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NOV. NINE REUNION

**MISSISSIPPI**  
WPT SOUTHERN RECAP

**NEW JERSEY**  
BORGATA WINTER OPEN

**PENNSYLVANIA**  
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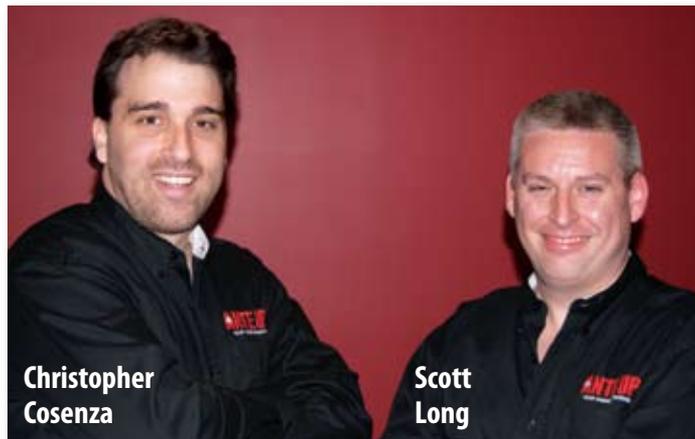
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## FROM THE PUBLISHERS

Christopher  
CosenzaScott  
Long

## DO YOU NEED STAR POWER?

Star power. Does it have the attraction in poker as it does in other walks of life? For instance, do you head to Lowe's to buy your plywood because Gene Hackman does the voiceovers in their commercials? Do women dye their hair with L'Oreal's Feria products because Beyonce bounces her hair on the screen? Maybe.

But one thing we do know: In poker, wherever a star player is, so too will be the fans. Hats off to Foxwoods Casino in Connecticut for reuniting the November Nine in a historic \$15K 30-player freeroll on Feb. 8. Players could qualify for this capped event through satellites, giving them a chance to rub elbows with world champ Jonathan Duhamel and the rest of the big names, such as Michael "Grinder" Mizrachi. Foxwoods deserves praise for not only giving East Coast players this opportunity (judging by the turnout at the Rio in November, only a select few actually witnessed it live the first time these nine came together), but for using the freeroll to help raise money for Bernard Lee's new charity (coverage on Page 38). And that's when poker is at its best, when it's raising money for special causes.

Normally we'd call the Foxwoods freeroll a made-for-TV event, except there was no TV. There was TV coverage, however, at Orange Park Kennel Club near Jacksonville, Fla., for the second annual Chad Brown No Limit Texas Hold'Em Championship. Brown returned this year to a \$5K buy-in event and \$50K buy-in televised cash game that drew some of the brightest stars of the poker galaxy. Players such as Victor Ramin, John Racener (who also was at Foxwoods), Jason Mercier, Shaun Deeb, Corey Burbick, Tyler Smith, Andrew Robl and more flocked to northern Florida for a chance at big cash and TV exposure (see cover story on Page 40). Kudos goes to the Jacksonville staff for luring these great names with a quality event. *Ante Up* has teamed with Fallah Productions to provide the TV coverage and will have dates, times and networks for you in an upcoming issue.

Let's get back to the importance of star power. What about *your* tournaments? We know having stars in the field would attract you as a spectator, as evidenced by the hundreds of onlookers who found their way to Foxwoods and Orange Park. But do you want the best in

the world competing against you in events in your local cardroom? Of course! What better story to tell than one where you knocked out Mercier or the Grinder? Plus, how will you know how good you are unless you test yourself against the best?

That leads to our final point: What makes these players stars? Exposure. Would you know who Chad Brown was if you didn't see him on TV or on the cover of a poker magazine? Nope, not unless you caught him on *Caesars Challenge* in the early '90s. Yet you show up for events where he's featured because you know who he is and you respect his game based on what you've seen on TV or read online or in periodicals.

What about made-for-TV poker shows? How does it feel knowing production companies and the large poker sites that sponsor them hand-pick the players? No qualification required. Shows such as *Poker After Dark* and *The Big Game* select players who will bring in the best ratings or who they want to see get famous. Do these players still deserve your admiration? Perhaps. They are, after all, pros and it is just a single-table entertainment/advertising vehicle.

But now there's a new league created by Annie Duke, Jeffrey Pollack (the former World Series comish) and the Palms that is launching in Las Vegas. It only allows the 200 best players in the world (based on a formula they've created) to compete against one another on television, ala the PGA Tour. What does this tell you? That these players are tired of getting pipped by Average Joes for TV time? That televised poker tournaments never have been about quality of play but rather the entertainment factor? Didn't they learn from the defunct PPT? That's why ESPN has to have featured tables at the WSOP. Manipulating a seating assignment in an open event to put the best players all at one table would be grossly gratuitous and would tick off everyone, even the selected players, not to mention it's against TDA rules.

So, what's more important, a steady diet of current star power, or natural selection that creates the stars of tomorrow? You be the judge.

We'll see you at the tables.

— Christopher Cosenza and Scott Long

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# WINTER POKER OPEN

JAN. 28-FEB. 7 • HARD ROCK HOTEL & CASINO • HOLLYWOOD

The Paradise Poker Room continues to build momentum heading toward its WPT event in April as South Africa's Ronit Chamani won the main event and \$53K, beating more than 150 players.



**Event #1 • \$560 NLHE**  
**Players: 260 • Prize Pool: \$130,000**  
 1. Scott Freund, Miami, \$35,811  
 2. Taylor Fortini  
 3. Jonah Miller  
 4. Thomas Schillo  
 5. Madhusoodhanan Appiacokulan  
 6. Elon Diamond  
 7. Mitchell Smith  
 8. Gregory Marcus  
 9. Rodolfo C.



**Event #2 • \$230 NLHE**  
**Players: 106 • Prize Pool: \$21,200**  
 1. Dirk Heuchert, Germany, \$7,104  
 2. Bogdan Constantin  
 3. Errol Massey  
 4. Guillermo Hamilton  
 5. Amer Ibrahim  
 6. Tagir Saydkhuzhin  
 7. Leiby Goldberger  
 8. Robert Leff  
 9. Howard Thompson Jr.



**Event #3 • \$350 NLHE**  
**Players: 106 • Prize Pool: \$31,800**  
 1. Nesrin Ergulec, \$10,651  
 2. Peter S., \$5,947  
 3. Paul M., \$4,007  
 4. Bobby Binsky, \$2,862  
 5. Atanael Thomas, \$2,131  
 6. Manuel Rosado, \$1,654  
 7. Mark Winkler, \$1,272  
 8. Yon Kwon, \$1,018  
 9. Paula Holder, \$859



**Event #4 • \$300 NLHE**  
**Players: 97 • Prize Pool: \$24,250**  
 1. Ronald Levy, \$8,243  
 2. James Deleo, \$4,486  
 3. Kyle Taddei, \$3,128  
 4. Daniel Turcotte, \$2,304  
 5. Fernando Halac, \$1,722  
 6. Ismael Cabrera, \$1,310  
 7. Denis Mendoza, \$1,019  
 8. Angie Rojas, \$825  
 9. Elon Diamond, \$655



**Event #5 • \$1,100 NLHE**  
**Players: 67 • Prize Pool: \$75,000**  
 1. Richard Zipes, \$26,250  
 2. Benjamin Stark, \$15,675  
 3. Nicholas Lizzo, \$10,275  
 4. Juan Naranjo, \$7,275  
 5. Salman Ali, \$5,400  
 6. Anthony Valiente, \$4,125  
 7. Nigel Murray, \$3,300  
 8. Ismael Cabrera, \$2,700



**Event #6 • \$150 NLHE**  
**Players: 166 • Prize Pool: \$19,920**  
 1. Tavarious Allwood, \$6,076  
 2. Robert Pphythian, \$3,506  
 3. Raymond Lorenzo, \$2,311  
 4. Kelvin Mcclendon, \$1,494  
 5. James Collier, \$1,096  
 6. Jose Avila, \$896  
 7. Christopher Mull, \$657  
 8. Peter Fragos, \$478  
 9. Richard Taylor, \$458



**Event #7 • \$230 NLHE**  
**Players: 154 • Prize Pool: \$30,800**  
 1. Juio Fernandez, \$9,548  
 2. Alex Luxenburg, \$5,452  
 3. Brian Phillips, \$3,604  
 4. Cyril Darmouri, \$2,402  
 5. Hany Ayoub, \$1,848  
 6. Adlay Lago, \$1,386  
 7. Fernando Halac, \$1,016  
 8. Jonah Miller, \$739  
 9. Juan Peralta, \$708



**\$2,170 Main Event**  
**Players: 152 • Prize Pool: \$304,000**  
 1. Ronit Chamani, \$53,951  
 2. Ben Sagan, \$49,257  
 3. Anthony Ruberto Jr., \$38,881  
 4. Michael Morton, \$35,094  
 5. Michael Larocca, \$34,030  
 6. William Beasley, \$30,163  
 7. Brian Hawkins, \$11,856  
 8. Ismael Cabrera, \$8,816  
 9. Jeanette Levitt, \$6,384



**Event #9 • \$300 NLHE**  
**Players: 99 • Prize Pool: \$24,750**  
 1. Mohammad Siddiqui, \$8,414  
 2. Chris McCormack, \$4,579  
 3. Julio Fernandez, \$3,193  
 4. Sergio Amato, \$2,351  
 5. Daniel Pearlman, \$1,757  
 6. Angie Rojas, \$1,337  
 7. John Laurence, \$1,040  
 8. Bobby Binsky, \$842  
 9. Tavarious Allwood, \$668



**Event #10 • \$180 Heads-Up**  
**Players: 58 • Prize Pool: \$10K**  
 1. Jeffrey Rose, \$4,000  
 2. Atef Nassall, \$2,000  
 3. Esteban Garcia, \$1,000  
 4. Michael D'amour, \$1,000  
 5. Peter Hadeed, \$500  
 6. Richard Freire, \$500  
 7. Errol Massey, \$500  
 8. Sergejs Terehovs, \$500

## GROUND BREAKS ON TWO NEW POKER ROOMS



Ground has broken on two new Florida poker rooms expected to open by the end of 2011.

In the Panhandle town of Gretna, the Poarch Band of Creek Indians and developer David Romanik broke ground Jan. 11 on a 100-acre site just off of Interstate 10 (illustration at left).

In addition to a poker room, the site will include a quarterhorse racing track and equestrian center. The facility is expected to open this winter.

Near Miami, legendary Hialeah Park finally has broken ground on improvements to the track that will include a poker room and slots casino. The track, which hosts quarterhorse racing, has faced challenges from competing tracks about whether it could offer enhanced gaming, but is progressing after an affirmative declaration from state regulators. It, too, expects to open this winter.



# PLAY IT COOL



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## MARCH 17 - 27, 2011

DATE	DAY	EVENT#	TIME	EVENT	ENTRY FEE	ADMIN FEE	BONUS CHIPS
Mar 17	Thur.		6PM	Single Table Satellites & Nightly Tournaments Begin			
Mar 18	Fri.	1	12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$300	\$40	\$10
Mar 18	Fri.	2	4PM	Limit Omaha 8 or Better	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 19	Sat.	3	12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 19	Sat.	4	4PM	Ladies No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 20	Sun.	5	12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 20	Sun.	6	4PM	Pot Limit Omaha/ 1 Re-entry 1 Add-on	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 21	Mon.	7	12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em/ 1 Re-entry 1 Add-on	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 21	Mon.	8	4PM	Stud/Stud 8 or Better	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 22	Tue.	9	12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 22	Tue.	10	4PM	Pot Limit Omaha 8 or Better	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 23	Wed.	11	12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em/ Knockout Bounty	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 23	Wed.	12	4PM	Limit Hold 'Em	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 24	Thur.	13	12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em/Multiple Re-entry	\$100	\$25	\$10
Mar 24	Thur.	14	4PM	Limit Omaha 8 or Better	\$200	\$30	\$10
Mar 25	Fri.	15	12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$300	\$40	\$10
Mar 25	Fri.		4PM	Mega Satellite with Multiple Re-entries	\$100	\$25	\$10
Mar 25	Fri.		8PM	Mega Satellite	\$100	\$25	\$10
Mar 25	Fri. Night		Midnight	Mega Satellite	\$100	\$25	\$10
Mar 26	Sat.		10AM	Last Chance Turbo Mega Satellite	\$200	\$25	\$10
Mar 26	Sat.	16	12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em Championship	\$2,000	\$100	
Mar 27	Sun.		2PM	Championship Event Final Table			

Single Satellites ranging from \$45 - \$270 for Championship Event will be held daily. \$100 + \$25 No-Limit Hold 'Em events nightly at 7PM.

Registration begins at 5PM on March 17 and is open from 8AM - 9PM daily. For more information, call 228.386.7092. Blind structures and other details are available at [beaurivage.com](http://beaurivage.com)

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# \$500K ISLE POKER CLASSIC

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## WAXMAN STAYS HOT, WINS MAIN EVENT

By Garrett Roth

The mix of a live and an online poker player is a recipe for profit and success. Just ask Matt Waxman, 26, the most recent winner of the Isle Poker Classic main event in Pompano Beach. He took home the \$86K first prize and another title to put on his growing resumé.

Waxman, a poker professional who lives in Parkland, Fla., has had a solid track record of consistent wins throughout his career. He's on the best tournament tear of his life, having won the 2010 World Series of Poker Circuit's main event in Atlantic City just days before the Isle victory. He took home \$117K and a gold championship ring. Other big live finishes include a sixth-place finish in the 2009 WSOP \$5K six-handed event (\$138K), a final table at the 2010 Borgata Spring Open (\$61K) and numerous cashes at the WSOP, WSOP Europe and PCA.

Though it wasn't his largest career cash, the Isle Classic victory was a special one for the hometown pro.

"I am really proud of my win at the Isle," he said.

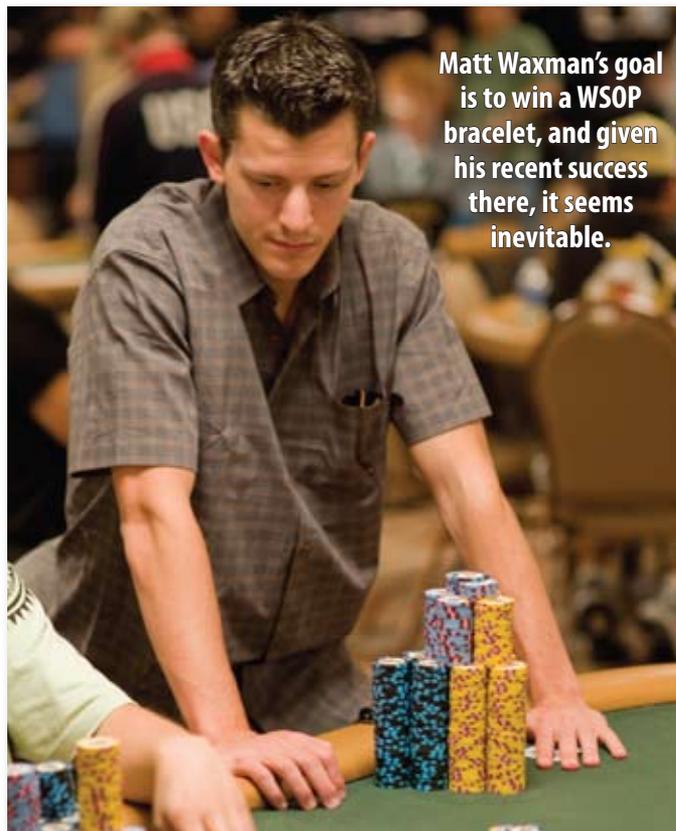
Waxman added he was able to accumulate chips on some very interesting hands on the second day of the tournament.

"I had 5♠-9♠, opened under the gun and was flattered by everyone! The flop came 4♣-5♣-10♠, which gave me middle pair with a flush draw. I bet, was immediately raised by Phillip Gurian (second place, \$76K) and the other two folded. He had 4-5 offsuit and I hit the spade on the turn and doubled to over 1.2 million in chips.

"I also picked off an enormous bluff of Sami Allen (third place, \$40K) at the end of the tournament. I made top pair on a really dry board, checked back the flop, the turn was a brick and I called a bet. On the blank river, he checked to me and I overbet for value and then he shoved all-in. I thought about it for a long time and ended up calling off a huge chunk of my stack. Allen then said 'You're good,' which is the best thing you can hear after making a hero call."

But, as mentioned earlier, his prowess doesn't lay merely on the live felt: He is a world-class online champion. Waxman, a.k.a. BigStack-BBQ, won the Full Tilt Online Poker Series XIII main event for an astonishing \$450,000.

"I was definitely in the zone and lots of things were working out as planned," Waxman said. "Having such a huge cash was really exciting because I knew that it meant I could stake myself in poker's most prestigious tournaments without overextending my bankroll."



Matt Waxman's goal is to win a WSOP bracelet, and given his recent success there, it seems inevitable.

Waxman's investments in himself have been paying off handsomely. He's proved he has the ability to transition from live to online and back again.

With more than \$1 million in combined cashes since beginning his career in high school, Waxman continues to be ambitious.

"A couple of my poker goals are to win a WSOP bracelet, *Card Player's* Player of the Year and to produce an original concept for a poker TV show that I have been imagining over the past few years."

With the way things have been unfolding for this Florida professional, anything is possible.



### Event #1 • \$550 NLHE

Players: 430 • Prize pool: \$215K

1. Mark Miller, Sunrise, \$42,727
2. Michael Goldfarb, Coral Springs, \$42,726
3. Barry Hutter, Bradenton, \$20,432
4. Bobby Bradley, Wellington, \$13,002
5. Armando Fernandez, Miami, \$9,287
6. Steven Komarc, Miramar, \$8,358
7. Dave Henry, Pompano Beach, \$6,129
8. Derek Updegraff, Hollywood, \$4,272
9. Edward Rappa, Arlington, VA, \$4,179



### Event #2 • \$1,600 NLHE

Players: 121 • Prize pool: \$121K

1. Ebony Kenney, Miami, \$23,878
2. Randy Zane, Montreal, \$21,000
3. Rob McLaughlin, Washington, \$21,000
4. T.J. Shulman, Jackson, GA, \$21,000
5. Herode Sinterce, W. Palm Beach, \$7,623
6. Tristan Wade, Boynton Beach, \$5,929
7. Robert Perry, Highland Beach, \$4,477
8. Nigel Murray, Miami Gardens, \$3,388
9. Nagui Yassa, Deerfield Beach, \$2,783



### Event #3 • \$230 NLHE

Players: 221 • Prize pool: \$44,200

1. Anthony Ruberto, Hallandale, \$8,500
2. Nigel Murray, Miami Gardens, \$7,000
3. Mark Kropf, Pembroke Pines, \$4,010
4. Larry Davis, Boca Raton, \$4,009
5. Juan Garcia, Doral, \$4,000
6. Jason Johnson, Coral Springs, \$4,000
7. George Lukawski, Parkland, \$1,419
8. Raminder Singh, Delray, \$1,032
9. Jerry Feldman, Pompano, \$989



### Event #4 • \$200 PLO w/rebuys

Players: 93 • Prize pool: \$32,875

1. Barry Hutter, Bradenton, \$9,200
2. John McCaffrey, Lake Worth, \$6,900
3. Barry Rith, Margate, \$5,400
4. Robert Rosengarten, Aventura, \$3,123
5. Nick Gelsino, Margate, \$2,334
6. Harry Thomas, Ft. Lauderdale, \$1,775
7. Anita Perl, Coral Springs, \$1,381
8. Kevin Spires, West Palm Beach, \$1,118
9. Avi Levy, Coral Springs, \$888



### Main Event • \$2,200 NLHE

Players: 169 • Prize pool: \$338K

1. Matthew Waxman, Parkland, \$86,078
2. Phillip Gurian, Boca Raton, \$76,500
3. Sami Allen, Boca Raton, \$39,208
4. Cesar Fuentes, Deerfield Beach, \$25,350
5. Ali Shiraaz, Boca Raton, \$18,590
6. Richard Zipes, Ft. Lauderdale, \$15,210
7. Harvey Freedman, Plantation, \$11,154
8. Darryl Fish, Hallandale Bch, \$8,112
9. Julio Fernandez, Miami, \$7,774

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# THREE NEW MANAGERS FILL SLOTS

Dominic Niro (Daytona Beach Kennel Club), William Mason (Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood) and Roger Coscarat (Ocala) all get the nod. This month we meet Niro, a Chicago native and poker guy.

Last month *Ante Up* pointed out that Florida has had a tremendous number of managing positions vacated in the past year. And now, just like that, three of those slots have been filled.

William Mason, who served as interim manager for the past few months, takes over officially at Hard Rock Hollywood, and just in time as its World Poker Tour event kicks off in April. Roger Coscarat has taken the reigns at Ocala Poker and **Dominic Niro**, who came from the Majestic Star in the Chicagoland area, has taken over the managing duties at Daytona Beach Kennel Club. We will introduce each of these managers to you in the coming months, starting with Mr. Niro in this issue.



**How long have you been in poker?** I started in the early '90s helping the charity groups in the Chicagoland area before the casinos came with poker. When Showboat was given a license in Indiana I started as a dealer, and then I moved on to a floor supervisor when Harrah's acquired them. I moved over to Trump Casino in early 2000, and Majestic acquired Trump Casino, and I was an assistant manager with Trump but the poker room manager with Majestic Star (for five years).

**Why did you come here and what are some differences you're noticing now that you're in Florida?** Starting off in my career, having a passion for poker and being in the Midwest I worked in casinos where they had poker. What amazes me is that these are poker rooms, and I came into this business to be in poker. Even though I understand how the casino business works, I'm a poker guy.

The action here since July has increased. I was pursuing this region to work about six months ago but a few years ago many of the employees of Trump moved down to some of the poker rooms down south and I kept in communication with them. But it was mainly after July when I saw that this market was going to grow when the limits changed. I knew that I would eventually settle down here. ... Who wouldn't want to be in sunny Florida where you can just wake up on a mid-January day and you can look out and the sun is coming up and

it's going to be 70 degrees and you don't have to be back in Chicago worrying about the snow?

**What can someone with your experience bring to a room like Daytona now that the limits have been lifted?** Being a poker player myself, I understand what the poker players' needs are. They know how the industry works. I can listen to their ideas and suggestions and implement any promotions based on what the player wants, rather than what we think we can offer. ... There are many ideas, and with any business we want to make sure we analyze it carefully before we promote it. Being able to provide the players with just a comfortable environment, where they can be part of the poker room; we want to make this a destination where players can come here, and being in Daytona Beach, it is a tourist attraction, we want them to have a place to play poker where they know we have standardized rules and promotions are similar to what's offered in the United States.

**What can a player expect from a room run by Dominic Niro?** I feel they have to be comfortable, and that our dealers, our brushes, our staff and our floor people are friendly. Back when poker exploded in the early 2000s, people flocked to these poker rooms. Just like the World Cup in 1994 where mothers were scrambling to get their kids into soccer, now these kids are scrambling to get their mothers in the poker room. A lot of them come here and they don't know where to sign up, they don't know what games are offered. When we have a knowledgeable staff that can welcome and get the players comfortable I'll guarantee you they will come back.

**Do you enjoy playing poker?** I'm a limit player. I love tournaments, but for me to go play in a tournament, you have to dedicate a good five or six hours. I like getting into a medium or small no-limit game knowing I could hit a good run of cards. I'm not the type of guy that can sit there because I have so many things going on. I like playing more leisurely rather than like a professional.

— Next month we'll meet William Mason, director of poker operations at Seminole Hard Rock in Hollywood, followed by Roger Coscarat at Ocala in May.

## DANIA JAI-ALAI

Giovanni Alonso from Hialeah was willing to chop the prize money until he looked down at his pocket aces.

The small blind had gone all-in against his top hand and his bullets held. This gave Alonso an overwhelming chip lead and eventually all of the first-place money of \$2,668.

There were 247 players in this first Dan Le Batard celebrity event of 2011.

• It was appropriately called the "Fun N Sun Hold'em Tournament" on Jan. 29 as picture-perfect Florida weather greeted those who showed up. However, two players were glad they spent their day indoors as they took home \$6,000 each for their \$250 buy-in.

Al Gomez and Leroy Jones had huge chip leads going into the final table. Having played all day and into the night, the



Giovanni Alonso



Al Gomez and Leroy Jones were the big Fun N Sun winners, taking home \$6K each.

players remaining decided to chop, giving Gomez and Jones the biggest share, the remaining eight players received \$3,176 each.

The tournament drew 210 players from

all over Florida. The beach theme permeated the room with dealers wearing beach garb and Beach Boys music playing in the background.

See website for  
calendar

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\$250 Buy-in  
15,000 Chips

40 minute blinds

Day 1A - March 17th at 1pm

Day 1B - March 18th at 7pm

Finals - March 19th at 4pm

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# FLORIDA MILLION III STARTS THIS MONTH

Derby Lane's director of poker room operations, Jeff Gamber relishes a challenge. In 2008 he created the state's largest tournament, the 500@500 Poker Classic, which capped the field at 500 players. In 2009 he bumped it to 600@600. But in 2010 a sinking economy necessitated a new approach to creating and sustaining a major tournament.

Gamber's idea was so big he realized one poker room couldn't handle all of the anticipated players, so he enlisted partner rooms, and the Florida Million was born. The initial event in March 2010 was a huge success, generating a prize pool of \$1.2 million. Last November, even with a still struggling economy, Florida Million II approached nearly \$900,000.

Florida Million is unique in that it allows a massive number of players to cycle through multiple Day 1s by playing in their local rooms. Players can continue registering in Day 1 events until they reach the top 10 percent, giving them multiple opportunities to compete – and for the prize pool to progressively grow.

"This is a local event for Florida players," Gamber said, "and the \$500+\$50 price point gives you a shot to win a potential heavy six-figure payday. This is WSOP event-type money in that very few national events generate a million-dollar pool."

Deborah Giardina, Jacksonville's executive director of poker operations, likes the idea of the tournament rotating throughout the state. "The fact that players qualify in their local rooms then travel for Day 2 only when they know they are already in the money is appealing," she said. "It's also a plus that the finals will eventually take place in their own area. It's a win-win partnership."

Gamber believes a tournament's success is based on the size of its prize pool, and if all seven rooms sell out their Day 1A it will generate a \$525,000 pool for starters ... and some rooms will run five Day 1s.

Day 1 events are being held throughout March at Daytona Beach Kennel Club, Derby Lane in St. Petersburg, Jacksonville's Orange Park Kennel Club and St. Johns Greyhound Park, Mardi Gras Casino in Hallandale Beach, Naples-Ft. Myers Greyhound Track, Palm Beach Kennel Club and Pensacola Greyhound Track.

Jacksonville's Orange Park poker room hosts Day 2 on April 9 -10. Check your local room's website for satellite and Day 1 information or see the ad on the facing page.

## Schedule for Day 1s

DAYTONA BEACH	PALM BEACH	JACKSONVILLE
March 13, 1 p.m.	March 20, noon	March 5, 1 p.m., OPKC
March 20, 1	March 26, noon	March 12, 1, SJGP
March 27, 1	April 2, noon	March 19, 1, OPKC
TBD	TBD	Two more dates TBD
PENSACOLA	MARDI GRAS	NAPLES
March 26, 1 p.m.	March 20, noon	March 6, 11 a.m.
April 2, 1	March 27, noon	March 27, 11 a.m.
TBD	April 3, TBD	TBD
DERBY LANE	March 18, 1	March 27, 1
March 5, 1 p.m.	March 19, 1	April 3, 1

## L.A. POKER CLASSIC



Al Doeksen of Cape Coral won a \$545 event that drew 190 players. He pocketed \$8,450, plus the hardware.



## BIG STACKS POKER LEAGUE

Congratulations go to Jim Hughes, left, who defeated Scott Cheesbrow, right, and more than 300 players to capture a World Series of Poker Main Event seat.

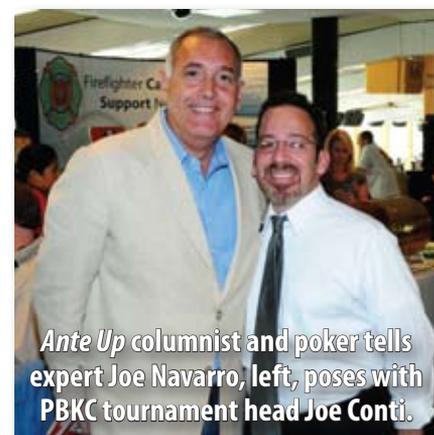
Cheesbrow won a \$750 sponsorship, followed by Linda Schreiber (\$275), Paul Williams (\$200), Billy Boon (\$150), Russell Harkness (\$150), Greyson Blandford (\$125), Donnie Shepard (\$125), Shannon Trejbal (\$100) and Phil Doucette (\$100).

**JANUARY QUARTERLY:** Jose Maldonado, center, won a \$750 World Series or World Poker Tour circuit trip by defeating Andy Upton heads-up. Upton won a \$150 WSOP satellite sponsorship.

Curtis Schultheis took third (\$100) followed by Connie Garrett, Jason Hull, Eliza Hull, Bonnie Capps, Rossanni Strobeck, Patricia Butkovich and Debbie New.

**JANUARY BIMONTHLY:** Cheesbrow defeated Upton to win a \$500 sponsorship. Upton won \$200 and was followed by Robert Simmons (\$150), Chris Leair (\$125), Charlie Haehnel (\$100), Russ Reed, Bob Chew, Alan Potter, Tracy DeCresie and Mike McClusky.

## PALM BEACH KENNEL CLUB



Ante Up columnist and poker tells expert Joe Navarro, left, poses with PBKC tournament head Joe Conti.

The third annual Butch Smith Poker Classic, which benefits numerous charities, drew 149 players and raised more than \$21K.

Stanley Mika won a \$1,600 seat into Palm Beach's World Series of Poker Circuit main event.

The charity event promises to return to PBKC next year.

# FLORIDA'S BIGGEST POKER TOURNAMENT!

# Florida MILLION III POKER TOURNAMENT



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## MELBOURNE GREYHOUND PARK



The Azunia Tequila Shootout on Jan. 30 attracted more than 300 players, but in the end the final nine players (pictured) agreed to chop the remaining portion of the \$15,000 guaranteed prize pool.

Club 52's next tournament will be a 300-player bounty \$15K guarantee event on March 27, with bounties paid on the first 200 players eliminated.

## TREASURE CHEST POKER



Here's a look at some of the recent TCP winners:

- Kim F. won the Stix Palm Harbor main event, beating more than 100 players for the \$300 gift card.



- Rick Moore won a monthly by beating more than 150 players and then eliminating Sandra Goetz heads-up. He earned a seat into a World Series of Poker satellite.



- Val Wilson is the Ocala King Queen of the Bars, the first woman to capture the "King" title. She won an Outback gift card.



- Terri McFarlane became Ocala's first three-time champ by winning the monthly title.



- Talon Craft won the second round of the Battle of the Sexes and a \$100 gift card.

## DEAD MAN POKER



Final table from a freeroll that drew 65 players to Jolly Roger in Kissimmee.

## DIRTY JACKS



Al Hunt is on a roll, winning the November dealers tourney and the November-December bimonthly in January.

## TEXAS HOLD'EM POKER TOURS



Patty Sullivan, above, took top honors at the Northeast area event on Jan. 8. She was followed by Dennis Paterno, Wes Railing, Bruce Hammack, Pat Baker, Susan Raybine, Gary Paterno, Peggy Tonkin, Jay Mitchell, Mick Perrone and Harry Erb.

- Wayne Smith, top right, won the January event at Calhoun's Pub & Grub in Destin.
- Isabella Perez, right, is the December champ.



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## LOOSENUTZ POKER



Tim "Tool Man" Harris won a seat to Derby Lane's \$10K Mega Stack on Feb. 26 in St. Petersburg when his Q-7 offsuit held up to haul in the final pot.

## JACKSONVILLE POKER ASSOCIATION



Travis Bowen, right, won \$2,200 and the finals title on Dec. 18 as Jesse Farrell won \$1,100 for second.

## NUTZ POKER LEAGUE



- Len Leighton captured the December monthly and a \$500 gift card in Oldsmar.
- Ken Cabrera won a Blu-Ray player and a trophy at Champps in Tampa.

## PLEASURE ISLAND POKER

John Brown beat Terry Green heads-up and more than 90 players on Jan. 25 to win the end-of-year monthly event at Flightline Pub & Cafe in Ft. Walton Beach.



Brown's prize package included a \$350 tournament-entry chip to Pensacola Greyhound Track's \$20,000 guarantee event. Green received a massage package for second and John "J.J." Simmons earned a \$50 tournament entry for third. They were followed by R.C. Klein, Pat Hayden, Bill Head, Mike Gauthier, Bill Fendley, Jack Lippert and Mike Yoder.

Jerry McFadden defeated Glenn Yost and more than 100 players on Dec. 11 to capture the annual event at Scully's on the Bayou in Ft. Walton Beach.



McFadden's victory earned him a \$350 seat into PGT's \$20K guarantee, a trophy and a bracelet. Yost won a \$100 seat. He was followed by Mike Scharnhorst, Bill Denson, Terry Green, Teena Fendley, Loria Walters, Mark Dickey, Mike Goodwin and Christian Hufford.

## MIAMI POKER SOCIETY



Michael Bruno defeated Monica Mataloni heads-up at Vinyl & Kai to win a 2011 World Series of Poker seat. Bruno will play in a \$1,000 WSOP bracelet event at the Rio in Las Vegas in June.



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- ♦ Sunday, March 27 • 12pm

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A look at the Mississippi-area poker scene

## SOUTHERN POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

JAN. 6-27 • BEAU RIVAGE • BILOXI

## KUZMIN'S WIN CAPS EPIC SERIES EVENT

Maybe it's the allure of a televised final table that draws them. Or perhaps it's the top-notch pros who come out to compete. It might be the impressive \$10,000 main event buy-in that lures would-be champions to test their skill. Whatever the reason, the Southern Poker Championship at the Beau Rivage in Biloxi is without a doubt an event of epic proportions for the Magnolia State.



JENNIFER GAY

From Jan. 6-27, thousands of players clocked hundreds of hours on the felt, competing for several million dollars in collective prize pools.

With more than 60 tournaments, including the nightly games and mega-satellites, it's no wonder so many players begin the new year with this World Poker Tour stop.

The championship is not for the faint of heart. The buy-ins range from \$340 to \$10,000 and has a long-standing reputation for attracting some of the best in the game. This year was no different with pros Scotty Nguyen, Gavin Smith, Chad Brown, Dwyte Pilgrim, November Niner Joseph Cheong, Lee Markholt, Matt Affleck, Leif Force and Jason Mercier in attendance, as well as champions from years past: Hoyt Corkins (2009), Allen Carter (2008) and Bill Edler (2007).

The month-long journey to the main event helped boost a few "up-and-comers" into the limelight. "Uncle" Mike Shafer of Detroit captured the \$1,060 no-limit hold'em event. Shafer, a relative newcomer to the circuit who took home a bracelet, trophy and \$43,500 for his efforts, said, "This felt great. I've only had the chance to play in four large events so far, but I definitely plan on making more of them now. This is my best poker moment to date."

Shafer said he gets his poker advice from his friend and pro player Robert Williamson III. "I also enjoy watching any footage I can of David "Chino" Rheem. He's got great presentation." The best part of this victory? "This definitely makes my brother (platinum recording artist Uncle Kracker) happy, because it buys him time before I come to him with my hands out." Shafer, who is always joking and cutting up, is no laughing matter when it comes to poker. He's definitely one to keep an eye on.

Local player Brad Peterson also took home the trophy and \$14,108 in the pot-limit Omaha rebuy event. Peterson, who plays live and online, was ecstatic about his win. With more than a few friends around to support him, this Gautier, Miss., resident definitely had the home-field advantage working in his favor.

Really, though, all eyes were on the \$2,008,100 prize pool of the main event, which included a \$25,000 seat to the WPT World Championship at the Bellagio in May. For five long days, 214 players fought for the bragging rights and first-place money.

The final table included Stuart Breakstone (ninth, \$35,750) of Memphis, who had the unwavering support of his wife, Lori, and mom, Donna, pulling for him; Ryan Hughes (sixth, \$89,735) from Place Chandler, Ariz., who boasts more than \$1.5 million in career winnings and two World Series of Poker bracelets; Shannon Shorr (fourth, \$144,985) of Birmingham, Ala., who is part of the Gulf Coast Poker blogging team; Allen Carter (third, \$218,471) of Lewisville, Texas, who took down a first-place win in this same event in 2008; Leif Force (second, \$315,790) of Tallahassee, Fla., with almost \$1.8 million in lifetime cashes; and the event champion, Alexander Kuzmin of Moscow.

Kuzmin is no newcomer to the game. With cashes dating to 2001 and lifetime winnings of more than \$1 million, this victory is arguably Kuzmin's most significant to date. Literally on his way back to Russia, he popped into the Beau Rivage between layovers and left with \$575,696 and an invitation to the Bellagio in May. Poker Hall of Famer and WPT commentator Mike Sexton commended Kuzmin's ability to adjust under pressure.

"Alex played terrific," Sexton said. "He came in as chipleader, lost a lot of chips and went to lock-down mode. He was able to change gears and played superbly once we got down to three-handed poker. He deserved to win."

Within hours of the curtain closing on the final table at the SPC, devotees to the grind took off for Tunica for the impending arrival of the WSOPC event at Harrah's. Details to follow in next month's column. Look for *Ante Up* to be in Biloxi again for the Spring Break Classic, which runs March 17-27 at the Beau Rivage (See ad Page 13).

— Jennifer Gay can be reached at [facebook.com/aceofjewels](https://www.facebook.com/aceofjewels).

**Event #1 • \$550 NLHE****Players: 290 • Prize pool: \$140,650**

1. Carl McGowan, Pearson, GA, \$42,193
2. Ben Mintz, New Orleans, \$22,504
3. Peter Sheppard, Sunset, WA, \$12,659
4. Mark Wild, Biloxi, MS, \$9,846
5. Mike Woods, Wellston, OH, \$8,439
6. Larry Moore, Whitehouse, TN, \$7,033
7. Kenneth Milam, LaPlace, LA, \$5,626
8. Robert Park, Atlanta, \$4,220
9. Joshua Wilcox, Atlanta, \$2,813

**Event #2 • \$340 Omaha/8****Players: 113 • Prize pool: \$32,883**

1. Todd Burrows, Friendswood, TX, \$11,838
2. Henry Hull, St. Augustine, FL, \$6,248
3. Mitchell Smith, N. Miami Beach, FL, \$3,946
4. Richard Crawford, Nashville, TN, \$2,631
5. Anthony Bellao, New Orleans, \$2,302
6. David Eller, Port Orange, FL, \$1,973
7. Tim Burt, Grenada, MS, \$1,644
8. Vincent Phan, Mobile, AL, \$1,315
9. Charles Edwards, Lynchburg, TN, \$986

**Event #3 • \$340 NLHE****Players: 434 • Prize pool: \$126,294**

1. Ron Mattingly, Springfield KY, \$34,100
2. David Bearden, Dawsonville, GA, \$18,944
3. Phong Huynh, Lilburn, GA, \$11,114
4. Jeff Ahmadi, Charlotte, NC, \$8,588
5. Doug Cox, Northport, AL, \$7,325
6. Aaron Lasater, Atlanta, \$6,062
7. Steve Ma, Atlanta, \$4,799
8. Deeanna Laurence, Bossier City, LA, \$3,536
9. John Durio, New Orleans, \$2,273

**Event #4 • \$340 Stud****Players: 38 • Prize pool: \$11,058**

1. Roland Israelashvili, New York, \$4,976
2. Brent Carter, Oak Park, IL, \$3,317
3. Tennyson Phillips, Moultrie, GA, \$1,659
4. Roger Barlow, Center Point, AL, \$1,106

**Event #5 • \$550 NLHE****Players: 195 • Prize pool: \$94,575**

1. Luke Priour, Austin, TX, \$31,207
2. Joe Greene, Panama City, FL, \$17,213
3. Alex Tassin, Houma, LA, \$9,458
4. Scott Culver, New Haven, KY, \$7,566
5. David Jackson, Atlanta, \$5,675
6. Thomas Doussan, Metairie, LA, \$4,729
7. Frank Alpardinar, Baton Rouge, \$3,783
8. Randy Krams, Houston, \$2,837
9. Jerry Monroe, Columbus, GA., \$1,892

More results next page

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**Event #6 • \$340 PLO w/rb**

- Players: 63 • Prize pool: \$33,756**
1. Joe Poole, Loris, SC, \$12,152
  2. Ryan Lenaghan, New Orleans, \$6,414
  3. Matt Humphrey, Avon, IN, \$4,051
  4. Robert Hurley, Atlanta, \$2,700
  5. Marty Muncus, Lewisville, NC, \$2,363
  6. Roland Israelashvili, New York, \$2,025
  7. Slade Whitt, Lima, OH, \$1,688
  8. John Bitting, Houston, \$1,350
  9. Gene Timberlake, Houston, \$1,013



**Event #7 • \$340 NLHE**

- Players: 277 • Prize pool: \$80,607**
1. Sean Williams, Dallas, GA, \$24,185
  2. Charles Tidmarsh, Greenville, SC, \$12,897
  3. Joe Bueche, Houma, LA, \$7,255
  4. David Luce, Fleming, Island, FL, \$5,642
  5. Jack Clark, Trenton, GA, \$4,836
  6. John Alredge, Gautier, MS, \$4,030
  7. Rohan Long, Windsor, CT, \$3,224
  8. Morten Hvitved, Santa Rosa, FL, \$2,418
  9. Michael Husar, Metairie, LA, \$1,612



**Event #8 • \$340 Stud/8**

- Players: 68 • Prize pool: \$19,788**
1. Kai Landry, Biloxi, MS, \$7,124
  2. Barron Luhipple, Gulfport, MS, \$3,958
  3. George Krafft, Absecon, NJ, \$2,572
  4. Tom Franklin, Gulfport, MS, \$1,781
  5. Diana Davis, Largo, FL, \$1,385
  6. Rich Chiovari, Chicago, \$1,187
  7. Sal Mortillaro, Metairie, LA, \$989
  8. Johnny Livingston, Selma, AL \$792



**Event #9 • \$230 NLHE w/rb**

- Players: 200 • Prize pool: 87,688**
1. Adam Lippert, Brooklyn, \$28,936
  2. Anthony Vidmer, Nashville, \$15,959
  3. Patrick Heneghan, Chicago, \$8,769
  4. Allen Barrie, Atlanta, \$7,015
  5. Brian Bass, Pensacola, FL, \$5,261
  6. Ray Bonavida, Los Angeles, \$4,384
  7. Mark Rose, Orlando, FL, \$3,508
  8. Moshe Nizan, Dade City, FL, \$2,631
  9. Eskimo Clark, New Orleans, \$1,754



**Event #10 • \$340 LHE**

- Players: 61 • Prize pool: \$17,752**
1. Mike Brawley, Cape Girardeau, MO, \$6,390
  2. Paul Sokoloff, Toronto, \$3,373
  3. Frank Sordi, Bethlehem, CT, \$2,130
  4. Vernon Harrison, Kerrville, TX, \$1,420
  5. Jerry Zehr, Florence, KY, \$1,243
  6. Larry Welker, Prairieville, LA, \$1,065
  7. Carol Farley, Ocean Springs, MS, \$888
  8. Thomas Naves, Clark Summit, PA, \$710
  9. Justin Carey, Metairie, LA, \$533



**Event #11 • \$340 NLHE**

- Players: 258 • Prize pool: \$75,078**
1. Francesco Gio Rocca, Toronto, \$22,520
  2. Don Rousseau, Orlando, FL, \$12,012
  3. Dr. Will Noyes, Thompson, PA, \$6,757
  4. Jack Harrod, Roswell, GA, \$5,255
  5. Joe Gowder, Homer, GA, \$4,505
  6. Steve Dauterive, Chalmette, LA, \$3,754
  7. Kelli Mix, Carrollton, GA, \$3,003
  8. Steve Tran, New Orleans, LA, \$2,252
  9. Nghia Le, Swanee, GA, \$1,502



**Event #12 • \$340 PLO**

- Players: 49 • Prize pool: \$44,814**
1. Bill McBride, Thonotossassa, FL, \$20,166
  2. Chris Trotter, Ringold, GA, \$11,204
  3. Matt Thomson, Longwood, FL, \$6,722
  4. Brent Carter, Oak Park, IL, \$4,481
  5. Nancy Birnbaum, Atlanta, \$2,241



**Event #13 • \$1,070 NLHE**

- Players: 168 • Prize pool: \$162,960**
1. Mark Wilds, Biloxi, MS, \$53,775
  2. Fred Sigur, Chalmette, LA, \$29,659
  3. Eddy Mroczkowski, Jax, FL, \$16,296
  4. Ralph Robinson, St. Mount., GA, \$13,037
  5. Don Matthews, Oxford, FL, \$9,778
  6. Bruce Macgregor, Port Orange, FL, \$8,148
  7. Jimmy Davis, Anderson, SC, \$6,518
  8. Bob Harris, Gulf Shores, AL, \$4,889
  9. Danny Doucet, Lafayette, LA, \$3,259



**Event #14 • \$340 Omaha/8**

- Players: 134 • Prize pool: \$38,996**
1. Anthony Vidmer, Nashville, \$12,868
  2. Yarom Limor, Beverly Hills, CA, \$7,097
  3. Thom Dolan, St. Louis, \$3,899
  4. Charles Chan, Pan. City Bch, FL, \$3,120
  5. George Krafft, Absecon, NJ, \$2,340
  6. Avner Levy, Westfield, NJ, \$1,950
  7. Wenzel Werner, Jacksonville, FL, \$1,560
  8. Raoufi Malek, Austin, TX, \$1,170
  9. David Peltzer, Henderson, NV, \$780



**Event #15 • \$340 NLHE**

- Players: 387 • Prize pool: \$112,617**
1. Roland Israelashvili, New York, \$30,404
  2. Ezra McCord, Atlanta, \$16,893
  3. Alan Smith, Mobile, AL, \$9,910
  4. Ryan Gamston, Ft. Benning, GA, \$7,658
  5. James Reed, Atlanta, GA, \$6,532
  6. Daniel Kim, Swanee, GA, \$5,406
  7. Merton Toler, Princeton, WV, \$4,279
  8. Doug Freiss, Katy, TX, \$3,153
  9. Nick Rodrigue, Chalmette, LA, \$2,027

More results next page

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**Event #16 • \$340 H.O.S.E.**
**Players: 62 • Prize pool: \$18,042**

1. Ron Winkelvoss, Rose Valley PA, \$6,495
2. Rich Chiovani, Chicago, \$3,608
3. Ashton Freeman, Atlanta, \$2,345
4. Mitchell Smith, Miami Beach, FL, \$1,624
5. Al Green, Weston, FL, \$1,263
6. Scott Hiett, Nashville, \$1,083
7. Gene Bauerlein, St. Pete, FL, \$902
8. John Napolf, Daytona Beach, FL, \$722


**Event #17 • \$340 Ladies**
**Players: 70 • Prize pool: \$20,370**

1. Holly Raba, Ft. Lauderdale, FL, \$7,333
2. Julie Dawson, Daphne, AL, \$3,870
3. Kerri Dorsey, Gautier, MS, \$2,444
4. Theresa Gex, Baton Rouge, LA, \$1,630
5. Janet Clark, Gulf Breeze, FL, \$1,426
6. Gretchen Holzhauser, New Orleans, \$1,222
7. Rita Little Pensacola, FL, \$1,019
8. Anne Manning, Kosciusko, MS, \$815
9. Paula Halata, Houston, \$611


**Event #18 • \$340 Seniors**
**Players: 270 • Prize pool: \$78,570**

1. Terry Garner, Hattiesburg, MS, \$23,566
2. Ed Childress, Arab, AL, \$12,571
3. Avner Levy, Westfield, NJ, \$7,071
4. Mark Fleddermann, St. Louis, \$5,500
5. John Ashley, Oxford, AL, \$4,714
6. Bill Crane, Wright, KS, \$3,929
7. Barbara Spano, Westfield, NJ, \$3,143
8. Sandra Kroll, \$2,357
9. Pete Ruskiewicz, Wisconsin, \$1,571


**Event #19 • \$550 NLHE/PLO**
**Players: 104 • Prize pool: \$50,440**

1. Ben Chan, Pan. City Bch., FL, \$18,158
2. James Miller, Auburn, AL, \$9,584
3. Joe Greene, Pan. City Bch., FL, \$6,053
4. Anthony Bellao, New Orleans, \$4,035
5. Tim Burt, Grenada, MS, \$3,531
6. Dustin Wertz, New Orleans, \$3,026
7. Robert Sturtz, Atlanta, \$2,522
8. Mark Edwards, Longwood, FL, \$2,018
9. Brad Peterson, Gautier, MS, \$1,513


**Event #20 • \$340 NLHE**
**Players: 271 • Prize pool: \$78,861**

1. Barry Shulman, Las Vegas, \$23,658
2. Larry Turner, Charlotte, NC, \$12,618
3. B.J. McBrayer, Tuscaloosa, AL, \$7,097
4. Hsien Han, Atlanta, \$5,520
5. Chris Champagne, Baton Rouge, \$4,732
6. Herman Stewart, Dothan, AL, \$3,943
7. Konstantin Suvorkin, Russia, \$3,154
8. Ron Cole, Sour Lake, TX, \$2,366
9. Amelio Amato, Sarasota, FL, \$1,577


**Event #21 • \$550 H.O.R.S.E.**
**Players: 55 • Prize pool: \$26,403**

1. Anthony Vidmer, Nashville, \$9,330
2. Andy Hwang, Houston, \$5,335
3. Avner Levy, Westfield, NJ, \$3,468
4. George Krafft, Absecon, NJ, \$2,401
5. Chris Sheffield, Pensacola, FL, \$1,867
6. Stewart Carpenter, Walls, MS, \$1,601
7. Bill Melms, New Port Richey, FL, \$1,334
8. Daniel Klein, Toronto, \$1,067


**Event #22 • \$340 NLHE**
**Players: 203 • Prize pool: \$59,073**

1. Zdenek Cicala, Czech Republic, \$19,494
2. Brandon Woolridge, Biloxi, MS, \$10,751
3. Ethan Smith, Gulfport, MS, \$5,907
4. Josh Palmer, Daphne, AL, \$4,726
5. Doug Saab, \$3,544
6. James Puritz, Orlando, FL, \$2,954
7. Robert Aguerriberri, Argentina, \$2,363
8. Dale McFarland, Houston, \$1,772
9. John Dahlberg, St. Louis, \$1,181


**Event #23 • \$550 Heads-Up**
**Players: 64 • Prize pool: \$31,042**

1. Mark Edwards, Longwood, FL, \$11,795
2. Jeremy Bynum, \$6,829
3. Arthur Young, \$3,725
4. Walter Chambers, \$3,725
5. Charles Townsend, \$1,242
6. Rolando Lazano, \$1,242
7. Christopher Authement, \$1,242
8. Carl Norris, \$1,242


**Event #24 • \$1,060 NLHE**
**Players: 136 • Prize pool: \$131,920**

1. Mike Shafer, Detroit, \$43,534
2. Nick Rampone, Portland, \$24,009
3. Martin Hornitz, Norway, \$13,192
4. Carlos Cuentos, Houston, \$10,554
5. David Nicholson, Biloxi, MS, \$7,915
6. Chad Burns, Houston, \$6,596
7. Mark Wilds, Biloxi, MS, \$5,277
8. Vin Luu, San Jose, CA, \$3,958
9. Kevin Eyster, Lafayette, LA, \$2,638


**Event #25 • \$340 PLO w/rb**
**Players: 63 • Prize pool: \$39,189**

1. Brad Peterson, Gautier, MS, \$14,108
2. Mike Schneider, Covington, GA, \$7,446
3. Brent Carter, Oak Park, IL, \$4,703
4. Brian McKain, Madison, IN, \$3,135
5. Allyn Shulman, Las Vegas, \$2,743
6. Dave Callaghan, Ireland, \$2,351
7. Gene Timberlake, Houston, \$1,959
8. Daniel Klein, Toronto, \$1,568
9. Gene Bauerlein, St. Pete, FL, \$1,176


**Event #26 • \$1,580 NLHE**
**Players: 110 • Prize pool: \$160,050**

1. Matt Brady, Havertown, PA, \$57,616
2. Justin Scott, Detroit, \$30,410
3. Patrick Mahoney, Lakeland, TN, \$19,206
4. Jonathan Little, Pensacola, FL, \$12,804
5. Jerry Milanos, Hillsboro, IL, \$11,204
6. Alexander Kuzmin, Russia, \$9,603
7. Mark Fledderman, St. Louis, \$8,003
8. Bruce Perry, Nashville, \$6,402
9. Tom Quinlan, Montgomery, TX, \$4,802


**Event #27 • \$340 NLHE**
**Players: 169 • Prize pool: \$49,181**

1. George McDonald, O. Springs, MS, \$16,229
2. Stan Crawford, O. Springs, MS, \$8,951
3. Jodi Westendorf, Key Largo, FL, \$4,918
4. Keith Davis, Millbrook, AL, \$3,934
5. James Maddox, Inman, SC, \$2,951
6. Michael Husar, Metairie, LA, \$2,459
7. Andrew Miller, Las Vegas, \$1,967
8. Josh Palmer, Daphne, AL, \$1,475
9. Wayne Walker, Houston, \$984


**Event #28 • \$2,600 PLO**
**Players: 29 • Prize pool: \$70,325**

1. Dave Callaghan, Ireland, \$31,646
2. Kyle Bawker, Walton, NY, \$17,581
3. Michael Nassergad, Atlanta, \$10,549
4. Karen Longfellow, Ind. Shores, FL, \$7,033
5. Justin Young, Henderson, \$3,516


**Event #29 • \$660 6-max NLHE**
**Players: 184 • Prize pool: \$89,240**

1. Mike Caruso, Ardada, Co \$20,079
2. David Shadley, Bogart, GA, \$11,155
3. Kevin Eyster, Lafayette, LA, \$8,478
4. Steve Lovoy, Gulf Breeze, FL, \$6,693
5. Ryan Tepen, Bowling Green, MO, \$5,801
6. Patrick Smith, Montgomery, AL, \$4,908


**Event #30 • \$2,600 NLHE**
**Players: 140 • Prize pool: \$339,500**

1. Russell Blattberg, Boulder, CO, \$112,035
2. Paul Tros Clair, Lake Charles, LA, \$61,789
3. Joe Pulliam, Westerville, OH, \$33,950
4. Barbara Smith, Houston, \$27,160
5. Brent Roberts, Las Vegas, \$20,370
6. Mohammad Moeini, Biloxi, MS, \$16,975
7. Jared Jaffee, Brooklyn, \$13,580
8. Jess Yawitz, St. Louis, MO, \$10,185
9. Chad Burns, Spring, TX, \$6,790


**Event #32 • \$2,600 Heads-Up**
**Players: 20 • Prize pool: \$48,500**

1. Darren Elias, Los Angeles, \$21,825
2. Tom Braband, Hunt. Bch., CA, \$12,125
3. Justin Young, M'head City, NC, \$7,275
4. Bill Edler, Las Vegas, \$7,275


**Event #34 • \$2,600 8-game**
**Players: 7 • Prize pool: \$16,975**

1. Timothy Burt, Grenada, MS, \$8,487
2. Joe Bradenburg, Portland, \$5,093
3. Karen Longfellow, Ind. Shores, FL, \$3,395


**\$10K WPT SPC Main Event**
**Players: 214 • Prize pool: \$1,986,100**

1. Alexander Kuzmin, Moscow, \$575,969
2. Leif Force, Tallahassee, FL, \$315,790
3. Allen Carter, Lewisville, TX, \$218,471
4. Shannon Shorr, Birm., AL, \$144,985
5. Pat Mahoney, Lakeland, TN, \$113,208
6. Ryan Hughes, Pl. Chandler, AZ, \$89,375
7. B.J. McBrayer, Tuscaloosa, AL, \$67,527
8. Otis Wright, Laport, TX, \$49,653
9. Stuart Breakstone, Memphis, \$35,750
10. Vitor Coelho, Tampa, FL, \$24,826
11. Dermot Blain, Ireland, \$24,826
12. Martin Zentner, New Orleans, \$24,826
13. Robert Keller, Gulf Shores, AL, \$22,840
14. Robert Smith, Lakeland, FL, \$22,840
15. Hilbert Shirey, W. Haven, FL, \$22,840
16. Chad Brown, Margate, FL, \$20,854
17. Jordan Smith, College St., TX, \$20,854
18. Mark Rose, Orlando, FL, \$20,854
19. Hoyt Corkins, Memphis, \$18,868
20. Andrew Batkin, New York, \$18,868



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### CONGRATULATIONS COREY BURBICK

WINNER OF THE 2ND ANNUAL  
CHAD BROWN NO LIMIT TEXAS HOLD'EM CHAMPIONSHIP

A look at the Louisiana-area poker scene • By Scotty Rushing

# DARK CITY CONCLUDES SEASON 8

If you build it, they will play.

Though Greg Shafer doesn't live on the edge of a mystical Iowa cornfield, he heard the voice just the same. It spoke to him in 2006.

"A buddy of mine and I got bored one day and wanted to play poker," he said. "Of course, to play poker you need a table, so we went and bought the materials to build one. From there we called a few more friends and started playing cards."



SCOTTY RUSHING

This was the humble beginning of the Dark City Poker League. Based in Shreveport/Bossier City, the home league has grown from that one homemade table to a roster of 40 participants for its eighth season, which will conclude with a championship on April 2. The winner will collect a nice sum, but the money isn't

what drives the members of Dark City. They play because they love the game and enjoy the friendship.

"The main purpose of the league is to hang out with friends and have fun," Shafer said. "We are always inviting new people out to play, but remaining a small home league is what I think it's all about."

Shafer and friends had no idea how to run a tournament when they began. They took a trip to a Baton Rouge casino to observe how tournaments were conducted. Now, after five years of running monthly tournaments Shafer has developed a slick production that includes computer software to manage levels and blinds. The program even randomly assigns new seating when a table breaks. Two monitors in the room keep players up to speed on entrants remaining and how many minutes are left in the level. All in all, Dark City comes very close to replicating a casino tournament and maintains a very professional website ([darkcitypokerleague.com](http://darkcitypokerleague.com)) that tracks league standings and results.

When I visited Dark City in January to participate in a NLHE tournament I found a diverse group of participants. There were youngsters dreaming of being the next Tom Dwan and a little lady that reminded me of my grandmother right up until she check-raised me for a third of my stack. Most of the league members are recreational players, but in five years of biweekly tournament play even a recreational player can get pretty good. These guys can play.

The structure of the league is pretty simple. A season consists of 12 events. Six of these are NLHE with the rest being chosen by the league members in a vote. Season 8 included stud, Omaha, H.O.R.S.E., and even pineapple. Tournaments are deepstack events and offer a one-time full rebuy if a player busts. Points are awarded based on finish with a bonus for knockouts. There also is a bounty placed on the head of the previous event's winner. The point leaders meet for a final table in the last event to determine the league champion. The format has been a success, but a change is in store for the new season set to begin later this year. Shafer hopes it amounts to a more fair system.

"Our biggest change for Season 9 will be our points distribution," he said. "Every season we have awarded points on tourney placement alone. That's fine and well, but when you consider the player who just beat a field of 16 gets the same points as the player who beat the field of 24, you've got to wonder if there is a better way. Going to a formula-based points system seemed like the logical way to go. We dissected the new system and are certain it's going to spark more competitiveness with the upcoming season."



Dark City's Greg Shafer enjoys a laugh during a recent league night.

Competitiveness is surely a factor that keeps the players coming back. Winning a league championship guarantees the victor six months of bragging rights and a bulls-eye on their back for the next season. Another attraction of the league is it allows an amateur a chance to give tournament poker a try without getting chewed up by the sharks at the local casinos.

With the launch of the new PokerStars Home Games platform in full swing, I asked Shafer if Dark City had any plans to take their league online.

"I have looked a bit at that PokerStars Home League, and it's a really cool idea. I think that a lot of the camaraderie we have now with the home league would be lost if we were all sitting at our PCs playing online. Could be fun for a Wednesday night freeroll, though."

State law in Louisiana is favorable to home games while the future of Internet poker still hangs in the balance. There is also quite a bit of history attached to home games in the Pelican State. Legendary players used to make the rounds in Shreveport and one game in nearby Haughton was a favorite of WSOP bracelet-winner T.J. Cloutier.

None of poker's legends has emerged from a magical mist to sit at Dark City's table, but that's okay. The players who show up on league night comprise their own field of dreams.

**DODD LEAVES ISLE:** A bit of sad news this month as **Matthew Dodd**, the poker room manager at Isle Lake Charles, is leaving to start up another Isle poker room, this time in Black Hawk, Colo.

"It's been a fantastic opportunity running the largest poker room in the Mid-South at the Isle of Capri in Lake Charles," Dodd said. "The people and the region have offered me many new experiences, both personally and in poker. As I embark on this adventure, I do so knowing that my potential for success there will be due in large part to the experience I've gained here in Louisiana."

Dodd was integral in launching the Isle's Louisiana State Poker Championships last year, and will be remembered for changing the Isle tables from 10-handed to nine-handed, a move that benefited everyone.

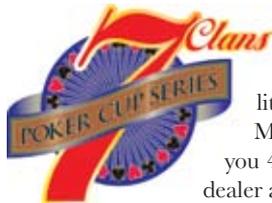
— **Scotty "The Spokesman" Rushing** is a poker professional and sports journalist. When he isn't playing or writing about poker he's usually reading about it. Email him at [scottyrushing@gmail.com](mailto:scottyrushing@gmail.com).



## NEWS

LOUISIANA

# COUSHATTA RETURNS SEVEN CLANS SERIES



The Seven Clans Poker Cup Series at Coushatta Casino's poker room returns this month, beginning with a mega-satellite on March 30. Online registration begins March 1. Buy-in is \$200 for the mega, getting you 4,000 chips for the 3 p.m. event. There's a dealer add-on of \$15 that will get you 1,000 more chips. Registration on the day of the tournament begins at 9 a.m. and closes at 2:45. Prize packages will be \$1,300 in Tournament Entry Chips, which covers the \$1K buy-in to the April 1-3 main event. No cash will be awarded from this satellite.

On March 31 is Event 2, a \$300 no-limit hold'em tournament starting at 10 a.m. Players will get 5,000 chips and 30-minute blinds.

The crown jewel of this series is the main event, which is a three-day affair beginning on April 1. The \$1K buy-in gets you 20,000 chips and 60-minute blind levels and 20-minute breaks every two hours.

On Day 1 the field will be reduced to four tables, followed by Day 2, where the field will be reduced to the final table for Day 3. Each session begins at 10 a.m.

For more information go to [coushattacasinoresort.com](http://coushattacasinoresort.com) or call (800) 584-7263.

## GEORGIA



David Herbert of Atlanta bested nearly 160 players to capture the Atlanta Poker Club's Fall Season 2010 Grand Championship on Dec. 18 at All-Star Billiards.

Herbert won a \$550 entry into a World Series of Poker or World Poker Tour event in Tunica or Biloxi, Miss., plus he gets a spot in the APC Hall of Fame and entry into the yearly championship.

"It felt good," said Herbert, who lists his favorite players as Phil Ivey and Daniel Negreanu. "It really didn't hit me until I got home. Made me want to celebrate and drink beer. It felt like a good accomplishment to win against the good players at the APC. However, it is a grind."

## PENNSYLVANIA

**MEADOWS:** The first WSOP satellite drew a sellout crowd of 230 players on Jan. 16, generating a \$23K prize pool as Stan Geier, a 49-year-old marketing executive from Sewickly, Pa., won the \$10,000 2011 WSOP main event seat and expense money. Shawn Murray, a 37-year-old from Connellsville, Pa., was runner-up, pocketing \$3,960.

**MOHEGAN SUN:** Here are the results of the \$280 event on Jan. 27, which drew 120 players and had a \$30K prize pool: 1. Tom R. (S. Abington, Pa.), \$9,225; 2. Tom E. (Hunlock Creek, Pa.), \$4,656; 3. Greg B. (Mt. Carmel, Pa.), \$3,201; 4. Joe O. (Williamsport, Pa.), \$2,328; 5. Mike L. (Pringle, Pa.), \$1,891; 6. Steve T. (Wilkes-Barre, Pa.), \$1,455; 7. Mike C. (Unityville, N.Y.), \$1,165; 8. Dan V. (Binghamton, N.Y.), \$873; 9. Kelvin G. (Farmington, Conn.), \$727; 10. John M. (Wyoming, Pa.), \$669; 11. Rob B. (Moosic, Pa.), \$582; 12. Ken V. (Williamsport, Pa.), \$582; 13. Chris V. (Effort, Pa.), \$582; 14. Rich G. (Watsonstown, N.Y.), \$582; 15. Don R. (Wyoming, Pa.), \$582. Moving forward, this \$280 event will be the last Saturday every month at 2 p.m.

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# BORGATA WINTER OPEN

JAN. 20-FEB. 4 • BORGATA • ATLANTIC CITY

It seems as though every time the Borgata hosts a tournament series another record is broken. This time its opening event, a \$560 no-limit hold'em tournament, generated the largest prize pool for a first-day event (\$736K) in the series' six-year run. Congratulations to all of the winners, including New Jersey's Vadim Shlez, who won the \$3,500 main event, good for more than \$530K.



**Event #1 • \$560 NLHE**  
**Players: 1,472 • Prize Pool: \$736,000**  
 1. Alex Rocha, S. Setauket, NY, \$150,850  
 2. Joshua Lawson, Quarryville, PA, \$94,236  
 3. Seunghwan Lee, Albertain, NY, \$57,113  
 4. Leo Palermo, Ortley Beach, NJ, \$47,832  
 5. Ryan Wood, Crownsville, MD, \$39,265  
 6. Aleksandr Bolton, Brooklyn, NY, \$31,768  
 7. Brian Mooney, Mid. Village, NY, \$25,343  
 8. Robert Hanley, Forest Hills, NY, \$19,275  
 9. Shawn James, Virginia Beach, VA, \$13,207



**Event #2 • \$350 NLHE**  
**Players: 520 • Prize Pool: \$156,000**  
 1. Steve Dannenmann, Severn, MD, \$37,679  
 2. David Meagher, Monkton, MD, \$21,185  
 3. Alexander Shteyman, Edison, NJ, \$13,619  
 4. Yesniel Pulido, Pem. Pines, FL, \$10,819  
 5. James Lillis, Robinsville, NJ, \$8,474  
 6. Dustin Bradley, Boca Raton, FL, \$6,961  
 7. Ibrahim Musleh, Staten Island, NY, \$5,523  
 8. Lawrence Lakatos, Red Lion, PA, \$4,313  
 9. Louis Menges, Holmdel, NJ, \$3,027



**Event #3 • \$350 LHE**  
**Players: 68 • Prize Pool: \$20,400**  
 1. Glenn Engelbert, Sicklerville, NJ, \$6,925  
 2. Joseph Calandrino, Oakdale, NY, \$3,760  
 3. Doug Borgman, Pleasantville, NJ, \$2,375  
 4. Nick Mavromoustakos, Brooklyn, \$1,781  
 5. Joseph Larkin, Pasadena, MD, \$1,385  
 6. Wasyl Zaliwicz, Philadelphia, \$1,187  
 7. Monty Dennis, Tucker, GA, \$989  
 8. William Floyd, Norristown, PA, \$792  
 9. Edwin Young, Bronx, \$594



**Event #4 • \$560 NLHE**  
**Players: 343 • Prize Pool: \$171,500**  
 1. Dean Schultz, Stow, OH, \$44,915  
 2. John Meinwieser, B. Ridge, NJ, \$24,952  
 3. Michael Green, Loris, SC, \$15,471  
 4. Hector Jimenez, Passaic, NJ, \$12,476  
 5. Richard Rice, Haymarket, VA, \$9,648  
 6. Kam Chin, Brooklyn, \$8,151  
 7. Thomas McGarry, Hazlet, NJ, \$6,571  
 8. Paul Lam, Rego Park, NY, \$4,907  
 9. Charles Geier, Sunnyside, NY, \$3,327



**Event #5 • \$450 Omaha/8**  
**Players: 160 • Prize Pool: \$64,000**  
 1. Tim Dalessandro, W. Chester, PA, \$18,624  
 2. Brent Keller, Horsham, PA, \$10,243  
 3. Leonardo Palermo, Ort. Beach, NJ, \$5,898  
 4. Steve Schlesinger, L. Hallow, NY, \$4,966  
 5. Peter Chung, New York, \$3,725  
 6. Eunice Chang, New York, \$3,104  
 7. Barry Levy, Brooklyn, \$2,483  
 8. John Hunter, Bronx, \$1,863  
 9. Nicholas Goedert, S. Spring, MD, \$1,397



**Event #7 • \$400 NLHE**  
**Players: 338 • Prize Pool: \$118,300**  
 1. Vin Basilicata, Little Neck, NY, \$30,982  
 2. Ahmet Kose, N Brunswick, NJ, \$17,212  
 3. Christopher Walker, Elkridge, MD, \$10,671  
 4. Romeo Montana, Eatontown, NJ, \$8,605  
 5. Jeffrey Morris, Woolrich Twp, NY, \$6,655  
 6. Chris Chatman, Stone Ridge, VA, \$5,622  
 7. Ralph Villela, Valley Stream, NY, \$4,532  
 8. Chris West, Florissant, CO, \$3,385  
 9. Ilya Nudelman, Owings Mills, MD, \$2,295



**Event #8 • \$450 NLHE**  
**Players: 619 • Prize Pool: \$247,600**  
 1. Michael Castaldo, Palisades, NY, \$57,665  
 2. Howard Brown, Brigantine, NJ, \$32,423  
 3. C. Boatwright, W'bridge, VA, \$20,414  
 4. Anna Dikker, Morganville, NJ, \$16,572  
 5. Matt Kalinowski, W'hampton, NJ, \$13,209  
 6. Matthew Mazzeo, E Williston, NY, \$10,928  
 7. Ian Palomo, New York, \$8,766  
 8. Kathryn Dougherty, Allen, TX, \$6,605  
 9. Jorge Carrero, Brooklyn, \$4,563



**Event #10 • \$350 NLHE**  
**Players: 340 • Prize Pool: \$102,000**  
 1. Mark Saccucci, Oxford, PA, \$26,713  
 2. Edwin Lau, Philadelphia, \$14,840  
 3. Bart Seemen, Santa Monica, CA, \$9,201  
 4. Robert Chung-Shui, New York, \$7,421  
 5. Monte Hoover Jr, Steubenville, OH, \$5,739  
 6. Joseph Neiman, Hackensack, NJ, \$4,848  
 7. John Morales, Gettysburg, PA, \$3,908  
 8. Brooks Floyd, Boone, NC, \$2,919  
 9. Michael Collette, Galloway, NJ, \$1,979



**Event #11 • \$350 PLO**  
**Players: 101 • Prize Pool: \$30,300**  
 1. William Seymour, Greenville, NC, \$8,817  
 2. John Cernuto, Las Vegas, \$4,850  
 3. James Newton, Egg Harbor, NJ, \$2,792  
 4. Gary Hutzler, Bridgewater, NJ, \$2,351  
 5. Haechul Cho, Ridgefield, NJ, \$1,763  
 6. Dom Christiano, Wilkes Barre, PA, \$1,470  
 7. Leonard Talarico, Cary, NC, \$1,176  
 8. Brent Keller, Horsham, PA, \$882  
 9. Joshua Murchison, Plattsburgh, NY, \$661



**Event #12 • \$200 NLHE**  
**Players: 1,292 • Prize Pool: \$219,640**  
 1. James Governa, Richboro, PA, \$46,870  
 2. William Hart, Martinsburg, WV, \$28,165  
 3. Jeff Finkelstein, B.-Gymwyd, PA, \$17,044  
 4. James Romoser, Washington, \$14,274  
 5. Nicolas Markatos, Dix Hills, NY, \$11,718  
 6. David Zeitlin, Brooklyn, NY, \$9,480  
 7. Salvatore Pipitone, Paramus, NJ, \$7,563  
 8. Ryan Eriquezzo, Danbury, CT, \$5,752  
 9. Nicole Rowe, Salisbury Mills, NY, \$3,941



**Event #13 • \$400 Seniors**  
**Players: 140 • Prize Pool: \$49,000**  
 1. Mike Kessler, Spotsylvania, VA, \$14,259  
 2. Gary Brudner, University Park, FL, \$7,842  
 3. Richard Lucasavage, Yonkers, NY, \$4,515  
 4. Dominick Pelli, Stamford, CT, \$3,802  
 5. Edward Newman, Brick, NJ, \$2,851  
 6. Edward Rappa, Arlington, VA, \$2,377  
 7. Abraham Mevorah, S. Island, NY, \$1,901  
 8. Thomas Starnier, Philadelphia, \$1,426  
 9. Donald Brown, Westbury, NY, \$1,069



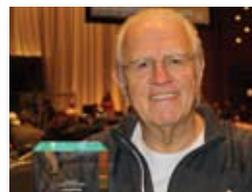
**Event #14: \$400 Stud**  
**Players: 49 • Prize Pool: \$17,150**  
 1. Lance Bacchia, Brampage, NJ, \$7,486  
 2. Frank Rasile, Staten Island, NY, \$4,159  
 3. Frank Gagliano, Brooklyn, \$2,495  
 4. Stephen Rivers, Baldwin, NY, \$1,664  
 5. Joseph Loguidice, Atlantic City, \$832



**Event #15: \$2,150 Heads-Up**  
**Players: 45 • Prize Pool: \$90,000**  
 1. Brandon Zaucha, Arlington, IL, \$34,920  
 2. Timothy Tuveson, Berwyn, PA, \$21,825  
 3. Lior Shalom Barlev, Israel, \$13,095  
 4. Marc Davis, Orlando, FL, \$8,730  
 5. Sirous Jamshidi, Broomall, PA, \$4,365  
 6. Rob McLaughlin, Ft. Laud., FL, \$4,365



**Event #16 • \$300 NLHE**  
**Players: 473 • Prize Pool: \$122,980**  
 1. William Stradley, Boothwyn, PA, \$30,479  
 2. Leo Fiorentino, Chandler, AZ, \$17,595  
 3. Steve Schott, O Fallon, MO, \$10,736  
 4. Kristin Fletcher, Gastonia, NC, \$8,649  
 5. Terrell Cheatham, Kent, OH, \$6,800  
 6. Rene Battiston, Clifton, NJ, \$5,666  
 7. Brooks Bell, Philadelphia, \$4,534  
 8. Jacquelin Lurch, Allenwood, NJ, \$3,460  
 9. John Koliner, Kings Park, NY, \$2,386



**Event #17 • \$560 H.O.S.E.**  
**Players: 62 • Prize Pool: \$31,000**  
 1. Jeffrey Duvall, London, \$10,525  
 2. Laurence Goldstein, Medford, NY, \$5,713  
 3. Igor Tiguy, Boston, MA, \$3,608  
 4. Jinglin Chen, Brooklyn, \$2,706  
 5. Richard Pilchman, Brick, NJ, \$2,105  
 6. Rob Demartino, Manahawkin, NJ, \$1,804  
 7. John Cernuto, Las Vegas, \$1,504  
 8. Steve Prosak, Arlington, VA, \$1,203  
 9. Jeff Jerome, Springfield, PA, \$902

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- Day **1B** - March 18th at 1:00 p.m.
- Day **1C** - March 19th at 1:00 p.m.
- Day **1D** - March 27th at 1:00 p.m.
- Day **1E** - April 3rd at 1:00 p.m.



**Event #18 • \$2K NLHE**

- Players: 226 • Prize Pool: \$418,100**
1. Daniel Cai, Brooklyn, \$113,556
  2. Edward Pham, Lansdale, PA, \$66,917
  3. Dennis Summers, C'ville, VA, \$38,528
  4. Mark Tyson, Philadelphia, PA, \$31,228
  5. Derek Buonano, Tolland, CT, \$24,333
  6. Ory Hen, Cooper City, FL, \$20,278
  7. Mark Baatz, Brielle, NJ, \$16,222
  8. Charles Tidmarsh, Greenville, SC, \$12,167
  9. Nicholas Ricciardi, Palm Beach, FL, \$8,111



**Event #19 • \$350 NLHE**

- Players: 301 • Prize Pool: \$90,300**
1. Tom PomPonio, Manahawkin, NJ, \$23,649
  2. Joseph Nichols, Nutley, NJ, \$13,138
  3. Matthew Damon, Los Angeles, \$8,145
  4. Thomas Calvo, Staten Island, NY, \$6,569
  5. Matthew Mazzeo, E Williston, NY, \$5,080
  6. Vincent Pizaro, East Meadow, NY, \$4,291
  7. Andrew Interdonato, Washington, \$3,459
  8. Steven Freifeld, New York, \$2,584
  9. Robert Rudovic, Bronx, \$1,752



**Event #20 • \$1,090 6-Handed**

- Players: 291 • Prize Pool: \$291,000**
1. Ryan Eriquezzo, Danbury, CT, \$71,978
  2. Lawrence Lakatos, Red Lion, PA, \$42,763
  3. William Pilosoph, Presto, PA, \$32,461
  4. Nash. Antonious, Red. Shores, FL, \$26,109
  5. Marcus Seitz, Lacey, VA, \$20,465
  6. Anibal Santiago, Bensalem, PA, \$14,819
  7. Andrew Buechner, New. Sq., PA, \$11,291
  8. Jacek Markowski, Gernamy, \$7,762
  9. Johannes Mueller, Pittsford, NY, \$4,234



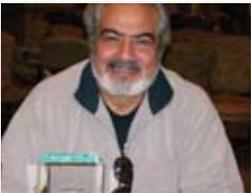
**Event #22 • \$560 NLHE**

- Players: 137 • Prize Pool: \$68,500**
1. Hamilton Dimaya, S. Brook, NJ, \$19,933
  2. Angel Modica, Astoria, NY, \$10,963
  3. Jaime Herrera, Miami, \$6,312
  4. Richard Corley, Brooklyn, \$5,315
  5. Matthew Selman, Brooklyn, \$3,987
  6. Ronen Avramov, Glendale, NY, \$3,322
  7. David Grandieri, Danbury, CT, \$2,658
  8. James Barago, Wantagh, NY, \$1,993
  9. Will Childs, Southern Pines, NC, \$1,495



**Event #23 • \$350 NLHE**

- Players: 172 • Prize Pool: \$51,600**
1. Gregory Weber, Howell, NJ, \$15,015
  2. Tony Tran, Philadelphia, \$8,258
  3. Pawel Kulpa, Whitestone, NY, \$4,755
  4. Antonio Savarese, Old Bridge, NJ, \$4,004
  5. Harry White, Hughesville, PA, \$3,003
  6. Harry Piacitelli, Ply. Meeting, PA, \$2,503
  7. Dan Eichhorn, Henderson, NV, \$2,002
  8. Paul Galiano, Old Bridge, NJ, \$1,502
  9. Ilya Vasserman, Huntingdon, PA, \$1,126



**Event #24 • \$200 NLHE**

- Players: 629 • Prize Pool: \$106,930**
1. Nash. Antonious, Red. Shores, FL, \$24,904
  2. Richard Fremaint, Brick, NJ, \$14,003
  3. Edwin Lau, Philadelphia, PA, \$8,816
  4. John Whitworth, Myrtle Beach, \$7,157
  5. Pete Zaplatynski, O. Mills, MD, \$5,705
  6. Kyle Olesko, Holmdel, NJ, \$4,720
  7. Gregory Bock, New York, \$3,786
  8. Peter Hong, Bayside, NY, \$2,853
  9. Brian Ali, Brooklyn, \$1,971



**Event #25 • \$300 NLHE**

- Players: 186 • Prize Pool: \$48,360**
1. Mark Wahba, Cleveland, OH, \$14,073
  2. Christopher Grove, Pasadena, MD, \$7,740
  3. Marco Jansen, Germany, \$4,456
  4. Michael Matrone, Morganville, NJ, \$3,753
  5. Onofrio Reina, Elizabeth, NJ, \$2,815
  6. Francis Dougherty, Philadelphia, \$2,346
  7. Robert Avram, Canoga Park, CA, \$1,876
  8. Vimy Ha, Brooklyn, \$1,407
  9. Abraham Gordon, Lakewood, NJ, \$1,055



**Event #26 • \$230 NLHE**

- Players: 237 • Prize Pool: \$47,400**
1. James Boyle, Havre D.G., MD, \$12,873
  2. Esfandiar Dara, New York, \$7,586
  3. Frank Dire, Columbus, NJ, \$4,367
  4. Hamilton Dimaya, S. Brook, NJ, \$3,540
  5. Cosimo Farinola, Las Vegas, \$2,758
  6. Pasquale Calabria, Wash. Twp, NJ, \$2,298
  7. Richard Sarkisian, Sicklerville, NJ, \$1,839
  8. Chris George, Sunnyside, NY, \$1,379
  9. David Eisenstein, Freehold, NJ, \$920



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**\$3,500 Main Event**

- Players: 718 • Prize Pool: \$2,369,400**
1. Vadim Shlez, Manalapan, NJ, \$533,210
  2. Leo Sande, New Haven, CT, \$310,273
  3. Trevor Savage, Thorofare, NJ, \$189,611
  4. Robert Suer, Dana Point, Ca, \$156,286

5. Gilbert Sacks, B. Cynwyd, PA, \$126,407
6. Patrick Carney, Scranton, PA, \$103,425
7. Steve Ryan, New York, \$82,740
8. Osa. Greene, Charlotte, NC, \$63,204
9. Al Vrooman, Greenville, NC, \$43,669

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Must be 18 years of age or older to play poker. More information available at the Poker Room Host Station. Some restrictions apply.

A look at the Atlantic City-Philadelphia-area poker scene



Harrah's Chester has added 10 tables, daily tournaments and will host the WSOP Circuit event next month.

## THINGS LOOKING UP AT HARRAH'S CHESTER

By **Cris Belkewitch**

Players in the Philadelphia area have been getting their fill of poker at Harrah's Chester for a few months now, but in 2011 things are really beginning to take shape. The buzz in the room is at a fever pitch as the room was expanded to house 10 more tables and the long-awaited addition of daily tournaments has arrived. The new schedule features two daily tournaments (Thursdays are bounty events). All of this has without a doubt been done to get the staff and players ready for the World Series of Poker Circuit event making its way to the property in late April.

The tournament scene isn't the only thing that's been upgraded recently at Harrah's Chester as the room is spreading a \$20-\$40 hold'em game on Thursday nights. Slowly but surely it's rolling out the perks for players. One of the more popular ones is the free buffet. By playing four-plus hours of \$1-\$2 NLHE or two-plus hours of \$2-\$5 NLHE you can earn a buffet comp. This is in an effort to help offset the problems with not being allowed to offer free drinks (as ruled by city ordinance). Kudos to Harrah's Chester for trying to help rectify what many saw as a problem that wasn't its doing in the first place.

**NEW JERSEY:** It's just after 11 a.m. on Jan. 20 and the Borgata poker room is full. With the first two events of the Winter Poker Open drawing huge fields (including 1,472 in Event 1) this comes as no surprise. While the mass of tournament players jockeyed for big pots and tried to dodge bad beats throughout the day in the convention center, the biggest and baddest of them all was taking place at a \$1-\$2 NLHE table downstairs in the poker room. The Borgata's bad-beat jackpot was at a healthy \$260,314 and expecting to grow as the hours passed.

But that all changed when Ronald Cusick's quad kings outpipped Frank Martin's quad queens. Martin was rewarded for his loss with \$104,128, while Cusick took home \$52,063 along with what was in the pot. The remaining six players at the table each took home a cool \$17,354. Nothing pads your bankroll like hitting the bad-beat jackpot, and surely nothing can make losing feel as good.

With the Borgata Winter Open in full swing the high-limit area saw its fair share of action, so much so they had two \$300-\$600 six-game-mix tables going. When the Borgata has a tournament series running

everything becomes bigger and better. Aside from the main events running each day they offered second-chance and survivor tournaments that received tremendous turnouts and saw many players walk away with thousands of dollars.

• It's not easy to take the poker action away from the Borgata in Atlantic City during its big events, but that's just what a growing bad-beat jackpot compiled from four casinos is capable of doing. With all four casinos under the Caesars Entertainment banner (formerly Harrah's Entertainment) being linked to one bad-beat jackpot it pays to find yourself seated in any one of them. So Caesars, Harrah's, Showboat and Bally's had their share of rounders thanks in part to a jackpot that found itself as large as \$331,613.

With the Showboat's new glass walls in place to keep the outside noise level to a minimum it is positioning itself to move up a few rungs on the ladder of power poker rooms in Atlantic City. The addition of an Omaha/8 tournament every Friday night is a nice touch to offer its players a little something different from the normal daily schedule spread throughout the boardwalk.

**LOOKING AHEAD:** With the Atlantic City and Pennsylvania-area casinos getting off to such huge starts, a prosperous 2011 is expected. As New Jersey surges forward with imminent online regulation with the land-based casinos at the helm, a new source of revenue stream can be expected and every brick-and-mortar player hopes some of those newfound riches find their way into the poker rooms in the form of some key renovations and upgrades. A few of the rooms can use the makeover and players tend to get giddy about things like that.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. Let's just bask in the bright light and big year that stands before us. First on the list is the World Series of Poker Circuit stop at Caesars Atlantic City. Taking place from March 2-13 the schedule boasts 10 ring events, including the \$1,650 main event and the NLHE ladies event with a coveted WSOPC pendant up for grabs. The WSOPC has seen a resurgence this season, and with Caesars Atlantic City having always been one of its more popular stops, big numbers are expected. Poker is alive and well on the East Coast and 2011 is going to be a monster year at the tables. See you there.

— **Cris Belkewitch is a professional poker player and writer from New Jersey. A member of Team Bustout, his insight can be found at [thepokerjourney.net](http://thepokerjourney.net).**



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# NOVEMBER NINE REUNION

FEB. 8 • FOXWOODS CASINO • MASHANTUCKET



The 2010 November Nine: John Dolan, Matt Jarvis, Jonathan Duhamel, Michael Mizrachi, John Racener, Soi Nguyen, Jason Senti, Joseph Cheong and Filippo Candio.

## By Cris Belkewitch

For the first time a reunion of the World Series of Poker's November Nine came to fruition, thanks to the hard work of Bernard Lee and the Foxwoods Resort & Casino.

The historic day that started with a news conference and photo shoot saw 21 players battle it out against the November Nine in a 30-player \$15,000 freeroll tournament on Feb. 8.

The morning's news conference announced the start of a new charity by Lee, who is official spokesman for Foxwoods. *The Full House Charity Program* will donate a minimum of \$20,000 annually to organizations across New England that focus on children. With Cabot Cheese serving as the lead sponsor, Lee will donate \$500 for every full house or better he's dealt in tournaments.

The freeroll kicked off with eventual bubble boy and ESPN announcer Lon McEachern introducing each member of the main event final table and ESPN *Inside Deal* co-host Lee announcing "shuffle up and deal" before a crowd of a few hundred fans and family members.

Three Niners sat at each of the three tables for the 30-player event as the action streamed live via foxwoodslive.com.

With a number of last-longer and side bets in place, the nine guests of honor weren't soft-playing anything. After McEachern's elimination put the remaining players into the money, the final table had a nice mix of pros and locals to make for a very fun and entertaining conclusion. WSOP champ Jonathan Duhamel, Matt Jarvis, Michael "Grinder" Mizrachi and Lee all had a shot at winning, but it was not in the cards for the pros. Ben Hopkins, a 26-year-old

carpenter from North Smithfield, R.I., took down Jarvis heads-up to claim the \$5,000 prize and a moment he'll never forget.

What made the event so memorable for the freeroll players was how well the November Niners interacted with everyone.

"It wasn't as overwhelming as I thought it was going to be," Hopkins said. "It was just like I was playing cards on a Friday night with my buddies."

Third-place finisher Bill Raynor, a Vietnam War veteran from Harrisville, N.H., echoed those sentiments.

"I think the pros were stellar. It was nice to sit down and play with them; it was entertaining and I learned some things. I think Foxwoods put on a nice show here."

Chris Iannucci from North Providence, R.I., loved his time at the table as well.

"It was a great experience. The pros were really welcoming."

With such a positive vibe and everyone having such a great time can we expect to

see an event like this take place again?

"We would love to do it annually," Lee said. "I think it was a great event. It was everything I had hoped for. It was so loud in here and every player got a really warm reception and Lon really added a lot. Today was one of those days that are going to go down in history as a phenomenal event."

"It was cool, a lot of fun," said Duhamel, now a PokerStars Team Pro. "Hopefully in the coming years they're going to do it again; it was a really great experience."

— For more, including pictures and videos, go to [thepokerjourney.net](http://thepokerjourney.net) and to learn more about the Full House Charity Program visit [bernardleepoker.com](http://bernardleepoker.com).



Hopkins won the historic event.

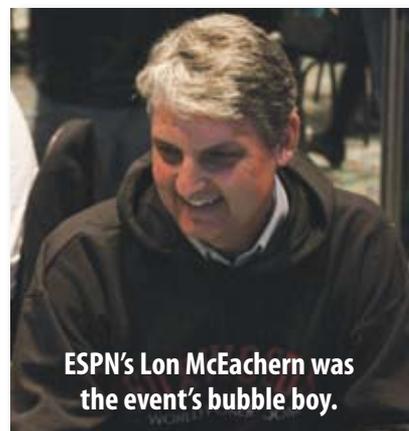
## Final freeroll results

Players: 30 • Prize Pool: \$15K

1. Ben Hopkins, N. Smithfield, RI \$5K
2. Matthew Jarvis, Canada, \$3K
3. William Raynor, Harrisville, NH \$2K
4. Tony Palladino, Franklin Lakes, NJ \$1K
5. Jonathan Duhamel, Canada, \$1K
6. Bernard Lee, Wayland, MA \$1K
7. Michael Mizrachi, Miramar, FL \$500
8. Joe Washington, E. Hartford, CT \$500
9. Rich Grygiel, Chicopee, MA \$500
10. Mark Walsh, Boston, MA \$500



Grinder was 7th.



ESPN's Lon McEachern was the event's bubble boy.

**WINDY CITY POKER CHAMPIONSHIP**



Windy City Poker Championship returns to a national audience with more than 13 episodes hitting TV in early March 2011.

The latest championship series features a 16-person heads-up tournament, a \$50K deepstack main event and a single-table winner-take-all high-roller event.



Featured players include 2007 WSOP champ Jerry Yang, WPT player of the year Faraz Jaka and other pros

such as Nick Brancato and Mark "Poker H0" Kroon.

*Ante Up*'s Chris Cosenza and Scott Long will provide guest commentary when regular hosts Kirk Fallah and Jason Finn are playing in the series.

Check your local listings for times and dates on Comcast and Bright House Networks, and look for more detailed information in *Ante Up* in the future.

**DELAWARE**

Since the Delaware Lottery approved tournaments for Dover Downs Hotel & Casino, the Crown Royal Poker Room has wasted little time in getting some quality series together, including this month's impressive Spring Poker Classic.

Its \$550 main event will be at noon on March 26, featuring 12,000 chips and 30-minute blinds.

From March 18-24 a variety of events will include seniors, ladies, Omaha/8 and PLO.

Times vary on qualifying days and buy-ins range from \$90-\$275. Single-table satellites for the main will be March 25 at 9 a.m., noon, 6 p.m. and 8 p.m., with a buy-in of \$70. Please see the Dover Downs ad on Page 54 for the full schedule.

**NORTH CAROLINA**

The World Amateur Poker League's December monthly went to Tim McGuirt, left. He was followed by Craig Pasley, Glenn Mangum, Dusty Rhoades, Cody Cook, Gail Osman, Matt Howey, Will Hall, Donny Streeter and Lisa Pallone.



The January semi-annual championship went to Troy Untig, right, winning a trip and entry for a WSOP event in Tunica. He



was followed by Mike Savinski, Gail Osman, Mike Quinn, Chris Gaydos, Josh Dufford, John Miller and Joe Mucci.

**DRAWING DATE**  
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Corey Burbick is all smiles after winning \$101K, a \$7,500 NAPT package and a custom bracelet.



# COOL CUSTOMER

Corey Burbick, a.k.a. comandr\_cool, finally wins his first live event, the \$5K Chad Brown No Limit Texas Hold'em Championship at Orange Park Kennel Club outside Jacksonville, Fla.

By Christopher Cosenza

So many storylines vied for top billing at the second annual Chad Brown No Limit Texas Hold'em Championship at Orange Park Kennel Club, but in the end there could be just one.

Corey Burbick, known mostly as comandr\_cool in the online poker world, finally made a name for himself in the live arena when he took down the historic televised final table on Feb. 1, pocketing \$101,070, a custom-made bracelet and a \$7,500 North American Poker Tour package.

"It makes me think I can get it done live," the Davie, Fla., resident said when asked how important this victory was to his career. "In the past I've played about 30 or so tournaments live, which isn't a lot. Going into this year I (said) I'm gonna try to play live every weekend and I already hit one."

But it was easy for the reserved Burbick to get lost among the buzz

surrounding the event. The field for this \$5,000 buy-in tournament, which had a prize pool of nearly \$325,000, sported some of the biggest names in poker, including the hottest no-limit tournament player on the planet, Tyler Smith. Team PokerStars Pros Jason Mercier and Victor Ramdin and online sensation Shaun Deeb also were in attendance. Plus there was the first televised Florida cash game that featured a \$50K minimum buy-in (see story Page 43).

But the story that got everyone talking at Orange Park was tournament host Chad Brown nearly winning his own event. The PokerStars Team Pro did his best, but ultimately finished second.

"If I won my own event there would probably be people saying it had to be fixed," he said with a chuckle. "But I really tried to win. I

Continued on Page 42

**PokerStars Team Pros Chad Brown and Victor Ramdin share a light moment at the featured table during the early stages of the tournament.**



**Last year's third-place finisher, Chilli Williams, didn't fare as well this year.**



**It was pretty much standing room only all week at Orange Park during the Chad Brown event.**



**Pros Jason Mercier, left, and Shaun Deeb look at their cards early in the event.**



**Tyler Smith of Mississippi built a decent chip stack but ran out of steam before the money bubble.**

**Watch it**

The two episodes of the Chad Brown No Limit Texas Hold'em Championship will air beginning in April on several networks. Comcast Sports South will air it April 8 and 15, both at 10 p.m., with rebroadcasts of each episode during the week. Schedules for Comcast SportsNet Chicago, Cox Cable and Bright House Sports Network were not finalized before press time, nor were schedules for the Jax \$50K cash game. Be sure to check [anteupmagazine.com](http://anteupmagazine.com) for updates.

**The guys from 1010XL interviewed Kirk Fallah during the week to learn what goes into making a TV poker production.**





Chad Brown studies Corey Burbick during their heads-up play at the final table.



Ante Up Player of the Year bracelet provided by Madison Jewelers. Go to [www.madison-jewelers.com](http://www.madison-jewelers.com).

Points are earned by finishing in the top 10. Here are the Ante Up Player of the Year leaders as of press time. For complete, up-to-date results and the formula used for calculating points be sure to log on to [anteupmagazine.com/tour](http://anteupmagazine.com/tour)

1. Corey Burbick, Davie, FL	393.15
2. Chad Brown, Margate, FL	278
3. James Slattery, Glen St. Mary, FL	226.98
4. Dermot Blain, Codonegal, Ireland	196.57
5. Shaun Deeb, Troy, NY	175.82
6. John O'Shea, Dublin, Ireland	160.50
7. Dennis Bergeron, St. Augustine, FL	148.60
8. Sean Winter, Jacksonville, FL	139
9. Robbin Ulrey, Jacksonville Beach, FL	131.05
10. Dan Dyke, Orlando, FL	124.32

### Upcoming events

**MARCH 11:** Ante Up Cruise Main Event, \$350

**MARCH 12:** Calder, Miami Gardens, 11a, \$100

**JUNE 8:** Ante Up Scramble in the Sand, \$4,000

**SEPT. 1:** Ante Up Cruise Main Event, \$350

**DEC. 14:** Ante Up Cruise Main Event, \$350

Continued from Page 40

think coming in second may not be far behind coming in first for the (popularity of the event). I played my best and Corey played great; there was just that cold-deck hand on the end. It would have been a big hill for me to overcome because he was playing very well."

The big hand he spoke of came when Burbick, with a 3-to-1 chip lead, made the nut flush and Brown had a worse flush.

"I was really happy with the way I played," said Brown, who won \$64,820. "I check-raised on the river and if he has two pair I know I'm gonna get paid. And then when he raised me I was pot-committed. I got to hope that either he's raising for value with a set or under a nine-high flush."

But it was the nuts, and Burbick couldn't have been happier to see Brown pushing in more chips on the end.

"When he check-raised I was just thrilled because I was pretty sure he was never bluffing and never folding the river," said Burbick, who stands atop the standings after one event of the 2011 Ante Up Poker Tour in a race for player of the year. "It's nice to finally have some legit real money and not just all of my money online."

The final table also featured Deeb, an online pro who, like Burbick, has really been itching to prove his worth in a live environment.

"This is my third (live) final table of the year so I'm really excited about that," said Deeb, the former PokerStars SCOOP champ who finished fifth for \$22,690. "I've only played like five events so that's really a sick run. I'm just going to keep it up and get a little bit more comfortable. I got a little bit out of my zone early on; I had a really bad seat with really aggressive opponents on my left. I let them dictate the action. I should have four-bet one or two of them to say, 'This is my final table,' but I just didn't and I let them run me over a little too much."

With nearly 900 big blinds in play when the final table began there was talk of the event not ending by the state-imposed 4 a.m. closing time. But thanks to some big hands the tournament ended by 10:30 p.m., and with that many chips in play it was easy to see why so many pros made it to the end.

"There were some tough players at the final table," Brown said. "My strategy was to try to not get involved in any big pots with some of the better players and try to take advantage of some of the weaker players. I was very happy with how I played."

"All good poker players feel if they are the better player at the table then having more big blinds there's going to be less luck and more skill. I didn't get any cards, but because the structure was good it allowed me to be more patient and not panic at any point."

This is what happens when a state is allowed to offer real poker with real buy-ins: The best in the world come out to play, and the cardroom can give them a structure they can enjoy.

"I was really surprised," Burbick said when asked about the big names in the field. "The reason I came here was I really thought no one would know about it, kind of underground. But I get here and the first

(people) I see are Jason Mercier, Tyler Smith and Shaun Deeb."

He also said he was thrilled with the new laws in the state.

"I still haven't had a chance to play live cash that much, which is something I'm going to do in the future. But the tournament buy-ins fit my bankroll really well, the \$2Ks and the \$5Ks, and I don't have to travel very far."

And neither did Brown, who has a home in Margate, Fla.

"The locals here were very excited about seeing a lot of poker players they are fans of that came to their hometown to play poker," Brown said. "I think the locals will be talking about this for a while." ♠

#### \$5K Main Event

Players: 70 • Prize pool: \$324,100

1. Corey Burbick, Davie, FL, \$101,070\*
2. Chad Brown, Margate, FL, \$64,820
3. James Slattery, Glen St. Mary, FL, \$42,135
4. Dermot Blain, Ireland, \$29,170
5. Shaun Deeb, Troy, NY, \$22,690
6. John O'Shea, Ireland, \$17,830
7. Dennis Bergeron, St. Augustine, FL, \$14,585
8. Sean Winter, Jacksonville, FL, \$12,960
9. Robbin Ulrey, Jacksonville Beach, FL, \$11,340

\* Burbick also received a \$7,500 NAPT package

# Jax \$50K cash game, TV lure big names

Some big cash games have broken out around the state of Florida, thanks to limits being removed in July, but none as big as what fans witnessed at Orange Park Kennel Club near Jacksonville on Jan. 31. In conjunction with the second annual Chad Brown No Limit Texas Hold'em Championship, the folks at Orange Park, led by new director of poker operations Deb Giardina, arranged for the Jax \$50K, Florida's first televised high-stakes cash game.

"We had some real high-profile players who came here for the high-stakes cash game," said host Chad Brown, who likely would have sat in had he not had to play at his own tournament's final table early the next day.

Players included World Series of Poker runner-up John Racener, WSOP bracelet-winner Jason Mercier, Bayou Challenge champ Tyler Smith, online star Andrew "good-2cu" Robl and millionaire amateur Rick Raheem, who many got to know last season on PokerStars' *The Big Game* on Fox. Each had to buy in for the minimum \$50,000, though some bought in for more. Play lasted in front of the cameras for about six hours before the game needed to be moved out to the main floor, where fans got to rail them until the wee hours.

There's talk of making this cash game a monthly event. Airtimes for the initial event have yet to be set, but will be posted on anteupmagazine.com when confirmed.

— Christopher Cosenza

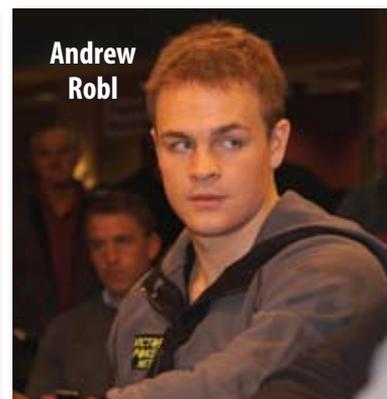


John Racener

Jason Mercier



Rick Raheem



Andrew Robl

Photos by Dan Kossorf

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# ANTE UP

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# HAVE AN AGGRESSIVE IMAGE

This hand came up in the \$10,000 PokerStars Caribbean Adventure main event. As usual, I had been playing my standard, fairly loose, aggressive game, which consists of raising a lot of hands preflop and making numerous stabs postflop. There also was a young Brazilian guy across the table from me who happened to be very loose and aggressive. We had tangled a little, with me getting the best of him twice (he bet twice and I called down with middle pair both times), when this hand came up.



JONATHAN LITTLE

He raised from the cutoff to 600 out of his 40,000 chip stack and I, also with 40,000 chips, reraised to 1,600 from the small blind with Q♥-Q♠. My standard raise in this spot would be slightly larger but I thought the small reraise may induce a re-reraise with a weak hand, as my opponent was overly aggressive. Much to my dismay, he just called.

The flop came A♠-A♣-6♦. I decided to check, as betting will usually put me in tricky spots if he calls or raises. The problem with checking is you make your hand look weak, which it is. In general, you want your hand to look the opposite of what it actually is. In this situation, though, I thought Q-Q easily could be the best hand, as long as I made it look like 5-5 or something like that, as he could easily try to bluff me off small pairs. He bet 2,500 and I called.

Some people may see an A-A-x board with a hand such as Q-Q and instantly go into check-fold mode. You basically should never be looking to get away from a spot like this for one or even multiple bets against an aggressive opponent because his range is very wide, especially when he just calls my reraise preflop. His range for calling my preflop bet is probably something like J-J through 2-2, A-K through A-2, K-Q through K-10, and numerous connectors and one-gappers, such as 8-6. Against this range, most of which I expect him to bet on the flop, I am in great shape, as I now lose to the hands with an ace. Also, he probably would re-reraise the worse A-x hands, as those usually play fairly poor postflop.

The turn brought the 5♥. I checked and he bet 5,000. At this point, I am still not too concerned with him having me beat, as I think his range for betting the turn is probably only slightly smaller than his range for betting the flop. Notice though, if instead of this loose-aggressive player, I was playing against a tight-passive player, I would instantly fold the turn with very little thought at all, as their range for betting twice in this situation is probably something like an ace or better. Though the hand was starting to look a bit grim, I called.

The river was the 7♦. I checked and my opponent bet 12,000. At this point, the pot had around 18,000 in it, so this certainly looked and felt like a value bet, which should make this a rather simple fold under most circumstances. The problem was he had shown a willingness to fire multiple times at me, plus, I thought he was smart enough to size his bluffs and value bets around the same size, meaning bet-sizing probably doesn't mean too much in this situation. After thinking for a while, I decided to call and he turned up A-K.

Though I lost this hand, it goes to show you how important it is to stay aggressive. If my opponent were a tighter or more passive player, he would have won a much smaller pot, as I would have folded my Q-Q in a heartbeat to his continued turn aggression. By keeping the pedal to the metal, he induced me to call down with any sort of made hand, which won him a pile of my chips.

Looking back at this hand makes me think about how I constantly do the same thing to my opponents. Usually, I will fire one or two bets on every hand, but when I bring out the third, much larger bet on the river, I usually have a monster. Because of this, I should have at least considered folding on the river. I still think my opponent would have bluffed the river if he happened to have air, so I don't really regret my call, though it may have been negative-EV in the long run. This is one of those spots in poker where it's tough to figure out your expectation as well as the correct play.

— Jonathan Little is the Season 6 WPT Player of the Year and is a representative for Blue Shark Optics. If you want to learn to play a loose-aggressive style, which will constantly propel you to the top of the leaderboards, check out his poker training website at [FloatTheTurn.com](http://FloatTheTurn.com).

LITTLE	FLOP	TURN	RIVER	OPPONENT

GET THE EDGE WITH

BLUE SHARK OPTICS

PRO POKER EYEWEAR

# LEARN THE ART OF THE REBLUFF

I was fortunate enough to play in the Aussie Millions main event this year. Things didn't go my way (because I'm a spewtard, duh), but before everything went south I found myself in an interesting spot.

The blinds were 100-200 with a 25 ante. I had a slightly aggressive image and everyone at the table had around 20K. The action folded to me in middle position with A♥-5♥. I opened to 475 and a very weak-straightforward player, who we will call Scot, called me on the button, as did the big blind.



The flop: A♠-10♠-7♠. The big blind checked and I made a continuation bet of 875. Scot called and the big blind folded. The turn completed a possible flush with the 3♠. I checked and to my surprise Scot checked. The river fell the A♠, bringing four spades and a paired board.

Holding A♥-5♥ out of position on a board reading A-10-7-3-A with four spades is not an ideal spot. What would you do, bet for value; bet as a bluff; check-call, check-fold or check-raise?

The answer definitely is not bet for value or as a bluff. So we are going to check hoping he checks behind. But then Scot bets half the pot. Now what?

We know he is such a dramatically straightforward player that his range can be determined from the action in the hand, so let's break down Scot's hand range before we make our decision.

What hand do we think he has?

**A.** A-K, A-Q, A-J: Wrong, remember a straightforward player usually three-bets these hands. Also, Scot checked the turn and didn't protect A-K, A-Q or A-J with a bet. Likely not.

**B.** 10-10, 3-3, A-10, 7-7, A-7: He COULD have a monster, but would YOU check a set or two pair on that turn? I would hope not.

**C.** Ace rag: This is an unlikely hand because if he had an ace with no spade he's likely checking behind on the river. He also is more likely to raise the flop-turn if he flopped-turned two pair. If he has an ace

with a baby spade he's probably checking behind the river as well.

**D.** K♠-Q♠, Q♠-J♠, 5♠-6♠, etc.: We assume Scot doesn't have a hand like this because he would have raised the flop on a semibluff or bet the turn for value protection.

**E.** Just a 10: Most likely, yes. Q-10, J-10, 10-9, etc. But they would have to be OFFSUIT hands for that to be possible because the 10♠ is on the board. It's tough for us to imagine Scot wanted to get involved with us preflop holding a hand like Q♠-10♦.

**THE KING CONCEPT:** It's important we know he doesn't have the K♠ because it's dramatically more likely he won't call our bluff on the river, because it widens our range vs. his hand. He shouldn't have the K♠ in his hand 90 percent of the time because it's unlikely he decided to just call preflop with a hand like A♦-K♠. It's also unlikely he would call the flop with a range of hands that has the K♠ in his hand. Scot is a standard player and doesn't peel for gutshots so we can rule out hands such as offsuit K-Q or Q-J, etc. He also is more likely to raise the flop or bet the turn with a hand like Q♠-J♠, K♠-J♠.

## Our final action

So we are going to check and hope it gets checked behind, but if Scot bets the river, we check-raise to turn our hand into a bluff and represent a huge hand. A lot of people would think that just calling would be the optimal play if we think Scot is bluffing, but I disagree.

We broke down Scot's range and we think he shouldn't have a full house of any sort, and he is value-betting the queen, jack or nine of spades (but that's unlikely because that means he would have had to call us preflop with Q-10 offsuit, etc.) or he is just bluffing his blank 10. But just in case he has the second nut flush or worse, we check-raise the river clearly repping a failed check-raise attempt on the turn with the K♠ or the full house.

Feel free to show the 5♥ to your table when you are mucking your successful rebluff.

— Jay Houston is an instructor with DeepStacks.com and is a sit-n-go specialist. You can email him at [editor@anteupmagazine.com](mailto:editor@anteupmagazine.com)

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JOE NAVARRO • Ex-FBI guy shares his nonverbal secrets.

# FATIGUE WILL BETRAY YOU

Most people aren't aware of their tells, especially those affected by alcohol, fatigue and stress, plus these factors hurt their ability to detect the nonverbals of others.

I am a commercially licensed pilot, not to mention an observer of human behavior, so I know how poorly people perform when they're tired, mentally fatigued or under the influence. Motor skills suffer, becoming far slower and less reliable. This comes from 80-plus years studying pilots in the military, NASA and the FAA.



JOE NAVARRO

A serious poker player should keep his body and mind healthy. I've talked with Phil Hellmuth countless times and have heard his lectures. He talks about how important mind and body are to winning, and not in a "New Age" sort of way, but rather, in a practical and scientific way.

Fatigue (as well as alcohol/drugs) affects our central nervous system. It makes your immune system weaker (and can affect a host of other vital systems and emotions); it hinders blood-sugar levels, throws hormones out of whack and, most important, it affects your brain. Some players will be affected more than others and in different ways. So, if you're going to play poker professionally, treat your body and mind as an enterprise. Exercise and eat well. Train yourself to endure long hours of play where you will make thousands of decisions and observations. Train your body to deal with distractions (noise, emotions, fears, health-related issues, etc.). It's not easy to concentrate when your child is about to have surgery, or your mortgage is due and the only money you have is on the table. When concentration is affected you become a weak observer.

Most players, once they settle down at a big event, begin to control their tells. That's great in the beginning, but we have limits. Your "poker face" is controlled by a "non-poker brain" that, when tired, says I don't care what you look like any more. The non-poker brain also will look at others less. It'll pick up fewer tells on others and could misinterpret observations. Don't let your non-poker brain leave you vulnerable.

Since fatigue affects your mental outlook, you may think you're fine physically, but you're not. Your face becomes easier to read and prone to leak information, especially around the eyes and mouth. Your shoulders and neck will reveal more information. I talk at length about this in *Read 'em and Reap*. These areas become more visible because the brain doesn't have the energy to maintain a poker face.

Holding a poker face when you have a monster hand requires energy, which isn't available because of fatigue or excessive drinking. Leakage occurs in what are called micro gestures. This occurs, according to Dr. Paul Ekman, because our brain can't contain our sentiments, especially when we are weak or tired.

Here's what you can do:

- Stay strong.
- Stay healthy.
- Eat normally so blood sugar is stable.
- Get up from the table often and walk around.

We are designed for walking, not sitting. Your calf

is called a "second heart" by physiologists. By walking around you release pooled blood from your lower legs and it helps to get rid of lactic acid build-up, which causes the shakes after stress. Rotate your neck and shoulders, move around a little and drink plenty of water. Lots of water, especially out west where you need to drink 40 percent more water each day.

- Put in eye drops if you need them.
- Wash your face and hands, freshen up.
- Look at something other than poker tables. This helps "reboot" your brain, which was designed to work best when confronted with variety. Even children grow tiresome of theme parks after a day or two. Take the time to clear your mind and thoughts; it will help your poker game.
- Review notes or read a favorite poker book when you're not in a hand to reinforce what you're doing.

Realizing your tells will be easier to read over time and your ability to read others will become weakened the more fatigue you have so try to avoid it as best you can.

— Ex-FBI counterintelligence officer Joe Navarro of Tampa specialized in behavioral analysis for 25 years. He has penned numerous nonverbal books, including his new Kindle book called *200 Poker Tells*, which you can find on Amazon.com. Email Joe at [editor@anteupmagazine.com](mailto:editor@anteupmagazine.com) and he'll answer your questions.

**If you are tired at the poker table your non-poker brain will begin to let you down.**



# A PERFECT BLUFF THAT LOSES

During a recent online session, I pulled the trigger on what I would call the perfect bluff.

I was in the early stages of an online tournament with blinds at 15-30 and most of the players at my table were hovering around the 3,000-chip starting stack. I had 2,950 to start the hand and my opponent was the small blind with 3,145. Normally I play a conservative, relatively tight, straightforward game in the early stages of a tournament. I will mix it up on occasion, but for the most part, nothing too fancy.



LEE CHILDS

In this hand, I was in middle position with the 7♥-9♥ and raised to 75. The small blind re-raised to 240 and I decided to play a pot in position. My opponent was representing a big hand, so if I happened to hit the board hard, or

sense an opportunity to take the pot away by utilizing my position then I would do so. Otherwise I planned to play a small pot.

I called and the flop was 10♠-7♣-A♥, giving me bottom pair with backdoor flush and straight draws. Not the flop I was looking for, but if my opponent had just an ace, K-K, Q-Q, J-J, 9-9 or worse, I might be able to take this pot away if he showed any weakness. If he showed any resistance I would just fold. I also started my wheels spinning on how I would play the hand if I did have the nuts and proceed from there.

My opponent checked the flop and I checked behind, as I would do whether I hit it or not. In this case, I definitely would check a super-strong hand to induce a bluff from my opponent on a later street. The turn was the A♣ and my opponent bet 250. I thought my opponent would make this bet with pretty much his entire range since I checked the flop.

Sure, he could have a monster, but I was looking for an opportunity to get to showdown if he checked the river, or represent a monster to try to take the pot away on the river if a good card came for me. So, I called.

The river was the Q♥. This is exactly what I wanted. Any 10 or queen made for good bluff cards based on the way I played the hand, and of course a seven or nine could've given me the best hand. With a seven or nine on the river I planned to call a standard bet or re-evaluate if the bet was larger.

My opponent bet 555 and I moved all-in for 2,650. My opponent has to have a full house to call. He could play this hand like this with any ace in his hand, but I think he needed to fold unless he had A-A,

10-10, A-Q, Q-Q or 7-7. He snap called and showed A♦Q♣ and I was sent to the rail super early.

The best part about it was I couldn't have been happier. I happened to run into one of the hands I was representing, but I know if he had any holding I didn't mention earlier, this player was good enough to fold and I would've taken down this pot.

When you make a bluff where your line makes sense and it takes the nuts or close to it to call you, then I think that's the perfect bluff. In this example, if my opponent had K-K, J-J, A-10, or even A-K, I think he would have to fold. If I had been called by anything weaker than a full house, I'd have to think seriously about my line and if I gave away anything with my betting (or if playing live, with my physical tells). I want my opponent to think, "Well, he must have this if he is betting or raising in this spot."

There's no reason in my opponent's mind for me to be bluffing this big this early in the tournament. Why would I risk so much this early? I almost never do because I don't have to. This is exactly why I might pull this out of my toolbox early in a tournament from time to time. It is unexpected and with my normally tight image it is going to work often.

Now, the key is to not get carried away with plays like this. If you try to do them constantly, your opponents will catch on and call you much lighter. After pulling off a big bluff, or getting caught trying to, be sure to tighten back up a bit. Also, someone at the table may have been holding one or both cards that would have been the nuts, so they know you pulled that move without the nuts, so beware.

To pull off a perfect bluff you must know your opponents are good enough to fold big hands, you must have a solid image and you must be able to tell a really believable story with your betting and raising. You want your opponent to say, "He simply must have this to be doing that."

If you can't put all of those together, then don't pull the trigger. If you feel it's the right time to go for it, then let the chips fly. Yes, you are going to run into the nuts from time to time, but if you think about how often you actually have the nuts on the river, then you will realize this

type of thinking and action should work in many spots. Just make sure all of your conditions are met before trying this.

Decide to Win!

— Lee Childs is founder and lead instructor of Acumen Poker. He also is an instructor with the WPT Boot Camp. Go to [www.acumepoker.net](http://www.acumepoker.net).

WHEN YOU MAKE A BLUFF WHERE YOUR LINE MAKES SENSE AND IT TAKES THE NUTS OR CLOSE TO IT TO CALL YOU, THEN I THINK THAT'S THE PERFECT BLUFF.

CHILDS                      FLOP                      TURN                      RIVER                      OPPONENT

# BREAKING ALL THE RULES, AND THEIR BANKROLLS

By Mike Wolf

There comes a time in a poker player's life when he must get creative. There are three main reasons to change gears in mid- to high-stakes cash games.

1. It keeps your play unexploitable.
2. It makes it more difficult for opponents to put you on a range on hands.
3. It helps to get you paid off more with nut-type hands.

Do you think Phil Ivey got to the nosebleed stakes by check-folding every flop he missed with A-K? Heavens to the naw, Brah! As you progress through the stakes you must learn how to turn your made hands into bluffs, learn to overbet in certain spots and make huge laydowns, but most important, you must learn to think outside the box. Keep in mind my fellow three-bettors, that this example deals with (out)playing the players at mid- to high-stakes cash games. Take note these types of plays are fairly useless at \$1-\$2 and \$2-\$5 no-limit because your opponents will not realize how unbalanced your range is in certain spots. Oh, and make sure it's "nut" heavy and not "air" heavy.

This example comes from a \$5-\$10 NLHE game at the Hard Rock in Hollywood, Fla.

## The situation

I'm playing my normal super-tight strategy in a full-ring game when the other super-tight player at the table opens in early position. He has played two pots all day, one with a set and one with pocket kings. He raised six times the big blind to 60, with about \$900 behind. I have him covered and, on the button, I peek down at the A♠ and his good old pal the A♦.

## The problem

He's tight, but I'm even tighter! Just three hours ago he folded Q-Q face-up to my three-bet. Granted, I had A-4 suited, but he doesn't need to know that. Man those fours look like aces! (Next time you bluff, try thinking in your brain that you actually have the hand you're representing; physical tells and bet-sizing tells will disappear just like your opponent's chips.) Long story short, he's a squeaky clean, straightforward, tight player who will never get out of line, especially from early position.

## The solution

To flat the button with A-A. I would never recommend flat-calling with aces when a player with a strong perceived range has opened six times the big blind from early position. But here's the thing: He's going to fold every hand except pocket aces which, considering I have two of them, card-removal thinking would dictate it's highly unlikely. The only way I keep those strong hands that I dominate in the pot is to flat-call. His range is tight and I have a solid read that he is an ABC player who overvalues top pair and overpair-type hands. Plus when ol' straightforward me (or so he thinks) just calls his raise it looks like I have 8-8 through J-J. He might push Q-Q way too hard if the board runs out harmless, which of course is good for me.

The flop comes 5-8-K rainbow. As the dealer puts out the flop, the villain sort of leaned eagerly to see the flop. In my experience this is usually a non-made (non-paired) A-K or K-Q. He wants to see if he

hits his hand.

He bets \$75. The ABC tag, how I love you so, for your range is so tiny and easy to play against. The weight of his range goes like this: K-K = 2 percent; A-A = 2 percent (card removal); A-K = 75 percent; K-Q suited = 21 percent; 8-8 and 5-5 = 0 percent as he would've limped with these hands.

## The problem, Part II

If I raise I slow him down and he might check-call down and not commit his stack. He may sense 8-8 and fold. Disastrous. So I flat and will re-evaluate the turn. Did I mention I have position?

Turn is a 5: Good card for him because he can take 5-5 out of my range.

He bets \$100. If I raise I look incredibly strong because he knows I know he's tight. I decide to flat again and keep A-K and K-Q suited in the pot with the betting lead.

River is a 2. Brick city. He bets \$175. It looks like a standard value bet on his part. I decide to shove for two reasons.

1. I am fairly certain I have the best hand and it's the best way to build the pot.

2. He invested a decent percent of his stack and might "have" to call.

He hems and haws, then sighs and exhales.

He picks up his cards, flicks them back and forth and says, "I hate this hand." I know now he has A-K. He says, "I'm going to lay down a huge hand here because you know that I'm strong and you still raised."

It hits me like a rack to the face that I must do something to induce a call. I smile and flip up one ace knowing he will never put me on pocket aces given that I called down the entire hand. He says, "I guess it's a chop," and immediately calls. He tables A-K suited and I flip up the other ace to scoop the pot. I hope Mike Caro is proud.

## Summary

I danced a fine line with giving free cards with a one-pair hand, but because I had reads and knew exactly my opponent's hand I could pick and choose the best line to maximize value. As the players are getting better and better nowadays sometimes you have to

break all of the rules to get their stacks. Here are a few pointers to keep in mind when getting creative:

- Against an unknown player, always reraise with A-A.
- Adjust to the board texture.
- Take your time and weigh each possible decision.
- Reads are everything.
- Free cards are not the horrible things they are made out to be so long as you know your opponent has a tight range.

Next time you're on the river in a heads-up pot, think about showing a card that's relevant to the flush draw or previous action in the hand. You may just be able to manipulate your opponents into making incorrect decisions. Catch you next month with my article on focus and preparation.

Until next time, see you on the road.

— Mike Wolf is a small-stakes pro living out of his car. You can email him at [MichaelJWolf33@gmail.com](mailto:MichaelJWolf33@gmail.com).





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# DON'T GET CAUGHT UP IN THE MOMENT

I can't emphasize enough how bad it is for players in tournament play to get caught up in the moment and suffer huge chip losses or, even worse, bust out of a tournament.

Why then do we see this so often? I believe the main reason is a lack of attention on the player's part. There are several more reasons this occurs and we will cover those also, but the fact that this player busted doesn't seem to be appreciated by him. They attribute the poor performance to the bad beat or suck-out, when in fact their lack of concentration sends them to the rail.

How then do we overcome this and prevent it from happening to us? There are several strategies and game plans we can use to keep us focused on the game.

First, understanding the type of tournament you're playing in is very important. Don't laugh; there are three types of tournaments. Fast ones have blinds that increase quickly with small starting chip stacks (e.g. 1,500 units, 25-50 blinds, 20-minute levels). Medium tournaments, which have one-hour levels and larger starting stacks and 25-50 blinds, have much more play for the entry fee. And lastly, slow tournaments have blinds that increase every two hours with large starting stacks.

Realizing that in fast tournaments there are two strategies you can use depending on the type of action the table is giving will help protect your stack. If each hand has a jammed-up pot preflop be extremely selective with your starting hand as you'll be playing against more players after the flop. Second, if the table is playing with less action preflop be more aggressive to limit the number of players in the hand. You'll be winning more blinds with this style of play. Again it all comes down to paying attention to detail and having a strategy for what the table action is offering you. Don't feel you need to acquire a big stack early in tournament play. You have to win all of the chips to win the tournament, and you can't do that in the early rounds.

In medium-action tournaments you also want to pace yourself based on the type of action the table is giving you. Be aware it will require a more disciplined style or strategy to overcome the rigors of the many more hours of play you will face. Again knowing the structure of the tournament and planning a strategy for the table action will keep your stack safe and allow you to acquire many more chips with your good hands.

In slow-action tournaments (World Series of Poker Main Event) and larger buy-in tournaments (\$5K-plus) there never is a need to play fast. I often see players trying to acquire large stacks on the first day as if that will win the tournament for them; it won't. Slow is the way to go in SLOW TOURNAMENTS.

Now that you're aware of the type and style of play you're going to



ANTONIO PINZARI



**Starting stacks and blind levels should dictate your play.**

use you're focused and into the game. The next step is using position to your advantage.

Your starting hands become important in the early stages of a tournament when the blinds are small (25-50). When there are four or five players in the hand preflop avoid lesser-type hands such as small pairs and suited connectors. If there's only one limper and the blinds in the hand when it gets to you, you're able to gamble a little more with the lesser-type hands as long as you can see the flop cheaply.

If you enter the pot and get raised you fold to the raise when any of the other players call or if you're the only caller since you're out of position for the remainder of the hand.

The problem with calling is you may hit a portion of the flop (which happens a third of the time) with your lesser cards and trap yourself for much more of your stack.

Many players lose the majority of their stack in the first two levels of tournament play gambling more than they should with lesser hands. They are forced to gamble more with the same type of hands that got them into the predicament in the first place.

Most players don't have the discipline to lay down a hand when they catch a piece of the flop. They may have played a lesser hand without having good position, and continue with the hand trying to draw out on their opponent. This lack of discipline accounts for major chip loss.

You now have a simple yet effective strategy for the type of tournament you're playing in and this should protect you, and your stack.

— Antonio Pinzari is the host of *Poker Wars Live*, which airs Mondays from 7-9 PM (ET) on WBZT-AM 1230 Radio from West Palm Beach, FL and streams live at [www.pokerwars.info](http://www.pokerwars.info).

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## BEING AT YOUR SEAT MEANS JUST THAT

I was playing in a \$65 NLHE tournament in Atlantic City when a man in Seat 9 went all-in with three players left to act. Player 1 folded, and as Player 2 folded, it was announced the 10-minute break would start at the end of the hand. Upon hearing this the guy in Seat 9 stood and moved to the back of his chair and put on his jacket.

The player in Seat 8, last to act, asked the dealer if his hand was folded. The dealer called the floor. The situation was explained and the floor said if this were a cash game his hand would be dead, but she was not going to eliminate a player from the tournament for standing to put his jacket on before the break. The guy pressed her, asking if that was the official rule. Is it? — **Tony from New Jersey, via email**

**JODY:** That floor person was 100 percent correct. Obviously there's a house rule they follow in cash games that doesn't apply in tournaments. Great call. Tournament Director 101 teaches us to never allow an all-in hand be killed. It must remain live and must be given an opportunity to win. If we don't follow this procedure, maybe you get all-in with your brother, father, neighbor, etc. and stand up so they'll kill your hand and give your colluding partner all of your chips.

TDA Rule No. 22 states: "A player must be at his or her seat by the time all players have been dealt complete initial hands in order to have a live hand."

Notice it does not say IN your seat; it says AT your seat. Is standing behind your chair at your seat? Sure. Do we want to take cheap shots at players and kill a hand simply because the player stood up? Absolutely not. Some places do have a "meat in the seat" rule, but that one should be ignored in this situation. Players like to prepare when the break rolls around. That's understandable.

They also need to stand and stretch sometimes. If they're doing so next to their chair they should be dealt in and have a live hand. Remember, we do what's in the best interest of fairness. The "at your seat" rule is to prevent people from running across the tournament floor screaming, "TIME!" trying to get to their cards, which causes accidents. The rule isn't in place to unfairly knock a player out of a tournament.

**Correct doesn't always mean right**

Blinds are 50-100 in a no-limit tournament. Seat 10 bets 250 and Seat 1 asks, "How much?" The dealer looks back at the bet and stares for a couple of seconds. Seat 1 does his own count and puts out 250. The dealer then says to Seat 10, "Wait a minute, you're the big blind," and pushes back 150. Seat 1 pulls back 150 and says, "Call." The dealer then says, "No sir, you raised, your 250 stays out." The player says, "I didn't say raise; I only called and only want to call." Dealer says, "It doesn't matter; your bet was a raise." What's the official ruling on this?

— **digerati, via anteupmagazine.com/forum**

**JODY:** I would say the following while making this ruling:

"It's every players' responsibility to protect his or her own hand, chips, and right to act. The technical interpretation of the rules would dictate the money stay in the pot, however, Rule No. 1 of the TDA says I can ignore that technical interpretation and do what is in the best interest of fairness. We have no significant action behind the bet. We are going to correct the blinds and allow you to call."

The problem here is poker is a game with a lot of human interaction. Any time humans are involved, so is human error. In the poker industry we like to think we train and hire top-notch professional dealers. Even so, they do make mistakes sometimes.

The dealer here technically was correct, but since there's no action behind and the player didn't say raise, I would have allowed the player to simply call. The only way that can happen is if the floor is called over to make a ruling. Dealers are taught to call the floor any time something out of the ordinary happens. Apparently this dealer didn't follow his training or was improperly trained.

So, the mistakes made here were:

1. Dealer didn't make the blinds right before pitching the cards, a bad habit that's common among less professional dealers.
2. Seat 1 didn't make sure the action to him was correct. He should have noticed the position of the button and the blinds, realized the 10 seat should be the big blind, and asked the dealer to correct it before he acted.
3. The dealer didn't call for a decision. He decided to make a floor decision from the box.
4. This is the big one... NONE of the players at the table asked for a decision.

TDA Rule No. 41 states: "Players are obligated to protect the other players in the tournament at all times."

Each player has a vested interest where every chip goes in the tournament. Those extra chips in the pot could create a much bigger pot than it would have been, change the winner of the chips, and change the entire outcome of the tournament.

Speak up when you see irregularities at your table.

It doesn't matter in tournaments if you have folded or weren't even dealt in. If you are actively in the tournament, it is your business what it happening at every table. There are a lot of players who think they are being a bad person by asking for decisions. That simply isn't true. There are a lot of dealers who think it reflects badly on them for calling for decisions. That isn't true, either.

Tournament directors get to a point during an event that everything slows down and they start looking forward to having something to do. Help them fight the boredom and earn their pay. Insist on a decision any time things aren't normal.

— **Jody Russell is a veteran poker room manager who also runs the Ante Up Poker Room. Email questions to editor@anteupmagazine.com.**



## CRACKING UNDER PRESSURE?

Stephen Bloomfield, a.k.a. the Doc, is one of Florida's leading psychologists. He wrote **Head Games** in the late '80s to help competitors of every type use the skills he had learned about the effects of the mind on performance.



After five years of playing poker in Florida, Mississippi, Las Vegas, Connecticut and occasionally online, Doc is sharing his skills with Ante Up readers through periodic columns, titled Head Games. Doc offers support to some of the region's best professionals and amateur players with one-on-one advising sessions and group workshops.

EMAIL YOUR QUESTIONS TO EDITOR@ANTEUPMAGAZINE.COM

# POKER, MUSIC AND EAR BUDS, PART ONE

At my recent home poker game, one of our friends recounted a hand he had seen at a local cardroom. The details escape me, but the point of his story was a player wearing ear buds had missed a verbal declaration from the other side of the table. Confusion ensued and the music lover ended up spewing some chips because he hadn't heard the action.



FRANK TOSCANO M.D.

"Aha!" someone said. "That's why you should never play wearing ear buds." A few others mumbled in agreement as if it were accepted knowledge that ear buds interfere with good poker skills. Being somewhat of a contrary sort, I wasn't so convinced.

Of course music blaring into your ears could cause you not to hear something being said at the table, costing you some chips. But do the benefits of hearing your favorite tunes at the table outweigh the negatives of making this occasional gaffe? After doing a little research, I found a few curious studies that point tantalizingly toward yes.

Now I'm not a psychologist or a neuroscientist, but occasionally I play one in this column. Those of you who have more knowledge on this subject than I do (and there are a lot of you), don't beat up on me too badly if my conclusions stretch the research a little. I admit I'm much more comfortable fixing broken bones or injecting Botox. Nevertheless, I'll give you a general summary of some pretty interesting findings and suggest you might be able to use music to improve your game.

The first study gathered a group for a written test requiring abstract or lateral thinking, sort of like trying to determine if that guy on your left is three-betting light or has a real hand. Those who watched a funny movie just before taking the test did better than those who just sat quietly and thought about the test. The conclusion: Relaxing the brain with a pleasurable activity might "free up" brainpower used to solve complex problems.

*Science Magazine* reported students who spent 10 minutes before an exam writing about their thoughts and feelings got better scores than those who didn't. Can it be that activating the "feeling" side of the brain simultaneously calms the analytical side and allows it to be more open to those "Aha!" moments?

The University of Michigan had groups of students stroll for 10 minutes through busy city streets or a serene wooded forest before being taught a complex lesson. Guess which group did better on the les-

son. The researchers concluded the intense concentration needed to navigate traffic interfered with the students' ability to learn new information while the pleasurable biochemicals released during the walk in the woods may "clean out" or "refresh" the brain and make it ready to absorb new things.

This study reminded me of how great thinkers sometimes achieve a sparkling moment of inspiration while communing with nature. I remember how occasionally my college philosophy professor would take our class outside to have a discussion while surrounded by flowers and trees. Maybe he understood a relaxed brain functions better.

What does all this have to do with ear buds and poker? Here's my favorite study out of McGill University. It identified people who truly enjoyed particular pieces of music. It didn't really matter what type of music the subjects liked. The study included lovers of classical music, punk, jazz, tango and even bagpipes.

The researchers then examined PET scans of the brain while these subjects listened to their favorite music passages. They found the brain's pleasure centers flooded with dopamine, the very same chemical that helps us feel the calming pleasure of eating good food or having satisfying sex. Cool! They identified a biochemical reason why I want to play air guitar every time I hear *Layla*.

So let's put this all together. Music releases chemicals that cause pleasure and relaxation. When you are calm and allow your feelings and intuitions to surface, you're able to grasp the big picture, to assemble the many pieces of information you need to solve a complex problem. Your opponent's betting pattern, the position of his hands, his posture, the texture of the board and the stack sizes form a picture that's easier to see if your brain is relaxed and open.

I admit these studies generate more questions than they answer. Let's have students absorb information or take tests while they listen to music. What type of music is best for problem-solving? Is the emotional richness of Beethoven better than the mathematical precision of Bach. Is Enya's angst superior to Devo's techno-pop? Does the emotion have to be happy or would forlorn country ballads work just as well? Should I stop harassing my teenager for doing her homework listening to Lady Gaga?

I have no answers to these questions but I do have a second chapter. It turns out there are some real downsides to playing ear-bud poker. Next month I'll tell you what they are.

— An avid poker player, Frank Toscano, M.D. is a board-certified emergency physician with more than 28 years of front-line experience. He's medical director for Red Bamboo Medi Spa in Clearwater, Fla. Email your poker-health questions to [ftoscano@redbamboomedispa.com](mailto:ftoscano@redbamboomedispa.com)

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## HEAD GAMES

DR. STEPHEN BLOOMFIELD • Poker psychology

## LET THEIR EXPERIENCES BE YOUR GUIDE

*Deal Me In*, by Stephen John and Marvin Karlins, was a holiday gift from my son. The book, published by Phil Hellmuth, is full of interesting anecdotes and I read it in one sitting. It offers short bios of some of the most notable and successful poker players. It was an enjoyable read. Then I thought there must be something to learn here, something to help with peak performance and head games.



DR. BLOOMFIELD

This is not a traditional book review, but more a comment on what can be gained in poker psychology from reading poker biographies.

I read it a second time with that perspective, that is, what could I learn about the psychology of successful professional poker player and what might that information add for the rest of us achieving our own peak performance?

While writing this column I was reminded of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*: "To thine own self be true,"

is Polonius' last piece of advice to his son, Laertes, who is in a hurry to get out of town. Polonius has in mind something much more than the self-knowledge that the phrase now suggests. As Polonius saw it, borrowing and loaning money, carousing with women of dubious character and other intemperate pursuits are "false" to the self.

Understanding yourself in the poker world is essential. Once you have an understanding of who you are, you can apply it to poker. You can work to peak performance and develop an understanding of your comfort zone and how to expand it. You also need to understand your relationship to money, which will be covered in a later column. But for now, know who "they" are and how that can teach you about yourself.

This is not a psychological analysis of any of these great players. Instead, just like at the poker table, it's an attempt to get a read based on limited information. But aren't they all? Let's try to uncover some patterns that might prove useful to the aspiring pro, or the person who plays at the same levels as these folks, even if it is an entry into the World Series of Poker, or to any of us trying to figure out where we are in the poker world. Once we get a handle of where we are, we understand our comfort zones and just how far to push them.

Besides, what is the point of reading a poker book if I can't learn from it? I looked for patterns: what similarities exist among these notable pros and how that is relevant to the rest of the poker world.

I noticed very few spent a great deal of time working in the 9-to-5 world. They didn't get jobs and progress through the world of work; they didn't start businesses and sell them and then become professional poker players. They didn't get used to the grind for income to which most of us are accustomed. They won and lost and risked astronomical amounts of money and were all great risk-takers, not only at the table but in life. They went all-in: good, bad and ugly. They fit in the purest sense the entrepreneurial spirit. This was the same spirit that was glorified for a number of years in America (until the economy went bust) and the one that defines extreme risk-takers.

They think of money differently than most; they didn't save for retirement, buy houses or have a cushion. Having a cushion, safety net or poker account was anathema to how they achieved their success. They raised stakes, played, lost and raised another stake until they won. They had a passion for poker and each spent their lives devoted

to becoming the best. It should be remembered that for each of these elite pros there are thousands who have gone bust and have not made it. Making this kind of decision has its pitfalls and tremendous downsides. But for the few who make it to the top it is a special life. It's not that much different than other high-risk, high-reward ventures. Money means more than the paper it's printed on, or the chips it represents. Money is linked to emotions, feelings, desires, status and thoughts.

For some poker players there's left-pocket and right-pocket money, for others it is always all at risk. How many people feel comfortable putting \$50K, \$100K and \$250K on the table knowing it is their total net worth? I began to wonder how much one's game changes when playing with "poker money" vs. "real money" and what happens when all money is poker money. There is a poker truism: "Never play with scared money." For some folks all money is scared money and for some, like most of these players, no money is scared money.

These pros are incredible risk-takers. They took risks with their lives, but didn't necessarily see it as risk. The road to being a poker pro is one of risk-taking and being able to live with the consequences and the variance. Several psychological questions arise. What is the nature of risk and how does risk-taking in life translate to risk-taking at the table?

So what is risk? Is there a measure we can use or is it a perception? If one doesn't perceive it as risk, is it risk? A good friend of mine who left the corporate life to enter the life of real estate development told me he loved controlled risk. He loved the roller-coaster life, but knew the car was always on a track. Reading this book suggests many poker pros don't care about the track. Risk also has been translated to mean aggression.

All of the pros seemed to have a natural and intuitive understanding of gaming, which was later refined. In a way they self-selected poker professionalism. They had to develop skills but they had a knack for this way of working and this aspect seems to be an important factor. Even when they lost they realized they were good at what they were doing. This understanding of the game later became analysis of probabilities, reads and game theory, but it seems that first came the intuitive understanding of the nature of poker.

Like any successful person who experiences struggles, they all said, "Don't do what I did ... it is not as glamorous as you might think." Many of them like to gamble in other ways as well. Some fell prey to the temptations of gambling and drugs. Most have a streak of narcissism. Those who have this tendency often succeed, but at the expense of other domains that people value, such as family. Narcissism isn't always bad; imagine an actor without it, a politician, a poker pro. But like every psychological trait, some people have features, others traits and other disorders. There is a continuum. Read the book and judge for yourself where each player lies.

I also found interesting that the world of Internet poker can be the realm for the introverted. Not sitting face-to-face allows one to develop their "avatar" or persona; those who are socially anxious, shy and insecure can play on a computer screen, no social skills needed.

This kind of book can be more than entertainment; it can be a learning experience that can help you keep your head in the game and reach your peak performance.

— Dr. Stephen Bloomfield is a licensed psychologist and avid poker player. His column will give insight on how to achieve peak performance using poker psychology. Email questions for him at [editor@anteupmagazine.com](mailto:editor@anteupmagazine.com).



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## WOMEN IN POKER

LAUREN FAILLA • Founder of High Heels Poker Tour

### A passion for poker fashion

If poker is supposed to be about skill, survival, long days and grueling pressure, does that mean you have to sacrifice fashion for comfort? Clearly this isn't one of the pressing matters in the poker world, but for women who play it can be.



LAUREN FAILLA

Here is the question: What do I wear today? Do I look cute or comfortable? I'm sure long before my time the few women who did play regularly had a full face of makeup and looked like they were off for a day at the office. Today's fashionable trend seems to be matching active wear or jeans, Pumas, hair nicely done, sunglasses and accessories.

And with so many choices, fashion should not be an issue. I will, however, stay away from sunglasses and hats as a personal choice. Women want to be treated with respect at the table, but that

doesn't mean we need to be perfectly dressed or dress like "one of the guys" to earn that respect. To worry about couture before you get to the table is respectable, but with long hours of play, six-inch heels are going to turn into bare feet by the end of the day.

I can tell you from experience, your poker wardrobe should contain a few important components: comfortable shoes (for quick bathroom breaks), a jacket (a necessity because every poker room is freezing) and comfortable pants (skinny jeans are not good).

What women wear is a reflection of who they are, even if it doesn't define them but does make an impression. So ladies, the next time you're ready for a day of play, look at yourself in the mirror and say cute AND comfortable! Always be yourself and dress for how you feel, but realize the environmental factors you are going into and have fun with it.

## FREE LEAGUE, FREE ADVICE

BRYAN OULTON • Learning poker etiquette

### Use relaxed setting to glean information

By Bryan Oulton

Why do you play poker for free in a bar? I'm sure you're like most who enjoy the camaraderie and the social setting while looking to improve your game. And there's no better place to get better at gleaning information from your opponents, because in a bar the mode is way more relaxed than in a casino setting. People often let down their guard so it's a perfect opportunity to acquire honest information from their tells.

In the past I've covered the topic of data mining, which is taking raw information gathered at the tables and putting it to use in the future. Process this info, and use it against your opponents. If you want to get better at reading people, buy the books and read the articles of fellow *Ante Up* columnist and retired FBI profiler Joe Navarro. They are priceless and absolutely invaluable to your growth as a poker player. They also are quite useful in your personal and business life.

Navarro often says data without comparable and baseline information is just data without meaning. Apply his practices to your game at your local bar league and you'll see massive improvement in your ability to read others and have more success.

— Bryan co-owns All In Free Poker, a league based in Pompano Beach, Fla.

# BEING BANNED IS POSSIBLE IF YOU MISBEHAVE

We've all had the experience of the annoying player at the table that's basically ruining the game for everyone with his behavior. Recently, I had a player lean over to me and say, "If that guy were playing at my house, I'd bounce him out on his car and keep his money."



MARC DUNBAR

Dealers and floor supervisors do their best to keep sanity at the tables, but some rooms allow patrons to go a little too far. Here's a little advice for players and poker rooms alike: Entry into a poker room is NOT a right; it is a privilege that can be revoked for little or no reason. I will dispel a common misconception at the table that the disruptive poker player must be tolerated.

To quote the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall in the case of *Loretto v. Teleprompter Manhattan CATV Corp.* (1982), "The power to exclude has traditionally been considered one of the most treasured strands in an owner's bundle of property rights."

For casinos, racetracks and other regulated gambling venues, the power to exclude a patron is further enhanced. In Florida, for example, in the case *Tropical Park v. Jock* from 1979, the Third District Court of Appeals citing case law from across the country stated that "a commercial establishment, particularly one of such a sensitive nature as a parimutuel operator, continues to possess the common law right to absolutely exclude a patron in this State." The holding of this case has been affirmed by courts across Florida as well as courts outside the state as a guiding right of gambling proprietors.

Before you start running around and attempting to create closed poker clubs, understand these rights are not absolute. Discrimination against gender, race, religion or disability is still a big no-no. In addition, this right can be abrogated by state law thereby allowing a legislature to set the boundaries for how a patron can be excluded and for what reasons. However, as it stands, the vast majority of poker rooms in the country operate under state laws that affirm the right to exclude patrons for any reason.

Should you be an unfortunate soul to find yourself bounced out of a poker room, you need to be mindful of the circumstance. Of-

ten you get a free initial pass as the facility hopes your behavior will improve in the future. After you've had time to cool off and in many instances sober up, you should contact the facility the next day and inquire as to your status. Each facility keeps an exclusion list, which is the black book that you don't want your name in. If your behavior was an isolated aberration, you likely didn't wind up on the dreaded list. If you've found your name added to the list, however, you need to inquire as to whether it's temporary or permanent.

Most state regulators require the facilities to inform them of patrons who are excluded from their properties. Regulators then decide whether to open an investigation into the exclusion and possibly add that patron to the statewide exclusion list that the regulator keeps. It's important to realize your behavior at one poker room can lead to you being permanently excluded from all rooms in the state. Many of you, I'm sure, are reading this and saying this can't happen to you, but trust me, it can and has.

Instances of criminal behavior of any kind including involvement or even solicitation for a home game can inadvertently land you on the permanently excluded list. It's common to hear of a dealer who was caught dealing or playing in a home game that lost his job dealing and was permanently banned from the poker room that employed him, which turned into an investigation by state regulators and a permanent ban from all poker rooms in the state.

The same can be said for patrons recruiting for home games at a poker room or have been overheard at a table making book on sports games. Rarely does surly behavior rise to the level of a state investigation, but if it escalates to a physical altercation and criminal charges are filed, be warned.

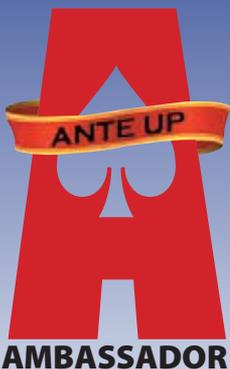
I hope this will help you understand playing poker at a regulated venue is not a right, it's a privilege extended by the owner of the room. Respect the privilege and those you're playing with or you may find yourself missing out on the action. Govern yourselves accordingly and let's keep up the decorum levels at the tables.

— Marc W. Dunbar is a shareholder with Tallahassee law firm Pennington, Moore, Wilkinson, Bell & Dunbar, P.A. He represents several gaming clients before the Florida Legislature and teaches gambling and parimutuel law at the Florida State University College of Law.

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# WHAT IS A PLAYER TO DO?

Answers to common poker income questions so you don't screw up with the IRS.

I'm often asked about what poker players need to know to stay out of trouble with the IRS. This is a loaded question; there are several basic things all poker players should know and things they should be doing they don't realize. Here are a few things you should be doing if you want to play poker and stay out of the way of tax trouble.

**KEEP UP WITH WHAT YOU'RE DOING:** It's so important to keep up with wins and losses. First, if you plan to be any good, you want to do this anyway to gauge how your game is going. The biggest reason to do this is you need to list your wins and losses on your tax return. This doesn't matter as much if you're filing as a pro player. If you're filing poker as a hobby, you have to separate them.

Expenses are another biggie. If you absolutely are not going to file as a pro, you don't need to worry about this. As a pro, you need to keep really good records so you can offset your profits. Such expenses for online players include Internet, your desk, chair, monitors, laptop, air card, etc. Live players would include hotels, taxis, entertainment and business meals (per diem if you're working out of town), cell phone, airfare and mileage to/from the airport for gambling trips or to casinos. Other things to consider would be subscriptions to online sites for training, magazines and books that are poker related, videos and software that you need for poker (such as training). As a pro player, you are able to deduct 100 percent of your health insurance if you have a profit. This can be HUGE! You also can deduct 100 percent of what you pay a tax professional for advice and tax preparation.

**KNOW IF YOU OWE:** So many people never know if they are supposed to pay money to the IRS with estimated taxes, or "quarterlies." This is a bit tricky so I will try to break it down.

Let's say you lived at home with your parents in 2009, graduated college, dabbled in poker, and, at tax time, you figured you don't have to file a tax return. In 2010, after your parents give you the "What are

you going to do with your life?" speech, you decide to go to a tournament to see how you play live. Next thing you know, you just cashed for \$1,250,000 in January 2010, and, luckily, you didn't have any backers when you won! Now, do you owe the government any of this? When do you pay it? How much do you owe? What if you lose it all by the end of the year?

Here is the rule: Always look at your prior year's tax return to see what you need to do. What you need to pay to avoid penalties is based on what your tax was in the prior year. In this case, since you didn't file a tax return for 2009, you really don't have to pay anything to the IRS until April 15, 2011, which is when your 2010 tax return is due. Now, you may owe a ton of money, but you can keep it all year and not give it to the IRS until April 15, 2011. But, if you are the kind of person who would blow it all, you might want to send it in. The rule is you do not have to at that time.

Now, in this case, you come to me and we do your taxes by April 15, 2011, based on your wins, losses and expenses for 2010. Let's say you end up owing \$375,000 to the IRS. Well, we need to start planning for your 2011 taxes, and, like before, you look at the tax on the prior year's return. With income this high, the rule is you have to pay in 110 percent of your prior year's tax OR 90 percent of the current year's tax. What does this mean? If you make as much or more in 2011, you need to make quarterly estimate payments of \$93,750 each. Now, what if 2011 is a horrible year and at the time we do your taxes on April 15, you are in the hole? In this case, you don't have to pay anything. This would be a point where we would need to look at your situation quarterly and try to do Part 2 of that rule, which is to pay in 90 percent of what we think your current year's tax is.

Sounds confusing and it is, unfortunately. This is why, no matter who you choose, you have to have a CPA that knows what they're doing and especially that understands the world of poker.

**BACKING YOUR BUDDY:** So, you think Johnny is a good player and you want to stake him in a tournament. Lucky for you, Johnny wins a huge tournament for \$480,000. You get 50 percent of this win →



Continued from previous page

once Johnny gets his cash. So, the guys come out and ask Johnny for his Social Security number and address. Johnny starts to worry because he knows he's going to fork over \$240K to you. He tells the casino he only wants them to give him a Form W-2G for his half. They look and chuckle with a "sorry dude," and they write the W-2G out to Johnny for the full amount. Now what?

This is crucial! Johnny has to give you a Form 1099-MISC at the end of the year for any money he pays you, and this amount should go in Box 3 as Other Income. So, for him to give you this form, he needs your information, such as your full name, address and Social Security number. This is best done on a Form W-9, which you can find at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov). Even if your backer is not a U.S. citizen, get this form filled out, as your CPA has to do another form called 1042-S, which I'm not even going to try to explain here.

You really need to be goofy and carry this Form W-9 around if you have backers. Giving you this form is the only way Johnny can get out of paying taxes on the full amount. Remember, it's Johnny's responsibility to do this form. Even if Johnny doesn't give you the form, you still need to claim the money as income on your return. It only hurts Johnny if he's audited later and didn't get you to fill out the W-9 for him.

**FOREIGN BANK ACCOUNT AND REPORTING:** I have tried for years to get the word out on this. This is the form you have to do if you have an online poker account, which is considered to be a foreign bank account. You are supposed to find out the highest balance on each poker site at any time during the year and then report it on the form. You are not taxed on this, it's just the government being nosy. This form has to be sent in each year by June 15 for the previous year's balances. You don't have to do this form if your

totals from all the sites don't exceed \$10,000.

What if you don't want to file this? Well, it's a requirement and if they find out you didn't do it and you should have, the penalties are bad. Non-willful violations are subject to fines of \$10,000 per account and if they feel it's a willful violation, the fee is a minimum of \$100,000 per account. So, how lucky are you feeling by not filing this one?

**NOW WHAT?** Well, these are some of the biggies on what a player should be doing or considering when talking taxes. Again, make sure whoever helps you knows their stuff or you will be the one that is on the hook.

— **Ann-Margaret Johnston is a practicing CPA in North Georgia. She is the author of *How to Turn Your Poker Playing Into A Business*. You can find answers to commonly asked poker tax questions on her website at [pokerdeductions.com](http://pokerdeductions.com).**



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CLUB 52



# How to pick a poker site

By John Lanier

With only 20 sites accepting U.S. players, how do you choose the best? There are so many options to consider so you must find a room that fits your needs. The most important concept is whether the room feels like a place where you want to put your money.

Here's a list of what you should look for in an online poker room.

**1. The site should have a lot of players.** Many of the smaller sites will have just a few thousand players, with maybe 1,000-2,000 playing at any given time. If you're a tournament player you might find your options limited here. Also, smaller sites tend to spread lower-limit cash games, which has the best rake for them. The mega sites will have a large number of cash games and tournaments of every type starting virtually every minute. Without a high volume of traffic, you might have issues trying to get into the game of your choice.

**2. You must feel safe about giving the site your money.** If you're going to play anything other than freerolls or with play money, at some point you will need to make an online deposit. The best sites offer multiple ways of getting money to them. Credit card, direct-bank deductions, wire transfers, third-party credit services are options you should expect to find.

**3. They should have great customer support.** You don't want to have any problems with an online site. If you do you certainly want it resolved quickly and without hassle. The best sites have 24/7 online customer support you can access via the chat box or drop-down menu. Smaller sites will offer customer support only through e-mail.

**4. Hand histories:** You want an audit trail. The largest sites will allow you to download hand histories of the events you've played. These are important to learn from and to keep players honest. The rare times when people on sites have been caught doing something improper a hand history usually was the smoking gun. Beware of any site not will-

ing to provide this information.

**5. Sign-up and other bonuses.** Many smaller sites will offer generous-looking sign-up bonuses. These are legit, but you might find you have to put in a lot of playing time to see those bonuses materialize. Mega sites offer player points with nice merchandise offerings. Some sites run bonuses for training sites; generate enough points and get a free week of an onsite poker video site. Mega sites also will allow you to sell your points for cash or tournament-entry fees. Sorry guys you can't trade points with another player. If it comes down to a couple of different rooms and you like them all the same then you might want to look at the best bonus. After all, they're giving you free money to play there. But it's still not as important as some of the other features of an online poker room.

**6. Give me my money:** When you want to cash out after that deep run in a big tournament you want your money sent to you safely and quickly. Interestingly, some mega sites fall short here, sitting on a withdrawal request for some time before a check arrives, but I've always been paid. There shouldn't be any withdrawal fees or need for identification verification.

**7. Class:** You shouldn't judge a book by its cover, but you should judge a poker site by its layout. If it looks like it was just thrown together then you can expect the same level of service and professionalism from the rest of the site. The site should be functional but not bulky; you should be able to find what you want quickly and not feel like you are doing them a favor by viewing their product advertisements.

At the end of the day it comes down to your preference. Most poker sites offer a free-to-play version of their software. I would suggest trying that out first and then go from there.

— John Lanier is Ante Up's Nothin' But 'Net online columnist and plays as "WildHare" on most poker sites.

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POKERSTARS

PokerStars is the biggest online poker site in the world with the best game security around. More than 57 billion hands have been dealt, more than 350 million tournaments have been played, and there are over 44 million registered players.

PokerStars strives to offer the biggest choice of games, first-class customer service and the most rewarding player promotions in online poker. The PokerStars software is also second to none, providing a smooth game and easy-to-use interface whether you're playing one table or 50!

The ethos of PokerStars is about fun and competition. PokerStars believes everyone can enjoy playing poker, improve their game, and win money through hard work, skill and determination. The PokerStars Team Pros are evidence of that extraordinary players that have risen to the very top through experiencing millions of hands of poker.

PokerStars also prides itself on being the most sociable poker site. With huge live poker tours in every continent of the world, and the launch of Home Games — a new software release which enables friends and family to play together in their own private poker clubs — PokerStars is breaking new ground in its attempts to make poker a truly universal game.



ANTE UP INTERCONTINENTAL POKER SERIES



AIPS, the *Ante Up PokerCast's* annual online poker series, begins its sixth season this month. The series, held on PokerStars.Com, features two events each month through December. Players earn points toward our Player of the Year title based on their finish.

Winners of each event get a coveted plastic banana trophy in addition to the normal PokerStars prize pool. New this year, winners also get a free pair of Blue Shark Poker Optics, worth more than \$100!

Players have multiple ways of earning a seat in the year-end Tournament of Champions, an exclusive freeroll with a cash prize pool put up by PokerStars.

The 16th of each month features a non-hold'em game (stud, Omaha, draw or mixed), while the 26th of every month is a hold'em game. All events have \$5.50 buy-ins. Also, on the 6th of every month is a \$1.10 satellite for that month's non-hold'em event. Join the fun today!

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A look at online poker

# 'HOME GAMES' REVOLUTIONIZES POKER

Have you ever played online poker at the same table with a friend or two only to have someone no one knows sit in as well? And at that moment you all have the same thought: "I wish we could have a table to ourselves so no one from the outside could crash our party."

Well, now you can. The folks at PokerStars have come up with Home Games, a new way to play online poker with your friends and family, no matter where they are, without intruders. Who better to give you the details of this revolutionary concept than Vanessa Rousso, a PokerStars Team Pro who plays online more than most? She recently took time out of her Arctic vacation/adventure to call in to the *Ante Up PokerCast* to give us the lowdown on just how cool Home Games can be.

**Give us a quick overview of how it all works.** Basically it gives you the pilot command center for controlling the sorts of games you play on PokerStars, whether it's tournaments or cash games, and not only just the format of the games but who you play against. It allows you to organize leagues with your friends, or other people, or regular home games, where you can set up stats within that group where you can set up tournaments with certain

buy-ins, etc. ... everything's completely customizable. ... I was blown away with the capabilities. ... It's an awesome feature and it's going to take online gaming a significant step forward.



Vanessa Rousso touts the new Home Games feature.

**How do you sign up for it?** There's a new (Home Games) tab on the client. You click it. .... There's like a tutorial, FAQ-type information on PokerStars' website ([pokerstars.com/homegames](http://pokerstars.com/homegames)). It's user-friendly.

**How will people use this differently from just private tournaments that they could set up in the past?** The cool thing is if you used to like doing private tournaments, this gives you the flexibility to have your own league. It's like fantasy football, except you won't be betting on pro football teams, you'll be betting on something you have a lot more control over, which is yourself. You can have certain parts of the prize pools withheld from tournaments over the course of the league and given to the best stats performer.

**Are you creating a Home Game with your husband, Stars pro Chad Brown, so you can beat up on him at the table in private?** (laughs) I would say the odds of that are probably pretty good. (laughs)

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# FLORIDA

LOCATION	TOURNAMENTS	JACKPOTS	EVENTS/PROMOTIONS
<b>CALDER CASINO</b> Phone: (305) 625-1311 www.calderracecourse.com/poker	Two guaranteed tournaments daily. Ante Up Poker Tour event is March 12, 11 a.m. (\$100, \$10K guarantee, 9K units, 30-minute levels).	Flopped progressive straight flushes have five different payouts per suit. Royals pay \$100.	More than \$200,000 in high hands up for grabs; visit studz poker.com for details.
<b>DANIA JAI-ALAI</b> Phone: (954) 927-2841 www.dania-jai-alai.com	Daily (12:30p & 6:30p), including a \$15K guarantee every Friday (\$105, 6:30p).	Bad beat in hold'em (\$12K at press time), Omaha (\$5K at press time) and stud.	Win it or Spin it (win up to \$500, call for details).
<b>DAYTONA BEACH KENNEL CLUB</b> Phone: (386) 252-6484 www.daytonagreyhound.com/pokerroom	Daily (\$25-\$275), including Friday Night Lights (\$120, 7p); Saturday DeepStack (\$225, 2p or 4p); Sunday Super DeepStack (\$275, 2p).	Bad beats in limit, no-limit (\$190K at press time) and Omaha. Daily high hands paid every hour.	Florida Million, March 13, 20, & 27 (\$550, 1p, see ad Page 35). WSOP satellite, March 6 (\$150, 1p).
<b>DERBY LANE</b> Phone: (727) 812-3339 ext. 7 www.derbylanepoker.com	Daily (\$50-\$330) on Sun.-Thurs. (1p, 4p, & 7p) & Fri.-Sat. (1p, 6p, & 8p). Second Sunday SuperStack (\$330, 1p, 15K chips, 30-min. levels).	Daily cash and prize promotions (please see website for times and details).	Royals pay up to \$500. See ad on Page 33 for Florida Million Day 1 dates, times. See ad on Page 33.
<b>EBRO GREYHOUND PARK</b> Phone: (850) 234-3943 www.ebrogreyhoundpark.com	Daily, except Friday (\$20-\$330), including a Mega Stack on the last Sunday of month (\$330, 2p, 10K chips, 30-min. levels).	Ultimate Big Easy Bad Beat (quad eights, \$19K at press time); Mini bad beat is \$2K.	Royal flushes \$250; Super High Hand \$200 (Sat.-Sun., 4a-9a); spade royal \$4,999 (Mon.-Fri., 9a-noon).
<b>FT. PIERCE JAI-ALAI &amp; POKER</b> Phone: (772) 464-7500 www.jaijai.net/poker.php	Mon. (\$75, 7p); Wed. (\$55, 7p); Sat. (\$100, 1:30p); Sun. (\$55, 4p). <b>SNGs:</b> Thurs.-Sat., \$65-\$110.	All new bad beats in hold'em, stud and Omaha. Call for details.	DeepStack event is the third Saturday every month (March 19, \$150, 3p).
<b>GULFSTREAM PARK</b> Phone: (954) 457-6336 www.gulfstreampark.com	Daily, (\$40-\$60, 6:30p), including bounties on Mon & Wed, plus Sat. rebuy, (\$40); Tue. PLO (\$25, 6:30p). <b>SNGs:</b> \$60 hold'em or \$45 PLO.	Bad beat: quad deuces; hourly high hands (11a-1a), \$100 (\$300 at 11a, noon, 1p, 2p, 4p, 7p and midnight).	Royals pay \$500. Free drinks and free breakfast. High hands pay \$100-\$300.
<b>HAMILTON JAI-ALAI &amp; POKER</b> Phone: (800) 941-4841 www.hamiltondownsjaijai.com	"Jackpot Bonus Tournament" on Sundays (\$20 w/ rebuys and add-ons, 3p).	Progressive royal; hearts pay \$2K (mini is 10% of main in any suit). Tournament high hand pays \$75.	Thurs. "First to Hit" pays \$25 to first 5 flushes and 5 full houses; Fri. & Sat. high hand (\$300-\$100).
<b>ISLE CASINO AT POMPANO PARK</b> Phone: (954) 972-2000 x5123 www.theislepompanopark.com	Daily (\$40-\$350); \$5K guar. on Mon. (\$100, noon); \$15K guar. on Tue. (\$230, 2p); \$10K guar. on Thurs. (\$150, 7:30p). <b>SNGs:</b> \$40-\$225.	Bad beat in hold'em (\$56K at press time) and Omaha. Call about high hands.	Ask about satellites, which run almost daily, for the Battles at the Beach (See ad on Page 27).
<b>JEFFERSON COUNTY KENNEL CLUB</b> Phone: (850) 997-2561 www.jckcpokerroom.com	Fridays, 7:30 p.m., \$50 (2K chips and 15-minute blinds)	Royal flushes win jackpot (\$13K at press time).	Call for promotions.
<b>MAGIC CITY CASINO</b> Phone: (305) 649-3000 www.flaglerdogs.com	Sundays, low-rake bounty event (\$40, 1p), bounties are \$5. <b>SNGs:</b> \$65-\$800.	High hands (\$150); All royals pay \$1K; Big Slick progressive (\$1K at press time).	\$500 minimum guaranteed progressive hot table paid (2p & 2a).
<b>MARDI GRAS CASINO</b> Phone: (877) 557-5687 x3167 www.playmardigras.com	Florida Million Day 1s: March 20, noon, March 27, noon and April 3, TBD (\$550). See ad on Page 23.	Hold'em high hand (\$150K in prizes each month); bad beat (call for details). See ad on Page 23 for more.	Easy Money (Mon. & Fri.); Fat Tue. \$1K high hands; Wild Wed.; Double C-Note (Thurs.).
<b>MELBOURNE GREYHOUND PARK</b> Phone: (321) 259-9800 www.mgpark.com	Daily (Sun., Mon., Thurs., Sat.) ranging from \$65-\$120, including Sat. SuperStack (\$120, 2p, 10K chips); Sunday (\$65, 1p, 3K chips).	Bad beat (\$44K) is in hold'em (aces full of jacks beaten by quads or better).	Azunia Bounty, March 27, \$65 (see ad on Page 57). Harley giveaway! (see ad Page 39).
<b>MIAMI JAI-ALAI</b> Phone: (305) 633-6400 www.fl-gaming.com	Daily (\$20-\$165).	Progressive royals and rolling quads of the day; see website for more information.	Hourly \$100 high hands plus tickets for Sunday raffle.
<b>MICCOSUKEE RESORT</b> Phone: (877) 242-6464 www.miccosukee.com	Friday and Saturday (\$110, 8p). Free buffet for all tournament players.	Spade royal flush pays jackpot.	Call for information.
<b>NAPLES-FT. MYERS GREYHOUND TRACK</b> Phone: (239) 992-2411 www.naplesfortmyersdogs.com	Mon. (\$40, noon); Tue. (\$50, 7p); Wed. (\$65, 7p); Thurs. (\$65, noon & \$50, 7p); Fri. (\$115, 6p); Sat. (\$115, 2p); Sun. KO (\$125, 2p).	Big Slick Royal Progressive (\$25K guaranteed); all other royals pay \$1K.	High hand, \$1K hourly (March 2); Full Moon Madness (March 19); Fla. Million, March 6 & 27 (\$550, 11a).
<b>OCALA POKER AND JAI-ALAI</b> Phone: (352) 591-2345 www.ocalapoker.com	Daily (\$30-\$500). <b>SNGs:</b> (\$45-\$500).	Bad beat in hold'em (\$125K at press time) and Omaha. See website for more details.	High hand pays \$300 every half hour on March 5 & 26 from 2p-midnight.
<b>ORANGE PARK KENNEL CLUB</b> Phone: (904) 646-0002 www.jaxpokerroom.com	Daily (\$30-\$550). Florida Million Day1s: March 5, 1 p.m., March 19, 1. More dates expected, see ad on Page 19 for details.	Bad beat in hold'em (\$70K at press time), Omaha and stud.	Royals and steel wheels \$250 (spades \$500).
<b>PALM BEACH KENNEL CLUB</b> Phone: (561) 683-2222 www.pbkennelclub.com	Daily (\$30-\$120), noon & 6:30p. Florida Million Day 1s: March 20, March 26 and April 2, all begin at noon.	Bad beat in hold'em (\$37K at press time), Omaha (\$11K at press time), and stud.	See ad on Page 31 for March Madness Florida Million promotion.
<b>PENSACOLA GREYHOUND TRACK</b> Phone: (850) 455-8595 www.pensacolagreyhoundtrack.com	Daily (\$50-\$350); Sun. (\$50, 4p); Mon. & Fri. (\$50, 7p); Wed. & Sat. DeepStack (\$100, 7p); \$20K guar. (\$350, 1p) on last Sat. of month. (See ad Page 26).	Hold'em and stud bad beats (any quads) and in Omaha (quad jacks).	Full House or better (daily at 10a & Tue. at 7p); mini bad beat (daily from midnight-4a).
<b>SARASOTA KENNEL CLUB</b> Phone: (941) 355-7744 ext. 1054 www.skcpoker.com	Daily (\$40-\$440), plus Fri. (\$110, 1p, 25K chips); Sat. (\$160, 1p, 15K chips, 30 min levels). <b>SNGs:</b> \$35-\$300.	Progressive jackpots in all games. Bad beat is quad deuces (\$10K).	\$440 DeepStack on 1st Saturday of the month (1p, 25K chips).

# FLORIDA

LOCATION	TOURNAMENTS	JACKPOTS	EVENTS/PROMOTIONS
<b>SEMINOLE CASINO BRIGHTON</b> Phone: (866) 222-7466 ext. 121 www.seminolecasinobrighton.com	Mon. & Wed., (\$20, 6:30p); Sat. (\$40, 6:30p). <b>SNGs:</b> \$25, \$50, \$110.	Mega-Bad Beat (quad 10s, \$120K at press time).	St. Patrick's Day \$500 high hand (March 17); Rolling Cash Fever (Wed.); Full House Drawings (Fri.).
<b>SEMINOLE CASINO COCONUT CREEK</b> Phone: (866) 222-7466 www.seminolecoconutcreekcasino.com	<b>SNGs:</b> \$55, \$85, \$135.	Mega-Bad Beat (quad 10s, \$120K at press time).	Call for promotions.
<b>SEMINOLE HARD ROCK HOLLYWOOD</b> Phone: (866) 502-7529 www.seminolehardrockhollywood.com	Mon. \$20K guar. (\$300, 6:30p); Tue. \$12K guar. (\$150, 6:30p); Fri. \$10K guar. (\$150, noon); Sat. (\$100, noon).	Mega-Bad Beat (quad 10s, \$120K at press time). High hands (limit and no-limit) of the hour every day.	WPT Hard Rock Showdown (April 27-May 2; see ad on Page 11).
<b>SEMINOLE HARD ROCK TAMPA</b> Phone: (866) 502-7529 www.seminolehardrocktampa.com	Daily (\$40-\$550), including Night Owl every Wednesday (\$60, with re-entry available, 12:30a). <b>SNGs:</b> \$50-\$1,075. See ad on back page.	Mega-Bad Beat (quad 10s, \$120K at press time). All royals pay \$500.	Freeroll for the first 400 who play 50 live hours (top 10 play March 11 for WPT HRH seat, plus \$2,500.
<b>SEMINOLE HOLLYWOOD CLASSIC</b> Phone: (866) 222-7466 www.seminolehollywoodcasino.com	<b>SNGs:</b> \$50-\$100 and are now jackpot eligible.	Mega-Bad Beat (quad 10s, \$120K at press time).	Aces cracked is a Spin to Win (Mon.-Thurs.) which can pay \$250. Hourly seat drawings (8-11p).
<b>SEMINOLE CASINO IMMOKALEE</b> Phone: (866) 222-7466 www.theseminolecasino.com	Wed. (\$35, 7:30p); Thurs. NL O/8 (\$50, 7:30p); Fri. HA (\$60, 7:30p); Sat. KO event (\$50, 1p) & Deep-Stack (\$115, 6:30p); Sun. (\$30, 6:30p).	Mega-Bad Beat (quads 10s), plus players get \$100 if Mega hits at any Seminole room. \$10K mini bad beats.	\$60 SNG qualifiers Sun.-Tue. (2p, 4p, 8p, 10p) into a \$530 mega on 4/12 (7p) for WPT HRH seat (April 27).
<b>ST. JOHNS GREYHOUND PARK</b> Phone: (904) 646-0002 www.jaxpokerroom.com	Daily (\$30-\$550). Florida Million Day 1: March 12, 1, (\$550). More dates expected; see ad on Page 19 for details.	Bad beat in hold'em (\$70K at press time), Omaha and stud.	Royals and steel wheels \$250 (spades \$500); Super High Hand (Mon.-Thurs.).
<b>TAMPA BAY DOWNS</b> Phone: (813) 298-1798 www.tampabaydowns.com	Daily (\$20 & up). St. Patrick's Day event (\$250, see ad on Page 17 for details). <b>SNGs:</b> available at any buy-in at any time.	Progressive payouts for quads or better. See ad on Page 17 for more.	Aces cracked; \$599 high hands; tourney entry giveaways; daily promotions (see website).
<b>TAMPA GREYHOUND TRACK</b> Phone: (813) 932-4313 www.luckyscards.com	Daily 2p & 6:30p (\$30-\$80) but 7:30p Fri. & Sat. Ask about Sunday Challenge last Sun. of month (\$115, 1p, 14K chips). <b>SNGs:</b> \$65-\$410.	Quads (\$50-\$75), straight flushes (\$150) and royals (\$300) on Mon.-Thurs. from 4p-11p.	Half-hour high hands (\$150+\$50) on Sat.-Sun., 4-11p. High hands pay up to \$500 (until 4p).

# CONNECTICUT

<b>FOXWOODS CASINO</b> Phone: (800) 369-9663 www.foxwoods.com	Daily (9a-8p). DeepStack events are Mon.-Fri. (\$120-\$340, 6p). <b>SNGs:</b> \$60-\$550.	Bad beat jackpot is quad eights in hold'em (\$68K at press time) and quad deuces in stud (\$13K).	Foxwoods Classic (March 19-April 3). Events start at \$300 w/main event on April 1 (\$2,500, 11a).
<b>MOHEGAN SUN CASINO</b> Phone: (860) 862-8000 www.mohegansun.com	Daily (\$50-\$200), including \$10K guar. on Wed. (\$120, 7:30p, 12K chips). & \$15K guar. on Fridays (\$200, 2p, 20K chips).	High hands paid every three hours daily, seven days a week.	Ask about new "Add-On" tournaments on Mon. (7:30p) and Tue. & Thurs. (noon).

# NEW JERSEY

<b>ATLANTIC CITY HILTON</b> Phone: (609) 347-7111 www.hiltonac.com	No tournaments. Poker only spread Friday-Sunday if there's enough interest, and generally only a \$1-\$2 NLHE cash game gets going.	None at this time.	None at this time.
<b>BALLY'S ATLANTIC CITY</b> Phone: (609) 340-2000 www.ballysac.com	Daily (\$50-75); Mon.-Thurs. (1p & 7p) & Fri. (1p); Fri. (8p) and Sun. (6p). All tournaments are KO events.	Harrah's AC bad beat decreases every Wednesday if it doesn't get hit (\$270K at press time).	2X Comps (Wed., Thurs., Sat.); high hand (Mon. & Tue.); cracked aces every Fri. spins wheel.
<b>BORGATA HOTEL CASINO</b> Phone: (609) 317-1000 www.theborgata.com	Daily (\$120, 11a & 7p) including a \$30K guarantee on Wed. (\$120, 11a & 7p) and Fri. (\$300, noon).	Bad beats are quad 10s (\$186K at press time) and quad 2s-9s (\$46K at press time).	\$500K guar. Deep Stack Double Play on March 5-8 (\$1,650). Call for details.
<b>CAESARS ATLANTIC CITY</b> Phone: (609) 348-4411 www.caesarsac.com	Mon.-Fri. (\$50, 3p & \$80 turbo, 9p); Sat. (\$60, 1p & \$80, 9p) and Sun. (\$50, 1p & \$80 turbo, 9p).	Harrah's AC bad beat decreases every Wednesday if it doesn't get hit (\$270K at press time).	WSOP Circuit (March 2-13). Events start at \$230 with the main event on March 11 (\$1,650, noon).
<b>HARRAH'S ATLANTIC CITY</b> Phone: (609) 441-5000 www.harrahresort.com	Daily (\$70, 10:15a & midnight); Sun.-Fri. (\$80, 1:15p), Sun.-Thurs. (\$80, 8:15p), Fri. (\$125, 8:15p) and Sat. (\$125, 1:15p).	Harrah's AC bad beat decreases every Wednesday if it doesn't get hit (\$270K at press time).	Call for promotions.
<b>SHOWBOAT ATLANTIC CITY</b> Phone: (609) 343-4000 www.showboatcasino.com	Sun.-Thurs. (\$65, 11a, 2p, 7p); Fri. (\$65, 11a, 2p) including an Omaha/8 (\$120, 7p); Sat. (\$100, 11a, 2p, 7p); nightly (\$50, 11p).	Harrah's AC bad beat decreases every Wednesday if it doesn't get hit (\$270K at press time).	Total Rewards multiplier comps, plus straight flush earns \$20 comp.
<b>TROPICANA ATLANTIC CITY</b> Phone: (609) 340-4000 www.tropicana.net	Daily (11:15a, \$62, 10K chips and 7:15p, \$62, 15K chips).	Bad Beat is quads and was \$216K at press time. Tournament bad beat was \$58K at press time.	Crack the Straight (see website for details).
<b>TRUMP TAJ MAHAL CASINO RESORT</b> Phone: (609) 449-1000 www.playtajpoker.com	Daily (\$50-\$230 at 12:15p, 4:15p, 7:15p, & midnight), including two DeepStacks on Saturdays (\$230, 7:15p) & (\$120, 4:15p & midnight).	Bad beat is quads (\$378K at press time). High hands are entered into drawings.	50-50 club (call for details).

\* SNG = single-table tournaments; all tournaments are no-limit hold'em unless noted. Poker room managers email roth@anteupmagazine.com

## LOUISIANA

LOCATION	TOURNAMENTS	JACKPOTS	EVENTS/PROMOTIONS
<b>AMELIA BELLE CASINO</b> Phone: (985) 631-1745 www.ameliabellecasino.com	Sunday Poker Challenge (\$50, 1p); Players can earn a free seat by playing 10 hours between 4p on Thurs.- 4a on Sun.	Bad beat is quads over aces full of 10s (\$8K at press time).	Early Bird (Thurs.), first 10 who buy in for at least \$100 before 7p get \$20 after one hour of play.
<b>BELLE OF BATON ROUGE</b> Phone: (800) 266-2692 www.belleofbatonrouge.com	Wed. & Sun., (10a, \$50, 1K chips, 15-minute blinds). Ask about Battle at the Belle.	Bad beat is any quads (\$80K at press time).	Aces cracked wins \$100 (Mon., 9a-3p); high hand of the hour wins \$50 (Tue., 9a-3p).
<b>BOOMTOWN NEW ORLEANS</b> Phone: (800) 366-7711 www.boomtownneworleans.com	Tuesday Freeroll (11a) for players who are a 4 or 5 Star Player; Wed & Thurs. (\$35 w/\$10 add-on, 7p).	Bad beat (quads beaten by quads or better) in hold'em (\$65K) and Omaha (\$6K).	High hands (Mon., Wed., Sat., & Sun.); Splash the Pot (Tue. & Thurs.).
<b>COUSHATTA CASINO</b> Phone: (800) 584-7263 www.coushattacasinoresort.com	Daily (\$15-\$230), including Tue. (\$15, 6:30p) w/rebuys & add-ons; Thurs. (\$75, 7p); Fri. (\$20, 7:30p) w/rebuys; Sat. (\$220, 2p, 7K chips).	Bad beat was \$207K at press time.	See story on Page 31 on Seven Clans Poker Cup series, which runs March 30-April 3.
<b>CYPRESS BAYOU/SHORTY'S CASINO</b> Phone: (800) 284-4386 www.cypressbayou.com	All tournaments are rake-free. Wed. (\$40 w/2 \$20 rebuys and add ons, 6:30p); Sat. Super KO (\$60 w/2 \$20 rebuys and add-ons, 3p).	Progressive bad beat: quads (\$117K at press time).	Aces cracked, 1st & 3rd Thursday, 2nd & 4th Monday.
<b>ELDORADO CASINO SHREVEPORT</b> Phone: (318) 220-5274 www.eldoradoshreveport.com	Sun. (\$150, 11a); Mon. \$2K guar. (\$130, 11a); Tue. (\$75 with \$25 or \$50 rebuy/add-ons, 6:30p); Sat. (\$125, 1 rebuy/1 add-on, 11a).	Bad beat: quads (\$67K); mini bad beat is aces full of 10s beaten by quads. Royals pay \$250.	Aces cracked wins \$100 (Fri., 4a-4p). Flush Frenzy (call for details).
<b>HARRAH'S NEW ORLEANS</b> Phone: (504) 533-6000 www.harrahsneworleans.com	Wednesdays (\$120, 11a).	Bad beat: quads.	Aces cracked almost every day.
<b>HORSESHOE CASINO BOSSIER CITY</b> Phone: (800) 895-0711 www.horseshoebossiercity.com	Daily (\$100-\$200), including a DeepStack event every Thursday (\$200, 6p, 7.5K chips, 25 min levels).	Call for future jackpots.	High hand (Sun. & Wed.); aces cracked (Mon., Tue., Fri.); Splash Cash (Thurs.). Call for details.
<b>ISLE OF CAPRI LAKE CHARLES</b> Phone: (337) 430-2407 www.lake-charles.isleofcapricasinos.com	Daily except for Thurs. (\$60-\$90, 6:30p), including Fri. (\$60, noon) & Sat. (\$115, noon) plus a Sunday KO event (\$60, 2p).	Bad beat (\$150K); minor jackpots (paid 24/7); quads (\$25), straight flush (\$50) & royals (\$125).	Cash giveaways Mon.-Thurs. Spring Fling, March 17-19 (\$1K main event, call for details).
<b>PARAGON CASINO</b> Phone: (800) 946-1946 x1975 www.paragoncasinoresort.com	Mon. (\$20 w/3 rebuys, 7p); Tue. (\$18, 10:30a); Thursdays (\$20 w/\$15 rebuys/\$50 add-on, 7p); Fridays (\$60 w/\$50 rebuys, 7p).	Bad beat is \$22K; minor pays quads (\$25), straight flush (\$50) and royals (\$125). Call for details.	High hand Wednesdays pays \$50 every 30 minutes (noon-2:30p & 9p-11:30p)

## ARKANSAS

<b>OAKLAWN RACING &amp; GAMING</b> Phone: (501) 623-4411 www.oaklawn.com	Daily, including SNGs; Sunday \$750 guar. (\$10, 10a); Tue. \$5 for \$500 (\$5, 10a); Ladies Night Freeroll on Thurs. (7p).	Bad beat in hold'em (\$58K at press time); high hands (Fri.-Tue., 10a-1a).	\$25K guar. Winter Poker Classic, qualifiers every Mon. & Wed. (\$50, 7p) through March 16.
<b>SOUTHLAND PARK GAMING &amp; RACING</b> Phone: (870) 735-3670 www.southlandgreyhound.com	Mon., Tue., Wed. & Sat. (\$20, 2p), 3K chips and 15-minute blinds (all play on PokerPro tables).	Bad beat is aces full of jacks beaten by quads.	Player Rewards cards offer comps based on play.

## DELAWARE

<b>DELAWARE PARK</b> Phone: (302) 355-1050 www.delawarepark.com	Daily (\$65-\$150), including an event on Fri. and Sat. (7p). Saturday's event is a \$10K guar. (\$150, 10K chips, 20-min. levels).	Bad beat with descending qualifier (quad nines) was \$69K at press time. Mini is aces full of kings (\$4K).	Aces cracked; high hand; free poker tournament entries (call for details).
<b>DOVER DOWNS HOTEL &amp; CASINO</b> Phone: (302) 674-4600 www.doverdowns.com	Twice daily (noon, 7p); Sun.-Fri. (\$65, noon) & (\$80, 7p); Sat. (\$80, noon) & (\$120, 7p). Crown Royal \$5K guar. on Fridays (\$125, 7p).	Bad beat (aces full of jacks) was \$115K at press time.	Spring Classic (main event, March 26, \$550, noon, 12K chips, 30-min levels). See ad for schedule Page 54.
<b>HARRINGTON RACEWAY</b> Phone: (888) 887-5687 www.harringtonraceway.com	Tue. & Thurs. (\$60, 11a, 3K chips); Wed. (\$115, 7p, 8K chips); Sat. (\$225, 4p, 15K chips). Tournaments limited to first 70 players.	Bad beat (aces full of kings) was \$106K at press time.	High hand (Mon.-Thurs., 6a-10a); Ask about freeroll tournament on March 13.

## GEORGIA, NORTH AND SOUTH CAROLINA

<b>DIAMOND CASINO SAVANNAH (GA.)</b> Phone: (912) 897-3005 www.diamondcasinosavannah.com	Call for information.	Call for information.	Call for any promotions.
<b>EMERALD PRINCESS II (GA.)</b> Phone: (912) 265-3558 www.emeraldprincesscasino.com	\$125 NLHE event every Saturday night.	Call for information.	Call for any promotions.
<b>HARRAH'S CHEROKEE (N.C.)</b> Phone: (828) 497-7777 www.harrahsherokee.com	Tue. (\$60, 6p), Sat. (\$120, 10a) and Sun. (\$120, 2p). All games on PokerPro tables. <b>SNGs:</b> Tuesday and Sunday (\$115).	Call for information.	Call for any promotions.
<b>SUNCRUZ AQUASINO (S.C.)</b> Phone: (843) 280-2933 www.sunruzaquasino.com	Mon. cruise (7p, \$110) and Fri. cruise (11a, \$110). <b>SNGs:</b> \$60	Bad beat is aces full of jacks beaten by quads.	Quads (\$50), straight flush (\$100) royals (\$200).

# MISSISSIPPI

LOCATION	TOURNAMENTS	JACKPOTS	EVENTS/PROMOTIONS
<b>AMERISTAR VICKSBURG</b> Phone: (601) 630-4996 www.ameristar.com/vicksburg	Thursdays, (\$70, 7p) with one optional add-on.	Mini bad beat (quads over aces full) pays 10% of full bad beat (any quads).	Call for details.
<b>BEAU RIVAGE RESORT AND CASINO</b> Phone: (228) 386-7092 www.beaurivage.com	Daily at noon & 6p (\$120-\$340), including \$20K guar. on the first Saturday of the month (\$335, noon, 4K chips, but 2K more for \$10 add-on).	\$5K cash giveaways Sunday-Friday. Aces cracked (\$100) runs 24/7.	Spring Break Classic (\$125-\$2,100) runs March 18-27 (ad on Page 13; call for details and satellite info).
<b>BOOMTOWN CASINO BILOXI</b> Phone: (228) 436-8999 www.boomtownbiloxi.com	No tournaments scheduled unless there is enough interest.	Bad beat is aces full of kings (More than \$50K). Mini pays 10% (aces full of jacks).	Aces cracked (24/7) wins up to \$100.
<b>GOLD STRIKE CASINO AND RESORT</b> Phone: (662) 357-1136 www.goldstrikemississippi.com	Daily (\$35-\$340). \$5K guar. on the first Sun. of the month (\$230, 1p). \$15K guar. on first Sat. \$15K (\$340, 1p). Both have 30-minute levels.	Call for bad beat and royal flush totals. Cash drawings (\$100 hourly, Tue. from 1p-10p).	Ask about Graveyard Cash Drawings (Mon.-Fri., 3a-9a); Delta Gold runs through March 6.
<b>HARD ROCK BILOXI</b> Phone: (228) 374-7625 www.hardrockbiloxi.com	Thurs.-Mon. at 3p (\$25-\$55). Chip stacks, bonus chip offers and blinds vary. Website has all details. <b>SNGs:</b> \$75, \$125, \$235, \$550.	Bad beat is aces full of queens beaten by quads (\$42K at press time). Ask about Hard Rock hands.	Ask about Four of a Kind Blows My Mind, Jackpot Hands, and the Super Sunday Promotion.
<b>HARLOW'S CASINO</b> Phone: (662) 335-9797 x144 www.harlowcasino.com	Tuesday & Saturday (\$60, \$5 add-on, 7:30p). <b>SNGs:</b> Thursday & Friday (\$40, 6p).	Bad beat is aces full of 10s beaten by quads or better.	Hourly high hands on Wed.; Friday Flat Screen Frenzy (Tickets to raffle on 1st Friday of every month)
<b>HARRAH'S TUNICA</b> Phone: (800) 946-4946, x33760 www.harahstunica.com	Daily at 1p (\$50-\$110), including Thurs. \$1.1K guar. (\$35 w/rebuys, 1p) and Thurs. (\$50 w/one rebuy, 6p).	Bad beats in hold'em, Omaha and stud.	Progressive Royal Single Table Promotion (call for current payout).
<b>HOLLYWOOD CASINO BAY ST. LOUIS</b> Phone: (866) 758-2591 x4026 www.hollywoodcasinobsll.com	Monday and Wednesday (\$30 w/rebuys, 6:30p).	High hand, \$50 (Mon., 10a-mid. & Wed., 10a-6p); Lucky Table \$50, \$100 or \$150 (Thurs., 10a-mid.).	Early Bird and aces cracked (\$100) from Fri.-Sun. (10a-2p); aces cracked (Tue., 10a-10p) pays up to \$500.
<b>HOLLYWOOD CASINO TUNICA</b> Phone: (800) 871-0711 x5005 www.hollywoodtunica.com	Daily (\$10-\$40). Mon., Wed., Thurs. (6p); Fri. & Sat. (7p); Sat. & Sun. (2p).	Hold'em bad beat (quads or better) must be in \$3-\$6 or higher and Omaha.	Sunday \$1K guar. (\$10 w/rebuys and \$20 add-on, 2p).
<b>HORSESHOE CASINO TUNICA</b> Phone: (662) 357-5608 www.horseshoetunica.com	Daily (\$65-\$160), including Sat. \$10K guar. (\$150, 4p, 10K chips and 2K more for \$10 add-on); Sun. Super DeepStack (\$100, 2p, 15K chips).	Bad beat (quads) in hold'em. Flush Frenzy (\$100) if you make a flush in every suit during your session.	Call for more promotions.
<b>IP CASINO RESORT &amp; SPA</b> Phone: (888) 946-2847 x8554 www.ipbiloxi.com	Daily, except Fri. (\$60, noon, 4K chips).	Poker Squares Sun. & Mon. (\$1K up for grabs daily).	Aces cracked pays \$100 on Fri. (8a-5p).
<b>ISLE CASINO BILOXI</b> Phone: (228) 436-7967 www.biloxi.isleofcapricasinos.com	Daily (\$40-\$60); Mon. (\$45, 3p), Tue. (\$60, 2p), Wed. (\$40, 7p), Thurs. (\$45, 2p), Fri. (\$60, 3p), Sat. (\$60, 3p); Wed. & Sat. events are KO/re-buy.	Bad beat in hold'em (\$70K at press time), Omaha (\$23K at press time) and stud (\$11K at press time).	Aces Full or Better (Sun.-Fri., 10a-12a). \$6K in lucky table cash giveaways on March 2.
<b>SAM'S TOWN CASINO TUNICA</b> Phone: (800) 456-0711 www.samstowntunica.com	Daily (\$20-\$80), including a \$3K guarantee on Saturdays (\$20, 7p). <b>SNGs:</b> \$60-\$120.	Bad beat is any quads. Single table mini bad beat (call for details).	Ask about the Live Action Bonus (Sat. & Sun., 7a-11a).
<b>SILVER SLIPPER CASINO</b> Phone: (866) 775-4773 x3766 www.silverflipper-ms.com	Mon. (\$45, 6p), Thurs. (\$75 KO, 7p), Sat. (\$45 turbo KO, noon), Sun. (\$65 Omaha, 6:30p). <b>SNGs:</b> \$45, \$65 (2K chips, 10 players).	Bad beat is \$52K in hold'em, \$2,200 for Omaha. Mini is aces full of deuces (\$550 to loser).	Aces cracked can win \$300 (Tue., Thurs. & Fri.). Splash the Pot (Mon. & Wed., 11a-9p).
<b>SILVER STAR CASINO (PEARL RIVER)</b> Phone: (601) 650-1234 www.pearlriverresort.com	Daily, (\$35-\$60), including a \$2.5K guar. on Saturdays (\$60, 2p). Start times for events are Mon.-Thurs. (7p) & Fri.-Sun. (2p).	Bad beat in hold'em (quads), Omaha (quad 7s) and stud (quads). Diamond royals (\$500).	\$3.5K freeroll is last Sunday of every month (5p). Call for details. 4 aces pay \$50; high hands (\$100).

# WEST VIRGINIA

<b>HOLLYWOOD AT CHARLES TOWN</b> Phone: (800) 795-7001 www.ctowntables.com	Open 24 hours now, but no tournaments yet.	None at this time.	None at this time.
<b>MOUNTAINEER RIVER POKER ROOM</b> Phone: (304) 387-8458 www.mountaineerpoker.com	Daily (\$50-\$225, 12:15 & 7:30); Wed. (10:30a), Sundays (\$65, 2p).	Bad beat is aces full of kings (\$32K at press time); ask about new payouts.	Call for promotions.
<b>MARDI GRAS CASINO AT TRI-STATE</b> Phone: (800) 224-9683 www.tristateracetrack.com	Generally events are Sun. (noon), Mon. (1p), Tue. (7p), Wed. (7p), Thurs. (1p) and buy-ins vary (\$45-\$150).	Bad beat in hold'em (\$111K at press time), Omaha (\$14K at press time) and stud (\$5K at press time).	Call for promotions.
<b>WHEELING ISLAND CASINO</b> Phone: (304) 232-5050 www.wheelingisland.com	Sun-Fri. (\$40, 10a); Sat. (\$150, 3p, 6K chips), plus events every night (\$40-\$65, 7p). Heartland Poker League (Sat., \$60, 5K in chips 10:45a).	Bad beat was \$76K at press time.	Quads or straight flush lets you spin the wheel; early bird on Mon., Tue. and Thurs. (call for details).
<b>THE GREENBRIER</b> Phone: (304) 536-7806 www.greenbrier.com	The poker room open only to guests; call for information.	N/A.	N/A.

\* SNG = single-table tournaments; all tournaments are no-limit hold'em unless noted. Poker room managers email roth@anteupmagazine.com

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

LOCATION	TOURNAMENTS	JACKPOTS	EVENTS/PROMOTIONS
<b>BENNING STREET POKER ROOM</b> Phone: (603) 298-6688 www.benningstreet.com/poker	Mon. & Wed. freeroll w/rebuys (7p); Thurs. (\$75, 7p); Fri. (\$25 w/rebuys, 7p); Sat. (\$25 w/rebuys, 6p); Sun. (\$125, 2p).	Call for details.	Freeroll tournaments throughout the week (call for details).
<b>GRANITE STATE POKER</b> Phone: (603) 396-0389 www.granitestatepoker.com	Fri. (\$50, 6p.; \$250, 7p. for VIP members; \$100, 8p); Sat. (\$50, 1p & \$100 KO, 4:30p); Sun. (\$50, 4p & \$50 rebuy, 7p). Closed on Wed. & Thurs.	Call for details.	Ask about satellites to PokerStars NAPT events.
<b>THE LODGE AT BELMONT</b> Phone: (877) 872-2501 www.thelodgeatbelmont.com	Daily (\$5-\$50). Times vary by day and are (1p, 4p, 4:30p, 5p, 7p). Call for details on special event tournaments.	Call for current jackpots.	Big Stack Events on Saturdays (\$50, 7p, 15K chips).
<b>POKER ROOM AT HAMPTON FALLS</b> Phone: 603-601-2486 www.thepokerroomnh.com	Daily (\$80-\$150); Mon.-Thurs. (5:30p, 7p, 8:30p); Fri. (1p, 5:30p, 7p, 9p); Sat. (11a, 4p, 7p, 8p); Sun. (1p, 4p, 7p, 8p).	Check website for details.	\$150 event on Fri. (1p) and Sat. (11a) gets you \$20K chips and 45 min levels.
<b>RIVER CARD ROOM</b> Phone: (603) 249-5548 www.riverpokerroom.com	Daily (\$5-\$60). Times vary by day. Many of the tournaments have optional rebuys and add-ons. See website for complete schedule.	Call for details.	Mini-Monster (Wed. & Fri.); River 4000 (call for details).
<b>ROCKINGHAM PARK</b> Phone: (603) 898-2311 www.rockinghampark.com	Daily (\$50-150). Start times vary from 2p-9p (see website for schedule).	Call for details.	NAPT Satellites (call for details).
<b>SEABROOK GREYHOUND PARK</b> Phone: (603) 474-3065 www.seabrookgreyhoundpark.com	Daily (\$30-\$140); start times range from 11:15a-10p.	Call for details.	Eastern Poker Tour on Sat. & Sun. throughout March (\$100-\$250, 1:30p). See website for schedule.

## NEW YORK

<b>SENECA NIAGARA</b> Phone: (877) 873-6322 www.senecaniagaracasino.com	Mon. (\$90 KO, 10a & 7p); Tue.-Wed. (\$60, 10a & 7p); Thurs. (\$35, 10a & 7p); Fri. (\$90, 10a & \$140, 8p); Sat. (\$190, 11a); Sun (\$45, 10a & \$60, 6p).	Bad beat progressive is quad 2s in hold'em (\$18K), Omaha (quad 9s) and stud (quad 7s).	Preferred Player Rewards (call for details).
<b>SENECA SALAMANCA</b> Phone: (877) 860-5130 www.senecagames.com	Mon.-Wed. (\$60, 11a & 7p); Thurs. (\$90, 6p); Sat. & Sun. (\$60, noon).	Bad Beat progressive in hold'em (quad 2s, \$28K at press time), Omaha (quad 9s), & stud (quad 7s).	Preferred Player Rewards and numerous monthly promotions (see website for details).
<b>TURNING STONE RESORT</b> Phone: (800) 386-5366 www.turningstone.com	Daily (\$70-125). Mon.-Fri. (noon & 7p); Sat.-Sun. (11a & 7p) including a DeepStack Turbo KO on Sat. (\$125, 7p) and Sun. (\$70, 7p).	Call for bad beat total.	Call for promotions.

## PENNSYLVANIA

<b>HARRAH'S CHESTER</b> Phone: (800) 480-8020 www.harrahschester.com	Call for information. Will host a WSOP Circuit event April 28-May 9.	Bad beat (quad 2s) was \$321K at press time.	Call for current promotions.
<b>HOLLYWOOD PENN NATIONAL</b> Phone: (717) 469-2211 www.hcpn.com	Mon.-Thurs. (\$85, noon); Wed. & Thurs. (\$125, 7p); Friday PLO (\$85, noon).	Call about future jackpots.	Call about future promotions.
<b>MEADOWS CASINO</b> Phone: (724) 503-1200 www.meadowsgaming.com	Twice daily (\$40, 10:30a & \$65, 7:30p), including a DeepStack bounty event on Saturdays (\$225, 3p). Feature events are on Sundays.	Call for information.	Call for current promotions.
<b>MOHEGAN SUN/POCONO DOWNS</b> Phone: (570) 831-2100 www.mohegansunpocono.com	Daily (\$60); Mon.-Fri. (noon & 7p), Sat.-Sun. (10a & 7p); Tue. KO (\$120, 7p).	Bad beat or high hands coming soon.	NLHE event on the last Saturday of the month (March 26), which is a \$280 buy-in and starts at 2p.
<b>MOUNT AIRY CASINO</b> Phone: (570) 243-5184 www.mtairycasino.com	Pending state approval, planning MTTs and SNGs.	Bad beat is aces full of kings.	None at this time, though high hands may be coming.
<b>PARX CASINO</b> Phone: (215) 639-9000 www.parxcasino.com	Call for details.	N/A	N/A
<b>RIVERS CASINO</b> Phone: (412) 231-7777 www.riverscasino.com	Daily (\$65-\$555). Mon.-Fri. (noon, 7:30p); Sat. (noon, 4p); Sun. (2p).	Bad beat is aces full of jacks.	Call for information.
<b>SANDS CASINO BETHLEHEM</b> Phone: (877) SANDS-77 www.sandsbethworks.com	Pending state approval, planning MTTs and SNGs for late spring, likely end of April/beginning of May.	Bad beat is quads and is a one-table winner.	None at this time.

\* SNG = single-table tournaments; all tournaments are no-limit hold'em unless noted. Poker room managers email [roth@anteupmagazine.com](mailto:roth@anteupmagazine.com)

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# Q&A

## WITH VANESSA SELBST

Vanessa Selbst is coming off the best year of her young poker career. She tells *Ante Up's* Chris Cosenza she's learned a lot on her way to making millions, admitting she's toned down her bluffing blowups and has acquired patience at the table. Oh, and wait till you see what she thinks of cops.



**Let's face it, 2010 was an amazing year for you with two major live victories and about \$3 million in live tournament winnings. What do you attribute to your great run?** Obviously there's just a ton of luck and variance, and whenever I run like that you know I had a lot of good luck at the final tables, which is really important. I think what I attribute to getting that deep in that many tournaments, I guess it was three majors I went pretty deep in, was just sort of learning how to be more patient at the tables.

At Mohegan Sun I kinda had a breakthrough moment. There was a mishap with the tournament scheduling and essentially there was a little room with all of the late registrants that was about 75 people big. They decided to essentially play a mini tournament in that room until there were enough (open seats) to put them in the main room with all of the online qualifiers and PokerStars players. It was really weird because we were playing our own little mini \$25K World Championship of Poker trying to break into the \$5K main event with all the online qualifiers. I think at that point it really sunk in for me just how bad my table draw was relative to the rest of the field. I had always known that that concept existed of waiting for a better spot, but in practice it's hard to say "OK, I'll get a better table later." Here it was more than clear I had every superstar at my table and it was just not a tough field.

So I just waited it out and honestly, after that table broke I just didn't have any hands so I didn't try to force the issue. I left with just my starting stack and went on an absurd heater the rest of the day, and ended the day, in those last two hours, from starting stack to chip leader. So that was a breakthrough moment for me on waiting for better spots. That was always the thing I had struggled with beforehand, sort of playing too aggressively and just making too many bluffs in unnecessary spots. While I'm obviously still aggressive and obviously I still bluff a lot, I've toned it down considerably where I'm not just busting out of every tournament by bluffing. I think that is why I've learned how to get deep into these big-stacked events. And running good at the final tables has led to me being able to take them down.

**Since you attend Yale and live in Connecticut, how special was winning the NAPT event at Mohegan Sun in April?** It was amazing to win here. I had my friends from law school that were able to come up and watch me. ... But also, honestly, I probably wouldn't have played it otherwise. It's funny because I just didn't really play any poker the first semester of

school. ... And then I didn't play another event until the World Series of Poker at the main event. ... I just got lucky at the right times and was only able to play the events that were close to home.

**What are the cash games at Yale like and did you take down any trust funds?** (laughs) They were juicy, but not trust-fund material. They were juicy for a college game, but Yale cash games are where I got my start. I met some really amazing players that were very talented and very into poker and I was the fish when I joined the game. They turned me on to online poker forums. ... We were playing \$1-\$1 blinds but there'd be straddles and stuff, and on any given night people would lose a couple hundred dollars, which in college is nothing to shake a stick at.

**How did your NAPT win differ from your Partouche victory in Cannes?** The structures of the tournaments made them vastly different tournaments. Partouche was hour-and-a-half levels the first day, followed by two-hour levels after that. So it really was just like, you did not have to force the issue at all. You could just wait and wait and let something happen. That's not really my style but I noticed that it was other people's style and subsequently I almost amped up my aggression because I noticed that people were more content to wait on things and wait for a better spot.

Mohegan Sun, well it's funny because I guess I played super crazy in that one, too, only because people were playing less passively so I had to play even more crazy to get them to fold. (laughs) ... It was just a shorter stacked tournament and I think the competition was probably a little bit more talented at Mohegan Sun as a whole. Poker's been around in the U.S. for a little bit longer and I think that field was a little bit tougher. It's getting more popular over in Europe. I think Partouche in its third year people finally heard about it. From what I heard the first and second years the fields were incredibly soft. I definitely ran into some tough players, especially as the field thinned out, and I thought there were some very good players at the final table.

**You have an NAPT, WSOP and Partouche Poker Tour title; how important is winning a World Poker Tour main event to you?** Let's not get ahead of ourselves here. (laughs) You should ask me, "How important is it for you to CASH at a World Poker Tour main event?" and I would say that would be awesome; let's try it out! (laughs) I've played about 15 main events by now; I played a lot in 2007 when I was just awful at these

Continued on next page



Continued from previous page

events, and I've played about three or four this year I guess. I've gotten deep in a couple of them but got unlucky in a few situations late. I've been unable to make any money; I guess I got second in a WPT ladies event if that counts.

In terms of the title, I love winning; I love winning tournaments. I think titles are great. People remember the first-place person, and I'm also very good at closing tournaments. It's something that's important to me. That's a skill that I have. I'm very good at short-handed, and you know it is a very important skill; you don't make many final tables. If you make 10 final tables in come in third or fourth, or if you make three and come in first you're breaking even essentially. It's just a huge skill to be able to play short-handed and be able to close final tables. Let's see what happens when I make it to a World Poker Tour final table or two and in that case I think it would be incredibly important. The WPT is a historically important event, but there's a lot more circuits out there that's becoming almost bigger. Like the European Poker Tour is just getting huge and I think for me it might be more special to win an EPT because those fields are getting so much bigger nowadays.

**Some say WPT titles are more important than WSOP bracelets because there are fewer WPT titles to be won. How do you feel about that?** I think the reason World Series titles seems so valuable is both marketing and historical nature. Once upon a time, it was the only real big tournament series out there, so it was the most important. Just having that historical aspect, which has been played up in the media and their marketing, is why people value it so highly. But it's a self-fulfilling prophecy. Because they value it so highly more people want to play and so it becomes a valuable thing. At the end of the day their structures are much worse, they're three-day tournaments as opposed to five- or six-day tournaments, you're not getting as much poker, there's a lot more luck involved. People ask me how did you win NAPT Mogan Sun and Partouche and I say I think played my A game and made some really crazy sick moves. ... And at the World Series they ask me (how I won my bracelet) I say I got aces in PLO and they held every single time I had them. I do think the deeper-stacked events are more prestigious for actual poker players. And I do think for that reason I would also agree the WPT events, I would value those more than bracelets. ... It's more impressive to win those deepstack events, whether it's WPT or EPT.

**You were once nearly brought to tears when you were heads-up with Nancy Todd Tyner for the 2008 WPT Ladies Invitational title. How frustrated were you in that match and have you ever been that frustrated since?** Tears might be a slight exaggeration. (laughs) I was frustrated, but it wasn't just the poker. I mean the poker was frustrating because she was just God-awful and just winning every single hand. But it was her antics. This is something I've just given up trying to explain to people because it sounds like I'm making excuses for myself, and I don't care enough. If people want to think I'm a terrible person and I'm really rude to people at the tables then that's fine; if that's how (they) want to market me good for them; I'm glad I got the air time.

The actual story is that she was incredibly rude to me and slow-rolled me and had all these antics and was taunting me and saying things to me. She was really good friends with one of the guys who was one of the WPT executives. They basically edited out all of her antics and left in all of mine, which was sort of astonishing and shocking

when I was watching the broadcast to see what you could do through editing. It was a really tough lesson to learn in a really hard and nationally televised way. That was the source of my frustration, I would say mostly 80 percent her being so, I guess, cocky in what she was doing while she was so bad in poker. But I've also matured in terms of my poker. I don't know that I could've beaten her with my cards (today), but I do think I adopted a good strategy, which was never bluffing and value-betting fourth pair, knowing that I was value-betting and knowing it was good. ... I'm definitely a much better player now; I don't get nearly as frustrated; I've taken a lot worse beats. ... I do think there's a maturity factor there as well, and have not gotten that frustrated since.

**You've cashed or won a few ladies tournaments. Some women are in favor of ladies events while others frown on them. What's your stance and do you still enter them?** I don't care (laughs) about this whole stupid debate. I think that ladies events are great. They bring more women into poker; people love them, or whether or not they bring more people in to poker, there's a thousand people every year that look forward to that one day during the World Series that they get to come and just have a fun time and play poker with each other. ... It's funny because I'm not usually the one who says, "Oh, there's a political struggle here and it's all semantics, blah, blah, blah." I'm someone who is very principled and will often fight politically for things I believe in. ... I don't believe 99 percent of the people that take issue with this actually have any political inclinations at all. I've never heard them say anything about any issue that they cared strongly about except for their own expected value. They're like, "Ladies events are terrible; this is misogynist and blah, blah, blah." The majority of them that there's a soft tournament out there they're not able to enter. I think they're fun events. ... I think it's a good way for beginners, that might be intimidated otherwise, to get into a



poker. I do think there's some merit to that because I do see the way women get treated at the table and it's frankly disgusting at time.

**Tell me about DeucesCracked.** I'm an executive producer for them so I've been with them since the inception in January 2008. I make videos, training videos, I make a podcast called *Tournamentality*. I was sort of making videos a lot more before, but now I make about one a month, mostly about tournament strategy. ... I'm hoping this year to launch a project where I take *The Big Game* footage and do analysis with maybe another very good cash-game player. Sort of a voiceover commentary. I think it would be pretty fun and interesting. I also do private coaching.

**You've had some good heads-up success, what makes a great heads-up player?** Fearlessness and a good ability to read hands.

**What is the one thing about you that would surprise our readers?** I hate these kinds of questions. (laughs) ... My desire to practice civil-rights law. I'm real interested in policemen's conduct litigation and sort of abusive authority. Sort of worked on prisoners' rights, like illegal detention, defended some clients down in Guantanamo, I've defended indigent criminal defendants, just sort of all of that kind of work. I guess (I'm) motivated in large part by my own experiences with cops, been in some tussles with cops, I really hate cops. (laughs) I think there's a lot of problems with the way policing works and so that sort of my big passion to try to fix some of the problems. So that's something people don't know about me; I don't know if they'd be surprised. Probably not. "Oh wow! You mean the girl that's always really confrontational on TV gets in trouble with cops?" I know that's shocking. (laughs)



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## MARCH TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

### Multi-Table No Limit Hold'em

Mondays 12:30PM • \$50 + \$10 Re-Entry • 7:30PM • \$85 + \$15  
Tuesdays 3/1 12:30PM & 7:30PM • 3/8 & 3/22 12:30PM  
3/15 & 3/29 7:30PM • \$100 + \$20  
Wednesdays 3/2 & 3/16 7:30PM • \$85 + \$15 • 3/9, 3/23 & 3/30  
12:30PM • \$85 + \$15  
Thursdays 12:30PM • \$50 + \$10 Re-Entry • 7:30PM • \$100 + \$20  
Fridays 3/4, 3/18 & 3/25 12:30PM • \$50 + \$10 Re-Entry • 3/11 10AM  
\$125,000 Free Roll Poker Tournament  
Saturdays 10AM • \$85 + \$15 Re-Entry  
Sundays 12:30PM • \$100 + \$20

### Deep Stack Multi-Table No Limit Hold'em

Wednesdays 3/2 & 3/16 12:30PM • \$200 + \$40  
3/9, 3/23 & 3/30 7:30PM • \$200 + \$40  
Fridays 3/4 & 3/18 7:30PM • \$355 + \$45  
3/11 & 3/25 7:30PM • \$500 + \$50

### Night Owl No Limit Hold'em

Wednesdays 12:30AM • \$50 + \$10 Re-Entry

### Super Satellite

Tuesdays 3/8 & 3/22 7:30PM • 3/15 & 3/29 12:30PM  
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