stirred up some drama with others over the years. But there's no question of the New York native's skill. He was just 16 when he started and was at one point the no. 1 ranked online player in the world. He's since become an accomplished mixed-games player, and is a perennial threat for WSOP POY honors. He has five bracelets in total, including twice winning the prestigious \$25,000 pot-limit Omaha championship.

Antonio Esfandiari

Antonio Esfandiari was nine years old when his family moved from Iran to California. Originally a working magician, he switched to poker and found fame on the *World Poker Tour* in 2004, taking down the *L.A. Poker Classic*. He added a second WPT title at the 2010 *Five Diamond World Poker Classic* and also has three WSOP bracelets. Most notably, he won the original \$1 million buy-in *Big One For One Drop* event, banking \$18.3 million. With \$27.2 million in live tournaments earnings, the 43-year-old was once the money list leader, but has since fallen to 18th.

Chris Ferguson

Although no longer the crowd-pleasing, fruit-piercing card thrower he once was, it's hard to deny the accomplishments of 2000 WSOP main event winner Chris Ferguson. There have been some top-notch main event winners since, such as Joe Cada, Martin Jacobson, Ryan Riess, Joe McKeehen, and Koray Aldemir, but the California-raised Ferguson was among the first to



Ted Forrest



Phil Galfond



Barry Greenstein



Jennifer Harman



Brian Hastings



Isaac Haxton

apply a game theory approach to poker. As a result, the 58-year-old has six *WSOP* bracelets, including titles in stud and Omaha eight-or-better. In 2017, he won the *WSOP* Player of the Year award.

Ted Forrest

Perhaps this spot would be better reserved for David Oppenheim, one of the biggest live high-stakes cash winners ever, or the late Layne Flack, who won six *WSOP* bracelets. But how about a guy who did both? Ted Forrest not only has six *WSOP* wins of his own, but he also added a *WPT* title, and the *National Heads Up Poker Championship* to his list of accomplishments. The New York native, who was nicknamed ‘The Suicide King’ for his penchant for playing anyone for all the

money he had, was also part of the crew that played billionaire banker Andy Beal for millions.

Phil Galfond

Although he is now a poker businessman with his online poker site, Phil Galfond has been dominant as a player throughout his career. The Maryland native turned pro while attending the University of Wisconsin, and won the first of his three *WSOP* bracelets in 2008. In the years since he has maintained his status as a top-notch cash game player in all games, especially pot-limit Omaha. The 37-year-old issued a challenge to the world in 2019, offering to play anyone heads-up in PLO, and has since won every match against the likes of Brandon Adams, Chance Kornuth, and online crusher ‘VeniVidi.’

Barry Greenstein

Imagine winning so much money in cash games that you just donate all your tournament earnings to charity. That’s exactly what Barry Greenstein did for years, earning the nickname, ‘The Robin Hood of Poker.’ Originally a computer scientist from Chicago, Greenstein left his company for poker and was quickly beating the highest stakes. In fact, he won a reported \$5 million alone during the 2003 *WSOP* that sparked the poker boom. The 67-year-old has more than \$8.5 million in live tournament earnings, which includes two *WPT* titles and three *WSOP* bracelets.

Jennifer Harman

Pioneers like Linda Johnson, Barbara Enright, Susie Issacs, and Cyndy Violette opened the door, but Jennifer Harman kicked it down. The Reno, Nevada native learned the game around the family dinner table but spent much of her career at the table in Bobby’s Room at Bellagio, playing the biggest cash games around. Harman was one of the most important and successful players for ‘The Corporation,’ which was a group of high-stakes pros that pooled their money to take on Andy Beal. The 57-year-old also has two *WSOP* bracelets, both in open events.

Brian Hastings

Brian Hastings is only 33 years old, but he has been playing poker at the highest stakes for half of his life and already has one of the best résumés in the game. By the end of his senior year of high school, the Pennsylvania native already had a bankroll of more than a quarter of a million dollars. He was playing the highest stakes online before he was even 21, while simultaneously earning his degree from Cornell University. He famously beat Viktor ‘Isilur1’ Blom for \$4.18 million in one PLO session and has proven to be an excellent mixed games player, earning four of his five *WSOP* bracelets in non-hold’em games.

Isaac Haxton

High-stakes cash games? Check. High-stakes tournaments? Check. The respect of all his peers? Check. Isaac Haxton checks all the boxes, except for *WSOP* bracelets. The New York raised, Brown University educated poker pro has been one of the most consistent winners in big online cash games, and also one of the

most feared players on the high roller circuit. With \$29.6 million in earnings, he is no. 14 on the all-time money list. The 36-year-old's biggest score came when he topped the 2018 *Super High Roller Bowl* for \$3.6 million.

Phil Hellmuth

What is there left to say about Phil Hellmuth that he hasn't told us himself over and over again. The Poker Brat is simply the greatest player in *WSOP* history. Not only does he have the record for the most bracelets, but the 57-year-old has 16! That's six more than his nearest competitors. Hellmuth was the youngest main event winner in history, then 24, when he won it all in 1989 and he's still going strong today, putting together one of his best series performances in 2021. The Wisconsin native also won the *WSOP Europe* main event back in 2012. With \$24.6 million, he's 23rd on the all-time money list.

John Hennigan

There are a number of high-stakes cash game players who have also found success at the *WSOP*, including three-time winner Lyle Berman, four-time winners John Monnette and Eli Elezra, or five-time winner Daniel Alaei, but we're going to go with six-time winner John Hennigan. In addition to beating the big games, the man known as "Johnny World" also won the \$50,000 *Poker Players Championship*, the *U.S. Poker Championship*, and the *WPT Borgata Winter Open*. The 51-year-old former professional billiards player from Philadelphia has more than \$8.5 million in career tournament earnings.

Fedor Holz

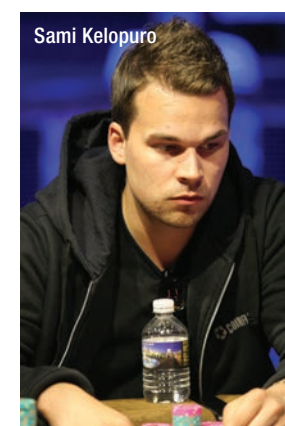
The Germans have put together quite an impressive group of high roller crushers such as Christoph Vogelsang, Rainer Kempe, Dominik Nitsche, Ole Schemion, and Steffen Sontheimer, but none of them can touch Fedor Holz. Although most of his success did come within a three-year window, he did rack up \$34.4 million in live tournament earnings, which is good for ninth all time. Oh yeah, Holz just so happens to be one of the greatest online tournament players ever, too. He has won nearly \$11 million online, which is no. 32 on the PocketFives rankings. Did we mention he's only 28?

Phil Ivey

There isn't a game or format where Phil Ivey would be a welcome opponent. Perhaps the most feared player ever, Ivey has been terrorizing players since he was a teen, using a fake ID to play in Atlantic City. He won his first *WSOP* bracelet against 'Amarillo' Slim in 2000, and then won three more in 2002. He now has 10, which is tied for second most all-time. With \$31.7 million, he is ranked no. 12 in tournaments. The 45-year-old is considered online poker's biggest cash game winner ever among tracked games, and he has reportedly done even more damage in both public and private games from Las Vegas to Macau.

John Juanda

Born in Indonesia, John Juanda came to the States as a track star before earning an MBA from Seattle



University. He quickly took to poker, finding a knack for tournaments. He has five *WSOP* bracelets across a variety of games including triple draw, 2-7 lowball, pot-limit Omaha, and stud eight-or-better. He also won the *WSOP Europe* main event in 2011. The 50-year-old has an *EPT* title, and did quite well in various high roller events, most notably the *Triton Super High Roller Macau* in 2017 for \$2.9 million. He has racked up \$24.8 million overall, which is no. 21 overall.

Sami Kelopuro

There have been several European high-stakes phenoms over the years including Jens 'Jeans89' Kyllonen, Niklas 'ragen70' Heinecker, Ilari 'Ziigmund' Sahamies, Matt 'mustafabet' Ashton, and Mikael 'ChaoRen1'



Bryn Kenney



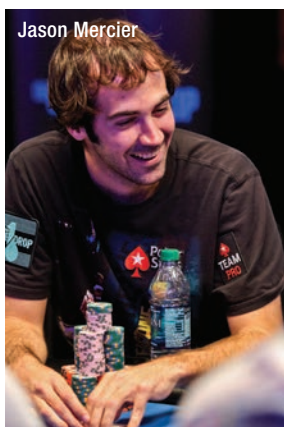
Jason Koon



Timofey Kuznetsov



Adrian Mateos



Jason Mercier



Michael Mizrachi

Thuritz, but Sami 'LarsLuzak' Kelopuro wins the tie-breaker thanks to his surge in online tournaments as well. Not only does the Finnish pro compete for the highest stakes in online cash games, but the 35-year-old is also second on the PocketFives all-time money list with \$22 million in online tournament earnings as well.

Bryn Kenney

Like Justin Bonomo, the man he is currently battling at the top of the all-time money list, Bryn Kenney also got his start in competitive *Magic: The Gathering*. The New Yorker spent years hunting the no. 1 spot on the tournament trail, determined to make it to the top. He then called his shot in one of the highest-stakes tournaments of all-time, pocketing \$20.6 million in the *Triton Super High Roller London* event, giving him the temporary lead. The 35-year-old bracelet winner has since given back the lead to Bonomo, but remains close with \$57.4 million in earnings.

Jason Koon

West Virginia's Jason Koon was a track standout at Wesleyan College, where he also received his master's degree. Poker was just the way he passed the time while healing from a running injury. He quickly found success online while also working his way to the live high roller circuit. The 36-year-old has since become one of the best short deck players in the world, both in tournaments and cash games. In 2021, he won his first *WSOP* bracelet. With \$35.2 million in career live tournament earnings, he sits eighth on the all-time money list.

Timofey Kuznetsov

When it comes to high-stakes online cash games, you could make the argument for guys like Ben 'Bttech86' Tollerene, Jonas 'OtB_RedBaron' Mols, Linus 'LLinusLLove' Loeliger, Ben 'Sauce123' Sulsky, or Wiktor 'limitless' Malinowski, but we'll give the nod to 31-year-old Russian pro Timofey 'Trueteller' Kuznetsov. The mathematical genius has been one of the biggest winners for the better part of the last decade. Although his identity was hidden to start, he eventually stepped out and has since done very well in *Triton Super High Roller* series, racking up nearly \$9 million in live tournament cashes.

Adrian Mateos

Despite being one of the youngest players on this list at just 27 years old, Adrian Mateos is already one of the most accomplished tournament players ever. Originally from Madrid, Spain, Mateos started playing at just 16. He was only 19 when he won the €10,000 buy-in *WSOP Europe* main event, banking €1 million. He has since added dozens of high roller final tables and three more *WSOP* bracelets to his collection, including the 2021 \$250,000 *Super High Roller* that paid out nearly \$3.3 million. With \$25.6 million in total live earnings, Mateos is first on Spain's all-time money list and 20th overall.

Jason Mercier

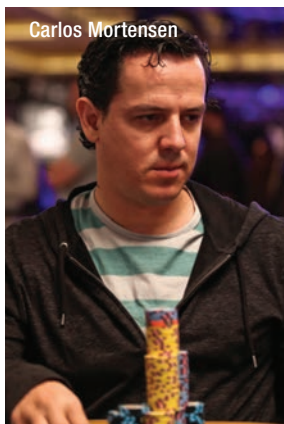
Although his volume has dropped off considerably since starting his family, Jason Mercier spent the better part of a decade attacking the tournament trail. The Florida poker pro broke through at the 2008 *EPT San Remo* main event and the next year won his first *WSOP* bracelet. Although the 35-year-old also has several million won online, he has really excelled at the summer series, winning five bracelets overall. His 2016 campaign was particularly successful, earning him POY honors. With several high roller wins and \$19.7 million in live earnings, Mercier is ranked 34th all time.

Michael Mizrachi

If money management were a factor, we'd probably have to disqualify several players on this list. But hyper-aggressive Michael Mizrachi makes it on sheer talent alone. The 41-year-old has won \$17.1 million during his career, including two *WPT* titles and five *WSOP*



Chris Moorman



Carlos Mortensen



Johnny Moss



Daniel Negreanu

bracelets. Most impressively, ‘The Grinder’ has won the \$50,000 *Poker Players Championship* an insane three times, and even took fourth once. The Florida native’s biggest score came when he finished fifth in the *WSOP* main event for \$2.3 million. His brother Robert is not too far off this list with four bracelets of his own.

Chris Moorman

Credit must be given to the likes of Niklas ‘lena900’ Astedt, Peter ‘Belabacsi’ Traply, Jon ‘apestyles’ Van Fleet, Ben ‘bench789’ Rolle, and Joao ‘Naza114’ Vieira who have since passed him, but for the better part of a decade, nobody was better at online tournaments than the U.K.’s Chris Moorman. In fact, with nearly \$20 million won on the virtual felt, he is still among the leaders on PocketFives’ all-time list. The 36-year-old has two *WSOP* bracelets, and to top it off, Moorman picked up a *WPT* title at the *L.A. Poker Classic*, bringing his live earnings total to \$7 million.

Carlos Mortensen

There wasn’t any poker action in Spain for Carlos Mortensen in the late ‘90s, so he moved to the States. In 2001, the ‘Matador’ defeated a then record-field of 613 players to earn the \$1.5 million payday and his first *WSOP* bracelet. He added a second bracelet in 2003 and then the *WPT* came into the picture. Mortensen captured three *WPT* titles, including the *Hollywood Poker Open*, *Festa al Lago*, and season-ending *Five-Star World Poker Classic*, the latter of which was worth nearly \$4 million. The 49-year-old remains the tour’s all-time money leader.

Johnny Moss

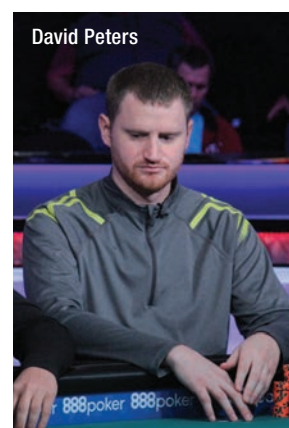
Johnny Moss was already in his ‘60s when he kickstarted the *WSOP* with his match against Nick ‘The Greek’ Dandolos. In fact, if he were still alive today he’d be 115, so you’d be forgiven for thinking he predates this list. But the Texas-born Moss remained highly competitive in the game until he passed at age 88 in 1995. Not only did he win the 1970 (by vote), 1971, and 1974 main events, but he earned nine bracelets in total, the last of which came in 1988 when he was 81 years old. It’s no wonder he was nicknamed ‘The Grand Old Man of Poker.’

Daniel Negreanu

When all is said and done, it will be extremely difficult not to put Daniel Negreanu on poker’s prover-



Scotty Nguyen



David Peters

bial Mount Rushmore. Originally a snooker player, he dropped out of high school to play cards, ultimately making it to Las Vegas from his home in Toronto. The 47-year-old has done it all in his career with two *WPT* titles, six *WSOP* bracelets, and numerous Player of the Year honors. Perhaps more impressively, ‘Kid Poker’ has completely reinvented his game in recent years and has transformed himself into a top performing high roller regular. With \$45.2 million in career earnings, Negreanu is no. 3 all-time.

Scotty Nguyen

After escaping the war in Vietnam and surviving nearly a month stranded at sea, Scotty Nguyen found himself in the U.S. The natural hustler started as a poker dealer, before quickly making the switch to player. The ‘Prince of Poker’ has since put together an incredible career that includes the 1998 *WSOP* main event title, a *WPT* title, and four other *WSOP* bracelets. Most notably, he took down the 2008 \$50,000 *Poker Players Championship* for nearly \$2 million. The 59-year-old is Vietnam’s all-time money leader with \$12.7 million in tournament earnings.

David Peters

If you’re looking for consistency on the high roller circuit, David Peters is the guy. The Ohio native has three *WSOP* bracelets, but those results don’t touch what he’s put together in the bigger buy-in events. Peters has been an annual threat for POY honors for nearly a decade, winning it all in 2016. He is also the back-to-back reigning *U.S. Poker Open* champion. Although he



Nick Petrangelo



Doug Polk



Brian Rast



David 'Chip' Reese



Nick Schulman



Huck Seed

might not engage much at the table, he has 11 scores of seven figures and 37 titles overall for a total of \$41.4 million. That puts the 34-year-old silent assassin fourth on the all-time money list.

Nick Petrangelo

There are so many American high rollers that could take this spot such as Jake Schindler, Sean Winter, Sam Soverel, or Alex Foxen, but right now it belongs to Nick Petrangelo. The Massachusetts-born poker pro has spent the last seven years making his living among the elite and along the way has cashed for \$24.3 million. That puts the 35-year-old at no. 24 all-time. Petrangelo has won two *WSOP* bracelets and during the pandemic found the time to win an online *WPT* championship, as well as compete

in some of the biggest cash games ever spread.

Doug Polk

When we started this project, we had no idea that Doug Polk would embark on a similar journey with his podcast. Although we think that Doug's personal list is far too biased towards recent online hold'em cash players, that doesn't disqualify his play from putting him on ours. The 33-year-old from California is regarded as one of the best heads-up no-limit hold'em players ever, and last year wrapped up a highly publicized match against Daniel Negreanu, winning \$1.2 million. He has also done quite well in live tournaments, banking \$9.4 million while winning three *WSOP* bracelets.

Brian Rast

Colorado native Brian Rast was his high school valedictorian, earning his way to Stanford University. It was there that he found a poker club and got hooked. At the 2011 *WSOP*, he won two bracelets, including the elite \$50,000 *Poker Players Championship*. The high-stakes cash game player would repeat at the *PPC* in 2016, before adding his fourth and fifth bracelets in 2018 and 2021. The 40-year-old's largest score came when he won the inaugural *Super High Roller Bowl* in 2015 for \$7.5 million, back when it sported a \$500,000 buy-in. With \$21.9 million in tournament earnings, he's 27th all-time.

David 'Chip' Reese

David 'Chip' Reese was just six when his mother taught him poker, and by the next year he was already beating the fifth graders out of their lunch money. He graduated from Dartmouth University, and was about to attend Stanford Law School before getting sidetracked by a big win in Las Vegas. Over the next 30 years, Reese established himself as one of the greatest and most-respected high-stakes cash game players, and won three *WSOP* bracelets, including the inaugural \$50,000 *Poker Players Championship*. He was taken too soon, back in 2007 at the age of 56.

Nick Schulman

New York's Nick Schulman started as a teenage pool hustler before making the switch to poker, learning online. He was 21 when he won the *WPT World Poker Finals* in 2005 for \$2.1 million, and it wasn't long before he became a regular competitor in Bobby's Room at Bellagio in some of the biggest cash games around. The 37-year-old has several high roller wins to go along with three *WSOP* bracelets. His first two came in 2-7 lowball, a game he also has a second-, third-, fourth-, and fifth-place finish in. The popular poker commentator has more than \$14 million in career tournament earnings.

Huck Seed

If it weren't for 1995 *WSOP* main event champ Dan Harrington's 'part-time' status, he might have made this list. Instead, the spot goes to 1996 winner Huck Seed. The California-born, Montana-raised Seed caught the poker bug while in college playing for the California Institute of Technology's basketball team. It wasn't long before he was a regular in the big game in Bobby's Room (and in big prop bets). In addition to his main event title, the 53-year-old also has three other *WSOP* bracelets and

was the *National Heads-Up Poker Championship* winner.

Erik Seidel

No other old school player has earned more respect from the younger high roller community than Erik Seidel, who continues to prove he is one of the greatest of all time year in and year out, even now at age 62. Seidel was a backgammon player and stock trader before finding poker at the Mayfair Club in New York City. Although his heads-up loss to Johnny Chan is forever associated with *Rounders*, he does have nine *WSOP* bracelets of his own along with a *WPT* title. With \$40.2 million in career tournament earnings, he sits in fifth place overall on the money list.

Scott Seiver

Scott Seiver is one of the more versatile players on this list, having excelled in all forms of the game, both live and online. The New York-raised pro who attended Brown University has been a regular in big cash games for 15 years, climbing to the highest levels online while also taking on the greats in Bobby's Room. He has three *WSOP* bracelets and also won the *WPT Championship* in 2011 for \$1.6 million. His biggest score, however, remains the \$5.2 million he banked for his runner-up finish to Brian Rast in the *Super High Roller Bowl*. He has \$24.5 million earned in total, good for no. 22 all-time.

Vanessa Selbst

Kristen Bicknell and Maria Ho are rapidly climbing the ranks, and Kathy Liebert and J.J. Liu continue to compete, but they are all still a whopping \$6 to \$7 million behind Vanessa Selbst, who is the women's money leader with \$12 million in earnings. Although the New York native and Yale graduate is now mostly retired at 37, she was one of the most feared players for quite some time. Not only did Selbst earn three *WSOP* bracelets, all in open events, but she also did well on the high roller circuit. She is the only woman in the top 100 on the all-time money list, coming in at 74th.

Dan Smith

Although he is one of just two players on this list without a *WSOP* bracelet, Dan Smith has accomplished pretty much everything else when it comes to the tournaments. The New Jersey native and chess prodigy was destined to be a gambler, betting the horses with his father at age seven. Smith has \$38.3 million in total live earnings, which is good for seventh place overall. He has nine seven-figure scores under his belt, including the \$8.8 million career best he pocketed at the 2019 *Triton Super High Roller London* series. If that wasn't enough to get him on the list, he also beats high-stakes cash games, too.

Stu Ungar

It's hard to picture how Stu Ungar's career would have unfolded had he not passed away in 1998. The New York poker pro was considered to be one of the more naturally gifted players of his time, and possibly the greatest gin rummy player ever. Nobody questioned Ungar's skill in tournaments, having been the only person to win the *WSOP* main event three times, not counting Johnny Moss, who was voted the winner of one of his three titles.



Erik Seidel



Scott Seiver



Vanessa Selbst



Dan Smith



Stu Ungar



Anthony Zinno

Ungar had five bracelets overall, and also won the *Super Bowl of Poker* three times as well.

Anthony Zinno

With all due respect to the *World Poker Tour's* four-time champion and all-around end boss, Darren Elias, Anthony Zinno is no slouch himself with three *WPT* titles of his own. The lawyer-turned-poker pro from Rhode Island also has four *WSOP* bracelets, including the \$25,000 pot-limit Omaha championship for \$1.1 million. In fact, the 41-year-old has proven to be very well rounded in recent years, as all four of his *WSOP* titles have come in events other than hold'em, including PLO eight-or-better, stud, and H.O.R.S.E. Zinno now sits with \$10.8 million in live tournament earnings. ♠

TONY SINISHTAJ CAPTURES WYNN MILLIONS MAIN EVENT TITLE



The 2022 *Wynn Millions* \$10,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em main event in early March drew a field of 1,075 entries to just narrowly surpass its lofty \$10 million guarantee by \$105,000. Tony Sinishtaj ultimately emerged victorious with the title and the first-place prize of \$1,655,952.

This was the 41-year-old New York resident's first seven-figure score and the largest payday of his career. His previous top payout came when he won the 2017 *WPT Hard Rock Poker Showdown* main event for \$661,283. He now has more than \$3.5 million in live tournament earnings.

Sinishtaj also earned 2,400 *Card Player* Player of the Year points for the win, the largest amount of points awarded in any event yet in 2022. This was his first POY-qualified score of the year, but it was enough to see him move into first place in the rankings.

The final day of this event began with nine players remaining and Vanessa Kade in the chip lead. Sinishtaj sat in fourth chip position to start. He got off to a solid start with a knockout, with his A-K winning a preflop race against short stack Neng Lee's pocket tens. Sinishtaj flopped an ace and held from there to send Lee home with \$171,280.

Sean Perry was the next to fall. He got all in with pocket nines facing the pocket kings of Isaac Kempton. The flop gave Kempton kings full, and with no help on the turn or river, Perry was eliminated in eighth place (\$202,908). This was his seventh POY-qualified final-table showing of 2022, with nearly \$1.5 million in POY earnings so far this year. As a result, Perry now sits in seventh place in the POY race with 1,885 total points.

Roland Shen's run came to an end in seventh place

when his K-J ran into the pocket nines of Michael Stembera. Stembera flopped a set and held from there to send Shen home with \$244,541.

Two-time *WPT* main event champion Tony Tran got the last of his chips in preflop with pocket sixes and Sinishtaj called with pocket kings. The larger pair held up and Tran was knocked out in sixth place, earning \$304,161 for his third POY-qualified score of the year. He now sits in 15th place in the standings as a result.

Stembera got all-in preflop with A-K suited and Sinishtaj called with pocket jacks. An ace-high flop saw Stembera take the lead, but a jack on the turn gave Sinishtaj a set. Stembera earned \$390,053 for his fifth-place showing.

Then with a board reading K♠ 3♠ 2♣ Q♠ Q♦ Sinishtaj moved all-in. Kade called with her pocket aces, but Sinishtaj revealed 6♣ 5♠ for a flush. Kade earned \$527,481, giving her more than \$1 million in live tournament earnings. She also won more than \$1.5 million in the *PokerStars 15th Anniversary Sunday Million* event last year.

2019 *WSOP* main event third-place finisher Alex Livingston ultimately finished third in this huge \$10,000 buy-in event as well. His last chips went in preflop with K-J, only to have Sinishtaj pick up A-K suited. Livingston found no help from the board and was sent to the rail with \$745,749.

Heads-up play began with Sinishtaj and Isaac Kempton sitting on essentially even stacks, but it took only a few hands for the champion to be decided. In the final hand, Kempton raised from the button with pocket jacks and Sinishtaj three-bet with pocket aces.

Kempton four-bet and Sinishtaj called. The 7♠ 7♦ 6♣ flop saw Sinishtaj check-call another hefty bet, and the 6♦ on the turn prompted another check-call. The K♠ completed the board and Sinishtaj checked yet again. Kempton moved all-in and Sinishtaj made the call with his pocket aces to secure the pot and the title. Kempton was awarded a career-best \$1,093,314 payday as the runner-up.

Place	Player	Payout (POY)
1.	Tony Sinishtaj	\$1,655,952 (2,400)
2.	Isaac Kempton	\$1,093,314 (2,000)
3.	Alexander Livingston	\$745,749 (1,600)
4.	Vanessa Kade	\$527,481 (1,200)
5.	Michael Stembera	\$390,053 (1,000)
6.	Tony Tran	\$304,161 (800)
7.	Roland Shen	\$244,541 (600)
8.	Sean Perry	\$202,908 (400)
9.	Neng Lee	\$171,280 (200)

FARID JATTIN WINS VENETIAN DEEPSTACK SHOWDOWN EVENT



The *Venetian DeepStack Showdown* played host to a massive \$1 million guaranteed \$3,500 buy-in event that began on Sunday, March 6 in Las Vegas. A few days later, Colombian poker pro Farid Jattin came out on top from a field of 409 entries to secure the title, the \$272,357 first-place prize, and 1,080 POY

points.

This was already Jattin's third title of the year, with a pair of victories in side events at the *Lucky Hearts Poker Open* series at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood in January. He beat a field of 4,960 entries to win the \$600 buy-in kickoff event there for \$306,832 and 660 points, and then took down the \$2,200 buy-in pot-limit Omaha event for another \$58,410 and 240 points.

He also made a smaller final table finish in a \$5,200 buy-in bounty event at the *Wynn Millions* for a fourth score, adding \$23,155 and 192 points. With 2,172 total points, Jattin now sits in second place in the overall standings, with

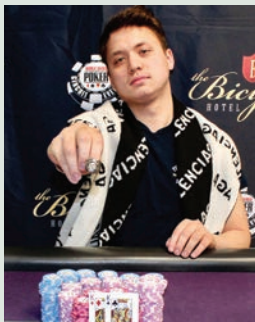
\$660,754 in POY earnings already secured this year.

James Romero finished eighth for \$28,988 and 180 points. He has a total of three final-table finishes this year, including one title won in a \$2,200 buy-in no-limit hold'em event at the Lucky Hearts Poker Open which saw him earn another \$167,285 and 720 points. With 1,584 total points, he has now moved into 14th place on the leaderboard.

Jacob Ferro finished seventh for \$38,651 and 270 points in this tournament at Venetian, bringing his final table count to three in 2022. The 2021 *WPT* Player of the Year now has 1,317 points to climb to 30th place in the rankings.

Place	Player	Payout (POY)
1.	Farid Jattin	\$272,357 (1,080)
2.	Jeffrey Tanouye	\$181,657 (900)
3.	Padraig O'Neill	\$127,547 (720)
4.	Adam Hendrix	\$90,185 (540)
5.	Zachary Donovan	\$67,638 (450)
6.	Antonio Heredia	\$50,890 (360)
7.	Jacob Ferro	\$38,651 (270)
8.	James Romero	\$28,988 (180)
9.	Curt Kohlberg	\$23,834 (90)

MICHAEL JOZOFF WINS WSOP CIRCUIT BICYCLE CASINO MAIN EVENT



The *World Series of Poker Circuit* just wrapped up their latest series, with the most recent stop taking place at The Bicycle Casino in Los Angeles. The *WSOPC Bike* series featured 13 gold ring events and was folded into the venue's *Winnin' O' the Green* festival.

The centerpiece of the whole affair was the \$1,700 buy-in no-limit hold'em *WSOPC*

main event. The tournament attracted a total of 550 entries, creating a prize pool of \$833,250 that was paid out among the top 83 finishers.

After four days of action, Michael Jozoff came away with the title and the top payout of \$161,500. Not only did the New York native earn his first *WSOP Circuit* gold ring, but it also represented his first recorded live win of any kind.

"I'm 22 years old, so pretty young. This past year was my first year legally being able to play tournaments in the U.S. Before that, I was playing online," the University of Southern California graduate told *WSOP* reporters.

Jozoff's previous top live tournament score came during this year's *L.A. Poker Classic* series. He chopped a \$2,200

buy-in six-max event heads-up with Chance Kornuth, earning \$20,165.

To secure the title, Jozoff had to get through Eugene Tito heads-up. Jozoff took roughly a 2:1 chip advantage into heads-up play and extended that lead even further by the time the final hand of the tournament was dealt.

Tito moved all-in from the button with A♠ 10♥ and received a quick call from Jozoff, who held pocket kings. The board came down J♦ 10♦ 6♥ 9♥ 6♠ to lock up the pot and the title for Jozoff. Tito earned \$99,840 as the runner-up.

Place	Player	Payout (POY)
1.	Michael Jozoff	\$161,500 (840)
2.	Eugene Tito	\$99,840 (700)
3.	Iris Angeleri	\$74,480 (560)
4.	Steve Hyung	\$54,740 (420)
5.	Marc Robinson	\$41,285 (350)
6.	Andrew Ostapchenko	\$31,530 (280)
7.	Corey Brass	\$24,385 (210)
8.	Lee Ci	\$19,105 (140)
9.	Jonathan Williams	\$15,160 (70)

GRZEGORZ GLOWNY TAKES DOWN EPT PRAGUE MAIN EVENT



Grzegorz Glowny won his way into the 2022 *European Poker Tour Prague* €5,300 buy-in no-limit hold'em main event via a €530 online satellite on PokerStars. The native of Poland was one of 1,190 total entries in this massive mid-March tournament that built a prize pool of \$6,331,336 at the King's Casino in the Czech Republic.

After seven full days of tournament action, Glowny managed to come away with the title and the top payout of €692,252 (\$754,555 USD).

This was Glowny's largest recorded live tournament score by nearly \$750,000. His previous top cash was just \$5,221, made earlier at the same series.

In addition to the money, Glowny also became the sixth Polish player to win an *EPT* main event title, joining Sebastian Malec, Piotr Nurzynski, Dominik Panka, Grzegorz Reczko, and Dmity Urbanovich.

A number of top players made deep runs in the event, including Panka (52nd) and Nurzynski (51st), as well as Adrian Mateos (40th), Bruno Fitoussi (20th), Paul Tedeschi (17th), Hossein Ensan (14th), Dimitar Danchev (9th), and Teun Mulder (7th).

The final day of this event began with just six players remaining, with Gab Yong Kim in the chip lead. Armin Rezaei was the first to fall, getting all-in with a three-bet squeeze from the big blind after Glowny raised from the cutoff and Kim called from the button. Glowny called with A♦ K♦, which had Rezaei's A♥ Q♥ in rough shape. The board improved neither player and Rezaei was eliminated in sixth place for \$198,162.

Demetrio Caminita's run in this event came to an end thanks to a preflop battle of the blinds. He shoved with 8♦ 6♦, and Glowny woke up with pocket fives in the blind. The fives held up and Caminita was sent to the rail with \$267,998 for his fifth-place showing.

The final four players battled on for more than four hours after Caminita left the table, with a few pauses in play to discuss a deal. Eventually, the quartet came to an agreement that saw them readjust the remaining payouts based on ICM numbers. The deal left \$120,768 USD in prize money remaining for the eventual champion.

Gab Yong Kim (46 big blinds) – \$678,645

Andrea Cortellazzi (37 big blinds) – \$631,568

Grzegorz Glowny (37 big blinds) – \$633,787

Symeon Alexandridis (23 big blinds) – \$542,033

Kim secured the largest guaranteed payout thanks to the deal, but almost immediately began to slide down the leaderboard. In his final hand he got all-in on a 10♦ 6♦ 4♣ 3♦ Q♠ board with 6♠ 3♣. His two pair was no good against the 8♦ 7♦ of Cortellazzi, who turned a flush.

Symeon Alexandridis got the last of his stack into the middle with his A♥ 9♠ leading the A♣ 8♠ of Glowny. An eight on the turn paired Glowny's eight, though, and Alexandridis settled for third place and 1,280 POY points. He now sits just outside the top 30 on the leaderboard, having already made one smaller final-table finish earlier this year.

With that, heads-up play began with Cortellazzi holding a slight 5:4 chip lead. The lead changed hands a couple times, but Glowny managed to win a huge all-in with pocket queens against Cortellazzi's A-9 to take control in time for the final hand of the tournament.

Cortellazzi shoved his last eight big blinds with 8♣ 4♣ and Glowny called with K♣ Q♣. The board ran out 10♣ 7♠ 2♥ K♠ 4♠, giving Glowny a winning pair of kings and the pot. Cortellazzi took home \$631,568 as the runner-up, while also securing 1,600 POY points. Glowny added the \$120,768 reserved for first to his deal of \$633,787 to walk away with a total of \$754,555.

Place	Player	Payout (POY)
1.	Grzegorz Glowny	\$754,555 (1,920)
2.	Andrea Cortellazzi	\$631,568 (1,600)
3.	Symeon Alexandridis	\$590,816 (1,280)
4.	Gab Kim	\$678,645 (960)
5.	Demetrio Caminita	\$267,998 (800)
6.	Armin Rezaei	\$198,162 (640)
7.	Teun Mulder	\$151,041 (480)
8.	Valentino Konakchiev	\$107,638 (320)
9.	Dimitar Danchev	\$83,549 (160)

EPT PRAGUE SIDE EVENTS MIX UP THE STANDINGS



Alejandro Lococo



Andras Nemeth



Timothy Adams

The 2022 *EPT Prague* series awarded more than \$28 million in total prize money, thanks in part to a plethora of high-stakes tournaments and large-field side events.

The first preliminary event to make a big impact on the POY rankings was the €1,100 buy-in no-limit hold'em *Eureka Poker Tour Prague* main event. It drew a record field of 3,155 entries, with Argentinian rapper and poker player Alejandro Lococo coming away with the title, \$455,424 USD, and 1,200 POY points.

Just six days later he topped a field of 218 in a €2,200 buy-in event for another \$96,530 and 360 points. He now sits in ninth place in the rankings as a result, with 1,632 points, two titles, and three final-table finishes this year.

The first high roller with a buy-in of €25,000 or higher wrapped up with Teun Mulder topping a field of 35 entries to win \$273,512 and 336 points. Nick Petrangelo placed sixth for his sixth final-table of the year, adding \$64,125 and 112 points.

A few days later, Timothy Adams defeated a field of 45 entries to take down the €50,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em super high roller event, earning \$814,965 USD and 510 POY points as the champion. The Canadian high roller now has \$26 million in lifetime live earnings, good for no. 17 on the all-time money list.

Chris Brewer secured his sixth POY-qualified score of the year in this event, placing fourth for \$275,652

USD and 255 points. The former collegiate distance runner had won a €10,200 buy-in side event earlier in the series of \$169,855 USD and 300 points and now sits in 38th place in the POY race.

Petrangelo also made his second final-table showing of the series, placing third for \$359,542 and 340 points. With seven final-table finishes, three titles won, nearly \$2.6 million in POY earnings, and 1,728 total points, Petrangelo now sits in eighth place on the POY leaderboard.

The second €25,000 high roller on the schedule drew 21 total entries, with online high-stakes tournament star Andras Nemeth coming away with \$230,818 USD and 353 POY points for the win. More on Nemeth later, though.

The third €25,000 event attracted 39 total entries. Brazil's Rodrigo Selouan earned \$349,178 USD and 336 points for the win. He would later add a third-place showing in a €5,000 side event a few days later.

Sam Grafton, who won one of the first preliminary events for \$87,592 USD, finished second in the €25,000 event to add another \$241,344 to his \$4.8 million in lifetime earnings.

The fourth €25,000 high roller saw 18 entries made, with Nemeth once again coming away as the victor for his second title of the series. The Hungarian took home \$197,857 as the champion, increasing his career live tournament earnings to more than \$5 million.

The €10,000 buy-in high roller attracted a sizable turnout of 271 total entries, building a prize pool equivalent to more than \$2.8 USD million in the process. After three days of play, bracelet winner Robert Cowen came away with the title, the top prize of \$518,197 USD, and 1,080 POY points.

Another side event that changed up the POY leaderboard was the €2,500 buy-in mystery bounty event, which drew 655 total entries to create a main prize pool of more than \$1.7 million. Brazil's Rodrigo Sirichuk, who had finished fourth in the €10,000 buy-in side event won by Brewer earlier in the series, came away with the title and the top prize of \$269,944 USD. He's now in 18th place in the rankings. ♠



EUROPEAN POKER TOUR MAIN EVENT EARNINGS

Rank	Player	Earnings
1	Mike McDonald	\$3.42 Million
2	Glen Chorny	\$3.27 Million
3	Pieter de Korver	\$3.04 Million
4	Poorya Nazari	\$3.00 Million
5	Dimitar Danchev	\$2.95 Million
6	Bertrand Grospellier	\$2.71 Million
7	Anthony Gregg	\$2.68 Million
8	Steve O'Dwyer	\$2.64 Million
9	Nicolas Chouity	\$2.55 Million
10	Sebastian Ruthenberg	\$2.45 Million

The *European Poker Tour* has been running since the fall of 2004, with a few breaks in action along the way. One such halt to the *EPT* was due to the brief shelving of the tour in 2017, thanks to a rebranding as the *PokerStars Championship* that lasted just one year. More recently, the tour was put on hiatus due to the live poker shutdown around most of the world during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Only four *EPT* series were held in 2020 and 2021, with one being online and the other three taking place in Sochi, Russia. The first live stop outside of Sochi was the 2022 *EPT Prague* festival, which ran from March 5-16. The centerpiece of the whole affair was the €5,300 buy-in no-limit hold'em main event, which was won by Polish online qualifier Grzegorz Glowny for \$754,555 USD.

Canada's **Mike McDonald** remains the tour's all-time leader in main event earnings with more than \$3.4 million. The 32-year-old set the record as the youngest *EPT* main event champion at 18 years of age, when McDonald won the *EPT Dortmund* main event in 2008 for nearly \$1.4 million. This was the first of two seven-figure paydays he recorded in *EPT* main events, with the other being the \$1,064,865 he took home as the runner-up finisher in the 2014 *PokerStars Caribbean Adventure* main event.

Glen Chorny is second on this leaderboard, thanks almost entirely to the \$3,193,822 he earned for winning the 2008 *EPT Grand Final* main event. The Canadian player's second-largest cash on the tour was an \$80,000 payday for a 13th-place showing in that year's *PCA* main event. The Netherlands' **Pieter de Korver** sits in third place on this list. Like Chorny, his spot is largely due to a win in the season-ending *EPT Grand Final* main event. He took down the 2009 running for \$3 million. ♠

2022 Card Player Player of the Year Sponsored by Global Poker



Place	Player	Points	Titles	Final Tables	POY Earnings
1	Tony Sinishtaj	2,400	1	1	\$1,655,952
2	Farid Jattin	2,172	3	4	\$660,754
2	Jeremy Ausmus	2,172	1	8	\$1,100,695
4	Ali Imsirovic	2,002	4	9	\$1,433,500
5	Isaac Kempton	2,000	0	1	\$1,093,314
6	Grzegorz Glowny	1,920	1	1	\$754,555
7	Sean Perry	1,885	2	7	\$1,498,508
8	Nick Petrangelo	1,728	3	7	\$2,596,507
9	Alejandro Lococo	1,632	2	3	\$564,969
10	Alexander Yen	1,620	1	1	\$975,240
11	Andrea Cortellazzi	1,600	0	1	\$631,568
11	Alexander Livingston	1,600	0	1	\$745,749
13	Nicholas Verderamo	1,594	1	4	\$511,333
14	James Romero	1,584	1	3	\$357,113
15	Tony Tran	1,536	1	3	\$474,450
16	Cary Katz	1,493	1	6	\$613,040
17	Scott Baumstein	1,440	2	3	\$165,552
18	Rodrigo Sirichuk	1,410	1	2	\$329,262
18	Brock Wilson	1,410	0	7	\$844,310
20	Nikolay Fal	1,404	1	2	\$348,822
21	Raul Garza	1,400	1	2	\$282,920
21	Mark Davis	1,400	1	3	\$408,350
23	Sean Winter	1,391	0	8	\$659,100
24	Joseph Sabe	1,368	1	1	\$507,978
25	Ankit Ahuja	1,361	1	5	\$225,578
26	Anton Wigg	1,350	0	1	\$650,180
27	Joseph Cheong	1,344	0	4	\$720,120
28	Andrew Moreno	1,330	1	2	\$248,813
29	Huy Nguyen	1,325	1	4	\$174,707
30	Jacob Ferro	1,317	0	3	\$363,531

CIRCUIT RESULTS

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
DeepStack	1. Ankit Ahuja	\$189,013 (900)
Venetian Las Vegas, NV	2. Thomas Boivin	\$126,065 (750)
	3. Alexander Tkatschew	\$88,513 (600)
	4. Stephen Song	\$62,585 (450)
\$2,500 NLHE Mar. 1-3	5. Justin Bond	\$46,939 (375)
\$500,000 GTD	6. Darren Rabinowitz	\$35,316 (300)
Entries: 393	7. Jim Collopy	\$26,822 (225)
Prizepool: \$894,075	8. Michael Wang	\$20,117 (150)
	9. Victor Shih	\$16,540 (75)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
DeepStack	1. Scott Stewart	\$51,752 (408)
Venetian Las Vegas, NV	2. Ronald Sullivan	\$45,000 (340)
	3. George Long	\$27,133 (272)
	4. Benjamin Palmer	\$17,844 (204)
\$1,100 NLHE Mar. 3	5. Andrew Rodgers	\$13,444 (170)
\$100,000 GTD	6. Hyo Joo	\$10,022 (136)
Entries: 252	7. Eshaan Bhalla	\$7,871 (102)
Prizepool: \$244,440	8. Peter Asmuth	\$6,111 (68)
	9. Laurette Thurber	\$5,182 (34)



Kenny Huynh

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Event	Player	Payout (POY)
DeepStack	1. Kenny Huynh	\$56,224 (360)
Venetian Las Vegas, NV	2. Timothy Pai	\$51,669 (300)
	3. Julian Manolio	\$30,895 (240)
	4. David Yonnotti	\$22,091 (180)
\$800 NLHE Mar. 4-6	5. Rishi Makkar	\$16,648 (150)
\$200,000 GTD	6. Rupesh Pattni	\$12,486 (120)
Entries: 465	7. Josh Mok	\$9,285 (90)
Prizepool: \$320,160	8. Joshua Turner	\$7,044 (60)
	9. Ricardo Gonzalez	\$5,763 (30)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Wynn Millions	1. Bin Weng	\$189,800 (420)
Las Vegas, NV	2. Ren Lin	\$138,700 (350)
	3. Tony Tran	\$94,900 (280)
	4. Ilyas Muradi	\$73,000 (210)
\$10,500 NLHE Mar. 7	5. Jeremy Ausmus	\$58,400 (175)
Entries: 73	6. Ivan Zufic	\$43,800 (140)
Prizepool: \$730,000	7. Darren Elias	\$36,500 (105)
	8. Ben Diebold	\$29,200 (70)
	9. Brek Schutten	\$21,900 (35)



Brek Schutten

© Wynn

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Wynn Millions	1. Brek Schutten	\$219,300 (360)
Las Vegas, NV	2. Stanley Tang	\$141,900 (300)
	3. Sergio Aido	\$96,750 (240)
	4. Cary Katz	\$70,950 (180)
\$15,700 NLHE Mar. 8	5. Barry Hutter	\$51,600 (150)
Entries: 43	6. Dan Smith	\$38,700 (120)
Prizepool: \$645,000	7. Dragana Lim	\$25,800 (90)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Wynn Millions	1. Ben Diebold	\$96,810 (540)
Las Vegas, NV	2. Uri Kadosh	\$58,135 (450)
	3. Daniel Couzens	\$37,485 (360)
	4. Ankit Ahuja	\$25,690 (270)
\$3,000 NLHE KO Mar. 10-11	5. Anthony Marquez	\$18,918 (225)
\$200,000 GTD	6. Adam Hendrix	\$14,963 (180)
Entries: 200	7. Salim Admon	\$12,257 (135)
Prizepool: \$350,000	8. Albert Nguyen	\$10,395 (90)
	9. Michael Lim	\$8,925 (45)

TOURNAMENTS

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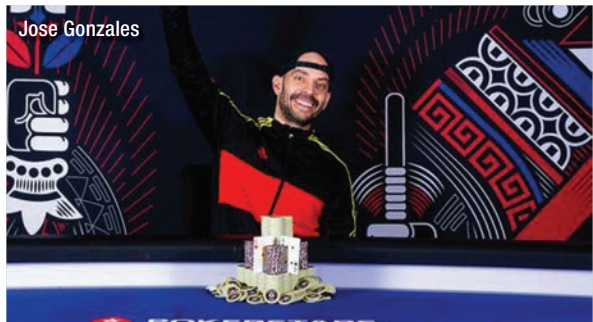
Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Wynn Millions Las Vegas, NV \$3,500 NLHE Mar. 11-14 \$2,000,000 GTD Entries: 889 Prizepool: \$2,867,025	1. Joseph Sabe	\$507,978 (1368)
	2. Joao Simao	\$334,295 (1140)
	3. Jacob Ferro	\$227,355 (912)
	4. James Romero	\$160,840 (684)
	5. Clayton Maguire	\$118,408 (570)
	6. Justin Zaki	\$92,318 (456)
	7. Javier Sanchez	\$74,256 (342)
	8. Ryan Roeder	\$61,641 (228)
	9. Armando Collado	\$51,971 (114)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €1,100 NLHE Mar. 6-10 Entries: 3,155 Prizepool: \$3,326,531	1. Alejandro Lococo	\$455,424 (1200)
	2. Bartolomeo Tato	\$271,410 (1000)
	3. Jakub Koleckar	\$189,802 (800)
	4. Jon Kyte	\$143,771 (600)
	5. Yann Nasser	\$108,913 (500)
	6. Ville Jantunen	\$82,502 (400)
	7. Nicolas Cottin	\$62,501 (300)
	8. Merijn van Rooij	\$47,339 (200)
	9. Alexandre Reard	\$35,817 (100)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €10,200 NLHE Mar. 7 Entries: 51 Prizepool: \$539,223	1. Chris Brewer	\$169,855 (300)
	2. Niklas Astedt	\$122,669 (250)
	3. Andrey Lyubovetskiy	\$78,186 (200)
	4. Rodrigo Sirichuk	\$59,318 (150)
	5. Ben Heath	\$45,835 (125)
	6. Thomas Muehloeker	\$35,054 (100)
	7. Arthur Conan	\$28,307 (75)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €25,000 NLHE Mar. 8 Entries: 35 Prizepool: \$915,982	1. Teun Mulder	\$273,512 (336)
	2. Juan Pardo	\$253,176 (280)
	3. Leonard Maue	\$137,395 (224)
	4. Zhuang Ruan	\$105,338 (168)
	5. Ole Schemion	\$82,437 (140)
	6. Nick Petrangelo	\$64,125 (112)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €50,000 (USD 56,470) NLHE Mar. 9-11 Entries: 45 Prizepool: \$2,396,966	1. Timothy Adams	\$814,965 (510)
	2. Orpen Kisacikoglu	\$563,284 (425)
	3. Nick Petrangelo	\$359,542 (340)
	4. Chris Brewer	\$275,652 (255)
	5. Adrian Mateos	\$215,732 (213)
	6. Yuri Dzivilevski	\$167,791 (170)



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Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €2,200 NLHE Mar. 9-10 Entries: 1,149 Prizepool: \$2,422,938	1. Jose Gonzalez	\$374,688 (960)
	2. Pedro Marques	\$314,738 (800)
	3. Ermanno Di Nicola	\$181,071 (640)
	4. Nicolas Vayssieres	\$136,097 (480)
	5. Thomas Lhomme	\$103,637 (400)
	6. Romain Lewis	\$76,224 (320)
	7. John Mooney	\$57,835 (240)
	8. Gilles Gauyacq	\$41,289 (160)
	9. Benjamin Beekhuis	\$32,122 (80)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €25,000 NLHE Mar. 11 Entries: 21 Prizepool: \$549,589	1. Andras Nemeth	\$230,818 (252)
	2. Pablo Brito	\$153,886 (210)
	3. Sirzat Hissou	\$98,928 (168)
	4. Yuri Dzivilevski	\$65,956 (126)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €5,200 PLO Mar. 12 Entries: 88 Prizepool: \$465,212	1. Jonas Kronwitter	\$113,873 (384)
	2. Tommi Lankinen	\$95,461 (320)
	3. Daniel Smuskovics	\$56,756 (256)
	4. Manuel Stojanovic	\$44,428 (192)
	5. Eran Carmi	\$35,817 (160)
	6. Andras Nemeth	\$27,915 (128)
	7. Vadim Zakharyan	\$22,094 (96)
	8. Simon Mattsson	\$17,211 (64)
	9. Ole Schemion	\$13,026 (32)

TOURNAMENTS

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €2,700 NLHE KO Mar. 12-14 Entries: 655 Prizepool: \$1,745,190	1. Rodrigo Sirichuk	\$269,944 (1260)
	2. Ian Hamilton	\$170,073 (1050)
	3. Ognyan Dimov	\$134,255 (840)
	4. Erdal Gulseven	\$99,005 (630)
	5. Eduardo Cardigo	\$78,949 (525)
	6. Andre Marques	\$58,511 (420)
	7. Mariam Tekle	\$46,401 (315)
	8. Robert Sampat	\$31,054 (210)
	9. Daniel Almeida	\$22,127 (105)



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Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €25,000 NLHE Mar. 13 Entries: 39 Prizepool: \$1,027,002	1. Rodrigo Selouan	\$349,178 (336)
	2. Sam Grafton	\$241,344 (280)
	3. Sirzat Hissou	\$154,052 (224)
	4. Orpen Kisacikoglu	\$118,100 (168)
	5. Timothy Adams	\$92,436 (140)
	6. Johan Guilbert	\$71,893 (112)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €10,300 NLHE Mar. 14-16 Entries: 271 Prizepool: \$2,865,283	1. Robert Cowen	\$518,197 (1080)
	2. Andrey Lyubovetskiy	\$438,256 (900)
	3. Conor Beresford	\$279,367 (720)
	4. Ricardo Caridade	\$225,499 (540)
	5. Adrian Mateos	\$176,787 (450)
	6. Mike Watson	\$133,808 (360)
	7. Christopher Puetz	\$98,274 (270)
	8. Kayhan Roshanfekr	\$72,202 (180)
	9. Niall Farrell	\$59,885 (90)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €25,000 NLHE Mar. 15-16 Entries: 18 Prizepool: \$471,076	1. Andras Nemeth	\$197,857 (168)
	2. Martin Kabrhel	\$131,901 (140)
	3. Pablo Silva	\$84,791 (112)
	4. Stephen Chidwick	\$56,527 (84)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €2,200 NLHE Mar. 15-16 Entries: 218 Prizepool: \$456,230	1. Alejandro Lococo	\$96,530 (360)
	2. Romain Lewis	\$64,964 (300)
	3. Arnaud Enselme	\$45,802 (240)
	4. Said Madani	\$37,136 (180)
	5. Toni Kaukua	\$29,386 (150)
	6. Daniel Rezaei	\$22,312 (120)
	7. Georgi Sandev	\$16,285 (90)
	8. Julien Sitbon	\$11,903 (60)
	9. Elias Suhonen	\$9,854 (30)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
EPT King's Casino Prague €5,200 NLHE 6 MAX Mar. 16 Entries: 52 Prizepool: \$274,898	1. Stephen Chidwick	\$86,590 (240)
	2. Patrick Leonard	\$62,544 (200)
	3. Rodrigo Selouan	\$39,861 (160)
	4. Marton Czuczor	\$30,237 (120)
	5. Belarmino Souza	\$23,370 (100)
	6. Sirzat Hissou	\$17,865 (80)



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Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Lucky Hearts Hard Rock Cincinnati, OH \$1,500 NLHE Mar. 3-6 \$500,000 GTD Entries: 632 Prizepool: \$834,240	1. Adam Friedman	\$171,020 (840)
	2. JB Whitehouse	\$105,782 (700)
	3. Brian Hall	\$77,584 (560)
	4. Brent Ballentine	\$57,729 (420)
	5. Angela Shade	\$43,464 (350)
	6. Timothy Bishop	\$33,203 (280)
	7. Michael Mccauley	\$25,695 (210)
	8. Peyton Smith	\$20,189 (140)
	9. Ray Attiyah	\$16,017 (70)

TOURNAMENTS

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
WSOP Circuit	1. Chris Unger	\$76,420 (365)
The Bike Bell Gardens, CA	2. Karo Davtyan	\$46,430 (304)
\$400 NLHE Mar. 6-8	3. Vahan Sudzhyan	\$34,140 (243)
\$200,000 GTD Entries: 996 Prizepool: \$407,040	4. Ali Hamidzadeh	\$27,070 (182)
	5. Bryan Rowland	\$20,610 (152)
	6. Quoc Le	\$15,840 (122)
	7. Jesus Bertoli	\$12,380 (91)
	8. Kevork Srabian	\$9,760 (61)
	9. Anthony Denove	\$7,775 (30)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
WSOP Circuit	1. Dathan Kuppin	\$45,445 (360)
The Bike Bell Gardens, CA	2. Ron Swain	\$28,085 (300)
\$600 NLHE Mar. 12	3. Ethan Yau	\$20,555 (240)
\$75,000 GTD Entries: 443 Prizepool: \$224,540	4. Stephen Goldstein	\$15,250 (180)
	5. Robert Buckingham	\$11,475 (150)
	6. David Linden	\$7,655 (120)
	7. Ed Alikhani	\$6,775 (90)
	8. Hengyu Sun	\$5,315 (60)
	9. Elvis Toomas	\$4,235 (30)



Event	Player	Payout (POY)
WSOP Circuit	1. Ethan Yau	\$49,530 (192)
The Bike Bell Gardens, CA	2. David Van Reyk	\$30,605 (160)
\$2,200 NLHE Mar. 15-16	3. Shan Jing	\$20,895 (128)
Entries: 80 Prizepool: \$153,849	4. Vincent Moscati	\$14,695 (96)
	5. Sohale Khalili	\$10,655 (80)
	6. Derek Kwan	\$7,975 (64)
	7. Shingo Horikoshi	\$6,160 (48)
	8. Adam Swan	\$4,925 (32)
	9. Bryan Rowland	\$4,075 (16)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Poker Classic	1. George Allen	\$63,071 (384)
Seminole Hard Rock Tampa, FL	2. Thomas McDonald	\$47,072 (320)
\$400 NLHE Mar. 9-13	3. Juan Rodriguez	\$47,071 (256)
\$200,000 GTD Entries: 1,463 Prizepool: \$490,105	4. Ivan Yatsuk	\$47,071 (192)
	5. Gabriel Garcia	\$21,890 (160)
	6. Enreko Fracassi	\$16,740 (128)
	7. Kenneth Ware	\$12,940 (96)
	8. Marcus Gurley	\$10,110 (64)
	9. Richard Carr	\$7,990 (32)



Event	Player	Payout (POY)
MSPT	1. Shaun Skrondahl	\$46,490 (365)
Grand Falls Larchwood, IA	2. T.J. Murphy	\$28,598 (304)
\$360 NLHE Mar. 10-13	3. Paul Cross	\$20,925 (243)
\$50,000 GTD Entries: 780 Prizepool: \$232,500	4. Jonathan Kim	\$15,554 (182)
	5. James Klosterbuer	\$11,858 (152)
	6. Kevin McClurg	\$9,068 (122)
	7. Sean Johnson	\$6,975 (91)
	8. Nicholas Gates	\$5,348 (61)
	9. Nicholas Marsh	\$4,185 (30)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Wynn Millions	1. Cliff Josephy	\$154,670 (648)
Las Vegas, NV	2. Dennis Wilke	\$144,334 (540)
\$3,000 NLHE 6 MAX Mar. 9-10	3. Jordan Spurlin	\$75,521 (432)
\$200,000 GTD Entries: 276 Prizepool: \$759,000	4. Ryan Riess	\$52,902 (324)
	5. Daniel Smiljkovic	\$38,709 (270)
	6. Paul Fisher	\$29,981 (216)

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HEAD GAMES: WHAT'S MATH GOT TO DO WITH IT?

By Craig Tapscott



The Pros: James 'SplitSuit' Sweeney and Reid Young

Craig Tapscott: Why is there such a big aversion for some players to go deeper and really utilize the mathematics of the game?

James Sweeney: In the first chapter of my book, I wrote the following: "Here is the truth. Most players suck at poker math." Math is rarely a person's favorite subject in school and most people identify as being below-average in mathematical ability. Couple all of that with the fact that most poker players have been out of formal education for years, if not decades, and the idea of studying math seems awful.

The truth, though, is that poker is a math game disguised as anything but. Which all leaves an opportunity for you to develop a sizable edge. And the good news is that poker math is fairly simple. Once you know how to do the basic calculations and memorize a few shortcuts, being able to make better estimations at the table gets much easier.

One of my favorite students over the last few years was 'Joe,' a winning \$2-\$5 live player who was struggling to move up to \$5-\$10. Every time Joe took a shot, he would instantly lose a few thousand bucks, move back down to \$2-\$5, rebuild, and then take another failed shot at \$5-\$10.

It was obvious he had a great feel on his normal stake. He'd been playing \$2-\$5 for years, knew his player pool well, had extensive notes on the regs in his game, and most of his reasoning during hand history reviews was based upon his reads and feel. There was almost zero discussion of math when Joe reviewed hands. Just a bunch of reads, thoughts about Joe's specific hand strength, and a vague mention of villain's range.

So, what Joe and I did was focus a lot of attention on poker math. We focused on the technical considerations in a hand, used a few tools like Flopzilla Pro to take a deeper look at ranges, and ran drills during coaching sessions.

"Your actual goal is to tie together the math and your reading ability," I told him. "Use your reads to inform the range assumptions you're making, and then run that through your math brain to output a +EV play."

That little tidbit right there, the idea that you aren't just a math player or just a feel player, is crucial. And players who are naturally gifted with the ability to read people have a real advantage. It's much easier to teach someone math than it is to teach someone how to read people.



After another couple of months, Joe had fully moved up to \$5-\$10 and was finding both playing and studying time more lucrative. Plus, given the smaller player field at his \$5-\$10 game, his reads were even more valuable since he could put them to use more often.

Reid Young: People love to believe in shortcuts to the high levels. Truly understanding what game you're playing requires work and facing adversity, plain and simple. Adversity and work aren't shortcuts and they're uncomfortable ideas for a lot of people, especially people who feel entitled to a goal.

Truly successful people are happy to fail and understand that failure as part of a process of becoming great. Any hesitation to embrace the inner workings of what you want to do well is counterproductive hubris.

Emerson said that you can't teach a man what he believes he already knows.

Craig Tapscott: What are some of the biggest mistakes players make when it comes to calculating the mathematics behind any poker decision?

James Sweeney: Most players don't think in ranges, and the ones that do, tend to not think about them correctly. For instance, I recently reviewed a hand where I opened UTG with A-Q, faced a squeeze from the player on the button, and I ended up four-bet shoving. A few comments I received about that video looked something like, "I would never get A-Q all-in preflop for 100 big blinds. That's terrible."

Players typically land on this sort of decision because they look at A-Q and know it's a huge dog against a normal stack-off range, and they conclude that four-betting with A-Q would be utter suicide. However, if you think more deeply about villain's range, what becomes apparent is the importance of the gap between villain's squeezing range and the range villain would call the shove.

That gap is part of the EV equation that represents how often you will pick up the preflop pot uncontested. As that gap gets larger and larger, the EV of a shove can get quite high, even when villain's calling range absolutely dominates our A-Q.

The same sorts of range mistakes happen post-flop, too. I also reviewed a hand where I bet and called an all-in with J-9 on K-Q-10-Q-3. In smaller stakes, it's rare that players



are bluff raising rivers often enough, and debatable if they would even shove with Q-X hands given the action.

I ran the math in the video with villain only shoving a strong range and J-9 was (obviously) a clear fold. However, I went a step further and looked at the EV of calling the all-in if villain had a bluff combo, then a few bluff combos, and then many bluff combos. It didn't take very many bluff combos for J-9's equity to rise enough to make calling profitable given the pot odds.

If you only play poker using rote qualifying statements like "never stack off with A-Q preflop" and "never call a river raise without the nuts," your strategy will 100% stagnate. And besides, a little exploration and math practice can disprove those rote strategic ideas quickly.

Reid Young: Garbage in. Garbage out. That's the saying used in any data-backed exercises.

Faulty assumptions create miscalculated results. Acting with an understanding that your assumptions are based on small sample sizes should create a confidence interval within which you can make a more accurate decision.

If you assume your opponent is going to fold to your bluff 50 percent of the time, then you can solve for a bluffing frequency. In a real game, guessing that frequency with insufficient information and relying on weak assumptions rather than mathematics might result in your bluffing too frequently or not frequently enough and cost you portions of the pot that you would have kept with a better understanding of the game and situation at hand.

Craig Tapscott: What are a few tips toward a consistent and diligent approach to the study of the math of the game? It can get overwhelming for some people with ranges, equity, pot odds, implied odds, etc.

James Sweeney: Prioritize learning about the concepts you are weakest in. Poker books are great for this, as are YouTube videos and strategy guides online. Spend one week on each concept, and whenever you review a hand that week, give some extra time to see if the math concept applies to that hand.

Most concepts in poker are interrelated with other key concepts, so you will end up finding new areas to focus on in future weeks. For instance, say you are working on pot odds one week and studying a hand where you faced an all-in on the river to work out if you should hero call with second pair. While knowing the pot odds you are getting is great, you can only know if the call would be profitable with knowledge of equity, and equity relies on range assumptions, and all of that informs the EV of your call.

Try not to get frustrated. Remember that 85 percent of players will never bother doing this sort of work, and that by doing this work you are developing a natural edge. You will be able to look at spots, deduce the important math concepts at play, assign ranges better, and as a result, make better decisions.

Reid Young: All those math terms fit together to describe the game. It's the language of mathematics.

Players aren't combining a set of named ideas to arrive at a full arsenal of solved problems so much as you want to describe how equity changes from player

to player and why. You can create toy games, simply solved example hands, and then gradually expand the combinations of hands involved in the scenario, for example.

You can also change other factors in isolation, like bet sizes, betting frequencies, hand strength, etc. Keep your exercises solvable so that you can act upon them. ♠

James "SplitSuit" Sweeney is a prolific poker coach having trained more than 500 students. Find his content on The Poker Bank's YouTube channel, The Red Chip Poker podcast and discord server. You can also check out his books and Poker Math & Preflop Workbook at splitsuit.com. Find him @SplitSuit.

Reid Young is a software engineer, app developer, and professional poker player with a focus on cash games. He is the author of The Blue Book: An Advanced Strategy Guide for No-Limit Hold'em Cash Games. He can be found on Twitter @Shootaaa.

"People love to believe in shortcuts to the high levels. Truly understanding what game you're playing requires work and facing adversity, plain and simple. Adversity and work aren't shortcuts and they're uncomfortable ideas for a lot of people, especially people who feel entitled to a goal."

ROBOTS ENJOY POKER, TOO: WHEN TO DEVIATE FROM GTO

By Jonathan Little

Most people who play games can intuitively understand how games that only consist of known information, like tic-tac-toe, checkers, and chess, can be solved by computers. But they cannot comprehend how games with unknown information, like poker, can be solved.

The truth is that with enough computing power and time, even the most difficult games can be solved using math and game theory.

A game is considered to be “solved” when the Game Theory Optimal strategy has been determined. The GTO strategy is quite powerful because it either breaks even (when the opponent plays the same strategy) or wins (when the opponent plays any other strategy).

Games that have fewer options than no-limit hold'em, like limit hold'em, were solved a few years ago, and even no-limit hold'em is close to being solved. In 2017, Libratus, a poker bot developed at Carnegie Mellon University, beat four of the best heads-up no-limit hold'em players for more than 14 big blinds per 100 hands. With \$1-\$2 blinds, that would be \$28 per 100 hands, which is an incredibly high win rate.

Some players may not understand how a bot could possibly know how and when to bluff intelligently, but it turns out bluffing is a common tactic discussed in game theory classes. For example, you will regularly find yourself on the river with a polarized range, which consists of premium hands and junky hands, while your opponent will have a condensed range, consisting of mostly marginal made hands that lose to your premium hands and beat your junk. In this situation, the polarized player can win the pot on average simply by betting an amount that will result in their opponent winning an amount of the time equal to their pot odds.

Still following?

If you know your range consists of 67% premium hands and 33% bluffs (which is possible using in-depth range analysis, which I teach at PokerCoaching.com), bet an amount that requires your opponent to win 33% of the time.

In this case, a pot-sized bet will give your opponent 2:1 pot odds, meaning he needs to win 33% of the time to break even. So, with a polarized range, a pot-sized bet will win you the pot on average, *no matter what your opponent does!*

If your range was instead 83% premium hands and 17% bluffs, betting one-fourth of the size of the pot, giving your opponent 5:1 pot odds, will win the pot on average. One interesting concept that comes from this is that as you have more bluffs in your range, you can use a larger bet size. If your range is perfectly polarized with 51% premium made hands and 49% bluffs, you could actually bet 24.5 times the size of the pot, which *almost* no one does.

If you study using the two main GTO solvers available today (PioSolver and MonkerSolver) you will find patterns that repeat over and over. For example, when determining which hands to continuation bet on the flop against one opponent, your main concern is how your range fares against your opponent's range. If you have the equity advantage (meaning your equity with your entire range on the flop is a decent amount higher than your opponent's equity with his

entire range), you should often bet with a large portion of your range using a small bet size.

If you do not have the equity advantage, you should bet infrequently using a larger size with a polarized range consisting of your premium made hands and some draws, while checking your marginal made hands and junk, plus a few traps. Using this knowledge, you can develop an implementable system to determine roughly the ideal betting and checking strategy in any situation.

While the GTO strategy is quite powerful, it is usually the ideal strategy against only the best players in the world. As your opponents play worse, you should adjust to take advantage of whatever they do incorrectly. If you play strictly the GTO strategy, you will leave a ton of money on the table.

Passive exploitation is when you play GTO and whatever your opponent does wrong wins you money, while active exploitation is when you deviate from the GTO strategy to further take advantage of your opponent's mistake. The maximally exploitative strategy is when you deviate from the GTO strategy in a way that maximizes your profit from your opponent.

While it is sometimes difficult to know what your specific opponent does incorrectly, many times it is obvious. For example, many small-stakes players almost never bluff on the river. So, if you get to the river and your opponent with this tendency check-raises, you should fold all but your best made hands. Other players bluff way too often, allowing you to easily call down with all sorts of marginal made hands. These are both examples of actively exploiting your opponent.

The major problem with using the maximally exploitative strategy is that your assessment of your opponent's strategy could be incorrect. If you think your opponent never bluffs yet he actually bluffs a lot, if you fold to most of his bets, you will get demolished. If you think your opponent bluffs a lot, so you call down with lots of marginal made hands, but it turns out your opponent essentially never bluffs, you will also get demolished. If your opponent quickly and correctly counter-adjusts to combat your maximally exploitative strategy, you will lose way more than you could have potentially won by making your initial adjustment.

Playing the GTO strategy sidesteps this dilemma, but will also result in you winning less money in the long run from your non-world-class opponents, assuming your assessments are generally correct. So, until you are fairly certain about what your specific opponent does incorrectly against you, it is wise to play a fundamentally sound strategy that is adjusted slightly to take into account what you know the average player in your game does incorrectly. ♠



Jonathan Little is a two-time WPT champion with more than \$7 million in live tournament earnings, best-selling author of 15 educational poker books, and 2019 GPI Poker Personality of the Year. If you want to increase your poker skills and learn to crush the games, check out his training site at PokerCoaching.com/cardplayer.

Final Table Takedown: Michael Jozoff

By Craig Tapscott



Michael Jozoff, 22 years-old, recently graduated from the University of Southern California with degrees in communication and finance. He started taking poker more seriously as a freshman in college, playing \$20 dorm cash games with friends.

He loved watching old school TV cash games, such as *High Stakes Poker*, and applied what he saw to improve his game. Michael also started learning more from YouTube videos and reading a myriad of strategy books to take his game to the next level.

To test his newfound skills, he jumped online, and has since accumulated more than \$1 million in earnings. In late February, Jozoff entered the \$2,200 six-max no-limit event at the *L.A. Poker Classic* at the Commerce Casino, and after striking a deal heads-up with Chance Kornuth, walked away with \$20,165.

A few weeks later, he entered the \$1,700 *World Series of Poker Circuit* main event at the Bicycle Casino. Once again, he found the winner's circle, but this time it was worth \$161,500. *Card Player* caught up with Jozoff break down his breakthrough victory.

Event: WSOP Circuit Bicycle Main Event

Buy-In: \$1,700 • Entrants: 550 • Prize Pool: \$833,250 • First Place Prize: \$161,500

HAND
NO. 1

Stacks: Michael Jozoff - 2,600,000
Andrew Ostapchenko - 1,500,000
Blinds: 30,000-50,000 with a 50,000 big blind ante
Players Remaining: 6

Craig Tapscott: Set this hand up for us Michael.

Michael Jozoff: The first hand is against Andrew Ostapchenko, who is on my direct right. I had a bit of history with him. He was at my starting table at the *LAPC*, six-max event [that I won] a few weeks ago. We also were at the same table at various points throughout day one and two of this tournament.

CT: What's your take on his game?

MJ: He's a young guy who I viewed as a strong, thinking, capable opponent. Our stacks in this hand were 30 big blinds effective. He was the effective stack. The hand is immediately interesting because...

Ostapchenko opened to 150,000 from the cutoff.

MJ: He opened to 3x the big blind. This was strange to me.

CT: How so?

MJ: Because of his stack depth, I would have expected him to min-raise or 2.2x as his open size, especially when he could have faced re-jams from the short stacks. He had been opening to those [more traditional] sizes all day at this stack depth. When he did raise this hand, it tripped me up a bit. I wasn't sure if he misclicked or if he was going for some sort of live exploitive play or what. Then I looked down at $K\spadesuit Q\heartsuit$ and had to decide how to proceed.

CT: What was your best option given that you were in

position?

MJ: With this combo at this stack depth, I would three-bet with a small sizing (something like 2.7x his raise) most of the time. However, given the fact that I was a little confused by what his open raise size meant, I opted for just a flat this time, since I'm allowed to mix three-bets and calls anyway with my combo.

Jozoff called with $K\spadesuit Q\heartsuit$ on the button. The blinds folded.

Flop: $J\spadesuit 6\spadesuit 5\heartsuit$ (pot: 350,000)

Ostapchenko checked.

CT: From your prior experience with this player, how did you interpret the check?

MJ: He would have done that with most, if not his full range, on this texture out of position. I figured that I have a good combo to start bluffing with, given that I double block him from having a jack, since he would open $Q-J$ offsuit and $K-J$ offsuit from the cutoff.

Also, with the $K\spadesuit$ in my hand, I could keep blasting a flush completing turn as a bluff, which would have allowed me to stay balanced when I fired the turn with a made flush for value. So, I bet...

Jozoff bet 115,000.

CT: Why that bet sizing?

MJ: I bet about 33% pot. I don't have a huge sizing on this flop because he can have all of the sets and overpairs, whereas I can only have fives and sixes as my sets, and none of the overpairs.

Ostapchenko called.

Turn: $J\heartsuit$ (pot: 580,000)

MJ: Once the top card on the board pairs, he naturally would check to me.

Ostapchenko checked.

POKER STRATEGY

CT: Was that a good or bad card for you to continue?

MJ: This is a terrible card for me to continue barreling on. He can still have all the jacks, sets which are now full houses, and overpairs. And the jack didn't improve any of my draws or backdoors on the flop. I expected to get called a lot here if I had barreled, so...

Jozoff checked.

River: 9♥ (pot: 580,000)

Ostapchenko checked.

CT: It seems he has given up on the hand here. What range did you put him on? And what hands do you think he might have had in mind for you after your call preflop?

MJ: I believe his range was quite capped here when he checked the river after I had checked back the turn. Of course, he could have a small frequency of nutted hands in his range played like this, but when he checked all three streets, he reduced the frequency of those significantly. I'm now thinking about the ICM pressure I had on him because he's the third-shortest stack.

CT: Were there other really short stacks at the table?

MJ: There were two stacks at the table that were quite short in chips at that moment. Also, I could still have had some (albeit less) J-X hands when I checked back the turn. And I could have had all of the 8-7 suited which checked back the turn as well and now made a straight.

I think it's likely he has an ace-high or one-pair type hand, which I can get him to fold. Since I'm targeting hands as strong as non-overpair pocket pairs to try to

make him fold, I moved all in for about a 135% pot jam. He tanked for three minutes, before finally making the fold face down.

Jozoff moved all-in. Ostapchenko folded. Jozoff won the pot of 580,000.



Stacks: Michael Jozoff - 6,500,000 Eugene Tito - 4,500,000

Blinds: 40,000-80,000 with an 80,000 big blind ante

Players Remaining: 3

MJ: This is an interesting hand because I completely switched gears against this opponent from theory to pure exploitative poker.

Jozoff opened from the button to 210,000 holding J♠ 10♣. Eugene Tito raised to 600,000 from the small blind.

CT: How well did you know Eugene's game?

MJ: Essentially, Eugene is a very tight, solid player who does not three-bet anyone ever. Especially in a situation where he had roughly the same stack as Iris (the other remaining player).

I'm the chip leader, so he had to have been three-betting me extremely tight here. Here, I know that I'm likely up against an overpair to my J♠ 10♣ (Q-Q+) or A-K against this opponent. However, his three-bet sizing was quite small, not even 3x my raise from out of position.

CT: So, you should take a flop with this hand, correct?

MJ: Well, given how well my hand plays post-flop, my position, and the fact that mucking J♣ 10♣ would be

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

European Poker Tour Prague
€5,300 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event



Teun Mulder
3,260,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 16%
After Flop: 87%
After Turn: 95%



Hossein Ensan
1,425,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 17%
After Flop: 4%
After Turn: 0%



PREFLOP

With 26 players remaining and blinds of 10,000-25,000 and a big blind ante of 25,000, Teun Mulder raised to 50,000 from the cutoff. Viktor Katzenberger called from the button, and Hossein Ensan called from the big blind.



Viktor Katzenberger
390,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 67%
After Flop: 9%
After Turn: 5%



Ensan bet 90,000. Mulder and Katzenberger called.



Ensan and Mulder checked. Katzenberger bet 55,000, and Ensan folded. Mulder check-raised all-in, and Katzenberger called.



No further action.

COMMENTARY:

The *European Poker Tour Prague* €5,300 main event was down to the final few tables, with players all guaranteed five-figure paydays while the six- and seven-figure scores loomed. This hand began with chip leader Teun Mulder raising from late position with Q-10. The Dutch poker pro had made two high roller final tables earlier in the series, including a win in a €25,000 buy-in event for \$273,512. Table short stack Viktor Katzenberger, who finished third in the 2019 *EPT Monte Carlo* main event, looked down at the best starting hand in hold'em in pocket aces. He had less than 16 big blinds and decided to just call from the button, likely with the hopes of inducing a squeeze play from one of the players behind him. 2019 *WSOP* main event winner and the 2015 champion of this very event, Hossein Ensan, called from the big blind with two suited and loosely connected cards. The flop brought two queens, giving Mulder trips. Ensan, who only picked up three to a flush, took a stab as the first to act. Mulder just called with his three queens and Katzenberger called as well. The turn brought a king and a second club and Ensan gave up. Mulder continued to disguise the strength of his hand with another check. Katzenberger found himself in a tricky situation after his sneaky preflop flat call failed to produce a squeeze raise from any of his opponents. He opted to bet 55,000 into the pot of 455,000, leaving himself with just 250,000 behind. Mulder check-raised all-in, having Katzenberger well covered. Katzenberger had to feel pretty sick about the situation, especially because his hand was dramatically under-represented as a result of his preflop approach. He eventually made the call and found out he was in rough shape with one card coming. Mulder improved to quads on the river to take down the pot, while Katzenberger was eliminated in 26th place for \$31,076. Mulder ultimately finished seventh for \$151,041.

too much of a deviation for me to look at myself in the mirror, I decided to make the call.

Jozoff called.

Flop: 6♥ 5♣ 3♣ (pot: 1,200,000)

CT: That was a pretty good flop for you.

MJ: Yes. I flopped the flush draw, but he has a relatively clean board for his overpairs given that I could never have straights here. And I probably would have mucked all the low pocket pairs that would make sets, since we're not deep enough to justify set mining in this spot.

Tito bet 475,000. Jozoff called.

MJ: I have nowhere to go but call here. I have no fold equity against his overpairs. And given how condensed I perceived his range to be in this spot, overpairs are something like half of his entire range.

Turn: 10♥ (pot: 2,150,000)

CT: Not a horrible card.

MJ: I turned top pair to along with my flush draw. This time, Eugene checked to me. This is where I faced my first real decision point of the hand. Against his perceived range, I could easily have checked this turn back to take my equity and see a river. However, against this opponent, I have the read that I'm never getting check-raised ever on the turn if I bet. I also didn't feel he would lead the river in that situation. So, I decided to bet...

Jozoff bet 1,200,000.

CT: What was your plan?

MJ: The plan was to check back rivers where I don't improve. I essentially set my own price for the amount

of chips I want to put into this pot. Old school, right? He tanked for a while and looked genuinely torn before he made the call.

Tito called.

River: 10♦ (4,550,000)

MJ: I now have made trips and beat literally every hand in his range.

Tito checked. Jozoff moved all in.

CT: So, you squarely targeted the big pairs.

MJ: Yes. I shoved for about 3 million effective, and targeted Q-Q+ to make the call. He tanked for two minutes before he showed a spectator his queens face up, and then folded it.

Jozoff won the pot of 4,550,000.

MJ: I gave him a huge amount of credit for finding that fold, as exploitable as it might be.

CT: You seem to be on a bit of a roll. What do you attribute the success with your tournament game?

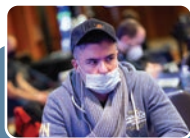
MJ: I attribute my success thus far to really just hard work and studying. I keep improving and I'm so much better than I was just a year ago. I study using different software and I run my own sims.

The main thing to take away from studying the game is pattern recognition and understanding why the solver does what it does in certain spots. You're never going to be perfect in trying to replicate a solver. But if you understand the key mechanics in most spots then your mistakes won't be losing too much EV.

From there, you'll have a nice baseline understanding of what optimal play is roughly supposed to look like, and you'll know how to deviate accordingly when

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

European Poker Tour Prague
€5,300 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event



Symeon Alexandridis
4,480,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 63%
After Flop: 48%
After Turn: 68%



Gab Yong Kim
9,410,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 37%
After Flop: 52%
After Turn: 32%



PREFLOP

With four players remaining and blinds of 80,000-160,000 and a big blind ante of 160,000, Symeon Alexandridis raised to 325,000 from the button. Gab Yong Kim called from the big blind.

FLOP



Both players checked.

TURN



Kim checked, and Alexandridis bet 275,000. Kim called.

RIVER



Kim bet 500,000, and Alexandridis raised to 1,500,000. Kim called.

COMMENTARY:

The final day of this event began with six players remaining. It took just over an hour for the field to be narrowed to four contenders, and another eight hours for a champion to be decided. This hand took place directly after the elimination of Demetrio Caminita in fifth place. Symeon Alexandridis raised with A-Q from the button and Gab Yong Kim, who was second in chips, defended his big blind with 8-6. The flop gave Kim an open-ended straight draw. He checked and Alexandridis opted to forego a continuation bet, instead checking behind. This might have been due to the jack-high flop with two lower cards being perceived as more likely to have connected with the big blind's defending range. The K♥ on the turn made a backdoor flush draw possible, while putting a second Broadway card on the board. Kim checked again and Alexandridis jumped at the opportunity to take the lead, firing a bet for just under one-third pot. Kim check-called and the river brought the 9♥, improving him to a nine-high straight, but both a flush and a higher straight were possible. Nonetheless, he made a value bet of 500,000, likely trying to draw calls from top pair type holdings for his opponent. Alexandridis' strong preflop hand had missed, though. With the Q♥ in his hand being a key card for both the nut straight and a flush, he opted to make a move and raised it to three times the size of Kim's river bet. This move very well could have worked against some of Kim's thinner value bets. With Alexandridis' check on the flop and bet on the turn, a backdoor flush would make sense. But with a hand as strong as a straight, Kim did ultimately make the call after a couple minutes of thought to take down the sizable pot. He remained in second chip position, while Alexandridis fell to below 15 big blinds.

A Better Way To Play Razz? 2-7 Stud Lowball Explained

By Kevin Haney

The game of Razz has long been a staple of mixed games, most frequently as a part of H.O.R.S.E. rotations. That version of Razz has typically been a form of Stud Lowball where the aces are considered low and straights and flushes don't count against you. Thus the best hand is A-2-3-4-5 and we will refer to this more traditional game as A-5 Razz.

Deuce to Seven (2-7) Razz has been around awhile in mixed games where the game choices are more exotic, but has recently become more prevalent in all games.

In 2-7 Razz aces are considered high and straights and flushes cannot be a part of your best five-card holding. Therefore, the nut holding in the game is 2-3-4-5-7 without a flush.

For example, if you get to showdown with (7♥ 3♠) 4♥ 6♠ 10♦ J♥ (5♥) your final best five card hand would 3♠ 4♥ 5♥ 6♠ 10♦. You have a ten low, not a seven because that would make a straight.

Why play 2-7 Razz as opposed to A-5 Razz? I guess the easiest answer to that question is why not? After all, it is truly what Seven Card Stud Lowball is supposed to be if making the worst possible high hand is the goal.

Another reason is that mixed game players are always trying to keep their opponents on their toes by continually coming up with new games. A new game is always fun, and experienced players always adapt faster than their competition thus their edges get a little bit bigger.

2-7 Razz isn't tremendously different than A-5 Razz. But there are a few nuances that call for some adjustments in hand selection and play on the later streets that skilled players are more apt to make.

Differences between A-5 Razz and 2-7 Razz

The biggest difference is that aces are high in 2-7 Razz. It seems comical but you will find players playing hands with aces more than one would think. In live play they may not be paying full attention to the plaques or if it's an online game they may be distracted with numerous things.

Deuces, sevens, and eights are the key cards in the game. When you hold a maximum "stretch" type hand such as 2-3-7, 2-5-7, or 2-4-8 you cannot make a straight that will set back your final hand and cause you to make a much weaker holding.

The times you start out with a more "condensed" holding such as 4-5-7 you are in peril of picking up a straight draw when you collect a three, six, or an eight. For example, if you hold (4-5)7-6-Q-J, only a deuce will make you an eight or better low and depending on what you are chasing you may have very few outs.

In A-5 Razz since straights don't count against you, the equities tend to run close. For example, with no knowledge of board cards an A-2-6 is only a 53% favorite over 4-5-6. Thus, in A-5 Razz it is crucial to be cognizant on whether or not the cards that are out help or hinder your holding.

This is also certainly true in 2-7 Razz but another con-

sideration is that if your starting hand is protected from picking up straight draws, it is a lot stronger. There are no equity calculators available for 2-7 Razz that I am aware of, however, I'm quite confident 2-3-7 is much greater than a 53% equity favorite over a holding such as 5-6-7.

Flushes count against you in 2-7 Razz but this particular aspect of the game is not that important because it only takes one offsuit card or a pair to eliminate a flush possibility and allow you the full complement of outs to make your hand. In other words, you would never consider folding (2♠ 3♠) 7♠ because it is suited. This holding is still way ahead over (5♥ 6♦) 7♠. The presence of a flush draw should only potentially impact your decision to play when the situation is already debatable.

To look at an extreme example, suppose you make (2♠ 3♠) 7♠ 4♠ 5♠ in your first five cards. Any of the remaining 15 pair cards will make you a wheel and with two cards to go you are a slight favorite to do so. Then of course you also have the non-spade sixes and eights that would also make very strong hands.

Playable Hands

In all variants of Razz hand values are widely dependent on what cards are shown on the board. However, in a vacuum in A-5 Razz any three to an eight is generally considered a reasonable starting hand and you are dealt such a holding around 16.2% of the time. Certainly a (8-7)6 is not a powerhouse, but when you open this holding with only a few low cards left to act it's not really considered a steal.

In 2-7 Razz you are dealt the below starting hands with the following frequencies:

Three to 7	5.50%
Three to 8	4.34%
Three to 9	6.08%
Total	15.93%

Holdings such as 2-3-4, 2-5-6, and 3-4-5 are included within the "Three to 7" although any holding with at least one card seven or lower has the ability to make a seven. As we can see playing the "Three to 9" hands is essential otherwise we would be playing too few hands. Certainly, if you took the mindset that you are only playing hands that you would play in 2-7 Triple Draw Lowball (27TD), you would ante yourself off like Broomcorn's uncle!

However, for those of you with Triple Draw experience, the premium holdings in 2-7 Razz are the starting hands you would open from the first two positions in 27TD. These would include hands such 2-3-7, 2-4-5, 2-6-7, and 2-5-8.

Whenever you are dealt such holdings you should put in a lot of action on third street especially if the cards on board are advantageous to you. By reraising on third you insure yourself against catching a brick on fourth street because you made the pot large enough to continue. And the greater equity differences on third street are definitely worth pushing even if it makes your opponent correct to chase on the later streets.

Hands such as 3-4-7, 3-5-7, 3-4-8, and 4-5-8 are highly playable as well even when you are the second player to enter the pot; any early position raiser may be a favorite to hold a deuce but they will hold one less often than they would in 27TD. With some of these holdings you may pick up straight draws, however, they are way too good to fold, even against a legitimate raise.

Condensed holdings such as 4-5-6, 5-6-7, and 5-7-8 are much less valuable as you will often lose outs due to picking up straight draws, they will make rougher hands, and lack the key lower cards, deuces, and threes. I'd consider 9-7-2 to be a better starting hand than any of those holdings even if I'm handicapped somewhat by having the nine up.

When holding (7-2)9 and the board cards are overall advantageous to the holding it is relatively standard to complete the bet even with a few low cards behind you. Getting reraised is not a great development but you are not a huge underdog to many hands should that happen. But as we see in the above chart of starting hands it is not often that our opponents are dealt premiums, and with no potential straight draws to worry about, we fare well

enough against many of the more condensed holdings anyway. If you are last to act before the high card you should be reraising this holding versus someone who is likely to be stealing.

Having a nine up is slightly less perilous in 2-7 Razz than having an eight up in the A-5 version. In 2-7 Razz there are eighteen possible eight or better hands while in A-5 there are twenty-one possible seven low or better lows. On the later streets we may be forced to make looser calls in 2-7 Razz than we would in somewhat similar situations in A-5. For example we may need to make looser calls against boards showing something middling cards like 3-5-6 and 4-5-6 due to the fact that your opponents may hold straights or straight draws.

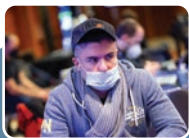
These added nuances make for a slightly better game and I would not be surprised if 2-7 Razz continues to make inroads, even possibly replacing the A-5 version wherever Razz is currently being spread in both cash games and tournaments. ♠



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.

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

European Poker Tour Prague
€5,300 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event



Symeon Alexandridis
7,500,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 80%
After Flop: 75%
After Turn: 73%



Andrea Cortellazzi
9,650,000 Chips



Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 15%
After Flop: 5%
After Turn: 21%

PREFLOP

With four players remaining and blinds of 125,000-250,000 and a big blind ante of 250,000, Symeon Alexandridis raised to 500,000 from under the gun. Andrea Cortellazzi called from the big blind.



Both players checked.



Cortellazzi bet 450,000, and Alexandridis called.



Cortellazzi bet 1,700,000, and Alexandridis called.

COMMENTARY:

Symeon Alexandridis already had a bluff picked off (see pg. 37), but this time around, he was the one playing bluff catcher. The hand took place not too long after the final four players in this event had struck a deal that redistributed the remaining prize money based on ICM. The agreement saw all the players lock up at least \$542,033 USD, which was better than third-place money based on the original payouts. The deal left only the title and \$120,768 to play for, with the players finishing in fourth through second places earning nothing extra. This change in incentives might have informed this hand, which began with Alexandridis raising as the first to act with pocket fives. Andrea Cortellazzi defended his big blind with 5-3 suited. The nine-high flop gave both players gutshot straight draws. Action checked through and the 2♠ on the turn gave Cortellazzi a backdoor flush draw to go with his straight outs. He made a semi-bluff of 450,000 into the pot of 1,375,000. Alexandridis was not ready to let go of his pair and straight draw. He made the call and the board paired on the river. Cortellazzi had arrived at the river with no showdown value to speak of and the betting lead. He fired another barrel, this time opting for a larger sizing. He bet 1,700,000 into the pot of 2,275,000. Alexandridis' pocket fives would probably be a good candidate for bluff catching in any case, but with the four-way deal encouraging him to play for the win, his call was made a bit easier. He considered the situation for a bit before putting in the chips to take down the pot and move into second place on the leaderboard. Alexandridis went on to finish third for the \$590,816 he locked up in the deal, while Cortellazzi survived to the final two.

FOUR-TIME BRACELET WINNER BRIAN YOON TALKS TOURNAMENT TRIPLE DRAW

By Bernard Lee

During this series of strategy columns, I have been interviewing 2021 *World Series of Poker* bracelet winners. These champions will provide observations, tips, and strategies for you, the readers of *Card Player*, about the specific poker game in which they captured their title.

The Event: \$10,000 Limit 2-7 Triple Draw Championship

The Winner: Brian Yoon

Since 2013, Brian Yoon has quietly won four *WSOP* bracelets while earning almost \$5.5 million on the tournament circuit. His first three titles were captured in no-limit hold'em events and impressively, two of them were against massive fields.

In 2013, the California native won the \$1,111 *Little One for One Drop*, outlasting 4,756 entries for \$663,727. Then in 2017, he outlasted another enormous field in the \$1,500 *Monster Stack* event, this time with 6,716 players. For this win, Brian took home a seven-figure score of \$1,094,349. His other hold'em bracelet win came in the 2014 \$5,000 eight-handed event for \$633,341. That time he beat out 550.

Additionally, he has three top-60 finishes in the *WSOP* main event. As you can see, he is no stranger to navigating his way through massive fields.

"I think early on, most of these tournaments play very similar. But, I find that when I go deep in these tournaments, many amateurs are so scared to play poker because there is so much money up top and (they are) so worried to make a mistake. They value their tournament life so much that you end up winning so many small or medium pots. Overall, if you are not afraid to be eliminated, you can take advantage of this situation and get deep in these tournaments."

Although only playing no-limit hold'em at the beginning of his poker career, he began to try mixed games at the *WSOP*.

"I started playing mixed games just for fun about six or seven years ago. I dabbled in the eight-game (mix) at the *WSOP* after getting eliminated in a no-limit (hold'em) event and it was pretty fun. I didn't have any expectations and I enjoyed it."

Of all the mixed games, Brian had a penchant for limit 2-7 triple draw and started playing every chance he could, whether live or online. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the 32-year-old devoted more time to studying poker, especially limit 2-7 triple draw.

All of his hard work paid off during the 2021 *WSOP* as he impressively captured the \$10,000 Limit 2-7 Triple Draw Championship, along with the \$240,341 first-place prize.

Recently, I spoke with Brian for my radio show (You can watch the full interview on my YouTube Channel – Bernard Lee Poker) and got some of his thoughts about playing in limit 2-7 triple draw tournaments.

Bernard: Congrats on winning the triple draw event. What an incredible game to get your fourth bracelet.

Brian: Thanks. I really like the game and have been



working a lot on it during the pandemic.

Bernard: In less than a decade, you have won four bracelets, but your first three were in no-limit hold'em. What drew you to mixed games, especially limit 2-7 triple draw?

Brian: I started trying my hand at mixed games and (limit) 2-7 triple draw was definitely my favorite. The basic strategy is not too complicated and there is still a little gamble to it as well. Then, I always played the PokerStars SCOOP and WCOOP triple draw tournaments online. I felt that I would get a little better every time I played, but I wanted to improve even more.

Then, the perfect storm happened. COVID game me more time so I decided to focus and improve in my triple draw game. Also, I was having a little lack of interest in no-limit hold'em as well. This situation allowed me to improve my triple draw game and when the 2021 *WSOP* rolled around, I was ready to play.

Bernard: Before we proceed, I want to explain the basics of this unique game for those who have never heard of and/or played.

Limit 2-7 triple draw is a five-card game with three separate draws. Hence, the name triple draw. As with any lowball game, the worst hand is the winner. However, this game has a twist in that an ace is always considered high. Thus, the lowest card is a deuce. Also, straights and flushes count against you. Since straights count against you, 2-3-4-5-6 would not be the best low hand. Thus, 2-3-4-5-7 is the best hand possible and how the game derives its name. This hand is even referred to by players as "number one" or the wheel.

After putting up the small blind and big blind, the betting is similar to hold'em where the first two times (pre-draw and after first draw) you can make a small bet, and after the second and third draw, there is a big bet.

Brian: That is correct. The betting is similar to limit hold'em, but the main differences are that limit 2-7 triple draw is a five-card draw game and being a lowball game, you are trying to make the *worst* hand.

Bernard: Can you share some key strategies when playing in a triple draw tournament?

Brian: The first key strategy is important in any game of poker – starting hands. If you play hands that are marginal, you can get into trouble from the start. The best starting hands are ones that have a deuce.

It seems simple and almost basic, but it is so advantageous to have a deuce. Remember, you cannot make a 7 (low) without a deuce. This is why a deuce is so critical. (Note: There are only four possible 7 hands – 2-3-4-5-7, 2-3-4-6-7, 2-3-5-6-7, and 2-4-5-6-7).

Now, you could start a hand without a deuce, as a solid 8 low can often win. But remember, without a deuce, you can't be drawing to a 7 which limits you right away.

Bernard: That's great advice. Do you have any other strategies?

Brian: The other key strategy is position, which is so important, even more than hold'em. In any 2-7 game, the player in position will get to see what his/her opponent will do first. You not only know if they bet before you act, but also see if and how many cards they are drawing, which is incredibly valuable information. This information could be the difference in whether you draw or stay pat.

Bernard: Speaking of drawing cards, what are your thoughts on this?

Brian: So obviously it's going to vary a little bit based on position. But in general, on the first draw, if you have a pat 7 or 8 (take no cards), you have an incredibly strong hand. Also, anytime you draw one card, especially to a 7 or 8, you have a very strong hand.

However, drawing two cards is the most common situation. Drawing three cards is very niche and can be done in specific situations, but if you are a beginner to limit 2-7 triple draw, I would stray away from drawing three cards.

Bernard: What advice would you give about the third and final draw?

Brian: The last draw is basically like playing (no-limit)

2-7 single draw. The rule of thumb is if you have a jack pat versus a player drawing one, the jack pat is a slight favorite (Note: similar to how a pair is a slight favorite over A-K in hold'em). Also, if you have a queen pat versus a player drawing two, the queen pat is a slight favorite.

Bernard: Any final words of advice?

Brian: I would say for triple draw, a lot of the decision-making in this game is kind of automatic. 80% of your decisions are automatic where you check or bet.

For example, I raise and the big blind defends. After the big blind takes two, I draw one. It is super standard that the big blind will check and I will bet, because I'm drawing less cards. There are lots of spots like this and you just need to learn them to make the decision-making process easier.

Bernard: Well, Brian, thanks so very much for your time and words of advice on this very interesting game.

Brian: You are very welcome. I hope that other players will find the game interesting and give it a try. ♠



Bernard Lee broke into the poker world after a deep run in the 2005 WSOP main event. He has two WSOP Circuit rings, and is an author, having written for Card Player, the Boston Herald, Metrowest Daily News, and ESPN, where he was a host of the show The Inside Deal.

His radio show and podcast, The Bernard Lee Poker Show, recently celebrated its 14th anniversary, and his latest book, *Poker Satellite Success: Turn Affordable Buy-Ins Into Shots At Winning Millions*, is now available on Amazon as well as D&B Publishing. Follow him on Twitter @BernardLeePoker or visit his website at BernardLeePoker.com or YouTube channel at Youtube.com/BernardLeePoker.

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

European Poker Tour Prague
€5,300 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event



Andrea Cortellazzi
20,025,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 44%
After Flop: 37%
After Turn: 9%



Grzegorz Glowny
15,700,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 56%
After Flop: 63%
After Turn: 91%



PREFLOP

With two players remaining and blinds of 200,000-400,000 and a big blind ante of 400,000, Andrea Cortellazzi limped in from the button.

Grzegorz Glowny checked his option from the big blind.

FLOP



Glowny checked, and Cortellazzi bet 800,000. Glowny called.

TURN



Glowny bet 900,000. Cortellazzi raised to 4,000,000, and Glowny called.

RIVER



Glowny checked, and Cortellazzi bet 4,000,000. Glowny check-raised all-in for 10,100,000 total. Cortellazzi folded.

COMMENTARY:

Despite getting a bluff picked off by Symeon Alexandridis four-handed, Andrea Cortellazzi went for an even bigger move in this pot that took place during heads-up play. Action kicked off with Cortellazzi limping in from the button with 10-9. Grzegorz Glowny checked his option with A-7 in the big blind and flopped middle pair on a jack-high board with two hearts. Glowny went into pot-control mode, check-calling an 800,000 stab from Cortellazzi, who had flopped a gutshot straight draw. The turn brought another seven, giving Glowny trips with an ace kicker. He opted to fire a bet of 900,000 into the sizable pot that already sat at 2,800,000. Cortellazzi likely thought his inside straight draw was no longer strong enough to continue with a call, thus making it a reasonable candidate to instead use as a bluff. He made a large raise to 4,000,000 and Glowny thought it over for a while before eventually deciding to just call with his trips and the nut kicker. The river put a second pair on the board, giving Glowny sevens full of threes. He checked and Cortellazzi bet another 4,000,000, having made it to the river with a hand that could not beat the board. Glowny considered his options before electing to raise all-in for value. Cortellazzi folded and Glowny took down the largest pot of the day to move into the lead. He went on to emerge victorious with the title and the top payout of \$754,555, which gave him quite the ROI considering that he had won his way into this event for just the equivalent of \$578 via an online satellite. Cortellazzi earned \$631,568 for his second-place showing. This was his first six-figure live tournament payday, besting his previous top score of \$92,321 as the 12th-place finisher in the 2016 *EPT Barcelona* main event.

COGNITIVE BIASES: PART 1

By Greg Raymer

I few issues back, I discussed a couple of ways that evolution has failed us humans, at least with respect to operating at maximum efficiency in modern society. The issues I wrote about, over-dependence on pattern detection and believing there needs to be significance to cause-and-effect, are examples of cognitive biases.

Many, even most of us, tend to fall prey to these biases, even when there is clear and convincing evidence to the contrary. There are many dozens of these cognitive biases that have been extensively studied by scientists. They cannot be ignored, except at our own peril. We instead must embrace the fact that we suffer from these biases, and then learn to overcome them.

I'm going to start a series of articles where I will discuss some of these biases that pose a particular risk for poker players. Remember, we all fall prey to these biases. In many ways, they are built into our DNA. They likely served us well many thousands of years ago when we were hunter-gatherers. But in today's world, both in general and when playing poker, these biases can undermine our efforts, and cause us to make serious mistakes.

I've discussed in past articles how poker players tend to overrate themselves. We also tend to underrate our opponents. This is related to one of the most harmful of the cognitive biases, the Self-Serving Bias.

The self-serving bias leads us to blame our failures on the circumstances around us, yet give ourselves full credit for our successes. This bias does have some benefits. It protects our psyche from blaming ourselves too much when things go poorly. But in the long run, that benefit is more harmful than helpful, when it prevents us from looking at the facts realistically.

The Self-Serving Bias probably sounds familiar to you. How many poker players do we know (including ourselves) who blame bad luck for our losses? Yet, when we win, we give ourselves, and our skill, full credit? In the short term, this bias is not a concern. But it leads to some serious long-term harm to our game, primarily our ability to improve.

If all our bad results are caused by bad luck, there is no incentive to work on our game and get better. Clearly, we must already be playing perfect, since we only lose because of bad luck. If it weren't for those other idiots getting lucky all the time, we would always win, right? If you think like this, why would you work on improving your game? Playing better can't change bad luck. So, what's the point?

I see this constantly as I travel the country playing poker. In fact, if I could read minds, I suspect that at least 90% of the players out there honestly believe they are the best player at the table every time they sit down. And with that attitude, you are probably not working as hard as you should, while at the table, to understand each opponent, and how they play.

Again, what's the point? They're just idiots who constantly get lucky, there's nothing you can do about that, right? But this opinion means you aren't learning their nuances, how to read them, when is the best time to try a



bluff, and so on.

This also puts you in a mindset that they can't even really think about the game properly. They are just "clicking buttons" at random, right? If instead you look more closely at their decision-making, you gain an opportunity to learn so much more.

Even if they are not great players, you will learn how they think about situations, and therefore how to best exploit their weaknesses. More importantly, you will now be open to the idea of actually learning from them. Maybe the decision they made wasn't just dumb luck. Maybe it was a brilliant move that tricked you into paying them off. It is dangerous to underrate your opponents. More importantly, it is costly.

To avoid the trap of the Self-Serving Bias, you must remove your ego from the situation. You must believe that you are less than perfect, that you make mistakes, and that you can learn and improve. And then you must realize that other players don't win, or lose, simply due to good and bad luck. They are making decisions. Maybe some of those decisions are actually brilliant, and if you see that truth, you can learn from those decisions, incorporate them into your game, and become even better.

Have fun, 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.

CONTRACTS AND POKER: A WEIRD GAMBLING STATUTE

By Scott J. Burnham



In a recent column on the legality of home poker games, I pointed out that often the goal of state regulation of gambling is not to punish the player, but to punish the winner or organizer of the game. An example of this is the Massachusetts law that provides:

Whoever, by playing at cards, dice or other game ..., loses to a person so playing or betting money or goods, and pays or delivers the same or any part thereof to the winner, ..., may recover such money or the value of such goods in contract; and if he does not within three months after such loss, payment or delivery, without covin or collusion, prosecute such action with effect, any other person may sue for and recover in tort treble the value thereof.

The section that follows that one provides that the owner or tenant of the property where the gambling took place has the same liability if he knew of or consented to the gambling. So if Larry loses \$1,000 to William in a home game at Owen's house, Larry has three months to recover the money from both William and Owen, and if he doesn't, then anybody could make the claim on Larry's behalf and collect \$3,000 from William and Owen.

If this sounds like an antiquated statute, you are right. It all goes back to the famous English Statute of Anne in 1710 which provided that gambling debts were unenforceable, presumably to prevent the ruling classes from gambling away their property and inheritances. This law was carried over to the colonies and is still the rule in most states. It was a big deal in Nevada in 1983 when the law was finally changed to allow licensed casinos – but not private parties – to enforce gambling debts.

The general rule is that gambling contracts are unenforceable – by winners and losers alike. So winners will be thrown out of court if they try to sue the losers to collect. This partly explains the popularity in the movies – as well as in real life, no doubt – of other forms of enforcement as an alternative to the courts. But the same rule applies to losers. If you paid your gambling debt and then sued the winner to get your money back on the grounds that the contract was illegal, you would be thrown out of court because you were a party to the illegal transaction and thus in no position to challenge it. This goes by the Latin name of *in pari delicto*.

But the Statute of Anne carved out an exception to that rule, allowing the loser to sue the winner or owner “in contract,” even though the contract was illegal, and that exception was the basis for the Massachusetts law. Of course, the “anyone” who can bring the claim after three months could not sue in contract. Since they are a third party who had no contract with the winner, their claim is in tort rather than contract.

There was an interesting 1884 case that called for an interpretation of the part of the statute that allows the third party to make the claim only if they act “without covin or collusion.” I had to look up the word *covin* – it is an archaic word for fraud or deception. Suppose Larry the loser thought, “Hmmm. I can forego suing William for the \$1,000 for three months and then my friend can sue William for \$3,000. So why don't I agree with my friend that I will do that on the understanding that we will each get

half of the recovery. That way I can get \$1,500 instead of \$1,000.”

Does that sound like the kind of collusion the statute was designed to prevent? No, said the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court – that agreement would be perfectly okay! Since the law is designed to punish the winner for gambling, it doesn't matter who gets the benefit from suing him. The court said that the statute was designed to prevent collusion between the winner and the loser, not between the loser and the third party.

What would collusion between the winner and the loser look like? I suppose the winner might say to the loser, “Bring a claim against me for the loss. I'll give you a couple of bucks and that will give me insurance that no third party can later make a claim against me for three times the loss.”

The statute came up again in an interesting 1949 case. The plaintiff claimed that racetracks had offered a “daily double” bet that was not legally permitted. He was suing not for himself as a loser, but as a third party to recover what was lost by everyone who had made such a bet but had not made a claim against the winning racetrack for the previous three months.

Not only did he stand to recover three times the amount lost by all those bettors, but by suing the owners of the property as well as the operators of the racetracks, he stood to recover six times the amounts lost on such wagers. A victory would likely have bankrupted the racetracks, but presumably would have served the purpose of discouraging illegal gambling. Fortunately for the racetracks, the court determined that the daily double wager was not illegal.

We will take a look at other weird gambling laws in future columns. ♠



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SCHEDULES

FOR COMPLETE TOURNAMENT RESULTS AND LISTINGS, VISIT CARDPLAYER.COM

MARCH	March 28-May 1	DeepStack Extravaganza II	Venetian Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
APRIL	April 18-24	San Diego Spring Classic	Ocean's Eleven Casino ■ Oceanside, CA
	April 19-24	Nevada State Ladies Poker Championship	South Point Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	April 21-23	PGT Heads-Up Championship	Aria Resort & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	April 21-May 1	Spring Series	bestbet Jacksonville ■ Jacksonville, FL
	April 21-May 2	WSOP Circuit - Mississippi	Horseshoe Casino Tunica ■ Robinsonville, MS
	April 28-May 16	World Poker Tour Chotaw	Choctaw Casino Resort ■ Durant, OK
MAY	May 2-July 31	DeepStack Championship	Venetian Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	May 31-July 3	Grand Poker Series	Golden Nugget Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	May 31-July 20	World Series of Poker	Bally's & Paris Casinos ■ Las Vegas, NV
JUNE	June 2-July 17	Poker Classic	Aria Resort & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	June 5-July 17	World Series of Poker Online	WSOP.com ■ Las Vegas, NV

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

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11:15 a.m. NLH, \$160

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

THURSDAY

11:15 a.m. NLH, \$140

7:15 p.m. NLH, \$160 KO \$25

FRIDAY

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SUNDAY

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6:30 p.m. NLH, \$35 AO \$5

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Facing A Tricky Turn Lead With Top Pair



You are six-handed late in a \$1,000 buy-in poker tournament. You have 1,300,000 chips with the blinds at 15,000-30,000 when it folds to you in the hijack seat with A♥ 10♥.

Question 1: Should you fold, call, raise to 70,000, or raise to 90,000?

Answer: Your A♥ 10♥ should be raised every time. While a 90,000 raise is permissible, a smaller raise with a short-to-medium stack is usually ideal for numerous reasons, such as letting your opponents call with far inferior hands while also giving you better odds to steal the blinds when you happen to have a weaker hand.

You raise to 70,000 and only the small blind calls. The flop comes 10♠ 9♦ 8♥ and the small blind checks.

Question 2: Should you check, bet 70,000, bet 140,000, or bet 210,000?

Answer: You should mostly bet with your best made

hands and draws on coordinated boards that connect well with your opponent's range. While you will be in a difficult spot if you bet and get raised due to the small blind's range likely containing many premium hands, a bet can also get called by many worse hands. On coordinated boards, you should usually use a decently large size, but non-gigantic bet size, which in this case is 140,000.

You bet 140,000 and your opponent calls. The turn is the 6♥ and your opponent leads into you for 85,000.

Question 3: Should you fold, call, raise to 200,000, or go all-in?

Answer: When the turn completes numerous draws for your opponent, leading with a wide range of premium hands, marginal but likely best hands, and draws becomes a viable strategy. Unless your opponent is leading with only the nuts, you should continue a decent amount of the time due to your pot odds.

With your top pair and flush draw, folding is out of the question. Raising does not make sense because it may result in your opponent reraising, putting you in a tough spot. When you have a clear marginal made hand and an excellent draw, call and continue to the river.

You call and the river is the 2♣. Now your opponent checks.

Question 4: Should you check, bet 125,000, bet 250,000, or bet 375,000?

Answer: This is an intriguing spot as you often have the best hand. The problem though is sometimes your opponent will show up with two pair or better that will call almost any bet. Against a strong player, it is wise to check behind when you do not have a good read on what they may have. When facing weak, straightforward players who will almost never have a straight, perhaps making a small value bet has a little merit as long as they can call with many worse made hands. In this spot, however, most players will fold one-pair hands. Checking behind is ideal.

You check and your opponent reveals K♣ Q♣, awarding you a nice pot.

For access to more than 1,200 interactive poker hand quizzes just like this, but in video format, visit PokerCoaching.com/CardPlayer.



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