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September 7, 2022

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TO PUMP THE BRAKES
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16 BRACELETS IN
MICHIGAN AND
PENNSYLVANIA
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BLUFF CATCHING
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Dan Zack: World Series Of Poker Player Of The Year

Three-Time Bracelet Winner Is Built For Long Sessions At The Table



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NEWS FROM THE GAMBLING WORLD

DEAL REACHED FOR MASSACHUSETTS SPORTS BETTING LEGISLATION

By Joe Mattia

An agreement between policymakers has been reached to bring legal sports betting to Massachusetts.

According to a statement in early August from House Speaker Ron Mariano, members of both chambers of the legislature are now in agreement on how to move forward.

"I am proud to announce that the Sports Betting Conference Committee has reached an agreement on legislation that will legalize wagering on professional and collegiate sports in Massachusetts, bringing the immense economic benefits of a legal sports betting industry to [the state]," Mariano said.

"I want to thank Rep. Aaron Michlewitz and Rep. Jerry Parisella, all the conferees and my colleagues in the House, as well as our partners in the Senate for recognizing the incredible economic opportunity that legalized sports betting presents."

Online gambling on sports is expected to begin sometime in 2023.

The sports betting agreement calls for a 20% online sports betting tax rate, with up to seven online sportsbook licenses up for grabs. The state's three casinos can also have sportsbooks. Colleges and universities in the state will not be allowed to be bet on through the regulated sportsbooks.

Though a small market state in terms of potential operator revenue, the Bay State has deep connections to the sports betting industry, as well as popular sports franchises like the Boston Red Sox and New England Patriots.

DraftKings, a top-three sportsbook in the U.S. in terms of national online betting market share, is headquartered in the state. Additionally, Barstool Sportsbook, another top brand, has ties to Boston, though it's headquartered in New York.

"We are thrilled that our home state has acted to protect consumers, create jobs and grow revenue in the Commonwealth," DraftKings CEO Jason Robins said in a statement. "We particularly want to thank Speaker Mariano, Senate President Spilka, Chairs Michlewitz and Rodrigues, and the members of the conference committee for their leadership."

Neighboring New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island also have legal sports betting. ♠

Ron Mariano



REPORTS: TROOPS LOSE \$100 MILLION EACH YEAR TO GOVERNMENT SLOTS

By Joe Mattia

Does DOD stand for the department of degeneracy?

According to a report from *NPR*, the U.S. military is facing some increased scrutiny over real-money slot machines that it has on overseas military bases.

Per the report, the Department of Defense operates more than 3,000 slots at bases around the globe. The DOD reportedly rakes in more than \$100 million each year in the name of "morale, welfare, and recreation" for troops, according to a report by the Government Accountability Office.

Service members as young as 18 can play DOD slot machines, located in as many as 12 countries. With service members experiencing high rates of gambling addiction, the history of the slot machines is controversial.

Per *NPR*, Congress in 1951 banned slot machines from domestic military bases. About 20 years later, the machines were removed from all foreign bases. However, in the 1980s, the one-armed bandits were again brought back to overseas locations.

Although significant, the \$100 million in slot revenue each year from the DOD machines isn't a lot by domestic standards. For example, slot machines on or around the Las Vegas Strip won about \$380 million from gamblers in June alone, the most recent month of reporting. ♠





ACCUSED CHEATER BRYN KENNEY BACKS NEW ONLINE POKER SITE

By Card Player News Team

Despite still being embroiled in the wake of an online poker cheating scandal, high-stakes pro Bryn Kenney is gearing up for the launch of his own brand-new online poker site.

The 35-year-old Kenney, who is battling Justin Bonomo for the lead on the all-time money list, is an ambassador and investor of the upcoming real-money site 4poker.

The timing is not good for the New York native, who was accused this April by former horse Martin Zamani of a slew of transgressions, including multi-accounting, ghosting, and even the mistreatment of the players in his stable. Kenney attended the *WSOP* this summer, getting the cold shoulder or even hostility from his peers as did fellow accused players Ali Imsirovic and Jake Schindler.

Kenney admitted to some small infractions, but refuted most of the claims in an interview with PokerNews. However, his refusal to directly answer some tough questions, coupled with some damaging text messages provided by Zamani, has many in the poker community believing he was guilty and worthy of the ban from GGPoker two years ago.

His ban has since been lifted, however, and he was recently spotted playing on the site in late July. Poker Integrity Council member Jason Koon explained that certain players would be invited back eventually after serving their time, depending on the severity of the violation.

4Poker Chief Operating Officer and former PokerStars exec Heath Cram is standing in Kenney's corner, stating that Zamani's claims were "a quite desperate outburst from a former disgruntled associate."

"I'll make my own judgement of people," Cram told



Poker.org. "I frankly haven't spent time with someone with as much passion for poker and people since working for PokerStars' founding owners."

An online poker product designed by former PokerStars employees sounds promising, but trust becomes an immediate concern after hitching their wagon to Kenney's star. Although a few pointed out that Kenney would be uniquely qualified to spot and perhaps prevent cheating at the new site, most of the reactions to the announcement were negative.

"Is it called 4poker because that's the maximum amount of accounts a player is allowed to have?" Ondra Machalek asked on Twitter.

"It's called 4poker because Bryn gets to see all four of your cards while super using," joked Veronica Brill.

The 4poker site is expected to have a soft launch later this year, and will host a major tournament series sometime in early 2023. ♠

ONLINE CASINOS AND SPORTS BETTING COMING TO PERU

By Joe Mattia

The country of Peru will soon be home to online casinos and online sportsbooks following a new law enacted by its Congress.

According to a report from Yogonet, the new law institutes a tax rate of 12% on the industry. It's unclear which operators are looking at the market. American online betting giants such as MGM and Caesars might be interested.

The measure was reportedly widely supported, receiving near-unanimous approval. Part of the new regulatory framework will include rules for

responsible gaming.

"Responsible and healthy gambling, in a social market economy and mobilizing more than \$1 billion, is an activity that needs to be taxed," said Gonzalo Perez, vice president of the Peruvian Association of Online Sports Betting. "No one can generate profits without being taxed. The profits, then, are directed to health, education, development of tourism and sports."

Peru has a population of about 32.8 million people, a bit less than the state of California. The new law



also allows for land-based gambling facilities.

Other South American countries including Colombia and Brazil have recently taken steps to modernize their legal gambling. Some U.S. operators have pursued business in the region. ♠

15 BRACELET EVENTS SCHEDULED FOR 2022 WSOP EUROPE

By Erik Fast



The *World Series of Poker* has released the official schedule for the 2022 *WSOP Europe*, which will run from Oct. 26 through Nov. 15 this year at King's Resort in Rozvadov, Czech Republic.

The 2022 *WSOPE* festival features 15 gold bracelet events, with €12 million in guaranteed prize money set to be awarded throughout the series.

"We're very excited to host the biggest and most prestigious tournament series with the biggest guarantees in Europe without any limitations and struggles of the past two years. Finally, also travel restrictions for players coming from the US have been lifted," said King's owner Leon Tsoukernik. "We're all set to deliver first-class service and hospitality for all poker players at King's."

This year's schedule includes something for every player, with buy-ins ranging from as low as €350 in the €500,000 guaranteed kickoff event, all the way up to €50,000 for the €2 million guaranteed no-limit hold'em high roller.

The marquee tournament of the whole series will, of course, be the €10,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em main event. This year's tournament features a €5 million guaranteed prize pool.

In 2021, the *WSOPE* main event attracted a record field of 688 entries, blowing away the €5 million guarantee to

create a prize pool of €6,536,000, or \$7,365,418 when rendered in USD at the exchange rate of that time. Josef Gulas Jr. emerged victorious in the end, defeating Johan Guilbert heads-up to capture the championship bracelet and the top prize of \$1,429,917 USD.

In addition to the *WSOPE* schedule being revealed, the *WSOP* also released more info about the 10 currently scheduled *WSOP International Circuit* stops on offer during the remainder of this year.

"The *World Series of Poker* is ready to go international once again," said Senior Vice President and Executive Director of the *WSOP* Ty Stewart. "Poker is bigger than ever and there has been a recent run of international champions in our Main Events. We're excited to bring the once-in-a-lifetime poker experiences of the *WSOPC* and *WSOP Europe* back to transcontinental players."

Below is a look at the 10 *WSOP International Circuit* stops planned so far, with more expected to be announced soon.

| Series Dates | Location (City, Country) |
|--------------------------|--|
| Sept. 21 - Oct. 11, 2022 | King's Resort (Rozvadov, Czech Republic) |
| Sept. 22 - Oct. 2, 2022 | Hilton Aruba Caribbean Resort (Aruba) |
| Oct. 11 - 23, 2022 | Cintermex Convention Center (Monterrey, Mexico) |
| Oct. 18 - 28, 2022 | Unique Hotel (Sao Paulo, Brazil) |
| Nov. 2 - 14, 2022 | The Star Sydney (Sydney, Australia) |
| Nov. 25 - Dec. 3, 2022 | Holland Casino (Rotterdam, Holland) |
| Dec. 2 - 10, 2022 | Enjoy Punta del Este Resort (Uruguay) |
| Jan. 11 - 23, 2023 | Deerfoot Inn & Casino (Calgary, Canada) |
| Jan. 14 - 22, 2023 | Es Saadi Marrakech Resort (Marrakech, Morocco) |
| March 22 - April 3, 2023 | Casino Royale (St. Maarten) |

© Tomas Stacha

Single Ticket In Illinois Wins \$1.3 Billion Mega Millions Lottery

By Joe Mattia

One of the largest lottery prizes in U.S. history is going to a person in Illinois.

During the late July drawing of the Mega Millions, one ticket matched all six numbers – the white balls 13, 36, 45, 57 and 67, plus the gold Mega Ball 14.

The pot was worth a staggering \$1.337 billion (\$780.5 million for a lump sum payout). It's the second largest jackpot in the 20-year history of the game, topped only by the \$1.537 billion won in South Carolina in 2018. The largest ever lottery prize won in the U.S. was a \$1.58 billion Powerball in 2016. Three separate winning tickets were had in that drawing.

The Mega Millions jackpot that was hit on Friday had been rolling since it was last won at \$20 million in April.

"Congratulations to the Illinois Lottery for selling the winning ticket for the \$1.337 billion Mega Millions jackpot," says Ohio Lottery Director Pat McDonald, currently serving as Lead Director for the Mega Millions Consortium. "We are thrilled to have witnessed one of the biggest jackpot wins in Mega Millions history. We're eager to find out who won and look forward to congratulating the winner soon! Better still, this exciting jackpot run has had a significant positive impact on the revenues for good causes raised by our member lotteries."

26 tickets matched all five white balls to win the game's second-tier prize. Six of them included the optional Megaplier (available in most states with an extra \$1 purchase), which was 2X, and are worth \$2 million each. Three



were sold in Florida, and one each in Arkansas, Iowa, and Pennsylvania.

The other 20 second-tier prizes are worth \$1 million each and were won in 15 different states: two each in Florida, Georgia, Minnesota, North Carolina and Texas, and one each in California, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

Nearly 400 other tickets won five-figure sums. In total, there were 14,391,740 winning tickets sold across all nine prize tiers in the July 29 drawing, including the single jackpot-winning ticket.

The July 29 drawing was the fifth Mega Millions jackpot won to date this year. To start the year, a \$426 million prize was won in California on January 28, followed by \$128 million in New York on March 8, \$110 million in Minnesota on April 12, and \$20 million in Tennessee on April 15. ♠

MASSACHUSETTS GAMING REGULATORS STILL PONDERING STATE OF POKER

By Joe Mattia

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission reportedly is still receiving some complaints from poker players in the state over a relative lack of card games.

According to a local report from *WAMC Northeast Public Radio*, regulators are looking to find out more about why Encore Boston Harbor and MGM Springfield have continued to scale back their respective poker room offerings.

"Gaming Commission Chair Cathy Judd-Stein suggested the casino operators should come prepared to discuss poker issues when they present their quarterly reports in August," the report said.

There are currently about 30 poker tables in the state between the two casinos, down from roughly 100 before the pandemic started. Operating hours are also limited compared to before COVID-19. The state's third casino, Plainridge Park, doesn't have poker.

Per the report, Encore's 12-table poker room will soon expand its hours. The poker room is currently open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m.–8 p.m. Most poker players are used to 24/7 poker rooms, and that's what it was at Encore pre-COVID.

"I didn't want to steal their [Encore's] thunder, but I think it's forthcoming in a very short period of time," Burke Cain, assistant chief gaming agent with the MGC, reportedly said. "It's going to be expanded to some weekend hours and little bit longer hours, I understand."

MGM Springfield's poker room is currently open seven days a week, 10 a.m.–3 a.m. It's unclear if MGM Springfield is looking to expand its room's hours. ♠



Dan Zack: World Series Of Poker Player Of The Year

Three-Time Bracelet Winner Is Built For Long Sessions At The Table

By Julio Rodriguez



Dan

Zack was just 10 years old when Chris Moneymaker won the 2003 *World Series of Poker* main event and helped to spark the biggest boom in the history of the game. Even though the Princeton, New Jersey youngster didn't have any real money of his own to gamble with, Zack was almost immediately drawn to the card player lifestyle and dreamed of the day when he could make a run at the series himself.

He would beg his older brother to let him play during home game nights, and it wasn't long before he was competing online. It was play money at first, and then real money in between his classes. By the age of 13, he had already read the *Harrington On Hold'em* strategy book series.

It was obvious that he had the skills, running up his account as a teenager, but Zack lacked the discipline to deal with variance and tilt. After blowing through a few bankrolls and even quitting the game entirely for a brief period of time, he was able to rebuild, plug the leaks, and establish himself as one of the best all-around players today.

Zack has been a prolific cash game grinder, not afraid to put in extremely long hours at the table. But during the summer, his attention is 100 percent focused on tournaments at the *WSOP*. He won his first bracelet in 2019, taking down the \$2,500 Mixed Triple Draw event. The next year, he bubbled the final table of the \$10,000 main event when the series moved online because of the pandemic.

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He has been a consistent performer in the summer POY race for the last few years. He has 89 total *WSOP* cashes dating back to 2014. In the last 10 years, only Daniel Negreanu and Shaun Deeb have outperformed Zack for total POY points. (Although the numbers are skewed more towards recent years as the points formula has changed.)

This summer, the 29-year-old was the runaway winner of Player of the Year honors, having racked up 16 cashes, four final tables, and just over \$1.45 million in earnings.

“I set a goal to try and win this a few years ago and it’s been an insane battle each year,” Zack said after sealing the deal. “I’m really ecstatic to actually get there. I have been super stressed the past few weeks trying to close out the series. Thanks to everyone who has wished me luck.”

He also managed to nab his second and third career bracelets, winning both the \$10,000 Omaha Eight-Or-Better Championship and the \$10,000 Stud Eight-Or-Better Championship.

The POY title comes with a personalized banner that will hang at Paris and Bally’s during the *WSOP*, as well as a custom trophy, and a \$10,000 seat into the 2023 main event.

Card Player caught up with Zack for an episode of the *Poker Stories* podcast to talk about finding the game as a child, numerous 60-hour sessions, shot taking, heads-up battles, and just how much you need in your bankroll to compete for the *WSOP* POY title.

You can listen to the full *Poker Stories* episode on Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Spotify, or any podcast app. The highlights of the interview appear below.

Julio Rodriguez: I guess the story goes that you saw poker very early on.

Dan Zack: I first started playing five-card draw with my family. I remember a family reunion when I was seven or eight where I won a jar of pennies.

But in terms of Texas hold’em, it was 2003 and Chris MoneyMaker. I was 10 when that aired on *ESPN*. I think I’m the youngest, or last person who got into the poker scene [that way.]

I would come home from school and hop into every single play chip tournament. I would occasionally cash in a freeroll and try to spin those up. I was probably 13 or 14 when I convinced my dad to let me make some small deposits, \$20 here or there.

JR: What’s the story about you losing \$20,000 on a family trip?

DZ: That was senior year of high school. It was actually a church retreat. I was having the bigger spin ups by then, but I still lacked control. So I was sneaking off to play during any downtime, and at some point I blasted through [the \$20,000] at \$100-\$200 heads-up against one of the OGs that used to sit those tables. I was very, very sad for the rest of that trip.

JR: Looking back now, how do you feel about being exposed to poker at such a young age?

DZ: It was probably really bad. I’ve gotten super lucky to have found a way to turn it into a positive, but it definitely colored my teenage years pretty negatively. It’s not a game designed for children, especially to play for money.

I was good, so I would have spin ups, but you can’t win at poker without the control aspect. And I just don’t know many 14-year-olds that would have that skill. [Although] it’s obviously helped me a lot in my career now to have learned so many tough lessons about the game growing up.

JR: In college you turned \$1,000 into \$100,000 in just one summer.

DZ: Yeah, at Turning Stone [Casino]. That was a very good summer of mostly \$2-\$5 and \$5-\$10. I ran so good. I would buy-in for \$500 and it felt like I would have over \$5,000 and the end of almost every single day.



JR: You've been known to play some really long sessions. What was your longest?

DZ: There was a guy at Commerce [Casino] who really liked open-face Chinese poker and wasn't very good at it, and wanted to play very long hours for pretty big. I had a best friend in college who would drive me to the casino on Friday as soon as I got out of class at 3 p.m. and we would play straight through until my classes started on Monday morning. I did that for two months straight, and would fall asleep in class every single time.

I may have played a longer session when this lawyer would come and play pretty big no-limit games. He would also get there on Friday and play until he ran out of money, sometimes Monday as well. I've done a lot of 60-plus hour sessions.

JR: Any Bobby's Room stories?

DZ: It was a huge life accomplishment and just a dream come true to play cash with those guys. I have a picture I took when I was 23 of myself with [Daniel] Negreanu, [Phil] Ivey, and Doyle [Brunson]. I don't know if that will ever happen again, so that was a fun one for me.

JR: What was it like to win your first bracelet, and when did you get the ambition to compete for *WSOP* Player of the Year.

DZ: Coming up in poker I took the attitude of '[act] like you've been there before.' I found that it kept me grounded more than trying to display excitement when new things would happen for me. I remember after winning that bracelet [being] interviewed and keeping my cool, acting like I had been there before.

Top Tournament Scores

| Date | Event | Finish | Payout |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|--------|-----------|
| June 2022 | \$250,000 WSOP High Roller | 8th | \$488,095 |
| June 2022 | \$10,000 WSOP Omaha Eight-Or-Better | 1st | \$440,757 |
| June 2022 | \$10,000 WSOP Stud Eight-Or-Better | 1st | \$324,174 |
| Dec. 2017 | \$10,000 WPT Five Diamond Classic | 7th | \$208,725 |
| June 2019 | \$2,500 WSOP Mixed Triple Draw | 1st | \$160,447 |
| June 2022 | \$10,000 WSOP 2-7 Triple Draw | 3rd | \$129,670 |
| July 2017 | \$3,333 WSOP Online Event | 4th | \$97,232 |
| June 2019 | \$10,000 WSOP Razz | 4th | \$94,305 |
| Oct. 2021 | \$25,000 WSOP NLHE Heads Up | 3rd | \$89,787 |
| Dec. 2020 | \$10,000 WSOP Online Main Event | 11th | \$77,832 |

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Then I got out of the tournament room, got outside the casino, and I just sat down and cried. I realized how meaningful it was to me in a way that I hadn't [thought about before] given all the years of failure and how this had always been something that I really wanted.

I had come into that series thinking I was going to end up more in cash games, but I had such a good start that I remember really wanting to chase [POY]. And then I hit a one-week stretch where I bricked everything and ended the series in fourth.

JR: This year you got off to another good start for POY. How much in buy-ins does one have to set aside to compete for this title? And did you have a parachute plan if you found yourself two weeks in and already out of contention?

DZ: If I had bricked everything and was out of contention, I would still play a full schedule. I just wouldn't play the really big no-limit events, skipping the \$250,000, \$100,000, and \$50,000 no-limit tournaments.

This year I ended up playing about three-quarters of \$1 million in buy-ins, but that includes the \$250,000 and a couple of \$50,000 events that I sold action for. Of my own money, I probably paid about \$400,000 in buy-ins, and that's what I expect to buy-in for each year. I never expect to completely brick a series, but it wouldn't surprise me to lose something like \$250,000. That's a reasonable bottom 10 percentile outcome that you should expect to happen once every six years of so.

JR: You really had to earn your two bracelets this summer, which both came in \$10,000 championships. (Read more on pg. 18) You got heads-up, and both times your opponent refused to lose. These matches went seven, and then eight hours respectively. Obviously, you're built for the long sessions.

DZ: People say that it must have been exhausting, and [I

reply], 'For me or for them?' Over the years I transitioned to mixed games, which tend to break around one or two in the morning. And I have constantly been the person who says, 'Does anyone want to still play heads-up?'

I have nothing but good things to say about how each of [my *WSOP* opponents] played heads-up and at the final table. In the O8 tournament specifically, I had Dustin Dirksen outchipped 20:1 within an hour and it just looked like I was going to win [easily].

And then he came back and tied it, and then I got it back to 10:1. And then he came back and tied it, and then he was up 10:1 on me. I was sitting there like, 'Oh my god! Am I really about to lose this?' I remember at one point Dustin won a really big pot to get back into the chip lead and then he started barking very loudly in my direction. We're on the [live] stream and I was just sitting there telling myself I was never going to watch this back again. This was going to be a documentary of the worst evening of my poker career.

So I was very glad that I ended up coming back from that and closing that one out.

JR: You didn't win the POY that night, but I think if you finish second there, you don't win POY.

DZ: You're probably right. It would have been really tough to lose that one and bounce back from it immediately. I pride myself these days on having much stronger mental toughness than I had earlier in my career, but that would have been a painful heads-up match to blow.

JR: Now that you've won the POY, are you going to sign up for it all again next year or is it been there, done that?

DZ: I'll for sure be chasing it again next year. I really enjoy it. I enjoy the competition with Shaun [Deeb] and Daniel [Negreanu] and whichever of the 100 or so players run hot early on. As long as I'm coming out for the full series, I'll be in the mix chasing it each year. ♠



WSOP PLAYER OF THE YEAR WINNERS BY EARNINGS

| Year | Player | Bracelets | Final Tables | Cashes | Earnings |
|------|-----------------|-----------|--------------|--------|-------------|
| 2012 | Greg Merson | 2 | 2 | 5 | \$9,785,354 |
| 2011 | Ben Lamb | 1 | 4 | 5 | \$5,352,970 |
| 2018 | Shaun Deeb | 2 | 4 | 20 | \$2,545,623 |
| 2013 | Daniel Negreanu | 2 | 4 | 10 | \$1,954,054 |
| 2015 | Mike Gorodinsky | 1 | 3 | 8 | \$1,766,487 |
| 2006 | Jeff Madsen | 2 | 4 | 5 | \$1,467,852 |
| 2022 | Dan Zack | 2 | 4 | 16 | \$1,455,622 |
| 2008 | Erick Lindgren | 1 | 3 | 5 | \$1,358,528 |
| 2010 | Frank Kassela | 2 | 3 | 6 | \$1,255,314 |
| 2021 | Josh Arieh | 2 | 5 | 12 | \$1,194,061 |

There have been 17 different *World Series of Poker* Player of the Year award winners since the honor was first bestowed in 2004 to Daniel Negreanu. The Poker Hall of Famer also won the POY title in 2013 to become the first, and so far only, two-time winner of the award. When Negreanu first secured the POY, he did so with one bracelet won and just six cashes totaling \$346,280. The series has grown considerably since then, with the 2022 *WSOP* having more than 100 bracelets up for grabs while the 2004 series sported just 33 events.

This leaderboard highlights the highest-earning *WSOP* POY award winners, based on the amount they earned at the series in the year they locked up the award. Sitting atop this

list is 2012 *WSOP* main event champion **Greg Merson**. He is the only player to win both the POY and the world championship in the same year. His win in the big dance was what pushed him over the top. Had he even finished one spot lower, all-time bracelet leader Phil Hellmuth would have won his first POY title that year.

Hellmuth has now finished as the runner-up for the award four times (2006, 2011, 2012, 2021). Merson cashed in five events that summer, but it was his two wins in two massive and prestigious events that sealed his victory. He took down the prestigious \$10,000 no-limit hold'em six-max event for \$1.1 million and his first bracelet just a few days before the main event got underway. He then

topped a field of 6,598 entries to earn more than \$8.5 million as poker's world champion.

Ben Lamb sits in second place thanks to his incredible performance in 2011. He made four final tables that year, including finishing third in the main event for more than \$4 million. He also took down the \$10,000 pot-limit Omaha championship event that summer, beating out a field of 361 entries to earn \$814,436 and the hardware. All told, he cashed for more than \$5.3 million in bracelet events that year.

Rounding out the top three is 2018 POY award-winner **Shaun Deeb**. His 20 cashes (totaling more than \$2.5 million) were the second-most of any *WSOP* POY, trailing only 2017 winner Chris Ferguson and his 23 in-the-money finishes. Unlike Ferguson, Deeb hardly min-cashed his way to victory, though. He made four final tables that year, winning two of his five career bracelets that summer. Deeb first took down the \$25,000 pot-limit Omaha event for \$1.4 million, then won the \$10,000 six-max no-limit hold'em event for another \$814,000.

With ever larger schedules and more high-roller events than ever at the *WSOP*, this leaderboard will likely continue to see plenty of shifts in the future. ♠



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Final Table Takedown: Dan Zack Breaks Down Two Key Hands From His Two Bracelet Wins

By Craig Tapscott



Dan Zack won two bracelets this summer en route to the *WSOP Player of the Year* title. In the first, he survived a back-and-forth heads-up match with Dustin Dirksen in the \$10,000 Omaha eight-or-better championship to bank \$440,757.

In the second, he once again came out on top of an epic heads-up match, this time with David Funkhouser in the \$10,000 stud eight-or-better championship, to nab his third career bracelet and another \$324,174.

Card Player asked Zack if he could break down a key hand from each of the tournaments that ultimately played a big role in securing each title.

Event: \$10,000 Omaha 8/OB
Entrants: 196
Prize Pool: \$1,827,700
First-Place Prize: \$440,757
Stacks: Dan Zack – 2,000,000 (5 BB)
Dustin Dirksen – 10,000,000 (25 BB)
Limits: 200,000-400,000
Players Remaining: 2

CT: Set this hand up for us.

DZ: It was hour five of my heads-up match with Dustin and I found myself down 2,000,000 to his 10,000,000. Earlier on in the match I twice had over a 10:1 chip lead, so I felt a bit defeated at this point. But of course, I was still trying my best.

Zack raised to 400,000 from the button holding Q♥ 9♦ 5♠ 2♠. Dirksen called.

DZ: Dustin called with A♥ K♥ 8♠ 7♠. I was surprised watching this hand back that he chose not to three-bet this hand. Perhaps he wanted to play trappy with some decent A-x hands. Meanwhile my hand, while not a powerhouse in Omaha8, needed to be played heads-up.

CT: How so?

DZ: If you fold a holding like this in heads-up play, you'll

blind out of the tournament. Heads up requires you to play many hands you would never consider playing in a full ring game.

Flop: A♠ 10♦ 5♦ (pot: 800,000)

Dirksen checked, and Zack bet 200,000. Dirksen called.

DZ: I believe I must bet 100% of my hands on an Ace-Low-High board since this is so much better for the preflop aggressor than the big blind defender. Dustin had flopped top pair, but not much else. So his decision to just check-call makes a lot of sense.

Turn: 9♠ (pot: 1,200,000)

Dirksen checked, and Zack bet 200,000. Dirksen raised to 400,000.

CT: What did you make of Dirksen's raise on this turn card?

DZ: When he checked a second time here, I had a tough decision to make. There's 1,200,000 left to play in my stack and the bet is 400,000, so we have three bets left total. If I chose to bet and was raised, we would get all the money in across the turn/river. My thinking in game was that it was unlikely he'd have many stronger two pairs since he didn't three-bet preflop, which reduced how often he had an ace in his hand by a huge amount. And he wouldn't have too many sets, since he didn't check-raise the flop.

CT: So basically, your mind was in the blender.

DZ: Yes. Once he raised, I was in hell. He either had a better two pair or set (in which case I was close to drawing completely dead) or he had some kind of combo draw that contained two pair draw/flush draw/low draw/straight draw combinations. I played this whole heads-up match very quickly. This was probably the only decision the entire match that I took longer than 10 seconds to act.

CT: What scenarios were you running through your head?

DZ: It's pretty tough math to roughly calculate how many two pair type hands he has that don't three-bet preflop versus how many combo drawy type hands he likely had that he'd make this sort of move with.

CT: Did you get a read off any of his behavior?

DZ: Dustin was having a jovial conversation with his rail while I was in the tank. And it seemed super strong, which made me even more concerned. Ultimately, watching this hand back, I think I'd probably fold if given the spot again without being able to see his cards.

I think five hours into the heads-up match having blown two huge leads I had gotten a bit frustrated. I didn't want to try and battle back down to two big bets. So, I decided to gamble that I hopefully wasn't drawing dead. I was lucky to find out he did have one of those drawy type hands, but even then, I still only had 31 percent equity in the pot.

Zack raised all-in for 1,200,000, and Dirksen called.

DZ: I raised the turn all in because I don't think my hand can just call since it would have to call any river. Therefore, if I'm going to commit any more chips on the turn, I needed to put my stack in so I didn't allow his draws that I'm actually ahead of to brick the river and save a bet on the end.

River: 2♥ (pot: 3,600,000)

DZ: It was a relatively safe river as I survived to chop the pot and continue to fight on.

Zack and Dirksen chopped the pot of 3,600,000.



5♥ K♥ J♠ and checked.

CT: Share your thoughts on the check in this spot.

DZ: In general, in Stud8 when both players start with a low card, as soon as one player has more low cards showing than the other, the other player will check to them. This is because they now are advantaged by being closer to having a made low (and these cards are more likely to pair them as well). Shaun bets (as he will with almost any holding).

Deeb bet 80,000, and Zack called.

CT: Why did you call? That card

wasn't great for you.

DZ: Many players will fold my hand here. I tend to play stickier in these spots than most where Shaun can have many air balls since it's steal position versus a bring-in defend. It is also nice that he has a deuce and three showing since when he has split deuces or has paired his three all of my pair outs are live to scoop the pot.

Deeb caught (X X) K♠ 3♦ 2♣ 8♠. Zack caught (8♣ 4♥) 5♥ K♥ J♠ 3♣ and checked. Deeb bet 80,000.

DZ: I checked again, since he was still ahead of me in low cards showing. I would check any holding here.

Shaun bet (as he would with almost all of his holdings). At this point I've added a low draw that's almost always live, as well as the previously discussed fact that my pair outs may have been live to scoop, since he had a wide defend range. I have an easy call.

Zack called. Deeb caught the unknown (X X) K♠ 3♦ 2♣ 8♠ (X), while Zack caught (8♣ 4♥) 5♥ K♥ J♠ 3♣ (5♠).

CT: What was your best play here?

DZ: Well, I rivered a pair of fives. Most players here check and then call a bet from Shaun hoping the pair of fives are good for half and Shaun was value betting a low. Other times when they check, Shaun will check back when he has a pair of twos or threes, or maybe no pair / no low.

I believed if I lead out, Shaun would have only raised me with a very strong hand, as that's how most players react to a lead here.

CT: Might he have raised any other hands?

DZ: He might raise trips or better for high, and a six low or better for low. It's very hard for him to have such a strong hand here. If my assumption that he won't raise two pair for value is correct, then I very rarely get punished for an extra bet here by leading if my intention is otherwise to check-call.

By leading I win an extra bet every time Shaun has just a pair of twos or threes and even sometimes an ace high, since he has to call these hands in case I am just betting the low.

Zack bet 80,000 and Deeb called.

DZ: I announced a pair of fives, which was good.

Zack wins the pot of 710,000.

CT: Did he react at all?

DZ: Shaun thought very little of my bet here on the river, although I'm still okay with my play. Many players would play both fifth and seventh street differently than myself, but at least with this hand I was rewarded for playing abstractly.

CT: You had to feel good after this result.

DZ: Yes. This hand felt like a big turning point at the final table for me when things started to go in the right direction. ♠

Event: \$10,000 Stud 8/OB

Entrants: 137

Prize Pool: \$1,277,525

First-Place Prize: \$324,174

Stacks: Dan Zack – 600,000 (7.5 BB)

Shaun Deeb – 1,000,000 (12.5 BB)

Limits: 40,000-80,000

Bring In: 10,000 Ante: 10,000

Players Remaining: 7

Craig Tapscott: What was your plan going into this final table?

Dan Zack: I was pretty short so usually pay jumps would be on my mind, but these \$10,000 mix events are small fields and the big jumps really don't start until the final few players. Given that, I'm mostly just looking to play my game and look to pick up chips in all the normal spots you would in a cash game.

Zack raised to 40,000 holding (8♣ 4♥) 5♥ from the steal position into Deeb's bring in with the 3♠. Deeb defended.

DZ: With a full game versus a steal open, Shaun should be defending extremely wide here. Probably not quite 100 percent, but any two low cards, any pair, any two live high cards with a two suit. Most important, he should be extremely wide in this spot.

Shaun caught (X X) K♠ 3♦. Zack caught (8♣ 4♥) 5♥ K♥. Deeb checked, and Zack bet 40,000.

DZ: I decided to bet here. Since I raised in a steal position, we are both holding extremely wide ranges. The suited king favored me as I'll just have more three-quarter to a flush-type hands. We were both equally likely to hold a high type hand. My particular holding was probably a small favorite against his range as well.

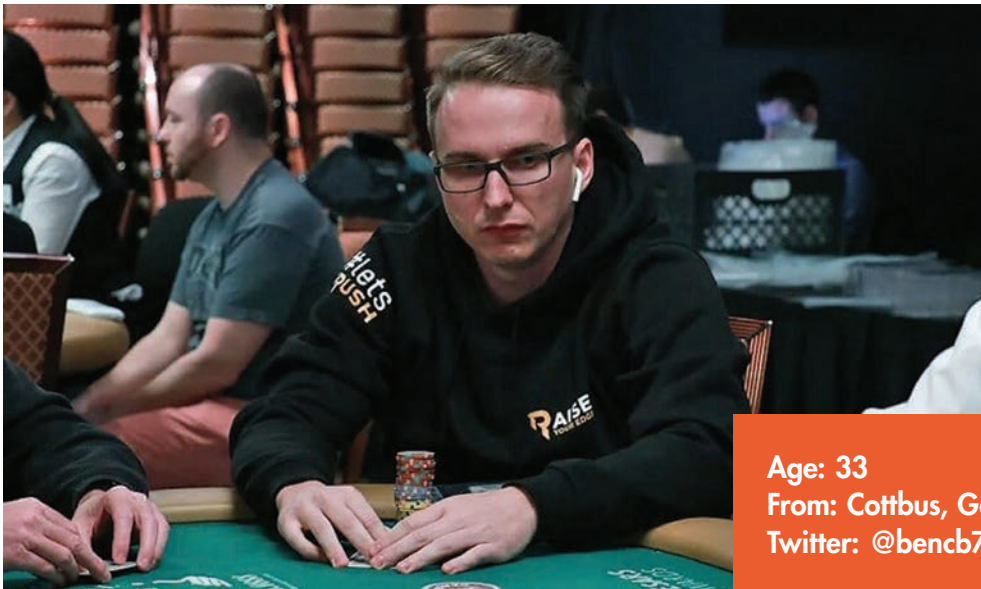
Deeb called and caught (X X) K♠ 3♦ 2♣. Zack caught (8♣ 4♥)

POKER STORIES PODCAST

Utih Online Crusher Benjamin 'Bencb' Rolle

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

To listen, visit www.cardplayer.com/poker-podcasts or download it directly to your device from any number of mobile apps, such as Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Google Play, or Spotify. Catch up on past episodes featuring notables such as Doyle Brunson, Antonio Esfandiari, Daniel Negreanu, Jennifer Harman, Patrik Antonius, Justin Bonomo, Nick Schulman, Jason Koon, Barry Greenstein, Mike Sexton, Phil Galfond, Dan Smith, Layne Flack, Chris Moneymaker, Maria Ho, Brad Owen, Fedor Holz, and many more.



Age: 33
From: Cottbus, Germany
Twitter: @bencb789

Benjamin Rolle, known to most of the poker world as 'Bencb,' is one of the greatest online tournament players in the game today. The 33-year-old German was a standout junior soccer player, but turned to online poker after college and grinded his way to the highest stakes available. He has won many millions during his career, most notably chopping the *World Championship of Online Poker* \$100,000 Super High Roller with Fedor Holz for \$1.2 million.

Originally an anonymous player, it wasn't until the summer of 2019 that he revealed his identity. Eager to share his knowledge with others, Rolle started Raise Your Edge poker training, and also streams his play on Twitch. Then last year, he was named as an ambassador for Team PokerStars. When he's not playing or teaching, he works with his champion Esports club Acend.

Highlights from this interview include scoring six goals in one game, injuries and ego, going broke three times early on, how a vacation in Sicily changed his game, why you don't want a big score early, grinding up to \$5,000 sit-n-go's, showing others how to win, dealing with online cheaters and anonymity, fan culture and poker rankings, accepting the upside of stress, sucking out in a \$100k tournament, German techno music, Matthew McConaughey, breathwork, and the literal coin flip for his life.

The Highlights



On The Turning Point In His Poker Career

Ben Rolle: I thought since I beat all my friends, I didn't need any strategic advice. I was quite stubborn.

Julio Rodriguez: So what was the turning point?

BR: To be honest, it was a vacation to Sardinia in Italy. It was a [trip] with nine or ten of my best buddies. We booked a huge house, and it was an absolute banger of a vacation. Most of these guys were already poker pros, and I realized the freedom that they had.

I was just a broke student at the time. I had to look at every penny that I spent. And it's not that they were throwing around money, but if they wanted a [nice] dinner, they [went] for it, you know? They bought the Coke for €2, and I would look for the 70-cent fake Coke because the real stuff was a little too much.

I admired [their ability to do that]. None of them were living the fancy lifestyle and arriving there in a fancy car or yacht or anything, but it was [eye opening] to see that they had no worries about what they spent on vacation. I wanted that. I realized I had to take poker more seriously.

JR: You saw it was doable. What was the first big score?

BR: I didn't really have big scores [at the beginning]. I started with setting goals, then just played sit-n-gos. That's the slow grind. And I was happy to do that. I would actually advise everyone getting into poker to start with cash games or sit-n-gos where you can learn slow.

Over the last 10 years I've had hundreds of students, and I think so far I've met one guy who had a big score early and is still a high-stakes pro. Everyone else, say 99 out of 100, fail when they have a big tournament score early on. It's very bad for your mentality.

And I understand it, I don't even blame them. It's just so difficult to put that into perspective if you don't have the knowledge and the understanding of variance, or the experience. It makes you think you are better than you are. Since you won in the beginning, you have this confirmation in your mind that you are good, and you stick with it way too long after you start losing.

JR: All that being said, what was the biggest pot you ever won or lost? It could be cash, or equity in a tournament.

BR: It was probably equity while at the final table of the \$100,000 WCOOP Super High Roller. There were three of us left, already in the money, but I sucked with A-Q against A-K. It was almost a cooler, you could say, but it was of course worth several hundred thousand dollars. I went on to chop with Fedor [Holz for \$1.2 million.] ♠



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WSOP ONLINE AWARDS 16 BRACELETS IN MICHIGAN AND PENNSYLVANIA

By Erik Fast



The *World Series of Poker* has been awarding official gold bracelets on the internet since 2015, when Anthony Spinella won the first-ever online bracelet in a \$1,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em tournament. Since then, the amount of online events included in the schedule has expanded.

2021 saw the first gold bracelets awarded in Pennsylvania, following the Keystone State's legal online poker market opening for business last summer. In March of 2022, WSOP.com launched in Michigan, paving the way for another state with official gold bracelet events played out online.

A total of 16 online bracelets were awarded in PA and MI this year, with eight for each state's players. The two schedules of events mirrored each other, with the same events taking place on the same day in the two (currently) segregated markets. These joined the 13 online events played in the shared markets of Nevada and New Jersey to bring the overall total of online events to 29.

The 16 MI and PA events collectively attracted more than 3,200 total entries, with \$1.6 million in prize money paid out along the way. Below is a closer look at those events and their champions.

The first event on the schedule was the *Big \$500* event. The MI running saw 310 entries made, building a prize

pool of \$139,503. In the end, Brett Blackwood emerged victorious with the title, his first bracelet, and the top prize of \$35,559. This was the second-largest score of his career, behind the \$188,314 he earned for taking down the 2016 *Michigan State Poker Championship* main event.

To celebrate the historic occasion of the first bracelet ever awarded in the Great Lakes State, longtime *WSOP* commentator and Poker Hall of Fame nominee Norman Chad flew out to Michigan to present Blackwood with his new hardware.

The PA version of the *Big \$500* saw Joseph Kuczewski defeat a field of 270 total entries to earn his first bracelet and a career-high payday of \$30,970. He overcame a final table that included the likes of bracelet winner Michael Lavin (8th – \$2,734) and *WSOP Circuit Choctaw* main event winner Dave Alfa (7th – \$3,657).

Todd Estes reportedly only signed up for a WSOP.com account on the day of the MI \$400 no-limit hold'em Ultra Deepstack event. The decision paid off in a big way, as he beat out a field of 326 total entries to earn his first bracelet and the top prize of \$27,896. A few weeks before finishing as the runner-up in the \$1,000 tag team event at the in-person *WSOP* in Las Vegas, Corey Pagueot finished second in this event for a \$17,314 payday.

The PA running saw Chris Perkins come out on top



of a field of 272 entries to earn his first bracelet and \$24,960. This was Perkins' largest recorded score. Just a fortnight after this win, he took down a \$525 buy-in online circuit event for his first ring and \$21,650. Another two weeks after that, he earned another ring by winning a \$500 buy-in online circuit event for another \$9,159. He now has more than \$236,000 in recorded tournament earnings.

The only pot-limit Omaha event on the schedule featured a \$500 buy-in and a six-max format. The MI running attracted 188 total entries to build an \$84,599 prize pool. The lion's share of that money, and the bracelet, went to John Macleod. He earned \$21,387 as the champion.

In PA, the PLO event drew 152 entries, with Mark Dellavecchio coming out on top to secure the gold and the top prize of \$17,292. 2022 *WSOP Tournament of Champions* winner Benjamin Kaupp finished third in this event nearly a month before he went on to secure his breakout victory in Vegas for a quarter of a million dollars.

Next up on the agenda was the \$600 buy-in deepstack event. In MI, the tournament saw 221 total entries made before the end of registration. Adam Kittle came out on top for his first bracelet and \$30,420 in prize money as the champion.

The PA \$600 Deepstack attracted 196 entries, building a six-figure prize pool. Stephen Jarrett came away with the bracelet and the \$26,979 top prize. This was the largest score of his career. *WPT* champion Ryan Van Sanford finished sixth in the event for \$4,255.

During the holiday weekend in early July, the two states hosted a \$500 no-limit hold'em deepstack tournament. There were 227 entries in MI's version of the tournament. Freddie Kirkland was the last player standing, earning his first bracelet and \$26,038 for the win.

In PA, the same event drew 171 entries. In the end, five-time *WSOP Circuit* ring winner Jonas Wexler closed out the victory. The Southampton, PA resident earned his first bracelet and \$19,615 as the champion. The 2019 *WSOP Circuit Harrah's Cherokee* main event champion now has nearly \$1.3 million in lifetime tournament earnings to his name.

The MI \$1,000 no-limit hold'em online bracelet championship event drew 130 entries to create another six-figure prize pool. The largest share of that money (\$28,829) was ultimately awarded to Cade Lautenbacher, who was making his first recorded tournament score in this event.



The PA online bracelet championship attracted 122 entries. Wexler nearly went back-to-back, but ultimately was defeated heads-up by Alex Schwint. The Philadelphia resident, a two-time ring winner, earned his first bracelet and \$27,055 for this victory. Wexler added \$19,314 to his career tally thanks to this runner-up finish.

The penultimate pair of bracelet events were the \$777 buy-in *Lucky 7's* second chance event. The MI running saw 123 entries made, building a \$86,105 prize pool. Ryan Hiller came away with the bracelet and \$21,947 as the champion. This was the second-largest score of Hiller's career, behind the \$35,194 he earned as the 21st-place finish in the 2020 *WSOP* main event.

The PA \$777 buy-in tournament closed registration with 115 entries. Peter Williamson won the bracelet and the \$20,519 top prize, defeating Ryan Messick heads-up for the title. Messick was just getting started, though.

Daniel Ott finished fifth for \$4,371. The 2017 main event runner-up now has more than \$4.7 million in lifetime earnings, with nearly all of that coming from his deep run in the big dance.

The final event on the schedule was the \$500 buy-in *Summer Saver*. The last-chance dance in MI attracted 229 entries to create a \$103,055 prize pool. Matthew Garza, who finished fourth in the \$777 buy-in a day earlier, came away with the bracelet and the top prize of \$27,824.

The PA *Summer Saver* was won by none other than Ryan Messick. He beat out the field of 200 entries to earn his first bracelet and \$24,300, just one day after finishing runner-up to Williamson.

The victory also gave Messick a seat in the 2022 *WSOP Tournament of Champions*, which was starting later that same day. Messick hopped a flight to Las Vegas and managed to finish third from a field of 470 entries in the \$1 million freeroll invitational event that was only open to bracelet and gold ring winners from this year. The deep run resulted in a \$100,000 payday for him, bringing his earnings for the week to more than \$136,000.

"Still haven't slept enough to process all this, but what a week," said Messick in a social media post after the dust settled.

While the summer is now in the rearview mirror, players won't have to wait that long for another crack at a bracelet. A new slate of *WSOP Online* offerings was recently announced for the fall. Check out page 10 for more information on those series. ♠

WSOP.com — Michigan And Pennsylvania — Final Table Results

| Event | Player | Payout |
|---|--------------------|----------|
| Michigan \$500 NLHE June 5 Entries: 310 Prizepool: \$139,503 | 1 Brett Blackwood | \$35,559 |
| | 2 Andrew Rosen | \$21,971 |
| | 3 Marshall Davey | \$15,108 |
| | 4 Brent Borrows | \$10,588 |
| | 5 Michael Aron | \$7,575 |
| | 6 Leroy Pennington | \$5,608 |
| | 7 Richard Green | \$4,199 |
| | 8 Aaron Klemm | \$3,139 |
| | 9 Joel Tasman | \$2,441 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|---|--------------------|----------|
| Pennsylvania \$500 NLHE June 5 Entries: 270 Prizepool: \$121,503 | 1 Joseph Kuczewski | \$30,970 |
| | 2 Michael Duffy | \$19,136 |
| | 3 Edward Leonard | \$13,158 |
| | 4 James Tedrow | \$9,222 |
| | 5 Robert Coleman | \$6,597 |
| | 6 Matthew Javitt | \$4,884 |
| | 7 Dave Alfa | \$3,657 |
| | 8 Michael Lavin | \$2,734 |
| | 9 Richard Frani | \$2,126 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|--|--------------------|----------|
| Michigan \$400 NLHE June 12 Entries: 326 Prizepool: \$119,161 | 1 Todd Estes | \$27,896 |
| | 2 Corey Paggeot | \$17,314 |
| | 3 Aaron Jones | \$11,773 |
| | 4 Jared Passanante | \$8,151 |
| | 5 Derek Yerke | \$5,767 |
| | 6 Shaun Gillian | \$4,159 |
| | 7 Matthew Ploof | \$3,050 |
| | 8 Kyle Goodman | \$2,288 |
| | 9 Brady Seeley | \$1,764 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|---|--------------------|----------|
| Pennsylvania \$400 NLHE June 12 Entries: 272 Prizepool: \$97,909 | 1 Chris Perkins | \$24,960 |
| | 2 Kyle Lorenz | \$15,442 |
| | 3 Chris Kounoupis | \$10,605 |
| | 4 Ryan McKnight | \$7,432 |
| | 5 James Gouldner | \$5,317 |
| | 6 Ian Crampton | \$3,936 |
| | 7 Jesse Baker | \$2,947 |
| | 8 Matthew Sullivan | \$2,203 |
| | 9 Edward Leonard | \$1,714 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|--|---------------------|----------|
| Michigan \$500 PLO 6-Max June 19 Entries: 188 Prizepool: \$84,599 | 1 John Macleod | \$21,387 |
| | 2 Tim Mulroy | \$13,223 |
| | 3 Alec Magdan | \$9,010 |
| | 4 Christopher Morse | \$6,252 |
| | 5 Mark Phillips | \$4,433 |
| | 6 Jared Passanante | \$3,206 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|--|---------------------|----------|
| Pennsylvania \$500 PLO 6-Max June 19 Entries: 152 Prizepool: \$68,403 | 1 Mark Dellavecchio | \$17,292 |
| | 2 Robert Lavin | \$10,691 |
| | 3 Benjamin Kaupp | \$7,285 |
| | 4 Gregory Wish | \$5,055 |
| | 5 Richard Kienzle | \$3,584 |
| | 6 Austin Moser | \$2,592 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|--|------------------|----------|
| Michigan \$600 NLHE June 26 Entries: 221 Prizepool: \$119,341 | 1 Adam Kittle | \$30,420 |
| | 2 Marcus Norman | \$18,796 |
| | 3 Ryan Redoutey | \$12,925 |
| | 4 Earl Mckee | \$9,058 |
| | 5 Jonathan Metz | \$6,480 |
| | 6 Roger Khoury | \$4,797 |
| | 7 Leo Taffe | \$3,592 |
| | 8 Chandler Burch | \$2,685 |
| | 9 Sean Pitzer | \$2,088 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|--|--------------------|----------|
| Pennsylvania \$600 NLHE June 26 Entries: 196 Prizepool: \$105,843 | 1 Stephen Jarrett | \$26,979 |
| | 2 Joshua Berardi | \$16,670 |
| | 3 William Dopico | \$11,462 |
| | 4 Christopher Dow | \$8,033 |
| | 5 Nicholas Lein | \$5,747 |
| | 6 Ryan Van Sanford | \$4,255 |
| | 7 James Larkin | \$3,186 |
| | 8 Kyle Lorenz | \$2,381 |
| | 9 Ryan Pochedly | \$1,852 |



TOURNAMENTS

| Event | Player | Payout |
|---|--------------------|----------|
| Michigan \$500 NLHE July 3 Entries: 227 Prizepool: \$102,147 | 1 Freddie Kirkland | \$26,038 |
| | 2 Chris Hando | \$16,089 |
| | 3 Andrew Romeo | \$11,063 |
| | 4 Joseph Bakun | \$7,753 |
| | 5 Scotty Brown | \$5,547 |
| | 6 Brandon Poe | \$4,106 |
| | 7 David Kelly | \$3,075 |
| | 8 Jared Martin | \$2,298 |
| | 9 Brett Blackwood | \$1,788 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|--|--------------------|----------|
| Pennsylvania \$500 NLHE July 3 Entries: 171 Prizepool: \$76,959 | 1 Jonas Wexler | \$19,615 |
| | 2 Anthony Garofalo | \$12,120 |
| | 3 Paul Kitchen | \$8,334 |
| | 4 Matthew Javitt | \$5,841 |
| | 5 Chad Reed | \$4,178 |
| | 6 James Larkin | \$3,093 |
| | 7 Frank Bonacci | \$2,316 |
| | 8 Chris Rodriguez | \$1,731 |
| | 9 Laurence Rogers | \$1,731 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|--|-----------------------|----------|
| Michigan \$1,000 NLHE July 10 Entries: 130 Prizepool: \$117,001 | 1 Cade Lautenbacher | \$28,829 |
| | 2 Robert Gincott | \$20,580 |
| | 3 Casey Carroll | \$14,695 |
| | 4 Kristopher Bradshaw | \$10,507 |
| | 5 Justin Pimpedly | \$7,500 |
| | 6 Earl McKee | \$5,359 |
| | 7 Ryan Hiller | \$3,826 |
| | 8 Justin Pease | \$2,726 |
| | 9 Chris Trombley | \$2,480 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|--|----------------------|----------|
| Pennsylvania \$1,000 NLHE July 10 Entries: 122 Prizepool: \$109,799 | 1 Alex Schwint | \$27,055 |
| | 2 Jonas Wexler | \$19,314 |
| | 3 Abraham Faroni | \$13,791 |
| | 4 Michael Duffy | \$9,860 |
| | 5 Harish Chouhan | \$7,038 |
| | 6 Brian Frasca | \$5,029 |
| | 7 Michael Van Sickle | \$3,590 |
| | 8 Chris Perkins | \$2,558 |
| | 9 Paul Kitchen | \$2,328 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|---|------------------|----------|
| Michigan \$777 NLHE July 16 Entries: 123 Prizepool: \$86,105 | 1 Ryan Hiller | \$21,947 |
| | 2 Joseph Cervo | \$13,561 |
| | 3 Kyle Goodman | \$9,325 |
| | 4 Matthew Garza | \$6,535 |
| | 5 Brent Burrows | \$4,675 |
| | 6 James Imirzian | \$3,461 |
| | 7 Kenneth Flach | \$2,592 |
| | 8 Thomas Metz | \$1,937 |
| | 9 Daniel Linares | \$1,507 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|---|----------------------|----------|
| Pennsylvania \$777 NLHE July 16 Entries: 115 Prizepool: \$80,506 | 1 Peter Williamson | \$20,519 |
| | 2 Ryan Messick | \$12,679 |
| | 3 Michael Van Sickle | \$8,718 |
| | 4 Robert James | \$6,110 |
| | 5 Daniel Ott | \$4,371 |
| | 6 Andrew Porter | \$3,236 |
| | 7 Robert Isaacs | \$2,423 |
| | 8 Jesse Klein | \$1,811 |
| | 9 Thomas Davis | \$1,409 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|--|--------------------|----------|
| Michigan \$500 NLHE July 17 Entries: 229 Prizepool: \$103,055 | 1 Matthew Garza | \$27,824 |
| | 2 Germandio Andoni | \$16,230 |
| | 3 Wasim Mahfooth | \$9,275 |
| | 4 Stephen Dees | \$7,214 |
| | 5 Scotty Brown | \$6,183 |
| | 6 Carter Myers | \$5,153 |
| | 7 Justin Pimpedly | \$3,916 |
| | 8 Dapreesch Scates | \$2,473 |
| | 9 Jared Passanante | \$1,752 |

| Event | Player | Payout |
|---|-------------------|----------|
| Pennsylvania \$500 NLHE July 17 Entries: 200 Prizepool: \$90,000 | 1 Ryan Messick | \$24,300 |
| | 2 Michael McNeil | \$14,175 |
| | 3 Elias Garney | \$8,100 |
| | 4 Joshua Zerbe | \$6,300 |
| | 5 Dillon Ott | \$5,400 |
| | 6 Zach Gruneberg | \$4,500 |
| | 7 Scott Kahler | \$3,420 |
| | 8 Jonathan Erhart | \$2,160 |
| | 9 Nilesh Thakker | \$1,530 |

2022 Card Player Player of the Year

Sponsored by Global Poker



| Place | Player | Points | Titles | Final Tables | POY Earnings |
|-------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------------|--------------|
| 1 | Stephen Chidwick | 4,901 | 5 | 20 | \$5,378,739 |
| 2 | Ali Imsirovic | 4,683 | 6 | 20 | \$3,566,356 |
| 3 | Farid Jattin | 4,527 | 3 | 9 | \$1,192,967 |
| 4 | Jake Schindler | 4,322 | 4 | 10 | \$7,052,283 |
| 5 | Jeremy Ausmus | 4,117 | 3 | 16 | \$2,019,392 |
| 6 | Joao Simao | 4,014 | 1 | 4 | \$1,442,743 |
| 7 | Michael Duek | 3,950 | 0 | 3 | \$4,843,427 |
| 8 | Alex Foxen | 3,911 | 3 | 16 | \$6,395,402 |
| 9 | Sean Winter | 3,658 | 2 | 13 | \$2,134,869 |
| 10 | Chance Kornuth | 3,636 | 3 | 6 | \$1,924,140 |
| 11 | Daniel Dvoress | 3,583 | 1 | 12 | \$4,864,477 |
| 12 | Adam Hendrix | 3,489 | 2 | 8 | \$953,463 |
| 13 | Tony Sinishtaj | 3,470 | 1 | 3 | \$1,927,123 |
| 14 | Marius Gierse | 3,468 | 2 | 6 | \$2,531,092 |
| 15 | Chris Brewer | 3,443 | 3 | 14 | \$2,223,465 |
| 16 | Phil Ivey | 3,394 | 2 | 10 | \$5,083,020 |
| 17 | Espen Jorstad | 3,300 | 1 | 1 | \$10,000,000 |
| 18 | Stephen Song | 3,218 | 0 | 7 | \$866,438 |
| 19 | Darren Elias | 3,135 | 0 | 8 | \$1,233,466 |
| 20 | Mark Davis | 3,020 | 2 | 4 | \$1,408,650 |
| 21 | Erik Seidel | 2,987 | 1 | 7 | \$1,541,524 |
| 22 | Michael Watson | 2,931 | 0 | 7 | \$2,735,461 |
| 23 | Mikita Badziakouski | 2,930 | 2 | 6 | \$4,240,293 |
| 24 | Michael Wang | 2,910 | 2 | 7 | \$1,025,917 |
| 25 | Yuri Dzivielevski | 2,877 | 1 | 8 | \$1,954,941 |
| 26 | Robert Cowen | 2,860 | 2 | 3 | \$2,183,232 |
| 27 | Danny Tang | 2,852 | 1 | 8 | \$3,318,680 |
| 28 | Jason Koon | 2,829 | 1 | 10 | \$4,161,770 |
| 29 | Alex Livingston | 2,821 | 1 | 6 | \$1,112,376 |
| 30 | Isaac Kempton | 2,798 | 0 | 5 | \$1,473,882 |

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The 25 Biggest Leaks (Course)

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DANNY MARX DENIES QUAN TRAN SECOND WSOP CIRCUIT CHOCTAW TITLE



In January, Quan Tran emerged victorious in the *World Series of Poker Circuit Choctaw* \$1,700 no-limit hold'em main event, earning his first *WSOPC* gold ring and the top prize of \$336,412. Just over half a year later, Tran once again found himself heads-up with a *WSOPC Choctaw* main event title on the line.

Tran was defeated by Danny Marx this time around, however, securing his first championship ring and a career-best payday of \$246,820. Tran earned \$152,553 as the runner-up finisher after falling just short of back-to-back wins at the venue.

"I have no words right now, this whole tournament has been an insane experience for me," Marx told *WSOP* reporters. "I'm just super happy."

"A lot of those guys are very, very tough players," Marx continued. "A lot of them have a lot more tournament experience than me. I come from a cash background, and I'm still getting the hang of tournament stack depths, but I learned a ton from playing against them. I was incredibly lucky to be able to beat them."

Marx outlasted a field of 931 total entries who came out to the Choctaw Casino Resort in Durant, Oklahoma to earn the lion's share of the \$1,410,465 total prize pool. The Dallas, Texas resident also took home 912 *Card Player* Player of the Year points for the win, enough to move him inside the top 400 in the 2022 POY race sponsored by Global Poker.

Plenty of notables were among the 141 players to make the money in this event, including Justin Bond (70th – \$3,273), Adrian Buckley (35th – \$4,963), Jared Ingles (34th – \$4,963), Andrew Watson (21st – \$10,803), Brian Green (19th – \$10,803), and recent *WPT Choctaw* main event runner-up Steven Buckner (11th – \$19,645).

After two starting flights and a 13-hour day 2 session, there were still 13 contenders remaining heading into the final day of this event. Dakotah O'Dell led the way, while Marx was in 10th chip position when cards got back in the air. O'Dell went on to finish fifth, earning \$65,591 after having lost the majority of his stack to Marx, with pocket eights running into pocket kings preflop.

Four-time *WSOP* bracelet winner Brad Ruben was the next to hit the rail. He got all-in with pocket nines and was racing against the K-Q of Marx. A king-high flop saw Marx take a big lead, which he maintained through the river to narrow the field to just three players. Ruben earned \$86,051 as the fourth-place finisher, increasing his career earnings to more than \$1.1 million in the process.

Marx was well out in front when three-handed play began, but Tran closed the gap considerably when stacks got in on an $A\spadesuit 7\heartsuit 5\heartsuit 2\clubsuit$ board with Tran holding $A\heartsuit K\heartsuit$ against the $A\clubsuit 3\diamondsuit$ of Nikola Mircetic. The $Q\diamondsuit$ river locked up the pot for Tran, while Mircetic was knocked out in third place (\$114,015).

With that, heads-up play began with Marx holding 17,930,000 to Tran's 10,000,000. It didn't take long for all of the chips to make their way to the middle. On a board of $6\clubsuit 4\heartsuit 3\heartsuit 10\clubsuit$, Tran moved all-in and Marx called. Tran had a pair and a straight draw with $3\spadesuit 2\spadesuit$, but was trailing the pocket eights of Marx. The $J\clubsuit$ on the end saw the pot pushed to Marx, busting Tran in second place (\$152,553).

Tran has now cashed for \$488,965 in POY earnings so far in 2022, with all of that money coming from his two deep runs in *WSOPC* main events at Choctaw. His two heads-up appearances and one win were enough to see him move within reach of the top 100 in the POY standings.

Final Table Results

| Player | Payout (POY) |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Daniel Marx | \$246,820 (912) |
| 2 Quan Tran | \$152,553 (760) |
| 3 Nikola Mircetic | \$114,015 (608) |
| 4 Brad Ruben | \$86,051 (456) |
| 5 Dakotah O'Dell | \$65,591 (380) |
| 6 Jason Rice | \$50,498 (304) |
| 7 Osman Ihlamur | \$39,272 (228) |
| 8 Steven McCartney | \$30,855 (152) |
| 9 Aaron Thomas | \$24,492 (76) |

MELAD MARJI WINS HARD ROCK POKER OPEN \$25,000 PLO HIGH ROLLER

The Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood welcomed the high-stakes tournament circuit for a number of high roller events that were on the schedule for the *Hard Rock Poker Open*. The first on the agenda was the \$25,000 buy-in pot-limit Omaha event. With 52 entries, the prize pool grew to \$1,284,400, with the top eight finishers making the money.

After two days of nosebleed tournament PLO action, Melad Marji emerged victorious with the title and the top prize of \$443,118. This was the South Florida resident's largest-ever live score, topping the \$261,652 he earned as the fourth-place finisher in the 2016 *WSOP* \$10,000 PLO championship.

Marji now has more than \$1.2 million in career scores to his name. He also earned 420 POY points as the champion of this event. This was his fourth POY-qualified final-table finish of the year, all coming in some variant of PLO.

Several notables made deep runs, including David Coleman (8th), Matthew Wantman (6th), Isaac Kempton (4th), Dominique Mosley (3rd), and 2022 *WSOP* main event third-place finisher Michael Duek (2nd).

Kempton climbed to 30th place in the POY standings thanks to the 210 points he earned in this event. This was his fifth final-table finish of the year, with \$1,473,882 in



POY earnings accrued along the way.

Duek took home \$295,412 and 350 POY points for his third major score of the year. Before earning \$4 million as the third-place finisher in the *WSOP* main event, the 23-year-old venture capitalist from Florida made two deep runs in high-stakes PLO events. With three final tables, 3,950 total points, and more than \$4.8 million in year-to-date POY earnings, Duek now sits in seventh place in the 2022 POY standings.

Final Table Results

| Player | Payout (POY) |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 Melad Marji | \$443,118 (420) |
| 2 Michael Duek | \$295,412 (350) |
| 3 Dominique Mosley | \$179,816 (280) |
| 4 Isaac Kempton | \$122,018 (210) |
| 5 Lev Zerkal | \$83,486 (175) |
| 6 Matthew Wantman | \$64,220 (140) |
| 7 Jordan Semel | \$51,376 (105) |
| 8 David Coleman | \$44,954 (70) |

DAVID PETERS TOPS HARD ROCK POKER OPEN \$50,000 NLH HIGH ROLLER

David Peters is one of the most prolific tournament poker superstars in the game. The four-time *WSOP* bracelet winner recorded his 450th tournament cash in Florida, with the earnings from those scores totaling nearly \$43.8 million. As a result, he climbed into fourth place on poker's all-time money list.

The 35-year-old moved up that prestigious leaderboard thanks to a victory in this year's *SHRPO* \$50,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em super high roller event. He defeated a field of 25 entries, striking a heads-up deal to secure the title and \$407,545 in prize money. The score was just enough to see him take a narrow \$17,668 lead over fifth-ranked Stephen Chidwick for the time being.

This was his second title and seventh POY-qualified final-table finish of the year. With 2,426 points and more than \$2.7 million in year-to-date POY earnings, Peters has climbed into 41st place in the rankings. Peters won the POY award in 2016, and has eight top-50 finishes over the last 12 years including three top-five showings.

At the final table Peters found two double-ups through



Krishna Lawrence to chip up and then knocked out Lawrence (5th) and Sergio Aido (4th) to continue his surge up the leaderboard. Byron Kaverman eliminated two-time bracelet winner Elio Fox (3rd) to narrow the gap.

The final two negotiated a deal that brought the tournament to an end. Peters was awarded \$407,545 and the title thanks to his chip lead, while Kaverman took home \$380,580 as the runner-up, increasing his career earnings to \$17.4 million.

Final Table Results

| Player | Payout (POY) |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1 David Peters | \$407,545 (306) |
| 2 Byron Kaverman | \$380,580 (255) |
| 3 Elio Fox | \$194,000 (204) |
| 4 Sergio Aido | \$133,375 (153) |
| 5 Krishna Lawrence | \$97,000 (128) |

CIRCUIT RESULTS

All payouts in USD.



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| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|---------------------|----------------|
| DeepStack | 1 Joon Kim | \$82,790 (456) |
| | 2 Stephen Ma | \$61,184 (380) |
| Venetian Las Vegas, NV | 3 Aaron Le | \$43,020 (304) |
| | 4 Rickey Evans | \$31,070 (228) |
| \$600 NLHE July 21-24 \$250,000 GTD Entries: 956 Prizepool: \$478,000 | 5 Jeff Heiberg | \$22,705 (190) |
| | 6 Thida Lin | \$17,065 (152) |
| | 7 Blake Whittington | \$12,763 (114) |
| | 8 Aditya Prasetyo | \$9,942 (76) |
| | 9 Lokesh Garg | \$7,887 (38) |

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|--------------------|----------------|
| DeepStack | 1 Qing Liu | \$51,624 (420) |
| | 2 Kevin Stevens | \$45,636 (350) |
| Venetian Las Vegas, NV | 3 Joshua Prager | \$27,873 (280) |
| | 4 Charlton Hawes | \$19,952 (210) |
| \$600 NLHE July 28-31 \$200,000 GTD Entries: 581 Prizepool: \$293,405 | 5 Nathaniel Zoller | \$15,110 (175) |
| | 6 John Paul Cao | \$11,296 (140) |
| | 7 Lukas Gunzel | \$8,362 (105) |
| | 8 Joshua Suyat | \$6,455 (70) |
| | 9 Ori Hasson | \$5,135 (35) |

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|--------------------|----------------|
| San Diego Summer Classic | 1 Ariel Savage | \$31,587 (365) |
| | 2 Michael Zucchet | \$29,491 (304) |
| Ocean's 11 Oceanside, CA | 3 Charley Du | \$18,650 (243) |
| | 4 Armando Mesina | \$17,387 (182) |
| | 5 Gianluca Pace | \$10,700 (152) |
| \$300 NLHE July 25-31 Entries: 857 Prizepool: \$198,480 | 6 Hour Lim | \$8,740 (122) |
| | 7 Cameron Sinclair | \$7,160 (91) |
| | 8 Ramnys Garcia | \$5,365 (61) |
| | 9 Oscar Salunga | \$3,645 (30) |

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|--------------------|----------------|
| EUREKA | 1 Gusti Sas | \$78,979 (720) |
| | 2 Yves Bueno | \$49,327 (600) |
| Grand Hotel Bucharest, Romania | 3 Marius Gicovanu | \$35,231 (480) |
| | 4 Catalin Stan | \$27,101 (360) |
| €1,100 NLHE July 27-31 Entries: 407 Prizepool: \$398,534 | 5 Andrei Wauters | \$20,839 (300) |
| | 6 Bogdan Ionescu | \$16,034 (240) |
| | 7 Valentin Cristea | \$12,332 (180) |
| | 8 Marian Chelaru | \$10,118 (120) |
| | 9 Tudorel Costache | \$8,425 (60) |

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|---------------------|----------------|
| July Monster | 1 Nino Natale | \$80,242 (480) |
| | 2 John New | \$70,128 (400) |
| The Lodge Round Rock, TX | 3 Raul Garza | \$43,404 (320) |
| | 4 Christopher Bello | \$33,895 (240) |
| \$500 NLHE July 27-31 \$500,000 GTD Entries: 1,134 Prizepool: \$559,330 | 5 Gawain Visagie | \$30,729 (200) |
| | 6 Pierpaolo Papadia | \$19,577 (160) |
| | 7 Juan Tejada | \$15,102 (120) |
| | 8 Jonathan Good | \$11,746 (80) |
| | 9 Astolfo Rodriguez | \$9,509 (40) |



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| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|---------------------|-----------------|
| SHRPO | 1 Andrew Pecina | \$225,906 (528) |
| | 2 Thomas Morgado | \$186,979 (440) |
| Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood, FL | 3 Nicholas Carballo | \$173,368 (352) |
| | 4 Hossein Pezeshkan | \$165,792 (264) |
| | 5 David Frenkel | \$155,827 (220) |
| \$400 NLHE July 27-31 \$1,000,000 GTD Entries: 7,703 Prizepool: \$2,541,990 | 6 Corel Theuma | \$73,718 (176) |
| | 7 Colby Covington | \$48,298 (132) |
| | 8 Scott Livingston | \$35,588 (88) |
| | 9 Vinny Monteiro | \$25,420 (44) |

TOURNAMENTS

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|--------------------|----------------|
| SHRPO Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood, FL \$1,100 NLHE 6-Max July 31-Aug. 1 \$100,000 GTD Entries: 262 Prizepool: \$254,140 | 1 Vincent Chauve | \$58,030 (432) |
| | 2 Brandon Hamlet | \$39,100 (360) |
| | 3 Mor Zucker | \$26,930 (288) |
| | 4 Matthew Waxman | \$18,950 (216) |
| | 5 Michael Dalberth | \$13,635 (180) |
| | 6 Brad Speight | \$10,035 (144) |

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|---|----------------------|----------------|
| SHRPO Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood, FL \$1,100 NLHE Aug. 3-4 \$100,000 GTD Entries: 314 Prizepool: \$304,580 | 1 Michael Tweedlie | \$66,500 (480) |
| | 2 Larry Hoffman | \$44,950 (400) |
| | 3 James Carroll | \$29,850 (320) |
| | 4 Frank Brannan | \$18,930 (240) |
| | 5 David Hewitt | \$14,605 (200) |
| | 6 Aaron Thivyanathan | \$12,905 (160) |
| | 7 RJ Sullivan | \$10,155 (120) |
| | 8 Brian Altman | \$8,345 (80) |
| | 9 Vincent Chauve | \$6,620 (40) |



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| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|
| SHRPO Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood, FL \$2,200 NLHE Aug. 4-5 \$200,000 GTD Entries: 229 Prizepool: \$458,000 | 1 Ian O'Hara | \$107,155 (384) |
| | 2 Johnny Landreth | \$74,495 (320) |
| | 3 Blake Bohn | \$46,945 (256) |
| | 4 Daniel Couzens | \$28,555 (192) |
| | 5 Landon Tice | \$22,055 (160) |
| | 6 Brock Wilson | \$18,275 (128) |
| | 7 Elvis Toomas | \$15,575 (96) |
| | 8 Shannon Shorr | \$13,280 (64) |
| | 9 Khalil Francis | \$10,995 (32) |

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|--------------------|----------------|
| SHRPO Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood, FL \$600 PLO July 31-Aug. 2 \$100,000 GTD Entries: 500 Prizepool: \$260,000 | 1 Duff Charette | \$48,075 (420) |
| | 2 Malachi West | \$30,000 (350) |
| | 3 Dan VanDyke | \$30,000 (280) |
| | 4 Steven Steinmetz | \$15,900 (210) |
| | 5 Carlos Guerrero | \$12,200 (175) |
| | 6 Matt Bretzfield | \$10,170 (140) |
| | 7 Stephen Johnson | \$8,465 (105) |
| | 8 James Calderaro | \$6,760 (70) |
| | 9 Ryan Roussel | \$5,070 (35) |

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|-------------------|----------------|
| WSOP Circuit Choctaw Durant, OK \$1,100 NLHE July 28-29 \$100,000 GTD Entries: 246 Prizepool: \$239,850 | 1 Nathanael Kogel | \$54,547 (408) |
| | 2 Jeffrey Sowell | \$33,714 (340) |
| | 3 Derek Norman | \$24,091 (272) |
| | 4 Michael Marder | \$17,537 (204) |
| | 5 Mauricio Solano | \$13,010 (170) |
| | 6 Charles Barker | \$9,839 (136) |
| | 7 Chance Walker | \$7,589 (102) |
| | 8 Michael Slate | \$5,972 (68) |
| | 9 Lucas Tae | \$4,796 (34) |



Adam Maxwell

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| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|
| UKIPT Dusk Till Dawn Nottingham, United Kingdom £1,100 NLHE July 28-31 £500,000 GTD Entries: 582 Prizepool: \$702,873 | 1 Adam Maxwell | \$118,534 (840) |
| | 2 Jonathan McCann | \$89,973 (700) |
| | 3 David Ledden | \$57,317 (560) |
| | 4 Michael Howard | \$44,081 (420) |
| | 5 Daniel Gormley | \$33,912 (350) |
| | 6 Fabio Sperling | \$26,086 (280) |
| | 7 Alex Montgomery | \$20,060 (210) |
| | 8 Philip Clarke | \$15,434 (140) |
| | 9 Thomas Simm | \$12,379 (70) |

TOURNAMENTS



© Harrah's Cherokee

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|
| WSOP Circuit | 1 Shannon Hambleton | \$120,742 (480) |
| | 2 Brian Beattie | \$74,619 (400) |
| Harrah's Cherokee, NC | 3 Sokchheka Pho | \$55,985 (320) |
| | 4 Keith Smith | \$42,420 (240) |
| \$400 NLHE Aug. 4-7 \$500,000 GTD Entries: 2,726 Prizepool: \$899,580 | 5 Storm Cooper | \$32,461 (200) |
| | 6 Matthew Abba | \$25,091 (160) |
| | 7 Harrell Hardin | \$19,592 (120) |
| | 8 David Reeves | \$15,455 (80) |
| | 9 William Neal | \$12,318 (40) |

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|---------------------|----------------|
| WSOP Circuit | 1 Stuart Moody | \$35,241 (336) |
| | 2 James Wicks | \$21,777 (280) |
| Harrah's Cherokee, NC | 3 Allen Kerlin | \$16,119 (224) |
| | 4 Cory Biddle | \$12,076 (168) |
| \$400 NLHE Aug. 4 \$50,000 GTD Entries: 573 Prizepool: \$189,090 | 5 Jason Eskridge | \$9,158 (140) |
| | 6 Sallie Avino | \$7,031 (112) |
| | 7 Brad Fowler | \$5,466 (84) |
| | 8 David Henslee | \$4,303 (56) |
| | 9 Jonathan Williams | \$3,432 (28) |

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|---|-------------------------|----------------|
| WSOP Circuit | 1 Christopher Reaves | \$41,728 (336) |
| | 2 Mary Irene Carey | \$25,787 (280) |
| Harrah's Cherokee, NC | 3 Vishwanath Rajashekar | \$19,075 (224) |
| | 4 Jesse Williams | \$14,273 (168) |
| \$400 NLHE Aug. 6-7 \$100,000 GTD Entries: 691 Prizepool: \$228,030 | 5 Johnny Burke | \$10,805 (140) |
| | 6 Michial Drake | \$8,277 (112) |
| | 7 William Hawk | \$6,416 (84) |
| | 8 Dillon Clopton | \$5,034 (56) |
| | 9 Elias Asi | \$3,998 (28) |

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|---------------------|----------------|
| July 500 | 1 Paul Palmer | \$20,791 (180) |
| | 2 Shane Scorza | \$13,861 (150) |
| bestbet Jacksonville, FL | 3 Rebecca Like | \$10,120 (120) |
| | 4 Chathou Chau | \$7,494 (90) |
| \$500 NLHE July 30 Entries: 210 Prizepool: \$90,300 | 5 Frederick Smith | \$5,630 (75) |
| | 6 Ron Germany | \$4,291 (60) |
| | 7 Hardik Patel | \$3,320 (45) |
| | 8 Mark Manesh | \$2,607 (30) |
| | 9 Hubert Sacilowski | \$2,079 (15) |

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|-------------------|----------------|
| WPT Legends | 1 Rich Tsan | \$26,685 (365) |
| | 2 Peter Pham | \$20,120 (304) |
| Parkwest Bike Bell Gardens, CA | 3 Emad Bastawros | \$19,500 (243) |
| | 4 Phuoc Nguyen | \$19,230 (182) |
| \$360 NLHE July 30 \$100,000 GTD Entries: 702 Prizepool: \$210,600 | 5 Grayr Zograbyan | \$10,905 (152) |
| | 6 Freddie Legaspi | \$10,190 (122) |
| | 7 Bai Ming | \$9,470 (91) |
| | 8 Brian Hunkins | \$7,250 (61) |
| | 9 Andy Ghebre | \$6,460 (30) |



© Run Good

| Event | Player | Payout (POY) |
|--|-------------------|----------------|
| RGPS | 1 Derrick Plumage | \$51,888 (365) |
| | 2 David Hengen | \$34,591 (304) |
| Horseshoe Casino Council Bluffs, IA | 3 Kaleb Dunn | \$25,525 (243) |
| | 4 Gearld Pauley | \$19,040 (182) |
| \$420 NLHE Aug. 4-7 \$50,000 GTD Entries: 826 Prizepool: \$297,360 | 5 Jesse Bowman | \$14,357 (152) |
| | 6 Anonymous | NA |
| | 7 Carter Clond | \$8,439 (91) |
| | 8 Shannon Roberts | \$6,580 (61) |
| | 9 Timothy Nichols | \$5,189 (30) |

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WHEN TO APPLY PRESSURE, AND WHEN TO PUMP THE BRAKES

Two Live Stream Grinders Share Their Tips

By Craig Tapscott



The Pros: Andy ‘Stacks’ Tsai and Cedric ‘Poker Traveler’ Trevino

Craig Tapscott: Can you share the best way to play various flop textures after being the raiser preflop? When is it best to be aggressive and when is it best to be cautious? How does the type of opponent you’re facing factor in?

Andy Stacks: There is no one-size-fits-all strategy for continuation-betting being the opener preflop in position. Your strategy should always consider your current table image, your opponents and the general game flow at the time. A general rule that I follow, however is to bet accordingly to your perceived range rather than the strength of your actual hand on flops. This will allow your strategy to be well balanced and make it difficult for your opponent to determine the strength of your holdings.

One of the main factors I consider when c-betting is first determining whether the board is dry or wet. For drier flops that contain one or more Broadway cards that favor my perceived range, I lean towards c-betting frequently, using smaller sizings with my entire range. On wetter, more connected boards that favor the caller’s perceived range such as 5-6-7, I lean towards checking when I flop little to no equity and using larger c-bet sizings on wet boards when I flop strong.

Again, keep in mind that this is just a general guideline and will depend on your opponent’s tendencies as well as how you believe they will interpret your betting patterns. I will deviate from this strategy if I think that it will allow specific opponents to misinterpret the strength of my holdings.

Whether to c-bet aggressively or proceed cautiously

depends on what I know about my opponents. If I perceive them to be sticky, willing to call down lightly with any piece or draw, I will value bet more aggressively on flops and on subsequent streets. I will lean towards bluffing less and checking when I flop no equity. This means giving up on certain boards in which they are likely to call down on multiple streets.

If I perceive them as sticky and calling with a wide range on the flop, I will also c-bet aggressively on the flop and may continue to bluff aggressively on turns and rivers that are very unlikely to improve my opponent’s flop calling range. If my opponent will only continue with strong hands like top pair or a good draw on the flop, I will c-bet aggressively and proceed cautiously when called.

Cedric Trevino: For me there are two major factors when making a decision on whether to c-bet (play aggressive) or check behind (play passive) assuming our opponent does not donk bet (lead) into us. The two decision points are (1) board texture and how it should connect with our perceived range and (2) stickiness of the opponent.

To keep this simple let’s break each decision point into two options. Board Texture: (a) the board is good and should connect with our perceived range or (b) the board is bad and should not connect with our perceived range. Let’s define stickiness as how likely the opponent is to continue against a c-bet. So just two options on that (a) sticky: likely to continue (b) non-sticky: likely to fold.

With these two factors and two options for each we end up with four possible outcomes on the flop. We can create a simple chart to illustrate what we are more likely to do when each of those outcomes occur.

| The Board | Sticky Opponent: likely to continue to c-bet | Non-Sticky: likely to fold to c-bet |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Good board texture for our range | C-bet almost 100% of the time. We do this so we can build the pot with a favorable holding. *Size up your bets against this type of opponent | Mix in checks and bets, leaning towards betting more frequently. We can check at a lower frequency for deception, especially if we think opponent is likely to take our check-back as weakness. *We can use smaller bets here of about 25-33 percent pot |
| Bad board texture for our range | Check back majority of the time to control size of the pot, as c-bet is not likely to take down the pot. *Think of your chips as ammunition, no point in firing if you don't have a good shot | Mix in checks and bets but lean to betting more frequently as opponent is likely to fold to c-bet and we are able to take down the pot a large percentage of the time. *We can use smaller bets here of about 25-33% pot |



So, as you can see in the chart above, our decision leans to c-betting in three of the four possible flop outcomes. In general, aggression (c-betting in this instance) is a winning strategy and puts your opponents to a decision.

One of the most important things I ever learned in poker is that you can win two ways, by making the best hand or making people think you have the best hand.

Craig Tapscott: Let's say you flop a hand like top pair. When would you consider a delayed c-bet? And what type of turn cards would change that plan?

Andy Stacks: When hitting a hand like top pair on the flop, my strategy will usually depend on how passive or aggressive and sticky my opponent is. Here are a few general guidelines I follow:

If my opponent tends to passively peel or float often, I will bet to extract value more frequently. If they tend to fold when they miss but tend to bluff more aggressively on later streets, I may choose to start with a check, especially using my weaker top pairs (with weaker kickers), either going for a delayed c-bet or planning to use them as bluff catchers.

If my opponent is very aggressive and check-raises many different types of flops, I may tend to go for a delayed c-bet and check back my top pairs on more draw-heavy boards to prevent being raised and making it dif-

ficult for myself to arrive at showdown with my equity.

Whether to c-bet or continue betting the turn depends on how the specific turn cards interact with the flop. If the turn completes obvious front door draws and does not improve my own hand, I will check frequently with the plan to evaluate and possibly bluff catch with my top pairs.

On dry turn cards that are unlikely to have improved my opponent and do not change the flop texture, I will usually continue to bet my top pairs for value. On turns that put more draws on the board, I will also continue to bet my top pairs aggressively as it increases the chance my opponent is able to continue calling with the improved equity. For example, if the board is Q♣ 6♣ 4♦ and the turn brings the 3♦, bringing additional flush and straight draw possibilities that my opponent may be holding, I will bet for value aggressively.

Being constantly aware of the opponent(s) you are facing in each hand, their tendencies and how the board texture interacts with their ranges will allow you to implement the most optimal strategy.

Cedric Trevino: Two important factors come to mind, aggressiveness of the opponent and strength of my top pair.

Aggressive opponents will be more likely to call our

delayed c-bet. So, in essence this is the outcome we are looking for when choosing to check flop and lead turn. In my opinion using this strategy against passive opponents is not productive as it allows a passive player to catch up on the turn. I would rather take down these pots uncontested on the flop against passive players and not use the delayed c-bet strategy.

The strength of our top pair is simple to explain. Is our top pair likely to remain top pair on the turn? Does our top pair likely have the better kicker against opponents that might also have flopped top pair?

Here are some examples of strong top pairs: A Broadway pair with an ace or king kicker (A-Q on a queen-high flop or K-J on a king-high flop). Weak top pairs usually occur with suited connectors and suited ace combos, such as 8-7 suited on a seven-high flop, or A-5 suited on five-high flop. I am not typically going to employ a delayed c-bet strategy when our top pair lacks strength, because so frequently our hand is very vulnerable or behind with many turn cards.

That takes us directly to our next question. What type of turn cards halt my c-bet plan and which ones give us the green light to continue?

Cards that stop us from c-betting are cards that make a scary board even more coordinated (like a four-liner to

a straight). Also, bigger cards that are in our opponent's range. If we hold 9-8 suited on a 9-6-2 flop and the turn is a queen, this is a card where we might choose to abandon our delayed c-bet strategy and choose to reassess on the river based on final card and opponent's action. Cards we will c-bet on are cards that do not change the board texture. ♠

Andy "Stacks" Tsai is one of the most familiar faces in the high-stakes poker scene in Los Angeles and Las Vegas and has become known for his regular appearances on the popular live streamed cash games Live at the Bike! at the Bicycle Casino and Hustler Casino Live at the Hustler Casino. Tsai has helped to promote the growth of poker in Asia as a brand ambassador for GGPoker China. You can check out his YouTube channel by searching for Andy Stacks Poker, and he can be found on Twitter and Instagram @AndyStacksPoker.

Cedrric "Poker Traveler" Trevino got his start in small \$10 games with friends. He initially tried his hand at poker after college but ended up spending more than a decade working a corporate job. In 2021 he decided that it was time to follow his dreams, and has since transitioned into a full-time pro, documenting his experiences on YouTube and Instagram @poker_traveler. This summer, Trevino finished 66th in the WSOP main event, banking a career high of \$121,500.

BLUFF CATCHING ON THE RIVER

By Jonathan Little



I recently witnessed this hand in a \$1,000 buy-in event that clearly illustrates a flaw in many poker players' strategies.

With blinds of 200-400 with a 400 big blind ante and with 23,000 effective stacks, everyone folded around to the button, a reasonably tight player, who raised to 900.

The player in the small blind (we will call him Hero) called with 3♣ 3♠, and the big blind, an unknown player, called as well.

The flop came A♠ 5♠ 3♦, giving Hero bottom set. Hero led out for 1,500 into the 3,050 pot.

Hero's lead is the first big error that takes place in this hand. By leading, he puts his opponents on the defense because most players only lead into the aggressor with their best hands and premium draws.

Of course, some players lead with marginal made



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hands, such as A-7 or 6-6 in this situation, but when that is the case, hands like A-J should only call to keep those vastly inferior hands in the pot. Leading is also not a good play because it allows the draws to call and cheaply see the turn.

Hero should have checked, giving both the big blind and the button the opportunity to bet. Once someone bets, Hero can then check-raise, extracting maximum value from strong made hands and pricing out the draws.

If the flop checks through, that isn't the end of the world because most turns will be somewhat safe and Hero can then bet the turn and river for value against two likely weak ranges, which would have been unable to pay off either a flop lead or check-raise anyway.

While there is a time and a place for leading, leading is almost always a bad play on an ace-high board because the ace heavily favors the preflop raiser's range.

Only the big blind called Hero's flop bet. The turn was the 4♦.

While there is now a straight possible, it is not too likely the big blind has it because most people do not call preflop raises with too many hands containing a deuce. Despite this, if Hero bets, the big blind is somewhat unlikely to call unless he has top pair or a better made hand, or a draw.

However, if you look at the big blind's range, it will be difficult to extract much value from middle pair and worse made hands. This should lead Hero to continue betting for value. I would have bet 4,000 into the 6,050 pot unless I got the vibe that the big blind either loved

the turn card or was prone to raise in spots where he should have more nuts than me.

Hero instead checked and the big blind bet 3,000 into the 6,050 pot.

Once Hero checks, he simply has to call the 3,000 bet. Even if Hero doesn't have the best hand with his set, he has the draw to a full house. Notice Hero does not want to check-raise because his opponent will usually fold when he is drawing dead and when he does not fold, Hero is usually crushed.

Hero called, and the river was the 8♠. Hero checked and the big blind bet 10,000 into the 12,050 pot.

When the river completes the flush and the opponent bets large, Hero simply has to fold. If the river did not complete the flush, this would be a closer spot, but now that Hero loses to many more combinations of hands, he has to be disciplined and let his set go. Just because a set is normally quite premium does not mean it is premium every time, and given the action, it is quite likely a set is crushed.

Hero ultimately couldn't find a fold, and lost to the big blind's 5♠ 2♣ ♠.



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

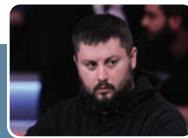
TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2022 World Series of Poker
\$10,000 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event



Adrian Attenborough
59,000,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 43%
After Flop: 37%
After Turn: 2%



Matija Dobric
96,150,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 56%
After Flop: 63%
After Turn: 98%



PREFLOP

With nine players remaining and blinds of 600,000-1,200,000 and a big blind ante of 1,200,000, Adrian Attenborough raised to 2,400,000 from the lojack. Matija Dobric three-bet to 8,000,000 from the hijack, and Attenborough called.



Attenborough checked, and Dobric bet 5,500,000. Attenborough called.



Attenborough checked, and Dobric bet 10,000,000. Attenborough called.



Attenborough checked, and Dobric checked back.

COMMENTARY:

This hand features two of the big stacks at the *World Series of Poker* main event final table clashing in a three-bet pot, with each having turned a flush. Action began with Australian cash game grinder Adrian Attenborough min-raising J-10 suited from the lojack. Chip leader Matija Dobric decided to leverage both his positional and chip advantage, making a three-bet from the hijack with A-7 of the same suit. Attenborough came along with his highly-playable holding and flopped an open-ended straight draw and jack-high flush draw. He check-called the roughly quarter-pot bet of Dobric, who had picked up the nut flush draw. The turn was a gin card for Dobric in the 9♦, giving him the nuts while Attenborough made the third nuts. Attenborough checked a second time. Dobric opted for a third-pot sizing on the turn. Attenborough called the bet, leaving himself with 35,500,000 behind while the pot had ballooned to 50,000,000 heading into the river. The K♣ on the end paired the board, significantly altering how each of the players likely felt about their relative hand strength in this mammoth pot. Attenborough checked a third time. Dobric took around 15 seconds before deciding to check behind. Could Dobric have extracted more value? Perhaps, but he likely decided it wasn't very likely that he would get called by enough worse hands to make it worth reopening the betting. "I think what shocked me was how quickly that decision was made. I wonder, if he thought longer about it, if he would have realized that Attenborough could have a lot of hands that could pay something that don't have him beat," said PokerGO commentator Jamie Kerstetter during the exclusive live coverage. Even without more chips going in on the river, Dobric took down the massive pot to chip up to over 122 million, while Attenborough slid to the second-shortest stack.

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

Initial Decisions In 2-7 Pineapple: Part 1

By Kevin Haney

In Deuce-to-Seven Pineapple (2-7 POFC), as in any pineapple open face Chinese variant, the quality of your initial set decisions play a huge role in your success (or failure) in the game. A pair of kings or better up top is worth big royalties and will also send you to Fantasyland (FL or The Land), therefore building these holdings should be our core strategy.

In order to not foul, these big pairs need to be covered by a better high hand on the bottom and most of the time we should try and build two pair or trips in the back. We should not pursue flushes in the back nearly as often as we would in high only POFC.

When we go flushing in 2-7 POFC, everything must go exactly right in order for us to earn a trip to FL. It's not like POFC where we can make a flush on the bottom, kings in the middle, and queens up top; in 2-7 POFC we are required to place five unpaired low cards to at least a ten low in the middle and those will often compete against the flush we are attempting to build.

That being said, on some initial deals it is sometimes the best play to keep flush possibilities open in the back, but only when most if not all of the following conditions apply:

- ❑ We can put at least one low card in the middle, although two is preferable
- ❑ Our flush cards are very live
- ❑ Our flush draw isn't using a valuable ace or king that is probably best placed up front
- ❑ We aren't breaking up a premium low draw in the middle such as 2-3-4-7 (or even just 2-3-4, 2-3-7 etc.) that can possibly make a wheel and send us to FL

Attempting to build a straight from the start is also something we should very rarely do. Those hands are only worth two bonus points and will also often compete against the hands we are trying to make in the middle and up top.

A wheel (i.e. 2-3-4-5-7) will send us to FL, but other good lows such as sevens and eights are not worth so much (four and two bonus points respectively) that we should go out of our way to build them at the potential expense of other lines. A wheel is always worth pursuing but otherwise the middle can almost be viewed as a "dumping ground" of sorts for low cards that don't help anywhere else.

In all of the following examples we are going to assume that hero is out of position and thus has no knowledge of any other cards. When we have position, we should of course use the extra information we have as tiebreakers for our closer decisions.

Let's warm up with an easy standard 2-7 Pineapple set:

2♥ 7♣ J♦ Q♥ K♣

| |
|-------|
| K♣ |
| 2♥ 7♣ |
| J♦ Q♥ |

Here it's obvious that the deuce and the seven go in the middle and the king gets placed up top to give us fifteen-card FL potential. On the bottom, we are mostly trying to

build two pair or trips to cover a potential pair of kings up top. These are the types of 2-7 hands that tend to play themselves as it's usually obvious where future cards should go.

Queens and jacks will go on the bottom, a king will go up top, and non-pairing low cards go in the middle. An ace would either go on the top or bottom mostly depending whether or not we have already paired the jack or the queen. If we have already paired on the bottom, the ace is best up front as we will often make two pair or better in the back. This preserves our potential to make a full house or quads on the bottom and gives us more outs up front to make a big pair.

2♥ 9♣ J♦ Q♥ K♣

| |
|-------|
| K♣ |
| 2♥ 9♣ |
| J♦ Q♥ |

Here we changed the seven to the nine and our best play is still to start with two low cards in the middle. A nine low is only worth one bonus point; however, there appears to be no better option. We have FL potential with this setting and want to increase the likelihood of making a qualifying low.

2♥ 10♣
J♦ Q♥
K♣

| |
|--------|
| K♣ |
| 2♥ 10♣ |
| J♦ Q♥ |

| |
|-----------|
| K♣ |
| 2♥ |
| 10♣ J♦ Q♥ |

| |
|--------------|
| |
| 2♥ |
| 10♣ J♦ Q♥ K♣ |

This is a below average initial deal where we don't have any great options, but the first setting would be my preferred even though we are capping ourselves at a ten low. Any other setting will make it difficult to get to FL and also increase the odds of not making a qualifying low.

It's a slightly different matter when we have straight-flush draws and it's probably best to set the following deals accordingly:

2♥ 10♣ J♠
Q♣ K♣

| |
|-----------|
| K♣ |
| 2♥ |
| 10♣ J♠ Q♣ |

2♥ 10♣ J♠
Q♣ K♣

| |
|--------------|
| |
| 2♥ |
| 10♣ J♠ Q♣ K♣ |

A straight flush is worth fifteen royalties and a royal is worth 25. Even if these monster holdings don't materialize, a flush draw offers more outs to your holding that won't necessarily compete against other lines. In addition, a flush on the bottom is worth four bonus points as opposed to only two when we make a straight.

Now let's talk about some initial sets containing big pairs:

2♥ 3♣ 7♦ K♥ K♣

| |
|----------|
| K♥ K♣ |
| 2♥ 3♣ 7♦ |
| |

Here we start with a pair of kings and set it up top and will try and cover it with a pair of aces, two pair, or better on the bottom.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|----------|-------|-------------------|--|-------|----------|--|
| 2♥ 3♠ 7♦ A♥ A♠ | <table border="1"><tr><td> </td></tr><tr><td>2♥ 3♠ 7♦</td></tr><tr><td>A♥ A♠</td></tr></table> | | 2♥ 3♠ 7♦ | A♥ A♠ | 2♥ 6♠ 8♦ A♥ A♠ | <table border="1"><tr><td>A♥ A♠</td></tr><tr><td>2♥ 6♠ 8♦</td></tr><tr><td> </td></tr></table> | A♥ A♠ | 2♥ 6♠ 8♦ | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♥ 3♠ 7♦ | | | | | | | | | |
| A♥ A♠ | | | | | | | | | |
| A♥ A♠ | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♥ 6♠ 8♦ | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |

When dealt a pair of aces I won't always place them up top especially if we don't hold any other pair to put on the bottom that will often materialize into two pair or trips. Also, in the first hand since we have a potential wheel brewing, it may make sense to play in a more conservative manner.

In the second hand we lack wheel potential, thus we are risking less by getting more aggressive and placing our aces in the front. Some players always put aces up top while others may often place them in the back. If placing them in the back is a mistake, it probably isn't a huge one as we can still put kings in the front and it also keeps the door open for trips up top.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|----------|-------|-------------------|--|--|----------|-------|
| 2♥ 3♠ 7♦ Q♥ Q♠ | <table border="1"><tr><td> </td></tr><tr><td>2♥ 3♠ 7♦</td></tr><tr><td>Q♥ Q♠</td></tr></table> | | 2♥ 3♠ 7♦ | Q♥ Q♠ | 2♥ 6♠ 8♦ Q♥ Q♠ | <table border="1"><tr><td> </td></tr><tr><td>2♥ 6♠ 8♦</td></tr><tr><td>Q♥ Q♠</td></tr></table> | | 2♥ 6♠ 8♦ | Q♥ Q♠ |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♥ 3♠ 7♦ | | | | | | | | | |
| Q♥ Q♠ | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♥ 6♠ 8♦ | | | | | | | | | |
| Q♥ Q♠ | | | | | | | | | |

We should always place other high pairs such as queens or jacks in the back. While these pairs are worth good royalties up front and are much easier to cover, it's probably not worth the extra risk of fouling as they are not a pathway to FL. In addition, by placing them on the bottom we keep open the possibility of making aces, kings, or trips in the front.

To conclude this issue we will look at some situations where we are dealt a good low from the start:

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|--|--|-------------|----|-------------------|--|--|-------------|----|
| 2♥ 3♠ 4♦ 6♥ 7♠ | <table border="1"><tr><td> </td></tr><tr><td>2♥ 3♠ 4♦ 7♠</td></tr><tr><td>6♥</td></tr></table> | | 2♥ 3♠ 4♦ 7♠ | 6♥ | 2♥ 4♠ 6♦ 7♥ 8♠ | <table border="1"><tr><td> </td></tr><tr><td>2♥ 4♠ 6♦ 7♥</td></tr><tr><td>8♠</td></tr></table> | | 2♥ 4♠ 6♦ 7♥ | 8♠ |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♥ 3♠ 4♦ 7♠ | | | | | | | | | |
| 6♥ | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| 2♥ 4♠ 6♦ 7♥ | | | | | | | | | |
| 8♠ | | | | | | | | | |

In the first hand, breaking the second-best possible low is probably optimal as a five will get us to the Land and a six can end up becoming two pair or trips as easily as any other rank.

Breaking up the made low in the second hand also appears to be the best play as the chances are quite good that over the course of the hand we will get either a three or five which is good for four bonus points (as opposed to two) and overall a seven low has a much greater chance of winning the middle than a rough eight. One can possibly even make the case that we should only keep 2♥ 4♠ 7♥ in the middle.

This was a nice warm-up, next issue we will continue our discussion by examining some more thought-provoking initial setting decisions. ♠



Kevin Haney is a former actuary of MetLife but left the corporate job to focus on his passions for poker and fitness. He is co-owner of Elite Fitness Club in Oceanport, NJ and is a certified personal trainer. With regards to poker he got his start way back in 2003 and particularly enjoys taking

new players interested in mixed games under his wing and quickly making them proficient in all variants. If interested in learning more, playing mixed games online, or just saying hello he can be reached at haneyk612@gmail.com.

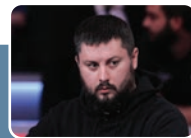
TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2022 World Series of Poker
\$10,000 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event



Espen Jorstad
90,500,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 7%
After Flop: NONE
After Turn: NONE



Matija Dobric
128,950,000 Chips

Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 2%
After Flop: NONE
After Turn: NONE



PREFLOP

With nine players remaining and blinds of 1,000,000-1,500,000 and a big blind ante of 1,500,000, Espen Jorstad raised to 3,000,000 from middle position. Matija Dobric three-bet to 10,000,000 from the cutoff. Jorstad four-bet to 23,000,000, and Dobric folded.

COMMENTARY:

The WSOP main event is known for being more top-heavy than a lot of other tournaments when it comes to the payout distribution at the final table. As a result, the jumps are smaller during the early going. In 2022, there was just an \$899,325 difference between finishing ninth and sixth. That's not even the difference between third and fourth place, which was worth \$1 million. Simply put, there wasn't as much incentive to ladder up the next few payouts. Perhaps this came into play in this particular hand, which saw two of the big stacks at the table square off in a preflop raising war. The hand began with three players at the table sitting with 18 big blinds or less: Adrian Attenborough had 19,000,000 (13 big blinds), Michael Duck had 20,825,000 (14 big blinds) and Phillippe Souki had 27,200,000 (18 big blinds). Espen Jorstad, who was second in chips with 60 big blinds, opened with a min-raise from UTG+2 with K-J suited. It folded around to chip leader Matija Dobric (86 big blinds), who also held K-J, though his cards were not of the same suit. He decided to three-bet to 6.66 big blinds, likely more as a semi-bluff with relevant blockers than as a raise for value. The move looks to put pressure on Jorstad, confronting him with the proposition of playing an inflated pot against the one player who has him out chipped while being out of position. Jorstad, however, wasn't about to back down and relinquish control of the table, and opted to put the onus back on his opponent by four-betting to 15.33 big blinds. Dobric got out of the way after a minute or so of consideration and Jorstad took down the key pot preflop without showdown to become the second player to surpass the 100-million chip mark. Dobric remained atop the leaderboard after the hand, but the gap had been closed considerably.

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

INTENTIONS DON'T MATTER... EXCEPT WHEN THEY DO

By Scott J. Burnham

After playing in a number of events in Las Vegas during the *World Series of Poker*, I can now report on the various rules problems that I witnessed. Here is a tough one to think about as you read on.

It is a tournament at Aria. We are at blinds of 200-300 and the big blind in seat 9 pushes out three black 100 chips. Seat 1, sitting under-the-gun, pushes out a raise of three red 1,000 chips. Seat 2 folds.

Seat 3, who sat down just before the hand was dealt, sees the three chips in front of seat 1, and says “eleven” as he pushes out a 5,000 chip. He then realizes his mistake and explains that he thought seat 1 had called 300 and he was raising to 1,100.

The dealer thinks it might actually be a raise to 11,000. What would you rule?

I can safely report that the most misunderstood rule in poker contin-

ues to be the oversized chip rule, even though players are often reminded of it in the announcements preceding the start of the tournament that no one listens to.

Players pretty much get it when the action comes to them before the flop. If the blinds are 100-200, they generally understand that if they push out a 500 chip, it is a call unless they indicate otherwise by stating “raise” or an amount.

The problem often arises with the blinds. Assume the blinds are 100-200 and the pot is unraised. When it gets to the small blind, she pushes out a 500 chip next to the 100 small blind chip without saying anything.

Is this a call or a raise? Even though the matter is often fiercely contested by players, most of the time the Tournament Director (TD) correctly rules that this is a call.

The rule is found in Tournament

Director’s Association (TDA) Rule 44 (which is almost identical to *WSOP* Rule 97):

Oversized Chip Betting (Overchips)

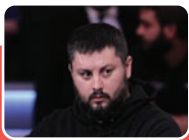
If facing a bet or blind, pushing out a single oversized chip (including your last chip) is a call if raise isn't first declared. To raise with an overchip, you must declare raise before the chip hits the table surface. If raise is declared but no amount is stated, the raise is the maximum allowable for the chip.

Note that the small blind, like the other players, is also “facing a blind,” so the same oversized chip rule applies – the small blind is merely making a call by adding an overchip unless he or she indicates otherwise.

I have to admit yours truly committed a possible infraction of this rule. The blinds were 100-100 and I was in the big blind. There were a bunch of limpers, and when the action got to me, I said, “I hate to spoil the party,” as I pulled back my

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2022 World Series of Poker
\$10,000 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event



Matija Dobric
114,950,000 Chips



Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 25%
After Flop: 33%
After Turn: 18%



Philippe Souki
33,200,000 Chips



Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 73%
After Flop: 64%
After Turn: 82%

PREFLOP

With nine players remaining and blinds of 1,000,000-2,000,000 and a big blind ante of 2,000,000, Matija Dobric raised to 4,000,000 from UTG+1. Philippe Souki called from the big blind.



Souki checked, and Dobric bet 4,000,000. Souki called.



Souki checked, and Dobric moved all in. Souki folded.

COMMENTARY:

32-year-old Croatian poker pro Matija Dobric scored a crucial win in this hand, getting a big semi-bluff all-in move through the top pair of Phillippe Souki, who was the fourth-shortest stack when the hand began. With the blinds up, the three players below Souki on the leaderboard were sitting between roughly 8 and 13 big blinds. Souki, who started the hand with 16.7 big blinds, defended K-J from the big blind facing a UTG+1 min-raise from Dobric, the chip leader. Dobric flopped an open-ended straight draw with his Q-J, while Souki made top pair with a jack kicker. Souki checked his top pair, likely hoping to control the size of the pot with several short-stacked observers watching with interest around the table. Dobric bet 4,000,000 into the pot of 11,000,000 and Souki made the call. As a result, the pot grew to 19,000,000, while Souki was left with just 23,200,000 behind. He checked a second time. Even with the top-heavy structure of this event, Dobric likely figured that Souki would feel a lot of pressure to avoid being knocked out with three players on sub-15-big-blind stacks. With just more than a pot-sized bet remaining in his opponent’s stack, Dobric elected to move all in with his draw. After more than two minutes of thought, Souki ultimately opted to lay down top pair. Unfortunately for him, he had folded as more than a 4:1 favorite in the hand, forfeiting a crucial portion of his stack to Dobric without showdown. As a result, Dobric extended his lead while Souki was left with just shy of 12 big blinds after the hand. He got a shove through not long after that to chip up slightly, before rebounding a bit by picking up pocket kings against pocket eights to eliminate fellow short stack Matthew Su in ninth place (\$850,675).

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

100 chip and replaced it with a 500 chip.

A couple of eyebrows went up around the table. The dealer asked me, “Is that a raise?” I hate it when dealers do that, because, as I have said a thousand times, my intention does not matter. She should have told me whether it was a raise or not without asking my intention. But of course I said, “Yes – raise,” and the hand played out.

Shortly thereafter, a player left the table and when he came back, he reported that he had asked the floor what they would have ruled in the situation. He said that the floor said it would be considered to be a raise “because it was my action.”

Now that seems to me a stupid explanation. When the oversized chip rule comes up, it is always your action. Looking at the plain language of the rule, I think it should have been judged a call.

I said afterwards that my intention was to make a raise, but who knows what went on in my head? Maybe my intention was just to get some change. Intentions don’t matter.

I did say, “I hate to spoil the

party,” which certainly sounds like an intention to raise, but nonstandard language is discouraged. As stated in TDA Rule 3, “using non-standard terms or gestures is at player’s risk and may result in a ruling other than what the player intended.” I got away with it, but lesson learned.

Back to the Aria tournament puzzle posed earlier. The dealer said, “I’m not going to decide this,” and called for the floor. The floor said, “I’m not going to decide this,” and called for the TD.

The TD pondered and may have been influenced by the player’s intentions and cut him some slack when he ruled that it was a call. But this interpretation is also supported by the relevant rule, TDA Rule 57 (which is almost identical to WSOP Rule 60):

Non-Standard & Unclear Betting

If a declared bet can legally have multiple meanings, it will be ruled the highest reasonable amount that is less than or equal to the pot size before the bet. Ex: NLHE 200-400, the pot totals less than 5000, player declares “I bet five.” With no other clarifying information, the bet is 500; if the pot totals 5000 or more, the bet is 5000. *The pot is the total of all prior bets*

including any bets in front of a player not yet pulled in.

In this case, there were blinds of 200 and 300, a big blind ante of 300, and a raise to 3,000. The pot therefore totaled 3,800 when the player said “eleven,” which could have meant either 1,100 or 11,000. Since 1,100 is less than the pot size, it would be ruled a bet of 1,100, but since that is not a reasonable amount, it will be ruled “the highest reasonable amount that is less than or equal to the pot size.” So ruling that it was a call of 3,000 seemed correct in this case – because that is what the rule says, not because it was the player’s intention not to raise.

Anyway, I’ll say it one more time: To make life easier for everyone, make your intentions clear using standard language. ♠



Scott J. Burnham is Professor Emeritus at Gonzaga University School of Law in Spokane, Washington. He can be reached at profburnham@yahoo.com.

TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

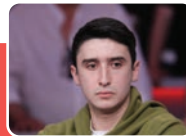
2022 World Series of Poker
\$10,000 No-Limit Hold’em Main Event



Philippe Souki
41,800,000 Chips



Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 68%
After Flop: 85%
After Turn: 93%



Michael Duek
52,650,000 Chips



Winning Percentage
Before Flop: 27%
After Flop: 13%
After Turn: 7%

PREFLOP

With eight players remaining and blinds of 1,000,000-2,000,000 and a big blind ante of 2,000,000, Philippe Souki raised to 4,000,000 from under the gun. Michael Duek three-bet to 10,500,000 from the hijack, and Souki called.



Souki checked, and Duek bet 5,500,000. Souki called.



Both players checked.



Souki checked, and Duek moved all-in. Souki folded.

COMMENTARY:

Phillip Souki and Michael Duek had both spent most of the day among the shortest stacks at the final table. While they remained at the bottom of the leaderboard, both had managed to chip up considerably in the hour before this hand took place. Duek doubled through the chip leader, while Souki had knocked out a fellow short stack to narrow the field to eight. In this hand, Souki min-raised as the first to act with A-Q suited. It folded around to Duek in the hijack, who opted to three-bet to 5.25 big blinds with his A-2 suited. Souki made the call and the pair saw a nine-high flop with two hearts. Souki checked with his two overcards and backdoor flush possibilities. Duek had only picked up backdoor outs to the wheel on the flop, but he opted to keep his foot on the gas with a continuation bet of roughly one-fifth of the size of the pot. This smaller sizing likely played a role in Souki making the call from out of position, which left him with 25,800,000 while the pot ballooned to 37,000,000. The turn brought the J♣. Souki checked and Duek checked behind. The K♦ river saw Souki check for the third time. Duek had arrived at the river with the worst possible ace-high holding. Likely deciding that wasn’t strong enough to showdown, he elected to move all-in as a bluff to apply maximum pressure on his opponent. Duek was likely trying to target folds from precisely the type of holding that Souki had, which was something that would beat him at showdown, but would not be excited to put any more chips into the pot. The gutsy move paid off for Duek, as Souki folded to send the crucial pot his way. Souki went on to finish eighth for \$1,075,000. Duek, a 23-year-old Argentinian-born venture capitalist now living in Miami, Florida, ultimately placed third for \$4,000,000.

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

HOW THE CHOICE-SUPPORTIVE BIAS AFFECTS POKER PLAYERS

By Greg Raymer

This is the seventh and final article in a series discussing how cognitive biases can affect us at the poker table. You can read the entire series on CardPlayer.com.

I'll finish this long-running series with the Choice-Supportive Bias. When suffering from this bias, once you make a choice, you tend to support that choice no matter what.

This bias strikes especially hard for long-lasting decisions. Once you choose a life partner, a best friend, which house or car to buy, which politician or political party to support, it is very difficult to reconsider such decisions. It is emotionally painful to admit that you made a mistake with such an important choice. It is emotionally easier to find and believe in (even clearly mistaken) reasons to continue to support such important choices.

Of course, when playing poker, you make a choice (bet, check, raise, etc.) and find out rather quickly if that choice was the best one. At least, you find out if it was the best choice, in hindsight, for this specific hand.

It's kind of like buying or selling a stock. Every day after, you learn if that choice made or saved you money, or if it cost you money. However, in both situations, the fact that a choice was correct in hindsight has very little to do with how smart the choice was at the time it was made.

This bias hurts us the most when it works in combination with selective memory and reinforces bad decisions. For example, let us stipulate that a player, Jim, has decided that it is a mistake to play draws aggressively. Jim believes that the smart play is to just call with every draw until it gets there, and only then start betting or raising with a made hand.

Of course, in hindsight, sometimes Jim will be correct. And in other cases, Jim will have been wrong. But suffering from the Choice-Supportive Bias, he will more strongly remember the times he was right, since those hands support his choice to play all draws passively. This will result in Jim never learning how to determine when to play a draw aggressively. He will be stuck in his misguided strategy, since to acknowledge any alternate strategy would mean having to admit he had been wrong.

And that is the root cause of the Choice-Supportive Bias. It protects our ego. By focusing on data that supports our choice, and minimizing data that contradicts our choice, we protect our ego from learning we were wrong.

It can be painful to admit you made a mistake. All of us can blithely say, "of course I don't know it all, I'm wrong all the time." But in reality, how often do we confess, even to ourselves, that we were wrong? Even more so if the mistake is of any consequence. And how often do we confess this to other people? That is even harder to do. It is much easier to let this bias take over, and protect ourselves from our own failings.

The problem is, if we permit this bias to control us



like this, we will find it almost impossible to learn and improve. If we fool ourselves into believing we play perfectly, we won't be motivated to put in the work to improve our game. Our skill level will stagnate, or even decline, rather than get better.

Here is a story showing how far people will go, rather than admit a mistake. I used to be a card counter, and played a lot of blackjack. One night there was an older gentleman at the table, probably in his mid-70s. He had bet \$10, and was dealt 9-8.

When the dealer got to him, he put out \$10 more next to his original bet. It was fairly obvious his vision was less than perfect, and he thought he had 8-8 or 9-9. The dealer told him he could only split pairs. He became flustered, and realized his mistake.

However, rather than admit he had not seen clearly, he now said he wanted to double-down. On a hard 17! The dealer tried to talk him out of it, as did the pit boss. But he insisted it was his money, and he could do what he wanted. So, rather than admit to failing eyesight, he instead chose to double-down in a spot where he was a 9:4 favorite to bust, which would cost him \$20.

It was amazing to observe, that he would prefer to burn money, rather than admit his vision was less than perfect. Even more interesting, it seemed he would prefer to do something blindingly stupid, rather than admit to a minor physical flaw. Personally, my ego would be harmed more by being seen as stupid, as compared to being seen as having imperfect vision.

For everything I have discussed in this series, you need to monitor your mindset, to make sure you aren't letting any of these biases influence your thinking. It requires a discipline of constant awareness, continually guarding against the encroachment of these biases. Only when this awareness becomes habit will you have permanently removed them from your game. More likely, it is something you will overcome, then fall prey to, and need to overcome again. It is something we all have to work on forever, if we wish to avoid these traps. I know I do.

Have fun, and play smart! ♠



Greg Raymer is the 2004 WSOP world champion, winner of numerous major titles, and has more than \$7 million in earnings. He is the author of "FossilMan's Winning Tournament Strategies," available from D&B Publishing, Amazon, and other retailers. He is sponsored by Blue Shark Optics, YouStake, and ShareMyPair. To contact Greg please tweet at him using @FossilMan or go to www.FossilManPoker.com.

Card Player

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

Download it directly to your device from any number of mobile apps, such as Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Google Play, or Spotify. Catch up on past episodes featuring notables such as Doyle Brunson, Antonio Esfandiari, Daniel Negreanu, Jennifer Harman, Justin Bonomo, Nick Schulman, Patrik Antonius, Fedor Holz, Barry Greenstein, Michael Mizrachi, Scotty Nguyen, Mike Sexton, Maria Ho, and many more.



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SCHEDULES

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| | | | |
|------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| AUGUST | Aug. 29-Oct. 2 | DeepStack Extravaganza III | Venetian Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV |
| SEPTEMBER | Sept. 15-26 | WSOP Circuit Omaha/Iowa | Horseshoe Casino & Hotel ■ Council Bluffs, IA |
| | Sept. 21-Oct. 2 | Poker Masters | Aria PokerGO Studio ■ Las Vegas, NV |
| | Sept. 29-Oct. 10 | WSOP Circuit Northern California | Thunder Valley Casino Resort ■ Lincoln, CA |
| OCTOBER | Oct. 5-7 | Super High Roller Bowl VII | Aria PokerGO Studio ■ Las Vegas, NV |
| | Oct. 7-23 | WPT Five Diamond | Bellagio Hotel Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV |
| | Oct. 13-24 | WSOP Circuit Florida | Isle Casino ■ Pompano Beach, FL |
| | Oct. 20-31 | WSOP Circuit Lake Tahoe | Harvey's Lake Tahoe ■ Lake Tahoe, NV |
| | Oct. 26-Nov.15 | World Series of Poker Europe | Kings Casino ■ Rozvadov, Czech Republic |
| | Oct. 27-Nov. 15 | Card Player Poker Tour | bestbet Jacksonville ■ Jacksonville, FL |
| NOVEMBER | Nov. 3-13 | WSOP Circuit Choctaw | Choctaw Casino & Resort ■ Durant, OK |
| | Nov. 10-21 | WSOP Circuit Chicago | Grand Victoria Casino ■ Elgin, IL |
| | Nov. 16-30 | WPT Rock 'N' Roll Poker Open | Seminole Hard Rock ■ Hollywood, FL |
| | Nov. 24-Dec. 5 | WSOP Circuit North Carolina | Harrah's Casino ■ Cherokee, NC |
| DECEMBER | Dec. 1-20 | WPT World Championship | Wynn ■ Las Vegas, NV |
| | Dec. 3-14 | WSOP Circuit Los Angeles | Parkwest Bicycle Casino ■ Bell Gardens, CA |
| | Dec. 20 | PGT Championship | Aria PokerGO Studio ■ Las Vegas, NV |

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

CALIFORNIA

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

CHUMASH - SANTA YNEZ

THURSDAY

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$40

SATURDAY

12:15 p.m. NLH, \$120

OCEAN'S ELEVEN - OCEANSIDE

MONDAY-THURSDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$75 AO \$5

5:00 p.m. NLH, \$95 KO \$20 AO \$5

FRIDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$75 AO \$5

SATURDAY-SUNDAY

10:00 a.m. NLH, \$230 AO \$10

FLORIDA

BESTBET - JACKSONVILLE

MONDAY

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

WEDNESDAY

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

FRIDAY

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

SUNDAY

MARYLAND

LIVE! CASINO & HOTEL - HANOVER

MONDAY

11:15 a.m. NLH, \$120 KO \$25

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

TUESDAY

11:15 a.m. NLH, \$130

7:15 p.m. NLH, \$200 KO \$50 (\$10K Guarantee)

WEDNESDAY

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

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

THURSDAY

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

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

FRIDAY

11:15 a.m. NLH, \$220

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

SUNDAY

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

NEVADA

SOUTH POINT CASINO - LAS VEGAS

MONDAY

10:05 a.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 2:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)
 6:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 10:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)

TUESDAY

10:05 a.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 2:05 p.m. O H/L, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)
 6:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 10:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)

WEDNESDAY

10:05 a.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 2:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)
 6:05 p.m. NLH, \$150 (\$15K Guarantee)
 10:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)

THURSDAY

10:05 a.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 2:05 p.m. O H/L, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)
 6:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 10:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)

FRIDAY

10:05 a.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 2:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)
 6:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 10:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)

SATURDAY

10:05 a.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 2:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)
 6:05 p.m. NLH, \$150 (\$15K Guarantee)
 10:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)

SUNDAY

10:05 a.m. NLH, \$60 (\$3K Guarantee)
 2:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)
 6:05 p.m. NLH, \$150 (\$15K Guarantee)
 10:05 p.m. NLH, \$60 (\$1.5K Guarantee)

NORTH CAROLINA

HARRAH'S - CHEROKEE

MONDAY-THURSDAY

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$140
 10:00 p.m. NLH, \$80

FRIDAY

8:00 p.m. NLH, \$250

SUNDAY

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

OREGON

WILDHORSE - PENDLETON

TUESDAY

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

THURSDAY

6:30 p.m. NLH, \$55 AO \$5

FRIDAY

6:30 p.m. NLH, \$80 AO \$5

SATURDAY

1:00 p.m. NLH, \$115 AO \$5

SUNDAY

1:00 p.m. NLH, \$35 AO \$5

TEXAS

PRIME SOCIAL CLUB - HOUSTON

MONDAY-FRIDAY

12:00 p.m. NLH, \$130 (\$5K Guarantee)

SATURDAY

2:00 p.m. NLH, \$300 (\$20K Guarantee)

SUNDAY

1:00 p.m. NLH, \$250 (\$5K Guarantee)



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Playing A Pair And Flush Draw

Hero (B)
106,930

Villain (HJ)
65,250

BE THE SHARK
POKERCOACHING.COM

Blinds - 250-500 with a 50 ante

You are eight-handed in a \$3,500 buy-in online event. The blinds are 250-500 and you have a massive stack of 106,930 chips. A tight, aggressive player UTG+1 raises to 1,200 and is called only by the hijack before it folds to you on the button. You look down at J♣ 7♣.

Question 1: Should you fold, call, three-bet to 3,200, or three-bet to 5,000?

Answer: This is an interesting spot with a borderline hand. While you do have position and are deep stacked, folding is the best play the vast majority of the time. Would you call with J-7 offsuit? The answer is definitely no, so does the fact that your J-7 is suited doesn't make much of a difference?

If you are considering playing this hand, three-betting the size of the pot is preferable to calling because that gives you a decent amount of pre-flop fold equity. If your opponents play especially poorly post-flop and you play especially well, calling gains some merit.

You elect to make the splashy play and call. The big blind calls as well and the flop comes Q♣ J♠ 4♣ giving you a pair and a flush draw. UTG+1 checks and the hijack bets 2,200 (38% pot).

Question 2: Should you fold, call, raise to 5,100, or raise to 8,800?

Answer: Normally when you have a pair and a draw, the pair is the overriding factor in making your decision. However, when you are multi-way you need to be way more inclined to raise for value and protection.

If you raise, the big blind and the initial raiser are forced into folding out hands like A-K, A-10, and A-9 that have decent equity against you. Additionally, the loose, aggressive hijack may be betting with worse flush draws that they will call a raise with.

While you may be behind with the Q♣ on the board, cleaning up your equity is more important than keeping the pot small, and with your pair and draw, you have a chance of improving when you happen to be behind.

You raise making it 5,100, the small blind and UTG+1 fold, and the hijack calls. The turn is the 4♥ and the hijack checks.

Question 3: Should you check behind, bet 4,200, bet 8,600, or bet 14,200?

Answer: With the 4♥ you again have two options: checking or betting small. By betting small, you are going for thin value and protection, with the option to make a big river bet when you feel inclined. Betting the turn does not do much in terms of value, but it does set the pot up for a large river bet when you improve, and it may also induce calls from junky draws that you crush.

Alternatively, you can check behind and keep the pot small, which also makes it impossible to get check-raised.

You bet 4,200 and the hijack calls. The river is the 4♦ and your opponent bets 1,500 (6% pot).

Question 4: Should you fold, call, raise to 3,600, or go all-in?

Answer: By betting 1,500, your opponent is essentially checking, and if they were to check, what would you do? In that situation, you would probably check behind and see the showdown for free, so how does that influence your approach to this bet? There is no merit in raising, no merit in folding, so calling is the only viable option.

You make the call and your opponent reveals K♥ Q♦ for a better full house. While it may have been better to fold the J♣ 7♣ pre-flop, keeping the pot manageable prevented you from losing a gigantic pot with your pair and flush draw.

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