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# EVENT #81: \$10,000 MAIN EVENT

WEDNESDAY	JULY 3	DAY 1A
THURSDAY	JULY 4	DAY 1B
FRIDAY	JULY 5	DAY 1C
SATURDAY	JULY 6	DAY 1D
SUNDAY	JULY 7	DAY 2ABC
MONDAY	JULY 8	DAY 2D
TUESDAY	JULY 9	DAY 3
WEDNESDAY	JULY 10	DAY 4
THURSDAY	JULY 11	DAY 5
FRIDAY	JULY 12	DAY 6
SATURDAY	JULY 13	DAY 7
SUNDAY	JULY 14	DAY 8
TUESDAY	JULY 16	FINAL TABLE (DAY 1)
WEDNESDAY	JULY 17	FINAL TABLE (DAY 2)

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Cover © Moneymaker Poker Tour

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## DOUG POLK, LODGE OWNERS PURCHASE SAN ANTONIO POKER ROOM

Plans Call To Expand In Texas, Starting With Former 'Rounders' Location

By Sean Chaffin

After getting turned down by a Dallas-area suburb for a poker room in May, Doug Polk and other owners of the Lodge Poker Club in Round Rock, Texas, responded with the announcement that they were purchasing Rounders Card Club in San Antonio.

The Lodge takes over operations on July 3 with the card room initially remaining in the current location. However, the Lodge plans to relocate the club to a vacant retail location next door that was formerly an Office Depot. The move would double the number of tables available and create the space for a 4,000-square foot restaurant.

"Lodge Card Club's long-term goal is to offer poker to as many people as possible, starting with the largest cities in Texas and expanding from there," Polk noted in a news release announcing the deal. "San Antonio, the third largest city in the state, is a perfect place for our second location. We ultimately decided that, rather than trying to start from scratch, it made sense to acquire the largest room, then try to make improvements."

Poker clubs continue to grow in number across the Lone Star State, although there has been some pushback concerning legality, especially in north Texas. The newly Lodge-branded location is the largest club currently in San Antonio.

The Lodge ownership group said that operations will not be interrupted as the property changes hands and that tour-



naments and cash games would continue.

As part of the purchase, the Lodge also announced a \$1-\$2 meet up game on July 26 featuring poker vloggers and Lodge co-owners Brad Owen and Andrew Neeme to celebrate the acquisition. That will be followed by a \$300 tournament on July 27 with a \$50,000 guarantee. ♠

## NEW JERSEY ONLINE CASINO REVENUE EDGES CLOSER TO BRICK-AND-MORTAR NUMBERS

By Sean Chaffin

New Jersey was on the forefront of the new state-by-state approach to online gaming after legalizing the industry, including poker, in 2013. Now recent revenue reports have shown that iGaming has become so popular that it's catching up with the revenue produced by traditional Garden State casinos.

In April, live casinos reported total revenue of \$216.8 million while online gaming came in at \$187.9 million. That was an increase of 18.2% for online gaming from the same month in 2023 and exemplifies how close iGaming is to catching traditional gaming – a gap of just under \$29 million.

The changes come as New Jersey has seen some dips in live casino revenue over the last few months, although April saw some increases. Some casino union representatives have expressed

concern as the state faces increased competition from properties in neighboring states.

"As lawmakers continue to proceed with the annual state budget process, representatives in the New Jersey Legislature must understand the perilous economic situation at hand for my members, and indeed all workers in Atlantic City," Unite Here Local 54 President Donna DeCaprio said in April.

"Not only is the overall in-person revenue troubling — but the size of the declines at some of the individual properties portends some serious instability for thousands of workers. The legislators need to take this into consideration as they consider policies that could compound the downward trends."

The April numbers narrowed the

revenue gap between live and online gaming more when compared to March. That month saw Atlantic City casinos with revenue of \$239.8 million, an increase of 4.9% from \$228.6 million in March 2023.

As the gap continues to close and online gaming continues to see major growth in New Jersey and in other legalized states, it seems that online gaming may eventually produce even higher numbers than live casinos.

Experts in the industry point to several reasons for this including ease of use, lower betting limits, and a wider selection of games. Despite the iGaming growth, online poker has mostly remained flat in recent months. Some believe that more shared liquidity, such as the expansion by WSOP.com recently, can help turn that trend around. ♠

## CHRIS MONEYSMAKER REOPENS POKER CLUB IN KENTUCKY

By Sean Chaffin

Chris Moneysmaker's Kentucky poker room is back – albeit in a new location. After closing a venue in Paducah in February 2023, the Moneysmaker Social club reopened in early June in Louisville.

The 2003 *World Series of Poker* main event winner released a video detailing plans for the room's opening. The location is just a short drive from the University of Louisville.

Moneysmaker's club becomes the second room to open in the state. The property follows a similar business model as in Texas, where players pay a membership fee as they might at a country club, instead of the house taking a rake of the action.

That amounts to membership dues of \$80 a month or \$10 per day. Players also pay a \$7 seat fee every half hour. The room features eight tables, with room for expansion. There is only cash game play currently, but tournaments will be added at some point as well. The club seems a likely location for a *Moneysmaker Tour* stop, which launched in 2023 and has now



run several events.

Moneysmaker believes the new room has threaded the needle when it comes to state law. The venue's manager, Christine Russell, told *PokerNews* that the district attorney has given the go-ahead on the model and "is excited to have us here."

The Paducah room faced much more local opposition, including threats from local law enforcement, according to news reports at the time. Those concerns now seem to have subsided with the new location.

Beyond the tour and new business venture in Kentucky, it's been a nice few months for the Poker Hall of Famer on the poker felt as well. In May, Moneysmaker won a *Triton* high roller event in Montenegro for \$903,000 while taking third in another high roller for \$311,000. The ACR Poker pro also took sixth in the *Venom* online event for another \$382,007.

Read our interview with the Poker Hall of Famer on pg. 14. ♠

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# CASINO SUES LAS VEGAS FORMULA 1 RACE, CLARK COUNTY

By Card Player News Team

Not everyone is happy about how the Las Vegas Grand Prix Formula 1 race turned out. A group of businesses has said they incurred major financial losses because of construction and road closures associated with the November race, and now one is taking race officials and Clark County to court.

Ellis Island casino, located just off the Strip east of the Horseshoe and Paris casinos, filed a lawsuit April 30 alleging that traffic congestion and other issues with the race negatively affects customers, vendors, and casino operations. This resulted in the casino spending “hundreds of thousands of dollars to employ their own flaggers” to help alleviate traffic congestion.

The casino reported that overall, the property lost \$4 million because of the race. The lawsuit alleges that participating partner casinos were misled as to the extent that roads would be closed, noting that the project manager previously represented that “entrances/exits for Ellis Island will not be impacted during construction.”

The lawsuit argues that this turned out not to be the case, costing the property significant business. The lawsuit also contends that casinos and other businesses dealt with unexpected changes in race operations and infrastructure.

“F1’s announced construction schedule, inclusive of paving and constructing the [temporary] Flamingo Bridge, would continue to fluctuate with no advance notice to plaintiffs, with each construction event impeding and interfering with plaintiffs’ customers’ ingress and egress, as well as the ingress and

egress of Plaintiffs’ vendors and other third parties it conducts business with, which caused disruption to those contracts and Plaintiffs’ business and business dealings,” lawsuit documents say.

“Between June and September 2023, F1 and its agents inconsistently timed their road paving schedules, leading to road closures on a daily basis with no notice to plaintiffs. Plaintiffs were forced to pay for road flaggers to work between 12 and 14 hours a day to minimize (if not prevent) the resulting traffic build-up from blocking entrances to Ellis Island.”

The lawsuit also criticized the county’s negotiation for the race and that property owners weren’t given enough public input and now face nine more years of the race in this environment.

While some reports indicated record profits during the race for a few marquee casino properties, others reported that that weekend spike was nowhere near enough to offset the many months of lost business leading up to the race, not to mention the traffic nightmare for casino employees trying to get to work each day. A recent poll from Emerson College reported that only 57% of locals surveyed viewed the race as a positive. ♠



## TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2024 World Series of Poker  
\$25,000 No-Limit Hold'em Six-Max Event



Taylor von Kriegenbergh  
7,575,000 Chips



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 66%  
After Flop: 75%  
After Turn: 86%



Brek Schutten  
7,225,000 Chips



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 34%  
After Flop: 25%  
After Turn: 14%

### PREFLOP

With five players remaining and blinds of 150,000-300,000 with a big blind ante of 300,000, Taylor von Kriegenbergh raised to 850,000 from the small blind. Brek Schutten called from the big blind.



Von Kriegenbergh bet 800,000, and Schutten called.



Von Kriegenbergh checked, and Schutten bet 1,700,000. Von Kriegenbergh folded.

### COMMENTARY:

Brek Schutten may be a healthcare worker by trade, but this hand shows that he’s got the chops to tangle with the top tournament poker players in the world. Schutten, a *World Poker Tour* champion and ICU nurse, came into this high-stakes tournament with more than \$3.9 million in prior tournament earnings. Schutten looked down at Q-10 in the big blind facing a nearly 3x raise from fellow *WPT* winner Taylor von Kriegenbergh, who had A-K suited in the small blind and almost \$5 million in prior tournament earnings to his name. Neither player connected meaningfully with the eight-high flop, but von Kriegenbergh understandably followed through with a continuation bet to back up his preflop aggression. Schutten floated with his queen high, likely with the design of forcing his opponent off his hand on later streets if given the chance. The turn brought another low card and von Kriegenbergh did opt to slow down with a check. From his perspective, this type of board texture might have seemed more likely to connect with Schutten’s defending range than his preflop raising range. Schutten jumped at the opportunity, firing 1,700,000 into the pot of 3,600,000. The bet represented nearly a third of Schutten’s remaining chips. It was enough to force von Kriegenbergh off of his unimproved A-K high, earning Schutten some crucial chips without a showdown. He climbed into a virtual tie for the chip lead after the hand, while von Kriegenbergh slid to below 20 big blinds.

© PokerGO / Miguel Cortes

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



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Thu	Aug 15	6pm	Event #1 No Limit Hold'em Flight 2	\$400	30 min	25,000
Fri	Aug 16	12pm	Event #1 No Limit Hold'em Flight 3	\$400	30 min	25,000
Fri	Aug 16	6pm	Event #1 No Limit Hold'em Flight 4	\$400	30 min	25,000
Sat	Aug 17	12pm	Event #1 No Limit Hold'em Flight 5	\$400	30 min	25,000
Sat	Aug 17	6pm	Event #1 No Limit Hold'em Flight 6	\$400	30 min	25,000
Sun	Aug 18	12pm	Event #1 Final Day bestbetLIVE		30 min	
Sun	Aug 18	1pm	Event #2 No Limit Hold'em Progressive Knockout	\$400	30 min	20,000
Mon	Aug 19	12pm	Event #3 No Limit Hold'em	\$300	30 min	20,000
Tue	Aug 20	12pm	Event #4 No Limit Hold'em MEGA STACK	\$360	30 min	50,000
Tue	Aug 20	3pm	Event #5 Big O/8 or Better	\$300	30 min	20,000
Wed	Aug 21	12pm	Event #6 No Limit Hold'em 6 Max	\$660	30 min	25,000
Wed	Aug 21	3pm	Event #7 No Limit Hold'em Ladies Event bestbetLIVE	\$300	30 min	20,000
Thu	Aug 22	12pm	Mystery Bounty Main Event Day 1A	\$1,700	40 min	30,000
Fri	Aug 23	12pm	Mystery Bounty Main Event Day 1B	\$1,700	40 min	30,000
Sat	Aug 24	12pm	Mystery Bounty Main Event Day 1C	\$1,700	40 min	30,000
Sun	Aug 25	12pm	Mystery Bounty Main Event Day 2		40 min	
Sun	Aug 25	1pm	Event #8 The bestbet 500	\$500	30 min	20,000
Mon	Aug 26	2pm	Mystery Bounty Main Event Final Table bestbetLIVE		40 min	

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# CHRIS MONEYMAKER'S PERSONAL POKER BOOM

Hall Of Famer Talks High Rollers, Card Room, Tour, And Coffee Brand

By Sean Chaffin



A new poker tour, a new card room, taking an active role in an online poker site, being a family man, and there's even a coffee brand in the works. Oh, and he also works in some time at the poker table.

Chris MoneyMaker is a busy man these days. And while most poker fans have his name etched in their memories for winning the 2003 *World Series of Poker* main event and subsequently helping to kick off the poker boom, MoneyMaker has spent the last couple of years adding significantly to a résumé that already had him in the Poker Hall of Fame.

At age 48, MoneyMaker finds himself playing the best poker of his career. In fact, his last year on the felt has been more lucrative than any time since turning an \$86 online poker satellite win into an entry into the *WSOP* and a score of \$2.5 million.

In August of last year, MoneyMaker ventured to London for the Triton high roller series, surprising competitors not

only with his presence, but his play in a \$250,000 buy-in event, grabbing fifth for \$2 million.

The truth is that MoneyMaker didn't even want to play *Triton* events, but decided to make the trip after some prodding from his sponsor, ACR Poker. As it turns out, it was a push in the right direction. (He has been with the site since 2020 after ending a 17-year deal with PokerStars.)

Not only did MoneyMaker final table the online *Venom* event, outlasting more than 5,000 entries for a \$382,007 payday, but then in May, ACR sent him back to *Triton*, where this time he found the winner's circle.

While in Montenegro, he topped a field of 107 entries, many of the best in the world, in the \$25,000 GG Million\$ event for \$903,000. If that weren't enough, he followed that up with a third-place finish in a \$40,000 Mystery Bounty event for another \$311,000.

"I was kicking and screaming going to both of them," he

© MoneyMaker Poker Tour / Omar Soder



admitted.

Despite his reluctance, Moneymaker was pleased to see some big results. Even after a long career at the table, the wins add even more to the Poker Hall of Famer's legacy.

"Obviously, it feels really good to win anything, but winning at that level is really incredible," he said. "Everybody knows every one of those players and how good they are, so having success in that realm is really good. I went above expectation, but it still feels nice. The London trip and the Montenegro trip, I had a magical run there. It feels amazing."

Overall, the poker business has been good for Moneymaker. His namesake tour, which launched in the summer 2023, continues adding stops and new partner casinos, and is now expanding internationally.

Although he scoffs at having to endure more international travel for high rollers, his deal with ACR Poker has been a boon, giving Moneymaker a more active role in helping expand the brand.

And after having to close down his first attempt at a card room in Paducah, Kentucky, last year due to legal issues, Moneymaker Social club recently opened in Louisville on more solid footing.

The poker legend recently spoke with *Card Player* about his life in the game, his expanding business, the sponsorship front, earning trophies, and more.

#### Table Talk

Moneymaker has no interest in being at the top of the all-time money list, and running simulators and being part of a poker study session is not something he wants on his agenda. Poker has always been an entertaining vocation that happens to also provide him with a nice living. Considering that mindset, it's no wonder that he wasn't too interested in heading around the globe to play cards at some of the highest stakes.

"I generally play poker for fun," he said. "I like playing against people that are enjoying themselves, and I like to play people I know I can beat. I've made a living playing people that are worse than me. They have a good time and I take their money. That's been a good relationship. You start getting into *Tritons* and these brilliant sickos well, it's really hard. Those guys are good. They don't really give anything away. It's really hard to say I'm going to fly halfway across the world to go play in a tournament where my expectation of winning is significantly less than if I went five hours away from the house."

As a *Triton* sponsor, ACR Poker usually sends a couple team pros to play in tour events. When Moneymaker signed with the company, he hoped to reduce some time on air-planes.

"When I signed my deal with them, part of the thing I wanted to do is slow down on my travel," he recalled. "I was going to do my own poker tour, my social rooms, and do things that are a little bit more local and I was able to stay at home with the family. And now I'm looking at going to Uruguay and other places. It's just a little bit of a change from what I had originally intended, but when you pick up some wins it makes it worthwhile."

Despite those big scores, Moneymaker says he has no interest spending hours a day fine-tuning his game. As a father and businessman, he's too busy and also just doesn't want to get that deep into the weeds, which he feels might take away the fun of the game. He has found himself working on some bigger-picture plays in recent months, but just doesn't focus on spending hours breaking down hands.

"I don't work (on poker skills) as much as everybody thinks I do," he admitted. "Obviously I've been working on it, but I don't study GTO and I don't study solvers. I play online. If I get stuck in a big hand, I'll review that hand and



see what I could have done differently. I'm not out here running sims. I pretty much play based on situations. I know the ranges you're supposed to play. The thing about *Triton* is a lot of it's 20-big blind poker and under. I play a lot of online poker so I know 20-big blind poker and under, so it's not that hard."

### Joining The ACR Team

MoneyMaker found his most recent big run online ironic as playing in a previous *Venom* tournament was what led to him joining the ACR Poker team as a sponsored pro. He played his first *Venom* during the pandemic and made the final table, which led to some interesting discussions.

"When you make the final table, the CEO (Phil Nagy) calls you and wishes you good luck," he says. "And he calls me up and he's like, 'Hey, is this who I think it is?' Because on my account, my name was hidden but I registered under my own name and used all my true information. So, he knew who I was, but I was like, 'Do you mind not telling people that I'm playing?' PokerStars would not like that because I was still with them at the time."

Nagy assured MoneyMaker his secret was safe. The two kept in touch and in August 2020, Nagy asked about the status of his contract with Stars. He'd been on recurring two-year contracts with the company and that was up in January. Nagy asked what it would take to buy him out and bring him on board at ACR.

"Negotiations lasted all of about five minutes and I was an ACR pro," he says. "So I got my contract with ACR and I final tabled the biggest *Venom* in history, so it's been pretty good to me."

The landscape has changed considerably since MoneyMaker cashed in big in 2003. At the time, sites like PokerStars, Full Tilt, and others were seemingly handing out deals to any player that made a major final table. Beyond

MoneyMaker, these days there's more of a trend toward content creators coming on board to represent companies. Those contracts have also dropped in value, and the number of site ambassadors has also greatly thinned out.

"Back in the early days of PokerStars and Full Tilt, they were giving out sponsorships like candy," he said. "If you lived in a foreign country or you were female or something unique, you would get a sponsorship. I think Full Tilt had more red pros and PokerStars had like 80 team pros. It just went bonkers. Then PokerStars got sold and obviously we know what happened with Full Tilt."

"Instead of having a million sponsors, they focused on a couple of specific ones. They also started incorporating this concept of dreamers and video content creators. That's the new world of poker now."

MoneyMaker doesn't see that trend slowing down and believes that it has been successful in ushering in a new generation of players. As a seasoned pro who has seen the game and online poker landscape change considerably, MoneyMaker is happy to remain one of those sponsored pros and has even done some streaming himself on ACR's Twitch page, while joining in for final table commentary.

But the switch to representing the site has also invigorated him creatively as well. He's now part of regular meetings, discussing and giving his input on promotions, customer sign-up goals, and making the player experience better. At Stars, he felt more "like a number than an asset they were utilizing."

### MoneyMaker Incorporated

Just saying the name "MoneyMaker" usually brings a recollection of his 2003 win from poker players and how important that time was to the game, so it's no surprise that he has remained a bankable fan favorite. The first step was signing with ACR and then in September 2022, he unveiled a poker room in Paducah, Kentucky. That was followed by

“I generally play poker for fun. I like playing against people that are enjoying themselves, and I like to play people I know I can beat. I’ve made a living playing people that are worse than me. They have a good time and I take their money. That’s been a good relationship. You start getting into *Tritons* and these brilliant sickos, and well, it’s really hard. Those guys are good. They don’t really give anything away.”





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the *Moneymaker Tour* taking off in 2023.

The efforts have been a bit of a whirlwind. The Paducah venue was closed after the district attorney threatened legal action, including arrest against the owner and staff. He hoped to make Paducah a learning opportunity, to figure out how to run a club and eventually expand to larger markets like Louisville and Lexington. Undeterred by the closure, he opened a club in Louisville in early June and feels much more welcome.

“After spending all that money, I didn’t want to stop where I was at, so I continued to spend money and finally got the go-ahead to open up in Louisville,” he said. “The poker room is up and running and it feels good. This is what I’ve been working for, to get to this room, not the Paducah room. So it feels good to actually finally have it, see it come to fruition, and see people enjoying playing cards.”

Some recent legal changes opened the door for social poker clubs in the state, he says, and local officials have been more amenable to the business. The club functions much the same as poker rooms in Texas, with players paying membership dues like at a traditional country club. If things go well, he hopes to open a Lexington club at some point.

The *Moneymaker Tour* appears to be a successful venture so far as well. He is quick to credit executive manager Tony Burns, formerly of the Seminole Hard Rock, in helping the tour grow.

What’s it like having a tour with his own name on it?

“It’s obviously pretty cool,” he says. “But it’s a lot of work. Thank goodness I have Tony Burns that handles it all for me. When I hired him, I told him, ‘I want you to do everything, I don’t want to do anything except show up and play poker.’ He’s pretty much brought that to fruition and has done a phenomenal job.”

The operation has expanded from a small startup in Florida kicking off at Palm Beach Kennel Club to several other stops around the country. The October stop in Aruba marks the first international foray with more in the works, and he hopes to add casinos in Europe and Latin America. Moneymaker feels the company has been fortunate to find good partners that want to continue hosting events and repeat players have also helped the tour grow.

“I’ve seen *Moneymaker Tour* swag out at the *World Series* this summer, so that makes me feel good,” he says. “People

are wearing the brand so that’s always cool.”

The initial goal was to eventually have a *Moneymaker Tour* stop at his poker club. Although the Louisville club might be too small for such a big event, the location he’s looking at in Lexington, however, would work better for tournaments.

“If we can prove one, that we can run the poker room, and two, we can run the kitchen effectively and make money doing both, I’ll start working toward Lexington and start that process,” he says. “I was a controller for a restaurant group and there’s one business I really said I would never get in – the restaurant business. But here I am.”

### Balancing Act

That’s not all, a Moneymaker coffee brand is also in the works and may debut this year. With so much going on, finding time for family is a key goal for Moneymaker. He has four children, three living at home. He’s very appreciative of the job his wife Christy does in helping their family and holding down the fort in Mississippi (just outside of Memphis) when he’s away for poker and business.

“My wife is on me a lot about balancing and making sure that I’m taking care of all my responsibilities and it’s great,” he said. “She takes care of everything at home, so it makes it really easy. But she still wants me to be at home and be present. It’s a challenge though. When you try and play poker then you have roles that you have to fill at your poker tour and now my social club, also with ACR and then the family time – you put it all together and there’s not a whole lot of room for much else. It does keep you busy.”

Looking back on his career, Moneymaker has no major regrets. There are some things he wishes he’d done, maybe a deal or two that might have been fortuitous, but overall is happy with the road he’s traveled. As a husband and father running businesses around the game he loves, Moneymaker believes things have really worked out for the best.

“I feel like I have the perfect life,” he said. “I have a great family. They support me, I support them. I get to play poker for a living. I’m very comfortable. Of all the things, you might wish to go back and change, I probably wouldn’t want to change them because my life would be different than where it is now. I don’t really feel like I could improve on much at the present time. I’ve really got life by the horns living just about as good as I possibly could live.” ♠



### Top Scores

2003	\$10,000 WSOP Main Event	1st Place	\$2,500,000
2023	\$250,000 Triton London	5th Place	\$2,030,000
2024	\$25,000 Triton Montenegro	1st Place	\$903,000
2024	\$2,500 ACR Poker Venom	5th Place	\$382,007
2024	\$40,000 Triton Montenegro	3rd Place	\$311,000
2011	\$25,000 NBA Heads-Up	2nd Place	\$300,000
2020	\$2,500 ACR Poker Venom	4th Place	\$248,739
2004	\$5,000 WPT Shooting Star	2nd Place	\$200,000
2011	\$10,000 Caribbean Adventure	11th Place	\$130,000

# JOHN HENNIGAN NABS SEVENTH WORLD SERIES OF POKER BRACELET

Scott Seiver And Robert Mizrachi Get To Five

By Erik Fast



John Hennigan

The 55th Annual *World Series of Poker* officially kicked off on May 28 at the Horseshoe and Paris Las Vegas. After less than a fortnight of action at time of publishing, there have already been 23 winners decided, with nearly \$59.7 million in prize money awarded across those nearly two dozen tournaments.

Over 43,000 total entries were made across the 23 live events that have wrapped up thus far, for an average turnout of 1,874. Fields have ranged from as small as 64 for the \$25,000 buy-in heads-up championship (entries were capped at that number), up to 18,409 for the \$1,000 *Mystery Millions*. That latter figure was good for the sixth-largest field in *WSOP* history.

## 'Johnny World' Secures Seventh WSOP Win

While 14 new bracelet winners were crowned in the early going, 10 players have added to their pre-existing collections of *WSOP* hardware so far this year. Chief among them was **John Hennigan**, who won his seventh gold bracelet by taking down the \$1,500 dealer's choice six-max event.

The 53-year-old Poker Hall of Fame member became just the ninth player to have won as many titles at the series. (For more on the all-time bracelet leaderboard, head to pg. 28).

"Very happy to win the tournament. I mean to me, the best thing about winning the tournament is not losing it. Not getting second or knowing they're still playing and wandering around after you go broke," Hennigan told reporters. "It's just very satisfying to come out on top."

All seven of Hennigan's wins have come in non no-limit hold'em events. His first two victories were the 2002 \$2,000 H.O.R.S.E. and the 2004 \$5,000 limit hold'em. A decade removed from that later triumph, Hennigan took down the king of all mixed game tournaments, the 2014 \$50,000 *Poker Player's Championship*. His next three bracelets all came in \$10,000 championship events, with wins in the 2016

triple draw deuce-to-seven lowball championship, the 2018 H.O.R.S.E. championship, and the 2019 stud championship.

Hennigan now has nearly \$9.6 million in career tournament earnings, with roughly \$6.1 million of that coming from his 50 cashes in *WSOP* events. He also has a *World Poker Tour* title to his name, having won the *WPT Winter Poker Open* for \$1.6 million back in 2007.

The event drew a field of 530 entries, resulting in a \$707,550 prize pool that was paid out among the top 80 finishers. The final table also featured six-time bracelet winner Shaun Deeb (8th) and high-stakes player Viktor 'Isildur!' Blom (4th).

## Scott Seiver and Robert Mizrachi Each Earn Their Fifth Bracelets

**Scott Seiver** won his first bracelet back in 2008, taking down the \$5,000 no-limit hold'em event for his first piece of *WSOP* hardware. Seiver then had to wait another decade before securing his second title at the series, which seems to have kicked off a spree.

He has now won four bracelets in the last six years, with his most recent coming in the \$10,000 Omaha eight-or-better championship. Seiver defeated a field of 171 entries to earn his fifth overall bracelet and the top prize of \$426,744.

"I made a decision this summer to really focus on tournaments and try to give it my A-game, at a level that I haven't always done here... so to just come and win the first \$10K, it feels very validating," said Seiver in an interview with *PokerGO*.

The 39-year-old New York native, now based out of Las Vegas, has accumulated nearly \$26.2 million in career tournament earnings despite not being a year-round tournament grinder. Three of his five *WSOP* wins have come in \$10,000 championship events, with the previous two being the 2018 limit hold'em championship and the 2019 razz championship.

Scott Seiver



© PokerGO/Miguel Cortes

Robert Mizrachi



© WSOP/Omar Sader

His fourth bracelet came in a \$2,500 buy-in no-limit hold'em freezeout event.

The top 30 finishers earned a share of the \$1,590,300 prize pool, with the final table featuring Jared Bleznick (8th), Jake Schwartz (7th), five-time bracelet winner Benny Glaser (6th), four-time bracelet winner Calvin Anderson (3rd), and bracelet winner Jonathan Cohen (2nd).

Seiver was the 37th player in poker history to have won five or more bracelets, but would soon be joined by another.

After his own deep run in the \$10,000 O8 championship, **Robert Mizrachi** followed it up by taking down the \$10,000 dealer's choice championship. He overcame a field of 124 entries to earn \$333,045 and his fifth career bracelet.

This title run also saw Robert tie his younger brother, Michael 'The Grinder' Mizrachi, who also has five wins at the series. Mizrachi won his first bracelet back in 2007, taking down that year's \$10,000 pot-limit Omaha championship for \$894,100. His second came in 2014 when he emerged victorious in the first-ever dealer's choice event held at the *WSOP* for \$147,092. 2015 saw him take down a \$1,500 Omaha eight-or-better tournament for \$251,022 and his third bracelet. His fourth came the following year in the \$10,000 stud championship for another \$242,662.

The 45-year-old South Florida native now has more than \$9.2 million in career tournament earnings to his name, with more than \$4.6 million of that coming from his 93 *WSOP* cashes. His largest tournament payday came when he took down the 2022 *WPT Venetian* main event for \$894,100.

Among the notables at the final table were three-time bracelet winner David Bach (5th), two-time bracelet winner Ben Lamb (4th), and bracelet winner Ryutarou Suzuki (3rd).

#### Other Pros Who Added To Their Collections

**Bryce Yockey** became yet another previous bracelet winner to win again in 2024. Just shy of seven years after securing his first in the 2017 \$10,000 pot-limit Omaha eight-or-better championship, the California native emerged victorious from a field of 733 entries in the \$5,000 pot-limit Omaha event.

Yockey earned a career-best payday of \$606,654 alongside his second bracelet, giving him more than \$5.1 million in lifetime earnings to his name.

The \$3,371,800 prize pool for this event was split amongst the top 110 finishers, with six-figure scores for the final six. Three-time bracelet winner Joao Vieira and Farid Jattin were among those who joined Yockey at the final table, with Jattin taking home \$404,430 as the runner-up finisher to bring his career total to more than \$9.2 million.

**Nick Guagenti** closed out the \$1,500 limit hold'em tournament to earn \$121,074 and his second bracelet on the same day

that Yockey recorded his win.

Guagenti's first bracelet win came back in 2020 when he took down a \$2,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em event during the *WSOP Online* for \$305,433. The Westerville, Ohio native now has more than \$2.7 million in recorded tournament earnings to his name.

**David Prociak** won a bracelet at his first *WSOP* final table back in 2016, taking down a \$1,500 seven card stud eight-or-better event. From 2017-2023, he made six more top-four finishes, including two third-place showings and two runner-up finishes.

The Orlando, Florida resident made another final table just a week into this year's festival and managed to come away with a win, taking down this year's \$1,500 badugi event for his second bracelet and \$129,676.

"It feels great; winning one could be a fluke. Winning two, you just can't be a fluke. Coming in second twice last year sucked," Prociak admitted. "Now I feel like I can actually take in some compliments."

This was only the second time that the *WSOP* has hosted a stand-alone badugi bracelet event. The tournament debuted in 2023, with Portugal's Michael Rodrigues coming away with the hardware. Prociak made the money last year, finishing 39th. Prociak now has more than \$2.3 million in recorded tournament earnings to his name, with more than half of that coming from his 44 in-the-money finishes in bracelet events.

Bulgaria's **Simeon Spasov** triumphed in the \$1,500 no-limit hold'em six-max event, outlasting a field of 2,526 entries to earn \$439,815 and his second gold bracelet. With this win, Spasov increased his career tournament earnings to more than \$2.2 million while becoming just the third player from his home country of Bulgaria to have won multiple bracelets. Joining him in that prestigious group are Boris Kolev and Yuliy Nikolayev Kolev.

This was the second-largest payday of Spasov's tournament résumé, trailing only the \$527,944 he earned for taking down the 2022 \$2,000 buy-in no-limit event. He has now cashed 26 times at the series, accumulating nearly \$1.1 million along the way.

**Dylan Weisman** is really good at pot-limit Omaha. In fact, he's one of the best, and there's a strong argument to be made that he currently stands at the top of the mountain. The PLO specialist earned his second career bracelet by topping a massive field of 1,469 entries in the \$1,500 pot-limit Omaha event for \$294,311.

His first bracelet came in 2021, winning the \$1,000 PLO event for \$166,461. He now has six final tables at the *WSOP*, all coming in PLO. In fact, his top 20 deep runs at the series have

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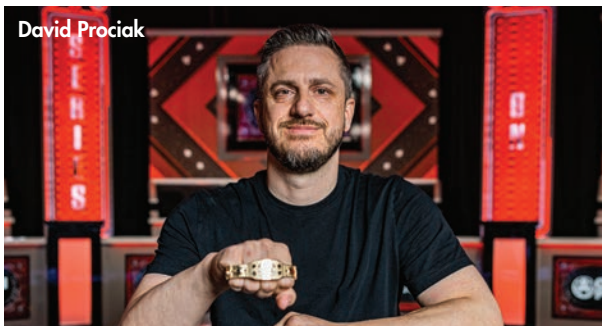
Bryce Forekey

© PokerGO/Antonio Abrego



Nick Guagenti

© PokerGO/Antonio Abrego



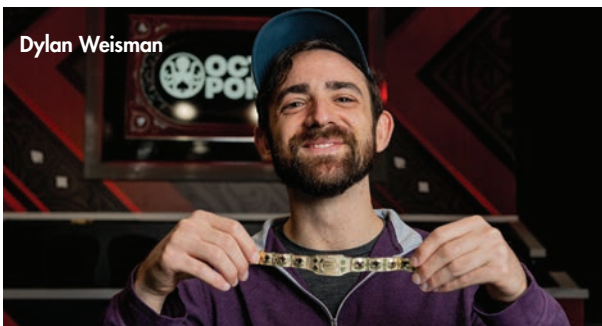
David Prociak

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Simeon Spasov

© WSOP/Hayley Hochstetler



Dylan Weisman

© WSOP/Omar Sadler



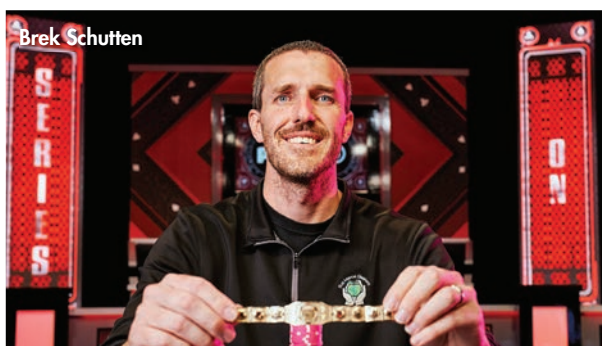
John Racener

© WSOP/Omar Sadler



Sean Troha

© PokerGO/Antonio Abrego



Brek Schutten

© PokerGO/Miguel Cortes

all included some variation of the game.

With nearly \$4.1 million of his \$5.6 million in career earnings coming in PLO, he is now the winningest PLO tournament player ever, narrowly edging out the likes of Eelis Parssinen, Stephen Chidwick, Ka Kwan Lau, Ben Lamb, Tommy Le, Shaun Deeb, and Jared Bleznick, according to Hendon Mob.

While limit hold'em has seen more popular days in poker history, there were still 104 hopefuls who turned out for the \$10,000 championship event at the series, all vying for the \$308,930 first-place prize and the bracelet.

In the end, the title went to Florida poker pro **John Racener**, who picked up his second career bracelet. Racener is best known for finishing runner-up in the 2010 *WSOP* main event for more than \$5.5 million, but he has proven to be a consistent force at the summer series for quite some time. In 2017, he nearly won

*WSOP* Player of the Year honors when he won his first bracelet in the \$10,000 dealer's choice championship. In total, he has made 24 final tables at the *WSOP*.

**Sean Troha** took down his first *WSOP* title back in 2022, emerging victorious in the \$10,000 pot-limit Omaha championship. The following summer he secured his second *WSOP* win as the last player standing in the \$1,500 buy-in pot-limit Omaha event.

Just a couple of weeks into the 2024 series, Troha has already managed to win his third career bracelet. He took down the \$10,000 pot-limit Omaha eight-or-better championship for \$536,713. He bested a field of 259 entries, scooping the final pot to earn the largest share of the \$2,408,700 prize pool.

The PLO specialist from North Olmstead, Ohio now has more than \$3.1 million in career tournament earnings, with



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over \$2.4 million of that coming from his 29 cashes in bracelet events.

### Brek Schutten, Malcolm Trayner, Asher Conniff, and Dan Sepiol Highlight First-Timers

A baker's dozen of players have won their first bracelets so far at the 2024 *WSOP*, including one who walked away with the largest payout awarded so far at the series. That honor belongs to Intensive Care Unit nurse **Brek Schutten**, who took down the \$25,000 buy-in six-max event for a career-best payday of \$1,405,641 and his first bracelet.

The 36-year-old healthcare worker and poker player from Grand Rapids, Michigan came within one spot of becoming a *WSOP* champion back in 2022, finishing second in the \$50,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em eight-max event. He had to wait two years before he found himself heads-up for a bracelet again, but this time around he came away with the hardware.

"I got second to Jake Schindler and just had those regrets ever since," Schutten told *WSOP* reporters after coming out on top. "Certain hands go through your mind all the time and you never know if you're going to get back to a high roller final table, let alone heads-up, let alone win the thing."

This was the second seven-figure score for Schutten, who cashed for \$1,261,095 as the champion of the 2021 *WPT Seminole Hard Rock Poker Open* \$3,500 buy-in main event. He now has more than \$5.3 million in career earnings to his name

despite not being a full-time poker professional.

The only other seven-figure payday awarded so far at the series came in the \$1,000 *Mystery Millions* event. The tournament drew 18,403 entries to become the sixth-largest field for any live bracelet event in *WSOP* history. This tournament also set a new record with the highest turnout for any bracelet event costing \$1,000 or more to enter.

After four starting flights and two more days of action inside the Horseshoe Las Vegas, only one player remained in Australia's **Malcolm Trayner**. The Turrumurra resident earned \$1,000,000 and his first gold bracelet as the champion.

This was the 34th bracelet won by an Australian player, and far and away the largest tournament score of Trayner's career. Before this marquee victory, his best cash had been the \$125,495 he secured as the runner-up in a \$10,000 AUD buy-in event at the *WPT Australia* festival last fall.

While Trayner was the only player to secure a seven-figure payday from the main prize pool, two other players also walked away with \$1 million thanks to the mystery bounty component of this tournament. Each \$1,000 buy-in made in this event saw \$300 added to the mystery bounty prize pool, with available prizes ranging from \$1,000 up to \$1 million.

As with 2023, there were two million-dollar bounties paid out this year, with Valentyn Shabelnyk and DJ Buckley securing those lucky tickets. The video of Shabelnyk opening his envelope

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Darius Samuel



© WSOP/Hayley Hochstetler

Thibault Perissat



© WSOP/Hayley Hochstetler

Caleb Furth



© PokerGO/Miguel Cortes

TJ Murphy



© PokerGO/Miguel Cortes

Brent Hart



© WSOP/Regina Corina

Aaron Cummings



© PokerGO/Miguel Cortes

went viral thanks to his understated response to the revelation that he had just won a million dollars. Other top bounty paydays went to bracelet winner Roberto Romanello (\$500,000) and eventual ninth-place finisher Jake Brown (\$250,000).

Of the first-time bracelet winners to emerge so far in this series, **Asher Conniff** and **Dan Sepiol** are two of the most accomplished. Conniff was the first player to take down an open event at the festival, coming out on top in the brand new \$5,000 buy-in no-limit hold'em champions reunion bounty eight-max.

The tournament also awarded a \$10,000 seat in this year's main event to anyone who knocked out a previous main event winner. A total of 22 previous world champions turned out, from 1983 winner Tom McEvoy through reigning main event winner Daniel Weinman.

The event attracted 493 entries in total, creating a prize pool of \$2,047,800. In the end, Conniff came away with his first bracelet and \$408,468. This was the third-largest score yet for the poker pro from Brooklyn, New York. The 2022 *WSOP* main event tenth-place finisher and *WPT* champion now has more than \$4.4 million in lifetime tournament earnings to his name.

Sepiol's breakthrough at the series came after he fell behind 17:1 in his heads-up match for the title in the \$1,500 no-limit hold'em shootout.

"It doesn't feel good, especially when you just bluffed off your entire stack but I kind of, like, played my stack that was in front of me and just tried to make the best decisions," Sepiol

told reporters.

From there the experienced player, with more than \$7.1 million in prior tournament earnings chipped away at Robert Natividad's lead, then moved ahead, then pulled away himself. In the end, the 2023 *WPT World Championship* winner closed out the victory, securing his first bracelet and the top prize of \$305,849.

### Bracelet Breakthroughs

The first bracelet awarded at the series went to **Jose Garcia** of Albuquerque, New Mexico. The poker dealer at Sandia Resort & Casino outlasted a field of 1,189 entries in the \$500 buy-in Casino employees no-limit hold'em event to earn his first piece of *WSOP* hardware and the top prize of \$79,134.

**Daniel Willis** overcame a field of 3,485 entries in event no. 3, the \$500 kickoff no-limit hold'em freezeout. The businessman and former online poker pro from Swindon, England earned \$175,578 and his first gold bracelet as the last player standing.

Pittsburgh's **James Chen** took down the \$1,500 Omaha eight-or-better, besting a field of 928 entries to win \$209,350. Chen had won his first bracelet nearly a year earlier but ultimately fell just one place shy of the gold in that \$10,000 Omaha eight-or-better championship event.

**Darius Samuel** came into the series with just eight recorded tournament cashes to his name, and no prior final-table finishes. The British businessman took a risk early in the series, putting

up around half of his poker bankroll to enter the \$25,000 buy-in heads-up no-limit hold'em championship.

The gamble paid off big, as Samuel went on to top the field of 64 entries to earn \$500,000 and his first bracelet. Samuel came out on top in six consecutive one-on-one matches to secure the bracelet, defeating James Chen, Ian Matakis, Matthew Wantman, John Smith, Artur Martirosian, and Faraz Jaka.

The \$1,000 super turbo bounty no-limit hold'em freezeout drew 2,639 entries. The fast-paced affair kicked off at 10 AM and continued until just short of 3 AM the following morning. When the dust settled after the roughly 17-hour sprint, it was France's **Thibault Perissat** who hoisted the bracelet and collected the top prize of \$197,308. This marked the 41st *WSOP* bracelet won by a French player.

The 15th event on the schedule this year was a \$1,500 buy-in pot-limit Omaha eight-or-better tournament. A total of 1,277 entries were made in the big bet split pot game, creating a prize pool of \$1,704,795 that was split amongst the top 192

finishers. **Caleb Furth** scooped the final pot of the tournament to secure the title and the top prize of \$265,361. This was Furth's first bracelet win and the largest payday of his career.

The \$800 buy-in no-limit hold'em deepstack took just two days of play to narrow a massive 4,732-entry field down to a winner. That player was **TJ Murphy**, who earned \$368,977 and his first gold bracelet after defeating Raymond Mancini heads-up for the title. The Spencer, Iowa resident had never cashed in a bracelet event before taking down this tournament.

**Brent Hart** earned \$660,284 and the hardware as the champion of the \$5,000 no-limit hold'em eight-max event, bringing his career haul to nearly \$1.5 million. The event drew 660 entries, with the top 124 earning a cut of the \$3 million prize pool.

The first standalone lowball bracelet of the series was earned by **Aaron Cummings**. The Montana resident bested a field of 574 entries in the \$1,500 deuce-to-seven triple-draw lowball tournament to earn \$146,516 and his first bracelet. ♠

## World Series of Poker – Horseshoe and Paris – Las Vegas, Nevada

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$5,000 Champions Reunion  May 28-30  Entries: 493 Prizepool: \$2,267,800	1 Asher Conniff	\$408,468 (1,440)
	2 Halil Tasyurek	\$272,305 (1,200)
	3 Yin Yuzhou	\$188,342 (960)
	4 Jonathan Pastore	\$132,545 (720)
	5 Terry Fleischer	\$94,936 (600)
	6 David Coleman	\$69,231 (480)
	7 Nenad Dukic	\$51,416 (360)
	8 Michael Acevedo	\$38,903 (240)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$500 Casino Employees  May 28-29  Entries: 1,189 Prizepool: \$499,380	1 Jose Garcia	\$79,134
	2 Richard Rothmeier	\$52,773
	3 Alexander Green	\$37,264
	4 Lang Anderson	\$26,698
	5 Barry Goldberg	\$19,412
	6 Bradley Wolfe	\$14,328
	7 Joshua Sieverding	\$10,737
	8 Christopher Keem	\$8,171
	9 Lukas Robinson	\$6,317

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$500 Kickoff  May 29-30  Entries: 3,485 Prizepool: \$1,463,700	1 Daniel Willis	\$175,578 (600)
	2 Michael Wang	\$117,046 (500)
	3 Shawn Smith	\$86,820 (400)
	4 Steven Borella	\$64,920 (300)
	5 Yoshinori Funayama	\$48,938 (250)
	6 Daniel Sherer	\$37,194 (200)
	7 John Marino	\$28,501 (150)
	8 David Niedringhaus	\$22,022 (100)
	9 Aaron Aldy	\$17,159 (50)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,500 Omaha 8  May 29-31  Entries: 928 Prizepool: \$1,238,880	1 James Chen	\$209,350 (912)
	2 Lewis Brandt	\$139,563 (760)
	3 Sovann Pen	\$97,445 (608)
	4 Adam Nattress	\$69,129 (456)
	5 Pearce Arnold	\$49,842 (380)
	6 Aleksey Filatov	\$36,531 (304)
	7 Curtis Phelps	\$27,227 (228)
	8 Todd Dakake	\$20,640 (152)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,000 Mystery Millions  May 30-June 4  \$1,000,000 1 <sup>st</sup> Place GTD Entries: 18,409 Prizepool: \$16,199,920	1 Malcolm Trayner	\$1,000,000 (1,440)
	2 Carson Richards	\$536,080 (1,200)
	3 Eugene Tito	\$407,970 (960)
	4 Junho Song	\$312,250 (720)
	5 Oshri Azran	\$240,350 (600)
	6 Amir Mirrasouli	\$186,080 (480)
	7 Michael Miller	\$144,900 (360)
	8 Christopher Castellan	\$113,490 (240)
	9 Jake Brown	\$89,411 (120)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$25,000 Heads-Up  May 30-June 1  Entries: 64 Prizepool: \$1,504,000	1 Darius Samuel	\$500,000 (504)
	2 Faraz Jaka	\$300,000 (420)
	3 Nikolai Mamut	\$180,000 (294)
	4 Artur Martirosian	\$180,000 (294)

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Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,500 Dealers Choice May 30-June 1 Entries: 530 Prizepool: \$707,550	1 John Hennigan	\$138,296 (840)
	2 Robert Wells	\$90,339 (700)
	3 Peter Gelencser	\$60,343 (560)
	4 Viktor Blom	\$41,237 (420)
	5 Brayden Gazlay	\$28,845 (350)
	6 Clinton Wolcyn	\$20,665 (280)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$5,000 Pot-Limit Omaha May 31-June 2 Entries: 733 Prizepool: \$3,371,800	1 Bryce Yockey	\$606,654 (1,824)
	2 Farid Jattin	\$404,430 (1,520)
	3 Zachary Schwartz	\$283,221 (1,216)
	4 Aditya Sadhu	\$201,419 (912)
	5 Jason Berilgen	\$145,504 (760)
	6 Joao Vieira	\$106,795 (608)
	7 Joao Simao	\$79,661 (456)
	8 Paul Radcliffe	\$60,405 (304)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,500 Limit Hold'em May 31-June 2 Entries: 443 Prizepool: \$591,405	1 Nick Guagenti	\$121,074 (720)
	2 Joseph Brodsky	\$80,717 (600)
	3 George Chen	\$54,708 (480)
	4 Juha Helppi	\$37,880 (360)
	5 Qinghai Pan	\$26,807 (300)
	6 Bradley Carter	\$19,400 (240)
	7 Abdulrahim Amer	\$14,363 (180)
	8 John Kim	\$10,886 (120)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$10,000 Omaha 8 June 1-4 Entries: 171 Prizepool: \$1,590,300	1 Scott Seiver	\$426,744 (780)
	2 Jonathan Cohen	\$284,495 (650)
	3 Calvin Anderson	\$197,582 (520)
	4 Paul Zappulla	\$140,273 (390)
	5 Sami El-Dein	\$101,853 (325)
	6 Benny Glaser	\$75,678 (260)
	7 Jake Schwartz	\$57,570 (195)
	8 Jared Bleznick	\$44,864 (130)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,500 Badugi June 2-4 Entries: 487 Prizepool: \$650,145	1 David Prociak	\$129,676 (720)
	2 Matt Grapenthien	\$84,650 (600)
	3 Chun Yam	\$56,508 (480)
	4 Tobias Leknes	\$38,597 (360)
	5 Tomasz Gluszko	\$26,988 (300)
	6 Brandon Cantu	\$19,330 (240)
	7 Yuya Murata	\$14,190 (180)



Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,500 6-Max No-Limit Hold'em June 3-5 Entries: 2,526 Prizepool: \$3,372,210	1 Simeon Spasov	\$439,815 (1,200)
	2 John Gordon	\$293,218 (1,000)
	3 Steve Yea	\$210,645 (800)
	4 Chih Fan	\$152,995 (600)
	5 Mark Dube	\$112,362 (500)
	6 Daniel Palau	\$83,542 (400)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$10,000 Dealers Choice June 3-5 Entries: 124 Prizepool: \$1,153,200	1 Robert Mizrachi	\$333,045 (660)
	2 Michael Martinelli	\$215,848 (550)
	3 Ryutaro Suzuki	\$144,431 (440)
	4 Ben Lamb	\$99,885 (330)
	5 David Bach	\$71,476 (275)
	6 Richard Bai	\$52,985 (220)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,000 Super Turbo Knockout June 4 Entries: 2,639 Prizepool: \$2,322,320	1 Thibault Perissat	\$197,308 (1,200)
	2 Ron Schindelheim	\$131,571 (1,000)
	3 Nevan Chang	\$96,965 (800)
	4 Jesse Yaginuma	\$72,115 (600)
	5 Gary Leibovitz	\$54,129 (500)
	6 Cole Griffith	\$41,007 (400)
	7 Dinesh Alt	\$31,358 (300)
	8 Hrair Yapoudjian	\$24,207 (200)
	9 Anthony Monin	\$18,866 (100)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,500 Pot-Limit Omaha 8 June 4-6 Entries: 1,277 Prizepool: \$1,704,795	1 Caleb Furth	\$265,361 (960)
	2 Gan Jiang	\$176,981 (800)
	3 Walter Chambers	\$125,665 (640)
	4 Andreas Frohli	\$90,468 (480)
	5 Michael Machugh	\$66,014 (400)
	6 Andrew Paterson	\$48,833 (320)
	7 Tom Koral	\$36,628 (240)
	8 Mathias Bayer	\$27,862 (160)

# TOURNAMENTS



Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$5,000 No-Limit Hold'em June 4-7 Entries: 660 Prizepool: \$3,036,000	1 Brent Hart	\$660,284 (1,680)
	2 Edward Ochana	\$440,202 (1,400)
	3 Alexander Queen	\$309,128 (1,120)
	4 Kartik Ved	\$220,373 (840)
	5 Shant Marashlian	\$159,517 (700)
	6 Daniyal Gheba	\$117,271 (560)
	7 Taylor Black	\$87,582 (420)
	8 Krasimir Yankov	\$66,464 (280)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$800 Deepstack June 5-6 Entries: 4,732 Prizepool: \$3,331,328	1 Timothy Murphy	\$368,977 (660)
	2 Raymond Mancini	\$246,031 (550)
	3 Tao Chu	\$183,237 (440)
	4 Vernon Barruga	\$137,551 (330)
	5 Hai Nguyen	\$104,079 (275)
	6 Dimitre Dimitrov	\$79,385 (220)
	7 Yuvaraj Rai	\$61,042 (165)
	8 Michael Wills	\$47,320 (110)
	9 Harry Lodge	\$36,968 (55)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,500 Pot-Limit Omaha June 5-7 Entries: 1,469 Prizepool: \$1,961,115	1 Dylan Weisman	\$294,311 (960)
	2 Chino Rheem	\$196,191 (800)
	3 Steve Zolotow	\$140,077 (640)
	4 Grzegorz Derkowski	\$101,284 (480)
	5 John Zable	\$74,178 (400)
	6 Jhojan Rivera	\$55,034 (320)
	7 Abdul Al-Magableh	\$41,371 (240)
	8 Leslie Roussell	\$31,516 (160)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$10,000 Limit Hold'em June 5-7 Entries: 104 Prizepool: \$967,200	1 John Racener	\$308,930 (600)
	2 Chad Eveslage	\$205,954 (500)
	3 Marco Johnson	\$142,245 (400)
	4 Anthony Marsico	\$101,062 (300)
	5 Shyamsundar Challa	\$73,922 (250)
	6 Justin Kusumowidagdo	\$55,715 (200)
	7 Ronnie Bardah	\$43,311 (150)
	8 Andrew Kelsall	\$34,759 (100)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$25,000 6-Max High Roller June 6-8 Entries: 272 Prizepool: \$6,392,000	1 Brek Schutten	\$1,405,641 (1,512)
	2 Tyler Stafman	\$938,775 (1,260)
	3 Michael Rocco	\$639,620 (1,008)
	4 Taylor von Kriegenbergh	\$444,766 (765)
	5 Brandon Wilson	\$315,771 (630)
	6 Masashi Oya	\$229,002 (504)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,500 2-7 Triple Draw June 6-8 Entries: 574 Prizepool: \$766,290	1 Aaron Cummings	\$146,516 (840)
	2 Yuichi Kanai	\$95,981 (700)
	3 Alexander Wilkinson	\$64,256 (560)
	4 Heather Alcorn	\$43,984 (420)
	5 Sean H. Yu	\$30,800 (350)
	6 Tony Lazar	\$22,075 (280)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$1,500 Shootout June 7-9 Entries: 1,534 Prizepool: \$2,047,890	1 Daniel Sepiol	\$305,849 (1,080)
	2 Robert Natividad	\$203,889 (900)
	3 James Davidson	\$148,196 (720)
	4 Jeremy Ausmus	\$109,071 (540)
	5 Daniel Strelitz	\$81,298 (450)
	6 Richard Dixon	\$61,380 (360)
	7 Sean Ragozzini	\$46,948 (270)
	8 Scott Ball	\$36,385 (180)
	9 Aaron Pinson	\$28,577 (90)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
\$10,000 Pot-Limit Omaha 8 June 7-10 Entries: 259 Prizepool: \$2,408,700	1 Sean Troha	\$536,713 (1,020)
	2 Tyler Brown	\$357,807 (850)
	3 Joao Simao	\$247,874 (680)
	4 Yuri Dzivielevski	\$175,321 (510)
	5 Robert Tanita	\$126,662 (425)
	6 Philip Shing	\$93,512 (340)
	7 Bradley Ruben	\$70,585 (255)
	8 Luis Velador	\$54,499 (170)





# WORLD SERIES OF POKER GOLD BRACELETS

Player(s)	Bracelets
Phil Hellmuth	17
Erik Seidel, Doyle Brunson, Johnny Chan, Phil Ivey	10
Johnny Moss	9
John Hennigan, Billy Baxter, Men Nguyen	7
Brian Rast, Daniel Negreanu, Josh Arieh, Shaun Deeb, Jeremy Ausmus, Chris Ferguson, Jason Mercier, TJ Cloutier, Jeff Lisandro, Brian Hastings, Layne Flack, Ted Forrest, Jay Heimowitz	6
Robert Mizrachi, Scott Seiver, Michael Mizrachi, Allen Cunningham, Scotty Nguyen, John Juanda, Daniel Alaei, Brian Yoon, David Chiu, Benny Glazer, Eli Elezra, John Monnette, Adam Friedman, Berry Johnston, Stu Ungar, Gary Berland	5

The first couple of weeks of *World Series of Poker* action have already seen multiple changes near the top of the *WSOP* bracelets leaderboard. John Hennigan became just the ninth player in the history of the game to have won seven or more titles at the series. Within a few days of that huge victory, Scott Seiver and Robert Mizrachi became the 37th and 38th players with five or more bracelets to their names.

**Phil Hellmuth** remains the... well, gold standard when it comes to *WSOP* titles. The 17-time bracelet winner has 14 wins in hold'em and another three in other games (two razz and a no-limit 2-7 single draw). The longest gap between bracelets for the 59-year-old was between his 11th and 12th wins. He took down the \$1,500 no-limit hold'em event in 2007 and then waited just a day shy of five years before securing his next bracelet in 2012.

The 1989 world champion has managed multiple multi-bracelet years, including winning three in 1993, two in 2003, and

another two in 2012. He also holds the distinction of being the only player to have won both the *WSOP* main event in Las Vegas and the *WSOP Europe* main event. Hellmuth took down the 2012 *WSOPE* main event in Cannes, topping a field of 420 entries to earn \$1.3 million and his 13th bracelet.

**Erik Seidel** joined a four-way tie for second with the late **Doyle Brunson, Johnny Chan, and Phil Ivey**. All four of those legendary players have 10 bracelets to their name. Seidel is the only player among those four to have added to his bracelet count in the 2020s. Brunson and Chan's most recent wins came back in 2005, while Ivey's latest victory at the series was logged nearly a decade ago in 2014.

Seidel won his ninth bracelet during the 2021 *WSOP Online* festival. Then in 2023 he took down a \$50,000 high roller at the *WSOP Paradise* to become the just fifth player with double-digit bracelet wins. ♠

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## 2024 Card Player Player of the Year

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Rank	Player	Points	Titles	Final Tables	Earnings
1	Adrian Mateos	5,764	2	10	\$7,638,924
2	David Coleman	4,964	4	15	\$1,898,111
3	Jesse Lonis	4,872	2	13	\$2,023,405
4	Michael Watson	4,584	3	10	\$6,321,508
5	Dylan Weisman	4,332	4	10	\$3,102,336
6	Stephen Chidwick	4,308	4	16	\$2,932,779
7	Punnat Punsri	4,157	2	11	\$3,108,836
8	Biao Ding	4,007	1	9	\$5,379,954
9	Daniel Dvoress	3,997	2	12	\$3,252,203
10	Sergio Aido	3,636	0	6	\$3,146,185
11	Alexander Queen	3,610	1	3	\$1,227,191
12	Alex Kulev	3,575	2	9	\$5,413,054
13	Luca Marki	3,178	1	2	\$1,828,138
14	Ren Lin	3,051	1	7	\$1,586,998
15	Roman Hrabec	2,955	1	4	\$5,084,866
16	Igor Yaroshevskyy	2,950	1	4	\$3,640,000
17	Seth Davies	2,894	1	10	\$1,775,524
18	Samuli Sipila	2,878	4	6	\$2,150,140
19	Dylan Linde	2,876	0	13	\$1,551,734
20	Dimitar Danchev	2,841	2	4	\$1,620,403
21	Josh Mccully	2,834	2	6	\$899,978
22	Aleksejs Ponakovs	2,827	0	4	\$3,250,858
23	Masashi Oya	2,826	1	7	\$1,864,311
24	Jose Barbero	2,799	2	6	\$2,807,785
25	Daniel Negreanu	2,788	2	10	\$950,891
26	Christopher Frank	2,652	1	4	\$2,652,280
27	Dan Smith	2,649	2	6	\$1,939,200
28	Eric Afriat	2,602	1	4	\$895,482
29	Alex Foxen	2,545	1	10	\$1,241,375
29	Mikalai Vaskaboinikau	2,545	1	4	\$5,566,676

# JOSHUA REICHARD LEVELS UP AT WPT HARD ROCK POKER SHOWDOWN

By Erik Fast

Joshua Reichard has been a fixture on the mid-major poker tournament circuit for over a decade, and in that time has established himself as one of the top players at that level. The Janesville, Wisconsin resident has accumulated 15 *World Series of Poker Circuit* rings, putting him in a tie for the third most titles in the history of that tour.

While Reichard had cashed for millions of dollars across more than 230 in-the-money finishes, he was lacking a marquee win in a major tournament. The average buy-in of his 22 recorded titles sat at just \$811.

Reichard's big breakthrough finally came in the 2024 *World Poker Tour Seminole Hard Rock Poker Showdown* no-limit hold'em main event. Reichard topped a field of 1,869 entries in the \$3,500 buy-in tournament to earn his first *WPT* title and a career-high payday of \$839,300.

"All of my titles are minor league titles, but this is a major league title," Reichard told *WPT* reporters after coming out on top. "It feels good to finally break through and have one of this magnitude."

This tournament began back on April 19 at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood in South Florida. The 1,869-entry field drawn over two starting flights built a prize pool of \$5,980,800 that was split amongst the top 234 finishers.

After three more days of action, the sea of entrants was narrowed down to just six contenders, with Dylan Smith leading and Reichard sitting in second chip position. They then reconvened in May in Las Vegas to battle it out for the title.

It took just a few orbits for Aaron Kupin to bust in sixth place for \$176,000, but several hours before the next elimination. Smith had slid out of the lead, and got all-in with A-K leading the A-Q of Reichard, but the board brought four clubs to go with Reichard's A♣. Smith earned \$230,000 for his fifth-place showing.

Reichard entered four-handed play with more than half of the chips in play in his stack. He was involved in the next key clash, which saw a three-way all-in between him, Alex Queen, and two-time bracelet winner Jesse Lonis. Lonis held A-K, while both Reichard and Queen had A-Q. Lonis dragged the pot with top pair of kings and an ace kicker, eliminating Queen in the process.

The reigning *Borgata Winter Poker Open* main event winner earned \$305,000 as the fourth-place finisher. With a final-table showing at the *WSOP* a week later, Queen now sits in 11th place in the POY standings.

Lonis fell back to the short stack during three-handed play when his K-Q lost a big preflop confrontation against the pocket aces of Landon Tice. Lonis eventually got his last 15 big blinds in with A-8, three-bet shoving over Reichard's button min-raise. Reichard called with A-K and held to send Lonis to the rail in third place.

This was the 13th final-table finish of the year for Lonis, with two titles won and more than \$2 million in POY earnings accrued along the way. He now sits in third place in the POY standings.



Heads-up play began with Reichard holding a 5:4 lead, but it didn't take long for him to close out the win. On the 16th hand of their clash, Reichard limped in with pocket kings from the button and Tice checked his option with 7♥ 6♣. The flop came down 7♦ 5♠ 4♦ and Tice check-called a bet with his pair and straight draw.

The J♣ on the turn drew another check from Tice. Reichard fired with his overpair and Tice called. The 4♥ completed the board and Tice knuckled. Reichard moved all-in and Tice made the call for the rest of his stack. Reichard's pocket kings were enough to earn him the pot, bringing this event to a close.

Tice walked away with a career-best score of \$550,000. The *Mid-States Poker Tour Venetian* champion and *Only Friends* podcast co-host now has more than \$1.6 million in career tournament earnings after this deep run. ♠

Player	Payout (POY)
1 Joshua Reichard	\$839,300 (1,620)
2 Landon Tice	\$550,000 (1,350)
3 Jesse Lonis	\$410,000 (1,080)
4 Alexander Queen	\$305,000 (810)
5 Dylan Smith	\$230,000 (675)
6 Aaron Kupin	\$176,000 (540)
7 Dylan Linde	\$136,000 (405)
8 David Mzareulov	\$105,000 (270)
9 Jaroslaw Osinski	\$83,000 (135)

# JAMES MACKEY SECURES HIS SECOND WPT CHOCTAW TITLE

By Erik Fast

The final table of the 2024 *World Poker Tour Choctaw* \$3,800 no-limit hold'em main event was stacked with big names on the edge of securing a big win. The final six reconvened at the HyperX Arena located in Luxor Hotel & Casino more than three weeks after Vladyslav Shovkovyi was knocked out in seventh place at the Choctaw Casino Resort in Durant, Oklahoma.

After seven hours of battling, James Mackey emerged victorious to earn the top prize of \$361,600 and his second *WPT* title.

Incredibly, this was the second time that Mackey took down this very tournament. His first *WPT* victory came in the 2016 running of this event, which saw him beat a field of 1,066 entries to earn \$681,758.

Mackey, a poker pro based out of Kansas City, now has nearly \$5 million in lifetime earnings. His largest live score remains the \$730,740 he earned as the winner of a \$5,000 buy-in event at the 2007 *World Series of Poker*.

"It feels so good, it's hard to describe how good it feels, honestly," Mackey told *WPT* reporters after the win. "In poker, you lose and lose and lose so getting that win... it's special."

Mackey wasn't the only former *WPT* winner at the final table. He entered with the chip lead, while three-time *WPT* champion Eric Afriat sat in the middle of the pack and two-time *WPT* champion Erick Lindgren brought up the rear.

Lindgren, the winner of the 2003 *Ultimate Poker Classic* and 2004 *PartyPoker Million II*, was the first to hit the rail. He got the last of his 18 big blinds in with A-9 suited leading the K-J of Sebastien Aube, but the board brought two kings to give Aube trips and the knockout.

Lindgren earned \$75,000 as the sixth-place finisher, his largest cash since 2018. He now has career earnings of nearly \$10.3 million.

Danny Marx was the next to fall. He got his last handful of big blinds in with 10-7 suited trailing the K-7 of Aube. Marx flopped a ten to temporarily turn the tables, but a river king sent him home with a career-best payday of \$99,000 for his fifth-place showing.

Aube slid to the bottom of the chip counts as short-handed play continued. He eventually got all-in for around four big blinds with A-Q leading the 8-7 suited of Afriat. Aube led after a jack-high flop, but Afriat turned and rived two pair to secure the knockout. Aube, a bracelet winner from Montreal, cashed for \$131,000 in this event.

Mackey was well out in front when three-handed action kicked off. He was keeping the pressure up with plenty of preflop aggression. In the next key hand, he shoved from the button and Adam Hendrix called from the big blind for seven big blinds with Q♥9♥. Mackey revealed A♣5♥.

The A♠6♣2♣5♠Q♣ runout gave Mackey aces up and the knockout. Hendrix earned \$175,000, growing his career tally to more than \$6.6 million in the process.

Heads-up play began with Mackey holding roughly a 5:1 lead over Afriat. Mackey was able to extend that advantage despite multiple double-ups for Afriat, who was looking to



win his record-tying fourth *WPT* title.

In the final hand, Afriat moved all-in for seven big blinds with K♠J♦ from the button and Mackey called with K♥5♦. The board ran out 9♠5♠5♥J♣6♦ and Mackey made trip fives to secure the title.

Afriat was awarded \$235,000 as the runner-up. The Canadian now has more than \$5.6 million in lifetime scores to his name. Nearly \$3.5 million of that has come from his 22 cashes and nine final-table finishes in *WPT* main events.

His first win on the tour came in 2014, when he took down the *WPT Seminole Hard Rock Poker Showdown* for nearly \$1.1 million. In 2018 he won the *WPT Borgata Winter Poker Open* for another \$652,000. His most recent win came in the 2020 *WPT Fallsview Poker Classic* for \$394,000. ♠

Player	Payout (POY)
1 James Mackey	\$361,600 (1,260)
2 Eric Afriat	\$235,000 (1,050)
3 Adam Hendrix	\$175,000 (840)
4 Sebastien Aube	\$131,000 (630)
5 Danny Marx	\$99,000 (525)
6 Erick Lindgren	\$75,000 (420)
7 Vladyslav Shovkovyi	\$58,000 (315)
8 Miguel Hernandez	\$45,000 (210)
9 James McGill	\$35,500 (105)

# CIRCUIT RESULTS

All payouts in USD.



©King's Casino

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Festival in Rozvadov Kings Casino Rozvadov, Czech Republic	1 Presiyan Tsvetanov	\$96,675 (456)
	2 Michal Riczak	\$62,328 (380)
€550 NLH June 5-9 €500,000 GTD Entries: 989 Prizepool: \$510,150	3 Antoine Degiorgio	\$47,348 (304)
	4 Barnabas Nagy	\$38,467 (228)
	5 Yann Lormel	\$32,689 (190)
	6 Anonymous	NA
	7 Erik Polluveer	\$11,770 (114)
	8 Anonymous	NA
	9 Rickard Olsson	\$6,367 (38)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Deltin Poker Tour	1 Harsh Dev	\$41,162 (288)
	2 Rishabh Vekaria	\$30,525 (240)
Deltin Royale Casino Panjim, India	3 Myron Pereira	\$22,637 (192)
	4 Ashish Ahuja	\$16,787 (144)
p110,000 NLH May 22-23 Entries: 157 Prizepool: \$188,435	5 Dhaval Mudgal	\$12,449 (120)
	6 Kunal Patni	\$9,232 (96)
	7 Nikesh Chawla	\$6,846 (72)
	8 Kanchan Sharma	\$5,077 (48)
	9 Akash Kumar	\$4,488 (24)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Deltin Poker Tour	1 Gera Abraham	\$57,566 (420)
	2 Anonymous	NA
Deltin Royale Casino Panjim, India	3 Goonjan Mall	\$30,971 (280)
	4 Raman Dixit	\$22,726 (210)
p50,000 NLH May 23-27 Entries: 597 Prizepool: \$322,427	5 Vaibhav Shah	\$16,682 (175)
	6 Archit Khandelwal	\$12,252 (140)
	7 Rohit Chauhan	\$9,005 (105)
	8 Savvy Ranchal	\$6,625 (70)
	9 Aditya Singh	\$4,880 (35)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Mystery Bounty Tournament	1 Tyler Hancock	\$73,192 (912)
	2 Seunghyun Noh	\$53,797 (760)
Talking Stick Scottsdale, AZ	3 George Heide	\$39,858 (608)
	4 Steven Jones	\$31,300 (456)
\$1,000 NLH KO May 23-26 Entries: 988 Prizepool: \$489,060	5 Alec Amendolangine	\$24,355 (380)
	6 Robert Brown	\$19,709 (304)
	7 Brian Biggs	\$15,112 (228)
	8 Senh Cong	\$11,248 (152)
	9 Jarrett Pearson	\$8,803 (76)



© Hard Rock Hollywood

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Deep Stack Series	1 Johnny Bromberg	\$98,100 (480)
	2 Christopher Bissinger	\$66,000 (400)
Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood, FL	3 Min Zhang	\$49,000 (320)
	4 Scott Watson	\$36,500 (240)
\$1,700 NLH May 23-26 \$300,000 GTD Entries: 303 Prizepool: \$454,500	5 Caio Sobral	\$27,500 (200)
	6 Iman Dan	\$21,000 (160)
	7 Craig Pollak	\$16,200 (120)
	8 Tomas Brokl	\$12,600 (80)
	9 Dion Jagroo	\$9,900 (40)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
GUKPT	1 Ryan O'Donnell	\$72,085 (408)
	2 Anonymous	NA
The Poker Room London, United Kingdom	3 Matthew Davenport	\$37,186 (272)
	4 Joe Laming	\$24,727 (204)
	5 Anonymous	NA
£1,250 NLH May 23-26 Entries: 249 Prizepool: \$327,583	6 Qiaochu Xiao	\$12,611 (136)
	7 Tarjei Forus	\$10,033 (102)
	8 Cassandra Yong	\$8,674 (68)
	9 Artan Dedusha	\$7,544 (34)

# TOURNAMENTS

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Summer Classic	1 Dipanjan Chattopadhyay	\$86,778 (480)
	2 Marko Marbella	\$70,000 (400)
Wynn Las Vegas, NV	3 Elad Cohen	\$70,000 (320)
	4 Jesus Calderon	\$70,000 (240)
\$600 NLH May 23-26 \$300,000 GTD Entries: 1,320 Prizepool: \$679,800	5 James Morris	\$33,769 (200)
	6 Matthew Schulte	\$25,905 (160)
	7 Connor Woodland	\$19,354 (120)
	8 Joshua Wang	\$14,992 (80)
	9 Bobby Poe	\$11,425 (40)



© Wynn Las Vegas



© Wynn Las Vegas

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Summer Classic	1 Jasthi Kumar	\$118,585
	2 Lee Markholt	\$104,566
Wynn Las Vegas, NV	3 Sean Lindsey	\$68,295
	4 Anthony Alonso	\$53,859
\$1,600 NLH Seniors June 3-4 \$500,000 GTD Entries: 498 Prizepool: \$717,120	5 Marc Levy	\$41,642
	6 Eusebio Gutierrez	\$31,661
	7 Michael Clarke	\$23,660
	8 William Holmes	\$17,453
	9 Michael Stephenson	\$12,722

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Summer Classic	1 Alban Juen	\$380,767 (1200)
	2 John Pierce	\$255,250 (1000)
Wynn Las Vegas, NV	3 David Trager	\$198,556 (800)
	4 Ryan Rivers	\$152,237 (600)
\$1,100 NLH May 28-June 1 \$2,000,000 GTD Entries: 2,532 Prizepool: \$2,456,040	5 James Mendoza	\$118,062 (500)
	6 Matthew Szeto	\$89,940 (400)
	7 George Tatalovich	\$67,585 (300)
	8 Daniel Jordan	\$49,656 (200)
	9 Hon Ban Lee	\$35,529 (100)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Summer Classic	1 Matthew Parry	\$106,645 (480)
	2 Richard Ashby	\$106,643 (400)
Wynn Las Vegas, NV	3 Ruslan Nazarenko	\$64,086 (320)
	4 Fernando Habegger	\$47,502 (240)
\$2,200 PLO June 7 \$200,000 GTD Entries: 300 Prizepool: \$600,000	5 Scott Dulaney	\$35,166 (200)
	6 Joao de Almeida	\$26,094 (160)
	7 Jiyang Gan	\$19,506 (120)
	8 Seth Davies	\$14,874 (80)
	9 Patrik Jaros	\$11,580 (40)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Summer Classic	1 Kai Cohen	\$59,105 (456)
	2 Noel Eicher	\$39,409 (380)
Wynn Las Vegas, NV	3 Matthew Cosentino	\$30,311 (304)
	4 Antonio Galiana	\$23,754 (228)
\$1,100 NLH June 2 \$250,000 GTD Entries: 298 Prizepool: \$292,040	5 Mike Chiappetta	\$18,429 (190)
	6 Mal Hagan	\$14,027 (152)
	7 Joseph Lao	\$10,467 (114)
	8 Caio Sobral	\$7,634 (76)
	9 Robert Minion	\$5,636 (38)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Summer Classic	1 Cesar Andrade	\$72,698 (600)
	2 Alexander Tafesh	\$48,482 (500)
Wynn Las Vegas, NV	3 Elvyn Bello	\$37,289 (400)
	4 Long Ma	\$29,223 (300)
\$1,100 NLH June 8 \$250,000 GTD Entries: 377 Prizepool: \$369,460	5 Philip Yeh	\$22,672 (250)
	6 Isaac Cohen	\$17,256 (200)
	7 Jacob Hamed	\$12,876 (150)
	8 Ioannis Angelou-Konstas	\$9,392 (100)
	9 Kelly Bradshaw	\$6,729 (50)

# TOURNAMENTS

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Stars & Stripes Tournament	1 Le Tieu	\$53,055
	2 Alan Culla	\$31,037
bestbet Jacksonville, FL	3 Andres Fernandez	\$18,837
	4 Ewan Leatham	\$11,767
	5 Freder Warnock	\$7,995
\$300 NLH May 24-27	6 Harjinder Chawla	\$6,784
\$100,000 GTD	7 Derek Nguyen	\$5,815
Entries: 1,047	8 Corey Zedo	\$4,846
Prizepool: \$251,283	9 Hyong Lee	\$4,119

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
DeepStack	1 Andrew Donen	\$36,984 (288)
	2 James Wilding	\$25,300 (240)
Venetian Las Vegas, NV	3 Tony Tran	\$17,744 (192)
	4 Matthew Lambrecht	\$12,766 (144)
\$1,100 NLH June 2	5 Jack Hardcastle	\$9,428 (120)
\$150,000 GTD	6 Joseph Cervo	\$7,152 (96)
Entries: 151	7 Christopher Shetland	\$5,578 (72)
Prizepool: \$150,000	8 Michel Molenaar	\$4,476 (48)
	9 Kane Lai	\$3,698 (24)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
Philadelphia Championship Series	1 Andrew Porter	\$64,000 (192)
	2 Aaron Olshan	\$42,000 (160)
	3 Kenny Huynh	\$25,000 (128)
Rivers Casino Philadelphia, PA	4 Sebastian Harasim	\$18,000 (96)
	5 Brian Luo	\$15,000 (80)
\$2,200 NLH May 24-27	6 Justin Lett	\$12,000 (64)
\$200,000 GTD	7 Michael Mcnicholas	\$10,000 (48)
Entries: 87	8 Matt Zambanini	\$8,000 (32)
Prizepool: \$200,000	9 Angel Lopez	\$6,000 (16)



Event	Player	Payout (POY)
DeepStack	1 Christopher Meyers	\$158,100 (840)
	2 Safwane Bahri	\$117,054 (700)
Venetian Las Vegas, NV	3 Tony Miles	\$87,600 (560)
	4 Sanford Tabin	\$66,270 (420)
\$1,600 NLH June 3-5	5 David Coleman	\$50,685 (350)
\$750,000 GTD	6 Thanh Nguyen	\$39,197 (280)
Entries: 696	7 Simon Britton	\$30,645 (210)
Prizepool: \$991,800	8 Elvyn Santos	\$24,245 (140)
	9 Mario Luiz Mentrop	\$19,398 (70)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
MSPT	1 Alexander Wong	\$89,544 (840)
	2 Nicholas Wang	\$66,019 (700)
Venetian Las Vegas, NV	3 Thien Tran	\$49,227 (560)
	4 Robert Schulz	\$37,125 (420)
\$1,100 NLH May 25-28	5 Lucas Tae	\$28,323 (350)
\$500,000 GTD	6 Boris Shakhmurov	\$21,860 (280)
Entries: 543	7 Michael Holtz	\$17,073 (210)
Prizepool: \$526,995	8 Euan Mcnicholas	\$13,493 (140)
	9 Tamas Lendvi	\$10,794 (70)

Event	Player	Payout (POY)
WSOP Circuit	1 Alexandre Correia	\$58,320 (240)
	2 Frederic Blehaut	\$38,880 (200)
Stade Jean-Bouin Paris, France	3 Roland Rozel	\$28,404 (160)
	4 Clement Michaud	\$21,492 (120)
€2,400 NLH May 22-24	5 Kalidou Sow	\$16,697 (100)
Entries: 110	6 Florin Pop	\$13,122 (80)
Prizepool: \$239,501	7 Fabrice Bigot Castagnet	\$10,530 (60)
	8 Fabian Rolli	\$8,694 (40)
	9 Darius Neagoe	\$7,398 (20)

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# POKERSTARS NAPT RETURNS TO RESORTS WORLD LAS VEGAS THIS FALL

By Card Player News Team

Resorts World Las Vegas hosted the first PokerStars *North American Poker Tour* stop held in more than a decade last fall. The debut series of the reborn *NAPT* was by all accounts a massive hit with players, attracting just shy of 3,200 entries across 17 events, with \$4,264,665 in total prize money paid out along the way.

The event's organizers have announced that the festival is set to return in 2024, with ten days of tournament action planned for Nov. 1-10.

"Resorts World Las Vegas is thrilled to announce the highly anticipated return of PokerStars and the *NAPT* this November. After last year's tremendous success, we are eager to capitalize on that momentum and host an even more spectacular festival in 2024," said Leon Wheeler, Director of Poker Operations for Resorts World Las Vegas.

The main event last fall featured a \$1,650 buy-in. It attracted 1,095 total entries, surpassing the \$1.5 million guarantee to create a final prize pool of \$1,609,650. Sami Bechahed came out on top, securing the trophy and the top prize of \$268,945.

This year the main event will feature a larger \$5,300 buy-in. There will be plenty of ways to win a seat, both online and via live events, with details to be announced in the near future.

"Last year, the *NAPT* smashed all expectations, so this year, we're going even bigger. With a premier partner like Resorts World Las Vegas, we're stepping up our game: bigger tournaments, buy-ins, and player-focused events," said Steve Preiss, Vice President of PokerStars North America.

Buy-ins are expected to range from \$250 all the way up to \$25,000. The full schedule will be released soon.

Organizers recently announced a variety of paths for players to win their way to the Resorts World with a Gold Pass via PokerStars. Players can start their journey to Las Vegas with a \$0.50 Step 1 ticket, which will be awarded just for logging in.



"These Step 1 tickets can be used to enter tournaments, progressively parlaying smaller wins into larger prizes, ultimately leading up to a Gold Pass. Along the way, players can also win Silver Passes, which are redeemable for entry into *NAPT Regional* events and bi-weekly \$1K *NAPT* satellites."

When Resorts World Las Vegas opened in 2021, it marked the first new resort on the legendary Las Vegas Strip in over a decade. The property was developed on the site of the old Stardust, which was demolished back in 2007.

The property features a 117,000 square foot casino, and a 50-story property with three distinct hotels. Las Vegas Hilton, Conrad Las Vegas, and Crockfords Las Vegas combine for nearly 3,500 total rooms. The casino floor features 1,400 slot machines, 117 table games, and of course, the poker room.

In addition to gaming, the property offers plenty of other world-class entertainment options, including the 5,000-person Resorts World Theater, the Zouk Nightclub, and the Ayu Beach House. There are also more than 50 dining and drinking establishments on site.

For more information on Resorts World Las Vegas and the November *NAPT* stop, visit [RWLasVegas.com](http://RWLasVegas.com). ♠



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# A SPOT YOU DON'T WANT TO SLOW PLAY

By Jonathan Little

A common mistake some players make is to slow play with hands that are strong, but vulnerable to being outdrawn.

In general, if your premium hand can somewhat easily be outdrawn, you should play it aggressively. You also want to apply aggression so you can get a lot of money in the pot as a clear favorite.

Slow playing often results in you getting outdrawn and/or playing a small pot, both of which are terrible outcomes for strong hands.

The following hand from a \$2-\$5 cash game with a \$500 effective stack illustrates this point. An unknown player limped in from the cutoff. Our Hero on the button called the \$5 with A♥ 5♥, and both blinds opted to see a cheap flop.

While I am fine with Hero's limp, I would usually raise, especially if I thought the cutoff's limp was a clear sign of weakness. From late position, almost all players raise with their best hands, meaning when they limp, they usually have marginal hands. While A♥ 5♥ is not too far ahead of the cutoff's range, taking the lead and applying aggression will allow Hero to steal the pot on flops where both players fail to improve.

The flop came 4♣ 3♣ 2♠, giving Hero a straight. The small blind checked and the big blind bet \$15 into the \$20 pot. Only Hero called.

I do not like Hero's call at all. There are numerous bad turns that will either give his opponent the best hand or make it difficult to get paid off.

While Hero's straight is quite strong, it is vulnerable to being outdrawn, making a raise ideal. Also, when playing with 100-big blind stacks in limped pots, it is mandatory that you raise with your best hands in order to build the pot so you can get your entire stack in by the river. Calling would be more justifiable if the pot on the flop was larger, if there was a preflop raise or three-bet.

Consider how the money will likely go in when Hero just calls the flop. On the turn, the big blind may bet \$35 into the \$50 pot, and on the river, he may bet \$60 into the \$120 pot. That leaves a large amount of unused money in Hero's stack.

If instead Hero raises the flop to \$40 and the big blind calls, he can then bet \$100 on the turn and potentially all-in on the river, getting much more money in the pot. Of course, raising may result in everyone folding and Hero winning a tiny pot, but that is the risk you have to take if you want to be able to play large pots with your best hands.

One additional benefit to your opponents folding to flop raises is that you can start mixing in semi-bluffs with weak draws like Q♠ 9♠ and 7♥ 6♥.

The turn was the 9♥. The big blind bet \$40 into the \$50 pot and Hero called.

While I hate the flop call, I merely dislike the turn call because in small-stakes games, turn raises are primarily made by players who have premium hands.

As on the flop, Hero's goal should be to play for all his money while also protecting his hand against all the possible draws. By just calling, he makes it nearly impossible to get



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all-in on the river. Again, notice that if Hero raises the turn to \$110, he can then blast the river and make the pot a whole lot larger.

The river was the J♥. The big blind checked, Hero bet \$80 into the \$130 pot, and the big blind called. Hero was overjoyed to get some river value and scoop the pot.

I like betting the river, but Hero should have bet a bit larger, perhaps \$120. There are numerous hands that can call a sizable value bet, plus there are a ton of potential busted draws, making a large bet the best option.

While many players are happy whenever they win a nice pot, they should instead be asking if there was a realistic way to win more. In this situation, raising the flop would have likely led to an even larger victory for Hero.

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*Jonathan Little is a two-time WPT winner and the 2024 PokerGO Cup champion with nearly \$9 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](https://PokerCoaching.com/CardPlayer).*



# 7 TIPS TO READING YOUR OPPONENTS

By Alex Fitzgerald

Mastering the art of reading your opponents is a pivotal skill in poker, often turning the tide in your favor. This article delves into seven psychological tricks that can unveil the intentions and strategies of your adversaries, giving you a critical edge at the table.

## 1. Who Hates Being Caught Bluffing?

Most of these tips will require multiple sessions with the same players before you can use them. This is one that can help you with all of the regulars in the cardroom.

If someone plays regularly, pay attention to what they turn up with on the river. If they never get caught bluffing, then they're not bluffing enough.

How do you know that? Think of it this way. Imagine if you move all-in on the river, the bet as a complete bluff needs to work 60% of the time to be successful. You look across the table, range your opponent, and surmise they're folding 80% of the time. What should you do?

Of course, you should pull the trigger, but this also means you'll be caught bluffing one-fifth of the time!

Players who bluff enough in marginal situations get caught regularly. If your opponents are not getting caught bluffing, then they're not bluffing enough. No one pitches a perfect game. Don't give them your money. They're glorified nut peddlers.

## 2. Is Their Preflop Call Agitation Authentic?

This is a small point, but it deserves being discussed. There are many people in your cardroom who will give off genuine agitation when they get three-bet. They'll put their chips in quickly, they'll slam them in, they'll look annoyed, or they'll do a myriad of other tells.

Pay attention to when they do this! This often means they don't have their best hands. Their range is capped when you get them post-flop.

I remember one time I three-bet a player and he didn't show any agitation for the first time. He stared blankly before he called my three-



**"If your opponents are not getting caught bluffing, then they're not bluffing enough. No one pitches a perfect game. Don't give them your money."**

bet. At the end of the hand, I found out he had aces.

Pay attention to who doesn't care about showing agitation. It can help you range them more accurately.

## 3. Who Checks Out When They're Going To Fold?

You'll see this in many players if you look long enough. When they're in a multiway pot and are planning on folding, they go to their cell phone, watch the game more intently, or just generally check out. When they're ready to fold their hands behind you, they'll sometimes have their hand

ready to throw in the muck.

There's an interesting wrinkle to this. Some players don't want to obviously look like they're folding because they know that will bite them in the ass later. But what they do instead is almost comical. They'll stare at the action intently like they have something when they've missed the flop. When they've smashed the flop, they'll look down at their chips and look away.

## 4. Who Is Calm With A Hand?

There are many players who get bored when they have a huge hand.

They know they're going to win a big pot or a bigger pot, so there's no suspense. They'll often wear this boredom on their sleeve, because they feel it doesn't give away anything.

Pay attention to when these players finally do get dialed up. This is dramatically different than what they do with a hand. It's possible they get this tense with their bluffs only. See what gets shown down. Look at how relieved they look if the other player folds.

### 5. Who Looks Ready To Go?

I remember sitting down once with a player who was picking at their skin. They were agitated with the dealer over nothing. They slammed their chips every time they raised. They looked annoyed when they had to fold anything.

I got 200 big blinds in on the flop versus this person with a set against their one pair. The other players at the table were surprised I played my hand so fast. It was obvious to them I had a set. They were shocked I got value.

When a player is ready to go, don't get cute with them. They're living on tilt. Give them big bets to call down. Don't let someone else bust them.

### 6. Who Rechecks Their Cards?

This read takes a long time to confirm, but pay attention to when people recheck their cards post-flop.

If they never recheck their cards or they always recheck, that doesn't tell you much. But most people have their favorite times to recheck their cards.

When the flop comes with three to a suit, a lot of players will recheck their hand to see if they have one card of a certain suit. If they have a suited hand, they have the suit memorized, so they don't have to recheck their cards.

I've played with players who only recheck their hand when they have the nuts. It's like a security blanket they want to soothe themselves with before they put the big bet out there. If they were bluffing, they would just get their nerve up and fire. They didn't have to see their junk again.

### 7. Who Announces Their Raises?

This is another play that takes time to develop, but pay attention to it. There are certain players who only announce their raises at specific times.

I've played with players who only announced their raises when they wanted to intimidate someone. If they wanted to three-bet you light they'd

announce it, but they got noticeably quieter when they had the hand.

You will also find the opposite of this sometimes. There are players who clam up with bluffs and don't want to give off anything, but when they have a huge hand, they'll be able to talk much more freely.

If you find someone who is calm and loose verbally when they have a huge hand, always use that against them. Chat them up with anything silly you can think of on the river. If they're responsive and bored, then you know they have nothing to worry about. They have it. ♠



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

He has WCOOP and SCOOP wins online. His most recent win was the \$250,000 Guaranteed on America's Cardroom. He currently enjoys blasting bums away in Ignition tournaments while he listens to death metal. Free training packages of his are provided to new newsletter subscribers who sign up for free at [www.pokerheadrush.com](http://www.pokerheadrush.com)

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# POKER STRATEGY: A GUARANTEED WIN FOR A MANIAC

Mixed-Game Specialist Breaks Down 2-7 Dramaha Hand

By Mark Mazmanian

The structure of Dramaha is a split-pot board game with five down cards where the player forms an Omaha high hand by using two of their hole cards and three of the community cards on the board.

Half the pot goes to the best Omaha hand, and half the pot goes to the best draw high hand (your five hole cards). With the 2-7 variation, however, players are trying to draw the best low hand, with the nuts being 7-5-4-3-2.

I recently came across an interesting spot while sweating a friend during a hand of \$20-\$40 2-7 Dramaha. (This Hero is a winning regular that leans on the nittier side of play.)

Hero was dealt K-8-5-4-3 and called early position. (I would have preferred a raise, but he elected to limp.) The cutoff then limped, the small blind completed, and the big blind checked.

The flop came down A-2-2 rainbow, the small blind checked, the big blind bet, and Hero called. The cutoff then quickly raised, the small blind folded, and the big blind immediately three-bet. Hero called, the cutoff four-bet, and then everyone called. (Note: We play a five-bet cap in most limit games in Las Vegas so this four-bet was not a cap.)

Now, as I was evaluating the hand range here, I asked myself what hands would the big blind and cutoff play in

this manner? Both were players with some experience in mix games, so any strong made low from the cutoff would have definitely come in for a raise preflop when facing a limp and two players to act in the blinds. Additionally, the big blind would have to raise for value in an unraised pot if they have a strong made low worth jamming for three-bets on the flop in this spot.

So, this leaves both of their ranges to either made full houses or a deuce with a one-card draw to a low. Given that both had reraised on the flop, full houses seemed far more likely to me, especially given the passive play preflop.

Now, if both players had a full house or better, that would mean they **MUST** have at least an ace in their hand as the only way to make a full house or better on this flop would be to hold A-2, A-A, or 2-2 in the hand.

If my read was correct here, this would render his typically weak king low to be unbeatable by either opponent. As such, I was anxiously watching to see if Hero made the same read and would make the unorthodox play of standing pat with a King low!

When it came time to declare, the big blind stood pat, and Hero discarded the king and drew one, finding a seven to complete an eight-low. The cutoff also stood pat. ➔

## TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

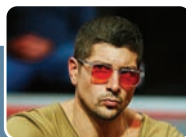
2024 World Series of Poker  
\$25,000 No-Limit Hold'em Six-Max Event



**Brek Schutten**  
8,875,000 Chips



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 68%  
After Flop: 52%  
After Turn: 0%



**Michael Rocco**  
8,575,000 Chips



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 27%  
After Flop: 46%  
After Turn: 100%

### PREFLOP

With five players remaining and blinds of 150,000-300,000 with a big blind ante of 300,000, Brek Schutten raised to 1,000,000 from the small blind. Michael Rocco called from the big blind.



Schutten bet 550,000, and Rocco called.



Both players checked.



Schutten checked, and Rocco bet 2,200,000. Schutten called.

### COMMENTARY:

The very next hand after forcing Taylor von Kriegenbergh off of A-K suited on the turn, Brek Schutten picked up the very same hand and raised from the small blind. Michael Rocco, who sat with just a single big blind fewer than Schutten to start the hand, flat called with A-10 suited out of the big blind. Rocco flopped the nut flush draw and just called in position when Schutten made his continuation bet on the jack-high board. The turn brought a third club to give Rocco the ace-high flush. Schutten checked and Rocco found a sneaky check back with the nuts, further disguising the strength of his hand. This tactic was likely undertaken with the hope of convincing more of Schutten's jacks or even unimproved strong preflop holdings to be played as bluff catchers. The gambit ultimately paid off. Schutten checked again after the river brought the 9♥. Rocco went for a hefty value bet of 2,200,000 into the pot of 3,400,000. Schutten mulled over his options with his nut-no-pair holding. Might Rocco be taking a stab with a lone high club in his hand, fearing that he might not win at showdown? Schutten thought it over for over a minute and eventually made the hero call with A-K high. He was shown the nuts and the pot was sent to Rocco, who surged into the outright chip lead while Schutten slid to the bottom of the chip counts. Schutten's roller coaster ride through five-handed play was far from done, though. Just a few minutes later he found himself involved in another big hand.

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



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# POKER STRATEGY

The turn was a jack, and the big blind checked. Hero bet, the cutoff raised, and the big blind called. Hero three-bet, the cutoff four-bet, the big blind flat called, and Hero capped with both opponents calling.

The river was a seven for a final board of A-2-2-J-7, and this time it checked to Hero who bet, and both players just called.

Before the cards were tabled, I told my buddy, "You should have patted."

"What? I had a king," he replied.

"Yes, but they both have boats. Your king was already good. By drawing, you risked pairing your hand which would have got you none of the pot."

Sure enough, the cutoff showed A-A for aces full, and the big blind showed A-2 for deuces full of aces. Hero got half the pot with his eight-low, and the cutoff took the Omaha half.

Now let's assess if it would have been more profitable to stand pat, planning not to raise the king low, versus drawing and raising a ten or better.

Going into the draw on the flop, there were four small bets preflop, and 12 on the flop for a total of 16 small bets, or eight big bets. If Hero had kept the King but elected not to raise because it is still a weak low, he would have gotten in 3 big bets x 2 for 6 big bets post-turn, making 14 big bets in the pot, and he would have won back half of that, yielding 7 big bets.

Of those, his investment was 2.5 bets predraw and 2 bets post-draw, for a total investment of 4.5 bets. As such, his profit would be 2.5 big bets. By drawing successfully, capping turn, and betting once on the river, he added 6 bets x 4 which is 24 bets bringing the total of big bets in the pot to 32. And since he won half, he got back 16 bets.

The total invested by him was still 2.5 predraw but now it is 6 post-draw, so he invested 8.5 bets, and thus profited 7.5 bets. This is 5 bets stronger than he would have gotten if he patted the king and elected not to play aggressively.

He made more money by drawing! But what were the chances in play on drawing?

As shown earlier, he would have 20 outs to complete a ten-low or better, but 2-2 was out on the flop, so that leaves only 18 outs amongst the 44 unseen cards.  $18/44 = 40.9\%$

Hero could also make a low worth calling with by drawing a jack, queen, or another king here, which gives him another 11 outs, or another 25% of the deck. By adding these two, we get approximately 66%, meaning one-third of the time, Hero has to fold what was already a sure winner of half the pot.

So, the question left is, which approach is best?

Actually, both approaches could use improvement.

The best play would have been to have pat the king-low and cap accordingly for value, taking the small risk that somebody had limped a monster low. In this case, not only would it have accomplished maximizing the pot while minimizing risk by avoiding drawing, but because of the sophisticated nature of the play, and how crazy it would have looked to unaware opponents, it would have given free advertising of being a maniac while risking very little. ♠



Mark Mazmanian has been a mixed-game specialist for more than two decades playing in games all over the country. The Las Vegas resident can be reached on IG @maztasticl or by email at markmaz17@hotmail.com.

## TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2024 World Series of Poker  
\$25,000 No-Limit Hold'em Six-Max Event



Brek Schutten  
5,125,000 Chips



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 48%  
After Flop: 98%  
After Turn: 100%



Brandon Wilson  
9,175,000 Chips



Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 51%  
After Flop: 2%  
After Turn: 0%

### PREFLOP

With five players remaining and blinds of 150,000-300,000 with a big blind ante of 300,000, Brek Schutten raised to 600,000 from the cutoff. Brandon Wilson called from the big blind.



Wilson checked, and Schutten bet 450,000. Wilson called.



Wilson checked, and Schutten bet 1,000,000. Wilson called.



Wilson checked. Schutten bet 2,300,000, and Wilson called.

### COMMENTARY:

Schutten sat out just a single hand after a hero call gone wrong (see pg. 42), only to become embroiled in another big pot on the next deal. Schutten kicked off the action min-raising with a small pocket pair from the one off the button as the short stack with 17 big blinds. It folded around to Brandon Wilson, who was second in chips at the time. Wilson defended with J-9 suited and flopped top pair. He checked to Schutten, who had spiked a set of threes to take a massive lead in the hand. Schutten fired 1.5 big blinds into the pot of 5.5 big blinds. Wilson check-called with his top pair and the turn brought an overcard in the 10♦. "This is going to be so hard for Wilson to diagnose, when the time is right. Schutten opening pocket threes in general, I think is a little... dare I say, cuspy?" asked PokerGO commentator and bracelet winner Brent Hanks. Wilson checked again and Schutten fired 1,000,000 into the pot of 2,550,000. Wilson made the call and another overcard peeled off the deck. He checked after the Q♠ was revealed and Schutten was more than happy to go for a healthy value bet of over half pot. Schutten left himself just 775,000 (just over 2.5 big blinds) behind. Wilson's top pair from the flop was now reduced to a pure bluff catcher, as Schutten would be very unlikely to bet all three streets for value with a hand like 8-8 or other one-pair holdings lower than nines. Wilson ultimately made the call and was shown Schutten's set. He fell to 15 big blinds after the hand and went on to finish fifth for a career-best score of \$315,771.

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# GT-NO: Two Controversial Preflop Slowplays In One Hand

By David Sklansky

Those of you who have read, or read about, our new book, are probably aware of the controversy surrounding the way I played pocket kings and the fact that I recommended that readers sometimes play that hand the way I did. Namely, limp with it after others have limped, in the hopes of someone in later position putting in a raise.

I am not going to discuss the pros and cons of making this play in various types of games, (seriously, it's in the book!) However, I coincidentally got the chance to witness one of my students take the concept to the next level. So, I thought I would tell you about it.

It was a \$3-\$5 game at the Venetian and a rather aggressive player had put up a \$10 straddle on the button. Four or five people limped, the straddle was skipped over, and the small blind called.

My student, Rubin, had about \$550 in front of him in the big blind, and looked down at pocket kings. He decided to just call!

Now it went back to the button who could either check or raise. He made it \$30. It's twenty more to everyone start-

ing with the small blind, who called.

Again, Rubin just called!

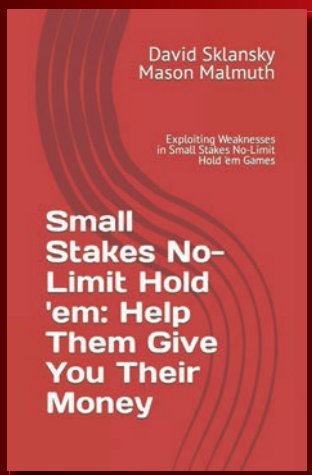
Now the first limper, instead of calling twenty made it \$120. The straddler called the \$90 and NOW Rubin moved in.

His opponents thought about it for a bit, but they both ended up calling the shove. The UTG player had pocket jacks and the button had A-5 suited. Rubin profited over \$1,100 with a hand that, if played normally, would have almost certainly won much less.

But did he play it right? Almost certainly GTO players would say no.

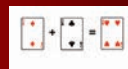
They would have raised the first time when it was five to them. Non-GTO players might have just called knowing that the button straddler would raise fairly often, but even then, they would have probably three-bet once it got around to them again.

Instead, Rubin realized that there was not only a decent chance that the straddler would raise, but also a decent chance that at least one of the original limpers



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was slowplaying a big hand that he thought would have a good chance to reraise with given the aggressiveness of the straddler.

Rubin turned out to be right on both counts. Plus, he realized that both these players were the type who would feel pot committed and would not leave \$120 of their money on the table but would rather spend another \$430 to try to punish this “old school” type player who thought out of the box, rather than inside of a “solver.” (Admittedly given the way the cards lay the A-5 had a slightly positive EV call but only because he wasn’t against another ace. The J-J call was simply bad against almost all opponents).

Of course, the way this hand played out doesn’t mean that it was played correctly. Whether it is depends on how likely the straddler will raise, how likely one of the limpers is slowplaying, and how likely the opponents will call the all in move with a hand they shouldn’t. However, it should be obvious that you don’t need these things to be THAT likely for it to be right to make this far-outside-the-box play.

And those who almost always play the way their computer tells them to will probably never even contemplate doing something like that. ♠



David Sklansky is the author of *The Theory of Poker*, as well as nearly two dozen other guides on gambling, poker, and other games. The three-time WSOP bracelet winner’s latest book, *Small Stakes No-Limit Hold’em: Help Them Give You Their Money*, is now available on Amazon. You can contact Sklansky at [dsklansky@aol.com](mailto:dsklansky@aol.com).

# TOURNAMENT HAND MATCHUP

2024 World Series of Poker  
\$25,000 No-Limit Hold’em Six-Max Event



**Tyler Stafman**  
22,950,000 Chips

Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 60%  
After Flop: 3%  
After Turn: 0%



**Brek Schutten**  
17,875,000 Chips

Winning Percentage  
Before Flop: 40%  
After Flop: 97%  
After Turn: 100%



## PREFLOP

With two players remaining and blinds of 250,000-500,000 with a big blind ante of 500,000, Tyler Stafman limped in from the button for 500,000 total. Brek Schutten raised to 1,800,000 from the big blind. Stafman called.

FLOP



Schutten checked, and Stafman bet 1,500,000. Schutten check-raised to 3,500,000, and Stafman called.

TURN



Schutten checked, and Stafman moved all in. Schutten called all-in for 12,075,000.

RIVER



## COMMENTARY:

Heads-up play in the *World Series of Poker* \$25,000 no-limit hold’em six-max event began with Schutten holding roughly a 5:3 chip lead over Tyler Stafman, who was at his first *WSOP* final table. Those roles reversed when Stafman won a preflop all-in confrontation with pocket jacks against A-10. Schutten was able to close the gap, though, in time for the pivotal hand of the match. Stafman was ahead by just 10 big blinds when he limped from the small blind with A-7. Schutten bumped it up with K-6 suited out of the big blind and Stafman made the call. Schutten flopped the joint, with the A♠ and two other spades hitting the board right away. He checked his nut flush and Stafman, who had hit top pair with a seven-high flush redraw, bet three big blinds. Schutten check-raised to seven big blinds total and Stafman hung around. The 4♣ meant that Stafman was drawing dead. Schutten made a canny check with his monster holding and Stafman moved all-in, an effective shove of just over the size of the pot (12,075,000 into 11,100,000). Schutten snap-called and secured the double up to take a more than a 6:1 chip advantage. Stafman hung on for nearly half an hour on the short stack, but eventually was knocked out in second place (\$938,775). Schutten earned his first bracelet and a career-high score of \$1,405,641 as the champion.

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<b>MAY</b>	May 20-July 31	DeepStack Championship Poker Series	Venetian Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	May 22-July 18	Summer Classic	Wynn ■ Las Vegas, NV
	May 26-July 14	Summer Open	Orleans Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	May 28-July 17	World Series of Poker	Horseshoe Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	May 29-July 13	Poker Classic	Aria Resort & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
<b>JUNE</b>	June 6-July 22	Summer Poker Series	Resorts World ■ Las Vegas, NV
	June 19-July 8	High Roller Series	Aria PokerGO Studio ■ Las Vegas, NV
<b>JULY</b>	July 17-29	WSOP Circuit - Choctaw	Choctaw Casino & Resort ■ Durant, OK
	July 22-28	San Diego Summer Classic	Ocean's 11 Casino ■ Oceanside, CA
	July 31-Aug. 13	Seminole Hard Rock Poker Open	Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino ■ Hollywood, FL
<b>AUGUST</b>	Aug. 1-Sept. 1	DeepStack Showdown	Venetian Hotel & Casino ■ Las Vegas, NV
	Aug. 15-26	Card Player Poker Tour	bestbet ■ Jacksonville, FL
	Aug. 15-26	WSOP Circuit - Northern California	Graton Resort & Casino ■ Rohnert Park, CA
	Aug. 21-25	Summer Poker Round-Up	Wildhorse Resort & Casino ■ Pendleton, OR
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	Sept. 18-Oct. 9	World Series of Poker Europe	Kings Casino ■ Rozvadov, Czech Republic
	Sept. 20-23	Florida State Ladies Championship	bestbet ■ Jacksonville, FL

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10:00 a.m. NLH, \$135

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#### WEDNESDAY

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7:00 p.m. NLH, \$95 AO \$5

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10:00 a.m. NLH, \$95 AO \$5

#### SATURDAY

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#### SUNDAY

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#### MONDAY

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

#### WEDNESDAY

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

#### FRIDAY

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

#### SUNDAY

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

### BESTBET - ORANGE PARK

#### TUESDAY

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

#### THURSDAY

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

#### SATURDAY

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

#### SUNDAY

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

### BESTBET - ST. AUGUSTINE

#### MONDAY

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

7:00 p.m. NLH, \$60  
**TUESDAY**  
 12:00 p.m. NLH, \$60  
**WEDNESDAY**  
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100  
**THURSDAY**  
 12:00 p.m. NLH, \$60  
**FRIDAY**  
 12:00 p.m. NLH, \$100  
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$160  
**SATURDAY**  
 12:00 p.m. NLH, \$100  
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100  
**SUNDAY**  
 7:00 p.m. NLH, \$100

**COUSHATTA - KINDER**

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 12:00 p.m. NLH, \$300 (\$30K Guarantee)  
 5:00 p.m. NLH, \$160 (\$10K Guarantee)  
**SUNDAY**  
 12:00 p.m. NLH, \$240 RB \$200 AO \$100 (\$40K Guarantee)  
 5:00 p.m. NLH, \$160 (\$10K Guarantee)

**OREGON**

**WILDHORSE - PENDLETON**

**TUESDAY**  
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**FRIDAY**  
 6:30 p.m. NLH, \$125  
**SATURDAY**  
 1:00 p.m. NLH, \$125  
**SUNDAY**  
 1:00 p.m. NLH, \$70



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You are seven-handed playing a \$1,000 live tournament. You have a 90,000 stack with the blinds at 1,500-3,000 with a 3,000 big blind ante. The lojack raises to 6,000 and the cutoff calls. You are in the big blind with 10♠ 8♣.

**Question 1:** Should you fold, call, reraise to 24,000, or go all-in?

**Answer:** While your hand certainly is not strong, it is not so weak that you fold. Similarly, the fact that you are unsuited, out of position, and down in your range, means you should never reraise this as a bluff or for value. Given the pot odds and the connectedness, check and see the flop.

You check, making the pot 22,500. The

flop comes K♦ 7♣ 5♦ and everyone checks. The turn is the 6♦.

**Question 2:** Should you check, bet 10,000, bet 20,000 or bet 30,000?

**Answer:** Because action checked through on the flop, you can begin to discount many value hands your opponents might have. In general, in multi-way pots, you are heavily incentivized to bet your value hands (like top pair) and high-equity hands (like flush draws). Therefore, you have actually shifted to having a range advantage because you can absolutely have flushes that got there on the turn as well as straights and two pair type hands.

Your exact hand is still only 10-high, but you have an open-ended straight draw, a bit of a range advantage, and you can easily fold if your bet gets raised. Therefore, betting small is the preferred option because it achieves all of your goals while minimizing your risk.

You bet 10,000 and only the cutoff calls, making the pot 42,500. The river is the J♠.

**Question 3:** Should you check, bet 20,000, bet 40,000, go all-in?

**Answer:** This is a great spot to over-bet jam all-in to apply maximum pressure on your opponent's likely marginal range. Continuing the assumption that your opponent is extremely capped and the fact that you could easily take a similar line if you had a flush, going all-in continues the story you have been telling and forces your opponent to make a massive decision for all their chips.

You push all-in and your opponent tanks for a while before folding, showing pocket queens. Nice bluff! ♠

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