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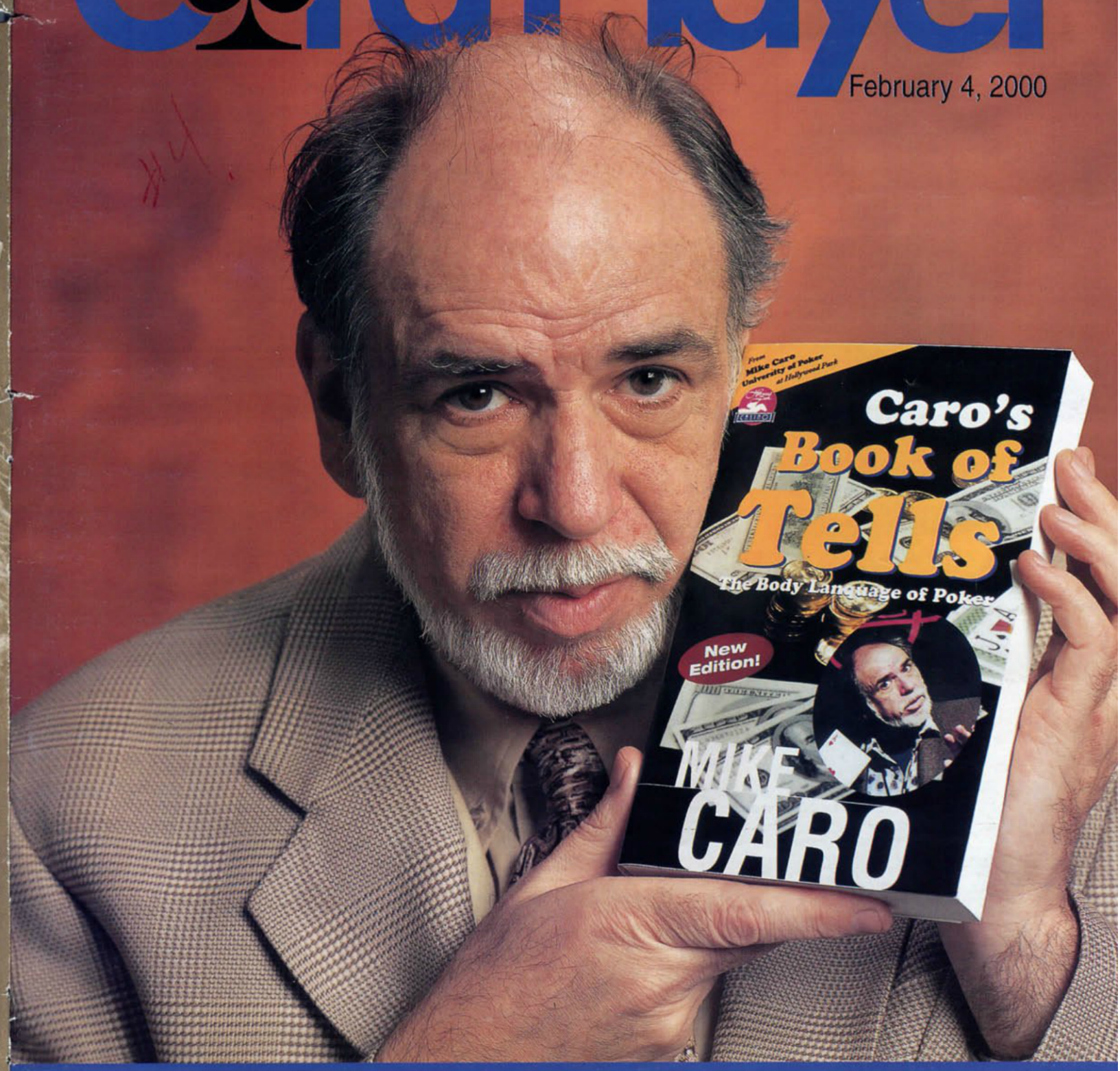
February 4, 2000



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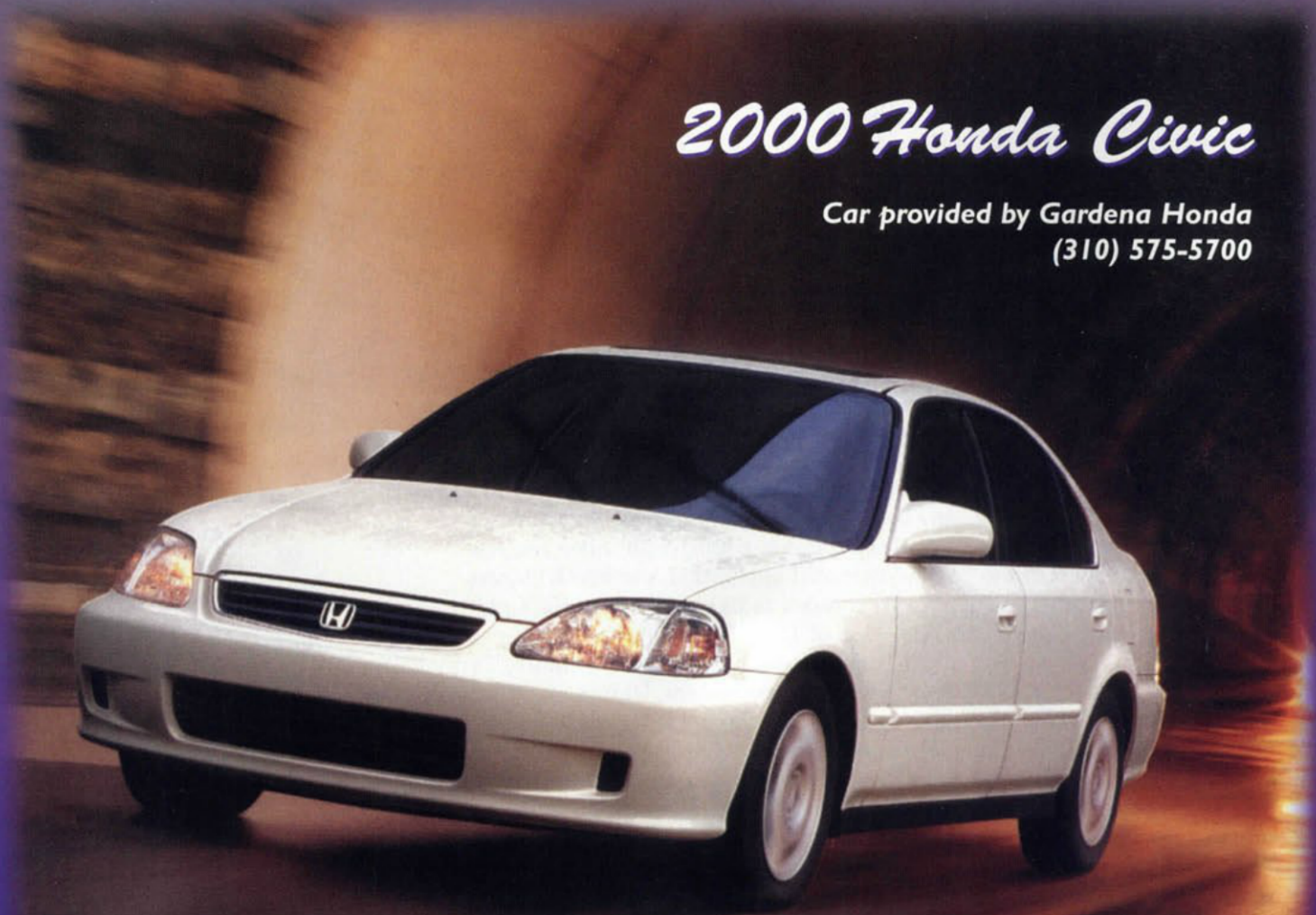

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Publisher's Pen



LINDA JOHNSON

The third annual *Carnivale of Poker* opened with 576 entrants for the first event. Players were pleased with the tournament structures, the side action, and the well-run supersatellites and one-table satellites; however, most were disappointed with the facility, as it was not large enough to comfortably accommodate the number of players. Also, the PA system and the smoke-filtration system were overtaxed, and it's safe to say that players are hoping to return to the Rio next year for the *Carnivale of Poker IV*. Results for the first few events appear on page 108.

♠ ❤ ♣ ◆

The Cliff Castle Casino in Camp Verde, Arizona, celebrated its grand opening Jan. 15. I was pleased to be on hand as General Manager John O'Neill, Tribal Chairman Vincent Randall, and several others gave opening speeches reflecting the pride so rightfully deserved in the Yavapai-Apache's new facility. The 114,000-square-foot new casino has replaced the original 14,000-square-foot building. The new facility houses four restaurants (I highly recommend Storyteller's Steakhouse with its cozy, private booths and cavelike setting), four cocktail lounges (the Dragonfly Lounge offers live entertainment and dancing), a 6,000-square-foot Kids Quest, an arcade, and a state-of-the-art bowling alley with a fun '50s theme.

Phil Pepple, director of gaming, gave us a tour of the gaming area, which houses 475 slot machines, a keno lounge, a pull tab counter, a bingo hall, video roulette and video craps, and Jack Attack (a game derived from blackjack in which players compete against each other). Of particular interest to us was Club 52, the eight-table poker room that is under the direction of Dave LaGrand. The cardroom, which offers such extras as food for the players, comfortable swivel chairs, TV screens throughout, and an excellent smoke-filtration system, features hold'em, seven-card stud, Omaha, double-hand high-low, and three weekly tournaments. The locals in the cardroom will make you feel right at home.

Cliff Castle is located about 80 miles from Phoenix and 20 miles from Sedona. Sedona is home to approximately two million tourists annually who are drawn by its beauty. Be sure not to miss the Broken Arrow Pink Jeep Tour and cocktails or dinner at the Enchantment Resort.

♠ ❤ ♣ ◆

The poker room at Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City now is totally nonsmoking, including the simulcast area and keno lounge. This was a bold step by Cardroom Manager Tom Gitto and was supported by Executive Vice President of Casino Operations Larry Clark. I spoke with Tom, who explained that his decision was based on wanting to do the right thing for the majority of his players. This move has been very well-received by most of the players and business appears to have picked up. In fact, many players have called to thank Tom and to pledge their support to the Taj poker room.

♠ ❤ ♣ ◆

Card Player would like to thank Nolan Dalla for his hard work in compiling the data for his 1999 Player of the Year column, which appears on page 54. This is a real gift to the poker community.

♠ ❤ ♣ ◆

Late-breaking news: Jack McClelland, tournament director extraordinaire, is coming out of retirement to work the *World Poker Open* in Tunica, Mississippi. This event, which will be held March 27-April 16, is a joint effort between the Horseshoe Casino Hotel and the Gold Strike Casino Resort. Welcome back, Jack!

Now, let's play poker.◆

Card Player
For Those Who PLAY TO WIN!

Volume 13, Number 3
February 4, 2000

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SHULMAN SAYS



BARRY SHULMAN

The Big Weight-Loss Bet

Jan. 10 and April 24 are big days this year in the poker community. Harrah's *Carnivale of Poker* started on Jan. 10 and Binion's *World Series of Poker* will start on April 24. At least equally important to nine of us poker players is that those are the two weigh-in dates for our big weight-loss bet.

Outside of poker, I'm not much for wagering. I don't even know who is in the *Super Bowl*. However, I was interested when I was approached by Reed Knaffl to join him and a few other *nutritional overachievers* to work together in a mutual support group to lose some of the excess poundage that we have accumulated over time. As you know, poker is quite fun and sometimes rewarding, but it *does not* necessarily correlate to physical fitness.

Reed suggested that we structure some type of nominal wager so that we all could win. Our main objective would be for everyone to lose his desired amount of weight and everything would be wonderful. The money would be just for tokenism, and that suited me just fine. When he mentioned that we ought to make it worthwhile, that seemed OK, too. Then, when I heard that they were talking about $2,000 each, I almost passed out. Nevertheless, not wanting to appear to be unconfident, I decided to go along with it.

You might enjoy the bet and try something similar. It is fun and is one that works particularly well, in that each participant controls his own destiny. If I achieve my goal, I win, and ditto for all of the other participants.

Here is how it works: We all weighed in on the exact same scale on the exact same day. Each participant has an objective of losing 10 percent of his body weight. Each participant who doesn't achieve his goal must put $2,000 into the kitty. All participants who achieve their goals will share the kitty equally. It's a very simple contest and one that we can feel good about winning and equally good if our friends win. If they don't, too bad.

It's a bit too personal to put down everybody's specific weight, but suffice it to say that even if we all achieve our goal, seven of the nine of us still will weigh in excess of 200 pounds. (You've got to start someplace.)

Here's a list of the participants and my ratings as to their probability of succeeding:

High Probability	Medium Probability	No Shot
Barry Shulman	Reed Knaffl	Ron McMillan
Ed Smith	Mike Sexton	Mike Matusow
Robert Williamson	Josh Winston	
	Boonie	

Some of the participants already have lost weight, but I haven't yet. In fact, to make this wager a little more competitive for myself, I intentionally have *bulked up* during the *Carnivale of Poker*. That's how confident I am that I'll win my wager!

Gentlemen, I think that it would be great if we all achieved our goals. However, I wouldn't mind picking up a spare $16,000.

Stay tuned for the results.◆

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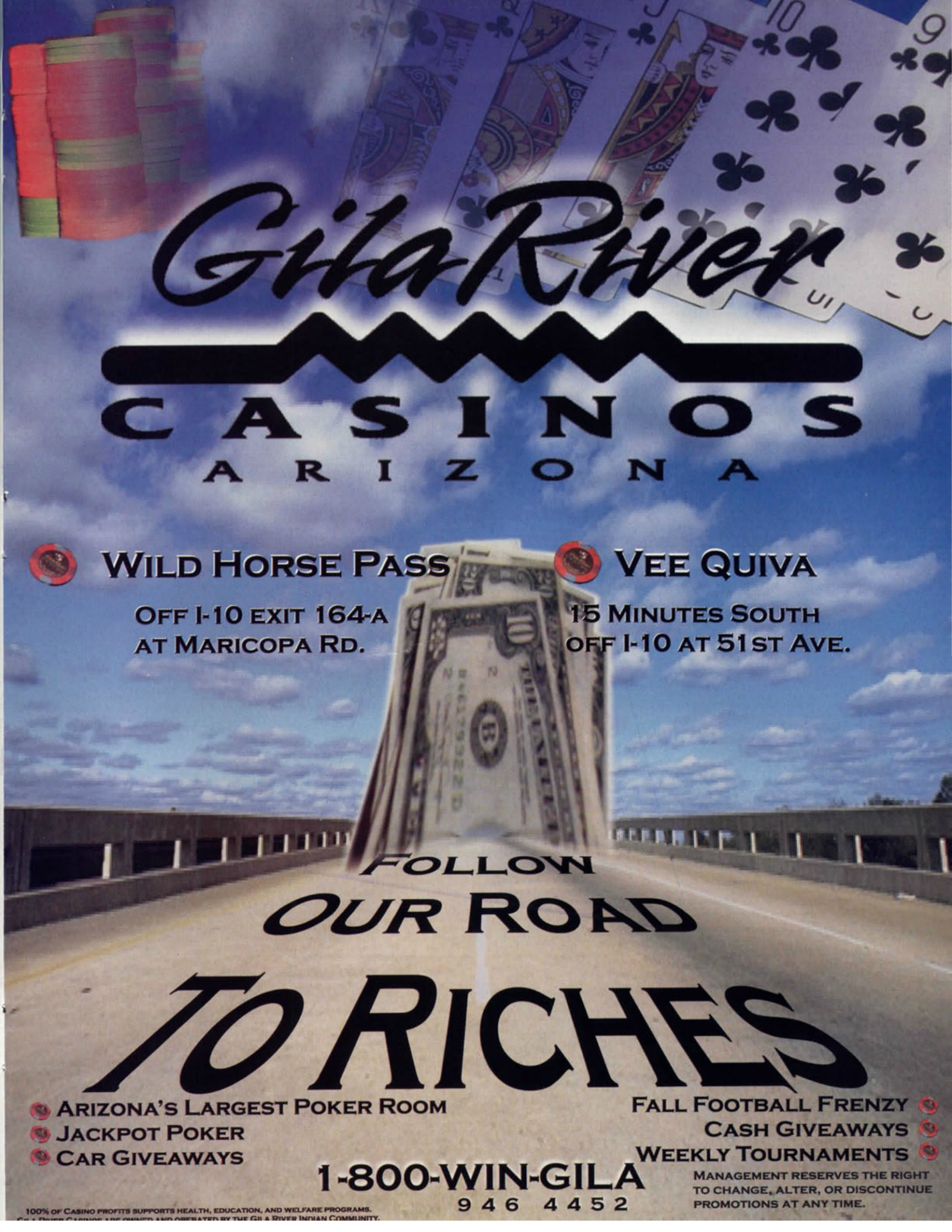
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Yavapai-Apache Nation Chairman Vincent Randall is pictured above with his wife, Erie, and children Shanae and Cheyenne at the grand opening of the new Cliff Castle Casino.

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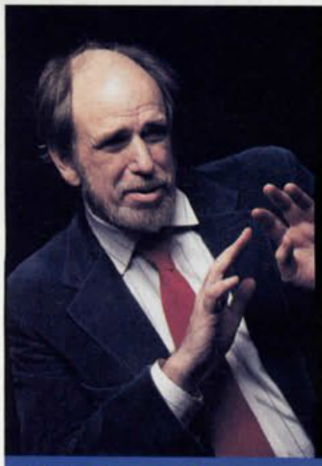

"America's Mad Genius" on POKER

MIKE CARO

Editor's note: Mike Caro is generally regarded as being today's foremost authority on poker strategy, psychology, and statistics. In his books, videos, and seminars, his unique method of communication has earned him the title "Mad Genius of Poker," or "America's Mad Genius." He is the founder of Mike Caro University of Poker, Gaming, and Life Strategy.

By special arrangement with Card Player, Mike Caro is expanding the one-page handouts that accompany his weekly lectures at Mike Caro University of Poker, Gaming, and Life Strategy.

Value Betting Has Value Only if You Use it Correctly

Among the most obvious traits that separate poker superstars from the players they pulverize is an understanding of value betting. Great players value bet at the right times for the right reasons. Less-skilled players often understand that value betting is a good idea, but they don't quite know when to use it or what the true purpose is.

Today, I'm going to tell you what value betting means to me and how I employ it in the heat of poker combat. This is a very important topic, but — if you're like most players — you'll often forget these guidelines and value bet by whim or emotion at the poker table. Don't!

Let's get started. This material comes from the 30th in my series of Tuesday Session classroom lectures at Mike Caro University of Poker, Gaming, and Life Strategy. The lecture was held on April 20, 1999. The title of my talk was ...

The Secrets of Value Betting

1. About "value betting." Different people think of value betting differently. Some think that it is a bet that can profit in many different ways, and therefore has "value." For instance, your bet with a medium-weak hand might cause your opponent to lay down a slightly stronger hand; or, you might get called by an even weaker hand. For example, your bet with a flush try may confuse an opponent and cause him to check to you on the next betting round; or, that same bet might cause your opponent to fold, leaving you with the pot and immediate profit.

But that's not what I mean by value betting. I call those multipurpose wagers *utility bets*. To me, a value bet is simply a daring wager that correctly goes after every extra penny in profit. Sometimes, a value bet actually is a utility bet, too, but usually it's just a very perceptive bet when your profit expectation is slightly greater if you get called than if you don't.

The value is in the money that's made from these aggressive wagers — wagers made when less-skilled players probably would have checked. There is even more value in "value betting" than earning a little extra on the play itself, though. You also help establish an image that gives you psychological control over your opponents.

2. Value bets usually are wrong on a limited bankroll. Although value bets theoretically add to your profit, they also add to your risk and to your bankroll fluctuations. If you are in the process of building a bank-

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roll, think twice before you value bet. Also, in proportional-payoff tournaments, value betting usually is a bad idea. Survival generally is more important than extracting slight extra profit.

3. Direct and indirect value of value betting. The direct value comes from earning extra money that you would not have earned by checking. The indirect value comes from enhancing your image.

Players who frequently value bet cause most opponents to feel insecure and to call more often. These opponents also — strangely — raise less often, because they are intimidated. A sensible counterstrategy would be to raise more often, but they just plain don't. Your fast action and unpredictable image make opponents behave. It gets even weirder, because this image, enhanced by value bets, allows you to make even more value bets than you would be able to make otherwise.

4. Players who are good targets. The most profitable targets of value bets are opponents who like to call and are not deceptive. Think "loose and timid" before you value bet. This doesn't mean that you can't sometimes pick other opponents as targets, too, but you need to value bet with stronger hands against them. And, of course, the stronger, livelier, more confusing, more deceptive, and more controlling your image, the more likely your opponents are to call and the less likely they are to act deceptively.

5. When you should *not* value bet. You seldom should value bet when you're losing. That's when players are least intimidated by you and are unlikely to be as meek and predictable as you need them to be for a value bet to have value.

You also should be reluctant to value bet against opponents who bluff too much — let 'em, and make your profit by calling. And remember, if these consistent bluffers already have checked, they often have strong calling or check-raising hands, making value bets usually wrong. It's true that they also have lots of semiweak calling hands, but after they've checked usually is not a good value bet opportunity against deceptive check-raisers, because there is too much danger. Also, opponents who both value bet and bluff frequently should not be your value bet targets after they've checked. Usually, just check along. You can be in a world of trouble here if you bet. Think about it.

Tricky opponents (who might raise unexpectedly for value) also are poor value bet targets. Tight opponents are poor targets, too. That's because they will call only with quality hands, so you should often bluff against them, but you shouldn't stretch medium-strong hands by betting for value.

6. Being slightly better on the river isn't enough. You need to be a favorite *if called ... unless* your opponent will randomly throw away some hands that are better than yours and will call often enough with hands that are worse than yours. Surprisingly, this happens quite often on the river, and it makes betting for value occasionally correct with medium-strong hands that will be an underdog if called. Always consider your opponent before value betting. If you're not sure if the chemistry is there to give your value bet a profit expectation, you probably should check.

7. Value betting after someone checks to you. Do it often against players who never check-raise and almost never against players who often check-raise.

8. Preventing others from value betting for profit against you. Simply raise more liberally with medium-strong hands. This will ruin their strategy.

9. A tight image and value betting don't mix. Players with tight images can't bet medium-strong hands for value and make a profit. Opponents don't call as frivolously with moderately weak hands against tight players. This absence of many calling hands that would lose often makes a value bet unprofitable for tight players.◆





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ROY COOKE

Digging Out When the Price is Right

After seven hours of grinding it out through the graveyard shift, I was buried in a $30-$60 hold'em game. I was stuck approximately $2,500, a tidy sum for a game of that size. The game was jamming, it was about 10 a.m., and most of the players had been there all night. As a group, they couldn't play a lick — and they were spanking me.

It's not easy to keep your mental toughness and heart in these spots. I often write about understanding that it's all one long game, that you should just play your best and not worry about the results because they'll come over time, and that the cards have no memory and each new hand starts a new universe of trials. Even knowing that, it's sometimes disheartening. You play your best game, stay focused, make good decisions — and watch your stack shrink. It can wear on you.

I wanted to put a little something together before I headed out of the cardroom to meet some real estate clients, something that would uplift me and put me in a positive frame of mind. One can't always control these things, but one can hope. I figured that I had another half-hour before the dayshift grinders began to replace the graveyard gamblers.

I looked down in the small blind to see the 8♥ 7♥. About the only pot I had won at that point during the session was when I had made a backdoor straight with an 8♥ 7♥. I had drawn to a flush and had caught two runners to fill my straight — a lucky break, but one of my outs. Seeing the hand again gave me a little emotional jolt, and reminded me that I had won at least one big pot during the course of the evening. Maybe the poker gods would smile on me again.

A player opened the pot, another called, the next player raised, the next player reraised, and another player called the three bets cold. Everyone else folded around to me. Five players already were in and the big blind was a loose player who was highly likely to call. Nobody with chips already committed to the pot was going to fold in this shootout. I suspected that the pot would be capped off behind me, either by a premium hand or just for the gamble of it.

Overall, I'm not a big fan of medium suited connectors. I think that most players and many poker theorists overvalue them. Many flops that appear to hit you are coordinated, and in fact present as much or more potential for your opponents. I like to get in cheaply with this kind of holding, preferably with position and a big field. With a hand of that texture, fewer good flops are available than with a hand such as A-K, so I like to be getting as large a price from the pot as I can. I don't mean that the pot has to be large at the point of the preflop call, but that the odds that the pot is offering me need to be extensive. By getting in cheaply with many players in the pot and with position, I am prone to win a big pot if I connect solidly with my hand.

That wasn't the case here. There were lots of players in this pot, but I wasn't getting in cheaply. I'd be first to act on all subsequent betting rounds. It was $70 to me and the price was likely to rise. On the upside, none of the players in this pot played well. I thought there was a good chance that someone held an overpair, and that I would have to hit my hand twice to win. Winning by bluffing couldn't happen in this game. But, if I got lucky and hit this hand soundly, I could acquire lots of bets in the future betting rounds.

Knowing that it was marginal but being emotionally and analytically committed, I called. To my surprise, the big blind folded, and to my delight, the rest of the field called with no more preflop raising.

The flop came J-8-7 with two diamonds. I had flopped bottom two pair, yet the flop contained many perils. Any 9 or 10 would likely fill a straight, a running pair or a jack would cause

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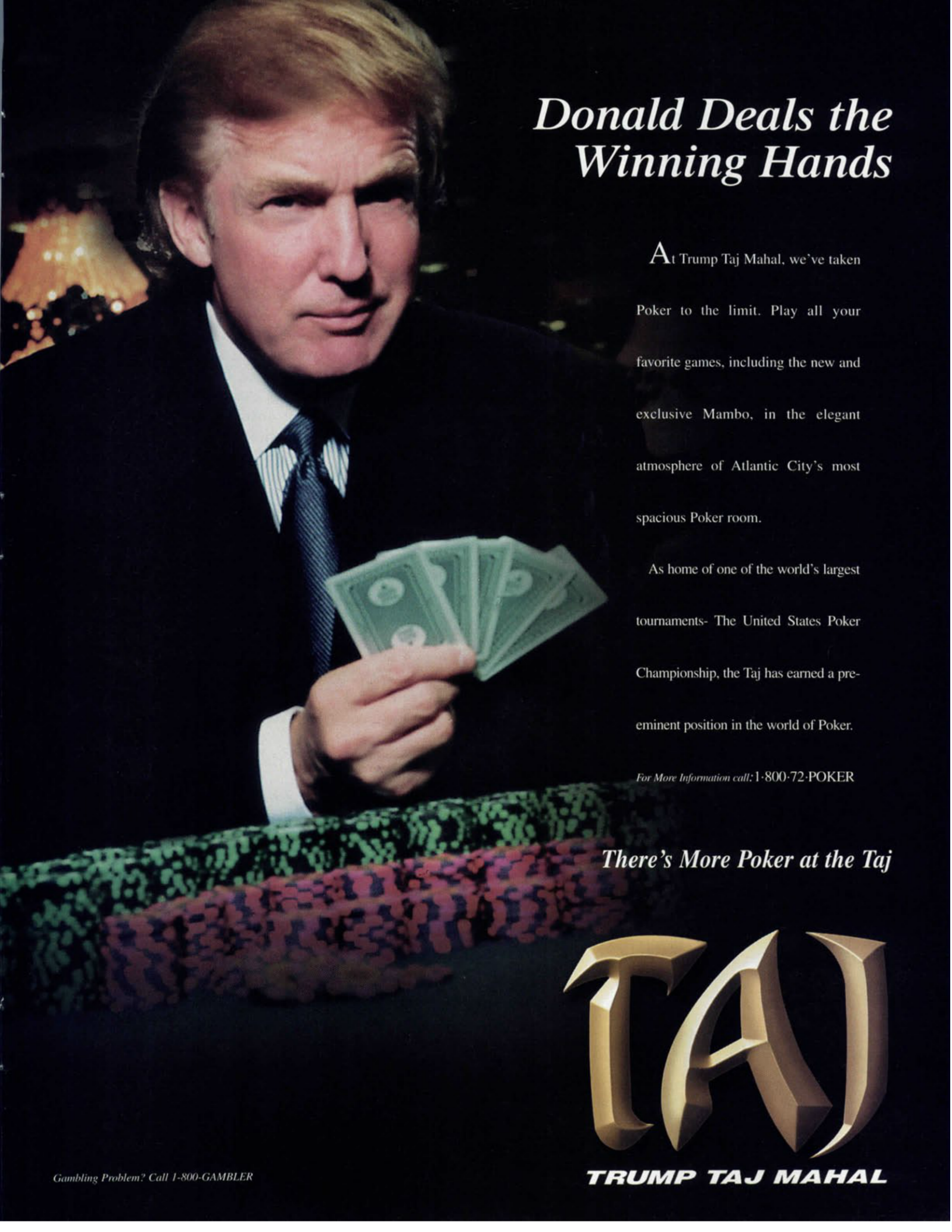
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my hand to be beaten by an overpair, and any diamond would fill a flush draw. And it was possible that somebody else had made a big hand as well. Still, this was a favorable flop to my hand. I had two options: leading or check-raising.

Often, I would check-raise in a situation such as this in an effort to eliminate players, but nobody with even the tiniest piece of the flop was bailing on this pot. I believed that my best play was to charge them as much as possible to lower the price that they were receiving and to give myself the best odds possible. I led into the likely overpairs, expecting to get raised, and was not disappointed. The two players in between the first preflop raiser and me called. The raiser hit it again. The next two players cold-called the two bets. I figured that if the initial raiser held an overpair, he would four-bet the pot. He was a fast-action player and aggressiveness was just in his nature. I reraised and got four-bet, as I'd anticipated. I elected not to cap the flop so that my aggressive opponent would feel confident that he held the best hand, and to give myself the chance to see the turn card before committing further. I thought that I had the best hand, but my situation still was perilous. I needed a good card on the turn. If I caught one, I could check-raise the overpair and maybe drive out some draws for a cold $120. Even if I didn't, at least I'd charge them a steep price. If they got there, oh well, that's just the nature of poker. I thought that the preflop three-betting player who had just called all of the flop bets was likely to have an A-K type of hand, and I didn't mind him drawing at all, since he was drawing dead. But I hoped to drive out the two players between the likely overpair and me, since the pot was large and my hand was vulnerable. By check-raising the turn, it was possible to trap the player who was drawing dead and move out the players who were drawing live. Also, a blank on the turn would increase the chance of my hand holding up, and I would get the bets in as a bigger favorite than if I put in the last raise on the flop.

An offsuit 3 came on the turn — as good as it could get for my hand without actually improving it. I check-raised the flop raiser and got two bets from four players, one of whom was the player I thought had A-K. Neither of the two players between the overpair and me moved, though. An offsuit king hit on the end. I felt good about the king even though there was some chance that it could have tripped the overpair or made someone two better pair. There were a lot worse cards for my hand at this point. I fired $60 into the pot and was called in two spots. My hand was good! The player whom I thought had an overpair showed two aces and muttered something about my being lucky and my breeding coming from a canine background. I scooped in a monster pot, smiling inside.

I did get lucky; 8❤ 7❤ is a big dog to beat two aces, but the price was right. And the price was made right by the fact that the players contesting the pot played so poorly. If the field had been top pros who would have given less action when I hit my hand, I probably would have mucked my hand preflop. It's not just the hand that you hold but the situation in which you hold it. Anytime that you get into a pot with opponents who play poorly after the flop, you can extend the price of your preflop bets. How much so depends on what level you can outplay the opposition. Here's a cautionary note in this regard: Most players I know significantly overestimate their edge against their opponents.

About 15 minutes later, I picked up two kings and got out-flopped by an underpair that hit a set. We built up a big one and I sucked out on the river by hitting a king. I made a two-outer! Once again, the price was right, as the pot was close to $3,000. I left the game winning $1,800, a $4,300 turnaround in about 30 minutes — a nice little rush for a $30-$60 game. And I did get lucky! I know it! I was a big dog to win either of those pots, but once again, the price was right to draw.

If you keep taking the positive prices offered to you at the poker table, you will win in the long run. Sometimes, your opponents will get lucky, and you will have streaks of bad luck. And when you do hit, as you sometimes must, people will moan and groan about how good you're running, not understanding the sound mathematical underpinning of your decision-making. Note that I wasn't running well, getting stuck $2,500, at the beginning of this session.

If you keep taking the best of it over time, you will end up to the good. It's that old favorite song of mine: The recurring sum of the volume that you bet times the percentage edge at which you bet it will equal your expectation, which, over time, will match your results. And it's only those long-term results that matter. Of course, it's much sweeter leaving $1,800 up than $2,500 stuck, but you already knew that.◆

Editor's note: Roy Cooke played winning professional poker for 16 years. He is a successful real estate broker/salesperson in Las Vegas — please see his ad on page 121. You can order Roy's column collection book from Mike Caro Publications, 3883 W. Century Blvd., Inglewood, CA 90303. Send $19.95 plus $3.95 for shipping and handling.

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TOURNAMENT TALK

TOM McEVOY

Too Much of a Good Thing?

"Thanks for your many excellent books on poker, but don't you think that after a while, with so many good books coming out, it will become impossible to make a livelihood at poker anymore?" Ron, a Los Angeles poker player, E-mailed me this question a while ago, and I also have been asked the same thing by numerous other players.

The proliferation of instructional poker books certainly has made poker tougher to beat in lots of ways, Ron, but there's an upside to this scenario: Books also have increased the growth of poker by making more knowledge available to players. As legal cardrooms mushroom throughout the world, it is obvious to me that poker books and computer programs are helping to develop players and strengthen the player base.

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By studying the expanded body of poker expertise, serious players find that it no longer takes years and years of hands-on experience to develop world-class poker skills.

Sure, the information in poker books has made it tougher for professional players to win consistently, but books also have helped spark interest in poker and create serious new players. While I agree that things are tougher — tournament poker has become extremely difficult to beat because of the increase in the number of tournament players and the faster rounds in many events (which makes the luck factor more important) — there still are plenty of good games to be found. Southern California in particular is a hot bed of poker activity, with many games at all limits that are eminently beatable for anyone who has developed his skills. Las Vegas still has many good poker games, as does the East Coast. Game selection has become more important than ever, but if you simply do a bit more scouting to find a good game, you eventually will spot one.

Also, don't forget that not everybody who buys a poker book studies or fully comprehends its contents. Unfortunately, lots of folks are lazy when it comes to making continued efforts to study and improve their games. They tend to use the more costly approach, the SOP method (seat of the pants), to learn their lessons. They don't want to take the time to study a poker book, so they play their usual ho-hum games without any preconceived game plan. As long as so many lazy players who aren't willing to work on improving their games are out there at the tables, there always will be plenty of games to beat.

It seems, too, that readers tend to think that authors either put too much information in their books or didn't put in enough. I sometimes hear the comment, "I feel like you held something back." In my opinion, no author can put everything that he knows in any one book, even though he may make a valiant effort to do so. Sometimes, an author will take for granted that everybody already knows such and such and will omit that point. Other times, he may leave out a subject that he does indeed know a lot about simply because he didn't think about it while he was writing the book. These omissions in the first edition of a book are what lead to "revised editions." For example, I received an E-mail this week from James, an excellent Utah student of mine, who made a

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suggestion for *Championship Hold'em* that I plan to incorporate into the second printing: "In my next lesson, maybe we can cover some of the mental side of the game that you didn't cover in the book," James said.

It is far more common for advanced players to tell me that I put too much into a book rather than too little, thus expressing the same fear that E-mailer Ron outlined when he wondered if too much instruction is toughening up the games to the point that they no longer are beatable. In the letter that James wrote, he asked, "Does it hurt when you give up so much of yourself? I know that this sounds very selfish, but I don't think that I'm going to be doing much advertising for *Championship Hold'em*. I don't need lots of better players out there playing against me — it's hard enough as it is. I don't expect you to give it all up in any book, but there is a little part of me that is sad that you gave up so much." And there's a little part of me that is sad, James, because I didn't answer all of your questions.

Like all poker authors, I was gratified (and yes, my ego was amply boosted) when James ended his letter with, "I've never paid that much for a poker book before, but I feel that I'm getting my money's worth." If something that you learn from a book, a tape, or a software program leads you to increase your win, there's never too much of a good thing, is there? And that's the bottom line — getting maximum value for your gaming dollar, as my friend Larry Grossman so aptly expressed in his book, *You Can Bet On It!*

Here's something else that you can bet on: I'll be looking for you in the winner's circle, where together we can reap the good things that come with winning.◆

Editor's note: Tom McEvoy is the author of the Championship Series of poker books, along with T.J. Cloutier, Linda Johnson, and Max Stern. Check out his web site for more information: www.pokerbooks.com. You may contact him at pokerplus@powernet.net or at Card Player.

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POKER

Sweetheart Stud Freeroll Tournament

Tuesday, February 29th at Noon, registration at 11am. Qualifying period: February 1st through February 28th at Noon. Player must accumulate 9 stamps with Jack's Full or Better. Omaha: Aces Full or Better. The tournament will be limited to 18 tables (The first 144 qualifying players and an alternate list of 25, if necessary). NOTE: Only one entry per player (Non-transferable).

Double Jackpots

Mondays, Wednesdays, & Thursdays: Every other hour starting at Noon & ending at Midnight. (Noon, 2pm, 4pm, 6pm, 8pm, 10pm, Midnight).

Far Out Fridays

Every Friday in February from 2pm to 10pm (excluding February 4th in lieu of Chinese New Year). High Hand of the Hour in Poker gets a chance to win cash and/or prizes up to $1,000. Omaha will have separate High Hands. Omaha High Hands will be at 5pm and 10pm. Qualifying will start at 1pm. (Must be present to win).

High Hand Of The Hour

Each High Hand of the Hour receives $250, Tuesdays, 2pm to Midnight. Omaha will have separate High Hands. Omaha High Hand of the Hour receives $50. Qualifying starts 1pm. (Must be present to win).

Valentine's Day

Every seated female player receives a drawing ticket every hour for a chance to win a beautiful Valentine basket. Drawing held at 8pm, February 14th. Qualifying starts at 10am. (1 basket in Blackjack section & 1 basket in Poker section, value $250 each). Every seated female player receives a long stemmed Red Rose!

Chinese New Year - Win Up To $1,000

"Gong Xi Fa Cai"-Celebrate with San Manuel! Friday, February 4th, 1pm to Saturday, February 5th, 1pm. We're giving away over $18,000. ($9,000 in Poker, $9,000 in Blackjack). Every Full House or Better gets a chance to spin the Money Wheel! Qualifying starts at Noon, February 4th. Drawings held every hour starting at 1pm. Must be present to win.

Don't Miss Our Lion Dancers Starting At 8pm, February 4th!

BLACKJACK

Sweetheart "21" Freeroll Tournament

Thursday, February 24th at Noon, registration 11am.

Complete your Freeroll entry card by receiving 7 stamps February 1st - February 23rd at Noon. One stamp for Suited Blackjack, Three 7's, 6-7-8 Suited, & 7-Card Charlie. One entry per player (Non-transferable).

Come Spin The Money Wheel

Every Sunday & Thursday in February, Noon to Midnight, a lucky table will be drawn in Blackjack every hour. (Pai Gow included in drawings). One card will be dealt to every player at the lucky table. Player who receives the Ace spins the Money Wheel. (You must have been dealt in the hand prior to the table number being called to qualify).

Wacky Wednesdays

Every Wednesday, 8pm to 10pm. Cash prizes from $25 to $500 for every Blackjack. To find out if there will be a surprise Wacky Monday, be at San Manuel on Wednesday!

Valentine's Day

Every seated female player receives a drawing ticket every hour for a chance to win a beautiful Valentine basket. Drawing held at 8pm on February 14th. Qualifying starts at 10am. (1 basket in Blackjack section & 1 basket in Poker section, value $250 each). Every seated female player receives a long stemmed Red Rose!

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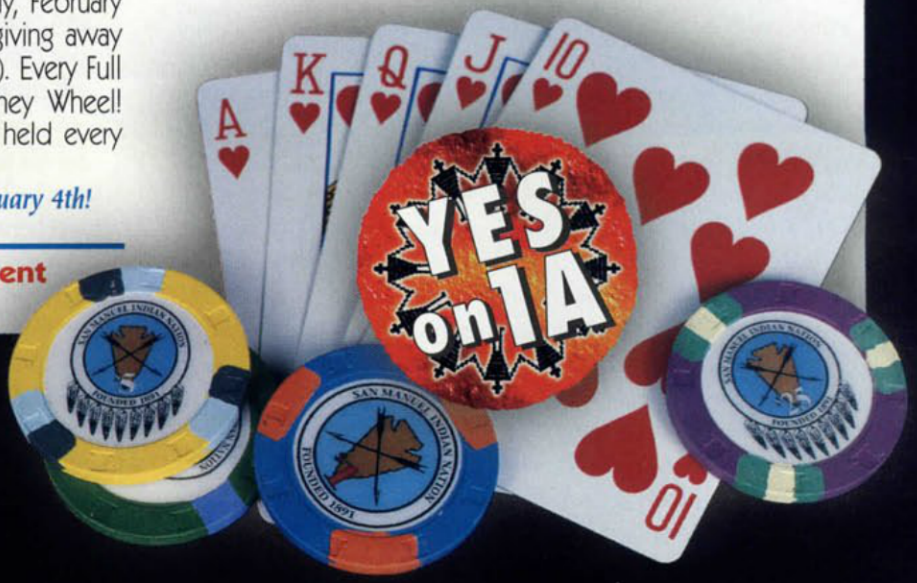

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Making Poker History

How would you like to make poker history? The *Challenge Cup of Poker*™ (a Ryder Cup™-type event for poker) is an opportunity to do so. The first-ever *Challenge Cup* will be a historical event. (Casinos Austria in Bregenz, Austria, will host the *2000 Challenge Cup* Aug. 30-Sept. 3.) Making these teams will be among the greatest honors in poker. Twenty years from now, pictures of Team USA and Team Europe at the *2000 Challenge Cup* will be preserved in poker books and casinos throughout the world.

The format of the *Challenge Cup* (and the *Challenge Cup Trials*) will be one-on-one match-play poker. What an exciting event it will be. (See further details on pages 102-103.) Think of it — heads-up poker by the greatest players from the United States and Europe! Doesn't it appear to be an event that is perfectly suited for television or "live" Internet coverage? Wouldn't you love to watch it? I expect the *Challenge Cup* to extend beyond the "poker community" in terms of publicity, awareness, and exposure for poker.

Each Team will consist of 11 players: a Team Captain, three "Captain's Choices," a poker-playing celebrity, the highest finisher for both the United States and Europe at *TOC 2000*, and five players who will earn a position on the team via the *Challenge Cup Trials*. The Team Captains are:

Team USA — from Las Vegas, Nevada, poker legend and two-time world champion Doyle Brunson.

Team Europe — from Dublin, Ireland, successful high-stakes player and 1998 *World Series* pot-limit Omaha champion Donnacha O'Dea.

There will be a *Final Trial* held in both Europe and the United States to determine team members. The Europeans will use the EPPA rankings, *Preliminary Trials*, and winners of designated events to qualify for the *Final Trial* (at a location to be determined). In the United States, players will qualify for the *Final Trial* via the *Preliminary Trials*.

The *Final Trial* for Team USA will be held at The Bicycle Casino July 30-Aug. 3. It will consist of 64-person double elimination tournaments in each of five poker disciplines — limit hold'em, Omaha eight-or-better, seven-card stud, pot-limit hold'em, and pot-limit Omaha. Each of the winners will have the honor of playing on the inaugural Team USA (and will make around $30,000 each).

The first-ever *Preliminary Trial* will be held at The Bicycle Casino in Bell Gardens, California, Feb. 14-18. The buy-in for each of the five events will be $1,000 (with an $80 entry fee). Each event will be limited to 80 players. (To ensure yourself a seat, contact Tournament Director Denny Williams for pre-registration at (562) 806-4646, Ext. 342.) Players are encouraged to play in as many *Trials* and in as many disciplines as they choose. (Everyone is invited to play the *Trials*, but to make Team USA, you must be a U.S. citizen or have significant contacts with the United States as determined by TOC Inc. All team members must have a passport.) Other *Preliminary Trial* locations will be forthcoming soon.

The first *Preliminary Challenge Cup Trial* (hosted by The Bicycle Casino) schedule is as follows:

Date	Discipline	Time	Buy-in
February 14	Limit hold'em	Noon	$1,080
February 15	Omaha eight-or-better	Noon	$1,080
February 16	Seven-card stud/pot-limit Omaha	Noon	$1,080
February 17	Pot-limit hold'em	Noon	$1,080
February 18	Pot-limit Omaha/seven-card stud	Noon	$1,080

All players will play three matches per day. A player will win $400 for each match he wins in the *Preliminary Trials*. The undefeated players each day will qualify for the *Final Trial*. In addition, all undefeated players each day will divide another $21,200 in prize money (10 players in an 80-player field), and will receive a paid entry ($1,080) into the *Final Trial*. Those with the best overall records from all *Preliminary Trials* for each discipline (who are not yet qualified) will fill a number of remaining seats at the *Final Trial*. At the *Final Trial*, the $64,000 in prize money will be divided as follows: First place — 40% ($25,600); second place — 30% ($19,200); third place — 20% ($12,800); and fourth place — 10% ($6,400).

As in the Ryder Cup, *Challenge Cup* Team members will receive air transportation to the host site, deluxe accommodations, and all meals. Team members will get a three-year exemption into the *Tournament of Champions*. Winning *Challenge Cup* Team members will receive a paid entry into *TOC 2001*.

You can make poker history! Your opportunity is now. I encourage all players to participate in your favorite event(s) during the *Preliminary Trials*. (Special note to the ladies: Can you imagine the publicity for poker if a woman makes Team USA or Team Europe?) See you at the Bike! Take care.♦

Mike Sexton can be reached by phone: (702) 558-1484; fax: (702) 558-1652; or E-mail: SextonTOC@aol.com.

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JAN 31	Mon	7 p.m.	LIMIT HOLD'EM	$100 + $20	No Rebuys	$20,000
FEB 1	Tue	7 p.m.	HOLD'EM SHOOTOUT	$100 + $20	No Rebuys	$10,000
FEB 2	Wed	7 p.m.	OMAHA HI-LO	$100 + $20	One Rebuy	$20,000
FEB 3	Thu	7 p.m.	LIMIT HOLD'EM	$100 + $20	One Rebuy	$20,000
FEB 4	Fri	7 p.m.	LIMIT HOLD'EM	$200 + $20	No Rebuys	$20,000
FEB 5	Sat	2 p.m.	LIMIT HOLD'EM	$100 + $20	Rebuys & Add-On	$25,000

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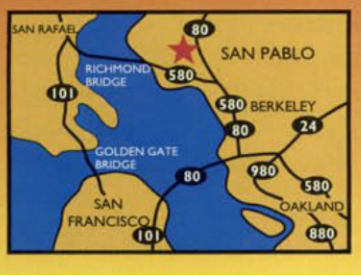




On Strategy

LOU KRIEGER

Power Ratings

Regardless of one's creativity, it's hard to paint well without mastering brush techniques. Mingus, Miles, and Monk weren't improvisatory masters the first day they picked up their instruments. They were grounded in musical theory, harmony, and technique. James Joyce didn't start out writing in streams of consciousness before first mastering the art of storytelling. By the same token, one won't win at Texas hold'em, either — or any form of poker, for that matter — without first developing a solid set of starting standards.

There's not a poker pundit worth his salt who wouldn't advise adopting a solid set of standards as a guide to determining when, and under what circumstances, to enter a hand. David Sklansky was a pioneer, developing and promulgating Texas hold'em starting standards some 20 years ago. While he's modified those standards over the years, they've held up remarkably well, and learning his "hand categories" has given many beginning players a sense of confidence that they otherwise might have lacked.

In my first book, *Hold'em Excellence: From Beginner to Winner*, and again in my second book, *More Hold'em Excellence: A Winner for Life*, I promulgated a set of starting standards that did not differ very much from those developed by Sklansky. I presented them graphically, however, hoping that the visual nature of the way in which the standards were depicted would permit anyone to study the chart, close his eyes, and visualize the array of hands. In that way, I hoped, players could learn starting standards without the necessity for rote memorization.

A few months ago, I wrote another column about starting standards that prompted a post to the Internet newsgroup Rec.Gambling.Poker by Berkeley mathematician and poker whiz William Chen. Bill began his post by saying: "OK! No more memorization of what hands belong in which category. This idea came up after talking today about Lou Krieger's recent *Card Player* column on starting hands. The question is whether we can limit the amount of memorization needed, and maybe even give some intuition about the game. Here are four easy rules to follow that produce 'power ratings' for starting hands in a full hold'em game."

Here is Bill Chen's formula for developing power ratings for hold'em hands:

Highest Card

You get these points for your highest card.

Ace	=	10 points
King	=	8 points
Queen	=	7 points
Jack	=	6 points

10 through deuce = face value divided by 2 (10 = 5 points; 9 = 4.5 points, and so on)

Pairs

- Multiply the pair by 2 (except for deuces through fives, which get only 5 points total)

Suited

- Add 2 points for suited cards

Gaps and Connectors

- Subtract 1 point for one-gappers (A-Q, J-9)
- Subtract 2 points for two-gappers (A-J, J-8)
- Subtract 4 points for three-gappers (J-7, 7-3)
- Subtract 5 points for bigger gaps, including A-2, A-3, A-4
- Give yourself 1 extra point if your cards are connected, or are one-gapped and your highest card is lower than a queen, since that allows you to make all of the higher straights.

Here are some examples of power ratings, using Bill Chen's method.

A-A = 20 points (2 x 10 points)

A-K suited = 12 points (10 points for the ace plus 2 points because they are suited)

J-9 = 6 points (6 points for the jack minus 1 point because they are gapped plus 1 point for the "straight" bonus)

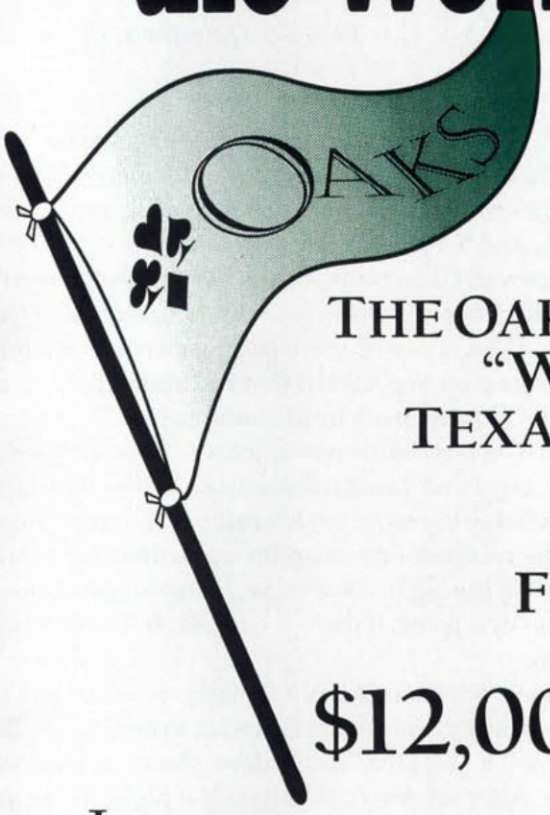
If you take the time to work them out, you'll find the following power ratings for hold'em starting hands:

Hand Power Ratings

20 points:	A-A
16 points:	K-K
14 points:	Q-Q

(continued)

Spring training for the World Series starts early this year.



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12 points:	J-J, A-K suited
11 points:	A-Q suited
10 points:	10-10, A-K, A-J suited, K-Q suited
9 points:	9-9, A-Q, K-J suited, Q-J suited, J-10 suited
8 points:	8-8, A-J, A-10 suited, K-Q, K-10 suited, Q-10 suited, J-9 suited, 10-9 suited
7.5 points:	9-8 suited
7 points:	7-7, K-J, Q-J, J-10, A-X suited, Q-9 suited, 10-8 suited, 8-7 suited
6.5 points:	9-7 suited, 7-6 suited
6 points:	6-6, 5-5, A-10, K-10, Q-10, J-9, 10-9, K-9 suited, J-8 suited, 8-6 suited, 6-5 suited
5.5 points:	9-8, 7-5 suited, 5-4 suited
5 points:	4-4, 3-3, 2-2, K-X suited, A-X, Q-9, 10-8, 8-7, Q-8 suited, 10-7 suited, 6-4 suited, 4-3 suited

Chen goes on to say that the "... hand rankings only tell you which hands to play, and not whether to come in for a raise." He mentions that he would play hands with a power rating of 8 points or higher under the gun, 7 points or higher in middle position, 6 points in late position, and 5.5 points on the button.

As far as calling a raise is concerned, Chen recommends having a hand worth at least 10 points to come in cold after an early raise, or 9 points against a "typical" player. He also recommends isolating a raiser by three-betting anytime you intend to take a pair up against him. He goes on to point out that he thinks it's "... a good rule that each raise pushes up the requirements by at least 2 points."

To come in cold after a reraise, Chen recommends at least a 12-point hand. He would defend his big blind with any hand rated 5.5 points or higher, but admits that he's been told that he defends his big blind too liberally. If the small blind is less than half of the big blind, he recommends using the guidelines for calling a raise, but if the small blind is half of the big blind or more, he recommends loosening the raise-calling requirements by a point. If there is no raise, he'll call from the small blind with 5 or more points.

Chen's power ratings differ somewhat from Sklansky's hand rankings and from my own, which were derived heuristically, and are not formulaic in origin like Chen's power ratings. But that's not the point. We all are going down the same path in the same general direction, and the fact that one could argue the night away about which method lies closer to theoretical perfection is simply a waste of time. What is important is that anyone aspiring to become a solid hold'em player needs to have some starting standards to guide his or her play.

If it is easier for you to memorize hand groupings, Sklansky's hand values are for you. If you are visually oriented, and can close your eyes and recall a pictorial array that you've just seen, my starting hand chart will lead you in the right direction.

But if you are computational in your approach to poker, Bill Chen's power rating method of deriving starting hands might be just the thing for you. Regardless of the approach taken, you will be far ahead of anyone who decides which cards to play on a whim, by instinct, or by his internal vision of how the cards are running that day.

The biggest stride forward that you will make as a hold'em player will not come from polishing your starting standards down to a perfect sheen, but from adopting reasonable standards in the first place. Without them, you will be lost. And any refinement made once you've integrated them into your game is merely fine-tuning.◆

E-mail your questions or comments to loukrieger@aol.com, or via snail mail c/o Card Player.

You can order a personally autographed copy of my new book, More Hold'em Excellence: A Winner for Life, or my first book, Hold'em Excellence: From Beginner to Winner, from ConJelCo at www.conjelco.com, directly from Card Player, or from the usual gaming bookstores.

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Chip Chatter

SUSIE ISAACS

The Thrill of It All

Editor's note: Many casinos and individuals opened up their hearts and wallets last Christmas to help those who are less fortunate. We regret not having the column space to report on them all.

Las Vegas

For the first time ever, Linda Johnson agreed to allow me to interview her. She had just returned from a special Christmas party and was absolutely glowing from the thrill of it all.

"I've been so fortunate," she began, "and I'm having a great life, professionally and personally. I got to thinking that



Card Player Publisher Linda Johnson and McDonalds owner/poker player Ron McMillan, along with Card Player staff members and friends, hosted a Christmas party for underprivileged children.

I wanted to do something to provide a little happiness to those who are less fortunate. With Christmas coming up, I decided that I wanted to have a party for underprivileged children.

"First, I needed a guest list. Sue's husband, Eric (Susan Kearns- Mann is the office manager at *Card Player*), works for the United Way. He said that there are plenty of people with special needs at Christmas, or anytime, for that matter. 'How many guests would you like to have at your party?' he asked.

"I then called Ron McMillan, because he is a wonderful, generous man, and he happens to own four McDonalds restaurants in the Las Vegas area. He responded, 'Linda, you can count on me.' He offered one of his restaurants for the party, or if I preferred, he would have all of the food and drinks delivered to another location. We decided to have the party at his biggest McDonalds, one that has a big playland attached."

Linda was beaming as she told me about the special Christmas party for the special children. "We had 40 kids and some of their parents. Each child got a large, plush teddy bear and a large bag full of gifts customized according to sex and age. Ron did not offer a limited menu; he donated anything on the entire McDonalds menu that they wanted, and they got to order their food and be waited on. He also had gift bags for each and every child. We had elves who did face-painting, and Santa made an appearance. *Card Player* staff members Pita Carosone, Christene King, Susan Mann, and Jan Fisher all helped distribute food, drinks, and gifts.

"Ron McMillan was the cornerstone of all of this. He was like a proud papa. He brought his son and several of his employees were on hand just to take care of our needs. The kids were thrilled, but we all were even more thrilled to bring such joy and happiness into their lives, even if for just one day."

Reno

After my last visit to Reno on Dec. 20, I took my rental car back to Internet Auto Rental and Sales. While looking for my friend and fellow poker player Russ Igram, I entered the showroom and was astonished to see it filled with a sea of huge brown wardrobe boxes. I found Igram on an assembly line of people who were wrapping Christmas gifts, labeling them, and filling the monstrous boxes. He quickly explained that the company hosts an annual Christmas party for the underprivileged rather than a big, costly company Christmas party. This year, the company would host 167 families with a total of 467 children at a party at the Peppermill, he said.

A few days after Christmas, I talked to Billy V., Peppermill cardroom manager, and asked him about this big Christmas party. "I met with Russ Igram months ago to discuss, not Christmas, but the possibility of putting a deal together such that we (the Peppermill) could give a new car as our best all-around player prize in our major tournaments in 2000. He, being a poker player, was all for getting in on the ground level of corporate sponsorship for poker tournaments in Reno. The conversation eventually led to his company's

Christmas charity event, and to the fact that it had outgrown its showroom, where it normally was held. We helped each other out. We will be giving away new cars at our tournaments, and the Peppermill comped the convention space and food for their huge Christmas party.



A sea of wardrobe cartons filled with gifts was prepared for the Christmas party for the underprivileged in Reno.

More than 700 people attended.

"To me, Susie, this is what the spirit of Christmas is all about. Most people who get caught up in the materialism just don't know how lucky they are. What Internet Auto did for these folks was phenomenal. They had to have spent more than $70,000 just on gifts. Did you know that each family had a questionnaire to fill out for the parents and each kid, with ages, sizes, and special requests? All family members received a winter coat, a pant and jacket outfit, and one specific gift that they had requested. The clothes and gifts for each family were gifted-wrapped by the employees at Internet, and each family's gifts were put into one of the huge boxes that was labeled and put in alphabetical order among the others for organized distribution.

"When I first met and talked with Russ Igram, I knew that it would be a thrill to be able to give away a new car at our tournaments, but it turned out that the involvement with this Christmas party was the biggest thrill of all."

A few days after Christmas, I finally caught up with Russ Igram. I asked him how the Internet Christmas celebration had come about. He stated, "The biggest reason was that I cannot accept what happens in this country when it comes to the true meaning of Christmas. It all has become a big retail game. I really wanted to help my fellow human beings, and prove to myself and our employees that 'giving' without a thought of 'getting something back' is the biggest thrill of all.

"Three years ago, our company Christmas party cost well over $30,000. I talked to John Stephens, the owner of Internet Auto Rental and Sales. We agreed that more than $30,000 could make lots of little kids who have big needs real happy at Christmas time.

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"For the first two years, we had the party on our showroom floor, but we rapidly outgrew that space. That's when I talked to Billy V. about the Peppermill, and they were great, very cooperative.

"This year, we bought 1,704 gifts. The gifts and the party were done totally by contributions from our employees, Billy V., and the Peppermill. Each child got a winter coat and new outfit, plus a toy of his or her choice. We gave the parents winter coats and $50 gift certificates for groceries. This party was done from the heart, and it was so gratifying to look at their faces as they were presented with their Christmas gifts. They thought they were getting big gifts. In fact, we were getting the biggest gift of all — the gift of giving and the satisfaction of seeing their excitement and enjoyment at this special time."

Oceanside, California

For the third consecutive year, Billie Brown, marketing director for Ocean's Eleven Casino, headed an extensive toy drive for local underprivileged children. Ocean's Eleven employees donated their efforts, time, and money to buy and wrap gifts for their "adopted" kids from Ivy Ranch, St. Clare's Homes, Brother Benno's Foundation, Green Oaks Ranch, Women's Resource Center, Families in Crisis, Neighborhood Watch, and many disadvantaged families in the area.

Along with this effort, casino employees host a Christmas party for their kids and some of Oceanside's disadvantaged children. This year, a "fun zone" was created on premises that had entertainment, games, and activities. Employees and their older children ran game booths and a treasure chest booth filled with an extravaganza of prizes. Their motto was: "Every Kid's a Winner!" Adding to the festivities were magician Terry Godfrey and, of course, the guest of honor, Santa Claus.◆

Editor's note: E-mail your comments to: Susiei@cardplayer.com. You can order Susie's new book, MsPoker: Up Close and Personal, from Card Player, 3140 S. Polaris Ave., Suite 8, Las Vegas, NV 89102. Send a check or money order for $24.95 plus $4 shipping and handling, or call (702) 871-1720 for Visa or Mastercard orders.



HAND of the Week



PHIL HELLMUTH

Bono vs. 'The Master' With Huck

How about that John Bonetti? He won three firsts, a second, and a fifth, including a first in the big $4,000 buy-in stud event and a second in the $7,500 buy-in "major" no-limit hold'em event, at the *U.S. Poker Championship* at Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City. John also had Daniel Negreanu all in in the "major" with Daniel drawing to a flush. Oh, by the way, John is 71 years old! Someone alert the marketing department of the Poker Players Association (PPA) that it is time to recruit some new older players down in Florida. The purely fictional PPA better start marketing John Bonetti to everyone in the country who's over the age of 57, since 57 is the age at which late-bloomer Bonetti won his first poker tournament. John reminds me of Bilbo Baggins from *The Hobbit*, who was 52 years old and living in safe comfort before he reinvented himself as a cunning leader with a warrior's heart. John is honorable and honest, and has been a true friend of mine for the last six years. Congratulations, Bono!

This most interesting hand came up between Huck Seed, John "Bono" Bonetti, and Men "The Master" Nguyen at the 1996 *World Series of Poker* at the final table of the championship event. Huck had been raising every time that he was on his button (Bono's small blind and The Master's big blind). Twice in the space of an hour, Huck had opened for $100,000 and Bono had made it $200,000 to go (only a $100,000 raise). Both times, Huck folded, and both times, Bono showed 3-2 offsuit! Now, here comes Huck for $100,000, Bono makes it $200,000, and now Men moves all in. Men had been able to reraise only about $180,000 more ($380,000 total), so John called him. Much to everyone's surprise, John had A♦ Q♠ and Men had 9♥ 8♥. The board brought no help for the hands and Men was eliminated in about fifth place.

What the heck happened here? Huck told me that he was on a steal, and it makes sense. In John's case, he wanted to make the same $100,000 raise that he previously had made in order to disguise his hand (maybe they would put him on 3-2 again). Maybe he could lure Huck into moving all in on him preflop. I guess that Men just made a bad read. He thought that John had a hand that was so weak (such as 3-2 offsuit) that he couldn't call the additional $180,000. However, even if John was on a steal, he may have had Men in bad shape anyway. Give Men some points for the daringness of his move; it takes guts to make the play that he made. However, I still don't like Men's move, because he didn't have enough firepower to make that play. His play would have been much more powerful if he had had more chips in front of him. With another $100,000, he may well have made Bono lay down his hand. Still, why risk all of your chips with 9-8 in the *World Series of Poker*? Why not wait for a better hand and a better spot? I think that John had to call Men's $180,000 raise unless he had a very strong read on Men. It goes without saying that Huck, John, and Men are three of the best poker tournament players in the world today. I hope that you enjoyed this week's Hand of the Week. I wish you good luck playing your hands in the new millennium.♦



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Thu 2/3		Satellites	
Fri 2/4	6:30pm	Limit Hold'em $100,000 Guaranteed	300+30 *Rebuys 1st 3 Levels*
Sat 2/5	2:30pm	7 Card Stud	300+30
Sun 2/6	2:30pm	No Limit Hold'em	300+30 *2 Optional Rebuys*
Mon 2/7	6:30pm	7 Card Stud Hi-Lo Split	300+30
Tue 2/8	6:30pm	Omaha Hi-Lo Split	300+30
Wed 2/9	6:30pm	Pot Limit Hold'em	300+30 *1 Optional Rebuy*
Thu 2/10	6:30pm	Lowball	300+30
Fri 2/11	6:30pm	No Limit Hold'em	500+40 *2 Optional Rebuys*
Sat 2/12	2:30pm	7 Card Stud Hi-Lo Split	500+40
Sun 2/13	2:30pm	Limit Hold'em	500+40
Mon 2/14	6:30pm	Pot Limit Omaha	500+40 *1 Optional Rebuy*
Tue 2/15	6:30pm	7 Card Stud	500+40
Wed 2/16	6:30pm	Pot Limit Hold'em	500+40 *1 Optional Rebuy*
Thu 2/17	6:30pm	Razz	500+40
Fri 2/18	6:30pm	Limit Hold'em	1,000+60
Sat 2/19	2:30pm	7 Card Stud	1,000+60
Sun 2/20	2:30pm	No Limit Hold'em	1,000+60
Mon 2/21	6:30pm	Omaha Hi-Lo Split	1,000+60
Tue 2/22	6:30pm	Pot Limit Hold'em	1,000+60
Wed 2/23	6:30pm	7 Card Stud Hi-Lo Split	1,000+60
Thu 2/24	6:30pm	Lowball Championship	1,000+60
Fri 2/25	6:30pm	Limit Hold'em $150,000 Guaranteed	300+30 *Rebuys 1st 3 Levels*
Sat 2/26	2:30pm	No Limit Hold'em Championship	2,500+80
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The Inner Game of Poker



STEVE BADGER

A Most Important Poker Skill

Playing winning poker is a bit like a tree; everything begins at the roots and branches out from there. Unfortunately, few players realize this, so when they identify a problem, they too often start hacking away at the branches instead of going to the roots.

In written storytelling, a person sometimes develops writer's block — he just can't figure what [illegible] Experienced [illegible] that the pro[illegible] where they a[illegible] point earlier i[illegible] ing on the Los[illegible] sometimes run[illegible] ever, your prob[illegible] always is not t[illegible] that stems from[illegible] route planning, [illegible] radio traffic chann[illegible] is very much the s[illegible]

Force yourself so[illegible] some bad-beat stori[illegible] beat stories involve[illegible] a mistake — usually [illegible] to check-raise. While [illegible] point is the "bad beat," he really should be focusing on the root of the beat — a risky or incorrect play early in the hand.

Listen when someone discusses a flaw in his game. Almost always, if you analyze the flaw truly objectively, the person's problem is *not* the apparent surface flaw. The true problem is one, two, or 10 steps earlier in a player's overall game.

Winning players should be constantly evaluating their play — what they do well, what they do moderately well, what they do poorly, and possible ways to improve on all three. One great thing about poker is that there are many variables, skills, and tactics with which we can tinker to attempt to get better results. All of them stem, though, from one great root.

Some people have called game selection [illegible] selection, the most [illegible] ker skills. Find the [illegible] uited to your abili- [illegible] beat it. OK, that's [illegible] hat is trivial com- [illegible] of winning poker. [illegible] nt skill that a [illegible] ge is not math, [illegible] ts, it's not good [illegible] and it's not a [illegible] -control!

[illegible] ood at all to [illegible] play above [illegible] do; it's no [illegible] ldn't tilt if [illegible] know that you shouldn't play 7-2 in hold'em if you do anyway; it's no good to know that your play deteriorates to the point that you are a losing player after nine consecutive hours if you continue to play after that amount of time anyway; and on and on and on ...

Poker isn't a game just for the moment. When you play with regular opponents, you should be setting the groundwork for many strategic plays minutes, hours, and even months before you pull the trigger on them.

Likewise, every action that you are executing now should be the result of a solid foundation of previous actions. Each step up the ladder that leads you to an action should be taken with self-control and a proper attitude. Play a game or games that you play well, have a well thought-out basic strategy, have a goal of being a winning player, find a limit for which you are adequately bankrolled, play hands with positive expectation, keep your butt in the seat only as long as you are playing near optimally, select individual games that suit you, don't let one day's poor results allow your emotions to tilt you, and so on. With these actions in place, each individual action that you then take will be rooted in a solid, sensible foundation.

Every bit of winning poker strategy and brilliant philosophy has to be *applied* or it is almost worthless. No other knowledge matters if you don't practice self-discipline and use what you know. If you want to be a successful, reasonably happy player, work on your self-control first.◆

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All About POKER From The Coach

BOB CIAFFONE

An Ounce of Common Sense

A famous quote of the ancient Chinese philosopher Confucius is, "Better wise men than wise laws." The philosopher was well aware that it is difficult — some would say, impossible — to construct a law so perfectly written that it both covers all cases and can be easily administered. Any law requires an ounce of common sense in its enforcement. Before we take a look at how this pertains to poker, let's examine a situation in "real life" that shows just how stupid some people can be who are responsible for law enforcement. The following excerpts are taken from today's edition of my hometown newspaper.

"Gary W. Going was driving on Bretton Road on June 14 when he spied a dead doe and its ailing offspring, which could not stand or defecate. He took it to his home, named it Gonzo, and fed it powdered milk from a bottle until July 11, when six DNR officers and state troopers cited him and seized the animal."

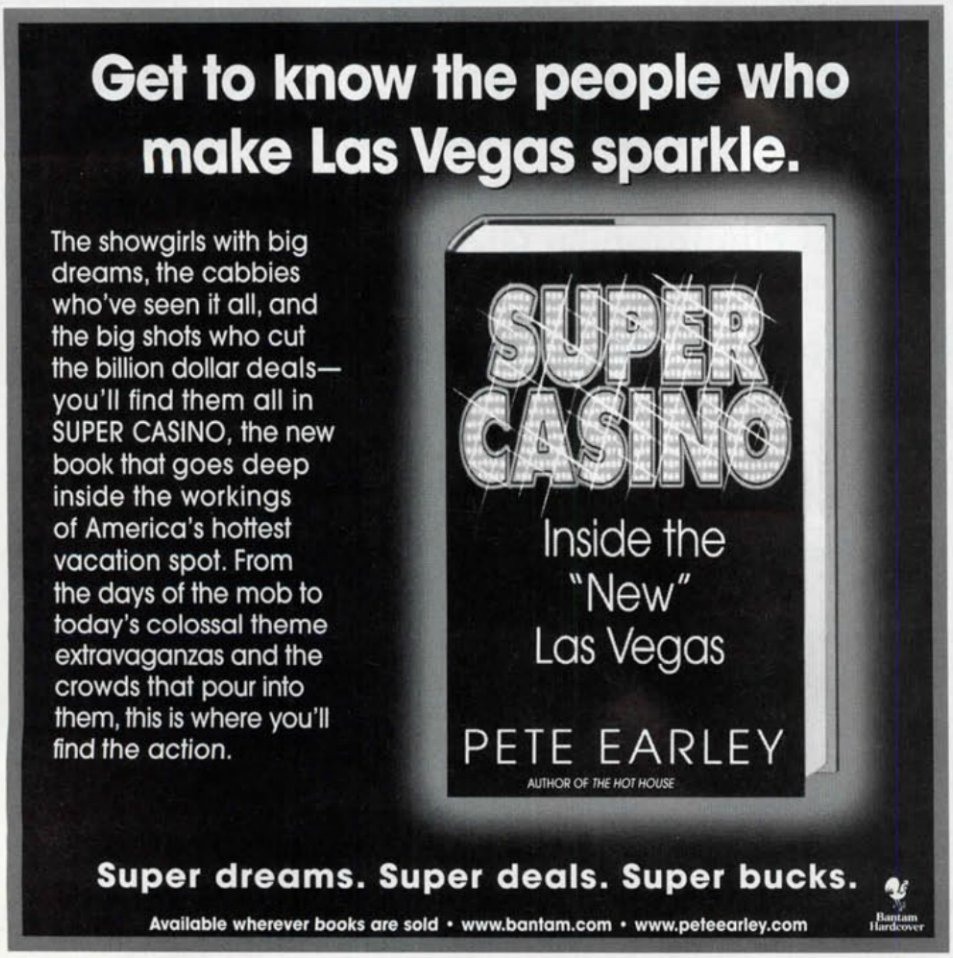
"Going said he planned to release the fawn into the woods that week. Instead, he faces a count of illegal possession of deer, a misdemeanor punishable by five to 90 days in jail, a $1,000 fine, and loss of hunting privileges for three years. The charge and penalty are identical to those for poaching. Assistant Prosecutor Janice Terry said Going's motivations or good intentions aren't relevant because he broke the law."

For those of you who think this man should be prosecuted for rescuing an orphaned fawn from death "because he broke the law," please skip the rest of this column. Better yet, switch your allegiance from *Card Player* to *Police Gazette*, a magazine more in tune with your view of the world. For the 99 percent of you who are normal, thinking that it is ridiculous to treat this man as a poacher and the case against him should be dismissed, please read on.

What I would like to do is analyze this case, determine the main operative elements in the dreadful decision to take the man to court, and see how those same elements apply to a recent poker decision. Besides a less than wise decision-maker, here are the main factors at work in most bad decisions:

1. The decision violates your innate sense of fairness.
2. A law that had been constructed to handle a certain problem was extended in some way to cover a situation for which it had not been designed.
3. The letter of the law rather than the spirit was followed.
4. Motivation of the violator was ignored in the decision.

Now, let's take a look at a poker decision that was described in *Card Player* late last year. I have no firsthand knowledge of the facts, and am simply repeating what was given by Publisher Linda Johnson in her column. The hand took place in a tournament setting. "A player moved all in and got called in



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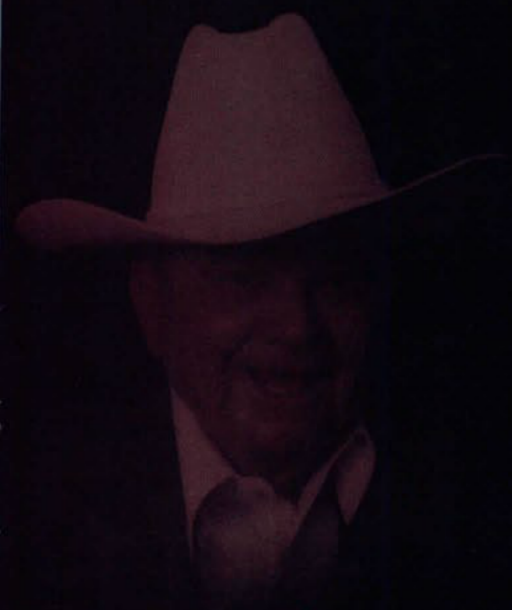

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Thursday, April 27	Seven-Card Stud (high-low)	$1,500 + $70
Friday, April 28	Omaha (pot-limit)	$1,500 + $70
Saturday, April 29	Omaha High-Low Split	$1,500 + $70
Sunday, April 30	Texas Hold'em (no-limit)	$2,000 + $70
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Tuesday, May 2	Texas Hold'em (pot-limit)	$2,000 + $80
Wednesday, May 3	Texas Hold'em (limit)	$3,000 + $80
Thursday, May 4	Seven-Card Stud (high-low split)	$2,500 + $80
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two places. A side pot was started and it seemed as though it would take a minute or two to play it. The all-in player then left quickly for a cigarette and asked another player to turn up his cards at the end of the hand. He had the winning hand. The floorman was called over for a ruling. He ruled that the missing player's hand was dead because no other player can turn up another player's hand."

Maybe some of you are so anti-smoking that smoke may figuratively get in your eyes, so instead of talking about this case, let's talk about a hypothetical case in which instead of going outside to light up, the person ran to the restroom to respond to what is euphemistically known as a "hurry call." All of the rest of the facts will be the same as the actual occurrence. How would you then rule?

In my opinion, the common sense of the situation is that the player should get the pot. He had the best hand, and obviously was unaware that there is a poker law forbidding any player from *turning* up another player's hand. In making a ruling, one does not want to directly violate a law — in this case, the law that a player must turn over his own hand — without justifying it in some way. Many bad rulings come in tournaments, because the decision-maker thinks (correctly) that there is less flexibility available. But in this case, I believe that I could justify my decision by saying that when the player made his intentions of leaving the table known, the house, through its agent the dealer, had an obligation to inform him that following his verbal instructions would be a violation of a poker tournament rule. Because the player was not properly provided with this important information, the house could not deprive the player of the pot.

Now, let's see if the four factors at work in the "poaching" case were at work in our poker case:

1. Contrary to gut feeling. I think that your gut feeling ought to be that the absent player deserves the pot because he had the best hand and did not think that he was doing anything wrong when he left the table. He appears to be a person who was not knowledgeable about poker rules and deserved to be informed of the rule before he walked away. You do not extract a confession and then read a person his Miranda Rights; law enforcement is required to do this up front.

2. Overextension of a law. The law requiring a player to turn over his own hand is not in place for the purpose of stopping unauthorized restroom visits or reducing tobacco use. It was designed to stop someone else from turning up a player's hand who was not at the table when the cards were dealt, but still had a live hand because nobody bet. An example would be when the absent player was in the big blind but the hand was checked throughout. It also handles the situation in which a player who believes that he has a loser and simply gets up from the table and exits the room at the conclusion of a deal, but fails to muck his hand, and a curious person not in the pot reaches over and turns the hand up — and it is a winner.

3. Letter of the law followed rigidly. Poker lawmakers, either not anticipating this type of situation or just wanting to keep things simple, have written that a player must turn over his own hand to get the pot. The spirit of the law is that interference from outside should not enable a hand to become live that otherwise would be dead, even though the letter of the law does not make an exception for a case in which the player wanted to leave the table and left verbal instructions to turn the hand up.

4. Violator's good intentions discounted. Why did the player leave the table and try to have someone else turn over his hand? Obviously, he was not trying to gain an unfair advantage by doing this. He just did not know poker rules too well.

Here are a few suggestions for making good poker decisions. (I am mindful of my own "law" that says, "Those most in need of advice are least likely to seek it.")

First, let your conscience and gut feeling of right and wrong take part in a decision. We all are endowed with a sense of fairness, and should let it come into play when making a judgment.

Second, try to justify doing the right thing. If you think that the proper decision is contrary to the way that a law is stated in a rulebook, look for a way to get around it.

Third, try to understand the reason why the law that you are enforcing was made in the first place. The anti-poaching laws were not made to prevent people from aiding disabled animals. Should the Good Samaritan have kept on going, eventually reporting the presence of a robbed and beaten up man to the proper authorities in the town where he was headed? His rescue was "unauthorized."

Fourth, go a little lighter on someone who does not know poker rules particularly well and has made an honest error. Newcomers are more in need of protection, and how they are treated as rookies will have something to do with whether they elect to become full-fledged members of the poker community.

The worst thing that a person in a position of power can do is say, "This is the law; my hands are tied." That's like Pilate saying, "I find no fault in this man; whip him." The things that actually may be tied are the feelings and imagination of that person, rather than the hands. Laws are imperfectly written and require a certain amount of judgment in their enforcement, rather than a mindless literal interpretation. This applies to both the real world and the poker world.◆

Publisher's note: We received many letters and E-mails regarding the poker situation described in this article. The vote was almost equally divided, with about half of the respondents saying the hand should be dead and the other half declaring it live.

Editor's note: Bob Ciaffone is available for poker lessons. He may be reached at (517) 792-0884, or by E-mail at coach999@concentric.net. His web site is www.concentric.net/~Coach999. His books Pot-limit and No-limit Poker, Improve Your Poker, and Omaha Hold'em Poker, Millennium Edition are available through Card Player.

Valentine's Day

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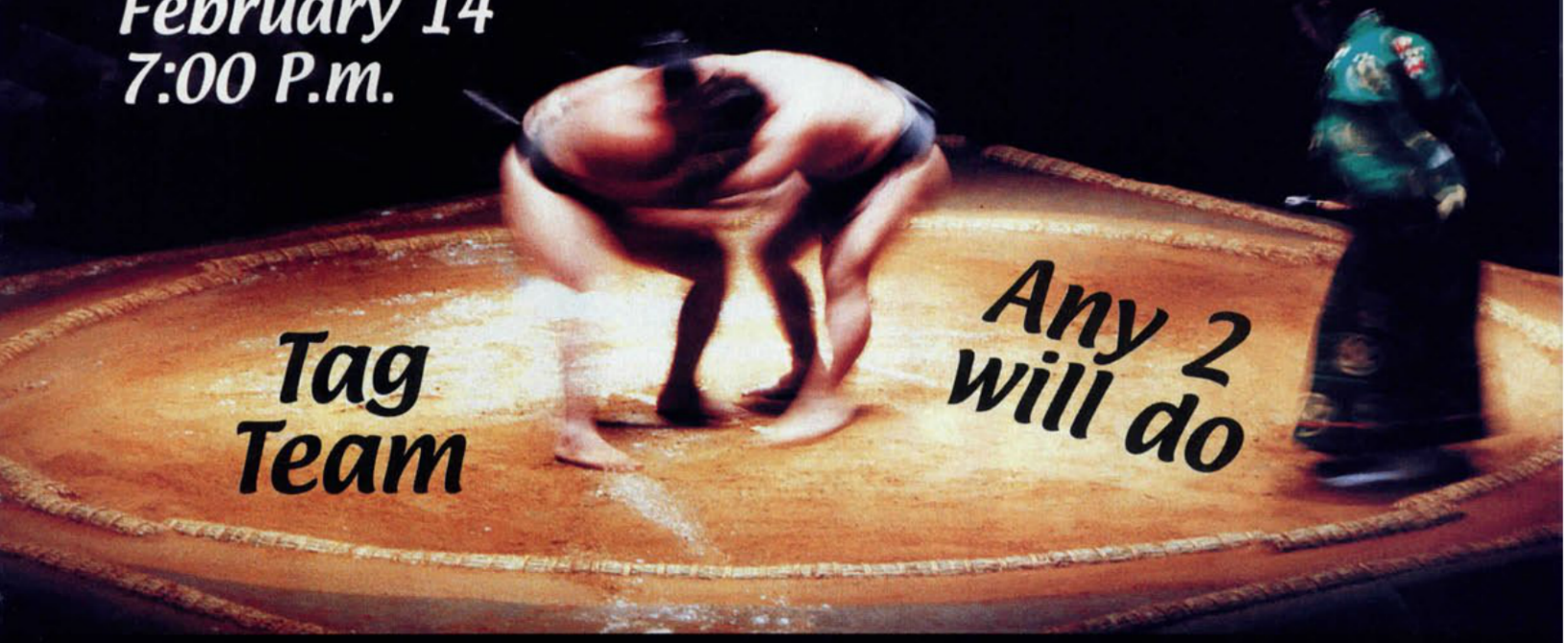

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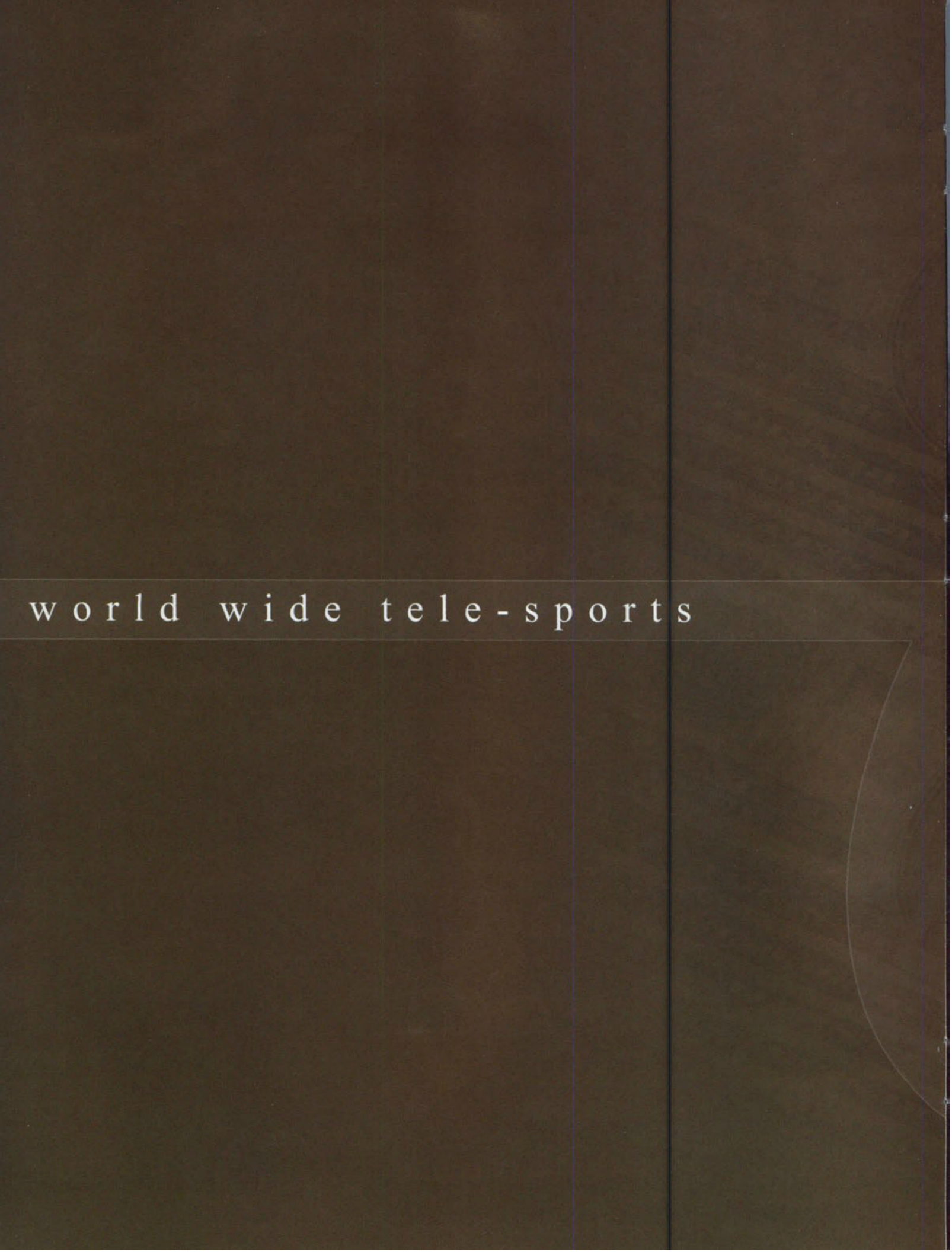
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ROY WEST

Hi. Come on in. Let's go practice kicking field goals while we chat about our beloved game of poker. You wanted to talk about tells at the poker table.

I first would caution you about being too quick to evaluate and act upon a tell. And, of course, tells are of no value unless you see them, which requires observation — constant study of your opponents. You must match the tell to the player.

Having seen a tell, you then must correctly *interpret* it. Keep in mind that the *same* tell from two different players can mean two entirely different things. *You must match the tell to the player*. More on that as we go along.

Unless we specifically are looking for tells, we usually miss most of them. Tells come in all sizes and forms, and from the young and old, male and female.

I once played poker with a woman who might as well have held up a big sign in bold letters stating exactly how each card she was dealt fit into her hand. The first time that I saw her tell, I thought that she must have been faking to deceive her opponents, but she wasn't.

The game was seven-card stud. The woman was, aside from having this huge tell, a rather knowledgeable player. But, each card that she was dealt, from fourth street on, was followed by a *slight* nodding of her head up and down if the card helped her hand, or a *little* shaking of her head from side to side if it didn't. Unfailingly, she did it every time! I was truly amazed.

To my further amazement, I seemed to be the only player at the table who had picked up on the tell. I think that it was because the tell came at the instant that she saw the card. At that time, the other players were *looking at the card being dealt* rather than at the *opponent* to whom it was being dealt. And as I say in my stud book and tell my students, if you're looking only at the cards, you are missing a lot of free information, especially with the seventh-street card.

Her tell saved me at least a half dozen bets when it announced improvement to or completion of her hand. And twice, it allowed me to make seventh-street bets into three opponents when *her* hand was my major concern. Her tell announced that she had missed her draw, so I confidently bet my aces up and kings up into the other two hands, which I correctly had read as each being two lesser pair. Both times, I was called by both opponents, and four additional bets went into my stack. Without the woman's tell, I would have checked and missed those bets.

I promised more on being cautious about tells. Remember, you must match the tell to the player. For one player, smoothly sliding his bet into the pot might mean that he has confidence in his hand. The next player might display the *same* confidence by *flinging* his chips to the center of the table with a motion that starts somewhere near his armpit. It would be easy to think that the first of these players was holding back on his physical action because he was unsure of the relative value of his



hand. And the flinging motion of the second player could be read as an act that his hand is stronger than it actually is. Thus, we might have been mistaken in both instances, and mistakes at the poker table cost money. Take the time and effort to confirm the meaning of a tell. Match the tell to the player.

How about an example of a small tell? Well, I'm not too sure that there is such a thing as a small tell. Any tell that puts more money into my stack is one that I consider to be big. I spotted a "small" tell in another seven-card stud game. Every time one gentleman received a card that helped his hand, he touched it. He didn't move the card — he just touched it. It was almost like a caress.

People who understand tells know that a player usually will try to ignore a card that helps. It's as if he thinks that paying attention to that card will divulge its value.

My point is, whenever I talk with anyone about tells, I always add the caution, *you must match the tell to the player*. Some tells are universal, and some are not. The very same tell from two different players might have two entirely opposite meanings.

Here's another example: One player "bombing" the pot with his chips might mean that he has confidence in his hand. The same motion from the player sitting next to him could mean a lack of confidence that causes him to act as if he's confident. Match the tell to the player, which means that you must be constantly alert and observant.

For more (a lot more) on tells, get Mike Caro's two-tape video set titled *Caro's Pro Poker Tells*.

You made 17 more field goals than I did. I'm embarrassed and tired. A nap is needed. Kill the light on your way out.◆

Editor's note: Roy West, author of the best seller 7-Card Stud, the Complete Course in Winning, now has a toll-free 800 number and is giving his successful poker lessons in Las Vegas in person, or on the phone around the country. See his ad on page 28.

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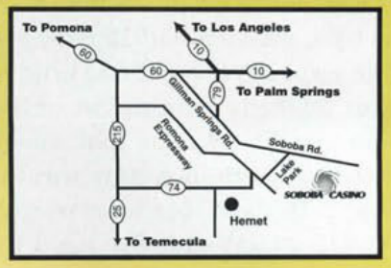

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For What It's Worth...

VINCE BURGIO

Be Good to Yourself

As usual, when the first of the year comes around, my best friend and I go to lunch and discuss our wishes and goals for the upcoming year. We review the previous year's goals and discuss how we did on them. Then after discussing why we want to do certain things for the year, we each quietly write down our "new goals."

We have a standing agreement that our first meeting after the first of the year is our goal-setting time. We have been having these lunches for a dozen or so years, and our late afternoon lunches usually last a couple of hours. When it's time to leave, we usually have pumped each other up and it feels like a good old-fashioned sales meeting.

My friend also is a poker player, so, as you might have guessed, there usually are several poker goals. Now, the interesting thing is, as the last 12 or 13 years have passed and we both have gotten older, our goals have taken on a different look.

I remember when we first started our lists, we each had 10 or so goals, of which seven or eight had to do with poker. Of the remaining two or three, there usually was one that was connected to health. It always was to try to eat better and lose some weight.

Over the last four or five years, there seems to have been a shift in our goals. Instead of seven or eight poker goals, there now are three or four. The health goals, on the other hand, have increased from one or two to five or six.

If you have gathered that what I'm trying to say is that poker is going to become less important as you start getting a little older and your health is going to start getting a lot more important — you're right!

If you play poker for a living, or are one of those people who really enjoy just playing, and you play lots of hours, be aware that it is a sedentary way of life. It will catch up to you, probably sooner than later.

So, all of you guys and gals in the 35 to 45 age group, take note. A word to the wise should be sufficient. Start paying more attention to your health. You are going to be surprised how important it will become as the years start passing by. It's like anything else. You shouldn't wait until your body starts to run down before you start to pay attention to it.

I remember that as a younger man, I sometimes played many, many hours of poker in a smoke-filled room, breathing not-so-fresh air and eating mostly the wrong foods. Then, I'd go home, get some sleep, and come right back and do the same thing again the next day. Simply put, that's just not good for you.

I don't want all of the casinos and card clubs to get mad at me for suggesting that we poker players should cut down on our playing hours. I would suggest to them that in the long run, they would benefit. Instead of playing longer hours for a fewer number of years, we (if we start paying more attention to taking care of ourselves) will be able to play shorter hours for a much larger number of years.

Of course, I'm not talking to you guys who still are young — let's say, under 35 years old. You guys are indestructible. Your bodies rejuvenate themselves quickly, and you have lots of different needs that have to be filled, so taking good care of yourselves isn't really that important — yet!

But for the rest of you, as you make your goals for this new year, you'll live a lot more productive, longer life if you start taking better care of yourself now, before things become irreversible.

And here's the best part of all: Once you start eating better, exercising more, getting enough fresh air and rest, and doing all of the other things that you know you should do, your mind will start functioning better. You'll start feeling a lot better about yourself, and I'll bet that you'll get a lot better results at the poker table.

Besides, I've grown to like a lot of you "middle-aged" people out there. I don't want to lose any of you too soon.

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Cards SPEAK

W. LAWRENCE HILL

Oldies, But Goodies

This column often focuses on interesting heads-up, all-in matchups of hold'em starting hands. Here, we will take a look back at some "oldies" that are, if not positively "classics," at least "goodies."

Let's start with A-K suited against a pair of deuces — examined in the March 23, 1990, issue of *Card Player* (and even before that back in 1987, in the old *Poker Player* weekly tabloid) — cards of the two highest ranks in suit with each other against a pair of the lowest rank. Which hand is favored? Well, a most interesting aspect of this matchup is that the answer to that question begins, "It depends ..." That is, it depends on the card *suits*. The 1990 column stated, "If neither deuce is of the same suit as the A-K, the A-K is favored by about 50.1% to 49.9%, but if one of the deuces is of that suit, the pair of deuces is favored by about 50.3% to 49.7%. But why is this true? Well, it's mainly because of flushes — and to make the English a bit smoother here, let's say that the ace and king are both spades. If ... one of the deuces is a spade, that leaves one fewer spade available to come up on the table ... Of course, if one of the deuces is a spade, the pair of deuces itself will make fewer flushes, too ... but ... not as sharp of a reduction as that suffered by the A♠ K♠." The only starting hands favored over A-K suited are *pairs* — with the sole exception being an underdog pair of deuces with neither deuce in suit with the A-K.

Then, "Up Against a Pair of Aces" in the May 18, 1990, issue sought out the starting hand that would fare best in the unfortunate circumstances of being in opposition to the very best hand of all, a mighty pair of aces. That 1990 column concluded that if we say that the opposing aces are A♠ A❤, "your very best chances of all (other than with the other two aces) would be with 6♦ 5♦ or 6♣ 5♣ — the advantage of the 6-5 being in the fact that you would steal those low straights when the board includes 5-4-3-2. With the 6♦ 5♦ or 6♣ 5♣, you would be only a 3.34-to-1 underdog."

And then for the closest matchup of all, "Closing In on the Closest Matchup" in the Dec. 27, 1991, issue reported, "... this columnist waded back into some more of the 47,008 possible starting hand matchups (other than the 247 exact mirror-image matchups), and found this one to hang up on the wall for you sharp-eyed readers to take your shots at — 3♠ 3❤ favored (although "favored" really might be a bit too strong of a word in these remarkably close cases) by a razor-thin 50.007% to 49.993% over A♠ 10♠."

And "Hold'em Matches and Mismatches" in the Sept. 6, 1991, issue investigated the question, "What might make for a big starting hands *mismatch*? How about the very best starting hand against the very worst (for heads-up play) — a pair of aces against 3-2 offsuit? A♠ A❤ is a big 7.31-to-1 favorite over 3♠ 2❤. But is that the biggest possible mismatch? *No* — not by a *long shot*! As we can see from the close matchups discussed previously, the favorite/underdog relationship is *not* strictly determined by the individual merits of the two starting hands involved. For a bigger mismatch, look at a pair of kings against a K-2 offsuit. Why does this figure to be such a mismatch? Well, even though a K-2 offsuit is a slightly better-than-average starting hand for heads-up play, it matches up as a big underdog against a pair of kings, mainly because its king is rendered virtually worthless against a pair of kings, its deuce is the lowest rank in the deck, and its straight potential is minimal. And to hamper further the chances of the underdog K-2 offsuit, make the deuce in suit with one of the pair of kings, such as K♠ K❤ against K♦ 2♠. The odds favoring the K♠ K❤ over the K♠ 2♠ are a staggering 18.70-to-1!"

Oldies, but goodies ... ♦



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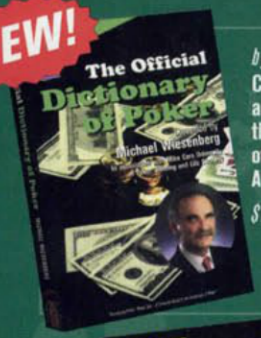

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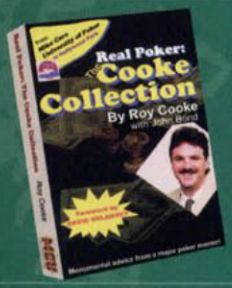

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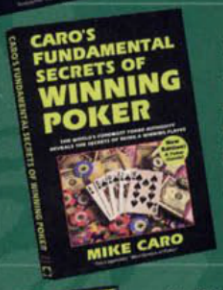

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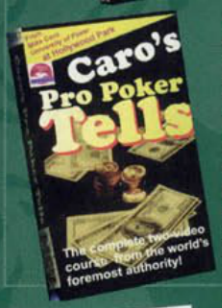

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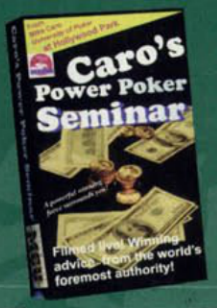

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'The Mad Genius on Poker' Mike Caro Predicts our Future and Takes No Prisoners in This Exclusive Card Player Interview

Nobody has done as many things for the poker community as Mike Caro, often called "The Mad Genius on Poker." At 55, he has been the world's premier authority, ambassador, and, some suggest, strangest character for 20 consecutive years in an arena that sees personalities come and go.

His accomplishments include the recent founding of Mike Caro University of Poker, Gaming, and Life Strategy. He brought the first-ever world-class poker tournament to the East Coast, created the first widely publicized artificially intelligent computer poker player in 1984, and has written breakthrough books and videos based on his own research.

More than 10,000 players have attended Mike Caro's standing-room-only seminars.

He founded the Cheater Monitoring Service in 1981 to promote ethical poker.

He has written lead columns for three different publications going back 18 years (including *Card Player* since its inception), has conducted a multiyear study of poker tells and psychology resulting in his landmark *Caro's Book of Tells*, has calculated the most widely quoted and reliable poker statistics ever published, and personally created Mike Caro's Poker Engine — software that easily guides computers through complex poker problems. Behind the scenes, Caro has been a top-level consultant for more than a dozen casinos.

Caro has been featured in more than 100 articles and books, and last year, he appeared in *Newsweek* magazine and on the cover of the *Los Angeles Business Journal*.

His biography appears in *Who's Who in America, Who's Who in the West*, and *Who's Who in the World*. When he was roasted at his "full deck" party upon turning 52, more than 400 people attended from across the country.

Today, he lives near Los Angeles with his casino-executive wife Phyllis and an African Grey parrot, Silver. He plays poker about twice a week, usually at "comfortable" limits of $75-$150 to $150-$300.

Card Player Managing Editor Steve Radulovich recently sat down with the "Mad Genius" for this candid interview.

Steve Radulovich: The last time that you were on the cover of *Card Player,* you were introducing a four-color deck. What ever happened to that?

Mike Caro: Actually, I tried to introduce the deck twice. For those who don't know, the four-color deck is an idea that's probably as old as traditional cards themselves. Instead of showing both diamonds and hearts as red and both clubs and spades as black, I think there should be four separate colors — one for each suit. The first incarnation was red, black, green, and blue, and I unveiled that at the first Foxwoods *World Poker Finals* in the early '90s.

Most players didn't like the original four-color deck, which Gemaco had built to my specification, because the colors were too hard to tell apart. In 1995, we introduced a Yaquinto version of the four-color deck to 65 casinos simultaneously on what we called "C-Day" — "C" meaning color. Again, I had chosen the wrong shades, but a majority of players liked the concept this time, including almost all beginners. But among the experienced players, there always was one or two yelling their heads off at each table. Soon, I'll be looking for another manufacturer, because I positively will not take this concept to my grave. My prediction is that the four-color deck will dominate in the coming years. We're already using it as an electronic version at Planet Poker.

SR: Speaking of Planet Poker — which is an Internet cardroom — you caused a great stir in the poker industry by endorsing it. Executives of brick-and-mortar cardrooms were surprised, because they'd always considered you to be a consultant, a friend, and a spokesperson for the industry. Why did you decide to endorse an on-line cardroom?

MC: I'm glad that you brought this up, because I want to set the record straight. I am primarily an advocate of traditional cardrooms. Mike Caro University of Poker, Gaming, and Life Strategy is headquartered at Hollywood Park Casino and may be opening extensions in real casinos elsewhere. That's where most of the action is, face-to-face poker in real casinos, where you can order food, giggle, pick up girls, or whatever. That was sexist, right? Strike that. No, don't strike that. Traditional cardrooms will benefit the most from what I am trying to do.

SR: And what exactly *are* you trying to do?

MC: I'm trying to promote ethical poker worldwide and especially in traditional real-world casinos. People who are disturbed by my endorsement don't understand my intent. The Internet is the most powerful tool ever invented to promote anything — especially poker. There are hundreds of millions of potential new players out there who never have set foot inside a real-world poker room. Even in the Los Angeles area, I'll bet that 90 percent of the adults never have played at Commerce,

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the Bike, Crystal Park, Hollywood Park, Hawaiian Gardens, Normandie — who did I leave out? — anywhere. They don't know what to expect when they walk through those doors. First of all, my endorsement isn't just of the real-money games that we offer on-line. We're building a huge web site with a discussion forum, courses, and other stuff, including a section that will promote traditional casinos. I am going to use our games to introduce new players to traditional poker and send them gift-wrapped with pretty ribbons into the casinos. Just watch.

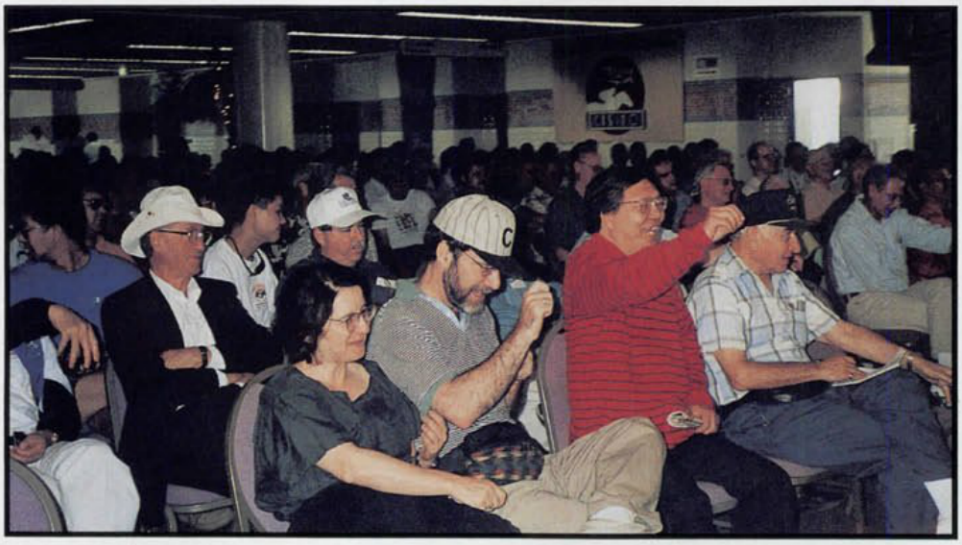
SR: Speaking of new players, how are your beginner's courses at MCU coming along?

MC: You know what? Tom Bowling, the G.M., brought me into that project kicking and screaming. I'm used to addressing more sophisticated players — and that's the main target for MCU in the future. But Tom convinced me that it was important to poker everywhere to bring in new players. So far, we've graduated about 125 players who devoted two hours a week for eight weeks. I do the first six weeks and then Debbie Parks, the MCU administrator, teaches them some more and guides them through their first tournament. The next course at HPC will start on April 4. Locally, El Camino College is even offering these courses in its catalog. Most of our graduates never have played poker in a casino before, and a large segment never has played poker at all. We now have dozens of these graduates as regular customers. And they don't just play at HPC — they play all over town and in Vegas, too.

SR: Your seminars always draw huge audiences. Nobody else prances around to drive home points using the same style that you do. That's really high-energy stuff, and some of the top players attend along with intermediate players. Why have you stopped doing seminars?

MC: I haven't stopped; I'm just resting. I plan to do more, but there are a few things I need to finish up first — books and videos, old commitments. MCU already has published an outstanding book by Roy Cooke, the definitive poker dictionary by Michael Wiesenberg, and three of my videos. The reissue of my *Book of Tells* is only a month away. *Caro & Cooke's Official Rules of Poker* is well along, and my *Pro Poker, Play By Play* series of books is next. About seminars, my next one will be on the high seas, on *Card Player's* poker cruise to Alaska June 21-28. It won't be just a seminar, because I'm planning an intense hour of instruction each day for five days. Players can sign up for that when they book the cruise. It will be fun and it won't interfere with the onboard poker or the excursions. We'll all giggle and learn together.

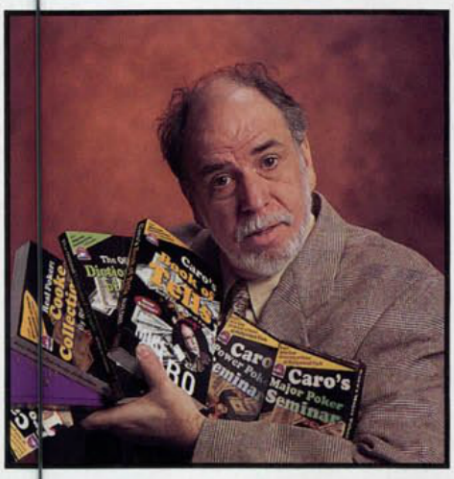
SR: What do you forecast for the future of poker?



An audience of more than 400 poker players attended a recent Mike Caro seminar.

MC: I see huge poker expansion. There's going to be a fallout of traditional games, because new ideas and electronic amusements will take the spotlight. But poker will flourish and grow and grow because of its unique blend of psychology and strategy.

SR: Does anything bother you about poker today?



Mike Caro holds some of the latest products from Mike Caro University Publishing. Caro has announced 20 new products that will be released over the next 18 months.

MC: Yes, mainly one thing. I detest nerds on testosterone who always come into my games looking studious as hell and commenting on whether their raise was right or wrong and giving specific analytical reasons at the table. Here are people arguing at the table about nuances in strategy that would make only pennies of difference. But by doing so, they often are costing themselves and other winners in the game thousands of dollars. You wanna know why it costs so much? It's because this talk alerts the opponents to the fact that we are not here to have fun. It tells them that we are here to analyze and make excellent plays. Of course, it's correct to analyze and make excellent plays, but you should keep this mission to yourself. Giggle. Have fun. This gives your opponents permission to have fun, too, and to play poorly without being scrutinized. And it isn't just players who talk about strategy that bothers me. It's players with a sort of strategic demeanor. Do you know what I mean? You can sense it thick as thick can be, even if they never say a word. This all-busi-

Continued on page 105

SPORT OF KINGS

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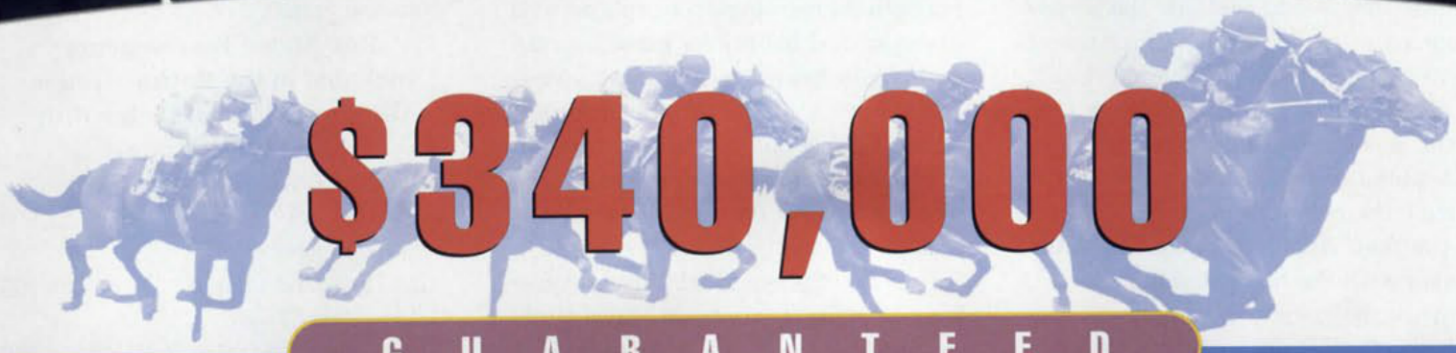

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TALES From the Felt

NOLAN DALLA

1999 Player of the Year: Hieu 'Tony' Ma

Introduction: Three years ago, I first conceived the idea of trying to establish a method of determining poker's "Player of the Year." My objective was to devise and implement a rating procedure that would evaluate the performances of every single tournament player over a 12-month period. Using a ranking system, each player was given a point count based on every final-table appearance that was achieved during the calendar year. The "Player of the Year" honor was awarded to the player with the highest point total.

When the inaugural column was published in *Card Player* in the Jan. 23, 1998, issue, I wasn't sure what kind of reaction it would receive. At the time, I wasn't convinced that my ranking system was refined enough to resolve debate within the poker community as to which players were the most successful in tournaments. Second, I was aware that other ranking systems already had been developed (in Europe, particularly), and I wasn't inclined to modify the established procedures of other ranking methods. Finally, I was concerned that it might be presumptuous to publicly announce that the players on my list were "more successful" than players who were not listed. After all, many players play in relatively few tournaments overall, but nonetheless have achieved impressive results over the year.

Another valid point that some critics have made is that since an incalculable number of poker's best players *do not* play in tournaments at all, my ranking system fails to weigh achievement and reputation based on live-action play. Unfortunately, because there seems to be no way to measure the financial results or wins/losses of nontournament players, any judgment about their levels of achievement would be purely subjective. Instead, I chose to give the "Player of the Year" honor to the one single poker player who distinguished himself (or herself, as the case might be) above all others; whose results are a matter of public record; whose figures can be verified through published results, and therefore, whose victories are not open to interpretation or personal bias.

Based on the overwhelming response from so many tournament players during the first two years of this award, I am pleased to continue with the tradition. What follows is my third annual "Player of the Year" column.

Tournaments: Last year, there were hundreds of poker tournaments that attracted thousands of poker players. Because there were so many tournaments, I had to devise a qualifying method to distinguish "major tournaments" from smaller ones. Hence, to qualify as a major tournament, *at least $100,000* in prize money had to be awarded to players over the duration of the tournament.

With the $100,000 qualifier, there were 38 major tournaments held in the United States in 1999 (up from 32 in 1998, and 28 in 1997). All tournaments were either special one-time competitions or — in most cases — annual events. Buy-ins ranged from $50 up to $10,000. The list of tournaments included 398 individual player events in hold'em (limit, pot-limit, and no-limit), Omaha (limit and pot-limit), Omaha high-low split, seven-card stud, seven-card stud eight-or-better, razz, deuce-to-seven lowball, lowball draw, crazy pineapple, five-card draw, Chinese poker, Mexican poker, and various mixed events (combinations of more than one game).

1999 Major Tournaments Included in the Rating System (In Chronological Order With Total Prize Money)

New Year's Challenge	
(Crystal Park Casino)	$327,900
Carnivale of Poker	
(Rio Hotel and Casino)	$4,238,200
Golden Gate Classic	
(Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo)	$211,050
L.A. Poker Classic VIII	
(Commerce Casino)	$1,949,800
Crystal Points Guaranteed Poker Week	
(Crystal Park Casino)	$115,600
Winnin' o' the Green	
(Bicycle Club Casino)	$306,150
Winterfest Poker Tournament	
(Hollywood Park Casino)	$135,000
Peppermill Spring Tournament	
(Peppermill Reno)	$286,200
$120,000-Guaranteed No-Rebuy Poker Week	
(Crystal Park Casino)	$136,300
New England Poker Classic	
(Foxwoods Resort and Casino)	$542,500
Southeastern Poker Championships	
(Silver Star Casino)	$369,600
Spring Challenge	
(Crystal Park Casino)	$460,400
Shooting Star Tournament	
(Bay 101)	$225,000
World Series of Poker	
(Binion's Horseshoe)	$11,291,000
USA vs. The World Poker Challenge	
(Crystal Park Casino)	$170,200
Sport of Kings Tournament	
(Hollywood Park Casino)	$226,950

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18 Friday *7:15 p.m.*	**Stud Hi-Lo**	$100+20	$10,000
19 Saturday *2:15 p.m.*	**Omaha Hi-Lo**	$100+20	$10,000
20 Sunday *2:15 p.m.*	**Crazy Pineapple**	$100+20	$7,500

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California State Poker Championship
(Commerce Casino) $1,109,500
First Anniversary Poker Championships
(Lucky Chances Casino) $189,670
San Francisco Open
(Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo) $248,600
Mid-America Poker Classic
(Horseshoe Tunica) $260,000
Summer Challenge
(Crystal Park Casino) $328,400
Anniversary Tournament Series
(Spirit Mountain Casino) $241,100
Heavenly Hold'em Tournament
(Commerce Casino) $426,600
The Orleans Open
(Orleans Hotel and Casino) $1,492,800
Tournament of Champions
(Orleans Hotel and Casino) $996,000
Legends of Poker
(Bicycle Club Casino) $1,641,800
Fall Vacation Tournament
(Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino) $213,520
National Championship of Poker
(Hollywood Park Casino) $453,850
Big Poker Oktober
(Bicycle Club Casino) $213,520
Tom McEvoy's Poker Spectacular
(Crystal Park Casino) $272,300
Peppermill Fall Tournament
(Peppermill Reno) $268,900
Thunder by the Bay
(Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo) $236,200
Fall Challenge
(Crystal Park Casino) $188,250
Sam Boyd Poker Classic
(Sam's Town) $725,500
World Poker Finals
(Foxwoods Resort and Casino) $815,035
United States Poker Championship
(Trump Taj Mahal) $1,116,800
Holiday Bonus Tournament
(Commerce Casino) $365,400

Note No. 1: The first qualifying event was held Dec. 31, 1998, at the *New Year's Challenge* (Crystal Park Casino). Since the tournament ran Dec. 31 through Jan. 8, it was included in the 1999 rankings.

Note No. 2: To be included in the rankings, the event had to be open to *all* players. Therefore, special events for seniors and women's-only events were not included. Freeroll competitions were not included. Team events (more than one player) were not included. "Second-chance" tournaments were not included. The *Tournament of Champions* was included because all players had an equal opportunity to qualify.

Note No. 3: European tournaments (and others held outside the United States) were not included. Because there is relatively little crossover between Europe and North America (with notable exceptions at the biggest tournaments), my rankings were limited to U.S.-based events.

The Dalla Rating System: My rating system emphasizes overall consistency, proven by high tournament finishes. This system uses numerical scoring in which the more challenging events are weighed with higher point totals. Points were awarded based on three factors:

1. Place finished — Points were awarded to every player based on his/her finish at the final table of every event. For a first-place finish, 100 base points were given; for second place, 90 points were given; 80 points for third, 70 for fourth, and so on. Only final-table finishes were recorded.

I aspired to reward final-table appearances on a graduated scale, while not overemphasizing an outright win. Although prize money is weighed disproportionately in favor of the top few spots, my intent was to consider multiple final-table appearances as a far more meaningful indication of overall consistency. For stud events, a standard final table is composed of the top eight places. In hold'em and Omaha, final tables normally are nine or 10 places. Finally, in events with a small number of entrants — in which making the final table did not win any prize money — the finish was not counted.

(Note: The final table of the World Series of Poker $10,000 event normally includes only six players. However, inasmuch as it is customary to include up to 10 players at most hold'em final tables — in the interest of uniformity — all top 10 finishers in that event were awarded points.)

2. Number of entrants — The greater the number of entrants, the more difficult the challenge to make the final table. Obviously, smaller fields are not as burdensome to overcome as larger fields. Therefore, I devised a sliding scale that uses numerical values ranging from 1 to 3. For any event with up to 100 entrants, the numerical factor is 1. Thereafter, for each 10-player increase, the factor increases in multiples of .1 (note the decimal). The maximum factor is 3. For example, an event with 234 entrants has a numerical factor of 2.3. An event with 236 entrants has a numerical value of 2.4 (numbers are rounded off and .5 is rounded up to the next level). An event with 300 or more entrants still has a factor of 3. Although the number of rebuys and add-ons are important considerations in the total prize pool, they do not influence the rating system.

3. Level of competition — Some events are more competitive than others. Accordingly, it was necessary to make some parenthetic judgment by giving greater weight to tournaments comprised of top professionals vs. those with primarily novice players. Since we cannot determine the skill level of each player at every tournament, I devised a workable indicator that awards rating points based on the amount of the



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buy-in for each event. Since many lower-limit buy-in events from $50 to $299 are largely comprised of amateur players, these events received a numerical factor of 1. Events with buy-ins ranging from $300 to $1,499 were given a factor of 2. Events with buy-ins higher than $1,500 were given the maximum factor of 3. Again, only the amount of the original buy-in was counted.

(Note: This year, one modification was made to the scoring method. Due to feedback from tournament players that suggested that events at the $300 buy-in level usually are more competitive than $100 buy-in events, this year, $300-$1,499 buy-in events were given Level 2 status. Previously, that distinction went to buy-ins between $500 and $2,499). Furthermore, all events with buy-ins of $1,500 and more were given Level 3 status. This change was made in keeping with the premise that adjustments sometimes are necessary to ensure proper representation as to the level of difficulty and achievement.

How to determine a score: To determine a point score for a final-table finish, let's take an extreme example — the $10,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em world championship at the *World Series of Poker*. The 1999 winner, Noel Furlong, received the 900 points for his victory based on the following formula:

100 (a first-place finish is worth 100 points) **x** (multiplied by) **3** (more than 300 entrants) **x** (multiplied by) **3** (the buy-in was $10,000) **= 900 points**.

Therefore, winning poker's world championship is worth 900 rating points. This is equivalent to winning nine events at the $100 buy-in level (with fewer than 100 entrants). I based my scoring system on this 100-900 spread, concluding that one lone tournament victory (no matter how impressive) did not, in and of itself, merit being included among players being noted for their high levels of consistency. Therefore, the "900" top score was used as a benchmark to establish parameters for smaller events.

Let's take one more example: Let's say that you finished fifth in a $100 buy-in seven-card stud event. There were 157 entrants. You would receive 60 points (for fifth place) times 1.6 (there were 157 entrants) times 1 (the buy-in was $100). So, you would receive 96 points.

Now, to get a final score, add up all of your final-table point totals from the calendar year — and there you have it!

Previous winners: Previous "Player of the Year" award winners have been:

1997 — Men "The Master" Nguyen (3,341 points)

1998 — T.J. Cloutier (3,277 points)

1999 Player of the Year results: Thousands of poker players entered the 398 events of the 38 major poker tournaments held throughout the United States in 1999. *Technically, every single player who entered an event of any kind was eligible to make this list.* The rating points from every tournament final table were added to get a score for every poker player (no small task, I might add).

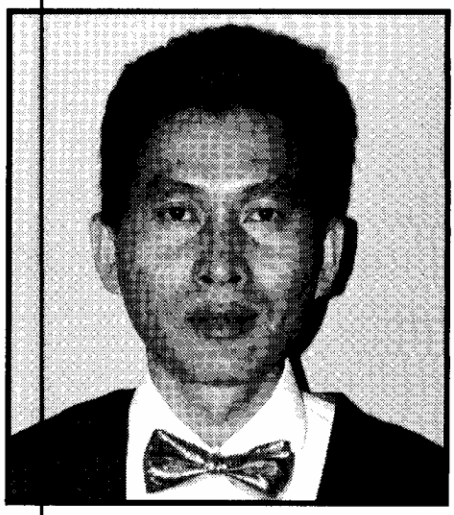
This year, once again, the results proved to be very interesting. There were hundreds of players who performed admirably, including many amateurs. In fact, the vast majority of players who made final-table appearances were nonprofessionals. However, most of these players did not accumulate enough rating points beyond the 500 range. Other players scored high in one or two major events, but lacked the overall consistency needed for serious contender status — which is about 1,500 points. Still other players chalked up several small wins, yet they lacked the large-scale wins (in terms of points) to catapult them into the upper echelon of finishers. Naturally, the highest point finisher was awarded the "Player of the Year" honor.

And now, here's what you've been waiting for — a drum roll, please. Following are the results of the 1999 year in tournament poker:

The Top 20

1. Hieu "Tony" Ma, South El Monte, CA ..... 3,954 points
2. John Bonetti, Houston, TX 3,266
3. Daniel Negreanu, Las Vegas, NV 2,901
4. T.J. Cloutier, Dallas, TX..... 2,822
5. "Miami" John Cernuto, Las Vegas, NV 2,784
6. Allen Cunningham, Rialto, CA . 2,726
7. Mario Esquerra, Whittier, CA ... 2,723
8. Dan Heimiller, Las Vegas, NV .. 2,510
9. Kathy Liebert, Las Vegas, NV .. 2,508
10. Layne Flack, Missoula, MT 2,444
11. Vince Burgio, West Hills, CA .. 2,424
12. Men "The Master" Nguyen, Bell Gardens, CA 2,366
13. David Pham, Bell Gardens, CA . 2,189
14. Steve Badger, Sherman Oaks, CA 2,123
15. Greg Hopkins, Anchorage, AK 1,977
16. Eskimo Clark, New Orleans, LA 1,891
17. Sirous Baghchehsaraie, Los Angeles, CA 1,868
18. Al Barbieri, Maywood, CA 1,863
19. Scotty Nguyen, Henderson, NV . 1,861
20. Chris Ferguson, Pacific Palisades, CA 1,838

Comments: A discussion of this rating system and its results would not be complete without a few candid observations about the top players:



Hieu "Tony" Ma

1. Hieu "Tony" Ma — It's fair to say that this year's winner annihilated the rest of the field. Ma's 688-point victory over the second-place finisher demonstrated an extraordinary level of accomplishment in the most competitive field of tournament players ever assembled. Ma, better known as "Tony," is a 43-year-old professional poker player from Southern California who started playing seriously nine years ago. This marks his first appearance on the Player of the Year rankings, rocketing to a first-place finish with 16 final-table appearances. His point to-

Continued on page 96

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EUROPE

By Nic Szeremeta

Final Euro rankings for 1999 ... After a year of intense competition, the final European rankings have been determined. A total of 30 ranking events were staged: 11 hold'em, 10 stud, and nine Omaha. One surprise is that a U.S. player, Kevin Nettles, topped the stud list as a result of a couple of successful visits across the pond. The top hold'em scorer was Pascal Perrault, a pharmacist from Paris, and the Omaha leader was Tibor Tolnai of Hungary. The combined list winner was Hans Pfister of Switzerland, as a result of consistent performances in both hold'em and stud. He finished second on the stud ranking list and fourth on the hold'em list.

The rankings, along with the results from five "Grand Slam" tournaments, are used to establish who gets seats in the *European Super Bowl of Poker* — a $23,000 freeroll that is sponsored by the Concord Card Casino in Vienna in March.

The top ranking positions were as follows:

Hold'em

1. Pascal Perrault, France 4,044 points
2. Guy Sitbon, France 3,738
3. Dave Welch, England 3,644
4. Hans Pfister, Switzerland 3,570
5. David Tavernier, France 3,376
6. Franz Gottfried, Austria 3,320

Seven-Card Stud

1. Kevin Nettles, USA..... 5,942 points
2. Hans Pfister, Switzerland 5,874
3. Michel Cordier, Belgium 4,200
4. Tibor Tolnai, Hungary 4,105
5. Danny Jordan, England..... 3,864
6. Bernd Rygol, Germany 3,562

Omaha

1. Tibor Tolnai, Hungary .. 5,024 points
2. Manuela Seliger, Austria 4,690
3. Guy Sitbon, France 4,578
4. Danny Newman, England 4,332
5. Lucy Rokach, England 3,820

Combined

1. Hans Pfister, Switzerland .. 11,144 points
2. Tibor Tolnai, Hungary 9,129
3. Guy Sitbon, France 8,316
4. Franz Gottfried, Austria 7,618
5. Manuela Seliger, Austria 7,390
6. Dave Welch, England 6,620
7. David Tavernier, France 6,225
8. Michael Keiner, Germany 6,130
9. Danny Newman, England 6,112
10. Kevin Nettles, USA..... 5,942



Grand Slam Qualifiers

• Josef Klinger, Austria; first at the Concord Card Casino in the *European World Series of Poker Trial* no-limit hold'em freezeout

• Randy Holland, USA; second at the Concord Card Casino in the *European World Series of Poker Trial* no-limit hold'em freezeout

• Lucy Rokach, England; first at the Aviation Club de France in the *Grand Prix de Paris* no-limit hold'em freezeout

• Julian Gardner, England; second at the Aviation Club de France in the *Grand Prix de Paris* no-limit hold'em freezeout

• Dan Uzan, France; first at the Aviation Club de France *Omaha Cup* pot-limit Omaha freezeout

• Jan Boubli, France; third at the Aviation Club de France in the *Omaha Cup* pot-limit Omaha freezeout

• Paul Alterman, England; first at Casinos Austria in the limit seven-card stud freezeout

• Istvan Hamori, Hungary; second at Casinos Austria in the limit seven-card stud freezeout

• Ram Vaswani, England; first at Holland Casino in the *Lido* no-limit hold'em freezeout

• Barney Boatman, England; third at Holland Casino in the *Lido* no-limit hold'em freezeout

Aviation Club de France ... Results of the *Winter Festival* were as follows (1,000 francs equals approximately 150 Euro):

200 francs no-limit hold'em
Entrants: 81 • Rebuys: 171

1. Seiji Hisano, Japan . 18,000 francs
2. Stephane Bazin, France .. 9,000
3. Gilles Haddad, France 6,200
4. Dan Whitman, USA ... 3,800
5. Tom Ryan, Ireland 2,100
6. Olivier Niox, France ... 1,700
7. Djoa Kim 1,300
8. David Benyamine, France 900
9. Roger Polani, France 400

2,500 francs pot-limit Omaha
Entrants: 51 • Rebuys: 46

1. Robert Cohen, France .. 90,500 francs
2. Alain Hagege, France..... 46,300
3. David Tavernier, France 39,100
4. James Hoeppner, USA 19,800
5. Tibor Tolnai, Hungary 11,000
6. Alphons Jaggi, Switzerland 8,800
7. Jean-Baptisete Brochu, France 6,600
8. Patrick Bueno, France 4,400
9. Patrick Guintrand, France 2,500

2,500 francs no-limit hold'em
Entrants: 53 • Rebuys: 37

1. Michel Leibgorin, France .... 84,000 francs
2. Tibor Tolnai, Hungary 43,000
3. Guy Hamili, France 28,700
4. Gerardo Crespi, Italy 18,400
5. Jean-Baptisete Brochu, France 10,200
6. Ofer Ovadia, Israel 8,200
7. Maurice Atlani, France 6,100
8. Donat Bernard, France 4,100
9. Randal Heeb, USA 2,500

1,000 francs pot-limit dealer's choice
Entrants: 51 • Rebuys: 70

1. Maurice Atlani, France 47,100 francs
2. Samy Benichou, France 23,550
3. David Tavernier, France 16,050
4. Rhoda Habert, Canada 9,650
5. Pieree Brochard, France 4,300

6. Patrice Lepage, France 3,200
7. Patrick Bueno, France 2,150
8. Ashley Alterman, England 1,100

2,500 francs Omaha high-low
Entrants: 39 • Rebuys: 29

1. Angelo Besnainou, France .. 63,100 francs
2. Gilles Haddad, France 32,250
3. Patrick Bueno, France 21,450
4. Maurice Medioni, France 13,800
5. Robert Kojfer, France 7,600
6. Paul Spillane, Ireland 6,100
7. David Tavernier, France 4,600
8. Stephane Bazin, France 3,100
9. Jean-Yves Haby, France 2,500

2,500 francs pot-limit hold'em
Entrants: 52 • Rebuys: 31

1. Paul Spillane, Ireland .. 77,350 francs
2. Gilles Haddad, France 39,550
3. Soraya Homam, Iran 26,350
4. Alain Hagege, France 16,900
5. Ebi Pajand, France 9,400
6. Robert Kojfer, France 7,500
7. Pouya Pouyamaj 5,600
8. David Tavernier, France 3,750
9. Jose Aben-Moha, France 2,500

5,000 francs pot-limit Omaha
Entrants: 54 • Rebuys: 65

1. Hemish Shah, India ... 227,600 francs
2. Ebi Pajand, France 116,600
3. Pascal Perrault, France 77,700
4. Jean-Baptisete Brochu, France .. 50,000
5. Ofer Ovadia, Israel 27,750
6. Bruno Stefanelli, Italy 22,200
7. Guy Sitbon, France 6,650
8. Willy Fitoussi, USA 11,100
9. Yves Aknin, France 5,550

2,500 francs seven-card stud high-low
Entrants: 31 • Rebuys: 18

1. Pieree Brochard, France . 49,000 francs
2. Angelo Besnainou, France 24,300
3. Paul Testud, France 16,600
4. Laurent Peretti, France 10,000
5. Bernard Darmon, France 4,200
6. Ram Vaswani, England 3,100
7. Laurent Theirry-Mieg, France .. 2,500
8. Chris Evans, England 2,500

5,000 francs no-limit hold'em
Entrants: 76 • Rebuys: 65

1. Randal Heeb, USA ..... 269,000 francs
2. Leo Farhi, France 138,000
3. Paul Testud, France 92,100
4. Roland Rohowsky 59,200
5. Bernard Darmon, France 32,900
6. Mickey Finn, Ireland 26,300
7. Craig Grant, England 19,700
8. Andee Lebail, France 13,200
9. Frank Requena, France 6,500

Hansen takes Helsinki finale ... Dashing Dane Jan Hansen confirmed his status as one of Europe's top money earners by winning the final major event of the millennium at the annual *Helsinki Freezeout* and adding 148,000 Finnish marks, approximately 25,000 Euro, to his winnings. His win did not come easy, as the final table took almost five hours to play, and he faced strong opposition from some pretty fierce competitors, including Ram Vaswani of England, a recent winner in Amsterdam, and local Seppo Parkkinen. Seppo won almost 74,000 marks by finishing second, and Ram took home more than 55,000 marks for third place.

The prize pool of almost 400,000 Finnish marks and Jan's first prize were records for a Casino Ray tournament.

The fact that the final took so long was a tribute to the Casino Ray poker room, which has made its mark on the European poker circuit by staging tournaments that are very player-friendly. Even the smaller buy-in competitions have slow ante and blind increases, which give the more careful tournament players a better chance of survival.

There was a lot to like at the five-day finale to the tournament year. Casino Ray broke new ground with its closed circuit television presentation of the final tables. They were played on a raised table, were filmed by cameras using split-screen techniques, and were shown on a giant screen opposite the bar. The result was a first-class view of the action and a major advertisement for poker to the rest of the casino.

Closed circuit TV coverage of poker finals is becoming increasingly common in Europe, and Casino Ray's presentation, provided by a camera team that obviously knew the game, was excellent.

The tournament featured the last three EPPA ranking events of the year in stud, Omaha, and hold'em. There was a large group of visiting players who were looking for points to qualify for next March's *Super Bowl* final. It was inevitable that someone would have a bad-beat story to tell. Robert Kojfer of France, who had been in a qualifying position on the stud list for much of the year, was edged out by Danny Jordan of England, whose points for fifth place in the stud event earned him a seat.

The stud event was won by Simon Trumper of England — one of four wins for the visitors. Timo Tukkianen of Finland won the Omaha event, the hold'em/Omaha mixed event went to Barney Boatman of England, and the Soko tournament was won by Swede Peter Eichardt, who also won the best overall player prize.

All players had something to celebrate at the end-of-tournament Christmas party that was hosted by Casino Ray as a traditional finale to the tournament year. A good time was had by all.

The next major event at Casino Ray will be the *Midnight Sun* tournament in June.

Results of the *Helsinki Freezeout* were as follows:

1,000 marks Soko five-card stud
Entrants: 88
Prize pool: 259,000 marks
(42,000 Euro)

1. Peter Eichardt, Sweden 100,090 marks ..... (16,000 Euro)
2. Markku Laitinen, Finland 50,045
3. Arto Tiainen, Finland 37,534
4. Martti Salonaho, Finland 25,023
5. Matti Kuortti, Finland 15,014
6. Jeremias Kurkela, Finland 12,511
7. Jani Vilmunen, Finland 10,009
8. Hannu Helenius, Finland 1,300
9. Hannu Hakala, Finland 1,000

2,000 marks pot-limit Omaha
(EPPA ranking event)
Entrants: 60
Prize pool: 198,000 marks
(32,000 Euro)

1. Timo Tukiainen, Finland 75,380 marks ..... (117,000 Euro)
2. Reijo Manninen, Finland 37,690
3. Aki Pyysing, Finland 28,268
4. Pascal Perrault, France 18,845
5. J.P. Juhola, Finland 11,307
6. Michael Keiner, Germany 9,423
7. Lothar Landauer, Germany 7,538
8. Ross Boatman, England 2,600
9. Robert Kojfer, France 2,000

2,500 marks seven-card stud
(EPPA ranking event)
Entrants: 57
Prize pool: 240,000 marks
(38,000 Euro)

1. Simon Trumper, England 91,300 marks (141,000 Euro)
2. Jukka Hakala, Finland 45,650
3. Ossi Punju, Finland 34,238
4. Nic Szeremeta, England 22,825
5. Danny Jordan, England 13,695
6. Athena Jordan, England 11,413
7. Aki Pyysing, Finland 9,130
8. Rune Philipson, Finland 3,250
9. Kim Green, Finland 1000

7,500 marks no-limit hold'em
freezeout (EPPA ranking event)
Entrants: 53
Prize pool: 397,500 marks
(61,000 Euro)

1. Jan Hansen, Denmark 148,125 marks (22,000 Euro)
2. Seppo Parkkinen, Finland 74,063
3. Ram Vaswani, England 55,547
4. Jeremias Kurkela, Finland 37,031
5. Ken Lennard, Sweden 22,219
6. Kim Green, Finland 18,516
7. Erkki Vaarala, Finland 14,813
8. J.P. Juhola, Finland 9,750
9. Alex Kong, England 7,500

1,000 marks
hold'em/Omaha
Entrants: 69
Prize pool: 184,000 marks

1. Barney Boatman, England 72,680 marks
2. Kim Green, Finland 36,340
3. Andreas Krause, Germany 27,255
4. Per Hildebrand, Sweden 18,170
5. George Geary, England 10,902
6. Kasperi Pitkakangas, Finland .. 9,086
7. Aki Pyysing, Finland 7,268
8. Robert Kojfer, France 1,300
9. Markku Laitinen, Finland 1,000

2000 European Poker Tournaments

Pokerworld — Vienna; Feb. 14-20
Casinos Austria; Bregenz; Feb 24-27
Leap Day Double — Grosvenor Casino; Southampton; Feb. 28-29
Euro Finals of Poker — ACF; Paris; March 1-12
Vienna Spring Festival (including the fourth *European World Series of Poker Trial* and the *EPPA Super Bowl of Poker)* — Concord Card Casino; Vienna; March 14-28
Great Britain Hold'em Championship — Rainbow Casino; Birmingham; March 31-April 9
Spring Tournament — ACF; Paris; April 7-16
Irish Open — Merrion Square Club; Dublin; April 20-23
Salzburger Card Triathlon — Casinos Austria; Salzburg; April 27-29
Stakis 100 hold'em — Stakis Regency Casino; London; May 16-19
Torneo di Poker — Hit Casino Park; Nova Gorica, Slovenia; May 24-28
South of England Poker Festival (including the *UK Kalooki Championship*) — Grosvenor Casino; Leisureworld, Southampton; May 28-June 1
Austrian Masters — Concord Card Casino; Vienna; May 30-June 6
Midnight Sun Tournament — Casino Ray; Helsinki; June 12-18
Poker Masters — Casinos Austria; Seefeld; June 14-17
Summer Tournament — ACF; Paris; June 16-July 2
Pokerworld — Vienna; July 13-16 (or July 6-9)
Worthersee Trophy — Casinos Austria; Velden; July 20-23
Grosvenor UK Open — Grosvenor Casino; Luton; Aug. 7-13
Turkey, Greek Islands, and Italy Poker Cruise — Card Player; Aug. 5-18
Autumn Tournament — Casinos Austria; Bregenz; Aug. 31-Sept. 3
Autumn Tournament — ACF; Paris; Sept. 16-24
Austrian Classics — Concord Card Casino; Vienna; Sept. 26-Oct. 4
Poker EM— Casinos Austria; Baden; The European Seven-Card Stud Championship; Oct. 5-7
UK Masters — Rainbow Casino; Birmingham; dates to be announced
Pokerworld — Vienna; Oct. 19-22
Poker en Mer — Poker Cruise (IGO, Paris); Oct. 27-Nov. 2
Master Classics of Poker and Lido International — Holland Casinos; Amsterdam; Nov. 5-12
Poker Party — Casinos Austria; Seefeld; Nov. 10-11
Jackpot Tournament — Casinos Austria; Salzburg; Nov. 16
Winter Tournament — ACF; Paris; Dec. 1-10
Helsinki Freezeout — Casino Ray; Helsinki; Dec. 12-17



AUSTRALIA

Crown Casino in Melbourne, Australia, recently hosted the inaugural *Mike Comer Classic*, which consisted of a no-limit hold'em tournament and a pot-limit Omaha event. The no-limit hold'em event was sponsored by C.E.L. Music, which added $4,000 to the first-place prize. The winner of this event also was awarded a $5,000 gold bracelet.

The pot-limit Omaha event produced the largest prize pool ever for an Australian poker tournament — $195,000. Crown Casino added $5,000 to the first-place prize money.

Results were as follows:

$1,000 no-limit hold'em
Entrants: 53 • Prize pool: $57,000

1. Constantine Harach ..... $30,500 plus gold bracelet
2. Nick Assioti 7,950
3. Peter Mordaunt 4,240
4. George Mamacas 3,710
5. Tino Lecich 3,180
6. Mel Judah 2,650
7. Nino Ascenzio 2,120
8. Ulf Hansen 1,590
9. Paul Ravesi 1,060

$5,000 pot-limit Omaha (one rebuy)
Entrants: 29 • Prize pool: $195,000

1. Jeff Lisandra $100,000
2. Bill Argyros 47,500
3. Taskin Sahinkaya 22,800
4. Mike Ivin 15,200
5. Tony Guoga 9,500

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APRIL 7-17, 2000



New England Poker Classic Schedule

DAY	DATE	BUY-IN	EVENT
FRI.	APR. 7	$120	7-Card Stud
SAT.	APR. 8	$120	No Limit Hold'em w/ 1 Opt. Rebuy
SUN.	APR. 9	$220	7-Card Stud 8 or Better
MON.	APR. 10	$120	Limit Hold'em
TUES.	APR. 11	$120	7-Card Stud-Unlimited Rebuys w/ Add-ons
WED.	APR. 12	$220	Omaha 8 or Better
THUR.	APR. 13	$220	Limit Hold'em
FRI.	APR. 14	$220	7-Card Stud
SAT.	APR. 15	$330	Limit Hold'em
SUN.	APR. 16	$550	7-Card Stud
MON.	APR. 17	$220	No Limit Hold'em - Unlimited Rebuys w/ Add-ons

Each event will begin promptly at noon.
Schedule is subject to change and to Tribal Gaming Commission approval.

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BONUS TABLES!
7 am to 10 am & 7 pm to 10 pm
Two Consecutive
Natural 21's $25
KQ Suited $50
Suited Natural 21 $50
7 Card Charlie $100
Three 7's Suited $300
6-7-8- Suited $300

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Every Thursday in January
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EVERY NATURAL '21' PAYS
$25 TO $500! *

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PECHANGA Entertainment Center

SWEETHEART TUESDAY

BONUS TABLES!
7 am to 10 am, 1 pm to 4 pm, and 7 pm to 10 pm
Two Consecutive
Natural 21's $25
KQ Suited $50
Suited Natural 21 $50
7 Card Charlie $100
Three 7's Suited $300
6-7-8- Suited $300

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NEW TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

MON. 7pm	TUES. 7pm	WED. 7pm	THURS. 7pm	FRI. 7pm	SAT. 2pm	SUN. 2pm
$500 Added. $50 Buy-in. No Rebuys Hold'em.	$2,000 Guaranteed. $20 Buy-in. Rebuys 1 hr. Hold'em.	$500 Added. $50 Buy-in. No Rebuys. Hold'em.	$2,000 Guaranteed. $20 Buy-in. Rebuys 1hr. Omaha.	$2,000 Guaranteed. $20 Buy-in. Rebuys 1hr. Hold'em.	$1,000 Added. $50 Buy-in. No Rebuys. Hold'em.	$1,000 Added. $50 Buy-in. No Rebuys. Hold'em.
					7pm $2,000 Guaranteed. $20 Buy-in. Rebuys 1 hr. Hold'em.	7pm $500 Added. $50 Buy-in. No Rebuys. Omaha.

NEW! Pai Gow Poker - Progressive High Hand
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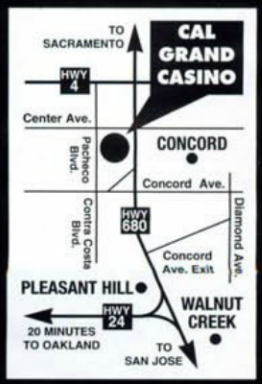
FREE Breakfast or Lunch* • FREE Hot Dogs! (Mon. Nights)
*Details available in the poker room.



CALIFORNIA GRAND CASINO

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Take the Concord Ave. or Pacheco Exit off HWY 680 or Pacheco Blvd. Exit from HWY 4. • 20 minutes to/from Oakland.

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Management reserves the right to modify or cancel promotions at any time. No purchase necessary.

GAMING NEWS

DEEP SOUTH GAMING SCENE

By Jan Fisher

At the **Grand Casino Coushatta** in Louisiana, there is a lot of poker activity. Relief Shift Manager Jacque Romero stated that several new promotions have been added to the current schedule of events. On the second and fourth Wednesday of the month, there is a hold'em tournament at 6:30 p.m. The buy-in is $35 and players start with $1,000 in tournament chips. There is one optional rebuy for which entrants receive $2,000 in chips. $1,000 is added to the prize pool. Players must register by 6 p.m. and these events are limited to the first 50 entrants. Players who already are in live games have the first opportunity to enter.

On Fridays from noon until midnight, there is a *Hot Seat, Cold Cash Giveaway* promotion. Players who are seated in games are eligible to win $100 an hour by having their table and seat number drawn.

The poker room's pot-limit games continue to attract a steady and loyal group of players. The games generally go from Friday morning through Sunday night, and often into Monday morning. There usually is more than one game, and a must-move rule is in effect to protect the main game at all times. The buy-in is $500, and the game is half Omaha high and half hold'em. The Omaha high blinds are $5-$10, while the hold'em blinds are $10-$20.

At the **Grand Casino Biloxi** in Mississippi, Cardroom Manager Tony Collins recently announced the reinstatement of Saturday afternoon tournaments. On the first Saturday of each month, there is limit hold'em event. It has a buy-in of $55 and one optional $50 rebuy. The tournament begins promptly at noon.

The Mississippi Gaming Commission has changed some of its laws. Effective immediately, casino personnel in the state are allowed to gamble in the casino where they are employed. For seven years, this has been a hot topic, especially with regard to poker rooms. During the commission's recent meeting, it was determined that it would be up to each individual casino property to decide whether or not to allow employees, including management and key personnel, to gamble on site.

RENO REPORT

By Susie Isaacs

Major tournaments along the Reno tournament trail are getting bigger and better. According to Reno poker leaders, it is a win-win situation for the players — who like to spend money while trying to win money — and the casinos, which like to make money. To attract even more players, casinos are making poker tournaments more and more enticing.

Reno Hilton's upcoming Pot of Gold ... Next up on the Northern Nevada tournament trail is the Reno Hilton's *Pot of Gold*, which will begin with a full day of satellites on Thursday, Feb. 24. "More of a good thing," stated Cardroom Manager Mike Gainey, referring to the decision to add a day to the tournament. The competition will continue daily through Saturday, March 4, and twilight tournaments will be offered every night at 7 p.m.

Pot of Gold events will include limit hold'em, no-limit hold'em, Omaha high-low split, and a combination of half hold'em and half Omaha high-low. Buy-ins will range from $100 to $330.

For those who can't wait for major tournament time, the Reno Hilton spreads 10 tournaments weekly. As an "eye-opener," a 9 a.m. $17 hold'em freezeout tournament is on the poker menu. Players begin play with $500 in chips and play two 20-minute rounds. The first round is $10-$20 limit hold'em and the last is no-limit. At the end of the 40 minutes, the player with the most chips wins all of the money. Regular evening tournaments include limit hold'em on Monday evenings, no-limit hold'em every Wednesday at 7 p.m., and Omaha every Sunday at 2 p.m.

Upcoming Peppermill Poker Tournament in a new location ... Billy V. recently called me and was very excited. He had been a bit apprehensive about changing anything significant about his major poker tournaments. He knew that he had a winning combination, and when the Peppermill "powers that be" informed him that he had to change the location of his tournaments, he wasn't necessarily pleased. As a matter of fact, he was concerned when he was informed that the Peppermill poker tournaments would be moved in time for the first competition of 2000.

After all, the majority of his players were used to the convention room on the second floor. The lighting is good and everything is fine there, so why change anything? He called me after he had just completed a tour of the new convention area that will serve as the new home of the Peppermill 2000 (and beyond) poker tournaments. "I am all jacked up!" he began. "And I'm not one bit worried anymore, because I *know* that the players are going to love it. I can't wait to see their faces when they see this setup. The area is 50 percent larger, so I can add as many tables as necessary as we continue to grow. The room has a 40-foot-high ceiling and its own bathrooms. It also has one enormous wall of windows. It's gorgeous! You can look out over the city and the Sierra Nevadas, and at night, the lighted city is a breathtaking sight. This is awesome, just awesome. I can't wait until March for my players to see this. I've never played in or even seen an area like this for a poker tournament.

"I predict that with this new space and a new car for the best all-around player, we're going to break all kinds of records!"

Boomtown — "Calling all cops" ... All policemen and policewomen are invited to participate in the annual *C.O.P.S.* (Concerns of Police Survivors) tournament at Boomtown Feb. 27-29. Also invited are all criminal justice agency personnel, who will have a great time playing poker while doing a great thing for a great charity.

The next "open to the poker-playing public" tournament at Boomtown will be the popular and fun *Mills Lane "Let's Get it On" Poker Tournament* March 14-19. Cardroom Manager Joe Bennett and the famous boxing referee/TV judge Mills Lane both are looking forward to welcoming poker players back to Boomtown.

MINNESOTA'S FIRST CARD CLUB OPENS APRIL 2000

Beautiful Canterbury Park Racetrack, just southwest of the Twin Cities, is now assembling the staff that will operate its new 50-table cardroom.

Applications are being accepted for the following positions:

Poker Dealers
Floor Supervisors
Chip Runners
Cage Manager
Cage Cashiers
Board Persons
Security Personnel

An excellent benefit package is offered, including health, dental, and life insurance, 401(k), employee stock purchase plan, and vacation and holiday pay.

Please contact Human Resources at:

Canterbury Park

1100 Canterbury Road, Shakopee, MN 55379
(612) 445-RACE
jobs@canterburypark.com



CALIFORNIA RAMBLINGS

Commerce Casino ... As part of an annual tradition, Commerce Casino will join many of its customers in celebration of Asian New Year during the first week of February. The casino extends wishes of good health, happiness, and prosperity to all patrons in the "Year of the Dragon."

Commerce Casino's beautiful new Crowne Plaza Hotel is presenting a progressive "work in progress" view for all commuters on the Santa Ana Freeway. The large new structure off the freeway creates a dynamic profile at the Washington Boulevard exit. In fact, as the project takes shape and definition, the sheer size and graceful curvature of its architecture commands viewing from thousands of commuters daily. With the ground floor and preliminary stories clearly defined, the hotel is on target for completion this fall. Reflecting Commerce Casino's commitment to world-class gaming and customer service, the new on-site Crowne Plaza Hotel will feature 200 luxurious rooms and suites, a pool, sundeck, spa, restaurant and bar, meeting and banquet rooms, and a new state-of-the-art tournament facility.

Speaking of tournaments, when *L.A. Poker Classic 2000* satellites and initial tournament events get under way, poker players across the board will reap the benefits of increased action, especially in Commerce Casino's top poker section. *L.A. Poker Classic* players can look forward to taking full advantage of the added amenities and convenience of the casino's new hotel during next year's *L.A. Poker Classic*.

Ocean's Eleven Casino ... *Super Bowl* Sunday will feature cash drawings totaling $5,000. The first drawing of $1,000 will be held at noon. Drawings will be held throughout the day, with the last drawing taking place at midnight for $1,500. All players at the casino will receive a complimentary *Super Bowl* T-shirt (while supplies last) and endless complimentary hors d'oeuvres. Winners will be determined by table and seat number drawings.

There will be a drawing at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 30 in the 21st Century Blackjack section. The winner will receive a Sea Doo

watercraft. All players who have any suited natural during the month of January (prior to the drawing) will have tickets entered.

The *Pan Pananza* tournament on Saturday, Feb. 5 and Sunday, Feb. 6 will have a guaranteed prize pool of $9,600 and a $150 buy-in. Players will receive $25 in chips per day — quarter kondition. Registration will take place from noon to 1:30 p.m. on Saturday. The high hand and the high score each day will receive $100 (from the prize pool). A complimentary dinner buffet will be served each day from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. A complimentary brunch buffet will be served on Sunday from 10 a.m. until noon. Friday, Feb. 4 will offer open play with a complimentary hors d'oeuvres buffet from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

On Valentine's Day — Monday, Feb. 14 — at 7 p.m., Ocean's Eleven will host a tag-team (any two will do) half hold'em and half Omaha high-low poker tournament with a $7,500 guarantee. The buy-in will be $60 ($10 entry fee) per person. There will be no rebuys or add-ons. A special buffet will be served and all of the lady players will receive a rose.

The Annual *Winter Jubilee* tournament will be held Feb. 25-27. Limit hold'em will be the event on Friday, Feb. 25 and Sunday, Feb. 27. The Saturday, Feb. 26 event will be Omaha high-low split. More details will appear in the next issue.

Ocean's Eleven now is spreading Mexican stud poker at all limits. Low-limit beginning games are spread on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Lake Elsinore Hotel and Casino ... Results of the recent *Fiesta of Roses* poker tournament were as follows:

$17 hold'em (rebuys) — $1,999 guaranteed
Entrants: 42
Prize pool: $1,999

1. Ken Cook $755
2. Gary Miller 380
3. Kim Alford 200
4. Norm Little 160
5. Not available 130
6. Frank Burke 130
7. Not available 100
8. Sal Bivalaqua 80
9. Chris Compton 64

$40 hold'em (rebuys) — $4,000 guaranteed
Entrants: 59
Prize pool: $4,000

1. Mike O'Brian $1,520
2. E.T. Higgens 760
3. Cliff Donnelly 400
4. Mike Lesle 320
5. John Eltz 280
6. Sam Shultz 240
7. George Macar 200
8. Wayne Smith 160
9. Carol Greenlee 120

$40 Omaha high-low (rebuys) — $4,000 guaranteed
Entrants: 42
Prize pool: $4,000

1. Richard Mensen $1,520
2. Larry Wilkin 760
3. Kamron Reizai 400
4. Mike Lesle 320
5. Joyce Mason 280
6. Rob Wengert 240
7. Joe Rivero 200
8. Not available 160
9. Fred Bell 120

Super Bowl weekend will be active at Lake Elsinore Hotel and Casino. Beginning on Friday, Jan. 28, there will be a $10,000-guaranteed tournament at 7:15 p.m. with a $60 buy-in, $15 entry fee,

COMMERCE CASINO

SUPER BOWL SUNDAY

Super Cash in a Flash

Over $100,000 up for grabs!

Hit a Super Cash in a Flash hand from 3:00pm until the end of the Superbowl game.

GAME	SUPER CASH
1-2 Hold'em	$ 12,000
1-2 Stud	$ 12,000
3, 6, 9 Hold'em	$ 35,000
3, 4, 6 Stud	$ 20,000
2-3 Lowball	$ 12,000
2, 3, 4, 5 Omaha/Pineapple	$ 15,000

Commerce Casino

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Management reserves the right to alter or cancel promotion at any time. No purchase necessary. See concierge for details. The posted amount will only be awarded to the first Cash in a Flash hand hit during the promo period.

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CRYSTAL PARK CASINO HOTEL

Millennium NEW **Guaranteed DAILY TOURNAMENTS**

11:00am Tournaments

Day	Event	Guaranteed	Buy-in/Re-buys
Mon	Limit-Hold'em	$2,100	$10+$5, $10 re-buys
Tue	Stud Hi-Lo	$2,100	$10+$5, $10 re-buys
Wed	Limit Hold'em	$2,100	$10+$5, $10 re-buys
Thu	Omaha Hi-Lo	$2,100	$10+$5, $10 re-buys
Fri	Limit Hold'em	$2,100	$10+$5, $10 re-buys

***BIG NIGHTS* 7:00pm Tournaments**

Mon	Limit-Hold'em	$3,500	$10+$5, $10 re-buys
Tue	No Limit-Hold'em	$3,500	$10+$5, $10 re-buys
Wed	Omaha Hi-Lo	$3,500	$10+$5, $10 re-buys
Thu	Stud Hi-Lo	$3,500	$10+$5, $10 re-buys
Fri	Bounty Limit Hold'em	$3,500	$15+$5, $10 re-buys

***BIG WEEKEND* 7:00pm Tournaments**

Sat	No Limit Hold'em	$4,000	$30+$10, 1 optional re-buy $20

Crystal Park Casino Hotel reserves the right to cancel or modify this promotion at any time. Must be 21 years of age or over.

CRYSTAL PARK Casino Hotel

On the 91 Fwy., between 710 & 110 Fwy., exit Alameda
123 E. Artesia Blvd.,
Compton, CA 90220
(310) 631-3838 (877) 631-3838

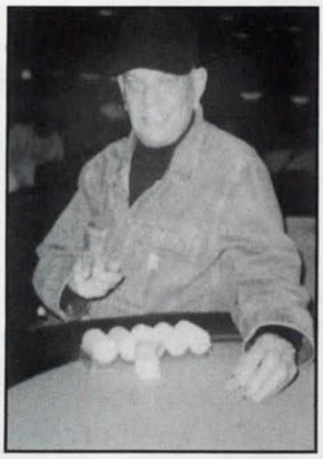
and one $50 rebuy. On Saturday, Jan. 29, there will be a $1,500-guaranteed freeroll tournament with no buy-in and no entry fee. There will be optional $10 rebuys and one optional $10 add-on. Sunday's *Super Bowl* party will begin at noon and will last until 9 p.m. From noon until kickoff, $100 cash will be given away every half-hour to seated players. NFL jerseys also will be given away. During the game, $200 will be given away per quarter, and $2,000 will be awarded for predicting the exact final score. After the game, another $100 per half-hour will be given away until 9 p.m.

Lake Elsinore is offering a *Monday Night Basketball Special*. During both the 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. games, $100 per half will be given away. Also, there will be a $100 exact final score giveaway for each game. Final score entries and squares can be obtained by playing in live-action games before the basketball games.

Casino San Pablo ... The eight-event *Golden Gate Classic* poker tournament, Jan. 29-Feb. 5, will feature competition in limit hold'em, seven-card stud, and Omaha high-low split. Buy-ins will range from $50 (plus $10 entry fee) to $200 (plus $20 entry fee). Three of the events will have no rebuys, while the others will feature either one rebuy or multiple rebuys and an add-on. Guaranteed prize money will range from $10,000 to $40,000.

Hollywood Park Casino ... From Jan. 21 until March 24, players can earn free entry into the final event at the *Sport of Kings* tournament. It's a freeroll tournament that will take place on Monday, March 27. Players in the *Poker and Ponies* daily poker tournaments will be able to accumulate points, and the top 50 point earners will win entry into the freeroll.

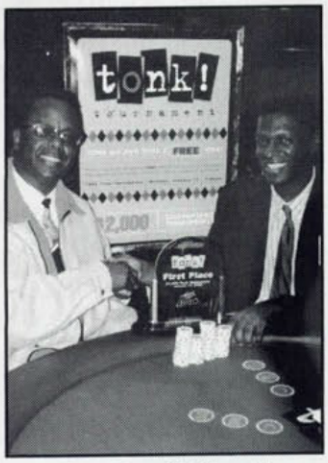
On *Super Bowl* Sunday, Jan. 30, more than $50,000 in cash will be given away. Seated players will receive their chance to win by having a perfect 15-spot parlay card. In addition to the grand prize bonus, each person will have a chance to win $1,000 by guessing the exact final score, or $1,000 for having the closest-to-perfect 15-spot parlay card. More than $3,000 in sports memorabilia also will be given away. The event also will feature hot dog and beer specials and beer girls.



Mel Fond

Mel Fond was the winner of the most recent weekly seven-card stud high-low split *Winner-Take-All* tournament that takes place on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. The prize pool was $2,400. By popular demand, the weekly Jim D.

no-limit hold'em tournament begins at 6:30 p.m. instead of 6 p.m.



Stan Pots (left) and tournament host Roger Myers

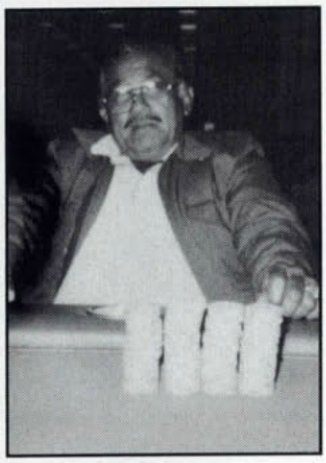
Stan Pots was the big winner in the first *Tonk Tournament Invitational* recently; 134 players participated in this $2,000 freeroll event.



Jovito Rubio (left) and California games floorman Cesar Araugo

Jovito "Obet" Rubio was the recent winner of the *Players Club Invitational Super Pan Nine Freeroll Tournament*. A total of 168 players participated. Obet took home $1,000 for his efforts.

The casino will be celebrating Chinese New Year starting the first week in February. To commemorate the Year of the Dragon, a set of limited-edition $2.50, $5, and $8 chips has been produced.



Andres Bello

The buy-in for the weekly $2,000-guaranteed Mexican poker tournament has been reduced to $10 plus $5 entry fee. Andres Bello recently won first place and more than $800.

The *After Work Jazz Cool Down* on Tuesdays at 7 p.m. will celebrate Black History Month and Youth in Jazz with the Derek Yellin Quintet on Feb. 1, and on Feb. 8, the Multi High School Jazz Band will make an appearance. There's no cover charge. *Take a Trip Down Memory Lane, a Tribute to Sam Cooke*, with Mike Majic Boyd, Al Wilson, and The Unknown Comic, appears every Saturday at 9 p.m. in The Breeder's Cup Lounge on the casino main floor.

Lucky Chances Casino ... recently held its $5,000 freeroll *Top 40* event, which featured Lucky Chances' best tournament players competing for an all-expense-paid trip to Las Vegas and a $2,000 entry into the *Tournament*

Spring Poker Tournament

Friday, March 24 - Sunday, April 2, 2000

Friday, March 24
Limit Hold 'Em
$120 Buy-in; $100 Re-buy

Saturday, March 25
Limit Hold 'Em
$225 Buy-in; $200 Re-buy

Sunday, March 26
No Limit Hold 'Em
$225 Buy-in, No Re-buy

Monday, March 27
Limit Hold 'Em
$225 Buy-in, No Re-buy

Tuesday, March 28
Omaha Hi-Lo Split
$120 Buy-in; $100 Re-buy

Wednesday, March 29
No Limit Hold 'Em
"Terminator"
$120 Buy-in; $100 Re-buy

Thursday, March 30
Limit Hold 'Em
$120 Buy-in; $100 Re-buy

Friday, March 31
No-Limit Hold 'Em
$330 Buy-in; No Re-buy

Saturday, April 1
Limit Hold 'Em
"Championship" Event
$540 Buy-in; No Re-buy

Sunday, April 2
Limit Hold 'Em
$120 Buy-in, $100 Re-buy, $100 Add-on

Overall Winner



2000 Daewoo Lanos

Second Chance Tournaments
6 pm Every Evening • $120 Buy-in; No Re-buy
Seating may be limited • Registration opens at 5 pm



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Poker limits from $2/4 to $100/200.

Tournament Schedule

Day	Date	Game	Buy-in
Wed.	Jan. 26	• Spread Limit Hold'Em	$25 $20RBs/1st hr
Sun.	Jan. 30	• Hold'Em	$25 RBs/1st hr
Mon.	Jan. 31	• Pan	$49 w/RBs
Mon.	Jan. 31	★ Omaha High/Low Split	$49 w/$40RB
Tues.	Feb. 1	★ Omaha High/Low Split	$59 w/$50RB
Wed.	Feb. 2	• Spread Limit Hold'Em	$49 w/$40RB
Sun.	Feb. 6	• Hold'Em	$25 $20RBs/1st hr
Mon.	Feb. 7	• Pan	$49 w/$40RBs
Mon.	Feb. 7	★ Hold'Em	$59 w/$50RB
Tues.	Feb. 8	★ Omaha High/Low Split	$59 w/$50RB
Wed.	Feb. 9	• Spread Limit Hold'Em	$49 w/$40RB
Sun.	Feb. 13	• Hold'Em	$25 $20RBs/1st hr
Mon.	Feb. 14	• Pan	$49 w/$40RBs
Mon.	Feb. 14	★ Hold'Em	$59 w/$50RB

•11:15 am. start ★7:15 pm. start

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of Champions. These players earned points in weekly tournaments, and the top 40 played Omaha high-low, limit hold'em, seven-card stud, and no-limit hold'em in the freeroll. When the smoke cleared, Ted Grose had emerged victorious.



Ted Grose (left) and Tournament Director Matt Savage

On *Super Bowl* Sunday, a party will be held that will feature a $2,000 cash giveaway during the game, free T-shirts, and hot dogs and sodas for $1.

Viejas Casino ... Louis J. Phillips, who has extensive business and academic background in corporate and gaming management, has been named chief executive officer of Viejas Business Enterprises by the Viejas Tribal Council, Tribal Chairman Anthony R. Pico announced recently. Phillips succeeds John Winkelman, who will continue to serve as a business advisor to the Viejas Band, Pico said.

As Viejas Business Enterprises CEO, Phillips, former president and chief operating officer of Harrah's Nevada, has operational responsibility for all Viejas tribal-owned businesses. Tribal businesses include Viejas Casino and Turf Club; Viejas Outlet Center; Borrego Springs Bank; Ma-Tar-Awa Recreational Vehicle Park; Viejas Springs RV Park; and the Viejas partnership with Commodore Holdings Limited for the operation of the soon-to-be-launched Enchanted Sun cruise ship that will operate between the Ports of San Diego and Rosarito, Mexico.



Normandie Marketing Manager Dan Seebold shows off one of the 20 Hondas that will be given away over a 20-week period (one per week) at Normandie Casino. Drawing tickets are given out on the hour to seated players.

Normandie Casino ... The 99-cent menu has returned to the casino. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner specials are featured in the poker section seven days a week as follows: breakfast



Thuy Le Che accepts congratulations from Normandie Marketing Manager Dan Seebold for being the first of 20 Honda winners.

from 2 a.m. until 11 a.m.; lunch from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m.; and dinner from 4 p.m. until 11 p.m.



Normandie Casino Employees of the Month — Angelita Sunga (left) and Michael Tsue

In other news, Michael Tsue, a pai gow shift manager, was elected January's employee of the month, and Angelita Sunga, a chip counter, won that honor for the month of February.

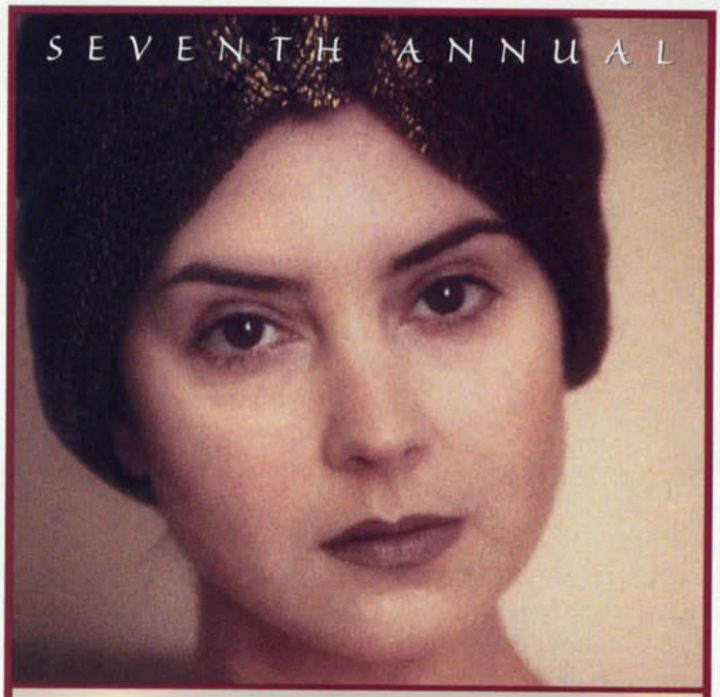
The Bicycle Casino ... The seventh annual *Queen of Hearts* tournament will commence on Feb. 6. For $8, ladies can enjoy a little shopping, a delicious buffet, a special gift, and, of course, great poker fun. On Feb. 13, the ladies are invited to bring their beaus to the second annual *King and Queens* tournament. This popular half hold'em-half stud tag-team event will feature $3,000 added to the $7,500 expected prize pool. Buy-ins and entries are $55 per person.

More than $25,000 will be given away Feb. 28-29 during the *Millennium Leap Year* promotion, in which there will be around-the-clock drawings and rollover drawings. Players must be playing when the tickets are handed out and must be present to win.

The Bicycle Casino currently is the only location where the *Challenge Cup of Poker* United States trials are being held. Three are planned before the *Challenge Cup* in Bregenz, Austria. Everyone is encouraged to enter this prestigious event. The first heads-up trial will take place Feb. 14-18. Games played will be limit hold'em, Omaha eight-or-better, seven-card stud, pot-limit hold'em, and pot-limit Omaha.

February is *Classic High-Low* month at The Bicycle Casino. Featuring the games of Omaha high-low, stud high-low, and crazy pineapple, players will be eligible to receive drawing tickets good for a $10,000 drawing on March 1. Also on tap will be a $30,000-guaranteed *Classic High-Low* tournament Feb. 17-20, which will include a hold'em high-low event.

The *Treasure Hunt* is on. Players can get a drawing ticket by getting the right hand in their favorite California game, and could have a chance at thousands of dollars by picking the right treasure chest. And there are more ways to win. By collecting 10 tickets, players automatically are eligible to play in the *Super Pan 9 Over $5,000 Freeroll*. Four super pan 9 freeroll events will take place on Feb. 7, 14, 21, and 28. Official rules and details for this and other events are available from any floorperson or at the Welcome Center.



Queen of Hearts
TOURNAMENT

$3,500 Hold'em Freeroll*
Sunday, February 6 at 2:15p.m.

Poker, Brunch and a Royal Gift! Play for a $3,500 Prize Pool and a 1st Place prize of $1,500! Browse our Specialty Shops at 10 a.m. A delicious buffet will be served from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.



In Person: Susie Isaacs
Signing her first book MS. POKER: UP CLOSE & PERSONAL

THE BICYCLE CASINO

7301 Eastern Ave., Bell Gardens, CA 90201 • (562) 806-4646

The Bicycle Casino reserves the right to cancel or modify this promotion at its sole discretion. *An $8 entry fee admits you to all the action!

VEGAS NEWS AND VIEWS

By Steve Radulovich

Plaza ... No-limit hold'em tournaments currently are being held every Tuesday and Friday at 7 p.m. The buy-in is $20, and there are $10 rebuys and a $10 add-on. Players may reserve seats in these tournaments by calling the poker room and asking for Shawn.

Station Casinos ... Details for the *$100,000 Poker Plus* tournament at all four Las Vegas Station Casinos properties — Palace Station, Sunset Station, Texas Station, and Boulder Station — currently are being finalized.

While a specific date for the tournament has not yet been finalized, it will take place sometime between May 1 and May 14 at one of the four Station Casinos properties. The time and location of the tournament will be posted in each poker room during the qualifying period, which is March 1 through April 30.

To qualify for this tournament, a minimum of 35 hours of live-action play must be logged during the qualifying period by each player. Qualifying time may be logged at any of the four Station Casinos poker rooms or combination thereof.

Each player who logs 35 hours of live-action play will receive $400 in tournament chips. Each player who logs 40 hours or more of live-action play will receive $500 in tournament chips.

The total payout in the tournament will be a minimum of $100,000 — $85,000 in tournament prize money and $15,000 in drawings. The tournament will pay out prize money as follows:

- First place — $20,000
- Second place — $10,000
- Third place — $6,000
- Fourth place — $5,000
- Fifth-Sixth place — $4,000 each
- Seventh-Eighth place — $2,500 each
- Ninth-10th place — $2,000 each
- 11th-20th place — $1,000 each
- 21st-30th place — $700 each
- 31st-50th place — $500 each

Total — $85,000

Tournament participants also will be eligible for drawings totaling $15,000. Each property will hold a tournament drawing in its poker room prior to the tournament that will consist of 15 drawings for $250 each. Each tournament participant will be given one drawing ticket that he or she must deposit in the *Poker Plus* drawing drum at one of the four poker rooms.

Watch this column for the specific date and time of the tournament. Complete rules are available in the poker rooms of the four participating Station Casinos properties.

Palace Station ... A $53,743 hold'em bad-beat jackpot was hit recently when John Konishi's four fives were beaten by Patty Devine's straight flush. Konishi won $26,872, Devine took home $13,436, and the five other players at the table each pocketed $2,687.

Stratosphere ... Live-action $2-$10 hold'em now is being spread every Tuesday night.

Sam's Town ... Poker Room Manager Dick Gatewood reports that Sharon Dingfelder, a prop player at Sam's Town since June of 1999, accomplished what she calls the "Grand Slam of Poker" by making a royal flush in each of the four suits in the same year. She did it in a six-month period of time, and none of the royals was made in Omaha.

♠ ❤ ♣ ◆

The poker room now is spreading $1-$4 hold'em and *all* hold'em games have a $2 maximum rake.

♠ ❤ ♣ ◆

In other news, the $100 million renovation at Sam's Town is on schedule and will be completed before the end of the year.

New Frontier ... The poker room's *Dog-Gone-Eesst Biweekly Poker Tournament* will continue in February. The next tournament, seven-card stud, will be held on Sunday, Feb. 13 at 1 p.m. For free entry, players must log 30 hours of live-action play from Feb. 1 through Feb. 12.

Players who do not accumulate the required number of hours for free entry may enter the tournament for a $25 buy-in. The tournament features $10 rebuys, a $10 add-on, and $500 in guaranteed prize money.

♠ ❤ ♣ ◆

Bingo Poker, a new poker room promotion, will start on Feb. 1. In this promotion, a player can win up to $200 by making specified hands on his *Bingo Poker* card. Complete details and further information are available in the poker room.

Big jackpot hit ... Ronald Moore, a restaurant owner in Salem, Oregon, recently won $1.5 million at Binion's Horseshoe when he hit the jackpot on a *Wheel of Fortune* quarter machine after investing about $20 in it.

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Cappelletti on ... TOURNAMENTS

MICHAEL CAPPELLETTI

No-Limit Turn Test

Playing in a no-limit hold'em tournament or satellite, what do you do "on defense" after hitting an unusually good turn (fourth) card?

The following quiz assumes that you are playing in the early stages of a no-limit hold'em tournament in which the blinds currently are $10-$20. While in your big blind, all of your opponents fold around to the small blind, who makes it $50 to play. You defend. Both your opponent and you have about $3,000 in front of you. After each of the following flops (hands A-E), your opponent goes on the offensive with a $75 bet, which you call (in limit poker, you sometimes would raise). On all five hands, you hit a good turn card. On all five hands, your opponent bets $100 after this fourth card. How do you proceed with each of the following hands?

Your Hand	First Four Boardcards
(Suited cards are underlined)	
A. K-J	K-10-9-Q
B. 7-4	6-3-2-5
C. Q-10	10-9-7-Q
D. A-Q	K-J-3-9 (four-flush)
E. 6-4	J-10-4-6 (four-flush)

Before reading further, decide how you would proceed with each of these hands. Then, read on.

My opinion is that with hands A and B, you should tend to make a "measured raise" — about twice the previous bet; in this scenario, about $200. You should not make a big raise that is likely to cause your opponent to fold. Hands such as these do not grow on trees. Although pulling in your opponent involves some risk of getting outdrawn, that risk probably is substantially less than the ever-present luck factor in most hold'em hands. Your present strategy should be to try to make hay while (you think) the sun is shining. An exception would be when you have reason to believe that your opponent is highly likely to call a big raise, in which case, you would raise whatever you think he would call. Against certain players with whom you have a "history" of aggressiveness, you might push your stack in with hand A (or any "one-carder").

The big difference in the first two hands is that with hand B, you would welcome a big reraise (and would be happy to go all in), but with hand A, you currently have second nuts. Although you generally like your chances with hand A, you might have some reservations about facing an all-in reraise (which might mean that the nut hand is out against you — and might result in an early exit for you).

Note that raising $200 accomplishes most of your strategic objectives. It makes your opponent pay more to see the last card and it gets more money into a pot that currently is small. But the raise does not pressure your opponent into folding unless he has nothing (in which case, he would not be calling you later). And, of course, your raise allows your opponent to make a big reraise. Finally, if the last card compromises your holdings, you might fold if there's a big bet without great loss.

The main negative in making the "measured raise" is that it grabs the initiative and makes a bluff effort by some opponents less likely. If you are playing against a ferocious bull, you might do better by merely calling, hoping for a big score after the last card. But raising the stakes now also might tempt a bull to try something now or after the last card.

It often is a matter of delicate judgment as to whether you will make more money by raising after the turn or by waiting (calling) and hoping for a bet after the last card. But unless your



opponent makes a large last-card bet, you do not rate to make more money by just calling. If your opponent checks after the last card or bets less than $200, you would rather have raised after the turn (especially if it fits into your overall choreography — see below).

With hand C, I also would make a measured raise ($200 on this hand) to get more money into a pot that I am a favorite to win, and also to test the waters. Once other players get the message that you sometimes make small raises with big hands (such as those above), they will be less likely to bluff you. Since I probably would fold if there was a large reraise, there is something to be said for not raising (but note that you have only two nut outs).

With hand D, you should simply call and let luck take its course. Any raise to win a few bucks by grabbing the initiative and perhaps stealing a small pot would be grossly "penny wise and pound foolish." If you were to raise, it would serve you right if you were reraised all in; you probably would have to fold and would lose a good opportunity for a "home run" (you have 10 nut outs). One of the main strategies in no-limit is to patiently wait for a big swing hand when you have the nuts. Both hands C and D have potential for a big swing if you hit — acting last after a betting opponent.

We cannot discuss these first four hands without taking a look at the big picture. First, it is important to note that these hands have not yet reached the critical or committed stage. The amounts bet thus far are small compared to your total stack size; either party can quit if he smells trouble. With two good players, it is very much a "cat and mouse" situation. Second, a lot depends on what is happening at your table. It is not unusual for a majority of players at a table to seemingly adhere to a "usual bet" structure — such as making it "the usual $100 to go" before or after the flop. That is a big advantage to the better players, since there is less skill in a game in which everyone makes big bets. If most players bet as if there were gradually increasing betting limits each round, bad luck would have less impact, and the better players would have more time for their skills to prevail.

Generally, in no-limit, it is clearly an advantage to control or influence the motus operendi at your table. A dominant player often improves his control or leadership by introducing or supporting the use of a pseudostructure — in which the "usual" or typical bets at that particular table fit into his game plan. Whenever a respected player makes a small raise, that seems to help set the tone and pattern for "slow going" at the table.

Although the predictability of your making frequent measured raises might be considered a weakness, note that uniformity is the master disguise. If many or most of your power sequences begin with a two-times or three-times bet or raise, not only will your opponents tread more carefully after your smaller bets and raises, they also might be inclined (programmed) to give up some cheap steals.

Notwithstanding all of the above, when I recently held hand E (6♣ 4♣) in a similar heads-up situation against a very aggressive player, I pushed my stack in (about 10 times more than was in the pot). During the two minutes that he mulled it over, I consoled myself that no matter what he had, I would have some winning outs. Before he folded, he stated that he "knew" (Wrong!) that I had just made a four-flush in diamonds (the board had the 6♦ 4♦). Then, he showed me his hand, K-J. But he did well to fold, since I was a big favorite.

I chose not to make a measured raise or a $400-$500 raise because against an aggressive player, I would have had a big problem if I was reraised. Since there were many possible problem cards on the river (last card), I also would have had a big problem if he made any big bet. Better that he should have to guess than I. Thus, part of my payoff was "problem avoidance."

Was it rash of me to go all in on two low pair (plus a flush draw) at such an early stage of the tournament? Part of the calculation is the fact that I have a tight image, and my opponent will fold a high percentage of the time. How often will I knock myself out of the tournament with this type of gambit? Perhaps about one time in five? Thus, judging by the amount of chips I won, it was rash. But I also "won" an all-in gambit with psychological overtones (with potential future value). When playing no-limit, image is important. In no-limit hold'em, it is not necessarily rash to occasionally act rashly.♦





Sports

CHUCK SIPPL

Weak Coaches Don't Win Super Bowls

I am writing this column just prior to the start of this season's NFL playoffs. And this year's run for the *Super Bowl* is a little unusual. The defending AFC and NFC champions, Denver and Atlanta, both ravaged by key injuries, were long gone before the drive for the playoffs even began in earnest. Two *Super Bowl*-caliber coaches, Jimmy Johnson of Miami and Mike Holmgren of Seattle, are trying to make it to the *Super Bowl* in Atlanta with 9-7 teams that appear to be far from *Super Bowl* caliber. And the only other coaches in this year's playoff tournament who have even been to the *Super Bowl* are Bobby Ross, whose Chargers lost 49-26 to the 49ers in one of the more embarrassing routes in *Super Bowl* history, and Dick Vermeil, whose Eagles lost 27-10 to Oakland 20 years ago.

So, this year's playoffs should provide a test of one of my favorite subjective *Super Bowl* theories — *weak coaches don't win super bowls*. Now, before you start citing Barry Switzer, Mike Ditka, and Hank Stram, "hear" me out.

Vince Lombardi, Tom Landry, Don Shula, Chuck Noll, Bill Walsh, Joe Gibbs, Bill Parcells, Jimmy Johnson, and Mike Shanahan have combined to win 22 of the 33 previous *Super Bowls*. Because I like Mike Holmgren and think that he might have another title or two in him, I'm going to include his triumph with the Packers and make it 23 of the 33 *Super Bowls* won by Hall of Fame-caliber coaches. (Throw the legendary George Allen into that group, and the group also accounts for fully one-third, 11 of 33, of the *Super Bowl losses*, eight of them vs. another coach in the same elite group. But, I digress.)

The other 10 *Super Bowl* championships were captured by Weeb Ewbank, Hank Stram, Don McCafferty, John Madden, Tom Flores (two), Mike Ditka, George Seifert (two), and Barry Switzer. Ewbank won with Joe Namath and the Jets after he already had two NFL titles with the Baltimore Colts under his belt. Hank Stram learned from his loss in *Super Bowl I* to Lombardi and then sent Bud Grant to his first loss three years later. McCafferty, who took over the Colts after Don Shula accepted a big-bucks deal to move to Miami, was universally praised by players and assistants before his promising career as a mentor was cut short by an untimely heart attack. Madden also had more titles in the pipeline if he could have handled the stress. I don't necessarily regard Flores as a strong coach, but he bested the highly emotional Dick Vermeil to win his first

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championship, and therefore couldn't exactly be termed a "weak" coach before he later upset Joe Gibbs' Redskins for his second ring (I still consider his victory over Gibbs as one of the biggest "coaching upsets" in the *Super Bowl*). Ditka was a strong coach on an intimidating team with the Bears. The underappreciated Seifert took over the mighty Niners from Walsh and posted the best-ever winning percentage in NFL history, and this year has begun proving that it was no fluke. And Barry Switzer, whom I do regard as a weak coach, took over the ready-made Dallas machine and was fortunate enough to be paired against fellow *Super Bowl* neophyte Bill Cowher, with Switzer failing to cover with the "Boys" after predecessor Jimmy Johnson had done so twice.

So, when this year's *Super Bowl* pairing is determined, it might prove useful to ask yourself, while trying to look forward into the future, whether a coach will be considered a Hall of Fame-caliber coach or will be "viewed" as a weak coach in the pantheon of those who made the *Super Bowl*. Before making a final decision regarding my choice of wagering sides, I always ask, "Which of these opposing coaches, from the perspective of history, will be viewed to be the superior coach?" That's generally a good way to bet in *Super Bowls*.

Obviously, the answer regarding the coaches is not always so apparent. Of the losing coaches in the 33 *Super Bowls*, we previously mentioned that eight losses were sustained by elite coaches who were facing other elite coaches. And other pairings were difficult to read before the game, such as Hank Stram vs. Bud Grant in *Super Bowl IV*, McCafferty vs. Landry, Vermeil vs. Flores, George Seifert in his first *Super Bowl* vs. Dan Reeves, and Switzer vs. Cowher.

But 12 of the *Super Bowl* losses have been sustained by three coaches — four each by Bud Grant, Mary Levy, and Dan Reeves. Truly, this trio was unable to get some high-quality teams over the hump. By repeating their big-game mistakes, they consistently lost to coaches who unquestionably provided a better spark for their own teams on game day. For this trio, I believe each's place in *Super Bowl* infamy is well-deserved — Grant for stoically refusing to adjust his defense to the situation, Levy for being a better talker and philosopher than hard-nosed football coach, and Reeves for being so cold and uptight that his teams always played cold and uptight with the title on the line.

And there is another list of coaches who (history has revealed) were overmatched on *Super Bowl* Sunday. Start off with Oakland's John Rauch vs. Vince Lombardi in *Super Bowl II*. Red Miller's Broncos never had much of a chance against Tom Landry's Cowboys. Ray Malavasi (who took over the Rams for the fired George Allen) clearly was outclassed by Chuck Noll. Forrest Gregg of Cincy was no intellectual match for Bill Walsh. The eccentric, note-scribbling Raymond Berry did a superb job of winning three road playoff games with his Patriots, but clearly and literally, he lacked the force of Ditka's Bears. Sam Wyche and the Bengals did manage to force Bill Walsh to the wire, but only because San Francisco missed a 19-yard field goal and gave up a kickoff-return touchdown (Wyche's offense never got into the end zone in a 20-16 49er win). And if Bobby Ross' Chargers ever had a clue about how to play the 49ers in *Super Bowl XXIX*, they still are keeping it a secret. Don't look for any of the losing coaches mentioned in this paragraph to make the Hall of Fame (as coaches, that is).

Going into this year's playoffs, Wade Phillips, Jeff Fisher, Bobby Ross, Norv Turner, Chan Gailey, Dennis Green, Jimmy Johnson, Mike Holmgren, Jim Mora, Tom Coughlin, Tony Dungy, and Dick Vermeil all have a chance to win the *Super Bowl*. As mentioned, Johnson and Holmgren have done it before, but appear to be hard-pressed this year to do it again.

So, when we get to the final two, try "looking forward" into what history will be. If you know your coaches, you might be able to avoid a lot of grind-it-out handicapping in order to find the eventual name on your *Super Bowl* betting ticket.◆

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VIDEO POKER INSIGHTS

DAN PAYMAR

The Investment Counselor

If you have some discretionary funds, you may be open to some advice on how to make wise investments. After taking a quick look at some of your options, I'll explain each of them further.

Let's start by looking at investment A, one of the safest places for your money for either the short or long term. There are no negative swings except for a very modest house vigorish, and almost zero risk of ruin. On the other hand, the positive swings are either very small or nonexistent. There's no excitement here. The best that can be said for it is that you don't have to study any strategy.

Then, there's investment B. Bankroll fluctuations and risk of ruin are modest, but most people experience a loss of $2 to $5 for each $100 invested. With a little study, those losses usually can be reduced to less than 1 percent. To make this a good investment, however, it requires a large amount of cash, lots of serious study and practice, and at least a modicum of acting ability. Even then, it's hard to get more than 1 percent expected gain, and there's always a risk of losing your entire investment.

Now, step over here and we'll check out investment C, which requires no study or practice at all. The attraction to most people is the quick turnaround on each investment, which may be of almost any size that you choose, but which carries with it a higher risk of losing all of your capital. It's easy to hold your average losses to less than 2 percent of your investment, and although there are occasional positive fluctuations, there *never* is any long-term upside potential. Some people make very unwise investments, thus greatly increasing their losses.

Then, there's the very popular investment S. In this one, you are competing with the other investors, so you have to be better than the average person at making the good choices from the myriad of options, and enough better to overcome the vigorish. Thousands of people make money at it, but many times that number lose money. The gain or loss rate varies irregularly, and there is no way to determine the long-term expectation.

And in this corner, we see investment P. As in S, you are competing with other investors, and the ones with the most skill at evaluating each situation will be the long-term winners. It takes years of study and practice to be able to consistently make significant gains.

Well, how about investment R? Again, no study or practice is required in spite of the wide variety of options, and each investment may be very small or hundreds of dollars. The drawback is an expected loss rate of 1 to 10 cents of each dollar invested, or perhaps even

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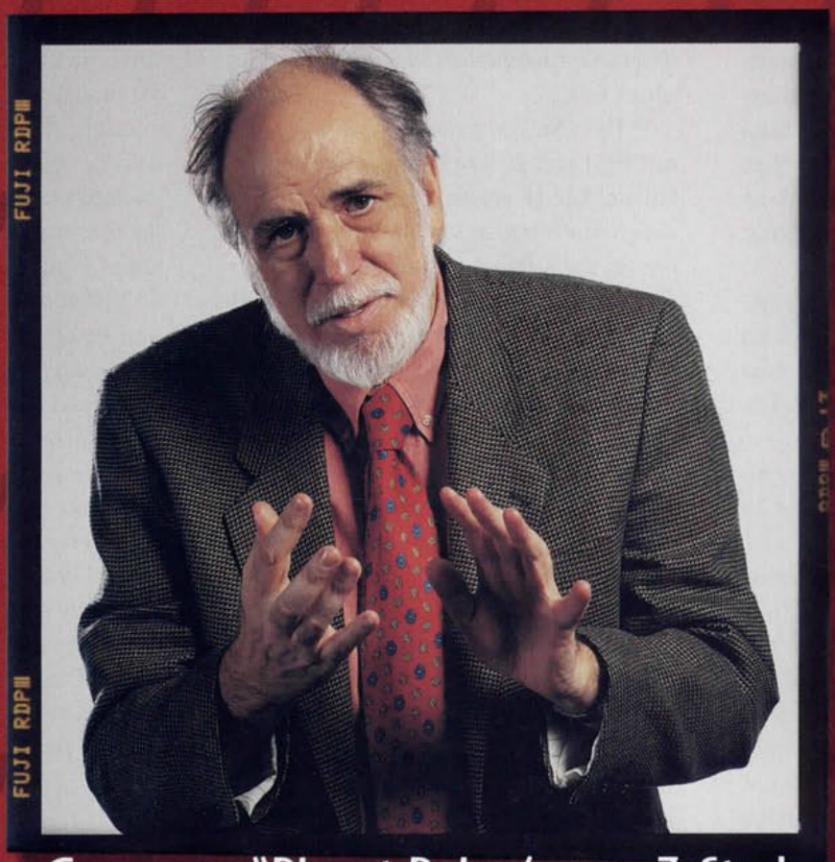

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more in some companies. In rare cases, there is upside potential, but it takes some study to recognize such situations.

This brings us to investment V. As is the case with R, V offers a wide range of investment sizes and options. Consequently, many people treat it the same as investment R, but there are many companies that offer much lower loss rates, and some offer a wide variety of investments with a very real expectation of long-term gain. It does take some study and practice to achieve that expectation, but not nearly as much as for investment B above, and an acting ability rarely is necessary.

There are many other types of investments available, some of which offer an expectation of long-term gain, but nearly all require much study and follow-up to achieve that gain.

Have you figured out yet what each of these investments is? Allow me to explain.

A. This is the ATM at your own bank. You can deposit your money into a checking account, where it is quickly available but there's no growth, and the fees (vigorish) slowly nibble away at it. A savings account can be either short- or long-term; there's growth, but not nearly enough to even keep up with inflation. A CD is long-term, and although the growth is greater, it still may not keep up with inflation, and your money is less readily accessible. Still, the bank is a good place for temporary storage of discretionary funds.

B. Now, we've moved into a casino to the blackjack table. Most players get a return of about 95% to 98%. A good basic strategy player may get from 98% to 100%. With lots of study and practice, a sufficient bankroll, and a good "tourist act," a card counter may get 101% or perhaps as much as 102% return. Very few counters are very successful. Some overplay their bankrolls and go broke, and some are tagged as counters by the casino and barred from further play. It's a tough way to make an easy living.

C. We're still in the casino, but this time, we're playing craps. If you stick with the pass or don't pass bets, you hold the house edge to about 1.4%. The game never can yield 100% return. Your risk of ruin is certain with extended play. There's only one workable strategy for craps — keep your money in your pocket!

S. Obviously, this is the stock market. It's what keeps industry going, but the large ups and downs make it simply a gamble for most players. The "vigorish" is the broker's fee on each trade. Further discussion would be out of place here.

P. By now, you probably have figured out that this is live table poker. Far be it from me to try to compete with this magazine's many knowledgeable writers on the subject, other than to reconfirm that it takes considerable study and skill to be a long-term winner.

R. This is the "no-brainer" reel slot machine. There's no way to determine the payback, which may be anywhere from 75% to 99%. In rare cases, a progressive jackpot may result in a long-term expectancy of more than 100%, but with big bankroll fluctuations and high risk of ruin. Charles Lund writes about a class of "banking" games, however, that sometimes may offer more than 100% expectancy in the short term (look for his book, *Robbing the One-Armed Bandits*, or read his column in *Video Poker Times*). But even if you can beat the banking games, it's mostly a recreational pursuit, since there never will be enough attractive situations to make any real money at it.

V. If you haven't figured this one out by now, you're reading the wrong column. Although the majority of games offer less than 100% return, you can find hundreds of video poker machines in Southern Nevada and a few other parts of the country that offer more than 100% return on the game itself. Games offering more than 100.7% are readily available, and occasionally there may be games offering up to 103% payback. Slot club rebates, comps, and promotions are the gravy.

True, playing to win requires some study and practice, but not nearly as much as for blackjack or other "investments" with positive expectation. The real beauty of video poker is that in any properly regulated jurisdiction, you can determine the game's maximum payback from the payoff schedule posted on each machine. This also allows you to minimize your losses and stretch your bankroll if you decide to play where 100%-plus games are not available.

There are quite a few professional players actually making a living playing video poker, but that requires more study and a large bankroll. You may have heard that the pros mostly wait for a progressive jackpot to get big enough, then hit en masse. While this may have been true 10 years ago, there no longer are enough such situations for the number of players watching for them. Now, they mostly take advantage of promotions that may add several percent to the payback. On rare occasions, an ill-conceived promotion has increased the payback on many games to 130% or more.

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My columns will help to improve your expectation at video poker, but why wait? Get a jump-start with my 198-page book, Video Poker — Optimum Play, which provides the easy-to-use Precision Play™ rules for several games, along with lots of related information. Normally $19.95 plus $3.50 shipping and handling, if you mention this column, you'll save $1.50. Send a check or money order for $21.95 payable to Dan Paymar, PMB 141, 2540 S. Maryland Pkwy., Las Vegas, NV 89109. I also offer highly optimized, laminated, shirt pocket-size cue cards (hand rank tables) for 16 of the most attractive games. For more information, write to the same address or visit my web site at www.vegasplayer.com/video-poker.html.



The Low Rollers

MICHAEL WIESENBERG

Lowball Situations

Like many other forms of poker, lowball is a game of situations. Recognize those situations and play them correctly, and you will be a winner. Here are two situations that come up (examples here are for a single-limit Northern California-style game, but they apply just as well to the double-limit games of Southern California):

When you are on the button and everyone has passed to you, various strategies have you open with any two-card draw to a 7 or better, any one-card draw to a 9 or better, and any pat jack or better. As an interesting aside, by the way, some tight players who are not aware of how much a game of position lowball is have much stricter opening requirements for the button.

Players who open on the button only with an 8 or better to draw to or only with a pat 9 or better, and maybe sometimes, rarely, with a good two-card draw if they have the joker, are giving up far too many hands in which they have the best of it. I am talking about opening here, of course, not calling.

You can improve on the strategies in certain situations. Sometimes you have advance information on what players who act after you will do. This advance information can include tells or knowledge of situations. For example, if no one has opened yet, and the middle blind is disgustedly showing three facecards, you know that player will not be in this pot.

(I could write a whole column about how showing your bad cards increases your chance of losing, thus exacerbating the overall negative effect of those bad cards. Showing cards definitely is poor poker etiquette, but it also has the inadvertent side effect of increasing the win rate of the good players.)

In most instances, when you are reasonably certain that the middle blind will not play, and the action has passed to you on the button, you should open no matter what your cards are. Part of the time, the big blind will not even call. In a $20-limit game, you profit by $20. Many other times, the big blind draws two cards or one to a rough hand. If your cards are completely hopeless, you stand pat. If the big blind checks after the draw, you bet, and most of the time, the big blind does not call. In this case, you profit by $35. You have to get away with this only once per hour to add an extra one to two bets to your winnings. Of course, if the big blind bets, you must give up. If you get caught, you probably should not make this particular play again for a while. Also, do not make it against a player who thinks that you bluff all the time, and might call your "pat hand" with a facecard or even a

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small pair. Against a player who calls too much, use your normal strategy for opening, and after the draw, when he passes, you should bet a 10 or better, and maybe even a jack. Obviously, also do not make this play if you have a reputation — even if only temporary — of bluffing a lot. And if your cards are not pretty hopeless, just draw to your hand. That is, if you opened on the button with 9-9-8-7-4, no matter how many cards the big blind draws, you usually draw one. But if you opened with 9-9-8-8-7 because you had a good indication that the middle blind would fold, and the big blind draws cards (which he usually will do if he hasn't raised), stand pat and hope for the best. Realize that if the big blind draws one and then checks, he will call somewhere around a third of the time. The actual figure depends on the cards in both hands and the other player's calling frequency. Some players draw one to a 9 or even a 10 when they have the blind, but do not call if they make the hand when the other player is pat. Other players do call in this situation, so this is why it helps to know your opponents.

If you make the play of opening with pure garbage and the big blind raises, you usually should give up on the play. Unless you raise back, your hand looks awfully weak. If the big blind now stands pat, you have very little chance of winning the pot, because either he will bet and you will have to fold, or check and call when you bet. In the first case, you lose $40; in the second case, you lose $60. You lose an average of $50 on a hand that should have cost only $20 — or even $5 if you hadn't attempted the blind steal. Reraising is even riskier. The big blind may just call and stand pat, or he may reraise. In either case, you have to give up on your $60. He also may call and draw a card, in which case he should bet about a third of the time — and you must give up — or check and call somewhere around a sixth of the time, costing you $80. Between the times when the big blind already is pat and the times when he draws and makes a hand with which he either bets or calls, you lose something over $60 more than half the time. I'm not saying that you never should put in the third bet on a snow hand. I am saying that it's a very risky play, probably one with negative expectation, and certainly one that radically increases your variance. One play like this can turn a winning session into a loser.

Here's a straightforward play that can add to your winnings. It, too, increases your variance. And since it appears to be pure gambling, you won't find a lot of tight players making this play.

A predictable player opens in early position. You have a wheel or 6 to draw to, perhaps with the joker. This is a hand that fares well against multiple players. You call. Another player calls. One of the blinds raises. The opener calls. Many players just call in this position, not wanting to risk more against a potential pat hand. They think that they're taking the worst of it against a pat hand, which usually is true. They also reason that if they just call, they're getting very good odds on their draw, which also is true, particularly since the next player undoubtedly will call. Their call is worth more than 7-to-1. A better play, though, is to raise. This might drive out the player behind you, who frequently had a substandard draw and didn't want to risk another two bets with a weak draw. What it will do, though, is guarantee that you will win at least one more bet than you would have by just calling, and you often will win a larger percentage of the pots than you would by just calling. Most of the time, you don't care what happens after you reraise. If the player behind you calls two more bets, most of the time you have the best of it against him because you probably are drawing better than he. If he doesn't call, your chances of winning have improved by narrowing the field, and your expectation also has gone up because of the dead money left by this player. Several additional possibilities exist. Usually, the player who put in the first raise just calls. If he does, since it costs only one more bet for the opener, he, too, calls. The initial raiser also may raise one more time, in which case the opener, depending on how tight he plays, may abandon his two bets, fearing getting caught in the middle of a raising war. (Remember that there is no cap on the number of raises in lowball.) He also may come in for the extra two bets, at which point you also call.

Here is a breakdown of your chances in some of these scenarios:

1. All call for three bets, and all draw. Depending on your exact cards, you are at least even with the first raiser, and you may be ahead. Your expectation is positive in all cases, however. I ran several matchups with Mike Caro's Poker Probe. They varied from a win rate of as high as 46 percent to as low as 26 percent, with the average being more than 33 percent. I'd rather put in three bets than two when I'm against three opponents and I win more than a third of the time. And due to the action before the draw, the action after the draw also is likely to be higher.

2. All call for three bets, and the first player is pat. Your win rate decreases, but still ranges, on the average, from 30 percent to 40 percent. You suffer at the expense of the pat hand, whose expectation is higher than yours, generally in the 40 percent to 50 percent range. Your overall expectation is higher than the figures indicate, since the pots that you do win tend to be larger, and usually are at the expense of the pat hand. When you miss your hand, most of the time you lose no more bets. When you make your hand, however, you almost always win at least one more bet from the pat hand. That is, you win extra bets after the draw more frequently than the pat hand, even though the pat hand wins more pots.

3. Three players call three bets, and all draw. This is even better than the first situation, due to the abandoned bet. If you have the best draw — and presumably you do when you make this play — you win anywhere from 35 percent to nearly 50 percent. That is, by eliminating one player, you have increased your chance of winning the pot by about 10 percent.

4. Two players call four bets, and you both draw. You are either approximately even with the other player, slightly ahead, or greatly ahead. On the average, you win somewhere between 55 percent and 60 percent of these pots. Plus, you have bet-

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ter position, which adds several dollars to your expectation.

5. Two players call four bets, and the first player is pat. You win somewhere between 30 percent and 40 percent of the time. This may at first appear to be a losing proposition, but it is not, due to the abandoned money from the other two players. Say that the middle blind was the first raiser. The pot contains $215, four bets from each of you, two abandoned bets, and $15 in undefended blinds. Neglecting the bet after the draw, maybe 65 percent of the time you lose $80, or $52, and 35 percent of the time you win $135, or $48. That appears to be a net loss of $4, but, actually, most of the time that you win, you win at least one extra bet. About the only time that you lose that extra bet is when the first bettor has an 8, bets it, and you call with a 9. Yes, the first bettor sometimes has a 7 or better, but those times are more than offset by the times that you beat that 7 or better and win two or more bets after the draw. Thus, your actual win is 35 percent times $155, or $54.25. That's not a big win — a difference of less than $3 from your loss — but this exact situation does not come up frequently compared to the others. Another plus is the times that the opening player gives up after two bets. Those times, you still lose about $52 on the pots that you miss, but you make 35 percent times $195, or $68.25.

By the way, don't make this play all the time. Don't always automatically put in the third bet for the situation described. One reason is that you don't want to be predictable. If you always reraise an early raiser after just calling on the first round when coming in second, savvy players will know that you are drawing, and will be less likely to break a breaking hand and more likely to go an extra bet with a rough pat hand. (In lowball, a *breaking hand* is a pat 8 or 9 that also is a good one-card draw. For example, while 9-4-3-2-A is a pat 9, if the pressure gets heavy, you always can *break off* the 9.) Also, don't make this play when the raiser is a player who, you know, never raises on the come when he will draw first, and who rarely raises with worse than a pat 8.

These are not world-class plays; they are pretty standard. Good players regularly make both of these plays, and know them well. Average and tight players, however, rarely make them. You can't make money in a typical limit lowball game by playing too tightly. And you don't make as much money as you should by not taking advantage of situations like these.◆

Author's note: Kudos to San Jose's Garden City Casino for promoting a $6-limit lowball game. Lowball cannot survive without grooming new players, but $20 is just too high for many newcomers to jump into their first game. The game also provides a fine "home" for those players who find the $20 game beyond the reach of their bankrolls. Most of the few clubs that offer lowball have no games lower than $20-limit or $15-$30. And while I'm apportioning praise, I'd like to add some for Garden City's new $9-$18 hold'em game, which makes a nice transition between $6-$12 and $20-$40.



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April 2, Sun.	Texas Hold 'em (limit)	$500+$40
April 3, Mon.	Omaha High-Low Split (limit)	$500+$40
April 4, Tues.	Texas Hold 'em (no limit)	$500+$40
April 5, Wed.	Texas Hold 'em (limit)	$1000+$60
April 6, Thurs.	Seven Card Stud	$1000+$60
April 7, Fri.	Texas Hold 'em (no limit)	$1000+$60
April 8, Sat.	Omaha (pot limit) Rebuys	$1000+$60
April 9, Sun.	Texas Hold 'em (pot limit)	$1000+$60
April 10, Mon.	Texas Hold 'em (limit)	$1500+$70
April 11, Tue.	Texas Hold 'em (no limit)	$1500+$70
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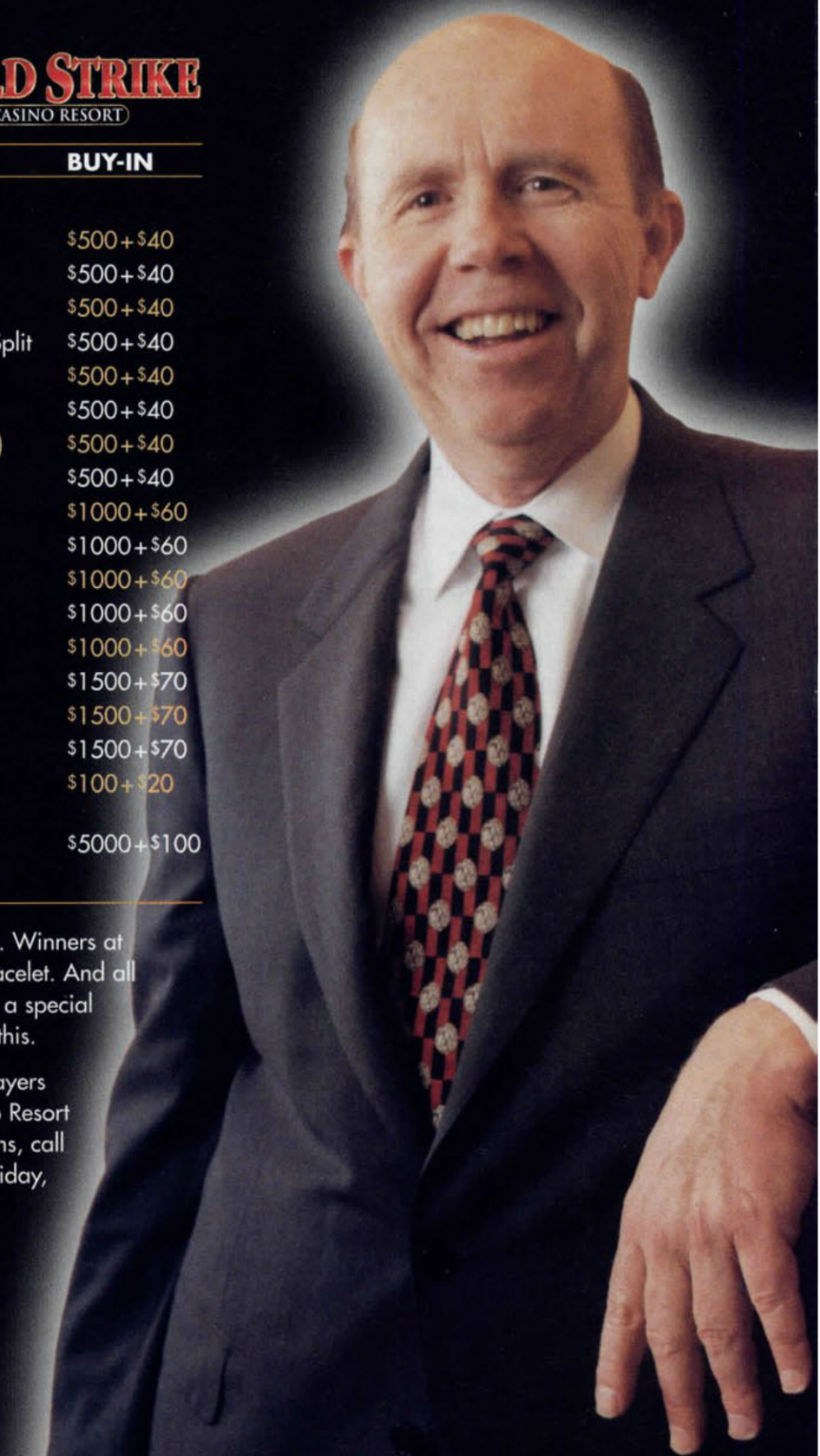


March 27 - April 16, 2000 in Tunica, Mississippi



Read 'em and Laugh

MAX SHAPIRO

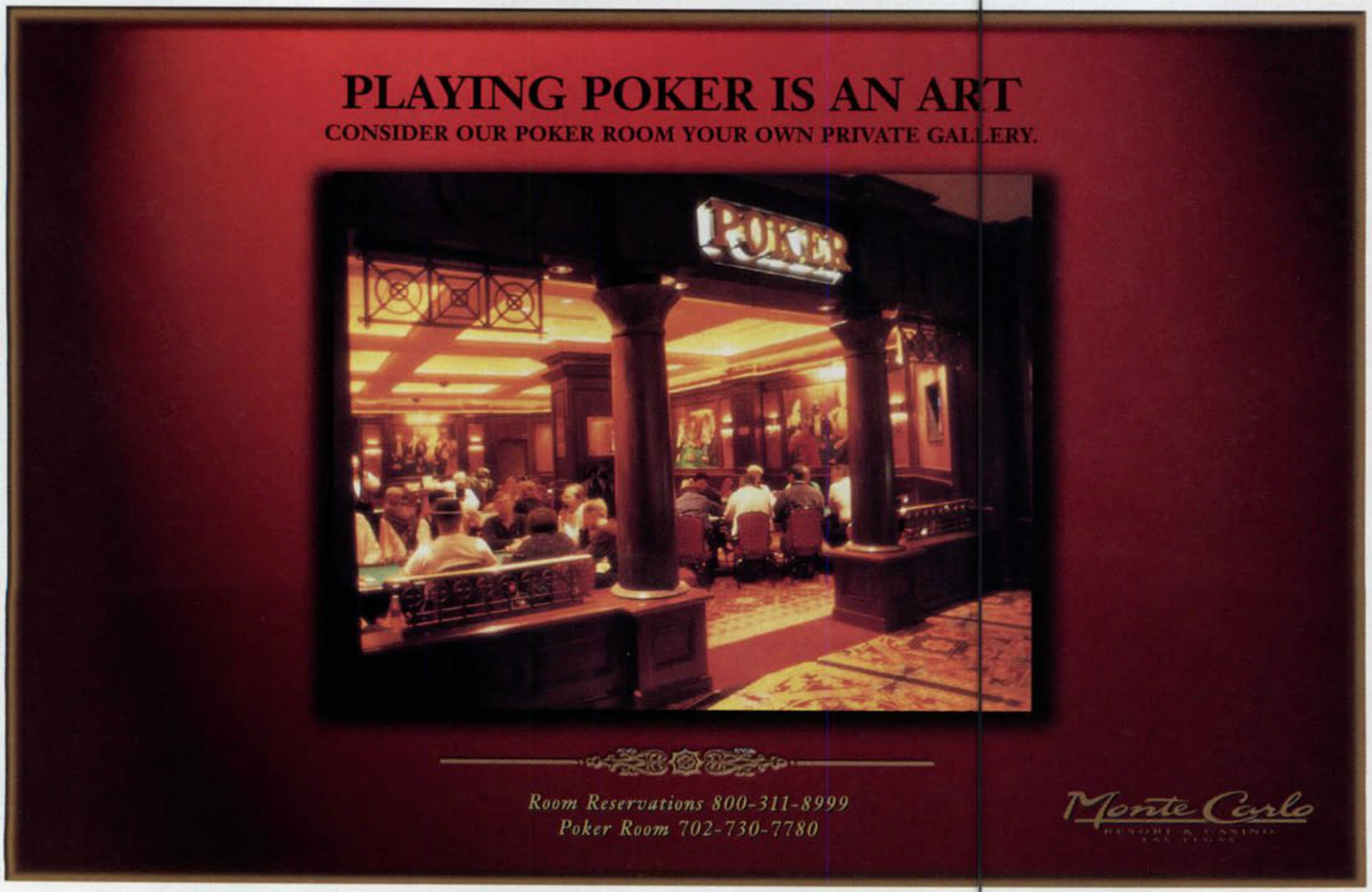
Keeping the Men at Bay

At the most recent *Ladies Poker Dream Weekend* at Commerce Casino, a man asked to play in one of the tournaments, and was reluctantly allowed to do so. Nancy Friedman, the casino's advertising and marketing director, then suggested that I write a funny story about it.

I am using Nancy's name as leverage to help get this story into print and to get around *Card Player*'s ban on my saying anything remotely snickering or unflattering about women poker players. Normally, the magazine doesn't give a damn about what I write, or whom I insult. I can say almost anything about any race, creed, or color; I can poke fun at Jews, Italians, Poles, pygmies, hunchbacks, or people with 12 toes and two heads. But let me put women and poker in the same sentence, and Wham! down comes the meat cleaver. However, by using an executive at a major casino as my front, perhaps I can get a line pass, and even rescue some of my previously rejected material. Here goes.

As I was saying, a man asked to play with the ladies. It wasn't a high-pressure, "Let me in or I'll sue you for sexual discrimination" thing like two guys pulled on The Bicycle Casino a couple of years ago. He said that he just wanted to play a tournament. Later, he said that he was trying to get tips on how women play, so nobody knows what his motive was.

The tournament director, Cheri Dokken, warned him that the ladies were likely to tear him to pieces for crashing their party, but that didn't deter him, and barring him would raise touchy legal questions. So, he played and was quickly knocked out, to thunderous applause from the ladies.



OK, no harm, no foul, and another $100 got added to the prize pool. But that isn't the point. The point is that if men are routinely allowed to enter ladies' tournaments, who knows what will happen next? Pretty soon, 4-year-olds will be clamoring to play in the *Seniors* tournament, sane people will want to play crazy pineapple, Anglos will insist on playing Mexican poker, and the floodgates will be opened. No, a line must be drawn, starting with women's tournaments. If men can't be legally barred, they must be deterred, and here are some ideas for ways to do it.

Casinos should make these events as unpalatable and humiliating for men as they can. For example, institute a strict dress code — a literal dress code. Everyone must wear a dress.

Instead of giving out gifts of fine crystal and similar items that both sexes can use, restrict the presents to items such as lipstick, perfume, makeup, toenail polish, handbags, hair coloring, and panty hose.

Stock the buffet with "edibles" such as tiny cucumber sandwiches, celery, organic arugula, sun-dried tomatoes, tofu, and lady fingers. No ribs, ham hocks, pork sausages, or fried chicken. And no second helpings, either.

As a prerequisite to play in the tournament, make it mandatory for everyone to first attend a two-hour Tupperware party.

Also, require everyone to listen to a lecture on "Getting in Touch With Your Inner Child," or any one of those touchy-feely-weepy things.

Alter the rules to suit feminine sensibilities. For example, check-raising, slow-rolling, cussing, criticizing the way others play, bitching about your bad luck, blaming the dealer for your cards, or any other activity that makes poker so much fun for men would be disallowed.

Beer would be absolutely prohibited. The only alcoholic beverages permitted would be Chardonnay, gin fizzes, and perhaps Charles Dickens martinis (no olive or twist).

Conversations about sports, especially pointspreads and odds, would be forbidden. Players would be allowed to talk only about recipes, diet plans, fashions, and how their children or grandchildren made the honor roll at school. However, constructive criticism about another player's appearance, such as "What a tacky dress," or "Did you see Ethel's ghastly face-lift?" would be OK, providing that the player was away from the table at the time.

Nobody would be allowed to dig out ear wax, clean fingernails, or trim toenails while sitting at the table.

Comments on play would be limited to, "Nice hand," "Well played," or "I was just lucky, dear." Remarks such as "Get it fixed, sucker," or "How could you play that hand?" would result in automatic disqualification.

Well, those are a few suggested ideas for women's tournaments. But after thinking about it, I realized that they would make any tournament a heck of a lot more civilized. I think that I could live with any of the rules — except maybe for wearing a dress and eating cucumber sandwiches.◆

You can send your comments and complaints to Max at readenlaff@aol.com.



Blackjack Hack

ARNOLD "THE BISHOP" SNYDER

Should You Mind Your K's and Q's?

Question: *Some of the casinos where I play in Reno offer "Royal Match" bets. The only book I have that discusses Royal Match is Don Schlesinger's Blackjack Attack. According to Schlesinger, the house edge on this bet is 3.8 percent. I'm no mathematician, so I sure won't try to argue with Schlesinger's analysis, but I think that he's missing something. Here's what happened: I was playing at a large table where one player occasionally would make this bet. Over the course of an hour, he won it twice with $5 bets. One of his wins was just two suited cards, which pays 3-to-1. The other bet was a Royal Match, a suited king and queen, which pays 10-to-1 (the first time I've ever seen anyone get that on a Royal Match bet). He told the dealer that he makes the bet only when no kings or queens come out on the first round, because this increases his chances of getting the 10-to-1 payout. At first, I thought he was just another dumb player, but the more I thought about it, the more his logic sounded correct.*

I reread what Schlesinger wrote about Royal Match, and it appears to me that he analyzed the bet only with a full 52 cards. But wouldn't the odds change if some cards already were played and all of the kings and queens still were in the deck? Isn't this the same theory that card counting is based on, whereby your edge goes up if more tens and aces are left in the deck? Is it possible that Don Schlesinger was wrong in his Royal Match analysis?

Answer: Your logic is absolutely correct. The house edge on Royal Match bets changes as cards are dealt. Don Schlesinger is well aware of this fact, but in *Blackjack Attack*, he analyzed the expectation on this bet only with the assumption that the player is not keeping track of any cards. *Every* rule variation in blackjack has a different effect on the game if you specify that certain cards have been removed, and this includes all of the "normal" rule variations, such as dealer hits soft 17, surrender, insurance, and so on. Don was not attempting to devise or describe a card-counting system for beating the Royal Match side bet; he was analyzing the expectation for the average player who's playing his hunches. The player you saw, who explained his Royal Match "system," definitely was smarter than the average bear.

This is not to say that he was a using a system that would win in the long run — it wouldn't. But his rate of loss surely would be less than the -3.8 percent that a player would expect if he paid no attention to the kings and queens. As you have deduced, this player was using a simplistic card counter-type approach in the same way that a player who bets more on his blackjack hand because he hasn't seen any aces dealt is using an intelligent and logical counter-type approach to betting. Neither of these approaches is strong enough to beat the

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house in the long run, but they both are definitely smarter than pure hunch betting.

Back in 1993, a legitimate card-counting system for beating Royal Match — "The Davies System" — was published. I reviewed the system in the December 1993 issue of *Blackjack Forum*. In the subsequent issue, March 1994, the late, great John Leib wrote an article about the Davies system in which he provided his computer simulation data. He ran 50 million hands of blackjack with the player using the Davies system to count suits and place the Royal Match bet when advantageous.

Unfortunately, for those who are interested in it, the Davies system was on the market for only about six months — at a price of $150. Then, the author/publisher took it off the market permanently.

But, let's look at what the Davies system requires of the player. It is not a simple point-count system like we use for regular blackjack. This system requires you to keep four separate counts — one count of the exact number of cards played of each suit. You place the Royal Match bet based primarily on how many of each suit are remaining — and this changes with the level of penetration — but somewhat more aggressively if no kings or queens have yet been dealt. So, the system is not easy.

What's it worth? That depends on how deep the penetration is. Remember, you can beat this option only on a single-deck game. According to John Leib's simulation data, if you could play heads up with the dealer, get seven rounds between shuffles, make $50 Royal Match bets when called for, and play 200 rounds per hour, you could make about $70 per hour. But let's get realistic. Heads up single-deck games dealt to the bottom are not something that you'll find in today's casinos. If you're at a table where five spots are in play, and there are only two rounds between shuffles, and you're playing about 80 hands per hour, your $50 Royal Match bets will make you about $2.50 per hour. Many casinos that offer Royal Match allow maximum bets of only $25, so this would cut your realistic hourly expectation to $1.25. Are you going to learn a counting system that requires you to keep four separate running counts for an expectation that's less than a quarter of what a teenage dishwasher makes in a fast food joint? That's lots of work for little return. Furthermore, your Royal Match count is useless for playing or betting on your blackjack hand.

I think the reason that the Royal Match counting systems never have been popularized is that they are more difficult than regular counting systems, and they return less. So, your question was good, and your logic was flawless, but Don Schlesinger made no mistakes in his *Blackjack Attack* analysis. He simply saw no practical reason for anyone to investigate the prospect of counting cards for Royal Match bets.◆

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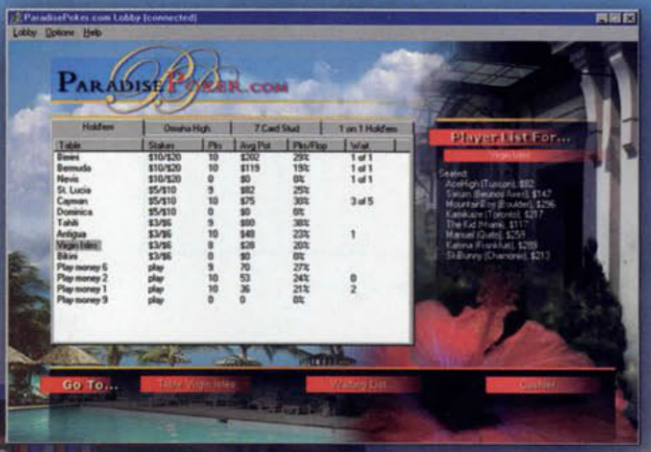

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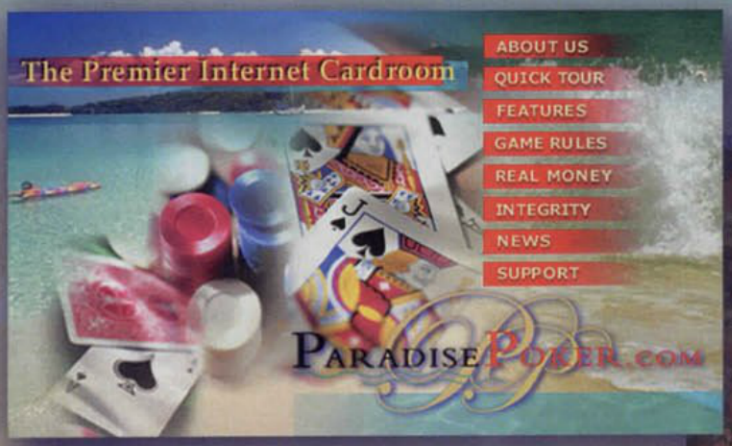



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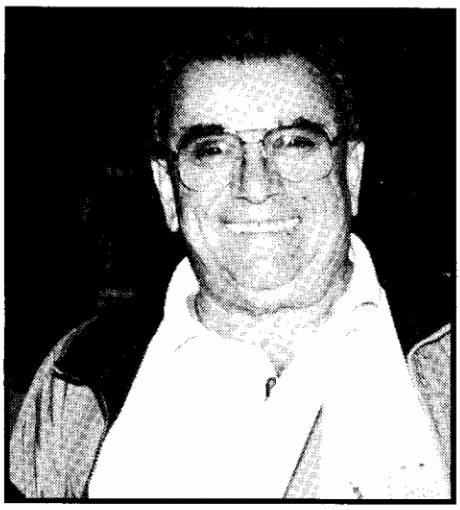
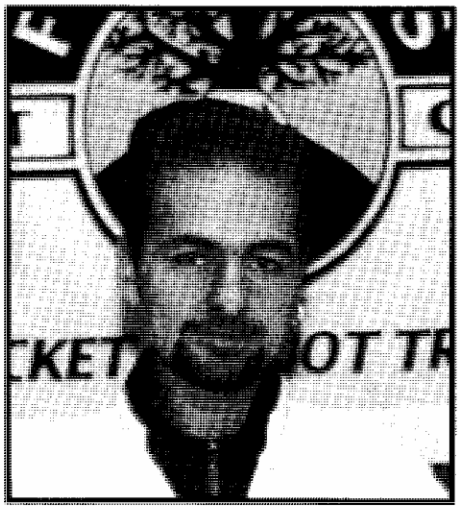
Continued from page 58

tal is staggering, since he won but two events — the $500 no-limit hold'em event at the *Carnivale of Poker* and the $500 seven-card stud event at the *U.S. Poker Championship*. It was Ma's consistent level of achievement in the toughest events (finishing in the top three spots a total of 12 times) that made him the deserving choice as 1999's Player of the Year.



John Bonetti

2. John Bonetti — The second-place finisher certainly is no stranger to most poker players. Bonetti, 71, has astounded the poker world for more than a decade with an aggressive style and championship trademark that have made him one of tournament poker's most feared players. On a personal level, Bonetti's story is perhaps the most compelling, having recovered from an illness that nearly cost him his life two years ago. Bonetti reincarnated himself in 1999 with 15 final-table appearances, winning four events. His three wins alone at the *U.S. Poker Championship* (and a second-place finish in the grand finale), coupled with an impressive victory in the no-limit hold'em event at the *Shooting Star* tournament, were the high points of a triumphant comeback year. Some might argue that Bonetti deserves the top spot, and were it not for Ma's stellar year, Bonetti would have won this year's honor. This marks Bonetti's second appearance in the rankings (he placed seventh in '97).



Daniel Negreanu

3. Daniel Negreanu — This marks Negreanu's second time to be ranked (he finished 11th on the '98 list). I noted a year ago that Negreanu was "the player" to watch in 1999. He didn't disappoint. He again proved himself to be one of poker's most consistent tournament performers with 16 final tables and five major tournament victories last year. Originally from Canada, Negreanu, now 25, has been playing full time for 10 years. Last year, his big wins were in no-limit hold'em at the *L.A. Poker Classic VIII*, and three Omaha high-low tournaments at the *Legends of Poker*, *California State Poker Championship*, and *Winnin' o' the Green*, respectively. But Negreanu's crowning achievement was at the *U.S. Poker Championship*, where he won the no-limit hold'em main event and more than $200,000 in prize money. He now has a *USPC* gold watch and a *World Series of Poker* bracelet to his name — one of a select few to hold that distinction. We can only speculate on what Negreanu will achieve in 2000.

4. T.J. Cloutier — No single player has accomplished more in tournament poker during the last three years than Cloutier. The 1998 Player of the Year defended his title proudly, but fell just short in points, in 1999. With 16 final tables and two major victories, Cloutier's biggest wins were in Omaha high-low at the *Sam Boyd Poker Classic*, and seven-card stud at the *National Championship of Poker*. In the annual rankings, Cloutier now has first-, second-, and fourth-place finishes on his resume — a phenomenal level of consistency that's unequaled by any other poker player. Based on his proven track record, Cloutier will remain the favorite to win the top honor next year.

5. "Miami" John Cernuto — With his third-place finish last year, Cernuto, 55, was expected to contend for the top prize in 1999. He took the lead midway through the year with three impressive victories (and the best all-around player prize) at the *Legends of Poker*. He also won the best all-around player award at the *Sam Boyd Poker Classic* and completed the year with a seven-card stud victory at the *USPC*. With "only" 12 final-table appearances (down from 20 last year, when he led all tournament players), Cernuto made the most of his opportunities. We expect more of the same from him in 2000.

6. Allen Cunningham — This marks Cunningham's first time on the list, but it probably won't be the last. At 22, by far the youngest successful tournament player in the game, Cunningham won an astounding six major events in 1999 — the most by any single player. His victories included two wins at the *Legends of Poker*, a limit hold'em win at the *Sport of Kings*, a no-limit hold'em victory at the *Fall Vacation Tournament*, a pot-limit hold'em win at the *USA vs. The World Challenge*, and a seven-card stud victory at the *USPC*. It was quite a first year for a young man who wasn't even able to enter a cardroom legally until 18 months ago.

7. Mario Esquerra — One of poker's most colorful personalities for many years, Esquerra made quite an impres-

sion on the poker world in 1999. It was truly a super year for the man called "Super Mario," as evidenced by his 16 final tables. His biggest wins came in the $200 limit hold'em event at the Crystal Park *Spring Challenge* and the Omaha high-low event at the *California State Poker Championship*. He also finished third in the $1,500 buy-in limit hold'em event at the *World Series of Poker* against a whopping 608 competitors. This is Esquerra's first time to be ranked on the Player of the Year list.

8. Dan Heimiller — One of the most respected tournament players for several years, Heimiller broke into the top 10 for the first time with an impressive performance in 1999. His 12 final tables and five victories marked a year in which Heimiller won three seven-card stud events (the most in the stud category by any player). With wins at the *World Poker Finals*, the *L.A. Poker Classic VIII,* and *Big Poker Oktober*, coupled with wins in the eight-or-better event at the *California State Poker Championship* and the limit hold'em event at the *National Championship of Poker*, Heimiller showed that he's a serious threat in any game, at any limit, in any tournament he plays.

9. Kathy Liebert — The only woman on this year's list, Liebert made the rankings for the second time (she finished fourth in '97). She made the final table 14 times and won three majors. Her biggest wins came in limit hold'em at the *Winnin'o'the Green*, pot-limit Omaha in the *USA vs. The World Challenge*, and Omaha high-low at the *California State Poker Championship*. Liebert has been a vocal supporter of this tournament player ranking system since its inception, and I'm pleased to see her dedication to poker rewarded with so many impressive finishes and a top 10 ranking. She clearly has earned her reputation as the best woman player in tournament poker today.

10. Layne Flack — Flack burst onto the poker scene a year ago (he ranked 12th in '98) and returns to the list for the second consecutive year. His tenacity in hold'em events continued, as he won four majors, including two at the *Legends of Poker*. He also won a limit hold'em event at the *L.A. Poker Classic VIII*. But his biggest payday came at the *World Series of Poker*, where he won the $3,000 buy-in pot-limit hold'em world championship. It's fitting that several younger players made this year's list — including Flack, Negreanu, and Cunningham. Perhaps it's a cliché to suggest that these players represent the wave of the future when they are winning so many events in the present. Flack, in 2000, is another player to watch.

Players ranked 11th through 21st — Vince Burgio returned to the list, ranking 11th. Burgio's point total was boosted by an impressive showing in pot-limit hold'em events. He also dominated the lowball category with four final tables; Men "The Master" Nguyen made the list for the third consecutive year (the only player other than Cloutier to be ranked every year); Steve Badger crushed the Omaha high-low events, with a stunning four major victories sparking his 14th-place showing; Eskimo Clark made the list for the second time in his usual dramatic fashion (he ranked ninth in '97); Scotty Nguyen, the '98 *World Series* winner, made the list for the second consecutive year; David Pham, Greg Hopkins, Al Barbieri, and Chris Ferguson all made their first appearances in the top 20 rankings; Randy Holland (who ranked second in '98) finished "on the bubble" in 21st place with 1,818 points.

Conclusion: For the third year in a row, the Player of the Year held a commanding point-total victory over the other finishers. Tony Ma's record point total was accentuated by a slight change in this year's scoring method. However, by any standard, Ma dominated this year's tournament results like no other player.

As the number of poker tournaments increases every year — as evidenced by a 35 percent growth in the number of ($100,000-plus) tournaments over the past three years — there is bound to be an eclectic mix of players of all ages and backgrounds who make this list. Older, established players who made the lists in previous years are being replaced by younger players who demonstrated exceptional levels of accomplishment. In short, I'm pleased that this rating system is not a barometer of popularity, but one of true accomplishment.

Ultimately, I hope to see the Player of the Year receive a cash prize. Perhaps in the future, corporate sponsorship for poker will be achieved and this honor will be a part of a larger effort coordinated through the *Tournament of Champions* to sanction events not only here in the United States, but around the world. That remains to be seen. Nevertheless, it is a testament to the devotion of a great many poker players who have confided that they track their "Dalla points" during the year in hope of achieving a top ranking — for no other reason than to win the respect of their colleagues.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to Mike Paulle for his excellent series of reports that were posted to the Internet. I also would like to thank the many tournament directors around the country who were kind enough to fax me their results. Congratulations to Tony Ma and the rest of the top 20 players who deserve our commendation for their excellence in tournament poker.

Next issue: 1999 Players of the Year — By Game♦

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ART SANTELLA

Should I Dress for Comfort or for Class?

More than a few players probably asked themselves this question when they started to play casino poker. Should they dress to impress, or for comfort? This is a legitimate question, so let's see what was said in reference to it.

The following question was posted recently: Should I wear good clothes or should I dress casually when I play? Is it better to look good or to be comfortable? I would like to see your suggestions for ideal clothes, and for other items that I should bring to the casino.

Reply No. 1 — This might fall under "table image." When I'm in a casino, it's usually only because I'm away on a trip, or it's a weekend. That means T-shirt, blue jeans, and no shaving when I'm off the clock. When I have the weekend-bum look, I generally find that people treat me like a bum. That can be good when you want people to underestimate you, but bad when you get no respect. So, how you dress can be a factor in how you want to be treated, how you want people to perceive you, or whether you care if you're seen or not seen. However, when I dress like James Bond, loads of beautiful women never seem to be fighting to fall into my lap.

Reply No. 2 — I would suggest the following:

1. Wear comfortable clothes.

2. If you are worried that a certain outfit will smell like smoke after you play, don't wear that outfit.

3. If you want to blend in, wear plain dark green, blue, or black.

4. If you want to stand out, wear loud colors (yellow, orange, and red).

5. Most importantly, wear lucky clothes. I'm not kidding. If you notice that you almost always win when you wear your blue sweatshirt, wear the blue sweatshirt. If you almost always lose when you wear your green sweatshirt, don't wear the green sweatshirt. It's not necessarily that the clothes are really lucky or unlucky, but that they influence your mindset when you sit down to play. Anything you can do to feel positive will help.

Reply No. 3 (from Nolan Dalla) — Wear a bathing suit, a tux, or a bathrobe. Who cares? Just bring money.

Arti's opinions — When I first started playing blackjack in a casino many years ago, I always dressed in a three-piece suit, complete with cufflinks and Rolex. I wasn't comfortable, but I looked sharp. When I started to play poker in casinos, I quickly realized that there were few if any players who dressed in evening clothes. It seemed to me that blending in was very important. I think the first time that this hit home with me was while I was talking to Nolan Dalla in the Taj poker room. He always kidded me about dressing all in black, winter or summer. I noticed that he always dressed in shorts or some type of laid-back, comfortable clothing. I figured that I had seen him sitting behind enough giant stacks of chips that I would follow his lead on dress. If you want to look like a regular Joe and not Diamond Jim Brady, wear casual, comfortable clothes.

I still see people playing who are dressed to kill. I watch for how much these people buy in, and carefully scrutinize how they play. I find that most of them just like to look good. They are not dressed to intimidate the table with their image, but to impress people with their obvious wealth.

I now dress in what I feel comfortable wearing. Those people who know me know that I like to wear my Taco Bell Chihuahua shirt, shorts, and *South Park* baseball cap with Eric Cartman on it that says, "Respect my authority." On some occasions, I dress even less conservatively than that. When I sit at a table, those players who don't know me have no idea what to expect. I don't dress to impress — I dress to confuse, and I like that. One piece of clothing that I always bring to the cardroom is a jacket. It's great for carrying all kinds of stuff in the pockets, and if the air conditioner is running full blast, I can put it on to keep from freezing. It's better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it. Someone once said to me, "You always can tell the regular poker players — they always have a jacket with them."

Thanks to the contributors on r.g.p.◆

Editor's note: Regardless of what you wear, do us all a favor and make sure that your clothes are clean and don't have an odor. Leave your clothes with rips and tears at home.

Feedback to: arti@optonline.net.

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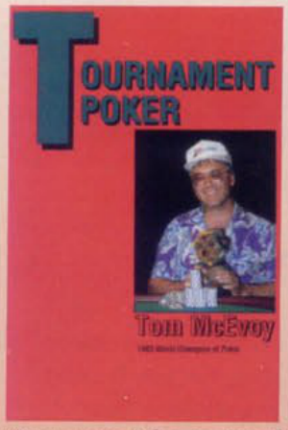

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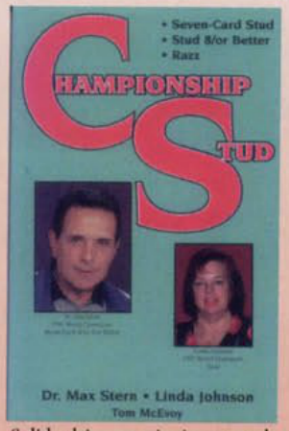

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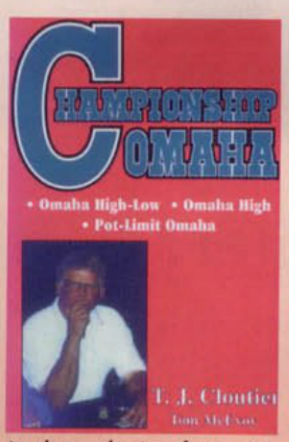

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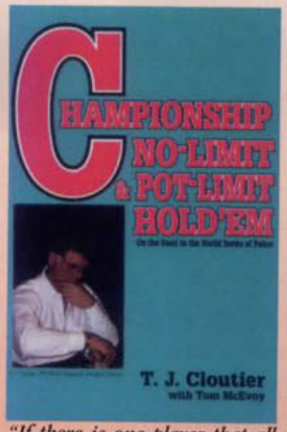

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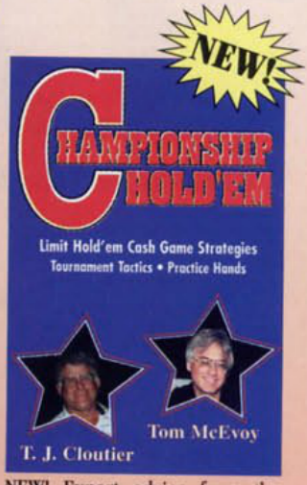

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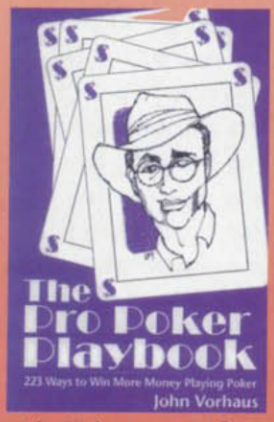

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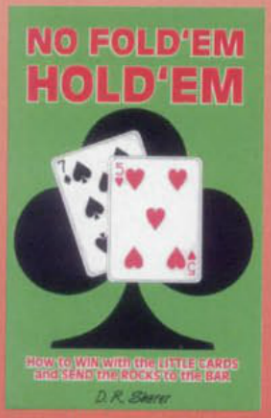

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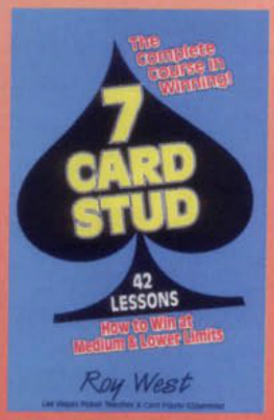

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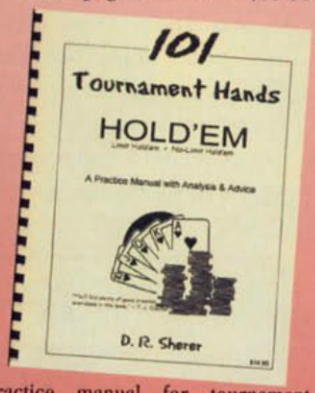

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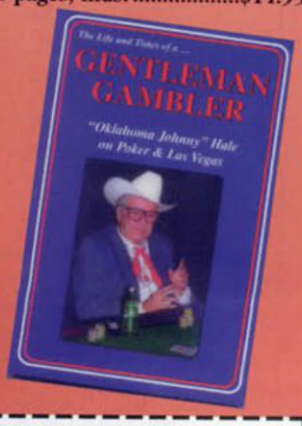

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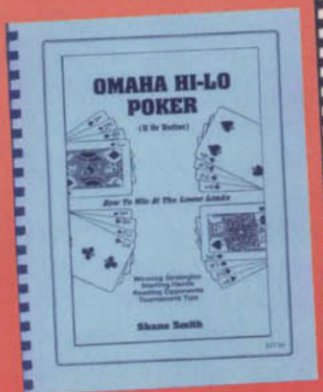

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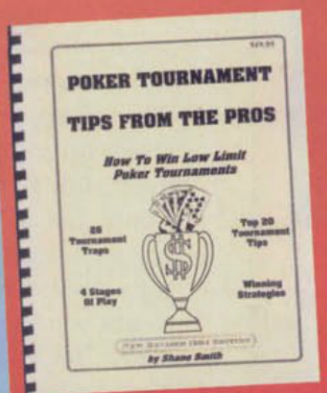

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Still a Nonfiler? Better Act Soon

For years now, we have been writing about the IRS' "Compliance 2000" program, the goal of which was to achieve 100 percent compliance from those who should be filing and are not. Well, now it is the new millennium and we just got a call from a nonfiler, so we know that the IRS did not achieve its goal. However, the "breaks" that were given under "Compliance 2000" have not gone away. Under the direction of Commissioner Rosotti, the IRS will be "kindlier and gentler" (at least while he is the commissioner), which means that the "breaks" given to nonfilers still are in effect. Additionally, the Offer in Compromise rules have been liberalized by Rosotti. What this means is that right now, nonfilers will get the best breaks that ever have been granted by the IRS. Rosotti believes that the primary mission of the IRS is to "provide service to the taxpayer," and not to "protect the revenue," as all previous commissioners have believed. And who knows what the next commissioner will think?

If you are receiving notices from the IRS demanding the filing of past-due returns, or if you are in a situation in which you have not filed for a number of years and it appears that the IRS does not know that you exist, you may want to consider "coming in from the cold" now while the current commissioner is in charge. You will be in a much better situation if you voluntarily file the prior years' returns that you have missed in order to get current, rather than be discovered by the IRS. How can you be discovered? There are many ways. Interest on savings accounts is reported to the IRS, as are the proceeds from the sale of stock or real estate. The main goal of the IRS is *not to punish the nonfiler* (there is no prison for debtors), but *to end the cycle of nonfiling*. The IRS is aware that once someone slips through the cracks, he more than likely will continue to not file year after year, due primarily to fear of what will happen when he gets caught or the lack of money to pay the back years' taxes, penalties, and interest that have accrued on the past-due amounts. The IRS is making deals, forgiving penalties and interest, and even accepting less than payment in full depending upon your circumstances, because it wants you to file next year and the years thereafter. It does not want to take your livelihood away; it just wants you to start paying your "fair" share. But let us be clear on one point: Nonfiling is not nearly as serious an offense as reporting a false name and/or social security number for use on a

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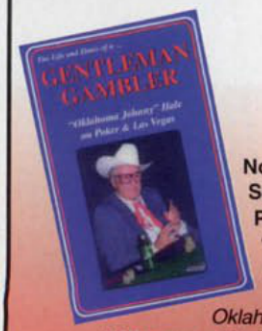

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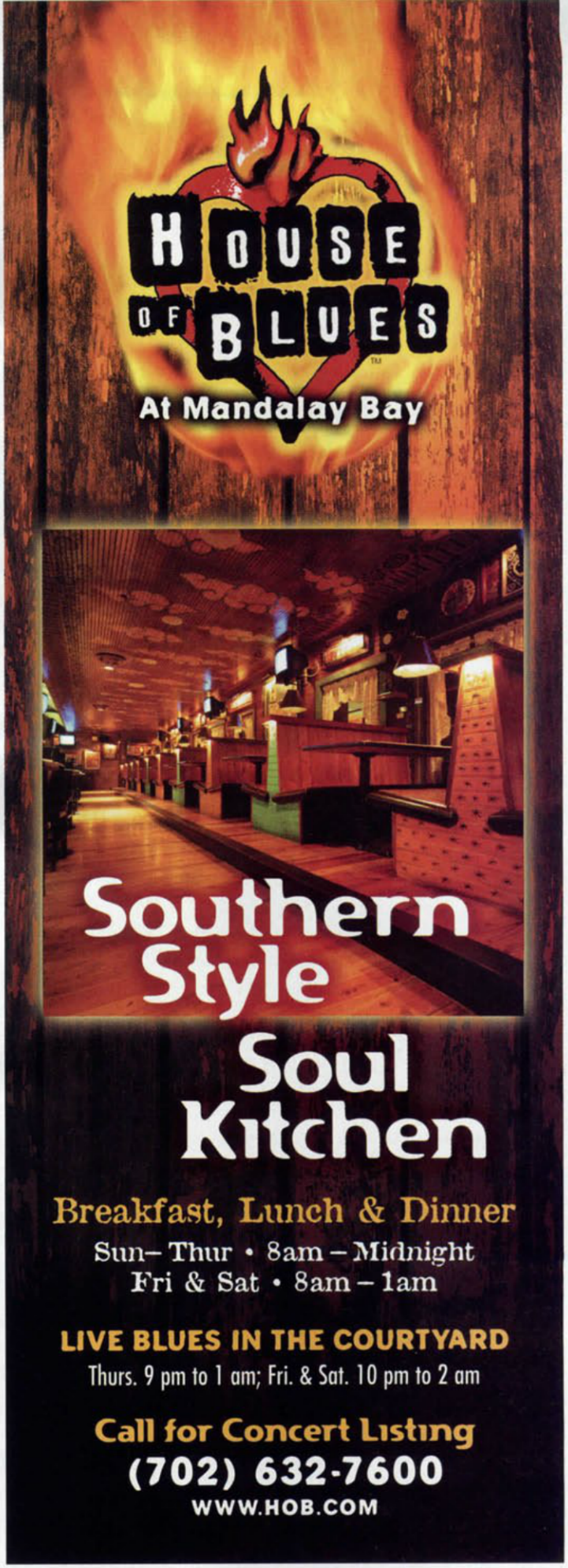
If you are tired of living an underground existence, and are tired of that fear of discovery that hides in your subconscious mind and surfaces when you try to go to sleep or when tax time rolls around, get that monkey off your back and get legal. You can even do it yourself, but we recommend that you retain competent, professional tax assistance. Recently, a nonfiler called who had not filed since 1981. He told us that he had talked to another firm that had told him that he had to file all of the back years' returns that he had not filed, and that this process would take about nine months. Additionally, he was quoted a fee of $3,000-$5,000 just to get started. I would categorize a firm like this as one that is interested only in how much money it can get from you. We do not demand that you file all returns unless the IRS will accept nothing less than that, which is unusual. Most of the files for the 1980s are on microfiche, and many have been lost. Pulling that information from microfiche is what makes the process so long. We have yet to encounter an IRS agent who wants to pull microfiche records. Thus, we usually are successful at making deals whereby the taxpayer has to go back only a few years. By doing this, we do not make as much money per nonfiler as the firms that advertise on the radio do, but we take pride in obtaining an agreement by which you pay the least amount acceptable to the IRS. For instance, one recent client had not filed since 1984, and we obtained an agreement whereby he had to file only 1996 through 1998 returns, and the amount that he had to pay was only $16,000. All of this was accomplished in less than a month.

We hope that you now know that there are big differences in tax preparers, regardless of their credentials, the worst of whom attempt to scare you into filing returns that you may not have to file, and to pay a fee much higher than necessary. Ask them how they charge, and if they are going to work for you in negotiating with the IRS to minimize your liability. If they tell you that you have to file all returns going years and years back, seek another firm. The IRS is more interested in getting you back into the fold and filing every year hereafter than spending its money trying to locate your old records.◆

Be sure to visit our web site at http://www.rbstaxes.com. If you have a question regarding the tax laws and regulations as they apply to gaming that you would like answered in Card Player, please mail your question to: R.B.S. Tax Services, P.O. Box 60908, Sunnyvale, CA 94088-0908, or E-mail it to questions@rbstaxes.com. We will keep your identity confidential. If you would like to utilize our professional services or order our book, The Tax Guide for Gamblers, please call (800) TAX-7271 (we accept all major credit cards). For more information, see our ad elsewhere in this publication.



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The **CHALLENGE CUP OF POKER** is a Ryder Cup™ type event for poker between the U.S. and Europe. We believe that it will become the "greatest tradition in poker." The inaugural **CHALLENGE CUP** will be hosted by Casinos Austria in Bregenz, Austria, August 30-September 3, 2000.



Teams: Each Team will consist of 11 members — a Team Captain, three "Captain's Choices," a celebrity player, the highest finisher from the U.S. and Europe at TOC 2000, and five players who qualify via the **CHALLENGE CUP** Trials (see adjacent page). Information for European players to qualify for Team Europe will be forthcoming.

Team USA



Two-time World Champion

Doyle Brunson

TEAM CAPTAINS

Team Europe



1998 WSOP Omaha Champion

Donn O'Dea

Format: All competition will be heads-up match play. Six poker disciplines will be played at the **CHALLENGE CUP** during the two-day, four-session event as follows:

Session No. 1: Team play. Both sides will field three Teams of three players each. The first Team will be a "Limit" team. Play on this Team will consist of matches in Limit Hold'em, Seven-Card Stud, and Omaha Eight-or-Better. The second and third Teams will be three-person "Pot-Limit Hold'em" and "Pot-Limit Omaha" teams. Each Team winning two out of three matches will earn one point for its side, with a bonus half point being awarded to a Team that scoops all three of its matches.

Session No. 2: Tag-team play. There will be matches in each of the five disciplines played in the first round. Two players on each Team will alternate play every half-hour. One point will be awarded to each of the winning *five* two-man teams.

Session No. 3: Team play. Same format as Session No. 1.

Session No. 4: The finals. Competition will consist of nine matches of No-Limit Hold'em. The Team Captains and the celebrity players will each play one another. Each winning player will earn one point for his side, with the Team with the highest overall total score over the four sessions taking the **CHALLENGE CUP**.

As in the Ryder Cup, **CHALLENGE CUP** Team members will receive air transportation to the host site with deluxe accommodations and all meals. Winning Team members also will receive a paid entry into TOC 2001. Making these Teams will be among the highest honors in poker.

CHALLENGE CUP OF POKER™



UNITED STATE TRIALS



Here's how you can make **Team USA!**

The inaugural **CHALLENGE CUP** will take place in Bregenz, Austria, August 30-September 3, 2000. Players can earn their way onto Team USA via the **CHALLENGE CUP** Trials. The Trials will consist solely of heads-up match play in five poker disciplines: Limit Hold'em, Omaha Eight-or-Better, Seven-Card Stud, Pot-Limit Hold'em, and Pot-Limit Omaha.

Each trial will last five days, with one discipline played per day. The field at the preliminary Trials will be limited to the first 80 players entering each of the five disciplines. Players are encouraged to play as many Trials and in as many disciplines as they choose. The Final Trial will be held at The Bicycle Casino July 30-August 3, 2000. It will consist of 64 players in each discipline in a double elimination match-play tournament. These Final Trial winners will become members of Team USA.

Format: All players will compete in three matches in each discipline entered at the Preliminary Trials. The initial drawing for matchups at each Trial will be random, with winners continuing to play each other. The 10 undefeated players at each Preliminary Trial will qualify to play in the Final Trial (with a paid entry).

Depending on the number of Preliminary Trials, other automatic qualification spots into the 64-player Final Trial may be granted. Those with the best overall match-play record from the Preliminary Trials will be one method used to fill the remaining seats.

Buy-in and payout: The buy-in for each discipline at every Trial will be $1,080 ($80 entry fee). In the Preliminary Trials, a player will win $400 for each match won. In addition, $10,800 will be withheld from the prize pool to pay the buy-ins for the 10 players advancing to the Final Trial. The remaining money ($21,200 with a full 80-person field) will be divided equally among the 10 undefeated players. At the Final Trial, the $64,000 in prize money will be divided as follows: 1st place — 40% ($25,600), 2nd place — $30% ($19,200), 3rd place — 20% ($12,800), 4th place — 10% ($6,400).

Where to qualify: The Bicycle Casino in Bell Gardens, California (562-806-4646), is the official West Coast host site for the 2000 **CHALLENGE CUP** Trials (see below about the inaugural Trial). We currently are negotiating to arrange Trial locations in the East and in the South. Details will be forthcoming.

THE BICYCLE CASINO

The inaugural **CHALLENGE CUP** Trial details are as follows: February 14 — Limit Hold'em, February 15 — Omaha eight-or better, February 16 — Seven-Card Stud, February 17 — Pot-Limit Hold'em, February 18 — Pot-Limit Omaha. All events will start at noon. Look for further Trial information in the next issue of ***Card Player*** and on our web site (www.TOCpoker.com). Making the inaugural Team USA will be historical. Good luck!



Poker 101

JAN FISHER

As more and more of you new poker players become involved in public card games, you will continue to hear terminology that you may not understand. Although you may have heard the words used before, you may never have fully understood what they meant. The terms I am addressing today are "kill," "kill pot," "put the kill on it," or any other wording that relates to a kill scenario.

What is a kill game? It is a game variation by which the betting limits can go up a notch when one of several situations occurs. In a hold'em, stud, or one-winner game, when a player wins two pots in a row, it becomes a kill. In an Omaha eight-or-better game or other high-low split pot game, when a player scoops a pot (wins the entire pot), the next hand becomes a kill pot. There are several variations on how kill pots work, and they differ from casino to casino.

How do the limits go up? The most common kill games are half-kill and full-kill. However, there also are one-third or one-fourth kill games. In a full-kill game, the winner of the two previous hands in a nonsplit game, or the scooper of the pot in an eight-or-better game, must put an additional blind or straddle (blind raise) into the pot that is equal to two times the big blind or opening bet. This is in addition to the usual two blinds or opening bet. If you have the kill and it would have been one of your blinds anyway, you put in only the kill amount.

Then what happens? OK, now that I have totally confused you, please stay with me and I think that we can get through this and see what happens next! Let's say that we are playing in a $3-$6 full-kill hold'em game, and you have won two pots in a row. Now, you must blind it, regardless of your position relative to the button, for $6. It is live, just like any big blind. The first player to act may call the $6 or make it $12. This hand now is being played at the $6-$12 limit. From here, there are two different scenarios that could occur, depending on house rules. The most common and easiest to understand is that your live kill acts in turn. So, when the action comes to your position, you may opt to check or raise. If you are in the position of the big blind anyway (where it's called an "econo-kill," as it has cost you only an additional big blind because you would have had the regular big blind anyway), you have last action, as would the big blind. There is another less used version of how the kill is treated. In some casinos, it is given last action. Now, when the action comes to the player with the kill, it skips that player until everyone else has acted and then returns to the killer for last action. It sounds much more complicated than it is, I promise. It is more difficult to explain it than it is to play it!

So, how would this work in a stud or one-winner game? Let's look at a $3-$6 stud game in which the low card opens for $1. Now, the killer has to open for $6, the action continues at the higher level, and the killer has last action. In some casinos, the low card still must bet $1, and then the next player must fold, call $6, or make it $12. Currently, many casinos are eliminating the low-card forced opener and the action begins with the killer. Again, there are several variations on kill games, so check the rules where you play so that you are certain to know the correct procedure in the game that you choose.

Are there qualifications or pot-size minimums in order for there to be a kill? Usually, there are. Generally, the pot size must be at least the size of the minimum buy-in for the game in question. Oftentimes, there is no qualification, or a different one. Again, check the house rules where you play. The examples I've given are for full-kill games. Just change the percentage increase for the one-half, one-third, or one-fourth kill games.

Why do players like to play kill games? It creates more action and larger pots. However, it also can strain a bankroll and cause players to play at a limit that is higher than they normally may play. This is neither good nor bad, necessarily. It is just the way it is. It is up to the individual to determine if kill games are for him.

As always, use your best judgement when playing poker, and don't play above your means. If the larger and faster action of a kill game intimidates you or makes you uncomfortable, don't play it. Kill games are the exception, not the rule, and there always will be plenty of regular limit games. There may appear to be a lot more to kill games than there really is. Just pay attention to the game and see what's going on. You'll pick up on it quickly.◆

To discuss this topic or other poker-related topics, please E-mail me at Fish@CardPlayer.com or write to me at the office. Thanks for all of your nice letters and good questions; please keep them coming.

Continued from page 52

ness, dead-serious attitude ruins the game and destroys profit. I hate that.

SR: Whom do you respect most in the poker industry?

MC: I don't mean this to sound patronizing, because she's your publisher, but I really would pick Linda Johnson. Not only has she done far too many good things for poker, that chick really *can* play the game. Among players, I'd pick Doyle Brunson, because we go back so far and he has done so much for poker, and he is such as classy champion. See, most people don't realize this, but I never wanted publicity. It was Doyle who picked me as one of his five expert collaborators for his poker bible — *Super/System* — in 1977. Before he somehow talked me into doing the draw and statistics sections for that book, I had resolved never to share my secrets with anyone. But once that book was out the door, things just got out of hand. Pretty soon, I was writing books and columns, doing seminars, and releasing computer analysis. All this stuff was going straight to the public, and they were telling me they loved me and I believed them, so I just kept giving away secrets. I was conned, right?

SR: Oh, I doubt that.

MC: Let's see, who else do I respect. Man, I don't have time to name the hundreds of players I admire. Oh, in management, though, I need to mention one person. And I'm not sucking up for the sake of harmony. I really admire my wife, Phyllis Caro, for the way that she is able to handle emergency situations in calm, rational ways. I've never known anyone who can keep tabs on everything going on in a cardroom the way that she does and deal with situations professionally and fairly. Beyond that, my management picks are hundreds deep. There are just so many good people in this industry.

SR: You keep teasing people by saying that you're the best poker player in the world. How would you rate yourself, truthfully?

MC: Truthfully, I'm not teasing. It's important to a competitive person to believe in himself. I guess that the top 50 or so players may be so closely matched that it would take a long time to determine who really is the best. I know both poker psychology and poker strategy so well that I can't stop bragging about it. I want to stop, but I can't. If the aliens invade earth and decree that they will send a delegate to play heads-up poker for control of the planet, I want to be earth's representative in that game. You should want that, too. I can beat the aliens at poker — any day, anywhere, on any planet.◆

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Carnivale of Poker

The third annual *Carnivale of Poker* at Harrah's Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas currently is under way, and thus far through the first seven events, which are reported in this issue, the tournament has attracted 2,240 entrants and has paid out $1,237,500 in prize money. Following are the results of those first seven events. Results of the remaining events will appear in the next issue.

$500 limit hold'em
Entrants: 576
Prize pool: $288,000

1. Dan Heimiller $105,120
2. Doug Saab 54,720
3. Mark Trombley 27,360
4. Rodney Upton 18,720
5. Mike Landers 12,960
6. Scott Nguyen 10,080
7. Patrick Nichols 7,200
8. Pat Wardlaw 5,760
9. Geno Davis 4,608

$500 pot-limit Omaha
Entrants: 174
Prize pool: $87,000

1. Young Van Phan $34,800
2. Tom McEvoy 17,400
3. Cal Dykes 8,700
4. Jim Balestrere 5,655
5. Larry Satterwhite 4,350
6. Peter Eichhardt 3,045
7. Paul Rowe 2,175
8. Tony Van 1,740
9. Richard Tatalovich 1,305

$500 seven-card stud
Entrants: 251 • Prize pool: $125,500

1. Hamid Mehrnaz $45,808
2. J.C. Pearson 23,845
3. Frank Martin 11,922
4. Johnny Knight 7,530
5. Bruce Levitt 6,275
6. Allen Cunningham 5,020
7. Phil Hellmuth Jr. 3,765
8. David Moreno 2,763

$500 pot-limit hold'em
Entrants: 323
Prize pool: $161,500

1. Matt Lessinger $58,947
2. Gary Haubelt 30,685
3. Jan Backstrom 15,343
4. Jas Perdesi 10,498
5. Brent Carter 7,267
6. Jim Spain 5,653
7. Marc Goodwin 4,037
8. Sacha Van De Graaf 3,230
9. Jan Lundberg 2,584

$500 seven-card stud eight-or-better
Entrants: 247 • Prize pool: $123,500

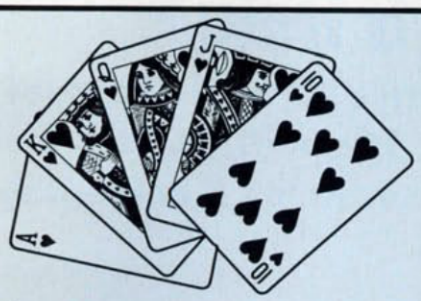
1. Casey Kastle $45,080
2. Alex Papachatzakis 23,465
3. Tri Cong Van 11,732
4. Herb Stein 7,410
5. Spring Cheong 6,175
6. Larry Eubanks 4,940
7. Kevin Song 3,705
8. Michael Bunis 2,717

$500 no-limit hold'em
Entrants: 434
Prize pool: $217,000

1. Tom Jacobs $79,205
2. Tony Ma 41,230
3. Cal Sanford 20,615
4. J.C. Pearson 14,105
5. Tiff Johns 9,765
6. Greg Pappas 7,595
7. Matt Lessinger 5,425
8. Maureen Feduniak 4,340
9. Joanne Bortner 3,472

$1,000 limit hold'em
Entrants: 235
Prize pool: $235,000

1. Greg Alston $85,775
2. Chris Tsiprailidis 44,650
3. Hassan Kamoei 22,325
4. Chris Grigorian 15,275
5. Marc Durand 10,575
6. Don Thompson 8,225
7. John Esposito 5,875
8. Mario Esquerra 4,700
9. Young Phan 3,760



ATTENTION EUROPEAN READERS!

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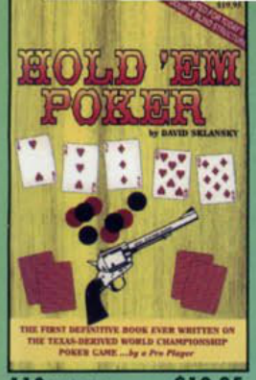

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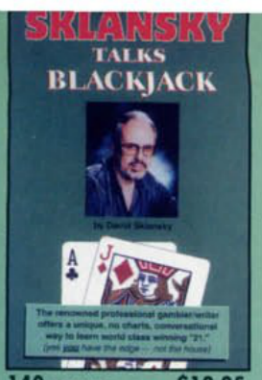

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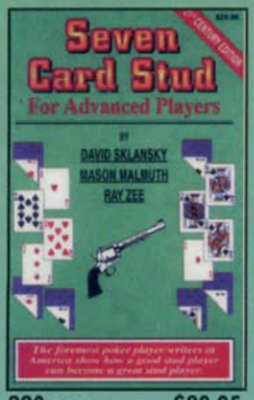

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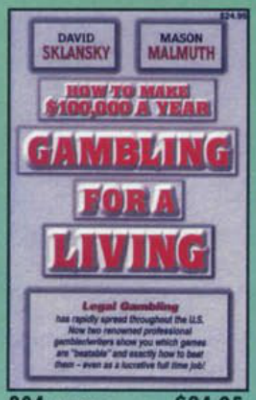

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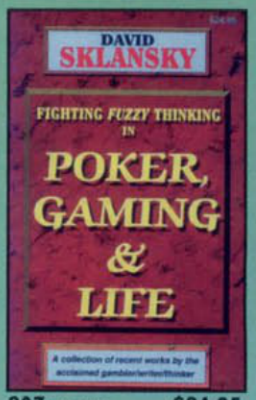

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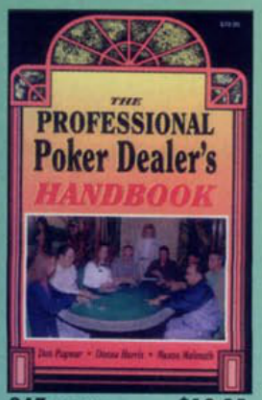

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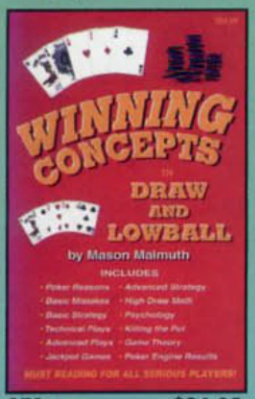

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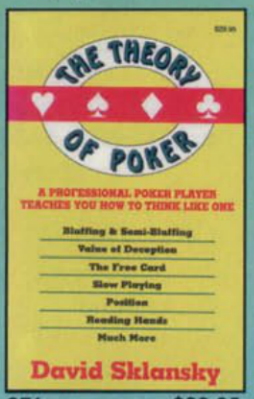

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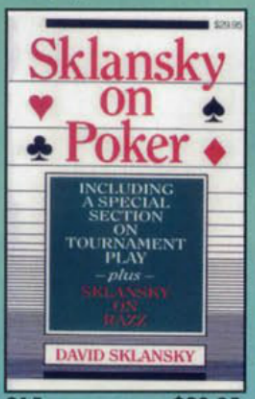

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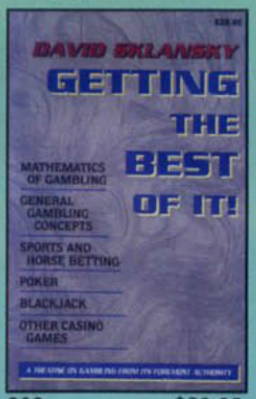

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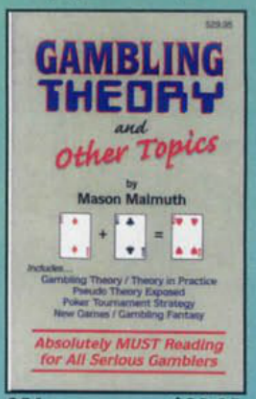

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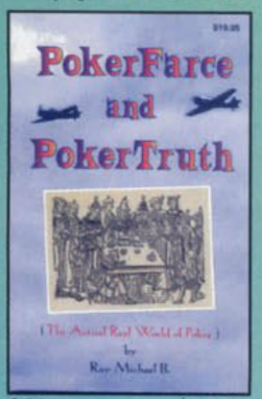

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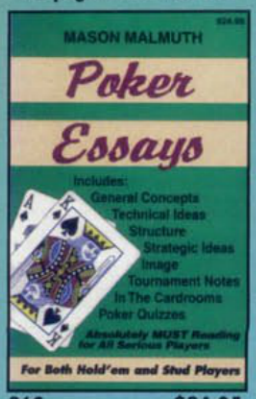

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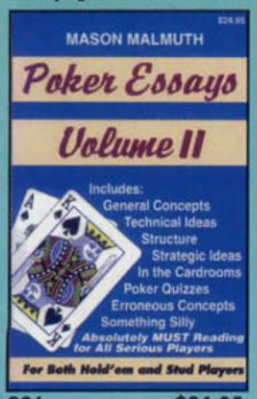

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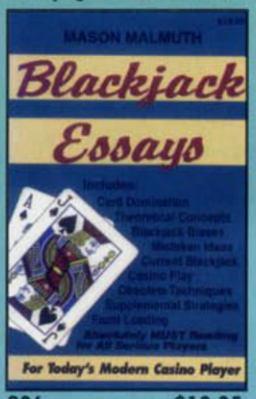

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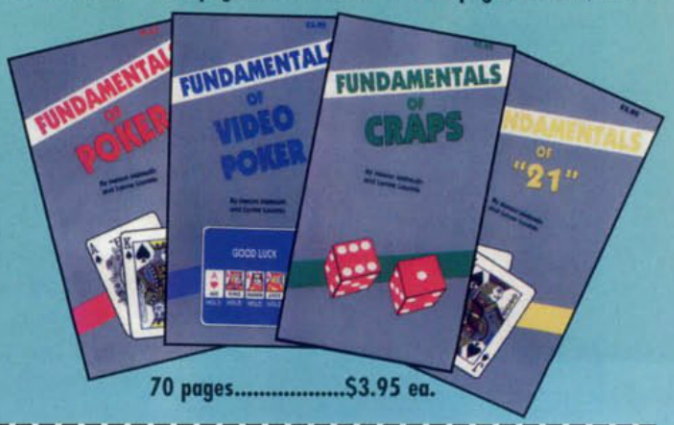

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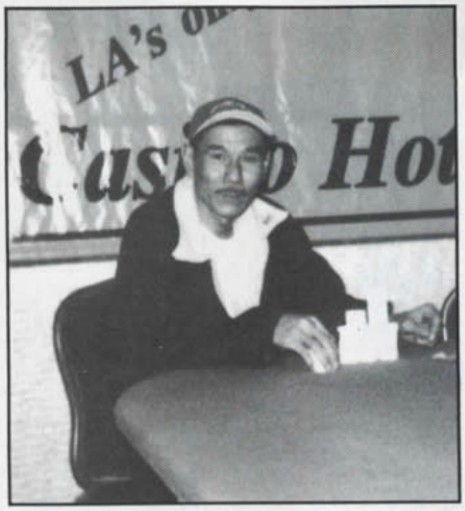
Millennium Challenge



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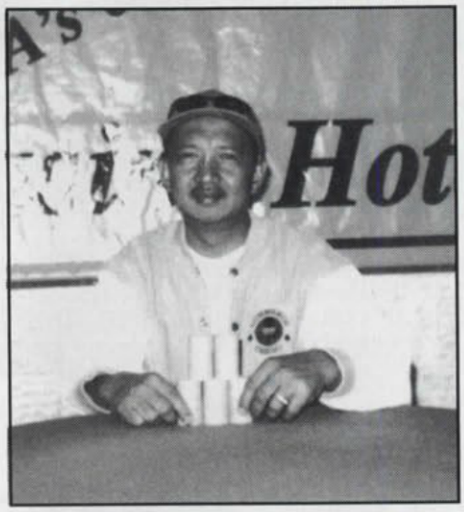

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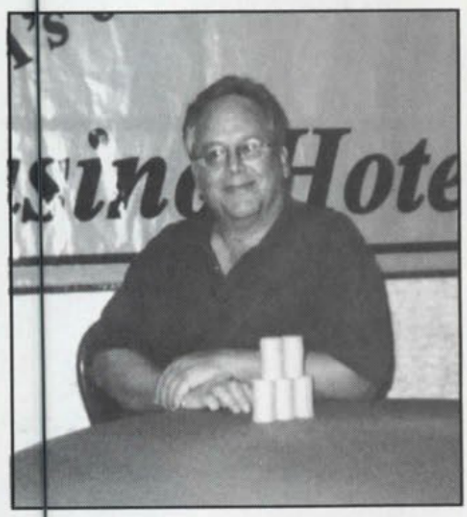


Marc Fein

The *Millennium Challenge* at Crystal Park Casino in Compton, California, recently concluded. This seven-event tournament attracted 1,411 entrants and paid out $169,200 in prize money. Results were as follows:

$50 limit hold'em
Entrants: 330 • Prize pool: $16,500

1. Tom Le	$5,940
2. Tony Nasr	3,135
3. William Christiansen	1,650
4. Chau Pham	990
5. Boris Kolas	660
6. Jose Casanova	575
7. Moshe Yona	495
8. Jay Jamieson	410
9. Beverly Kruskol	330

$100 limit hold'em
Entrants: 303 • Prize pool: $30,300

1. Hung La	$10,900
2. Chau La	5,755
3. Andy Lim	3,030
4. J.J. Volpe	1,815
5. Mike Kurlyand	1,210
6. Thang Doan	1,060
7. Trung Nguyen	905
8. John Hulett	755
9. Jim Bates	605

$ 100 pot-limit hold'em
Entrants: 100 • Prize pool: $10,000

1. Andy Gamboa	$3,830
2. Chris Hanley	1,930
3. Sophin Chea	1,000
4. Tiffany Le	600
5. Dan Gerard	450
6. Young Phan	350
7. Frank Sanzo	300
8. Buffy Shapiro	250
9. Tom Lockhart	200

$100 Omaha high-low split
Entrants: 140 • Rebuys: 116
Prize pool: $25,600

1. Marc Fein	$9,985
2. Sirous Baghchehsaraie	5,120
3. Minh Nguyen	2,560
4. Ronald Bruns	1,535
5. Anne Bloom	1,150
6. Andy Gamboa	890
7. Tom Duray	765
8. Wayne Shoemaker	645
9. Joe Urist	515

$200 limit hold'em
Entrants: 213 • Prize pool: $42,600

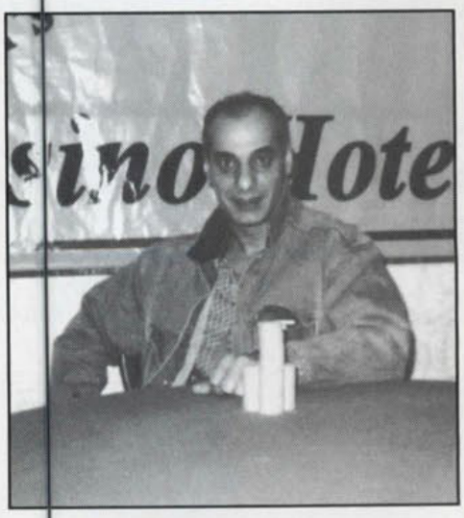
1. Anton Ulker	$15,335
2. Tiffini Le	8,095
3. Not available.	4,260
4. Eskimo Clark	2,555
5. Jay Reisler	1,700
6. Chau La	1,490
7. Not available	1,275
8. Not available	1,065
9. John Horrocks	850

$100 no-limit hold'em
• Entrants: 176 • Rebuys: 116
Prize pool: $29,200

1. Reggie Cardiel	$11,385
2. Dai Nguyen	5,840
3. Antonio Torres	2,920
4. Dan Alspach	1,750
5. Kee Ng	1,310
6. Butch Avien	1,035
7. Dorun Apostu	885
8. Alfred Paul Lamb	730
9. Woody Kobroob	585

$100 seven-card stud high-low split
Entrants: 149
Prize pool: $15,000 (guarantee)

1. Garry Kenneth Lent	$6,000
2. Wilbur Torres	3,000
3. Chris Hall	1,500
4. Andre Maloof	900
5. Rudy Diaz	750
6. Chris Karagulleyan	600
7. Jose Mendoza	490
8. Not available	375
9. Dan Field	260
10. Major Folk	225



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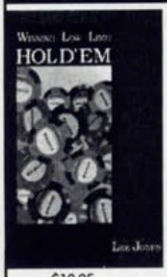

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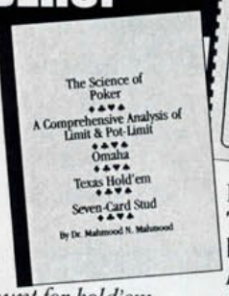



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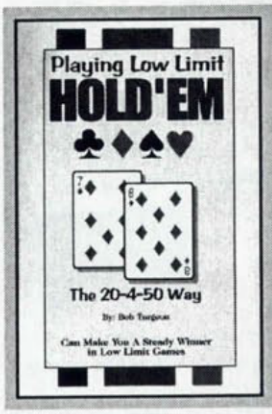

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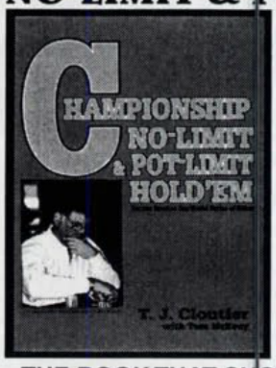

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2000 MAJOR POKER TOURNAMENTS*

Golden Gate Classic	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo, San Pablo, CA	Jan. 29-Feb. 6
L.A. Poker Classic	Commerce Casino, Commerce, CA	Feb. 2-27
Pot of Gold Tournament	Reno Hilton, Reno, NV	Feb. 24-March 4
$120,000 Guaranteed Poker Week	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	Feb. 28-March 5
Winnin' o' the Green	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	March 2-13
Mills Lane "Let's Get It On" Poker Tournament	Boomtown Hotel & Casino, Reno, NV	March 14-19
Sport of Kings	Hollywood Park Casino, Inglewood, CA	March 17-26
Peppermill Spring Poker Tournament	Peppermill Hotel and Casino, Reno, NV	March 23-April 2
Jack Binion's World Poker Open	Horseshoe & Gold Strike Hotel & Resort, Tunica, MS	March 27-April 16
$325,000 Guaranteed Spring Challenge	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	April 3-14
New England Poker Classic	Foxwoods Resort Casino, Ledyard, CT	April 7-17
Wild Wild West Tournament	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo, San Pablo, CA	April 8-16
World Series of Poker	Binion's Horseshoe, Las Vegas, NV	April 20-May 18
Queen of Champions	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	May 18-22
Mexican Riviera Poker Cruise	Card Player Cruises, Las Vegas, NV	May 21-28
Spring Fling	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	May 22-June 4
Peppermill Summer Poker Tournament	Peppermill Hotel & Casino, Reno, NV	June 1-11
$175,000 Guaranteed Poker Week	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	June 5-11
Pot of Gold Tournament	Reno Hilton, Reno, NV	June 8-17
California State Poker Classic	Commerce Casino, Commerce, CA	June 9-25
Second Anniversary Poker Championships	Lucky Chances Casino, Colma, CA	June 19-25
Alaskan Poker Cruise	Card Player Cruises, Las Vegas, NV	June 21-28
Independence Week	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	June 27-July 4
San Francisco Open	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo, San Pablo, CA	July 1-9
Orleans Open	The Orleans Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV	July 8-23
$300,000 Guaranteed Summer Challenge	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	July 27-Aug. 6
Legends of Poker	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Aug. 3-28
Greek Island Poker Cruise	Card Player Cruises, Las Vegas, NV	Aug. 5-17
$200,000 Guaranteed Fall Challenge	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	Aug. 22-27
Five Days of Gold	Reno Hilton, Reno, NV	Sept. 5-9
Heavenly Hold'em Tournament	Commerce Casino, Commerce, CA	Sept. 6-14
Northern California Championship	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo, San Pablo, CA	Sept. 9-17
Western Caribbean Poker Cruise	Card Player Cruises, Las Vegas, NV	Sept. 10-17
National Championship of Poker	Hollywood Park Casino, Inglewood, CA	Sept. 13-24
Ladies State Championship	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	Sept. 21-25
Tom McEvoy's Poker Spectacular	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	Sept. 25-Oct. 2
Big Poker Oktober	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Oct. 5-16
"Seniors VII" World Championship of Poker	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	Oct. 17-24
Peppermill Fall Poker Tournament	Peppermill Hotel & Casino, Reno, NV	Oct. 26-Nov. 5
Thunder by the Bay	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo, San Pablo, CA	Nov. 11-19
Holiday Bonus Tournament	Commerce Casino, Commerce, CA	Dec. 1-10
Ho Ho Hold'em	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Dec. 11-17

* To be categorized as a major tournament, an event must be five or more days in length. Tournaments with shorter durations are categorized as special events.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Super Stud Weekend	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Jan. 27-30
Super Bowl Weekend Spectacular	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino, Lake Elsinore, CA	Jan. 28-30
Queen of Hearts	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Feb. 6
"Feb"ulous Four	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino, Lake Elsinore, CA	Feb. 10-13
Hold'em Olympics VIII	Fantasy Springs Casino, Indio, CA	Feb. 11-13
$7,500 Guaranteed Valentine's Day Tournament	Lucky Chances Casino, Colma, CA	Feb. 12
King & Queen of Hearts	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Feb. 13
Valentine's Day Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	Feb. 14
Presidents Birthday Guaranteed Weekend	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	Feb. 19-22
Winter Jubilee	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	Feb. 25-27
$15,000 Guaranteed Limit Hold'em Tournament	Lucky Chances Casino, Colma, CA	March 11
Bike Bash VI	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	March 15
St. Patrick's Day Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	March 17
Cactus Pete's Spring Poker Tournament	Cactus Pete's, Jackpot, NV	March 23-26
Freeroll Tournament	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	March 24-26
Pechanga $35,000 Open	Pechanga Entertainment Center, Temecula, CA	March 30-31
Rat Pack Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	March 31-April 2
World Series Warm-Up	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	April 14-17
Chips Ahoy Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	April 14-15
Shooting Star Tournament	Bay 101, San Jose, CA	April 15-17
Cinco De Mayo	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	May 5-6
Fun in the Sun Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	May 12-14
Great Day in May	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	May 19
Queen of Diamonds	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	May 21
Memorial Day Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	May 29
Hat & Jacket Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	June 18
Oceanside Open	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	July 1-4
Crystal Park Freedom Open	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	July 5-7
Tournament of Champions	The Orleans Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV	July 24-26
2nd Anniversary Asian Games Championships	Lucky Chances Casino, Colma, CA	June 26-29
Cactus Pete's Summer Poker Tournament	Cactus Pete's, Jackpot, NV	July 27-30
Summer Shootout	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	Aug. 18-20
Summer Freeroll	Hollywood Park Casino, Inglewood, CA	August 20
Summer Freeroll	Hollywood Park Casino, Inglewood, CA	August 27
Bike Bash VII	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Aug. 30
Ladies Poker Dream Weekend	Commerce Casino, Commerce, CA	Sept. 1-3
No Rebuy Labor Day Weekend	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	Sept. 1-4
Labor Day Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	Sept. 4
Queen of Clubs	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Sept. 10
Mexican ID Day	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Sept. 15-16
Mexican Poker Tournament	Crystal Park Casino, Compton, CA	Sept. 16
Bike Bash VIII	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Oct. 18
Haig Kelegian Classic	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	Oct. 20-22
Queen of Queens	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Oct. 22
Good Times Roll Poker Tournament	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	Nov. 17-19
Turkey Shoot	The Bicycle Casino, Bell Gardens, CA	Nov. 23
Tournament of the Millennium	Ocean's Eleven Casino, Oceanside, CA	Dec. 27-30

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS

♠ ARIZONA

MON	11AM	Casino Arizona	Hold'em	$25
MON	Noon	Gila River	No-Limit Hold'em	$25 RB (1) $20
MON	1:30PM	Fort McDowell	Hold'em	$10
TUE	10AM	Desert Diamond	Alternates	$15 RB $5
TUE	11AM	Casino Arizona	Stud	$25
TUE	11AM	Fort McDowell	Omaha	$10
TUE	7PM	Fort McDowell	Hold'em	$15
TUE	7PM	Gila River	Hold'em	$55 RB $50
WED	11AM	Casino Arizona	Hold'em	$25
WED	11AM	Fort McDowell	Hold'em	$10
WED	6PM	Apache Gold	Hold'em	$25 RB $15
WED	7PM	Fort McDowell	River Hold'em	$15
WED	7PM	Gila River	No-Limit Hold'em	$55 RB $50
THU	11AM	Casino Arizona	Omaha	$25
THU	Noon	Gila River	Stud	$25 RB (1) $20
THU	7PM	Apache Gold	Omaha	$20
THU	7PM	Desert Diamond	Alternates	$30
FRI	11AM	Casino Arizona	Hold'em	$25
FRI	11AM	Fort McDowell	Half Hold'em-Half Omaha	$10
FRI	Noon	Gila River	Hold'em	$25 RB (1) $20
FRI	7PM	Fort McDowell	Hold'em	$30
SAT	Noon	Gila River	Ladies Hold'em	Freeroll
SAT	5PM	Fort McDowell	Hold'em	$30
SUN	10AM	Desert Diamond	Hold'em	$25
SUN	3PM	Apache Gold	Hold'em	$20

♠ COLORADO

MON	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Hold'em	$10
TUES	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Stud	$10
WED	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Stud	$10
FRI	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Stud H/L	$10
SAT	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Stud	$10
SUN	Noon	Ute Mountain Casino	Stud	$10

♠ CONNECTICUT

MON	7PM	Foxwoods	Hold'em	$35 RB (1) $20/$30
MON	7PM	Mohegan Sun	Crazy Pineapple	$25 RB $20
TUE	7PM	Foxwoods	No-Limit Hold'em	$35 RB $20
TUE	7PM	Mohegan Sun	Stud (bounties)	$35 RB $20
WED	7PM	Foxwoods	Stud	$35
THU	Noon	Foxwoods	Stud	$35 RB (1) $20/$30
THU	7PM	Mohegan Sun	Alternates	$35 RB $20/$30
FRI	7PM	Mohegan Sun	Omaha H/L	$35 RB $20/$30
SAT	10AM	Foxwoods	Hold'em	$20 RB (1) $10
SAT	10AM	Mohegan Sun	Hold'em	$20 RB $15
SUN	10AM	Foxwoods	Stud	$20 RB (1) $10
SUN	10AM	Mohegan Sun	Stud	$20 RB $15

♠ IOWA

MON	10:30AM	Lady Luck Casino	Dealer's Choice	$10 RB $10
MON	6:30PM	Lady Luck Casino	Dealer's Choice	$10 RB $10
TUE	6:30PM	Lady Luck Casino	Hold'em	$10 RB $10
WED	6:30PM	Lady Luck Casino	Stud	$10 RB $10
THU	6:30PM	Lady Luck Casino	Hold'em	$15 RB $15
SUN	3PM	Lady Luck Casino	Stud	$15 RB $10

♠ LOUISIANA

TUE	6:30PM	Grand Casino Coushatta	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $15 AO $15 or $30
SAT	Noon	Grand Casino Coushatta	Hold'em (1st Sat.)	$75 RB (1) $75
SAT	Noon	Grand Casino Coushatta	Hold'em (3rd Sat.)	$100 RB (1) $100
SAT	Noon	Grand Casino Coushatta	Hold'em (2nd & 4th Sat.)	$50 RB (1) $50

♠ MICHIGAN

MON	10AM	Soaring Eagle Casino	Stud	$20 RB $15
TUE	10AM	Soaring Eagle Casino	Omaha H/L	$20 RB $15
WED	10AM	Soaring Eagle Casino	Hold'em	$20 RB $15
SUN	5PM	Soaring Eagle Casino	Alternates	$20 RB $15

♠ MISSISSIPPI

MON	Noon	Grand Casino (Gulfport)	Half Hold'em/Half Omaha	$25 RB $20
MON	7PM	Grand Casino (Biloxi)	Ladies Stud	$15 RB (1) $15
TUE	Noon	Grand Casino (Biloxi)	Hold'em	$5 RB $20
WED	Noon	Grand Casino (Gulfport)	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $15
THU	Noon	Grand Casino (Gulfport)	Hold'em	$5 RB $15
FRI	Noon	Grand Casino (Biloxi)	Hold'em	$5 RB $20
SUN	Noon	Grand Casino (Biloxi)	Omaha	$10 RB $15
SUN	Noon	Grand Casino (Gulfport)	Stud	$15 RB $10

♠ NEW JERSEY

MON	12:15PM	Tropicana	Stud	$40
TUE	7:15PM	Tropicana	Stud	$20
WED	4:15PM	Tropicana	Hold'em	$60
THU	7:15PM	Tropicana	Hold'em	$20
FRI	4:15PM	Tropicana	Hold'em	$115
SUN	1:15PM	Tropicana	Stud H/L	$50

♠ NEW MEXICO

MON	11AM	Isleta Gaming Palace	Hold'em	$15
TUE	7PM	Isleta Gaming Palace	Hold'em	$25
WED	11AM	Isleta Gaming Palace	Stud	$15
THU	7PM	Isleta Gaming Palace	Hold'em	$25
FRI	11AM	Isleta Gaming Palace	Hold'em	$15

♠ NORTH DAKOTA

MON	7PM	Dakota Magic	Stud	Freeroll RB $10
TUE	7PM	Dakota Magic	No-Limit Hold'em	$30 RB $10
WED	7PM	Dakota Magic	Stud H/L	Freeroll RB $10
THU	7PM	Dakota Magic	Tahoe H/L Split Freezeout	$25
FRI	7PM	Dakota Magic	No-Limit Hold'em	$30 RB $10
SAT	2PM	Dakota Magic	No-Limit Hold'em	$30 RB $10
SUN	3PM	Dakota Magic	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10

♠ OREGON

MON	11AM	Spirit Mountain	Hold'em	$20 RB (2) $10
TUE	11AM	Spirit Mountain	Hold'em	$20 RB (2) $10
WED	11AM	Spirit Mountain	Hold'em	$20 RB (2) $10
WED	7PM	Spirit Mountain	Omaha H/L	$27 RB (2) $20
THU	11AM	Spirit Mountain	Hold'em	$20 RB (2) $10
THU	7PM	Spirit Mountain	No-Limit Hold'em	$25 RB (2) $20
FRI	Noon	Spirit Mountain	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $20, $25, $15
SAT	Noon	Spirit Mountain	Hold'em (last Sat.)	$115 RB $100
SUN	Noon	Spirit Mountain	No-Limit Hold'em (3rd Sun.)	$65 RB $50

♠ SOUTH DAKOTA

MON	6PM	Dakota Sioux	Stud H/L	$10 RB $5
TUE	6PM	Dakota Sioux	No-Limit Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10
WED	6PM	Dakota Sioux	Dealer's Choice	$10 RB $5
THU	6PM	Dakota Sioux	Hold'em H/L	$10 RB $5
FRI	4PM	Dakota Sioux	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
SUN	1PM	Dakota Sioux	Dealer's Choice	Freeroll RB $10

♠ WASHINGTON

MON	11AM	Grove Casino	Dealer's Choice	$10 RB $10
TUE	11AM	Grove Casino	Dealer's Choice	$10 RB $10
WED	11AM	Grove Casino	Dealer's Choice	$10 RB $10
THU	11AM	Grove Casino	Dealer's Choice	$10 RB $10
FRI	11AM	Grove Casino	Dealer's Choice	$10 RB $10
SAT	11AM	Grove Casino	Dealer's Choice	$10 RB $10
SUN	11AM	Grove Casino	Hold'em	Freeroll

♠ EUROPE

Some casinos in Europe hold ongoing weekly tournaments. Due to the fact that these tournaments are subject to change at any time, *Card Player* suggests that you check with the casino of your choice about its tournament schedule prior to your visit.

NEVADA WEEKLY TOURNAMENTS

LAS VEGAS/LAUGHLIN/MESQUITE/JACKPOT

♠ MONDAY

10AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em	$17
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$20
Noon	The Orleans	Omaha H/L	$20 RB $10
6PM	Luxor	Stud	Freeroll
7PM	Cactus Pete's-Jackpot	Pineapple	$15 RB $10
7PM	Co. Belle-Laughlin	Omaha H/L (bounties)	$25 RB $10 AO $10
7PM	Mirage	Hold'em	$60 RB $40
7PM	Sunset Station	Stud (bounties)	$20 RB $10 AO 2-for-1
7PM	The Orleans	No-Limit Hold'em	$20 RB $10

♠ TUESDAY

10AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em	$17
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$20
Noon	Sam's Town	Omaha H/L	$20 RB $10
Noon	The Orleans	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
5 PM	Santa Fe	Razz	$22
7 PM	Mirage	No-Limit Hold'em	$60 RB $40
7 PM	Plaza	No-Limit Hold'em	$20 RB $10 AO $10
7 PM	River Palms-Laughlin	Hold'em	$15 RB $10 AO $20
7 PM	Sunset Station	Hold'em (bounties)	$20 RB $10 AO 2-for-1
7 PM	The Orleans	Stud	$20 RB $10
8:30 PM	Stratosphere	Hold'em	$33

♠ WEDNESDAY

10AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em	$17
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$20
Noon	The Orleans	Omaha H/L	$30 RB (1) $20
5PM	Santa Fe	1/2 Omaha H/L-1/2 Stud H/L	$22
7PM	Cactus Pete's-Jackpot	No-Limit Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10
7PM	Co. Belle-Laughlin	Hold'em (bounties)	$20 RB $10
7PM	Mirage	Pot-Limit Omaha	$60 RB $40
7PM	Sunset Station	Omaha (bounties)	$20 RB $10 AO 2-for-1
7PM	The Orleans	Hold'em	$20 RB $10

♠ THURSDAY

10AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em	$17
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$20
Noon	The Orleans	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
5PM	Santa Fe	No-Limit Hold'em	$22
6PM	Luxor	Hold'em	Freeroll
7PM	Col. Belle-Laughlin	Omaha H/L (bounties)	$20 RB $10
7PM	Mirage	No-Limit Hold'em	$120 RB $100
7PM	The Orleans	Omaha H/L	$20 RB $10
8:30PM	Stratosphere	Stud	$33

♠ FRIDAY

10AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em	$17
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$20
Noon	The Orleans	Omaha H/L	$20 RB $10
6PM	Luxor	Stud	Freeroll
7PM	Co. Belle-Laughlin	Omaha H/L (bounties)	$20 RB $10
7PM	Plaza	No-Limit Hold'em	$20 RB $10 AO $10
7PM	The Orleans	No-Limit Hold'em	$60 RB (1) $40

♠ SATURDAY

10AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em	$17
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$20
Noon	The Orleans	Hold'em	$30 RB (1) $20
4PM	River Palms-Laughlin	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10
7PM	The Orleans	Stud H/L Split	$20 RB $10
8:30PM	Stratosphere	Stud	$33

♠ SUNDAY

10AM	Edgewater-Laughlin	Pineapple Shootout	$12
10AM	Nevada Palace	Hold'em	$17
Noon	Luxor	Hold'em Freezeout (20 player max.)	$20
Noon	The Orleans	No-Limit Hold'em	$30 RB (1) $20
12:30PM	Cactus Pete's-Jackpot	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $20
5PM	Santa Fe	Stud	$22
6PM	Luxor	Hold'em	Freeroll
7PM	Mirage	Stud	$60 RB $40
7PM	The Orleans	Hold'em	$120 RB (1) $100
8:30PM	Stratosphere	No-Limit Hold'em	$33

RENO/TAHOE

♠ MONDAY

9AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10AM	Peppermill	Hold'em Freezeout	$12
11:30AM	Boomtown	Stud Shootout	$15
7PM	Peppermill	Hold'em Shootout	$20
7PM	Reno Hilton	Hold'em (bounties)	$20 RB $10

♠ TUESDAY

9AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10AM	Peppermill	Hold'em Freezeout	$12
11:30AM	Boomtown	Stud Shootout	$15
6PM	Harveys-Lake Tahoe	Hold'em	$25 RB $20
7PM	Boomtown	Hold'em	$20 RB $15 AO $20
7PM	Peppermill	Casino Dealers Only Hold'em	$50 RB $50
7:30PM	Hyatt-Lake Tahoe	Crazy Pineapple H/L	$25 RB (3) $20

♠ WEDNESDAY

9AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10AM	Peppermill	Hold'em Freezeout	$12
11:30AM	Boomtown	Stud Shootout	$15
7PM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em (bounties)	$20 RB $10

♠ THURSDAY

9AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10AM	Peppermill	Hold'em Freezeout	$12
11:30AM	Boomtown	Stud Shootout	$15
6PM	Harveys-Lake Tahoe	Omaha H/L	$25 RB $20
7:30PM	Hyatt-Lake Tahoe	Hold'em	$35 RB (3) $20

♠ FRIDAY

9AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10AM	Peppermill	Hold'em Freezeout	$12
3PM	Hyatt-Lake Tahoe	Crazy Pineapple H/L	$55 RB (4) $50
7PM	Boomtown	Stud	$25

♠ SATURDAY

9AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10AM	Peppermill	Hold'em Freezeout	$12

♠ SUNDAY

9AM	Reno Hilton	No-Limit Hold'em Winner Take All	$17
10AM	Peppermill	Hold'em Freezeout	$12
2 PM	Reno Hilton	Omaha H/L	$25 RB (2) $20
7 PM	Boomtown	Hold'em	$20 RB $15 AO $20

The
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July 8-23, 2000
The ORLEANS
Las Vegas, Nevada

CALIFORNIA WEEKLY TOURNAMENTS

♠ MONDAY

9:30AM	Pechanga-Temecula	Omaha	$15 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Hold'em	$10 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em	$15 RB $10, $20
10AM	Jok-erz Wild-Petaluma	Stud	Freeroll
10AM	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino	Hold'em	$5 RB (2) $10
10AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Hold'em (bounties)	$13 RB $5 AO $10
10AM	Soboba-San Jacinto	Hold'em H/L	$35
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Hold'em (bounties)	$12
10:15AM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Hold'em (bounties)	$3 RB $10
10:30AM	Lucky Chances-Colma	Hold'em	$45
11AM	Crystal Park-Compton	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
11AM	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo	Stud	$13 RB $10
11AM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $10
11:15AM	Bay 101-San Jose	Pan	$49 w/RB
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Bounty Hold'em	$15 RB $10
12:15PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $10
6:15PM	Bay 101-San Jose	Omaha H/L	$88
6:30PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $10
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7PM	Crystal Park-Compton	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
7PM	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo	Hold'em	$33 RB $25 AO $25
7PM	Garden City-San Jose	1/2 Hold'em-1/2 Omaha	$40 RB $40
7PM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Mexican Poker	$25 RB $10
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Omaha H/L	$12
7:30PM	Jok-Erz Wild-Petaluma	Hold'em	$15

♠ TUESDAY

9:30AM	Pechanga-Temecula	Hold'em	$15 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Stud H/L	$10 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em	$15 RB $10, $20
10AM	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino	Omaha H/L	$5 RB (2) $10
10AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Omaha H/L (bounties)	$13 RB $5 AO $10
10AM	Soboba-San Jacinto	Omaha H/L	$35
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Omaha H/L (bounties)	$12
10:15AM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Omaha H/L	$3 RB $10
11AM	Crystal Park-Compton	Stud H/L	$15 RB $10
11AM	Garden City-San Jose	Hold'em	$10 RB $20
11AM	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo	Hold'em	$13 RB $10
11AM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
Noon	Cache Creek-Brooks	Hold'em	$25 RB $20
Noon	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Pan Elimination	$20
12:15PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
1:30PM	Commerce Casino-Commerce	Pan	$30
6PM	Clovis 500 Club-Clovis	Omaha H/L	$2 RB $2
6PM	Elk Valley-Crescent City	Hold'em	$10 RB $15
6PM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	No-Limit Hold'em (2nd & 4th)	$55
6PM	Soboba-San Jacinto	Omaha H/L	$15 RB (1) $10 AO $15
6:15PM	Bay 101-San Jose	Hold'em	$101
6:30PM	Artichoke Joe's-San Bruno	Hold'em	$45 RB $40
6:30PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	Stud H/L	$15 RB $10
6:30PM	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10 AO (1) $10
6:30PM	Lucky Chances-Colma	Omaha H/L	$49 RB (1) $40
6:30PM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em (bounties)	Freeroll
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7PM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Hold'em	$20 RB $20 AO $20
7PM	Crystal Park-Compton	No-Limit Hold'em	$15 RB $10
7PM	Garden City-San Jose	Stud H/L (1st Tues.)	$40 RB $40
7PM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	David L. Stud H/L	$330
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Hold'em (bounties)	$22
7:30PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	Pan	$33
8PM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	21st Century Blackjack	$50

♠ WEDNESDAY

9:30AM	Pechanga-Temecula	Omaha	$15 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Omaha	$10 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $10, $20
10AM	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino	Hold'em	$5 RB (2) $10
10AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Hold'em (bounties)	$13 RB $5 AO $10
10AM	Soboba-San Jacinto	Hold'em	$35
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Hold'em (bounties)	$12
10:15AM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Omaha H/L	$3 RB $10
10:30AM	Lucky Chances-Colma	Stud	$45
11AM	Crystal Park-Compton	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
11AM	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo	Omaha H/L-Stud H/L (alt.)	$13 RB $10
11AM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	Stud H/L	$15 RB $10
11:15AM	Bay 101-San Jose	Hold'em	$49
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
Noon	Cache Creek-Brooks	Omaha H/L	$55
12:15PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	1/2 Hold'em-1/2 Stud	$15 RB $10
6:30PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	No-Limit Hold'em	$15 RB $10
6:30PM	Oaks Club-Emeryville	Hold'em	$75
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7PM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Hold'em	$3 RB $20
7PM	Crystal Park-Compton	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $10
7PM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Cr. Pineapple H/L	$25 RB (1) $20 or (1) $30
7PM	Garden City-San Jose	Hold'em	$40 RB $40
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Omaha H/L	$12
7:15PM	Pechanga-Temecula	Hold'em	$15 RB $10 AO $10
7:30PM	Commerce Casino-Commerce	Pan	$40
7:30PM	Jok-erz Wild-Petaluma	Omaha	$20

♠ THURSDAY

9:30AM	Pechanga-Temecula	Hold'em	$15 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Crazy Pineapple	$10 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em	$15 RB $10, $20
10AM	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino	Omaha H/L	$5 RB (2) $10
10AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Hold'em H/L (bounties)	$13 RB $5 AO $10
10AM	Soboba-San Jacinto	Omaha H/L	$35
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Stud H/L	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Stud H/L (bounties)	$12
10:15AM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Stud H/L	$3 RB $10
10:30AM	Artichoke Joe's-San Bruno	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
11AM	Crystal Park-Compton	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $10
11AM	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo	Stud	$13 RB $10
11AM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	Omaha H/L	$15 RB $10
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Stud H/L	$15 RB $10
12:15PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	1/2 Hold'em-1/2 Lowball	$15 RB $10
5PM	Cache Creek-Brooks	Hold'em	$20
6PM	Elk Valley-Crescent City	Hold'em	$10 RB $15
6PM	Soboba-San Jacinto	Hold'em	$15 RB (1) $10 AO $15
6:30PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Omaha	$20 RB $10
7PM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Hold'em	$15 RB $15 AO $15
7PM	Clovis 500 Club-Clovis	No-Limit Hold'em	$12
7PM	Crystal Park-Compton	Stud H/L	$15 RB $10
7PM	Garden City-San Jose	Hold'em	$60 RB $40
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Stud H/L	$12
7:15PM	Outpost Casino-San Ramon	Hold'em	$40 RB (1) $40
7:15PM	Pechanga-Temecula	Omaha	$15 RB $10 AO $10
8PM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	Pai Gow Poker	$55 RB $50

♠ FRIDAY

9:30AM	Pechanga-Temecula	Omaha	$15 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Hold'em	$10 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em	$15 RB $10, $20
10AM	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino	Stud H/L	$5 RB (2) $10
10AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Omaha H/L (bounties)	$13 RB $5 AO $10
10AM	Soboba-San Jacinto	Hold'em	$35
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Omaha H/L (bounties)	$12
10:15AM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Hold'em	$13 RB $10
10:30AM	Lucky Chances-Colma	Hold'em	$45
11AM	Crystal Park-Compton	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
11AM	Ladbrokes Casino San Pablo	Hold'em	$13 RB $10
11AM	Normandie Casino-Gardena	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Bounty Hold'em	$15 RB $10
Noon	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Pan Elimination	$20
12:15PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	Stud H/L	$15 RB $10
5PM	Cache Creek-Brooks	Hold'em	$10
6PM	Elk Valley-Crescent City	Hold'em	$10 RB $10 AO $10
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7PM	Crystal Park-Compton	Bounty Limit Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7PM	Dealer's Choice-Auburn	1/2 Hold'em-1/2 Omaha	Freeroll RB $10
7PM	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino	Hold'em	$22 RB (2) $15
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Hold'em	$28
7:30PM	Commerce Casino-Commerce	Pan	$40
8PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	Pan	$40

CALIFORNIA WEEKLY TOURNAMENTS

♠ SATURDAY

10AM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Hold'em	$10 RB $10 AO $10
10AM	Soboba-San Jacinto	Hold'em	$35
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Hold'em (bounties)	$23
10:15AM	Chumash Casino-Santa Ynez	Hold'em	$13 RB $10
10:30AM	Lucky Chances-Colma	Hold'em	$55
11AM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Hold'em (bounties)	$23 RB $10 AO $20
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Stud	$15 RB $10
Noon	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Pan Elimination	$20
12:15PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	No-Limit Hold'em	$15 RB $10
1:15PM	Oaks Club-Emeryville	Varies (2nd Sat.)	$60 RB (1) $50
2PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$50
2PM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em	$30 RB $20 AO $10
2PM	Jackson Rancheria-Jackson	Hold'em	$12 RB $10
3PM	Clovis 500 Club-Clovis	Charity Support Tournament	$5
5:55PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Stud H/L (bounties)	$15
6PM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$13
6:15PM	Outpost Casino-San Ramon	Omaha H/L	$40 RB (1) $40
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$20 RB $10
7PM	Crystal Park-Compton	No-Limit Hold'em	$40 RB (1) $20
7PM	Lake Elsinore Hotel & Casino	Hold'em	Freeroll RB $10 AO (1) $10

♠ SUNDAY

10AM	Soboba-San Jacinto	Omaha H/L	$35
10AM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$13
10AM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Varies (qualify)	Freeroll
11AM	Garden City-San Jose	Hold'em	$40 RB $40
11:15AM	Bay 101-San Jose	Hold'em	Varies
11:30AM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	Hold'em	$15 RB $10
Noon	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Pan Elimination	$20
12:15PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	Crazy Pineapple	$15 RB $10
1PM	Ocean's Eleven-Oceanside	Stud H/L (bounties)	$38
1PM	Outpost Casino-El Cajon	Alternates	Freeroll RB $20
1:15PM	Oaks Club-Emeryville	Hold'em	$50 RB (2) $40
1:30PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	Pan	$33
2PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Hold'em	$50
2PM	Casino Morongo-Cabazon	Hold'em	Freeroll
5PM	Fantasy Springs-Indio	Hold'em Real Money	$25 RB (1) $30
6PM	Hollywood Park-Inglewood	No-Limit Hold'em	$330 RB (1) $300
6PM	Sycuan-El Cajon	Hold'em	$13
6:30PM	Bicycle Casino-Bell Gardens	Headhunter Hold'em	$20 RB $10
6:30PM	Lucky Chances-Colma	Hold'em	$88
7PM	California Grand-Pacheco	Omaha	$50
7PM	Viejas Casino-Alpine	Ladies Only (varies)	$12

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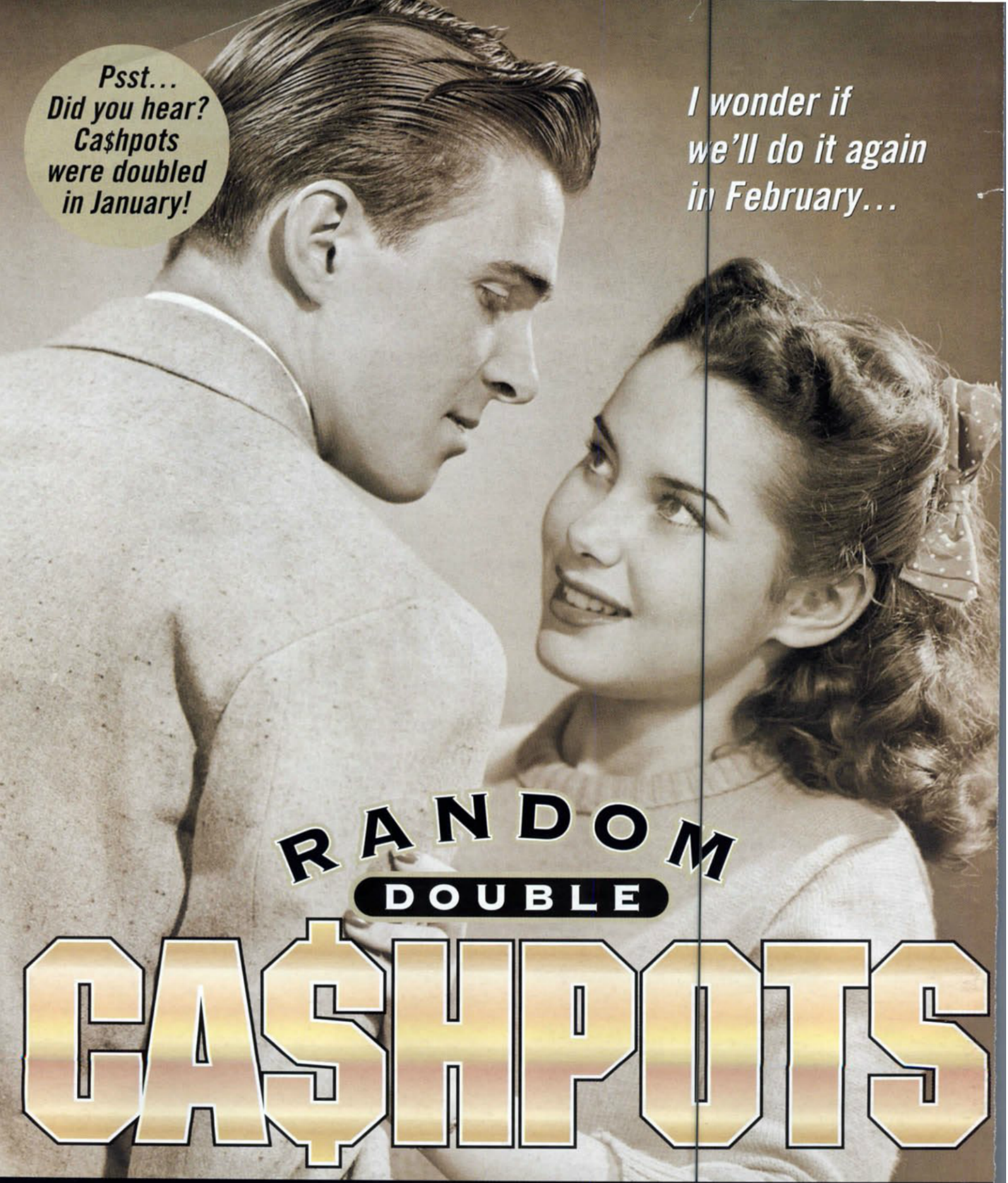

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