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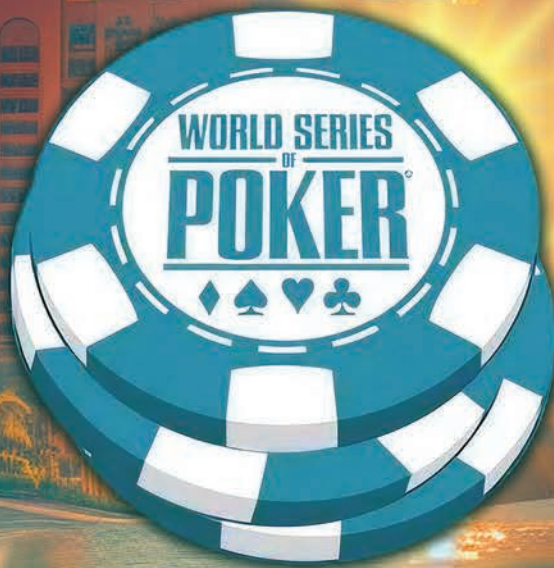
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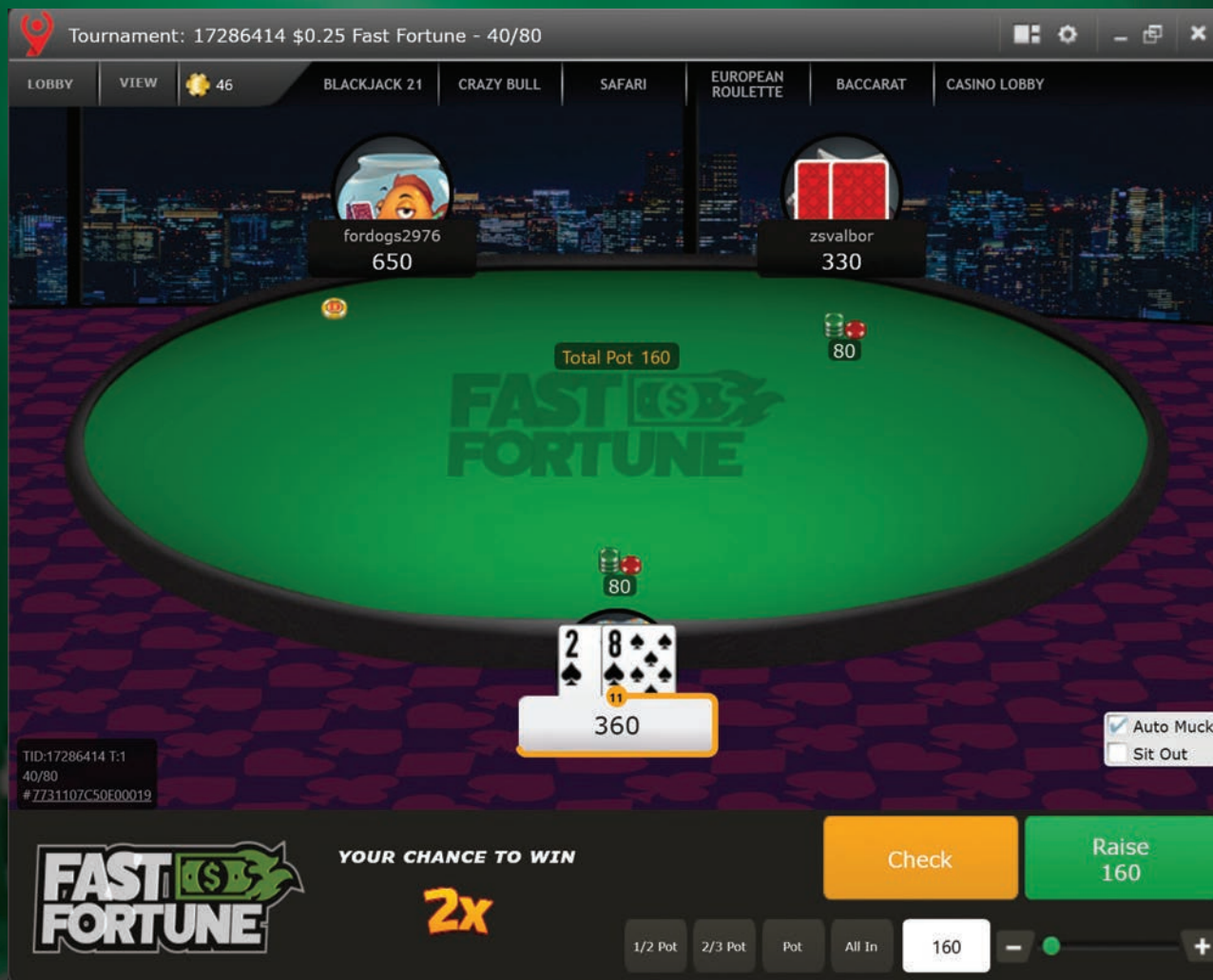
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24



14



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44



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Features

14

Poker Police: John Andress
Talks Online Game Security
By Art Parmann and Justin Young

20

Seven Nights Of Monarch: Ossi Ketola
Puts Up \$63 Million In Buy-Ins
By Tim Fiorvanti

24

Triton Jeju: \$130 Million Changes Hands
In South Korea
By Erik Fast

32

Leaderboard:
Triton Poker Career Earnings
By Erik Fast

News

10

News From The Gambling World
By Card Player News Team

Tournaments

34

Circuit Update
By Card Player News Team

36

Circuit Results
By Card Player News Team

Strategy

44

Final Table Takedown:
Schutten Shuts Out Distractions
For Circuit Title
By Craig Tapscott

48

Aggressive Shoving Before The Flop
By Jonathan Little

50

Five Ways To Spot (And Beat) Local Regs
By Alex Fitzgerald

52

Punt Of The Day: Main Event Runs
With Maria Konnikova
By Sam Greenwood

54

Loose Lips Sink Chips
By Mark Mazmanian

Also In This Issue

8

About Us

58

Tournament Schedules

62

Poker Glossary

64

Poker Odds

66

PokerCoaching.com Quiz:
Rivering Top Pair
By Jonathan Little

Poker Hand Matchups

39

Christoph Vogelsang vs. Henrik Hecklen

40

Aleksejs Ponakovs vs. Wu Kuisong

47

Benjamin Heath vs. Wu Kuisong
vs. Ho Bao Qiang

49

Aleksejs Ponakovs
vs. Christoph Vogelsang

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NEWS FROM THE GAMBLING WORLD

BALLY'S SHARES RENDERINGS OF PROPOSED VEGAS STRIP CASINO OUTSIDE A'S BASEBALL STADIUM

By Sean Chaffin



The new stadium for the soon-to-be Las Vegas Athletics is taking shape as construction recently started on the Las Vegas Strip. However, the area will be more than just a ballpark.

Bally's Corp. released renderings not only of the MLB stadium, but also a 50,000-square-foot entertainment district and casino surrounding the park.

The \$2 billion project's main attraction is the 33,000-seat stadium, but also includes retail, dining, and entertainment options, including a 2,500-seat theater.

The A's have already broken ground on the new stadium, which is scheduled to open for the 2028 season. But construction on the rest of the project won't start until next year.

According to Bally's chairman Soo Kim, the non-gaming aspects of the development are critical for Bally's.

"It's not lost upon me that 75 percent of Vegas revenues are non-gaming," Kim told the *Nevada Independent*. "We want to make progress in that area, and we're doing that now in real time. We are absolutely able to deliver [some of the venues] before the opening of the stadium. That's still up to the market."

The city demolished the historic Tropicana Casino Resort, which was open from 1957 to 2024, to free up space on the Strip for the new stadium. But Bally's is building a new casino on the same corner that will have direct access to the stadium.

Artist renderings show a bustling area at the corner of Las Vegas Boulevard and Tropicana Avenue. Shops and other retail establishments line the area around the stadium with a circular entertainment venue positioned closest to the intersection.

The stadium features a non-retractable roof with five overlapping, shell-like structures and a glass wall in the outfield offering views of the Las Vegas Strip. Two hotel towers serve as the backdrop of the entertainment district, a reduction from the three seen in earlier plans and renderings. A parking area is also now included in the project.

It's a similar plan to other stadiums that incorporated entertainment districts in the stadium experience. The Battery is next to the home of the Atlanta Braves, the Gaslamp District surrounds Petco Park in San Diego, and nearby T-Mobile Arena, home of the NHL's Vegas Golden Knights, has numerous restaurants located just outside on the Vegas Strip.

Bally's hasn't picked companies to partner with for the entertainment aspects of the project. Kim said Bally's is still in negotiations with potential operators for the theater.

Funding for the \$1.5 billion proposed stadium comes from a scheduled \$350 million in public financing, a \$300 million construction loan to the franchise, and the rest from A's owner John Fisher. After Clark County Commissions approves the plan, the A's will receive \$350 million worth of public funding. ♠

CLUBWPT GOLD CHANGES BUSINESS MODEL TO AVOID NEW SWEEPSTAKES LAWS

By Sean Chaffin



Sweepstakes poker operator ClubWPT Gold announced a new business model at the end of September. The plan scraps the free-to-play games and gold coins. Instead, the site has players purchasing poker training credits to play and redeem winnings for prizes.

The plan attempts to maneuver around the dual-currency model, which involves receiving Sweeps Coins after purchasing Gold Coins. The Sweeps Coins were redeemable for cash and prizes.

However, now the platform is offering players a training product for their money instead.

The training element comes via a hand analysis tool that “gives feedback on past hands you’ve played and offers suggestions on how the hand might have been played better.”

The company notes that the tool analyzes every action players make throughout a hand and shows how close they were to game theory optimal play.

“With each purchase of Hand Analyses, you’ll also get ‘Chips’ that you can use to play the games on ClubWPT Gold,” the site reads. “You can use Chips to play poker for real cash prizes at ClubWPT Gold. The Hand Analysis tool allows you to get feedback on all of the hands you play.”

The approach offers a different path for the popular sweepstakes operator and may help shield the company from

incoming restrictive laws. The transition comes as many states move to make sweeps casinos and dual-currency gaming sites illegal.

In August, ClubWPT Gold purchased Doug Polk’s Upswing Poker training site. That played a role in the shift and allowed the company to quickly transition to the hand analysis model.

“After acquiring Upswing Poker, the launch of our Hand Analysis tool marks the latest step in ClubWPT Gold’s long-term vision to offer a poker training and playing experience that’s unlike anything ever seen in the industry,” the site wrote on X/Twitter.

The site promises more to come, including aggregate stats, profiles, customized drills tailored to a player’s own style, and more. Of course, many players will simply purchase these hand analyses just to continue playing on the site.

Polk is also an ambassador for the site and hosted a two-hour livestream on Twitter detailing the changes.

“It makes sense, I think, when we look at the legal landscape of U.S. poker for ClubWPT Gold to want to transition to something that is a little more sound, a little more defensible,” Polk said. ♠



TEEN ARRESTED IN CONNECTION TO CASINO CYBERATTACK

By Sean Chaffin

In September, Las Vegas police announced the arrest of a teenage male in connection with the cyberattacks affecting numerous casinos in August and September of 2023. Authorities allege the teen was part of the group responsible for the attacks.

The suspect was brought to Clark County Juvenile Detention Center on Sept. 17 and faces several charges, including one count of conspiracy to commit extortion, one count of unlawful acts regarding computers, and three counts of obtaining and using personal identifying information of another person to harm or impersonate a person.

According to Las Vegas police, the suspect was allegedly part of an organized cybercrime group known by several names, including “Scattered Spider,” “Octo Tempest,” “UNC3944,” and “0ktapus.”

The Clark County District Attorney’s Office is seeking to transfer the juvenile to the criminal division. If the move happens, the teen would be charged as an adult.

The cyberattack impacted MGM Resorts’ properties nationwide. However, Las Vegas has a high concentration of MGM-owned properties. The company owns nearly half of the casinos on the Las Vegas Strip.

The cyberattack affected the company’s computer systems and left websites, email accounts, and reservation systems



offline. Additionally, it affected the functionality of slot machine operations.

As a result, MGM was forced to turn back the clock. Officials launched a simplified website listing phone numbers guests could call to reserve hotel rooms. In some cases, hotel employees kept track of guests with pen-and-paper log books, and slot attendants paid winners by hand.

The group also attacked Caesars Entertainment, but Caesars paid a \$15 million ransom to avoid further problems. MGM refused to pay the ransom, and as a result, the negative effects cost the company an estimated \$100 million. ♠

AGA SAYS TAX PROVISION WON'T GET FIXED THIS YEAR

By Sean Chaffin

The largest gambling lobby in the U.S. doesn't believe that gambling tax changes in the recent spending bill will be reversed anytime soon.

President Donald Trump's "One Big Beautiful Bill" included a provision that significantly altered gambling tax policy. The bill enshrines the changes into law next year.

The American Gaming Association's Senior Vice President of Communications Joey Maloney said gamblers should hope for a change by the end of 2026.

Some lawmakers have already tried to fix it, which would have allowed bettors to wager in 2026 worry-free. Rep. Dina Titus, D-NV, was the first to file legislation to reverse the provision. Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto, D-NV, and Sen. Ted Cruz, R-TX, also tried to make changes. Rep. Andy Barr, R-KY, introduced similar legislation in the house.

Maloney told gambling journalist Steve Ruddock that he thinks their efforts will pay dividends, just not by the end of this year.

"I think that momentum is going to push through, and the hope is to get this done before the end of the 2026 calendar year so that when folks go to file [taxes] in the spring of 2027, they don't have to be worried about this burden," he said.

Before the bill's signing, gamblers could deduct 100% of their losses. The new bill only allows write-offs totaling



90% of their losses. As a result, gamblers could pay taxes on money they didn't win. The tax provision would affect brick-and-mortar and online casino gambling.

For example, if a poker player wins a tournament for \$100,000, and then loses \$100,000 playing tournaments throughout the rest of the year, the player broke even. But the bill only allows the bettor to write off \$90,000 of the \$100,000 in losses. Thus, the player would pay taxes as if he or she won \$10,000 for the year.

Maloney believes the unfairness of the rule will ultimately result in a congressional reversal.

"Generally speaking, it's not great politics to force any number of Americans to pay taxes on phantom income," he said. ♠

Boyd Gaming Suffers Cyberattack

By Sean Chaffin

Just days after Las Vegas authorities arrested a teenager suspected of taking part in the 2023 cyberattacks against MGM Resorts and Caesars Entertainment, another breach came to light.

In a September filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Boyd Gaming admitted its servers were compromised. The company said hackers gained access to some employee information and "a limited number of other individuals."

According to the filing, those impacted by the attack were notified afterwards. Boyd officials said the attack didn't affect the company's properties or business operations.

The Las Vegas-based gaming company owns 28 casinos in 10 states. Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, Ohio, and Pennsylvania are all home to Boyd properties.

"Upon detecting the incident, the company promptly took steps to respond to the incident with the assistance of leading external cybersecurity experts and in cooperation with federal law enforcement authorities," company officials told the SEC.

The attack against Boyd clearly wasn't as extensive as the one that grinded MGM's operations to a halt two years ago. Much of the cost associated with the attack is expected to be covered by a "comprehensive cybersecurity insurance



policy."

"As of the date of this filing, the company believes the incident will not have a material adverse effect on the company's financial condition or results of operations," officials wrote in the filing.

However, the industry experienced an uptick in cyberattacks recently. The 2023 attacks against MGM affected the company's casinos across the country and ultimately cost the company \$100 million. Last February, hackers victimized a chain of Michigan tribal casinos.

Attackers also targeted online casino operators. In 2023, Mexican online gambling operator Strendus allegedly left player data accessible online after failing to set a password to secure the information. In 2022, PokerStars experienced hacking attempts during the *World Championship of Online Poker* tournament series. ♠

TRIBAL CASINO COMING TO TOWN NORTH OF HOUSTON

By Sean Chaffin

Legislative efforts to legalize commercial casinos in Texas may have failed this year, but a tribal casino may soon be coming to Texas.

The Alabama Coushatta Tribe of Texas plans to build a new gaming venue in Leggett, which is about 90 miles northeast of Houston. The casino will be located on the property the tribe owns just south of the Alabama-Coushatta reservation near Livingston.

Tribal chairwoman Cecilia Flores told the Polk County Commissioners Court on Tuesday that the project had already been approved by the National Indian Gaming Commission, according to the *Polk County Enterprise*.

“We had made a petition to them about gaming on tribal properties outside the reservation in eastern Polk County,” she said. “The Leggett land is eligible for gaming, so we plan to develop our Naskila Casino Resort there. We’re very excited about it. It means a whole lot of new jobs, a lot of new opportunities for taxes, income, roads, the whole thing... so we look forward to it.”

The tribe already runs the Naskila Casino near Livingston, offering just Class II slot gaming machines. The casino follows a nationwide trend of tribes building casinos outside of their traditional lands, however, this will be the first casino on land away from a tribe’s reservation in Texas.

Texas already boasts two other tribal casinos. The Kickapoo Traditional Tribe operates the Kickapoo Lucky



Eagle Casino Hotel in Eagle Pass, near the border with Mexico. The property even boasts a 12-table poker room. The Kickapoo are the only federally recognized tribe in the state, allowing them to operate a full-scale casino.

The Tigua Tribe of the Ysleta del Sur Pueblo run the Speaking Rock Casino near El Paso. The Tigua and Alabama-Coushatta faced years of legal challenges from the state before the Supreme Court ruled in 2022 that they could move forward with casino plans. However, both can only offer gaming that is already legal in Texas. That means slot games based on traditional bingo.

While Texas casinos still need time to come to fruition, the state has a robust poker club environment. The Texas Supreme Court recently cleared the way for Texas Card House and Champions Club to begin poker operations in Dallas. ♠

NO CASINOS! THAILAND SENATE REJECTS GAMBLING LEGISLATION

By Sean Chaffin

Efforts to legalize casinos in Thailand hit a roadblock when a bill allowing for casino resorts failed to pass the Senate.

Earlier this year, legislators took several steps toward casino legislation and worked to recognize poker tournaments as a sport. The *World Poker Tour* hosted a *WPT Prime* event in the country earlier this year. However, a new prime minister opposed to gambling appears to have brought casino plans to a halt.

The casino bill was introduced by former Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, but a special senate committee rejected the plan. Senators cited concerns about money laundering, gambling addictions, and other perceived social ills in nixing the bill, according to the *Bangkok Post*.

“The casino is not a side feature – it’s the core of the proposal,” Senator Chinachot Saengsang said. “If the new government includes casino legalization in its policy platform, it risks undermining public confidence and long-term governance.”

New Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul took office in early September and has been a vocal opponent of legal casinos in Thailand.

Another obstacle is the dissolution of parliament. When Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra was ousted over an ethics violation, Charnvirakul moved to end the current legislative



session early. As a result, lawmakers will have new elections next year, ahead of the original timetable.

In proposing the legislation, Shinawatra said that the addition of the gaming industry offered the chance for a boost in tourism. He also believed the bill could bring new jobs and investments to the country.

“Legalization will protect the public and would also generate more revenue,” Shinawatra said.

Some senators favored an approach similar to the Korean model, where the country’s casinos are only available to tourists. Myanmar also takes that approach.

Gambling is officially illegal in Thailand outside of the government-run lottery and horse racing. But according to reports, underground gambling is still prevalent. Legal casinos are also open just across the border in Malaysia, Laos, and Cambodia. ♠

POKER POLICE: JOHN ANDRESS TALKS ONLINE GAME SECURITY

Meet The High-Stakes Poker Player Who Helps Catch Cheaters

By Art Parmann and Justin Young



Life at the poker table has taken some interesting turns for John Andress. The Philadelphia native moved from esports into poker during his years at Penn State, eventually taking up the game full time. In the years since he has racked up \$3.3 million in live tournament winnings.

There was a breakthrough win in 2011 in a *European Poker Tour Prague* event for \$236,186. He continued to consistently find nice cashes and then recorded the biggest win of his career in 2017, taking down a \$25,000 high roller at the *Hard Rock Poker Open* for \$801,450. He was also a regular online, racking up big wins in both tournaments and cash games.

But his college-to-poker tale is a bit different from the typical poker boom story – his journey came with a twist. In 2018, Andress opted for a

bit of a career change after moving to the Bay Area in California. He began working in security for A5 Labs, a 200-person tech team building AI that hunts bots and collusion across online poker. Instead of hitting the tables, he was now helping root out unscrupulous players, bots, and other unethical play.

Despite his role on the security side, Andress still makes it back to the tables at times. This summer, he had a deep run in a *World Series of Poker Online* \$500 mystery bounty event for \$105,420, and he made three final tables at the recent *PokerGO Tour Bounty Blitz* series in Las Vegas.

Andress was recently a guest on the Table 1 podcast and discussed his progression from esports to poker, the ups and downs of his early card-playing career, how a big score in a Puerto Rico casino helped build his bankroll, his

transition to poker police, the work behind finding and banning cheaters, and more.

Keep reading for some of the highlights. You can also watch or listen to the entire episode on YouTube, Spotify, Apple, or any podcast app.



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John Andress: I was big into video games, but I played football, basketball, lacrosse. I played lacrosse at Penn State. I definitely had that hyper-competitive side, although I feel like I've lost a little bit of that now. I also got really into *Counter Strike* and played competitively at a high level, pretty much until the end of sophomore year of college, which is when I found poker.

I started playing *Counter Strike* in middle school with my friends at a cyber cafe. I'm the type of person who gets obsessed with things, so I started playing a lot. I found all of the competitive platforms, met people in my area that were playing, and then there was a group of guys I came up with. But it all kind of came to an end. I think it was the summer after sophomore year, we drove down to this qualifier in Virginia and we placed in the top four. That got us into the *World Cyber Games (WCG)*. But that was during the school year. One of my other teammates, he was a goalie at [his school], and he ended up playing for the [New Jersey] Devils. We were like, 'What are we doing?' and we all kind of just quit after that.

Justin Young: You guys qualified and just didn't show up?

John Andress: Yeah, we didn't really

have a sponsor. Esports was so different back then. I think at the biggest tournament, the whole prize pool was \$500,000. So, if you win with a team of five, we get like \$100,000 each. Back then there were a few teams, a couple that are still around today, that had someone sponsor them, put them in a house they could practice. But even then, the European teams were so much better that if we went to this qualifier, we would just probably get wrecked anyway. You played in L.A., and then you went to Korea. We probably wouldn't have even gotten through L.A.

Art Parmann: Did you find online poker?

John Andress: That's the other thing. I guess sophomore year I had a couple other friends that got me into poker. I had played poker once or twice before with friends. So, I learned a little bit through them and started playing. I was like, 'This is like a video game you can actually make money in. Now I'm addicted to this – I don't need to do *Counter Strike* anymore.'

Penn State actually had a lot of really good online players, like Jake Toole. I remember we were sweating him on Full Tilt, and he won a *FTOPS*

(*Full Tilt Online Poker Series*) tournament for like \$500,000 and that blew our mind. This kid was on the tennis team at Penn State, and he did drop out after that, but he ended up going back and getting his degree later.

Justin Young: You were going to school still, but were you just all in on poker basically?

John Andress: Kind of. I went on a vacation sophomore year with my buddy and his family to Puerto Rico. That's the first time I went to a casino, and I only had a few hundred bucks to gamble with. I ended up hitting a three-card Royal Flush on Three Card Poker. So, I had \$8,000 my parents didn't know about, a secret bankroll. It was also good beer money.

I started depositing online, just playing casually. I think by the time I graduated, I probably had like \$150,000. I told my parents that I was going to give it six months and if I wasn't making money I'd start applying for jobs.

From June to August, I probably lost like 60% of that bankroll. I think it actually started with *SCOOP (Spring Championship Of Online Poker)*. I never played tournaments that big, but I had all this money from cash and I started battling higher stakes, heads up. I was



like, 'This is going terrible.' So, I went back home to my parents, took a break, and then started grinding again. It was going well.

I won a *PCA (PokerStars Caribbean Adventure)* seat. At this point, I didn't really know anyone in poker other than my friends who weren't pros. So, I went to *PCA* alone from a \$700 satellite that I won, and I ended up cashing the tournament for \$60,000. That kind of got me back into it, and then I just couldn't lose for the rest of the year. My parents never really asked any more questions.

Address went on to describe his life as a poker pro, how he managed his bankroll, and how the game has changed.

John Address: I started playing \$5-\$10, \$10-\$20, and taking shots at \$25-\$50 online. I was a little more degenerate then. The game was just so different. This is something I think about now in my current job, there was a more evenly distributed skill hierarchy. I feel like you could jump up through the stakes easier and there was a different level of regs. Now it's just so much more polarizing where there are really good players and everyone else is kind of losing. So, it's really hard for a young guy to come up and play high stakes. There are guys that do it, but ...

Justin Young: They're outliers for sure.

John Address: Pre-Black Friday it was pretty easy to make \$20,000 to \$40,000 a month if you were disciplined.

Art Parmann: There were a lot of people on there gambling.

Justin Young: Were you responsible, bankroll-wise, or as a young guy at this time, were you spending money?

John Address: I was never super strict, but I never went broke. There were times I've had 40% or 50% downswings. When Black Friday hit, I moved to Toronto and was there on and off for a year. That also went really well, playing online cash and tournaments. But eventually I just was sick of being in Toronto, and figured out a way I could play on PokerStars.

All my friends were living in New York City, and every time I visited I had a great time. I moved there, and that was more degenerate with the spending. I was doing pretty well in poker, but looking back, I was spending six figures a year going out and traveling. We would go out every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday night.

Justin Young: How were you looked at by those friends that had real jobs in the city?

John Address: They looked at me as an outlier because I would be able to go out Thursday, and I'd be able to sleep

until 2 p.m. and they were at their job at 7:30 in the morning, so they were jealous of that. A year in, another poker player moved in with us so they were around it all the time. I loved New York as a single guy then, but I felt like an outcast socially with people outside of my friend group. It's just that same poker conversation, 'What do you do? Oh, how do you win money?' And especially in New York, the whole culture is work.

Eventually, Address transitioned to the other side of the online game. That included the ins and outs of what goes into banning cheaters.

John Address: I moved to the Bay Area, and there are a bunch of really good games there.

Justin Young: You must have met some cool people.

John Address: That's how I got into this job. Our CEO and CTO both played in an office game I played in, so I became close with them. They both had worked at startups together. In 2018, one of their previous investors bought this brand in Asia and was launching a poker site. So Conlan Ma, our CEO, went to work for him, and I started talking to him because at that point I'd played on the Asian apps. I'd kind of stopped playing because of the cheating issues. From playing on



“Pre-Black Friday it was pretty easy to make \$20,000 to \$40,000 a month if you were disciplined.”





there and doing some analysis about the games, I had a pretty good idea of what was going on with the bots and collusion.

We started talking about some ideas. He asked me to work with our data science team to build bot detection tools. I think the first platform launched in 2018 and it grew super fast. Pretty much right away, we discovered a huge problem, like the Russian bot farms that you hear about. And then there was a bunch of pretty well-known high-stakes players playing short deck that were colluding.

I actually pulled in Nick Petrangelo and Seth Davies, and Ben Sulsky helped a little bit, and I helped clean up this problem as a consultant. Then we got to talking to our CTO about what we could do from the technical side. I flew out to Asia, put a proposal together for the investors, and then that's kind of how that turned into a full-time job.

Justin Young: You're not a tech guy. Your expertise is more on the poker side of this, where you actually see what's going on behind the curtains without actually having to be behind the curtains.

John Andress: I would describe my role as a product leader. But most of my focus is on the data science products, around collusion detection, bot detection, there are some other things we've done like skill prediction that we use to control access to the tables. I work with the technical people as a domain expert, to build these different products.

Justin Young: Were you actually hands-on coding?

John Andress: No, but I can write very basic SQL. I would put together the requirements from a poker perspective, whether it's about game theory or describing what we need to do. They go back and do the feature engineering. We review all the outputs of the models and iterate on it in that way.

Then I work closely with the ops team on the actual security stuff, but I don't like that as much. There's been some crossover with people I know who get banned and it's always awkward.

Art Parmann: How do you go from playing the app games to going, 'Oh, there's, there's a problem?'

John Andress: Before I was working, when they bought the site, our CEO gave me access to the app. I was playing

there a little bit. Then when I started doing the security stuff, I obviously wasn't allowed to play anymore, but we would review the cases.

There was a big collusion case, and we were looking at all the hands and I was helping the team build the case. That's a little more straightforward. You're looking at how they usually play, and then what they're doing when they're sharing cards. Since a couple of the cases were pretty high profile, one of these guys that played private games with the owners of the company, we had to present the case to him.

Then we started talking about if there are technical solutions. Is it something AI can help automate or solve? And then that's when we came back, started this business entity, and started hiring. We can provide these solutions to their different platforms.

Justin Young: How much say do you have in that whole process? Was it just basically, this is the case. You guys do whatever you want with the information, or is it like, 'I think this is very severe. I think you guys should take extreme measures here'? How much input do you have as far as the punishments go?

John Andress: Everyone has a boss, but they come to us for all the recommendations. If there was a situation where some VIP that somehow knew the owners of the company or a high-profile player... when I think through the decision-making process for this, it needs to be as close to 100% as it can. With a lot of the cases you always have the option to not confiscate the money and just ask them to leave.

Justin Young: What percent of doubt in your mind would you need to just ban them, but let them keep the money?

John Andress: I think it's complicated because there's always a bunch of evidence, and kind of like a scale how the legal system works. Maybe this happens more with the RTA (real-time assistance) and bot stuff. But there are certain indicators that they're using something, but you can't definitively prove it or mathematically prove it.

We have asked people to play on webcam. They don't quite do what they were doing when they're playing online, and they're using something, but we can't really prove it. So, we're just going to 'ask' them to leave and let them keep the money. ♠



Table 1 is for people who *love* poker but can't stand rigid, boring, dusty games. We've put together the kind of community where the vibe is just as important as the cards.

Think about it—what if poker was less about squeezing every penny out of the pot and more about the laughs, the stories, and those unforgettable moments? That's what we're here for.

If you've ever thought, "Man, poker used to be fun," then welcome to Table 1.



SEVEN NIGHTS OF MONARCH

Ossi Ketola Steals Headlines At Triton Jeju With \$63 Million In Buy-Ins

By Tim Fiorvanti



Ossi Ketola

When we last left Ossi Ketola, the esports standout-turned-casino owner best known as ‘Monarch’ battled Dan Cates in a day-long series of heads-up battles in North Cyprus. Ketola lost over \$14 million to ‘Jungleman’ on the live stream by the time the action wrapped up in the wee morning hours.

But anyone who may have thought that Ketola would wave the white flag, take his losses and run for the hills doesn’t have a good sense of the public persona Ketola’s looking to build. As the owner and operator of Duel, a crypto-based casino and betting platform, Ketola is looking to simultaneously battle many of the top stars in poker heads-up, while shining a light on his brand.

So far, it’s been an expensive endeavor.

When the high-stakes action shifted to the *Triton Super High Roller Series* in Jeju, South Korea, (pg. 24) Ketola followed to lure more high rollers away from the tournaments and into a heads-up freezeout. For a weeklong stretch, Ketola battled both new and familiar opponents. It started with Polish pro Wiktor ‘Limitless’ Malinowski, and then came another high-profile target in Alex Foxen.

Across two nights, Ketola and Foxen battled, eventually setting a new record for

the largest televised pot in poker history. Ketola returned for more action against familiar foes Elias Talvitie and Kayhan Mokri, and the matches wrapped up with Bjorn Li. Records for the largest televised heads-up match and largest televised pot were once again shattered.

Ketola’s brash, take-on-all-comers approach should have been a no-brainer win for the poker world. And in fact, he is down somewhere in the neighborhood of \$21 million overall, which is a massive infusion of money into the high-stakes community.

But over the course of these matches in Jeju, Ketola’s history of highly questionable social media posts came to light. The Finnish man’s proclivity towards using racial slurs indiscriminately across social media became a topic of conversation. Ketola, whose fortune was initially built upon the CS:GO skins marketplace, came up in a community that leaned into free speech absolutism as a justification to utilize a wide spectrum of slurs without assuming any major consequences.

Rather than declining to interact or trying to offer context, Ketola responded with a barrage of new posts with slurs to a variety of parties who questioned his actions and speech. That included Cates, who tried to diffuse tensions and became another target of Ketola’s vitriol.

And yet, each night, the action continued on as players stepped up to try and take a chunk out of poker’s new villain. Ketola’s record now stands at 27 matches and \$21 million in losses.

Wiktor Malinowski – Up \$6 Million

First up for Ketola in Jeju was Wiktor ‘Limitless’ Malinowski. The 31-year-old from Poland is a veteran of online poker high-stakes cash games, and also has a *PokerStars World Championship of Online Poker* title worth \$726,000 to his credit. His live poker exploits are even more impressive. In 2021, he took down the \$250,000 buy-in *Super High Roller Bowl* main event in Cyprus for \$3,690,000.

Malinowski topped his high score in May 2024, winning a \$200,000 *Triton*

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Ossi Ketola and Alex Foxen



Alex Foxen



Super High Roller Montenegro event for \$4,789,000. Those two results go a long way in making Malinowski the winningest live tournament poker player ever to hail from Poland.

The first heads-up match between Ketola and Malinowski mirrored the format used in Cyprus. For the \$2 million buy-in, each player received an equivalent amount of chips worth exactly 100 big blinds, with stakes at \$10,000-\$20,000.

Ketola opened up an early lead with a triple-barrel bluff, and had a chance to take down the first match with pocket nines when Malinowski shoved with A♦ K♥, but a king on the turn flipped the advantage. Ketola bluffed off the last of his chips, running into Malinowski's rivered straight.

They reset the stacks, this time doubling the buy-in to \$4 million. Ketola once again opened up an early lead, at one point four-betting with A♣ 8♣ to get Malinowski to lay down tens. Malinowski stole the lead back with two pair against top pair, and the match evened out once again when Ketola's straight beat a set.

A Malinowski bluff gave him more room to operate, and on the final hand, he shoved the river of a Q♥ 4♠ 2♥ 2♦ 9♠ board, putting Ketola to the test. Ketola eventually found a call with A♣ 4♣, but Malinowski's A♦ Q♠ had the best of it. Malinowski walked away a \$6 million winner, and Ketola's losing streak stretched to five matches.

Alex Foxen – Down \$3 Million

The action ended in the early morn-

ing hours of Saturday melting into Sunday. Production staff went off to bed, ahead of another day of streaming tournaments, but there would be more heads-up poker to come.

Foxen and Ketola had both bagged up chips for day 2 of a \$150,000 *Triton* tournament, but still sat down to play a \$2 million heads-up match of their own. The biggest early pot saw Ketola flop top pair and a flush draw. Foxen turned a straight, but Ketola's rivered flush earned him a lead of almost 3:1. On the final hand of the match, Ketola turned a diamond flush while Foxen turned a wheel, breaking his losing streak.

Predictably, Ketola wanted more, and the stakes increased to \$5 million per player. The second match swung hard on one big hand. On a board of 4♣ 3♦ 2♠ J♥, Ketola had Q♦ 4♥ and seemingly hit gin on the 4♠ river. But after Ketola led out big on the river, Foxen shoved and put Ketola's stack at risk. After a solid few moments of thinking it through, Ketola got away, saving himself his last \$2.5 million. He was right, as Foxen had him dominated with A♦ 4♦.

But ultimately, Foxen's aggression wouldn't be denied, and he won a flip in the end to seal the bounce back win. The players then went off to sleep before returning for day 2 of the *Triton* event. Both players would reach the money, with Ketola finishing 19th for \$223,000 and Foxen placing 10th for \$342,000. A drop in the bucket, all things considered.

The third match was for \$6 million each. Foxen took an early lead, and

extended it by bluffing Ketola off of pocket jacks with ten-high. He then nailed a river flush against Ketola's top two pair. Ketola managed to get away from the hand, but ultimately, little would go his way. He put the last of his chips in with a busted straight draw, and Foxen picked him off with third pair to win the match.

Ketola briefly stepped away, now down \$9 million to the former college football player, but he would get it all back and then some before they were through. Once again, \$6 million was the buy-in, but this time everything went Ketola's way. His lead eventually swelled to more than 5:1, and then the deck delivered the deciding blow. Ketola's pocket queens dwarfed Foxen's pocket nines, and flopped a set for good measure.

As the sun threatened to rise in Jeju, the pair decided on one final \$6 million match. And it didn't take long for history to be made.

Ketola pulled slightly ahead early on, and then came the hand of the match. Ketola opened with K♣ J♥, and Foxen called with 8♦ 6♦. The K♦ J♦ 8♣ flop gave Ketola two pair, and Foxen had a pair of eights with a flush draw. Despite the strength of their hands, both players checked.

The tension built with an A♦ on the turn. Foxen led out for over 80% of the pot, and Ketola just called. The K♠ river gave Ketola a full house, and set the players on a collision course. Foxen bet \$550,000 into the \$800,000 pot, and Ketola ripped it in for \$5.05 million

Kayhan Mokri



Wiktor Malinowski



Elias Talvitie



Bjorn Li



© Triton Poker, Drew Amato
Ossi Karala

Ketola's record now stands at 27 matches and \$21 million in losses.



effective, the entirety of Foxen's stack. Foxen lifted his hand from the felt, stared at the cards, and eventually found a call. Ketola tabled the bad news, and the night's action was swiftly over.

"GG," said Foxen, ending his run against Monarch down about \$3 million overall, give or take any match handicapping.

Although the matches didn't work out for the tournament star, he did end up with eight cashes in Jeju for a little more than \$1.4 million. He's cashed for \$10.6 million this year overall and is once again in the running for the *Card Player* Player of the Year race.

Elias Talvitie – Broke Even

In the fourth consecutive late night of action from Jeju, Ketola's Finnish countryman took up the challenge for what would ultimately be a pair of \$3 million buy-in matches. Talvitie has \$6.4 million in recorded lifetime tournament earnings, most notably banking \$3,542,000 for fifth in the *Triton Million Invitational* at *WSOP Paradise* in 2024. He also took seventh in a 2022 *Triton \$200,000 Invitational* for \$1,050,000.

Once again, Ketola got out to a lead. Unfortunately for him, he and Talvitie played a pot for \$5.2 million of the \$6 million in play that didn't go his way. Talvitie rivered trip fives with 6♥ 5♣ to crack Ketola's pocket kings, claiming the first match and a \$3 million lead.

Not one to let out a window of opportunity get away, they ran it back for another \$3 million. In the turning point of the second match, Ketola nailed a runner-runner heart flush to take a lead of more than 6:1. After wearing Talvitie down to his last five big blinds, Ketola squared everything up when A♦ 9♦ held off Talvitie's J♠ 10♣.

Kayhan Mokri – Up \$5 Million

Kayhan Mokri was a familiar foe to Ketola, losing a €1 million buy-in match in Tallinn but winning a €2 million buy-in

in Cyprus. The pair reignited tensions in a major way in Jeju. Over two nights, they battled in an escalating series of four heads-up bouts on the live stream.

Mokri took the first match, which had a \$2 million buy-in, when his 10♦ 8♦ flopped a straight to crack Ketola's pocket aces. Mokri also won the second match for another \$2 million when Ketola's set of nines were cracked on a J♣ 5♠ 2♥ 9♠ 3♣ board by Mokri's A♥ 4♥.

With the stakes doubled to a \$4 million buy-in, Ketola finally got his revenge. He chipped Mokri down, and then, on a 7♦ 4♦ 4♣ flop, Mokri four-bet shoved with J♦ 6♦. Ketola was all too happy to call with A♣ 4♥, turning quads with the 4♣ to seal it.

They returned for a single \$5 million buy-in match the following night. With nearly \$8 million of the \$10 million in play in the pot, and Ketola at risk, Mokri's A♦ K♥ outflopped Ketola's pocket queens on a run out of K♠ 10♦ 8♣ 3♣ 10♣. Just as he had in Tallinn and in Cyprus, Mokri walked away from Ketola in Jeju as the overall winner.

Bjorn Li – Down \$4 Million

One final challenger stepped up to battle Ketola, a name likely to only be familiar to longtime poker fans. Bjorn Li, who hails from Hong Kong, is a long-time heads-up poker specialist. Back in 2015, the then-University of Chicago student joined Doug Polk, Dong Kim, and Jason Les to take on Carnegie Mellon University's poker-playing AI, Claudico. Li recorded the largest win total of any of the four human opponents.

Li has only popped up on the poker radar a handful of times in the subsequent decade, most notably finishing second in a *Triton* short deck event in Madrid in May 2022.

The pair started off with an explosive first match, as the bout lasted just one hand. Li flopped aces and sixes on an A♦ 10♥ 6♣ 4♥ 7♣ board, and Ketola tried a pure bluff river shove with 8♦ 3♦. Li eventually called, and he was up \$2 million right off the bat.

Ketola evened the score when he four-bet overshoved with Q♥ 9♦ preflop, Li called with pocket sevens, and the Q♠ spiked the turn. Li went up two matches to one when Ketola tried another bluff holding K♥ 10♦ on a 9♥ 8♥ 7♣ 5♣ A♥ board. Li eventually called with a straight to take the third match.

Another river bluff from Ketola in match 4 ran into the worst-case scenario. On a board of 10♠ 3♠ 2♦ K♦ A♠, Ketola attempted a steal with his J♦ 4♦ busted flush draw. Unfortunately for him, Li had rivered the nuts with K♠ 9♠ and snapped him off.

Ketola proposed a radical finale for the week. An \$8 million buy-in that would either leave him \$12 million in the hole to Li, or up \$4 million. Li agreed, and the biggest match of series kicked off. Li opened up a 3:1 lead early on, but Ketola managed a vital double when he turned trips.

With the stacks evened up, the scene was set for the new record for the biggest pot in televised poker history. Ketola four-bet jammed with 9♥ 9♣, and after some consideration, Li called with 8♦ 8♥. With \$12.7 of the \$16 million in play in the middle, the stakes had never been higher. The pair traded outs on a 10♥ 7♥ 6♣ flop, but two more undercards on the turn and river gave the pot to Ketola.

Ketola secured the victory a short time later with a coinflip. He was a \$4 million winner against Li, and without the side action or handicaps factored in, only a \$4 million loser on the trip in total. It's unclear where the controversial whale will pop up next, but it seems likely we haven't heard the last of him. ♠

TRITON JEJU: \$130 MILLION CHANGES HANDS IN SOUTH KOREA

Vogelsang, Chidwick, And Mokri Claim Huge Titles

By Erik Fast

Christoph Vogelsang



The *Triton Poker Super High Roller Series* has become such a staple of the high-stakes circuit over the last few years that it can be easy to forget just how massive these festivals are.

The latest stop, which ran from Sept. 8-23 at Landing Casino Jeju in South Korea, continued that tradition of excellence, with a staggering \$130.2 million in total prize money awarded across 18 events. That amounts to an average prize pool of more than \$7.2 million. In fact, the winner walked away with a seven-figure payout in two-thirds of the events held, with six champions earning \$2 million or more.

But it's not just the unfathomable sums of money that make these series stand out. The top players have also bought into the prestige of the trident trophy, with many of the biggest names in the game coming back repeatedly to try to add to their collections.

This marked the second time that the tour stopped in Jeju this year, a popular vacation spot located on an island off the southwestern coast of South Korea. The high roller festivities were preceded for the first time by the new mid-stakes *Triton One* offering, which was covered in the previous issue of *Card Player*.

Christoph Vogelsang Wins Main Event For \$4.1 Million

The largest tournament of the festival was the \$100,000 buy-in main event. With 228 entries, the prize pool swelled

to \$22,800,000. **Christoph Vogelsang**, one of the most successful high roller regulars in the game, captured the title in the end. The German pro arrived in Jeju with \$43 million in prior career tournament earnings, despite only capturing three titles on the live circuit since making his first cash nearly a dozen years ago.

The 40-year-old finally added a fourth title to his résumé, and did so in style. He earned \$4,099,975 as the last player standing in this gigantic event, bringing his lifetime haul to more than \$47.6 million.

This was the third-largest payday of Vogelsang's career, trailing the \$6 million that came with his 2017 *Super High Roller Bowl* win and the \$4.5 million he earned for a third place showing in the 2014 *WSOP Big One For One Drop*. He now has six multi-million-dollar cashes to his name.

"This win feels special because it's a main event, it's the biggest *Triton* event, and the *Triton* tour is easily my favorite place to play poker," Vogelsang told reporters. "You really know people so well, both the players and the staff."

This was Vogelsang's second *Triton* victory. His first saw him win a \$100,000 buy-in at the 2023 Monte Carlo stop for over \$2.6 million.

The top 39 finishers earned a share of the eight-figure prize pool, including Latvian crusher Aleksejs Ponakovs,

© Triton Poker

who finished fifth for \$1,409,000. It was Vogelsang who did most of the damage thanks to a big bluff catch against the two-time bracelet winner. (pg. 49)

Ben Heath took third, banking \$2,223,000. This was the second-largest score of his career, trailing only the staggering \$8.2 million he earned as the runner-up in the 2024 *Triton Million Invitational* at last year's *WSOP Paradise* festival. He now boasts more than \$35.4 million in total cashes.

Vogelsang had roughly a 2:1 chip lead over bracelet winner Samuel Mullur when heads-up play began. The Austrian pro soon hashed out a deal with Vogelsang to redistribute the remaining prize money a bit, locking up roughly \$3.95 million and \$3.5 million for the two contenders while leaving \$150,000 and the trophy to play for.

Mullur ultimately walked away with the \$3,509,025 payout he negotiated for, getting it all-in on a $A\spadesuit K\spadesuit 7\clubsuit 4\heartsuit 10\clubsuit$ board with $7\heartsuit 4\heartsuit$ for sevens up. He was up against $K\heartsuit 10\heartsuit$ for a higher two pair, however.

Mullur had taken down a *Triton One* event earlier this month and made two high roller final tables earlier in this series. The 1,600 POY points that came with his runner-up finish moved him into 25th place in the *Card Player* Player of the Year race, sponsored by Coin Poker.

Stephen Chidwick And Kayhan Mokri Triumph In Series' Biggest Buy-Ins

While the main event's mix of massive stakes and expansive turnout resulted in the largest single prize pool of the festival, two tournaments outstripped it in terms of buy in.

The first was the \$200,000 short deck event, a late addition to the schedule that **Stephen Chidwick** ultimately won. The British superstar has accumulated more than \$74.4 million in career tournament earnings, the second-largest total of any player on the circuit behind only Bryn Kenney's \$79.5 million.

The 36-year-old bested an elite field of 61 entries to secure his third title on the tour. He banked \$3,445,000 for the win, the second-largest score of his career behind only the \$5.4 million that came with a fourth-place showing in the largest buy-in tournament ever held, the 2019 *Triton Million Charity Invitational*.

All three of Chidwick's trident trophies have now been earned in short deck events. The two-time bracelet winner came out on top in both the \$20,000 short deck event at the 2024 Jeju stop and the €100,000 short deck main event at the 2022 *Triton Madrid* festival.

"Obviously, tournament poker is so much variance, short deck especially, and I assume it's mostly that that is the reason I've mostly been winning short deck tournaments and not no-limit hold'em or PLO," said Chidwick after completing his hat trick. "It's pretty funny, I didn't really prepare for short deck this trip. There was only one \$50K on the schedule, so I came in pretty rusty. When they kept adding tournaments, I was scrambling a bit to try and look up my notes and remember what I used to know."



Stephen Chidwick



Kayhan Mokri

In addition to the money and the hardware, Chidwick also earned 720 POY points for the win. The two-time POY award winner (2019, 2022) has now made 14 final tables in 2025. His 5,821 total points are currently good for 14th place.

Kayhan Mokri made headlines as the first high-stakes poker regular to square off against Ossi 'Monarch' Ketola in the highly-publicized, multi-million-dollar heads-up matches that have surrounded the high-stakes tournaments in both Jeju and Cyprus.

While any profits from those clashes won't count towards his career tournament earnings, the Norwegian pro's recent mammoth win in the \$150,000 buy-in eight-max event sure will. He outlasted 114 entries, earning a career-best tournament payday of \$3,835,059. His total haul is now approaching \$13 million after factoring in this massive victory.

This was the second *Triton* title for Mokri, who previously took down a \$30,000 buy-in event at last year's stop in Monte Carlo. He now has more than \$6 million in cashes in *Triton* events alone.

Mokri was on the brink of an early elimination in this event, falling down to just a couple big blinds at one point during the final table before surging back up the chip counts and eventually closing out the win.

Jason Koon, the all-time *Triton* titles leader with 12, finished fifth for \$1.2 million. He made two final tables during the festival, including a third-place finish in a \$75,000 pot-limit Omaha event for \$643,000. He now has over \$69.2 million in lifetime cashes, the third highest total of any player in poker history.



Isaac Haxton



Punnat Punsri



Michael Watson

Isaac Haxton Gets First Triton Title In PLO Main Event

Isaac Haxton first cashed in a *Triton* event back in 2017. In the years since then the high-stakes tournament star from New York had accumulated \$16.7 million across 63 in-the-money finishes in tour events, but had never managed to close out a win.

It turns out the 64th time was the charm for Haxton, as he finally broke through in the \$100,000 pot-limit Omaha main event for his first trident trophy and the massive top prize of \$2,789,000.

"There's a lot of noise in poker," Haxton explained. "I've won in other places, obviously. I've made a lot of final tables. It was bound to work out eventually."

The 40-year-old defeated a field of 116 entries on his way to the title and the second-largest payday of his career. A few days after his big win, Haxton tacked on another \$392,000 thanks to a fifth-place showing in the \$75,000 PLO six-max event. He now boasts total tournament earnings of \$63 million, which is good for seventh place on poker's all-time money list.

Other notables who put up strong performances included five-time *Triton* champion Danny Tang (6th), two-time bracelet winner Robert Cowen (4th), current POY race leader Jesse Lonis (3rd), and Jose 'Nacho' Barbero (2nd).

Lonis pocketed \$1,261,000 for his latest podium finish. The two-time bracelet winner and three-time *Triton* champion grew his career earnings to nearly \$26.4 million with his sixth seven-figure score, while further increasing his lead in the POY race.

Klemens Roiter finished seventh for \$489,000. This was his second final table of the series, having placed fourth for \$628,000 in the \$50,000 no-limit hold'em. The Austrian has made 14 final tables, with two victories, in 2025. As a result, he now occupies the eighth-place spot in the POY rankings.

Punnat Punsri And Michael Watson Join Five-Time Champions Club

Speaking of that \$50,000 event, the eventual champion was **Punnat Punsri**. With this triumph, he grew his *Triton* title total to five. That added him to a growing list of elite players such as Phil Ivey, Danny Tang, Mikita Badziakouski, and Bryn Kenney.

The win came one week after Punsri finished second in the inaugural *Triton One* main event, striking a heads-up deal that saw him earn \$1.2 million.



Richard Yong



Aleksa Pavicevic



Jose 'Nacho' Barbero



Artur Martirosian

Three of Punsri's five *Triton* victories have come in 2025. In Montenegro, Punsri took down a \$25,000 pot-limit Omaha event. Back in March, during *Triton*'s first Jeju stop of the year, Punsri won \$2,594,555 in a \$125,000 buy-in event. It's also Punsri's third title in Jeju, having bested another \$50,000 buy-in event back in 2024.

Punsri's successes in Jeju are a significant contributor to his status as the No. 1 player on Thailand's all-time tournament poker leaderboard with \$30.4 million. He pocketed \$1,697,000 for his latest win, topping a field of 146 entries on his way to the title. He made a total of four final tables during the festival, including a fourth-place finish in the \$75,000 PLO event for \$495,000. With 18 final-table finishes, Punsri now sits in second place on the 2025 POY leaderboard.

It didn't take long after Punsri's victory for another player to join the five-time champions club. **Michael Watson** took down the \$125,000 no-limit hold'em event, outlasting 69 entries to lock up \$2,130,812 and his latest piece of hardware on the circuit. The Canadian poker pro from Toronto, Ontario now sits in a six-way tie for second on the tour's title leaderboard. Jason Koon remains alone on top with 12 *Triton* wins.

The 41-year-old is not only one of the most decorated *Triton* players ever. He is also one of just 10 players to have ever completed poker's triple crown, which entails winning a *World Series of Poker* bracelet along with a *World Poker Tour* main event and a *European Poker Tour* championship. Watson ticked the final box with an online bracelet win in 2024.

Watson, understandably, had plenty of tough competition down the stretch. After the elimination of 12th-ranked POY contender Jun Obara in fourth place, he still had to square off against women's bracelet leader Kristen Foxen and

Stephen Chidwick.

Foxen's third-place finish for \$1,104,000 extended her lead on top of the women's all-time money list. With more than \$13.9 million in career earnings, she leads second-ranked Vanessa Selbst by almost \$3 million. Chidwick, meanwhile, added another \$1,927,000 to his already impressive haul in Jeju for finishing runner up.

Big Names Expand Their Trophy Collections

There were several other *Triton* champions who added to their collections with wins in Jeju. The very first winner of the series was tour co-founder **Richard Yong**. He earned \$705,000 and his third trophy as the last player standing from a field of 47 entries in a \$50,000 short deck event.

It was both Yong's first win and first *Triton* final-table appearance since a victory in Cyprus back in 2023. During that festival, Yong took down a \$25,000 no-limit hold'em short deck event. Yong's first career *Triton* title came in Montenegro back in 2018 in a six-max no-limit hold'em event.

Aleksa Pavicevic emerged victorious in the \$50,000 no-limit hold'em Quattro turbo bounty event, picking up \$1,261,000 and his second *Triton* title. He topped a field of 87 to claim more than 25 percent of the \$4,350,000 prize pool. His earlier win saw him earn nearly \$6.2 million as the champion of a \$200,000 invitational event on his home turf in Montenegro.

Mikita Badziakouski fell just short of his sixth title, earning \$536,000 as the runner-up. He's made 11 final tables in 2025, with one victory in a *EPT Monte Carlo* high roller. The Belarusian crusher now sits in 16th place in the POY race after adding four final tables to his tally in Jeju.

A familiar face won a new event for the tour when **Jose 'Nacho' Barbero** took down the \$30,000 mixed no-limit hold'em and pot-limit Omaha tournament, earning his



Ding Biao



James Mendoza



Elton Tsang



Jonathan Jaffe



Peter Wang

fourth *Triton* title and \$646,000. Barbero defeated Phil Ivey heads-up, and a field of 81 entrants overall.

Barbero followed up this win with a runner-up showing in the \$100,000 PLO main event won by Isaac Haxton, adding nearly \$1.9 million to his career totals. The Argentinian poker pro now has over \$28.5 million in lifetime earnings. With two titles and 13 final tables this year, he's now in sixth place in the POY standings.

Artur Martirosian defeated 60 entries in the \$25,000 PLO six-max event, earning \$421,000 and his third *Triton* title. The *EPT* champion and three-time bracelet winner now has nearly \$33.9 million in career cashes to his name, with over \$13.4 million coming from his 46 in-the-money finishes in *Triton* events.

The Russian poker pro's victory helped him secure this season's Ivan Leow Player of the Year award. He recorded 28 cashes, 11 final tables, and all three of his wins on the tour this past season, accruing more than \$7.7 million in earnings.

"It means a lot for me," Martirosian told *Triton* staff. "When I started to play PLO, my first goal was to win POY. I said on at the first stop of this series that I would win POY.

It means more than any titles."

The \$50,000 six-max PLO drew 64 entries, building a prize pool of \$3.2 million. The largest share of that money was ultimately awarded to **Ding Biao**, who walked away with \$880,000 and his third *Triton* title. The Chinese player now boasts nearly \$18.8 million in lifetime earnings, with over \$14.6 million of that coming from his success on this tour. In fact, his six largest scores have all come in *Triton* events.

More Huge Winners From Jeju

James Mendoza outlasted 311 entries in the \$25,000 buy-in *WPT Global Slam* to earn his largest payday ever. The California resident, originally from the Philippines, walked away with \$1,515,000 and his first title on the high-stakes tour. Mendoza now boasts more than \$4 million in career tournament earnings, with nearly \$2.6 million coming from his seven final-table finishes recorded so far this year. The 1,680 POY points that came with this victory increased his total to 4,561, which places him just outside the top 25.

Elton Tsang became a two-time *Triton* winner thanks to his triumph in the \$100,000 short deck event. The 2016 €1,000,000 *Big One For One Drop Invitational* bracelet winner defeated 58 entries to earn \$1,697,000 for the win. He now has 20 cashes on this high-stakes tour, accounting for just over half of his \$26.6 million in lifetime earnings.

Like Tsang, **Jonathan Jaffe** also joined the elite ranks of multi-time *Triton* winners in Jeju. The *WPT* champion took down the \$30,000 buy-in, navigating his way through a field of 183 to earn \$1,061,672. This was the third career seven-figure score for Jaffe, who now has more than \$17.2 million in scores to his name.

Japan's **Jun Obara** is having a breakout year on the live circuit, with two titles and nine final-table finishes. His five largest scores have all been recorded this year, including his \$1,739,000 win in the \$40,000 mystery bounty event at this stop. He beat out a field of 148 entries to get his first *Triton*



title. With 5,939 points, he has claimed the 12th-place spot on the POY leaderboard heading into the final few months of 2025.

Cash game stream star **Peter Wang** emerged victorious from a field of 154 entries in the \$60,000 eight-max tournament. In recent years, the Chinese high roller has been involved in several viral hands featured on *Hustler Casino Live* and *High Stakes Poker*. In this event, he proved that his skills translate well to the tournament game. He earned \$2,046,000 and his first title. Before this, his best tournament score had been the \$52,100 that came with a 12th-place showing in the mystery bounty won by Obara.

This festival concluded with a handful of PLO tournaments. The penultimate event cost \$75,000 to play, with 67 entries made before registration closed. **Joni Joughkimainen** dragged the last pot, earning \$1,381,000. The Finnish four-

card crusher topped a stacked final table that included Isaac Haxton (5th), Punnat Punsri (4th), Jason Koon (3rd), and Danny Tang (2nd).

The last winner of the series was Hungary's **Gergo Nagy**, who defeated 54 entries in the \$30,000 pot-limit Omaha turbo bounty quattro event. He took home \$310,000 from the main prize pool and another \$200,000 in bounty payouts to bring his total to \$510,000. This was the second-largest score of Nagy's career, trailing only the \$1,360,000 that he earned for his first *Triton* win in a \$50,000 PLO event at the Jeju stop this spring.

The next *Triton* events will be held this December as part of the *WSOP Paradise* festival in the Bahamas. Six *Triton*-branded high rollers are on the schedule, with buy-ins ranging from \$75,000 to \$250,000. ♠

Triton Poker - Landing Casino - Jeju, South Korea

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$50,000 Short Deck Sept. 7-8 Entries: 47 Prizepool: \$2,350,000	1 Richard Yong	\$705,000	510
	2 Michael Zhang	\$510,000	425
	3 Mikita Badziakouski	\$329,000	340
	4 Martin Nielsen	\$249,000	255
	5 Ruslan Khadartcev	\$193,000	213
	6 Rene Van Krevelen	\$150,000	170
	7 Kiat Lee	\$120,000	128

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$25,000 WPT Global Slam Sept. 9-11 Entries: 311 Prizepool: \$7,775,000	1 James Mendoza	\$1,515,000	1680
	2 Xue Song	\$962,000	1400
	3 Alex Foxen	\$721,600	1120
	4 Emilien Pitavy	\$584,000	840
	5 Viacheslav Goryachev	\$460,000	700
	6 Jingyao Yan	\$350,000	560
	7 Bao Qiang Ho	\$260,000	420
	8 Ming Dai	\$190,000	280
	9 Punnat Punsri	\$155,000	140





Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$100,000 Short Deck Sept. 9-10 Entries: 58 Prizepool: \$5,800,000	1 Elton Tsang	\$1,697,000	600
	2 Wang Ye	\$1,218,000	500
	3 Isaac Haxton	\$792,000	400
	4 Ferdinand Putra	\$598,000	300
	5 Tan Xuan	\$464,000	250
	6 Michael Zhang	\$359,000	200
	7 Winfred Yu	\$284,000	150

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$30,000 No-Limit Hold'em Sept. 10-11 Entries: 183 Prizepool: \$5,490,000	1 Jonathan Jaffe	\$1,061,672	1176
	2 Renji Mao	\$882,328	980
	3 Chi-Jen Chu	\$551,000	784
	4 Masashi Oya	\$447,000	588
	5 Clemen Deng	\$353,000	490
	6 Ramin Hajiyev	\$268,000	392
	7 Edward Pak	\$196,000	294
	8 Brian Kim	\$144,000	196

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$40,000 NLH Knockout Sept. 11-12 Entries: 158 Prizepool: \$3,160,000	1 Jun Obara	\$1,739,000	1008
	2 Mehdi Chaoui	\$873,000	840
	3 Weiran Pu	\$565,000	672
	4 Aram Oganyan	\$315,000	504
	5 Huu Nguyen	\$251,000	420
	6 Tobias Schwecht	\$702,400	336
	7 David Peters	\$158,000	252

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$200,000 Short Deck Sept. 11-12 Entries: 61 Prizepool: \$12,200,000	1 Stephen Chidwick	\$3,445,000	720
	2 Kiat Lee	\$2,465,000	600
	3 Rene Van Krevelen	\$1,591,000	480
	4 Esti Wang	\$1,234,000	360
	5 Daniel Dvoress	\$971,000	300
	6 Elton Tsang	\$754,000	240
	7 Winfred Yu	\$590,000	180

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$60,000 No-Limit Hold'em Sept. 12-13 Entries: 154 Prizepool: \$9,240,000	1 Peter Wang	\$2,046,000	1224
	2 Sosia Jiang	\$1,381,000	1020
	3 Anatoly Filatov	\$950,000	816
	4 Mikita Badziakouski	\$774,000	612
	5 Calvin Lee	\$618,000	510
	6 Nang Quang Nguyen	\$475,000	408
	7 Tom Fuchs	\$345,000	306
	8 Santhosh Suvarna	\$250,000	204

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$50,000 No-Limit Hold'em Sept. 13-14 Entries: 146 Prizepool: \$7,300,000	1 Punnat Punsri	\$1,697,000	1224
	2 Brandon Wilson	\$1,150,000	1020
	3 Igor Yaroshevskyy	\$766,000	816
	4 Klemens Roiter	\$628,000	612
	5 Manuel Fritz	\$504,000	510
	6 Samuel Mullur	\$391,000	408
	7 Jean Noel Thorel	\$289,000	306

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$150,000 No-Limit Hold'em Sept. 14-16 Entries: 114 Prizepool: \$17,100,000	1 Kayhan Mokri	\$3,835,059	1200
	2 Anonymous	NA	
	3 Wang Ye	\$1,846,000	800
	4 Yu Zhang	\$1,521,000	600
	5 Jason Koon	\$1,222,000	500
	6 Samuel Mullur	\$957,000	400
	7 Javid Ismayilov	\$718,000	300
	8 Brian Kim	\$530,000	200

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$50,000 NLH Knockout Sept. 15 Entries: 87 Prizepool: \$4,350,000	1 Aleksa Pavicevic	\$1,261,000	816
	2 Mikita Badziakouski	\$536,000	680
	3 Duan Bin	\$363,000	544
	4 Biao Ding	\$525,000	408
	5 Long Cao	\$229,000	340
	6 Poseidon Ho	\$179,000	272
	7 Isaac Haxton	\$141,000	204
	8 Aliaksei Boika	\$407,000	136





Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$100,000 No-Limit Hold'em Sept. 16-18 Entries: 228 Prizepool: \$22,800,000	1 Christoph Vogelsang	\$4,099,975	1920
	2 Samuel Mullur	\$3,509,025	1600
	3 Ben Heath	\$2,223,000	1280
	4 Liang Xu	\$1,795,000	960
	5 Aleksejs Ponakovs	\$1,409,000	800
	6 Kuisong Wu	\$1,065,000	640
	7 Musk Thomas	\$782,000	480
	8 Yu Lei	\$575,000	320
	9 Ho Qiang	\$477,000	160

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$125,000 No-Limit Hold'em Sept. 17-18 Entries: 69 Prizepool: \$8,625,000	1 Michael Watson	\$2,130,812	720
	2 Stephen Chidwick	\$1,927,188	600
	3 Kristen Foxen	\$1,104,000	480
	4 Jun Obara	\$849,000	360
	5 Artur Martirosian	\$673,000	300
	6 Sean Winter	\$526,000	240
	7 Mikita Badziakouski	\$414,000	180

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$30,000 PLO/ NLH Sept. 18-19 Entries: 81 Prizepool: \$2,430,000	1 Jose Barbero	\$646,000	672
	2 Phil Ivey	\$448,000	560
	3 David Wang	\$297,000	448
	4 Daniel Dvoress	\$232,000	336
	5 Dylan Linde	\$187,000	280
	6 Igor Yaroshevskyy	\$146,000	224
	7 Eelis Parssinen	\$116,000	168

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$100,000 PLO Sept. 19-21 Entries: 116 Prizepool: \$11,599,997	1 Isaac Haxton	\$2,789,000	1200
	2 Jose Barbero	\$1,897,000	1000
	3 Jesse Lonis	\$1,261,000	800
	4 Robert Cowen	\$1,037,000	600
	5 Rahul Byrraju	\$838,000	500
	6 Danny Tang	\$655,000	400
	7 Klemens Roiter	\$489,000	300
	8 Gergo Nagy	\$362,000	200
	9 Manuel Stojanovic	\$279,000	100

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$25,000 PLO 6-Max Sept. 20-21 Entries: 60 Prizepool: \$1,500,000	1 Artur Martirosian	\$421,000	504
	2 Benjamin Tollerene	\$298,000	420
	3 Dirk Gerritse	\$201,000	336
	4 Santhosh Suvarna	\$152,000	252
	5 Alex Foxen	\$120,000	210
	6 Punnat Punsri	\$93,000	168

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$50,000 PLO 6-Max Sept. 21-22 Entries: 64 Prizepool: \$3,200,000	1 Biao Ding	\$880,000	612
	2 Lautaro Guerra	\$625,000	510
	3 Daniel Dvoress	\$410,000	408
	4 Benjamin Tollerene	\$315,000	306
	5 Cesar Garcia	\$250,000	255
	6 Martin Dam	\$195,000	204

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$75,000 PLO 6-Max Sept. 22-23 Entries: 67 Prizepool: \$5,025,000	1 Joni Jouhkimainen	\$1,381,000	612
	2 Danny Tang	\$982,000	510
	3 Jason Koon	\$643,000	408
	4 Punnat Punsri	\$495,000	306
	5 Isaac Haxton	\$392,000	255
	6 Martin Dam	\$307,000	204

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
\$30,000 PLO KO Sept. 23 Entries: 54 Prizepool: \$1,620,000	1 Gergo Nagy	\$510,000	420
	2 David Wang	\$262,000	350
	3 Paul Phua	\$305,000	280
	4 Lautaro Guerra	\$149,000	210
	5 Artur Martirosian	\$165,000	175
	6 Robert Cowen	\$66,000	140
	7 Alex Foxen	\$92,000	105
	8 Eelis Parssinen	\$40,000	70
	9 Phil Ivey	\$31,000	35

TRITON POKER CAREER EARNINGS



Rank	Player	Earnings	Titles	Cashes	Nation
1st	Bryn Kenney	\$48,668,135	5	22	United States
2nd	Jason Koon	\$35,883,784	12	67	United States
3rd	Stephen Chidwick	\$32,131,106	3	65	United Kingdom
4th	Mikita Badziakouski	\$29,946,117	5	49	Belarus
5th	Dan Smith	\$25,714,816	2	37	United States
6th	Daniel Dvoress	\$24,967,482	2	59	Canada
7th	Punnat Punsri	\$24,920,230	5	37	Thailand
8th	Danny Tang	\$22,954,004	5	56	Hong Kong
9th	Paul Phua	\$21,371,882	1	51	Malaysia
10th	Fedor Holz	\$21,242,037	4	32	Germany

The stakes at *Triton* festivals are so high that, despite only being around since 2016, the tour has already seen 42 players accumulate more than \$10 million in earnings. In fact, surpassing \$20 million in *Triton* cashes doesn't even guarantee a spot inside the top 10 on the tour's money list. Just ask Aaron Zang, who won the largest buy-in poker tournament ever held for \$16.8 million. His \$21,091,439 in *Triton* earnings is currently good for 11th on this highly-competitive leaderboard.

The man who sits at the very top of both poker's all-time money list and this leaderboard is **Bryn Kenney**. The New York poker pro finished second to Zang in that £1,050,000 *Triton Millions Charity Invitational*, but earned the larger payout thanks to a heads-up deal. Kenney took home a record \$20.6 million for his performance in that event. He has also won five *Triton* titles and cashed for another \$28 million, including four other multi-million-dollar scores like his \$6.8 million win in an invitational \$250,000 buy-in event in 2023.

Jason Koon is the tour's top title earner, with his 12 wins good for more than twice as many as any other *Triton* com-

petitor. Given his record victory count, it should be no surprise that he ranks highly in tour earnings as well. The 40-year-old Las Vegas resident has compiled nearly \$35.9 million across 67 cashes, which is also a record. That accounts for more than half of his total career earnings of \$69.2 million. His four largest paydays have all come in *Triton* wins, and are all for multiple millions of dollars. His top score was the \$3.6 million he earned for winning a \$1,000,000 HKD (\$127,396 USD) buy-in short deck event in 2018.

Rounding out the top three is **Stephen Chidwick**, who is tied with Isaac Haxton for the second-most cashes with 65. The UK poker pro has tallied \$32.1 million, winning three trident trophies along the way. He finished fourth in the event won by Zang, earning \$5.4 million. At the tour's latest stop in Jeju (pg. 24) he won the \$200,000 short deck event for another \$3.4 million, the second-biggest payday on his lengthy résumé.

Triton events have reshaped poker's all-time money list and will likely continue to impact the tournament landscape for years to come. ♠

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BENJAMIN ROLLE WINS WSOP ONLINE MAIN EVENT FOR \$3.9 MILLION

By Paul Oresteen



The 2025 *World Series of Poker Online* \$5,000 main event wrapped up with 5,961 entrants. The huge turnout saw the \$25 million guarantee easily surpassed, with \$28,314,750 paid out in the end.

The international final table started with more than 5,000 people watching the action live. They witnessed online poker legend Benjamin 'bench789' Rolle win his first gold bracelet and the top prize of \$3,900,707.

The German entered the final table with the chip lead, and although he traded it around the table as the day wore on, he was always in contention. The CoinPoker ambassador and founder of the Raise Your Edge training site then took a key heads-up pot holding A-K that all but locked up the biggest win of his career.

This was the second straight year that Rolle made the final table of this event. He finished in eighth place for \$651,921 in 2024 as the shortest stack coming into the final table. This year, he had the biggest stack with Anatoly Zlotnikov and Daniel Smiljkovic on his heels when the final day began.

The first elimination came about 40 minutes into final table play when Zlotnikov opened for a min-raise with A♥ 10♦ and Zengxiang Chen shoved from the big blind holding A♦ J♠. The board ran Q♠ Q♦ 7♣ 4♦ 10♣ and Zlotnikov earned the knockout on the river.

Barely an orbit later, Felix Rabas min-raised with pocket aces and Amit Ben Yacov moved his short stack all in holding A♥ J♦. Rabas made the easy call, the board came out 10♥ 7♣ 4♣ J♥ A♦ and Rabas' set pushed him within two big blinds of Rolle, while both continued to stare up at Zlotnikov in the chip lead.

Rolle min-raised on the button with A♦ K♠ and Andres Christoforou shoved from the small blind with pocket sevens. Rolle called, and flopped Broadway to not only score the knockout, but take an overwhelming chip lead with twice as much as his nearest competitor.

Then, Santiago Plante jammed from the small blind with

a short stack holding K♠ 7♣. Rolle snapped him off from the big holding A♥ 10♦, and he paired his ten on the flop to send Plante to the rail in sixth place.

Plante earned \$1,063,360, the first seven-figure payday of the evening. The Canadian pro also has another \$2.4 million in live tournament earnings, including a \$552,004 score for final tabling the 2023 *EPT Barcelona* main event.

With five players remaining Rabas shoved from the small blind with Marco Perez in the big blind sitting on just six bigs. He called off with K♠ 7♣, and Rabas showed Q♥ 9♣. A nine appeared in the window, and Perez was eliminated. The Austrian earned \$1,378,866 for his deep run.

Two hands later, Zlotnikov shoved his small blind with K♠ Q♦ and Smiljkovic called off his stack holding pocket sixes. The flop paired Zlotnikov's queen, and Smiljkovic failed to catch up. The German player picked up \$1,788,026 for fourth place.

Three-handed play saw the chip lead change hands before Rabas made an ill-timed move with A♣ 3♣, running into Zlotnikov's pocket aces. The board ran jack high and Rabas was left with a \$2,318,640 consolation prize.

Zlotnikov led 185 million to Rolle's 143 million to start, but Rolle took the decisive lead when his A♦ K♥ held against K♣ J♠ in a preflop showdown. They both paired their king on the flop, but Rolle's ace kicker played to see him chip up to 268 million.

A couple of hands later, Zlotnikov shoved from the small blind with A♠ 9♥, and Rolle called with K♠ Q♠. The board ran K♥ 5♠ 2♥ J♠ K♦ to see Rolle secure the pot and the title.

Zlotnikov pocketed \$3,006,762 for the runner-up showing, the biggest score of his career. His previous high was the \$496,100 he banked for a win at *Triton Cyprus* in 2023. He also narrowly missed out on a *WSOP* bracelet in 2024, finishing runner-up in a \$1,500 pot-limit Omaha event. ♠

Player	Payout
1 Benjamin Rolle	\$3,900,707
2 Anatoly Zlotnikov	\$3,006,762
3 Felix Rabas	\$2,318,640
4 Daniel Smiljkovic	\$1,788,026
5 Marco Agustin Perez	\$1,378,866
6 Santiago Plante	\$1,063,360
7 Andreas Christoforou	\$820,073
8 Amit Ben Yacov	\$632,473
9 Zengxiang Chen	\$487,813

© Benjamin Rolle

ARDIT KURSHUMI WINS BETMGM POKER MILLIONAIRE CHAMPIONSHIP

By Tim Fiorvanti

The *BetMGM Poker Millionaire Championship* attracted a field of 670 to Borgata in Atlantic City. The \$5,300 buy-in finale to the *Big, Big Buy-In* series delivered a top-flight final table.

Chance Kornuth, Mike Leah, and Soheb Porbandarwala all have *WSOP* bracelets and *World Poker Tour* titles to their names. Andrew Porter is also a *WSOP* bracelet winner, and longtime East Coast standout and \$1 million mystery bounty winner Matt Glantz was still in contention when the field was narrowed to nine.

Ultimately, it was Ardit Kurshumi who broke through with the most significant result of his career. Kurshumi made a heads-up deal with Kornuth and ultimately persevered in their match for the trophy. After evening out the payouts a bit, Kurshumi walked away with \$772,280. He also earned 1,680 POY points as the champion.

"I've had so many close calls, but I always fell short," Kurshumi told *Poker.org*, the live reporting team for the event. "This time, I just knew it was my tournament. Sometimes you can feel it, and I felt it from the start."

The initial payout was more top-heavy with a prize pool of \$3,350,000 and a guaranteed first-place prize of \$1 million, and the difference of more than \$600,000 between first and second place may have contributed to a slow pace in terms of major pots early on at the final table.

Kurshumi picked up the first two eliminations of the final table to increase his lead. The final seven players went to dinner with Kurshumi in first and Kornuth in second, and there was a healthy gap between them and the rest of the field.

Kornuth knocked out a dangerous opponent in Leah in seventh place when play resumed. Leah three-bet all-in for his last 10 big blinds with $K\clubsuit J\clubsuit$ and Kornuth called with $A\spadesuit 7\clubsuit$. An ace-high flop was plenty for Kornuth to claim the pot. Leah settled for \$102,175, bringing his career totals to just over \$9 million.

An attempted blind steal by Kornuth netted him another elimination. Kornuth shoved from the button, and George Rakitzis called in the big blind with $A\heartsuit 9\clubsuit$. Kornuth was dominated with $9\heartsuit 7\clubsuit$, but nailed the $7\clubsuit$ on the flop to claim the pot and sent Rakitzis out in sixth.

Porter earned a crucial double through Porbandarwala, as his pocket kings held against $A\spadesuit Q\heartsuit$. He'd double again, through Kornuth, with pocket tens against Kornuth's $10\heartsuit 9\heartsuit$.

But Kornuth got all of those chips back, and then some. A short-stacked Glantz shoved the button for 15 big blinds, and Kornuth re-shoved from the small blind. Porter thought it over, and then called for his tournament life.

Kornuth had the best of it with $Q\clubsuit Q\heartsuit$, but there were some major sweats. Porter's $A\heartsuit Q\heartsuit$ and Glantz's $J\heartsuit 8\heartsuit$



both picked up outs on a $K\spadesuit J\spadesuit 4\heartsuit$ flop. Glantz's position improved further as the $7\heartsuit$ turn gave him a flush draw, too. But the $2\spadesuit$ river was a blank, and Kornuth picked up the double knockout. By nature of their stacks, Porter took fourth, and Glantz was out in fifth.

A deal was discussed before three-handed play began, but the trio couldn't come to terms. That ended up being especially bad news for Porbandarwala, who was moments away from a tremendously unlucky circumstance.

Porbandarwala five-bet all-in against Kurshumi, and Kurshumi called. Porbandarwala had a dream scenario with pocket aces against $A\heartsuit J\clubsuit$, but it turned into a nightmare. A $J\heartsuit J\heartsuit 4\clubsuit$ flop turned Kurshumi's dominated hand into trips, and the case ace would not show up to deliver justice. Porbandarwala settled for \$247,900, giving him \$2.2 million in cashes for his career.

Kurshumi and Kornuth made a deal for all of the money, but the heads-up match for the trophy and title still carried on for a stretch. Trips would be Kurshumi's winning combination as well. The chips got in on a $9\spadesuit 9\clubsuit 2\heartsuit 8\clubsuit$ board, and Kurshumi's $9\heartsuit 7\heartsuit$ had Kornuth's $8\heartsuit 6\heartsuit$ drawing dead.

Kornuth walked away with the \$634,720 he negotiated for. That just narrowly cracks his top 10 biggest live results in a career with over \$21.6 million in total recorded earnings. ♠

Player	Payout	POY
1 Ardit Kurshumi	\$772,280	1,680
2 Chance Kornuth	\$634,720	1,400
3 Soheb Porbandarwala	\$247,900	1,120
4 Andrew Porter	\$206,025	840
5 Matthew Glantz	\$167,175	700
6 George Rakitzis	\$130,650	560
7 Mike Leah	\$102,175	420
8 Edward Leonard	\$75,400	280
9 Frayser Flores	\$51,925	140

CIRCUIT RESULTS



© Winamax



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Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
Circuito Nacional Casino	1 Hongbo Lin	\$55,536	456
	2 Miguel Ferreiro	\$29,724	380
	3 Ivan Cendan	\$24,963	304
Mediterraneo Alicante La Vila Joiosa, Spain	4 Cornel Chris	\$34,502	228
	5 Miguel Veran	\$27,263	190
€550 NLH Sept. 10-14 Entries: 713 Prizepool: \$376,420	6 Lasse Laukkarinen	\$13,104	152
	7 Fedor Muntyan	\$9,945	114
	8 Eduardo Sanchez	\$7,254	76
	9 Axel Soria	\$5,850	38

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
La Notte Degli Assi	1 Giuseppe Chiaramonte	\$58,500	420
	2 Anonymous		
Casino Admiral Mendrisio, Switzerland	3 Andrea D'Elia	\$26,910	280
	4 Matteo Garofali	\$21,060	210
	5 Sallustro Pellegrino	\$17,550	175
€550 NLH Sept. 11-21 €300,000 GTD Entries: 560 Prizepool: \$351,000	6 Claudio Di Giacomo	\$14,040	140
	7 Gabriele Brambilla	\$10,530	105
	8 Luca Rio	\$8,190	70
	9 Orazio Pellegrino	\$6,435	35



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Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Fall Frenzy	1 Shawn Barnett	\$47,128
	2 Anthony March	\$39,317
Silks Poker Room Tampa, FL	3 Steven Sinclair	\$21,040
	4 Bryan Winchell	\$16,795
\$350 NLH Sept. 10-14 \$250,000 GTD Entries: 813 Prizepool: \$250,000	5 Jacob Mast	\$14,326
	6 Stanley Tavanese	\$10,125
	7 David Cooper	\$7,657
	8 Patrick Pintavalle	\$5,187
	9 Keith Loftus	\$3,705

Event	Player	Payout	(POY)
WSOP Circuit	1 Ari Engel	\$22,372	192
	2 Michael Wilklow	\$14,482	160
Horseshoe Council Bluffs, IA	3 Terence Reid	\$9,771	128
	4 Scott Allacher	\$6,885	96
\$1,100 NLH Sept. 11 Entries: 80 Prizepool: \$78,000	5 Ryan Brown	\$5,075	80
	6 Benjamin Kramer	\$3,923	64
	7 Daniel Lowery	\$3,187	48
	8 Minh Phan	\$2,729	32
	9 Michael Fouts	\$2,469	16

All payouts in USD.
VOLUME 38 / ISSUE 22

TOURNAMENTS

Ryan Brown



Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
WSOP Circuit Horseshoe Council Bluffs, IA \$1,700 NLH Sept. 12-15 Entries: 275 Prizepool: \$362,384	1 Ryan Brown	\$85,239	432
	2 Christopher Rodriguez	\$56,852	360
	3 Eric Vogler	\$38,900	288
	4 William Ellis	\$27,324	216
	5 Kyle Schmit	\$19,717	180
	6 Donald Nimneh	\$14,627	144
	7 Nick Raio	\$11,164	108
	8 Steve Pham	\$8,775	72
	9 Jay Philips	\$7,108	36

Michael Aman



Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
Electric City Series	1 Michael Aman	\$35,560	336
	2 Hyun Chang	\$23,875	280
	3 Shaun Deeb	\$15,355	224
Rivers Casino Schenectady, NY	4 Peter Lindner	\$10,670	168
	5 Vincent Leone	\$8,190	140
	6 Lucian Dublea	\$8,325	112
\$400 NLH Sept. 15-21 \$75,000 GTD Entries: 552 Prizepool: \$182,160	7 Brian Lineback	\$5,685	84
	8 Trent Sano	\$4,540	56
	9 Vu Lieu	\$3,405	28

James Hosley



Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
Fall Coast Classic	1 James Hosley	\$57,320	300
	2 Adam Nattress	\$40,106	250
	3 Jason Gray	\$25,782	200
Chinook Winds Lincoln City, OR	4 Taylor Hart	\$19,098	150
	5 Robert Vinic	\$14,323	125
	6 Cher Cha	\$11,458	100
\$775 NLH Sept. 13-14 \$225,000 GTD Entries: 392 Prizepool: \$272,832	7 Pong Shin	\$9,549	75
	8 Casey Ring	\$7,639	50
	9 Brian Lawrence	\$5,729	25

Nuno Morais



Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
Fall Festival	1 Nuno Morais	\$71,371	420
	2 Damir Savio	\$45,607	350
	3 Julius Julienius	\$32,269	280
Portomaso Casino St. Julian's, Malta	4 Dimitrios Chalasa	\$23,938	210
	5 Thomas Jakobsen	\$18,404	175
	6 Arttu Myllys	\$14,134	140
€550 NLH Sept. 16-21 Entries: 666 Prizepool: \$371,965	7 Gustav Ekhagen	\$10,833	105
	8 Olli Kovalainen	\$8,377	70
	9 Emmanuel Houssais	\$6,716	35

© WSOP

© Rivers Casino

© Chinook Winds

© Portomaso Casino

TOURNAMENTS

Isabel Baltazar



© Casino de Marrakech

Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
Unibet Open Casino de Marrakech	1 Isabel Baltazar	\$57,530	336
	2 Greg Dupouy	\$40,150	280
	3 Yohan Rascar	\$26,620	224
Marrakech, Morocco	4 Rui Soares	\$22,550	168
	5 Romain Morin	\$17,380	140
MAD 15,000 NLH Sept. 16-17 Entries: 193 Prizepool: \$272,272	6 Nikolay Ponomarev	\$13,640	112
	7 Mounir Khoddar	\$10,890	84

Daniel Kennedy



© Canterbury Park

Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
Fall Monster Stack	1 Daniel Kennedy	\$46,610	365
	2 Nicholas Gingrasso	\$31,250	304
Canterbury Park Shakopee, MN	3 Chase Williams	\$22,870	243
	4 Jesse Haddeland	\$17,000	182
\$400 NLH Sept. 17-21 Entries: 770 Prizepool: \$254,100	5 Carl Carodenuto	\$12,960	152
	6 Thai Dinh	\$9,910	122
	7 Michael Sitzman	\$7,620	91
	8 Eric Abate	\$5,845	61
	9 John Dennehey	\$4,575	30

Quentin Laugt



© Casino de Marrakech

Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
Unibet Open Casino de Marrakech	1 Quentin Laugt	\$84,150	456
	2 Kamel Rachedi	\$58,850	380
	3 Tristan Forge	\$42,900	304
Marrakech, Morocco	4 Ahmed Blili	\$31,900	228
	5 Belghiti Smail	\$23,650	190
MAD 6,000 NLH Sept. 17-21 Entries: 937 Prizepool: \$524,480	6 Manuel Lopez	\$17,600	152
	7 Frederic Popot	\$13,200	114
	8 Steven Bohn	\$10,120	76
	9 Hassan Atigh	\$8,140	38

Agustin Baletto



© Caribbean Poker Experience

Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
Caribbean Experience	1 Agustin Baletto	\$37,197	180
	2 Ruben Pedro	\$22,590	150
The Level at Melia Caribe Punta Cana, Dominican Republic	3 Roberto Bianchi	\$15,370	120
	4 Heon-Jo Kim	\$12,400	90
\$900 NLH Sept. 17-21 \$100,000 GTD Entries: 213 Prizepool: \$157,617	5 Ariel Rosanova	\$9,700	75
	6 Carlos Ibarra	\$7,300	60
	7 Marcelo Ortiguera	\$5,400	45
	8 Hugo Spangenberg	\$4,130	30
	9 Diego Gonzalez	\$3,290	15



© Venetian



© MSPT

Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
DeepStack	1 Benjamin Palmer	\$40,011	360
	2 Christopher Hull	\$28,786	300
Venetian Las Vegas, NV	3 Christian Larsen	\$20,978	240
	4 Danny Ayman Qutami	\$15,487	180
\$600 NLH Sept. 18-21 \$150,000 GTD Entries: 439 Prizepool: \$221,695	5 Davis Harari	\$11,585	150
	6 Nikhil Gera	\$8,783	120
	7 Andrew Rodgers	\$6,749	90
	8 Eric Fenzke	\$5,258	60
	9 Tongguang Sun	\$4,153	30

Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
DeepStack	1 Miguel Lopez	\$86,899	840
	2 Darren Rabinowitz	\$63,904	700
Venetian Las Vegas, NV	3 Mohamed Serry	\$47,552	560
	4 Mikhail Sniatovskii	\$35,803	420
\$1,100 NLH Sept. 25-28 \$300,000 GTD Entries: 522 Prizepool: \$503,730	5 David Jackson	\$27,280	350
	6 Anthony Danna	\$21,038	280
	7 Steven Zazaian	\$16,424	210
	8 Sami Bechahed	\$12,981	140
	9 Taylor Black	\$10,389	70

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2025 Triton Jeju
\$100,000 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event



Christoph Vogelsang
10,700,000

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 57%
After Flop: 77%
After Turn: 5%



Henrik Hecklen
2,325,000

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 42%
After Flop: 23%
After Turn: 95%



PREFLOP

With 10 players remaining, a five-handed table, and blinds of 75,000-150,000 with a big blind ante of 150,000, Christoph Vogelsang raised to 300,000 from the button. Henrik Hecklen called from the big blind.



Hecklen checked, and Vogelsang bet 175,000. Hecklen called.



Hecklen bet 300,000, and Vogelsang called.



Hecklen bet 1,375,000. Vogelsang raised all-in, and Hecklen called 25,000.

COMMENTARY:

The Triton Poker Super High Roller Series Jeju \$100,000 main event was down to 10 players from a starting field of 228, each player left having locked up \$400,000. On the final table bubble, Christoph Vogelsang had a big stack, covering his opponents in the blinds and enabling him to pressure them by opening hands like J-2 suited. He did so in this hand, and big blind Henrik Hecklen came along, defending off of his stack of about 15 big blinds. On the flop, Vogelsang had a favorable board and opted to use his range advantage for a small bet. Second pair with a bad kicker often falls into the checking range, but Vogelsang may have simply been using a range bet for a small size. Hecklen called, which was the most common solver play, although it does also recommend shoving weaker tens on some occasions. Things got interesting on the turn. Typically, the bottom card pairing the board favors the big blind in these spots, because the in-position player isn't incentivized to bet very often with bottom pair. Hecklen could have used that to his advantage to try and steal the pot with some of his weaker flop calls, although in this case, he had a monster. He went ahead with a small bet, and there was nothing for Vogelsang to do but call. The river was highly unfortunate for Hecklen, as Vogelsang could certainly have a jack with the line he took. However, there was simply too much value in a shove, as Vogelsang would have had to look him up with some hands with a king and even some ace-high hands that unblocked bluffs. Hecklen put almost all of his chips in, and the normal course of action for players leaving one chip behind is to call off when they have value while folding their bluffs. Hecklen had a good hand, so he paid Vogelsang the last 25,000 and was shown the bad news.

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

TOURNAMENTS



© RCPs

Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
RunGood Grand Prix	1 Chadd Beatty	\$26,018	156
	2 Rob Gardner	\$22,351	130
	3 Chris Coles	\$13,520	104
Hollywood Casino Grantville, PA	4 Richard Wilburn	\$9,712	78
	5 Zachary Gruneberg	\$7,179	65
	6 Anthony Potis	\$5,465	52
\$800 NLH Sept. 19-21	7 Mark Brodsky	\$4,289	39
	8 Pat Waters	\$3,472	26
	9 Jonathan Ares	\$2,903	13
Prizepool: \$115,500			



© Poker.org

Event	Player	Payout	(POV)
WSOP Circuit	1 Kevin Bass	\$58,837	384
	2 Charles Varner	\$39,568	320
	3 Anthony Murphy	\$28,268	256
Thunder Valley Lincoln, CA	4 Sung Choi	\$20,928	192
	5 Arthur Goltz	\$15,561	160
	6 Adam Nattress	\$11,687	128
\$400 NLH Sept. 25-28	7 Timothy Hayes	\$8,890	96
	8 Benjamin Primus	\$6,855	64
	9 Steven Gnatovich	\$5,359	32
Prizepool: \$409,200			

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2025 Triton Jeju
\$100,000 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event



Aleksejs Ponakovs
10,900,000

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 54%
After Flop: 65%
After Turn: 86%



Wu Kuisong
9,900,000

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 45%
After Flop: 33%
After Turn: 14%



PREFLOP

With nine players remaining and blinds of 75,000-150,000 with a big blind ante of 150,000, Aleksejs Ponakovs raised to 300,000 from the lojack. Wu Kuisong three-bet to 850,000 from the button, and Ponakovs called.



Ponakovs checked, and Wu bet 625,000. Ponakovs called.



Both players checked.



Both players checked.

COMMENTARY:

Preflop, Aleksejs Ponakovs was in a pretty good chip position to open as wide as 3-3, even though that was one pip wider than the lojack should open at this depth according to the solver. (4-4 is a good open.) Wu Kuisong responded by three-betting a hand that was a few pips too wide as well. Facing off with a fellow top-three stack in Wu, Ponakovs wasn't in an enviable spot playing out of position considering several players remaining had fewer than 30 big blinds. However, pocket pairs perform well enough to see the flop even with the positional disadvantage when there's plenty of money left behind. The seven-high texture favored Ponakovs, and the solver actually recommends leading frequently in this situation. Ponakovs had the advantage in sets and straights, as the in-position player should rarely hit this flop hard. However, he checked, which may have been part of a strategic choice to check his entire range. Once faced with a small bet, Ponakovs was supposed to mostly raise, leveraging the aforementioned equity advantage of his range. He continued with a call, though, and the players went to the turn. At that point, Wu decided to take the free card. It was a sensible move, since Ponakovs was likely to have a lot of overpairs in his range which probably wouldn't fold. The solver advocates for a mix with Wu's hand, but it's important to be aware that the A♥ is a critical blocker in that spot, and Wu would have bluffed the turn aggressively if he held that card instead of the A♣. On the river, Ponakovs needed to decide between betting for value and going for a check-raise. The ace favored Wu's range, but Ponakovs' own range contained plenty of hands like A-5 as well that can go for value. If he believed Wu would go for value with most of his pair of ace hands, then checking was the best play. Unfortunately for Ponakovs, Wu decided to show down, which was the solver-recommended play with anything weaker than A-K.

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

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Final Table Takedown: Schutten Shuts Out Distractions For Circuit Title

By Craig Tapscott



Brek Schutten wasn't supposed to win the *World Series of Poker Circuit* main event at Horseshoe Hammond in Indiana. It's not that he didn't have the necessary skills. In fact, he was perhaps overqualified, given his success in high roller events with buy-ins as high as \$50,000. But not only was the Michigan father of five splashing around at lower stakes than he is used to, but he also had to contend with a family emergency that almost forced him to abandon his stack in the tournament.

Schutten raced home to tend to his wife, who had been checked into a hospital. She was able to recover, however, and family insisted he go back to play out the tournament. The decision proved to be a wise one as he ended up winning, banking \$185,594, the gold ring, and a *WSOP Paradise* prize package.

It was yet another tournament accolade for the part-time poker pro who also spent much of his working life in the intensive care unit as a registered nurse. The devout Christian has two *WSOP Circuit* rings, as well as two *WSOP* bracelets, and a *World Poker Tour* championship. His biggest scores remain the \$1,405,641 he picked up in the 2024 *WSOP* \$25,000 high roller, and the \$1,261,095 he banked in the 2021 *WPT Hard Rock Poker Showdown*. His career earnings now sit at nearly \$6.6 million.

Card Player caught up with Schutten to talk about his latest victory.

Craig Tapscott: You're a very successful poker player and a registered nurse, as is your wife. Can you share a bit about this as one of your career choices?

Brek Schutten: I became a realtor after I graduated from college in 2010 and sold houses for several years before some family members had some major health concerns. I felt called to go back to school to become a nurse in 2016.

Around that same time, I discovered poker and began to realize I could earn money playing a game I loved. I continued as an ICU nurse until November of 2024, when it became too difficult to find time to schedule shifts at the hospital while maintaining a full poker schedule. I now work as a registered nurse and administrator for Impact Medical Weight Loss Partners, a weight loss clinic that my wife and I co-founded to help people live healthier lives and lose weight.

CT: Have you ever had to use your nursing skills at a poker table?

BS: One of the most important skills a nurse can have is assessing people and observation skills. When caring for patients in the ICU, you must constantly pay attention to every detail about a patient and understand what they're going through. This translates well to reading people at a poker table, especially in smaller buy-in events where players aren't as disciplined in hiding their tells.

Nursing in the ICU can also be a high-stress environment. Over the years, I've received compliments from people



who are amazed at how calm I appear at the poker table in high-stakes situations. I've attributed this to years of taking care of ICU patients in life-or-death situations, which can be much more stressful than poker situations that only have financial implications.

Event: WSOP Circuit – Horseshoe Hammond
Buy-In: \$1,700
Entrants : 622
Prize Pool: \$1,000,000
First-Place Prize: \$185,594

**HAND
NO. 1**

Stacks: Brek Schutten – 120,000 (80 BB)
 Villain – 111,000 (74 BB)
Blinds: 1,000-1,500 with a 1,500 big blind ante
Players: 9

BS: The first interesting hand I played wasn't deep in the tournament, but that doesn't mean it wasn't important.

More than halfway through day 1b, I had built a decent stack of about 120,000 from the 40,000 starting stack. I did this with aggressive play and a fair amount of three-betting preflop.

Schutten raised to 3,000 from UTG holding A♠ K♣. Villain in the hijack three-bet to 11,000.

CT: Did you have any kind of read on the Villain at this point, early in the event?

BS: He was a 50- to 55-year-old male who seemed fed up with my aggressive play. A few hands earlier, I had four-bet A-3 suited after he three-bet my open and he begrudgingly folded.

CT: What did you think was your best play holding A-K?

BS: I usually would four-bet in this spot, but I was con-

cerned that this particular player may just jam 75 big blinds with a lot of his three-betting range because he felt I was four-betting too much. Because of this, I decided just to call to see a flop and re-evaluate.

Schutten called.

Flop: A♣ A♦ Q♣

BS: The flop was a good one for me. So I...

Schutten checked, and Villain checked behind.

BS: I checked to play in flow, and he checked back relatively quickly. The quick check from this particular player felt more like strength than weakness to me, however.

Turn: 6♥

Schutten checked.

CT: What's the plan?

BS: Well, I felt that my hand was deceptively strong, but I didn't think I was going to be able to get two streets of value unless he had an ace, which he would bet on this street anyway.

Villain bet 6,000.

BS: This sizing was really small for the turn. I felt like he was trying to squeeze value out of me, but he didn't want to scare me off. Between the feeling I got on the flop from his quick check back and the feeling I got on the turn after he bet small, I decided to just call the bet.

Schutten called.

River: 3♦

BS: On this card, I decided to lead out.

Schutten bet 22,000.

CT: What are you trying to accomplish with the donk bet into the Villain?

BS: I did not think my hand was strong enough to check-raise comfortably. Additionally, I was concerned that he would bet small again with his A-x combos or check back pocket pairs. So, I wanted to get value from his marginal



value hands.

Villain moved all-in.

CT: That can't be good.

BS: Not at all. I felt pretty comfortable with my hand until he went all-in relatively quickly. At this point, I went into the tank to think about his actions on every street to see if there were any bluffs or any value hands I could actually beat.

I decided to go with my read of his flop and turn actions and...

Schutten folded. Villain won the pot of 60,000.

BS: I ended up folding my A-K, realizing his hand felt much more like a full house. I don't think he would take that line with any worse aces. After a little prodding, he eventually showed me A-Q offsuit, so that fold saved my tournament.

After a few more hours of play, I spun my stack up to 1,100,000 before bagging a modest 407,000, moving forward to day 2.

CT: Nice fold!

BS: Thanks. Between hand No. 1 and hand No. 2 came one of my most crucial decisions, however. On Saturday before day 2, my wife went into the hospital with a medical emergency and was placed on a ventilator and sedated.

CT: Is she okay?

BS: Thanks for asking. She is now. But at that point, she was transferred to the ICU, where I used to work as a nurse less than a year ago, and was cared for by my former coworkers.

Poker was the last thing on my mind at that time. I spent Saturday night at the hospital with very little sleep, trying to make sure she was comfortable and stable. Sunday morning came, and after talking with family, we decided that she was stable enough for me to make the 2.5-hour drive back to

Hammond for day 2 of the tournament. I struggled to maintain focus, and I was emotionally and physically drained throughout both day 2 and the final table.

HAND NO.2

Stacks: Brek Schutten – 9,500,000 (95 BB)

Villain – 4,700,000 (47 BB)

Blinds: 50,000-100,000, with a 100,000 big blind ante

Players: 6

BS: This hand took place at the final table on day 3. I came into day 3 with the chip lead with 9,500,000 chips. The villain from this hand started the day second in chips. He was also a 50- to 55-year-old male. I had played with him quite a bit on day 2 and recognized a few things about him. First, he did not like to fold preflop to three-bets. Second, he tended to use abnormally large sizings when he was the aggressor. And third, he liked to slow play his monster hands.

CT: Had you formulated your strategy for the final table?

BS: At this point in the tournament, as any good chip leader should, I had been the aggressor in the majority of pots. I was putting ICM pressure on the other players throughout the late stages of day 2 and the early stages of day 3.

Villain raised to 250,000 from the lojack.

BS: I looked down at pocket threes in the cutoff and decided to call.

Schutten called from the cutoff with 3♥ 3♦, and everyone else folded.

Flop: 7♠ 5♦ 2♣

Villain bet 400,000.

BS: The villain bet his typical larger sizing. He has a lot of hands that bricked this flop, so I decided to...



Schutten called.

Turn: 2♠

Villain bet 800,000.

CT: What did you make of this second barrel from him?

BS: This card shouldn't mean anything to either of us unless it gave him a backdoor flush draw. I had seen him play overpairs much more passively in similar spots, so it didn't seem very credible.

Schutten called.

River: 7♣

BS: The Villain reached for chips to count out relatively quickly and eventually settled on a bet sizing.

Villain bet 1,100,000.

BS: The seven on the river is a really bad card for him if he has an overpair, so I would expect his overpairs, or even 5-5, to check-call that river.

That bet made me think he was only betting a seven or a bluff. And he shouldn't have too many sevens in his UTG opening range if he has any concerns for ICM.

Schutten called, and Villain revealed K♣ Q♣. Schutten won the pot of 5,350,000.

BS: I decided to make the hero call, and he turned over K♣ Q♣. This hand vaulted me even further into the chip lead, and I never looked back from there.

CT: Congrats on the huge win. Can you share your wife's recovery progress?

BS: After I finished taking the winner's photos, I finally had a chance to look down at my phone and found a text from my father-in-law. He said that Jackie was getting her breathing tube out earlier than expected.

She's continuing her recovery at home, but is in much better condition now. God is good. He has continuously blessed me and my family throughout my poker career and, more importantly, every other aspect of my life.

Follow Schutten on Twitter/X @BSchutten. ♠

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2025 Triton Jeju
\$100,000 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event



Benjamin Heath
5,600,000

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 36%
After Flop: 9%
After Turn: 2%



Ho Bao Qiang
2,250,000

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 21%
After Flop: 25%
After Turn: 17%



Wu Kuisong
10,450,000

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 42%
After Flop: 64%
After Turn: 81%



PREFLOP

With nine players remaining and blinds of 100,000-200,000 with a big blind ante of 200,000, Benjamin Heath raised to 450,000 from UTG+1. Wu Kuisong and Ho Bao Qiang called from the blinds.

FLOP



Everyone checked.

TURN



Wu bet 350,000, and Ho folded. Heath called.

RIVER



Wu bet 775,000, and Heath called.

COMMENTARY:

Despite the commentary team calling it "close," Ben Heath made a perfectly normal open with 8-8, which should never be folded in this situation. He got two customers in the blinds. Wu Kuisong could have three-bet bluffed his hand, as A-9 doesn't perform that well against an early-position player. Likewise, Ho Bao Qiang could have folded, as Q-8 isn't an exciting hand to defend with three ways, even suited. It will frequently be dominated by one or both opponents, and it doesn't have a lot of playability since it can't flop an open-ended straight draw. In any case, the players all saw the flop, and all checked. Heath had a hand that played best as a check even in a heads-up pot, so betting in a three-handed pot was out of the question. On the turn, Wu had a reasonable hand to lead with using a small size. Worse hands would call him, and he could thin the field to get the pot heads up. That's exactly what happened, as it was too early for Heath to let the eights go, particularly with some draws present. Things got interesting on the river. Wu got one of the best cards in the deck for his hand, as he was now beating most of the hands Heath would get to the river with. He went for value, and Heath had a close decision between folding and calling. His hand blocked some bluffs, but he was also getting about 4-to-1 on a call, meaning he only needed to win about 20% of the time to justify one. Wu had been wild at times, so Heath flicked in a few big blinds with a hand that the solver thought was indifferent, meaning that it wouldn't matter what he did in that spot in the long run. This time it did not work out in his favor.

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

AGGRESSIVE SHOVING BEFORE THE FLOP

By Jonathan Little

I was recently told about a hand from a \$1,000 buy-in poker tournament that illustrates a big mistake that many players make on a regular basis.

With blinds at 250-500 with a 500 big blind ante, everyone folded to the button, a loose, aggressive player who recently lost a large pot, dethroning him as chip leader. Despite this, he still had a nice stack of 21,000. He raised to 1,150 and the action folded to our Hero with 12,500 in the big blind with 9♦ 8♦.

While calling is certainly better than folding, when facing a 2.5-big blind raise from a likely wide range, going all-in for about 10 times the initial raise could potentially be the best play, while also being the easiest to execute.

To figure out if an all-in is profitable, use this equation:

Profit = (% opponent folds) X (amount you steal) + (% opponent calls) X (equity in pot – amount you put in pot)

Let's suppose the button is raising with 60% of hands (many loose players raise wider) and that he will only call the all-in with the top 15% of hands (many players call tighter). This means that when Hero pushes all-in, he will get called 25% of the time (15/60).



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A man wearing a black baseball cap and a black t-shirt is smiling and holding a large, ornate trophy. He is standing behind a poker table.

When Hero pushes all-in and the button folds, he wins the 2,400 pot (the button's preflop raise plus the blinds and antes).

To find Hero's equity when called, you take his 9♦ 8♦ and run it in an equity calculator against the button's 15% calling range. In this case, Hero will win the all-in pot about 37% of the time. To determine Hero's equity in the pot, you take the total pot size after the all-in and call and multiply it by Hero's 37% equity, which is 9,509 (.37 X (12,500 + 12,500 + 250 + 450)).

Now you have all the information you need to determine if Hero can profitably push all-in.

$$\text{Profit} = (.75) \times (2,400) + (.25) \times (9,509 - 12,500)$$

$$\text{Profit} = 1,800 - 748$$

$$\text{Profit} = 1,052$$

While winning two big blinds by going all-in may not seem worth the risk, two big blinds is actually a huge amount of profit. Any time you expect your opponent to fold more than 65% of the time to a reasonably-sized preflop all-in, you can push with an incredibly wide range because your opponent will fold too often.

You can tinker with your opponent's calling frequency and also your hand's equity (weaker hands have less equity when called) to see how wide you can profitably go all-in.

But just because going all-in is profitable does not mean that it is the best play. If you expect to win more than 1,052 chips by calling, then calling is superior, even if it is a more difficult strategy to implement. That said, you will have a difficult time winning more than 1,052 chips by calling with a marginal hand from out

of position.

Going all-in will occasionally leave you broke, but scooping up two big blinds on average is well worth the risk. If you instead call and then frequently check-fold when you miss the flop, you will eventually blind out, making it close to impossible for you to succeed at poker tournaments in the long run.

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Jonathan Little is a WSOP bracelet winner, two-time WPT winner, and PokerGO Cup champion. The best-selling author of 15 educational poker books and 2019 GPI Poker Personality of the Year wants to help you increase your poker skills and learn to crush the games. Check out PokerCoaching.com/CardPlayer.



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TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2025 Triton Jeju
\$100,000 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event



Aleksejs Ponakovs
12,650,000

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 46%
After Flop: 56%
After Turn: 34%



Christoph Vogelsang
17,500,000

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 53%
After Flop: 43%
After Turn: 66%



PREFLOP

With five players remaining and blinds of 200,000-400,000 with a big blind ante of 400,000, Aleksejs Ponakovs limped in from the small blind. Christoph Vogelsang raised to 1,300,000 from the big blind, and Ponakovs called.



Both players checked.



Ponakovs bet
2,000,000, and
Vogelsang called.



Ponakovs bet
9,350,000, and
Vogelsang called.

COMMENTARY:

With five players remaining, including a short stack with just nine big blinds, Aleksejs Ponakovs was under quite a bit of ICM pressure playing in the small blind against a covering stack. His own stack was worth about double the next payout of \$1,409,000. Understanding that, Christoph Vogelsang raised preflop from the big blind. These offsuit hands with a high card and a low card generally perform well as bluffs because they have decent equity but poor playability. Suited hands have too much equity to fold against the raise, so Ponakovs called. He checked the flop, as he'd do with all of his hands, and Vogelsang had a hand that could bet or check. Betting would garner some value from weaker pairs, but checking would create some deception and possibly induce bluffs or lighter call downs on later streets. He opted for a check. On the turn, Ponakovs had a fine hand to bluff with, considering he was without much showdown value but had some equity with a pretty strong draw. Vogelsang had an easy call with top pair. On the river, Ponakovs had a decent hand to continue his story. Vogelsang would have tons of middling Q-X and J-X hands in a battle of the blinds, and a big bet would force many of those to fold. In fact, facing a shove (or close), the solver mixes folds with hands even as strong as A-K in Vogelsang's shoes. The downside was that the risk of ICM disaster was very real, as Ponakovs would be all but finished if called, costing himself around \$1.3 million in equity. Vogelsang had a good hand to bluff-catch with, top pair with a kicker that didn't block bluffs. Still, he took his time, understanding that Ponakovs had little incentive to take a huge risk. When he finally called, he put himself in a tremendous chip position that he was able to convert into a \$4,099,975 win, while Ponakovs ended up busting in fifth.

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

FIVE WAYS TO SPOT (AND BEAT) LOCAL REGS

By Alex Fitzgerald



Every local poker room has its so-called “regulars,” familiar faces who think they run the table. But with the right reads and counters, you can turn their routines into your advantage.

They Never Get Caught Bluffing

Let’s make this clear right away: Most local “crushers” have deep pockets and just keep re-entering until they get their picture on the wall. They haven’t studied the game thoroughly.

You can identify gaps in their

logic based on how often they get caught with bluffs. No one pitches a perfect game. Someone who takes many good profitable bluffs is going to get caught at some point. It’s simple mathematics.

If you’re running a bluff on the river that needs to work 56% of the time but you can prove it’s actually going to work 75% of the time, then you have a profitable bet. However, that still means one time out of four you’re going to turn over a bluff and lose a huge pot.

Most people rationally don’t want to experience this feeling. Who wants to lose all their chips while everyone stares at you, wondering what you were thinking? However, if you’re going to take the most profitable bluffs afforded to you and maximize your winnings, you’re going to have to accept being caught on occasion.

If you see a local “legend” or “crusher” or “solid regular” who never gets caught bluffing, then you know for a fact they’re missing a tool in their toolbox. They’re either only doing bluffs with a potential 100% success rate or they’re not bluffing at all. Either way, you don’t ever have to pay them off because their bluffing frequencies are too low, and that is a huge edge to have over a player.

They Try To Irritate You Into Calls

Most “aggressive” players are actually just annoying people who have learned how to nut peddle. Think about it. If you were bluffing regularly, would you seek to piss off everyone at the table?

You can find one of these nits with window dressing in any card-room around the nation. They know they don’t bluff enough, so they trash talk or irritate you into calling them more than you should.

It works most of the time. The Stoics pointed out that most people are protective of their body, and they’d be understandably irked if someone spilled a drink on them or pushed them. However, these people seek to rattle your mind, another part of your body, and we take it as business as usual.

Put some headphones on. Ignore them. There should be a table change coming soon if the structure is fast enough.

They Are Willing To Re-Enter Constantly

You will constantly be told that this guy or that guy is so good at poker. Look at all their final tables! Then, when you sit with them, you learn quickly how they got those final tables. They just re-enter over

and over!

They push any mediocre draw and hope for the best. They call off all of their chips versus any triple barrel and run any thin bluff.

Any single one of us could get a chip stack together if we didn't care about profiting from the tournament. That doesn't make the guy a great player.

To counter their constant re-entries, be willing to stack off wider versus their draws that they are playing fast.

They See Lots Of Flops, But Only Play Big Pots When...

Something you'll see a lot of so-called great players do is just flat call every single raise pre-flop. They'll call on the flop, but only spring to life later in the hand to play a big pot once they hit two pair or better. They're applying the same strategy that a lot of bad players employ. The only difference is they have the money to re-enter again and again.

Of course, some regs are better at this than others. Some of them restrict themselves to flatting with good suited connectors, suited gap-pers, and pocket pairs. They don't

just wing chips in with mediocre offsuit big cards that can easily be dominated.

Most regulars are somewhere on the continuum. They see a few too many flops, or way too many flops, but then they only play a big pot when they hit something large. People see them splashing around preflop and assume they're doing so later in the hand, but preflop spew does not equal river aggression.

The way you can counter all of them is by not paying them off later in the hand. They might try to irritate you by a quick shove and then a stare down, but they're not firing themselves up into a bluff. They're nut peddlers through and through. If they triple barrel you or raise you on the turn or river, you can just fold.

They Raise Constantly Preflop

Many of these players have learned that they need to be somewhat aggressive to get anything done. If they do come into a pot, they are generally raising. They three-bet slightly more than the average player.

Again, if the pot gets large later, they usually just have the hand they are representing. They might be

aggressive early, but many of them are not aggressive late. That's just smoke and mirrors.

The way you can counter them is by realizing they usually get away with constantly raising preflop because no one counters them. No one three-bets them and puts them in their place. You can be the person that delivers that knockout blow by forcing them to play a big pot before they have something large, which is what all of their bluster was hoping to avoid all along.

Conclusion

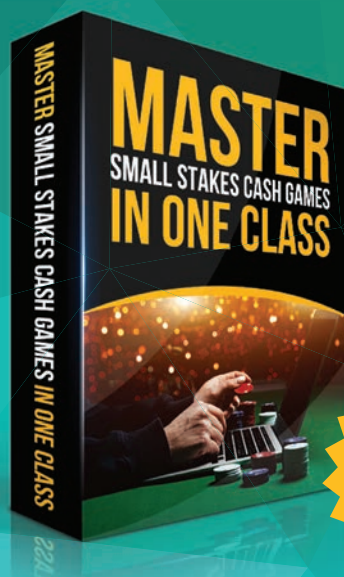
Beating local regulars isn't about playing fancy, it's about breaking their patterns and staying unpredictable. Spot their habits early, exploit them often, and you'll be the one they start fearing. ♠



Alexander Fitzgerald is a professional poker player and bestselling author who lives in Denver, Colorado. He is a WPT and EPT final ta-

blist with numerous online tournament wins. Free training packages of his are available to new newsletter subscribers who sign up for free at www.pokerheadrush.com

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PUNT OF THE DAY: MAIN EVENT RUNS WITH MARIA KONNIKOVA

By Sam Greenwood



Even the best players in the world make mistakes. Join Sam Greenwood as he breaks down and analyzes hands played from the circuit on his Punt Of The Day Substack.

As much fun as I have playing high rollers, there is nothing like a deep run in a main event. There's a reason why at EPTs, the main events get all the TV coverage and the high rollers often play in a small conference room in another part of the hotel.

I do like the peace and quiet of a half-empty, private room with free food and beverage service, but I also like feeling the energy of being in a packed room, full of people excited to play poker.

When we high rollers slum it in big field tourneys, we often need to classify our opponents into two groups: People who don't want to tangle with great players, and people who want to go home with a story to tell their friends. They want to tell people about "the time I bluffed Sam Greenwood."

When you're a 'known' player, you need to identify which type of player you're playing against and adjust accordingly. There is a similar dynamic when Joe and Jane Pokerplayer are playing versus high-stakes pros in main events.

Pros often go full Harlem Globetrotter mode: opening and three-betting too wide from every position, while making crazy bluffs, call downs, and folds. They were playing by the book in the super high roller, but not in the \$5,000 after they just lost a \$100,000 bullet.

This opens up a window for seasoned poker players. You won't beat an end boss in the long run when they're in their NBA mode, but you certainly can when they're in Globetrotter mode.

In today's hand, PokerStars ambassador Maria Konnikova, writer of the Substack *The Leap*, and author

of *The Biggest Bluff*, *Mastermind: How to Think Like Sherlock Holmes*, and *The Confidence Game*, tells me about a hand she played in the EPT Monte Carlo main event against former EPT champion and one of the most underrated and long-tenured regulars in high-stakes tournaments, Dimitar Danchev.

In this hand, Maria flops the nuts and wants to get paid. We don't know if Dimitar is playing his normal solid game or if he is in a main event mode, but we will try our best to find a strategy that allows us to make the most money.

Event: 2025 EPT Monte Carlo Main Event

The Hand

With blinds of 200-400 with a 400 big blind ante, Dimitar Danchev raised to 900 from under-the-gun. Maria Konnikova called on the button, and the blinds folded.

Flop: Q♣ J♦ 9♦ (pot: 2,800)

Danchev checked, and Konnikova bet 1,600. Danchev called.

Turn: 7♣ (pot: 6,000)

Danchev checked, and Konnikova bet 6,000. Danchev called.

River: K♠ (pot: 18,000)

Danchev checked again. Konnikova checked behind, and her K♦ 10♦ won at showdown against Danchev's Q♥ 8♥.

What Was She Thinking?

Sometimes at *POTD* we are forced to guess what people were thinking, but not this time. Maria has generously shared her thoughts with us below.

"You asked for a punt, so I gave you my puntiest punt from the whole series that I could think of... and it was a pot I won!

Obviously there are a few other smaller mistakes in the

“THE IMPULSE TO NOT BLUFF AND TO NOT VALUE BET THINLY OFTEN COME FROM THE SAME PLACE: PLAYING SCARED POKER.”

hand with bet sizing, but I really fucked up the river here. I think it's so important to recognize that the biggest punts sometimes occur when you fail to extract max value, or the bets you miss and the chips you don't collect that you should have.

In this particular hand, there are of course the usual excuses - I was tired and not feeling 100%, blah blah. But I think there were two things that led to this horrible river play.

Firstly, my opponent had gotten in my head a bit in prior pots we played. Just a few hands earlier, he check-raised me in a nasty river spot and I ended up folding what I suspect was the best hand. That's no excuse to misplay this hand, but it was in my head for sure.

When the king rolls off on the river, my initial reaction is, oh, damn, now A-10 beats me. But only A-10 beats me, and even if Dimitar raises my bet, I have a fairly easy call. I also want to be able to bet my bluffs here, so not betting with K-10 is atrocious. I should have taken a bit more time to think before checking. Just a few more seconds would have led to the correct decision, I think, when I realized

that given the sizing on the turn, it was just incredibly unlikely he had A-10.

Secondly, I really wanted to know what he had. He'd been my trickiest opponent by far at the table, and I wanted to see what hand took the line he'd taken. The only way I could guarantee showdown was by checking back - and I thought that I couldn't really get another street of value after the big turn bet, so I'd just check and get the information.

I realize this goes against being afraid he could possibly have the nuts, but sometimes, we aren't rational like that! Anyway, it was a massive EV loss, and a massive fuck up. Sometimes I'm a horrible poker player!"

What Was I Thinking?

Before looking it up (cheating), I'll share my thoughts.

When you're deeper, you three-bet more linearly, and K-10 suited should get in there a little as you fold out K-J and A-10, but call is the majority play. Generally, boards with two Broadways on them tend to play big bet or check, unless the out-of-position player has offsuit straight combos

Hi, my name is Sam Greenwood.

I've played millions of hands of poker and cashed for millions of dollars in tournaments, but I've also made millions of mistakes along the way.

Every day on my Substack I am going to revisit the blunders I've made, walk you through what I was thinking in the hand, and explain why I was unable to execute to the best of my abilities. My hope is that you'll gain some insights from my punts and we can all learn something together.

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and the in-position player does not.

Technically, neither of them should have much K-10 offsuit preflop here, so I'd guess we do get to bet big, and while you might trap sets or two pair or even bare K-10, I'd suspect K♦ 10♦ is too strong and pure bets. I'd pick 2,100 into 2,800, so if he calls, the pot would be an even 7,000 on the turn and I wouldn't need to waste brain power counting the pot size later in the hand.

On the turn, you need to bet. You have the nuts and a redraw and are pushing a ton of linear equity vs hands like A♣ J♣.

Similarly, on the river, you need to bet. Calling a full pot bet on the turn with A-10 is not something Dimitar would do, so you only lose to A♣ 10♣ specifically.

While I don't expect to get called by worse than a straight all that often, and I'm sure Dimitar is aware that it is hard to find bluffs on a board like this, the hand has so much equity that I'd comfortably bet half pot and probably call a raise, because we block A♦ 10♦ and other A-10 combos he could have.

What We Got Wrong

Now to look at the results. Not to toot my own horn here, but the only thing I got wrong is that we should bet larger than half pot with a king-high straight on the river.

How well this works vs. actual humans is unclear, however. The out-of-position player is supposed to check-call the river with hands like A♣ K♣, A-A, and K-Q quite a lot. The in-position player is supposed to bluff 4-4 through 2-2, and the most common straights are A-10 and K-10, so blocking an ace and a king make A-K an attractive bluff catcher.

Maria knows her river check is a big mistake; she told me so, privately describing her play as "awful" and "a fuck up" before publicly describing it as "atrocious" and a "massive fuck-up." It loses around five big blinds in theory; however, that is in a world where when Dimitar has worse than a straight, he calls the river 30% of the time. And I don't think that happens in this hand in reality.

It's still a very large mistake. Maria is so rarely beat that I think betting anything on the river is practically a freeroll, and not cashing in a freeroll is never sharp gambling.

Grade

This was a fun hand for me to analyze, because I have often been the high-roller regular playing hands versus seasoned but non-expert poker players in main events. By analyzing this from Maria's perspective, I am, to some degree, determining what you, the reader, should do if you ever played versus me.

My instinct is that Maria would not be bluffing with total air like small pocket pairs enough, and that when a king rolled off on the river, too many of her bluffs would pair or be straights. That means it is likely a great exploit for someone with Maria's image to blast off with pocket twos here a lot against a top pro.

In this hand, she had a much better hand than pocket twos, and while the river check loses a lot of EV vs. the solver, it loses less against Dimitar who will usually fold one pair.

The impulse to not bluff and to not value bet thinly often come from the same place: playing scared poker. Maria was intimidated by Dimitar and more curious about what he had than trying to win the most money. She was in the wrong headspace and made an indefensible play, but one that ultimately doesn't lose all that much EV all things considered. I give this play a D+.

Editor's Note: Konnikova would go on to win the last chance €1,000 event at the EPT Monte Carlo series. ♠



Sam Greenwood is one of the winningest tournament poker players ever and is third on Canada's all-time money list, having cashed for \$42 million and counting in high roller events all over the world. The former stock trader-turned-champion has played millions of poker hands and is breaking them down street by street on his Punt Of The Day Substack. You can reach out to the Run It Once coach on Twitter/X for private coaching @SamGreenwoodRIO.

LOOSE LIPS SINK CHIPS

By Mark Mazmanian

Recently at \$20-\$40 mixed game at Wynn, the structure has been that each player picks one game in the rotation. At a seven-handed table, that means there will be up to seven different games in the mix, and any player's pick will come up once per rotation.

My choice in this case was Five-Card Double Board Omaha. The structure of the game is each player gets five hole cards followed by a round of betting. Then comes two flops, two turns, and two rivers, with each having a round of betting as well.

I generally like the game because it tends to generate a lot of action and

builds large pots, which brings me to an interesting hand I recently played. There was a dynamic in the game where a couple of players didn't care much for my choice, and vocalized it every time it came up with friendly chiding comments. "Ugh, here we go with Mark's pick again!"

One player who consistently shared these types of remarks was an Asian lady who is a solid player at mix games ranging from \$20-\$40 to \$80-\$160 and higher. Which brings me to the hand.

At this point several hours into the session, we had played four rounds of this game and she had not opened a pot for a raise coming in yet. Every

hand she had previously played she had limped, and combined with her negative comments about the game, it made me think that she wished to keep her contributions to the pot small in a game she wasn't too comfortable with.

Finally in a spot where she was second to act, she opened for a raise. A recreational player who likes to see a lot of flops called, and in the big blind I looked down at K-J-J-9-7. My holding was rather formidable and if I was first to enter a pot, I would open this hand for a raise from any position.

With \$40 from two players, the \$10 dead small blind, and my \$20



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big blind, there was \$110 in the pot and I was getting 11:2 odds. With her range weighted extremely strong, this was a spot for an easy call and I tossed in four \$5 chips. We took the flops three-handed with \$130 total in the middle.

I smashed the first board with a flop of K-7-7 with two clubs, and the second board came Q-4-3 rainbow. I checked to the preflop raiser planning to pop it when it came back around, and she led with a bet which the recreational player called. I then made it \$40, and both players called growing the pot to \$250.

It of course crossed my mind that there was some chance either player could potentially have K-K, but at least it was a hand which I blocked. Additionally, I was rather light on the second board as my only realistic chances of improving were to drill my two-out jack or add a backdoor draw of some type on the turn. Another thought that crossed my mind was, an ace on the first board would be devastating for me, as the raiser's range is heavily weighted towards A-A with all things considered.

The next cards out were an ace and

a 4, making both boards K-7-7-A and Q-4-3-4 respectively. I was extremely disappointed and elected to check my hand, and sure enough the preflop raiser bet out, and the recreational player called. On the second board, I was effectively dead to a jack, and on the first board, I started to evaluate what my opponent's range really was.

She hadn't raised all day, so I thought Q-Q on the second board was unlikely. The only two hands she could realistically have here were A-A or possibly K-K that she flatted my raise with on the flop, and both these hands have me scooped on both boards dead to one out and two outs each.

With the \$80 added on this street, the pot grew to \$330, and my only chance of winning half for \$165 would be if she had Q-Q that I didn't think she would open with a raise. Also, I would have to call a \$40 bet on this street and the next. So even getting just over 4:1 pot odds, this was looking like a spot where even though I held a full house, I would be good almost never.

I showed my neighbor my holding, grimaced, and threw away my hand.

The rivers were 8 and 2, making

final boards of K-7-7-A-8 and Q-4-3-4-2. The preflop raiser bet and the recreational player called, and the hands were tabled. The preflop raiser showed A-A-10-6-2, and the recreational player showed 6-6-5-3-2 for a rivered straight that was a full wrap on the other board.

I smiled when the hands were tabled and said I threw away sevens full of kings. She looked at me incredulously, to which my neighbor nodded and said "No, he really did."

Without the additional information she offered about how much she didn't like this game, I wouldn't have been convinced enough of how strong her starting hand range was to make the laydown. But when all factors were considered, her loose lips sunk her chips on this hand to my benefit. ♠



Mark Mazmanian has been a mixed-game specialist for more than two decades playing in games all over the country. The Las Vegas

resident can be reached on IG at [mazzastatic](#) or by email at markmaz17@hotmail.com.

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OCTOBER	Oct. 2-Nov. 2	Fall Classic	Wynn ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Oct. 6-Nov. 23	DeepStack Showdown	Venetian Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Oct. 17-Nov. 2	WPT Bay 101 Shooting Star	Bay 101 ■ San Jose, CA
	Oct. 23-Nov. 3	WSOP Circuit - Lake Tahoe	Caesars Republic Lake Tahoe ■ Lake Tahoe, NV
	Oct. 28-Nov. 2	Major Series of Poker Tour - Iowa	Riverside Casino & Resort ■ Riverside, IA
	Oct. 29-Nov. 9	WSOP Circuit - Choctaw	Choctaw Casino Resort ■ Durant, OK
	Oct. 30-Nov. 18	WPT bestbet Scramble	bestbet ■ Jacksonville, FL
NOVEMBER	Nov. 3-12	NAPT Las Vegas	Resorts World ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Nov. 3-17	Fall Poker Open	Borgata Hotel & Casino ■ Atlantic City, NJ
	Nov. 3-18	WSOP International Circuit	Playground Poker Club ■ Kahnawake, Canada
	Nov. 6-17	WSOP Circuit - Chicago	Grand Victoria Casino ■ Elgin, IL
	Nov. 6-16	Fall Poker Round Up	Wildhorse Resort & Casino ■ Pendleton, OR
	Nov. 10-23	Trailblazer Poker Tour	Texas Card House ■ Spring, TX
	Nov. 12-25	WSOP Circuit - Los Angeles	Commerce Casino ■ Commerce, CA

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SCHEDULES

	Nov. 14-24	Texas PLO Roundup	Champions Club Texas ■ Houston, TX
	Nov. 18-23	Major Series of Poker Tour - Chicago	Ameristar Casino & Hotel ■ East Chicago, IN
	Nov. 19-Dec. 3	WPT Rock 'n' Roll Poker Open	Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino ■ Hollywood, FL
	Nov. 27-Dec. 8	WSOP Circuit - North Carolina	Harrah's ■ Cherokee, NC
	Nov. 28-Dec. 3	RunGood Dream Factory	Thunder Valley Casino & Resort ■ Lincoln, CA
DECEMBER	Dec. 2-22	WPT World Championship Festival	Wynn ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Dec. 3-14	European Poker Tour	Hilton Hotel ■ Prague, Czech Republic
	Dec. 4-18	World Series of Poker Paradies	Atlantis Resort & Casino ■ Paradise Island, Bahamas
	Dec. 26-Jan. 6	Trailblazer Poker Tour	Texas Card House - Rio Grande Valley ■ Edinburg, TX
JANUARY	Jan. 7-20	Lucky Hearts Poker Open	Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino ■ Hollywood, FL
	Jan. 14-Feb. 2	Trailblazer Poker Tour	Texas Card House ■ Houston, TX
	Jan. 29-Feb. 1	Diamond Poker Championship	Talking Stick Resort ■ Scottsdale, AZ
FEBRUARY	Feb. 15-March 2	Trailblazer Poker Tour	Texas Card House ■ Dallas, TX
	Feb. 17-22	MSPT Club Poker Championship	Potawatomi Hotel & Casino ■ Milwaukee, WI
	Feb. 18-March 1	European Poker Tour	Palais des Congres de Paris ■ Paris, France

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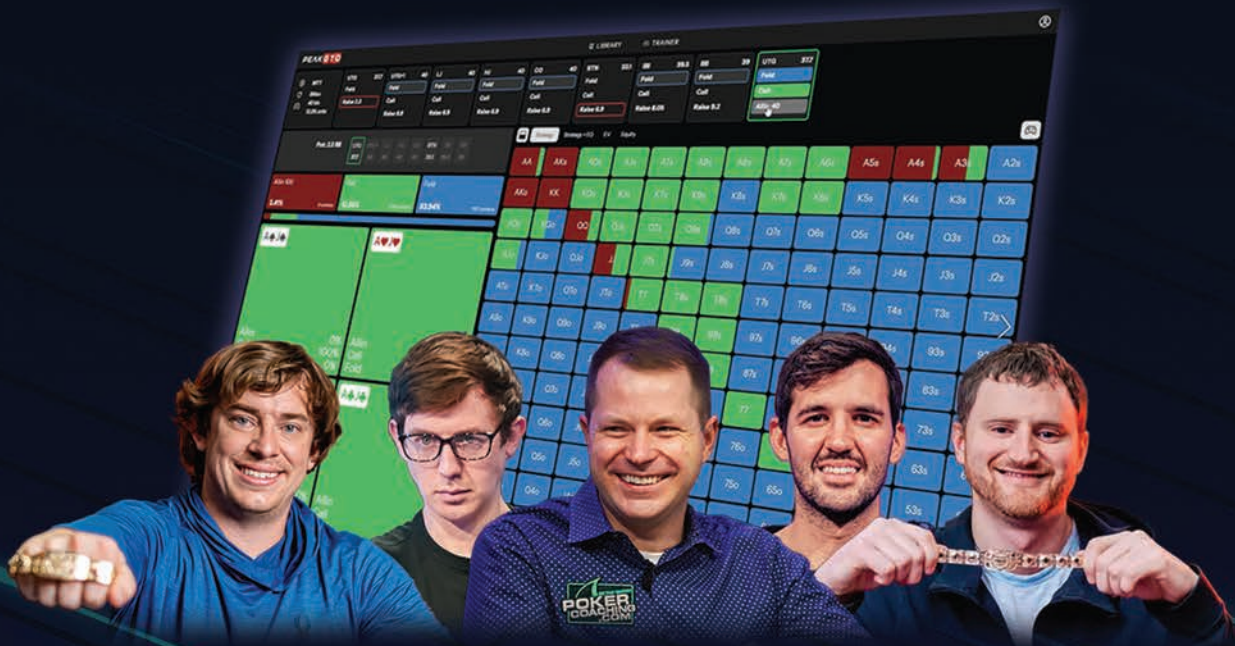
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DRILL OF THE DAY



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

Air - A bad hand with little to no value.

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

Backdoor - A draw needing two streets to complete.

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

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

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

Blocker - Holding one of your opponent's outs.

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

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

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

Broadway - A straight to the ace.

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

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

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

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

Chop - A split of the pot.

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

Collusion - Working with another player to cheat.

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

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

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

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

Drawing Dead - When your hand can no longer win.

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

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

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

Equity - The mathematical expected value of your hand.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Gutshot - An inside straight draw.

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

Hollywood - Exaggerating and overacting to sell strength or weakness.

Horse - A player financially backed by someone else.

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

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

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

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

LAG - A loose, aggressive player.

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

Muck - To fold.

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

Nuts - The best possible hand on a given board.

Open - To bet first.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Rainbow - Three or four cards of different suits.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TAG - A tight, aggressive player.

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

Tilt - Frustration or anger that leads to poor play.

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

VPIP - The percentage of hands voluntarily played preflop.

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

Wheel - A five-high straight.



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DAY	DATE	TIME	EVENT #	EVENT	BUY IN	GUARANTEE
Friday	11/14/2025	12:00 PM		15K GTD 1 Day NLH	\$300	\$15,000
		5:00 PM	1A	100K GTD PLO Multi-Flight/Multi-Bag	\$400	\$100,000
		9:00 PM		Turbo Super Satellite to Main Event	\$250	\$3,300
Saturday	11/15/2025	10:00 AM		Kickstarter Turbo Satellite	\$75	\$520
		12:00 PM	1B	100K GTD PLO Multi-Flight/Multi-Bag	\$400	\$100,000
		5:00 PM	1C	100K GTD PLO Multi-Flight/Multi-Bag	\$400	\$100,000
		9:00 PM		Turbo Super Satellite to Main Event	\$250	\$3,300
		10:00 PM	1D	100K GTD (Turbo) PLO Multi-Flight/Multi-Bag	\$400	\$100,000
Sunday	11/16/2025	12:00 PM	1E	100K GTD PLO Multi-Flight/Multi-Bag	\$400	\$100,000
		5:00 PM	1F	100K GTD PLO Multi-Flight/Multi-Bag	\$400	\$100,000
		9:00 PM		Turbo Super Satellite to Main Event	\$250	\$3,300
Monday	11/17/2025	8:00 AM	1G	100K GTD (Turbo) PLO Multi-Flight/Multi-Bag	\$400	\$100,000
		12:00 PM		10K GTD 1 Day NLH	\$300	\$10,000
		3:00 PM	★ 1	Multi-Flight PLO Day 2		
		4:00 PM	2	\$500 BC PLO PKO	\$500	\$25,000
		7:00 PM		Milestone to Main Event	\$565	\$6,600
Tuesday	11/18/2025	9:00 PM		Turbo Super Satellite to Main Event	\$250	\$3,300
		10:00 AM		Kickstarter Turbo Satellite into E#3	\$140	\$1,100
		12:00 PM		10K GTD 1 Day NLH	\$300	\$10,000
		3:00 PM	3	\$1,100 Monster Stack Pot Limit Omaha	\$1,100	\$100,000
		7:00 PM		Milestone to Main Event	\$565	\$6,600
Wednesday	11/19/2025	9:00 PM		Turbo Super Satellite to Main Event	\$250	\$3,300
		10:00 AM		Kickstarter Turbo Satellite into E#4	\$140	\$1,100
		12:00 PM		10K GTD 1 Day NLH	\$300	\$10,000
		2:00 PM	★ 3	\$1,100 Pot Limit Omaha Day 2		
		3:00 PM	4	\$1,100 Quad BC PKO	\$1,100	\$50,000
Thursday	11/20/2025	7:00 PM		Milestone to Main Event	\$565	\$6,600
		9:00 PM		Turbo Super Satellite to Main Event	\$250	\$3,300
		10:00 AM		Turbo Super Satellite to Main Event	\$250	\$3,300
		12:00 PM	5A	PGT PLO Main Event	\$3,300	\$1,000,000
		2:00 PM	★ 4	\$1,100 Quad BC PKO Day 2		
Friday	11/21/2025	4:00 PM	6	Big O	\$300	\$10,000
		7:00 PM		Milestone to Main Event	\$565	\$6,600
		9:00 PM		Turbo Super Satellite to Main Event	\$250	\$3,300
		10:00 AM		Turbo Super Satellite to Main Event	\$250	\$3,300
		12:00 PM	★ 5B	PGT PLO Main Event	\$3,300	\$1,000,000
Saturday	11/22/2025	4:00 PM		Milestone to Main Event	\$565	\$6,600
		9:00 PM		Turbo Super Satellite to Main Event	\$250	\$3,300
		10:00 PM	5C	PGT PLO Main Event (Turbo)	\$3,300	\$1,000,000
		10:00 AM		Turbo Super Satellite to Main Event	\$250	\$3,300
		12:00 PM	★ 5D	PGT PLO Main Event	\$3,300	\$1,000,000
Sunday	11/23/2025	4:00 PM		Milestone to Main Event	\$565	\$6,600
		6:00 PM	7	PGT PLO High Roller #1	\$5,300	
		10:00 PM	5E	PGT PLO Main Event (Turbo)	\$3,300	\$1,000,000
		8:00 AM	5F	PGT PLO Main Event (Hyper Turbo)	\$3,300	\$1,000,000
		3:00 PM	★ 5	PGT PLO Main Event Day 2		
Monday	11/24/2025	6:00 PM	8	PGT PLO High Roller #2	\$5,300	
		12:00 PM		10K GTD 1 Day NLH	\$300	\$10,000
		2:00 PM	9	PGT PLO High Roller #3	\$5,300	
		TBD	★ 5	PGT PLO Main Event Final Table		
		7:00 PM	10	Monday Nightcap ROE PLO/NLH	\$200	\$10,000

★ = MAIN EVENT

* ALL EVENTS ARE PLAYED PLO EXCEPT WHERE NOTED

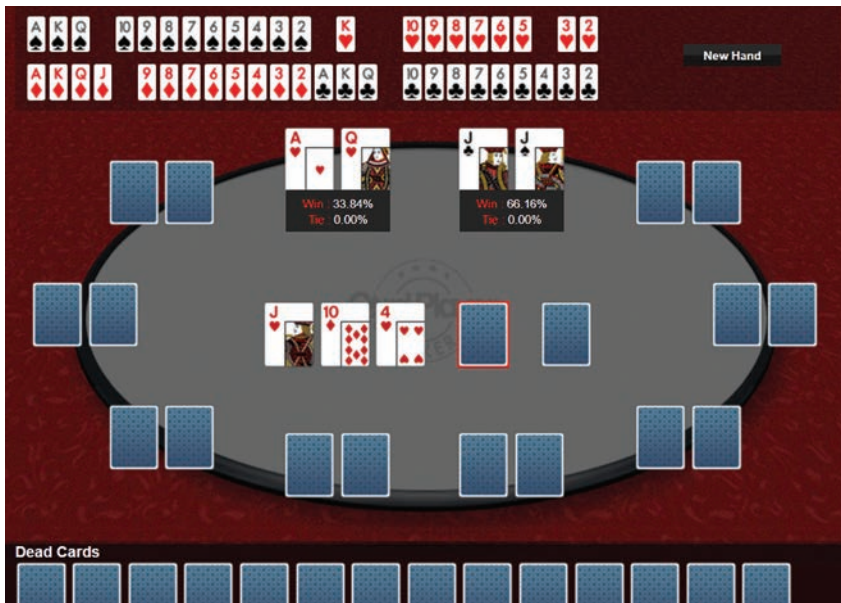
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CALCULATING OUTS

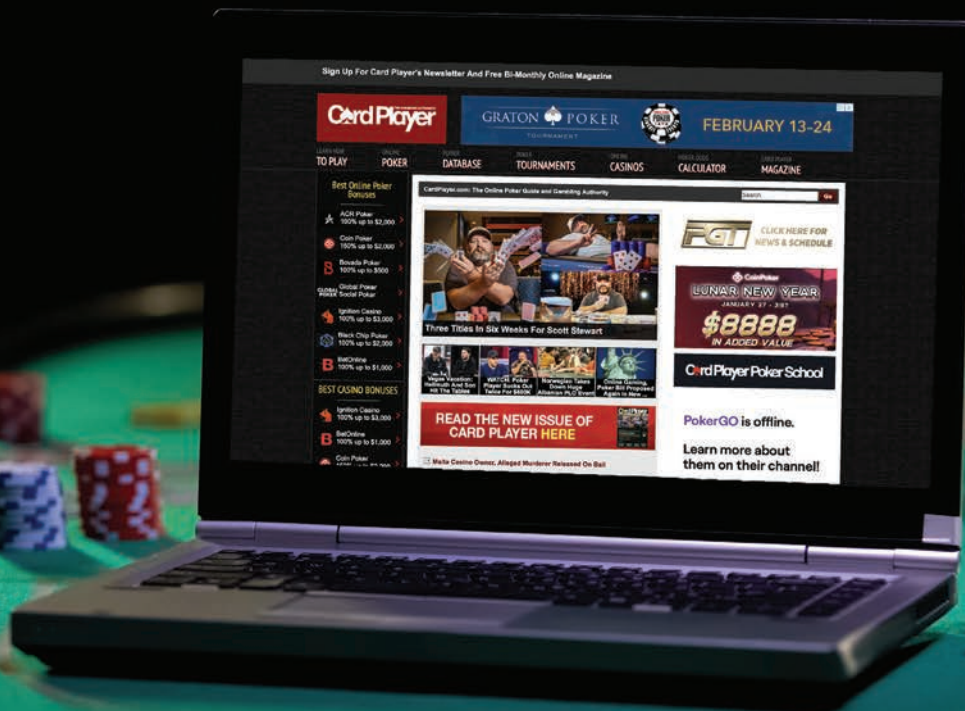
Outs	Situation	After The Flop	After The Turn
21	Straight And Flush Draw, With Two Overcards	70%	45%
20		68%	43%
19		65%	41%
18	Straight And Flush Draw, With One Overcard	62%	39%
17		60%	37%
16		57%	35%
15	Straight And Flush Draw	54%	33%
14		51%	30%
13		48%	28%
12	Flush Draw With One Overcard, Or With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

HAND MATCHUPS

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

*Approximate Percentages

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Early on in a \$1,000 buy-in event, you have 70,000 at blinds of 250-500. The under-the-gun player raises to 1,200 and it folds to you in the big blind with A♣ 9♣.

Question 1: Should you fold, call, reraise to 3,600, or reraise to 5,000?

Answer: Even though the UTG player should have a strong range, folding is out of the question. Three-betting as a bluff may have some merit with your ace blocker, but being suited gives you plenty of playability to call and see the flop.

You call and the flop comes 5♣ 5♦ 3♣. You check and UTG checks behind. The turn is the K♠.

Question 2: Should you check, bet 1,000, bet 2,000, or bet 3,000?

Answer: The turned king should be excellent for UTG's range, which could easily contain hands like A-K and K-Q. While it may be tempting to bet your flush draw after the flop checked through, always consider which better hands will fold and which worse hands will call. While a few weaker ace-highs may call, when you bet, for the most part, better hands will call and worse hands will fold. When that is the case, checking is usually ideal.

You check and UTG checks again. The river is the A♦.

Question 3: Should you check, bet 1,000, bet 2,000, or bet 3,000?

Answer: When your opponent checks behind on the turn, it is highly likely they have some sort of ace-high or absolutely nothing. If they have an ace, you usually split the pot. If they have nothing, they will not call a bet. However, they may bluff. Even though your hand is now quite strong, the best option is to check and try to induce a bluff.

You check and your opponent bets 2,000.

Question 4: Should you fold, call, raise to 6,000, or raise to 22,000?

Answer: Your only viable options are to call or raise. While it may be tempting to try to force your opponent off a chop when they have an ace, the best play is to simply call and realize your equity, because every once in a while, your opponent will show you an abnormally strong hand that you lose to.

You call and your opponent shows A♥ 5♥ for a full house, which should have extracted substantially more value. ♠



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