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ANTE UP

FLORIDA'S POKER MAGAZINE™

AUGUST 2009 | anteupmagazine.com



ANTE UP TOUR
RACE FOR THE BRACELET

HEALTHY BET
CRUISIN' FOR A VIRUS

ROAD TRIP
LET THERE BE MUSIC

TOP FIVE
POKER VILLAINS

TONY COUSINEAU

ANTE UP'S 2009 WORLD SERIES OF POKER PLAYER OF THE YEAR

PokerStars WCOOP 2009



WCOOP 2009 Schedule

Please note all times listed are ET.

DATE	TIME	EVENT	BUY-IN	GUARANTEE
3-Sep	14:30	NL Hold'em [6-max]	\$215	\$1,250,000
	16:30	Razz	\$215	\$200,000
4-Sep	14:30	PL Omaha [6-max]	\$215	\$500,000
	16:30	NL Single Draw 2-7 w/rebuys	\$215	\$200,000
	20:00	8-Game [10-minute levels]	\$109	\$50,000
5-Sep	12:45	NL Hold'em	\$109	\$1,000,000
	14:30	PL 5-Card Draw	\$215	\$200,000
6-Sep	16:30	FL Hold'em	\$215	\$400,000
	12:45	NL Hold'em	\$215	\$1,000,000
	14:30	NL Hold'em [High Roller]	\$10,300	\$2,000,000
7-Sep	16:30	NL Hold'em [2-day]	\$530	\$3,000,000
	14:30	NL Hold'em [4-max]	\$215	\$500,000
	16:30	7-Card Stud	\$320	\$150,000
8-Sep	14:30	Mixed Hold'em [6-max]	\$320	\$300,000
	16:30	FL Badugi	\$320	\$100,000
	20:00	NL Hold'em	\$1,050	\$500,000
9-Sep	14:30	NL Hold'em Triple Shootout [10-max]	\$530	\$500,000
	16:30	8-Game	\$320	\$300,000
10-Sep	14:30	PL Omaha [6-max, 1R1A]	\$320	\$400,000
	16:30	FL Triple Draw 2-7	\$320	\$100,000
11-Sep	14:30	NL Hold'em w/rebuys	\$215	\$1,250,000
	16:30	FL Omaha Hi/Lo	\$530	\$400,000
	20:00	NL Hold'em [10-minute levels]	\$320	\$300,000

DATE	TIME	EVENT	BUY-IN	GUARANTEE
12-Sep	14:30	NL Hold'em [Heads-Up Match Play]	\$530	\$1,000,000
	16:30	H.O.R.S.E.	\$320	\$400,000
13-Sep	12:45	NL Hold'em	\$215	\$1,000,000
	14:30	NL Hold'em [High Roller Match Play]	\$25,500	\$800,000
	16:30	NL Hold'em [2-day]	\$1,050	\$3,000,000
14-Sep	14:30	Mixed [PL Hold'em, PL Omaha]	\$320	\$400,000
	16:30	NL Hold'em [2X Chance]	\$320	\$600,000
15-Sep	14:30	PL Omaha w/rebuys [6-max]	\$320	\$700,000
	16:30	7-Card Stud Hi/Lo	\$530	\$200,000
	20:00	NL Hold'em	\$1,050	\$500,000
16-Sep	14:30	NL Hold'em [big antes]	\$215	\$500,000
	16:30	PL Omaha Hi/Lo	\$320	\$500,000
17-Sep	14:30	NL Hold'em w/rebuys [6-max]	\$530	\$1,000,000
	16:30	PL Omaha [6-max]	\$2,100	\$600,000
	14:30	NL Hold'em [1R1A]	\$530	\$1,000,000
18-Sep	16:30	FL Hold'em [6-max]	\$1,050	\$400,000
	20:00	NL Omaha Hi/Lo [10-minute levels]	\$215	\$200,000
19-Sep	14:30	PL Omaha [Heads-Up Match Play]	\$530	\$250,000
	16:30	8-Game	\$2,100	\$350,000
20-Sep	12:45	NL Hold'em	\$215	\$1,000,000
	14:30	H.O.R.S.E. [High Roller]	\$10,300	\$1,000,000
	16:30	NL Hold'em Main Event [2-day]	\$5,200	\$10,000,000

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FROM THE PUBLISHERS



THE CHOICE IS UP TO YOU

Isn't it nice to be recognized for hard work? Wouldn't a pat on the back once in a while go a long way? That's the idea behind our inaugural Ante Up Florida's Choice Awards.

You love playing poker in our great state, right? OK, maybe you don't LOVE playing here because the limits still remain so damn limiting, but that's not the fault of any of our poker establishments. Wouldn't you like to tell the people running (and working for) these establishments what you think? Maybe you're too shy and only let your cash tips speak for your feelings. Well now you can let them know how they're doing from the privacy of your home, too.

We have plenty of categories for poker rooms and poker leagues so no one gets excluded. Do you think the staff is fantastic in one room while tournament structures are superior in another? Here's your chance to reward those rooms you feel are exceptional. Or perhaps you play in a couple of free leagues and love the prizes in one league but prefer the locations of another. You can let your "virtual" voice be heard by voting for whatever you please at anteupmagazine.com. Voting will be open until July 27 and results will be featured in our September issue.

Given the competitive nature of the dozens of poker rooms and leagues that dot the state, we expect the "ballot box" to be stuffed. But that doesn't mean you should assume your favorite place to play poker would win. It's not hard to envision rooms campaigning for votes, requesting their players to log on to vote for

them. So maybe you're reading this while waiting for a seat to open or a tournament to begin. Be sure to tuck this issue under your arm or into your purse. That way when you get home you'll have a reminder to log on to anteupmagazine.com to make your vote count. Or, if you're a subscriber, head over to your computer now and exercise your right to show some love. No vote shall be left behind!

As for the rest of this issue, the World Series of Poker is all but wrapped up, save for the nine players who will battle it out for the world title in November. And, just like last year, we've recapped the WSOP from a Sunshine State perspective as Floridians had another tremendous showing. Davie's Jason Mercier won his first bracelet and our Player of the Year, Tony Cousineau of Daytona Beach, cashed seven times!

But we had some serious poker play going on right here in our own back yard as well. The Florida State Poker Championship at the Isle broke attendance records over last year's effort and the Summer Open at the Hard Rock in Hollywood wrapped up its week-long series with a \$150K guarantee.

Plus, the Ante Up Poker Tour was in full swing, increasing business and attendance for more than a dozen locations around the state. Be sure to check out this month's AUPT schedule on Page 27, and, as always, we'll see you at the tables.

Christopher Cosenza and Scott Long
Publishers



ANTE UP

PUBLISHING LLC

anteupmagazine.com

2519 McMullen-Booth Road
Suite 510-300
Clearwater, FL 33761
(727) 331-4335

PUBLISHERS
Christopher Cosenza
Scott Long

CONTRIBUTORS
Lee Childs
Lauren Failla
John Lanier
Joe Navarro
Dr. Frank Toscano
Chaz Allen

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Got a gripe? Bad beat story falling on deaf ears? Drop us a line at letters@anteupmagazine.com and tell us about it. Leave your name and location.

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Beautifully played.



Sep 3-14

Vanessa Rousso

"Lady Maverick"

Don't miss a special appearance by the professional poker star and WPT veteran. Plus, double down with well-known poker pro and TV celebrity, Chad Brown.



DATE	EVENT	TIME	TOURNAMENT	BUY-IN
Sep 3	Thu	6PM	Satellites and Nightly Event Begin	
Sep 4	Fri	1 12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (deep stack)	\$300 + \$40
Sep 5	Sat	2 Day 1 12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$500 + \$50
Sep 6	Sun	2 Day 2 12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (optional Day 1 Re-entry)	\$500 + \$50
Sep 6	Sun	3 2PM	LIPS Ladies Event	\$300 + \$40
Sep 7	Mon	4 12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (deep stack)	\$300 + \$40
Sep 7	Mon	5 4PM	Limit Hold 'Em	\$300 + \$40
Sep 8	Tue	6 12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (deep stack)	\$300 + \$40
Sep 8	Tue	7 4PM	Limit Omaha Hi-Lo	\$300 + \$40
Sep 9	Wed	8 12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (deep stack)	\$300 + \$40
Sep 9	Wed	9 4PM	Seven Card Stud/Stud 8 mixed event	\$300 + \$40
Sep 10	Thu	10 12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (deep stack)	\$300 + \$40
Sep 10	Thu	11 4PM	Pot Limit Omaha/Rebuy	\$500 + \$50
Sep 11	Fri	12 12PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$500 + \$50
Sep 11	Fri	13 2PM	A-5 Lowball/2-7 Lowball/Badugi Draw	\$1,000 + \$70
Sep 11	Fri	4PM	Mega Satellite (1 Day)	\$500 + \$40
Sep 11	Fri	8PM	Mega Satellite (1 Day)	\$500 + \$40
Sep 12	Sat	10AM	Last Chance Mega Satellite Turbo	\$500 + \$40
Sep 12	Sat	14 2PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em Championship	\$5,000 + \$150
Sep 13	Sun	12PM	Day 2 of Championship Event	
Sep 13	Sun	4PM	Mega Satellite	\$500 + \$40
Sep 14	Mon	15 2PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em Turbo (1 Day)	\$270 + \$30
Sep 14	Mon	4PM	Championship Event Final Table	

Event 14 winner receives a seat into the WPT event at Beau Rivage, January 2010.

\$300 + \$30 Mega Satellites for Championship Event every day at 4PM. \$175 + \$25 No-Limit Hold 'Em Nightly Events, every night at 7PM.

Registration begins at 5PM on September 3. Registration is open from 8AM - 9PM daily. For more information, call 1.228.386.7092. Blind structures and additional details are available at beaurivage.com. Complete rules are available in the poker room.

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COVER STORY



Mr. Consistency

Three things you can count on in life: death, taxes, and Tony Cousineau cashing in the World Series of Poker. The Daytona Beach resident made the money seven times this Series and is Ante Up's 2009 WSOP Player of the Year. **30**

STRATEGY



Use your mouse

If you are in a multi-day tournament, such as the World Series of Poker, don't be afraid to do a little Internet research on your Day 2 opponents. **38**

ROAD TRIP

Tunes and three-betting

This month we take a look at some cool concerts around the state and where to play poker while you're there. **24-25**

PERSPECTIVE



More dealer controversy

Chaz Allen is back with Part III of his look at dealers around the state, and yes, more letters discussing his past columns. **42**

TOP FIVE



Who's the worst?

Poker villains can make you laugh, wince or cry. We pick our favorites, and you just know the Poker Brat will be on both lists. **37**

NEWS

A South Florida potpourri

If you like tournament poker there was plenty to choose from last month in our South Florida casinos. We have results from the Isle's Florida State Championship, Hard Rock Hollywood's Summer Open, Gulfstream Park's World Series satellite race and Dania's Le Batard event. **8-14**



Touring the state

The first month of the Ante Up Poker Tour is in the books, and there were almost as many interesting stories as there were players. **26-27**



ON THE BUTTON

The Mouth opens up

Mike Matusow explains in his new autobiography that ADHD, bipolar disorder and "self medication" were the reasons for his "blowups." **44**



Down with bad-beat jackpots

On the surface, the big pile of cash from bad-beat jackpots may look like a good thing, but the deeper you go the more you'll realize they are bad for poker. **40**



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FLORIDA STATE POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

JUNE 12-22 • ISLE CASINO • POMPANO BEACH



EVENT #1 • \$330 BUY-IN

1. Kevin McBride	Boca Raton	\$11,000
2. Jeffrey Balsewich	Boynton Beach	\$9,500
3. Steven Senter	Plantation	\$8,500
4. Ezekiel Eberly	Ft. Myers	\$3,690
5. Alex Ripps	Boca Raton	\$2,706
6. Sal Kamal	Coral Springs	\$2,214
7. Jay Green	Boca Raton	\$1,624
8. Mike Amato	Boca Raton	\$1,181
9. Michael Tait	Hallandale	\$1,132
10. David Fetzner	Jensen Beach	\$1,082
11. Chaim Halpern	Boynton Beach	\$1,033
12. Richard Gettino	Weston	\$984
13. Shane Biggar	Coral Springs	\$935
14. Daniel Gimbel	Jupiter	\$886
15. Donald Keneipp	Ft. Lauderdale	\$836
16. Walter Scovronski	Hardeeville, S.C.	\$787
17. Todd Rich	Loxahatchee	\$738



EVENT #2 • LADIES CHAMPIONSHIP

1. Susan Tolson	Ft. Lauderdale	\$3,917
2. Lisa Woodburn	Margate	\$2,398
3. Christy Pham	Kissimmee	\$1,562
4. Georgia Felger	Lantana	\$1,085
5. Sirima Hecht	Deerfield Beach	\$792
6. Lisa Adams	Boca Raton	\$608
7. Ruth Gaskins	Green Acres	\$488

EVENT #5 • CASINO EMPLOYEES

1. Joseph Dipietro	Coconut Creek	\$1,030
2. Kellie Heburn	Coconut Creek	\$1,030
3. Brett Bennett	Ft. Pierce Jai-Alai	\$1,030
4. Jason Picciolo	Coconut Creek	\$1,030
5. Wilson Rivera	Coconut Creek	\$1,030
6. Alejandro Posso	Mardi Gras	\$1,030
7. Greg Jackson	Ocala Jai-Alai	\$1,030
8. Tim Fredericks	Ocala Jai-Alai	\$1,030
9. Chris Angelo	H.R. Hollywood	\$1,030
10. Thinh Van	Ft. Pierce Jai-Alai	\$1,030

EVENT #4 • \$330 • 230 PLAYERS

1. Tony Petrucci	Boca Raton	\$4,869
2. Toufik Belouki	Sunrise	\$4,869
3. Aleem Chandrani	Ft. Myers	\$4,869
4. Daniel Letts	Miami	\$4,869
5. Ray Nalbandian	Tamarac	\$4,869
6. Tim Morgan	Pompano	\$4,869
7. David Fetzner	Jensen Beach	\$4,869
8. Alan Winters	Gainesville	\$1,068
9. Walt Vanzuidam	Lighthouse Point	\$1,024
10. Brandon Terry	Kady, Texas	\$979
11. Ken Campos	Miami	\$935
12. Michael Mack	Tamarac	\$890
13. Gil Nagar	Hollywood	\$846
14. Devin Barta	Coral Springs	\$801
15. Amy Devoe	Oakland Park	\$757
16. Jorge Aristizabal	Parkland	\$712
17. Roy Goodman	Pompano	\$668
18. Nick Visconti	Boca Raton	\$623
19. Anna Calder	Hallandale	\$579
20. Eric Kolodny	Aventura	\$534
21. Robert Drexler	Delray Beach	\$500
22. David Weaver	Ft. Lauderdale	\$500
23. Mark Yee	West Palm Beach	\$500



MAIN EVENT • \$900 • 319 PLAYERS

1. Harrison Gimbel	Jupiter	\$67,860
2. Taylor Jon Stelfox	Edgewater, Md.	\$39,780
3. Claudionel Barbosa	Deerfield Beach	\$25,740
4. Glenn Fullone	St. Petersburg	\$16,380
5. Robert Blanchette	Ft. Lauderdale	\$11,700
6. Marc Bronstein	Delray Beach	\$10,062
7. Daniel Vranich	Lake Park	\$7,722
8. Jerry Leong	Boca Raton	\$5,616
9. Peter Han	Boca Raton	\$5,382
10. Greg Rosen	Plantation	\$5,148
11. Adel Jo	Miami	\$4,914
12. Stuart Paterson	Boca Raton	\$4,680
13. David Gerber	Deerfield Beach	\$4,446
14. Michael Lipman	Miami	\$4,212
15. Fernando Halac	Aventura	\$3,978
16. Nissin Vaknin	Davie	\$3,744
17. Robert Chusid	Cooper City	\$3,510
18. Howard Darnold	Ft. Pierce	\$3,276
19. Mike Delgigante	Boca Raton	\$3,042
20. Frank Andrews	Boca Raton	\$2,808
21. John Lacognata	Coral Springs	\$1,840
22. Anthony Ruberto	Everett, Mass.	\$1,840
23. Marc Levy	Boynton Beach	\$1,840
24. Donald Keneipp	Ft. Lauderdale	\$1,840
25. Jacob Roden	Esteros	\$1,840
26. Romel Nicolas	Miami Gardens	\$1,760
27. Dave Albertson	Margate	\$1,760
28. Charles Alexander	Coconut Creek	\$1,760
29. Devin Shalmi	Boca Raton	\$1,760
30. John Davis	West Palm Beach	\$1,760
31. Alan Gould	Plantation	\$1,600
32. Len St. Germain	SW Ranches	\$1,600



EVENT #6 • \$550 • 235 PLAYERS

1. Peter S.	Lake Worth	\$19,546
2. Steven Senter	Plantation	\$19,545
3. Joseph Sanzeri	Ft. Lauderdale	\$19,545
4. Scott Watson	Boca Raton	\$14,000
5. Hayden Fortini	Vero Beach	\$5,675
6. Carlos Alberta	Colombia	\$4,881
7. Tom Livia	Boca Raton	\$3,746
8. James Salmon	Ft. Lauderdale	\$2,724
9. Soo Jae Han	Boca Raton	\$2,611
10. Brett Maistri	Wellington	\$2,497
11. John Magnetta	Boynton Beach	\$2,384
12. Amy Wan	Parkland	\$2,270
13. Thomas McGrath	Tryon, N.C.	\$2,157
14. Ward Martin	Lantana	\$2,043
15. Cathy Pennell	Lake Worth	\$1,930
16. Sal Kamal	Coral Springs	\$1,816
17. David Fetzner	Jensen Beach	\$1,703
18. Andrew Swartz	Boca Raton	\$1,589
19. Walt Strakowski	West Palm Beach	\$1,476
20. Mark Levey	Boynton Beach	\$1,362
21. Mark Jagiello	Hillsboro Beach	\$1,000
22. Jason Seaton	Miramar	\$1,000
23. Charlie Bury	Boca Raton	\$1,000
24. Michael Goldfarb	Coral Springs	\$1,000



EVENT #3 • \$225 • 253 PLAYERS

1. Robert Zelinjka	Delray Beach	\$13,977
2. Francisco Regalado	Miami	\$8,194
3. Jerome Weinberg	Lake Worth	\$5,302
4. Scott Debenidetto	Boca Raton	\$3,374
5. Johnathan Gold	Boca Raton	\$2,410
6. Allen Epstein	West Palm Beach	\$2,073
7. Michael Sarabjit	Miramar	\$1,591
8. Richard Bratter	Ocala	\$1,157
9. Seth Gregg Elovitz	Pompano Beach	\$1,109
10. Max Gesenhues	Ft. Myers	\$1,060
11. Gus Decarlo	Aventura	\$1,012
12. Ravi Varma	P.B. Gardens	\$964
13. Thomas Battaglia	Pompano Beach	\$916
14. Orlando Comrie	Davie	\$868
15. Nissin Vaknin	Davie	\$819
16. Christy Pham	Kissimmee	\$771
17. Tim Morgan	Pompano Beach	\$723
18. Daniel Genachte	Deerfield Beach	\$675
19. Hosney Boutros	Ft. Lauderdale	\$627
20. Arnold Erenstoff	Margate	\$598
21. Doug Eddy	Hollywood	\$400
22. Dan Kolchikov	Pompano	\$400
23. Marene Ledo	Miami	\$400
24. Tony Aobano	Deerfield	\$400
25. Brian Sekel	Oakland, N.J.	\$400
26. Mike McBride	Lighthouse Point	\$400



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SUMMER OPEN POKER SERIES

JUNE 12-21 • SEMINOLE HARD ROCK • HOLLYWOOD

Here are the winners from the Paradise Poker Room, led by Ebony Kenney, who won the \$150K guarantee main event by besting 181 players and pocketing nearly \$55K. Also, Steven McKean won twice in a series that garnered 2,066 entries and generated nearly \$380K in prize money.



EVENT 8: \$1,100 buy-in, 182 entries • **PRIZE POOL:** \$182K
WINNER: Ebony Kenney, Estero, \$54,230



EVENT 5: \$300 buy-in, 139 entries • **PRIZE POOL:** \$34,750
WINNER: Steven McKean, \$11,120

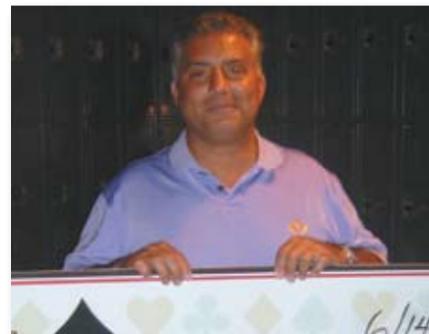
EVENT 9: \$75 buy-in, 276 entries • **PRIZE POOL:** \$16,560
WINNER: Steven McKean, \$4,507



EVENT 1: \$150 buy-in, 305 entries
PRIZE POOL: \$36,600 (\$9,744, 1st)
WINNER: Luis Cristobal, Coral Gables



EVENT 2: \$150 (w/rebuys), 224 entries
PRIZE POOL: \$39,555 (\$11,262, 1st)
WINNER: Ronnie Johns, Labelle



EVENT 3: \$75 buy-in, 310 entries
PRIZE POOL: \$18,600 (\$4,960, 1st)
WINNER: Gary Lopes, Naples

EVENT 4: \$75 buy-in, 173 entries
PRIZE POOL: \$10,380
WINNER: David Albertson, \$3,114

EVENT 7: \$75 buy-in, 267 entries
PRIZE POOL: \$16,020 (\$4,385 1st)
WINNER: N/A



EVENT 6: \$150 buy-in, 190 entries • **PRIZE POOL:** \$22,800
WINNER: Edgar Villamil, \$6,800

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Winner:
Billy Greisman

Poker room manager
Scott Poole

Gulfstream Park

The World Series of Poker Challenge at Gulfstream Park came to an end June 7, but not before three qualifiers punched their tickets to the main event in Las Vegas.

Billy Greisman, Toufik Beloualhi and Erwin Saltos outlasted a strong field of challengers in the 50-player freeroll. Greisman, who finished first, earned a seat at the main event, airfare and hotel stay. Beloualhi, runner-up, received a seat and hotel stay. Saltos also received a seat in the WSOP.

There were four female qualifiers as Mia Higginbotham and Peggy Penning made the final table. Penning was the top female finisher, eliminated in seventh and receiving \$500.

Gulfstream Park continued its challenge theme by kicking off its summer series July 1 with a 2009 Harley-Davidson motorcycle offered to the first-place finisher. See ad for details.



Runner-up:
Toufik Beloualhi

Shift manager
Mike Lord



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Meet . . . Christopher Trabue, Calder's Director of Poker Ops

Christopher Trabue, 37, has been named Director of Poker Operations for Calder Race Course's new poker room, which will open in November with 29 tables. He has worked in poker for five years, all with Isle of Capri properties (Boonville, Mo., and Pompano Beach). *Ante Up* recently caught up with Trabue to see how things are progressing in Miami Gardens and to get to know him a little better.

Are you a poker player, and if so, what do you play?

I play, however I would not call myself a "player." I play tournaments and limit games.

How and when will you fill your staff?

We're currently taking applications at www.calderracecourse.com; we have our positions posted for the poker room on our site. We will be doing our auditions by invitation starting Sept. 1.

What do you think about the history of poker at Calder?

Our team isn't looking back on the history...we are "Racing into the Future" at Calder.

Will your poker room have a name?

Yes, our poker room will be called Studz Poker Club.

What games/limits will you spread to start?

We'll offer hold'em, Omaha, and seven-card stud. As for the limits, we'll offer \$1-\$2, \$2-\$4 limit games, \$1-\$2, \$2-\$5 and \$5-\$10 no-limit hold'em. We'll also have

many daily and specialty tournaments.

What are some of the amenities your room will have?

We'll have bad-beat jackpots in cash games and tournaments. We're looking into many bad-beat promotions such as high hands, royal flush and some others to be disclosed at a later date. We'll be offering tableside food and drink services, along with two food outlets very close to the room. Also, massage service and players will have the option to receive a players club card for the opportunity to be rated on their poker play.

If the state-imposed betting/buy-in limits finally relax, how do you foresee Calder taking advantage of that?

The sky's the limit. The key is to listen to what the players want and see if you can accommodate them.

How difficult will it be to succeed in such a competitive market considering Calder is coming back to poker so late in the game?

I don't think we're coming into this "late" in the game. I feel Florida poker is still taking off.

What can a player expect from a poker room run by Christopher Trabue?

Players can expect to be treated as part of the Calder family. We'll create "winning experiences" to achieve player loyalty and return visits.



Dania Jai-Alai



Bobby Huff

Bobby Huff of Hallandale Beach was declared the winner of June's Dan Le Batard Celebrity tournament as the event drew 230 starters.

Ten players remained as midnight approached, and they agreed to "chop" the pot equally. Each player took home \$790. Since Huff was chipleader when they chopped he was awarded the tournament trophy.



Ante Up publisher Scott Long (red shirt) is all smiles at Dania.

Freepoker4real

Russell Virgins became the first two-time finals champion in Freepoker4real history.

Virgins cracked Bob "The Grinder" Bennett's kings by hitting a straight on the river. He pocketed a \$700 gift card for his victory and Bennett won a \$300 card.

Reggie Rine took third for a \$100 gift card. It was Rine's second straight top-three finish in the finals.

Freepoker4real hosts nightly events throughout Broward county. Go to freepoker4real.com for more information.

Miami Poker Society

The Cabana One Maverick Charity Tournament was held in conjunction with the Coconut Grove Chamber of Commerce, raising funds for the Children of Coconut Grove.

Jesus Hernandez won an \$800 gift card, defeating Leo Clavel, who won a night at the Mayfair Hotel, including a spa package for two and dinner.



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Nearly 150 players participated in the Ante Up Poker Cruise freeroll, hosted by the Silks Poker Room in Tampa.

TWO CRUISE TO VICTORY IN WDAE FREEROLL



The final table was pleasantly surprised the freeroll paid nine spots as rebuys and add-ons upped the prize pool.

Thanks to the Silks Poker Room and WDAE-AM 620's Poker Club, nine players are a little richer than they were before, June 18, and two of those players are headed for Cozumel for free.

With nearly 150 players in the field, the Ante Up Poker Cruise freeroll paid nine spots, including two cruise packages for the top two finishers. Below are the results. The cruise is Aug. 20-24.

1. Steven Constantini	Cruise & \$150
2. Valentin Rios	Cruise & \$150
3. James Bumbul	\$350
4. Stu Dausch	\$260
5. Debbie Colton	\$200
6. Kevin Abendroth	\$160
7. Joe Besciglia	\$130
8. Rose Whelan	\$110
9. Jerry Jackson	\$100



Treasure Chest Poker

At left, Robert Castings, Andy Lazaro and Marc Lowe won seats to one of the World Series of Poker's undercard no-limit hold'em events after finishing in the top three of the TCP year-end tournament on June 6.

On the right, William Clark and his family battled it out with more than 100 other players in the recent monthly event.

William won the tournament, and his brother, Brian, finished third.



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Southeast Hold'em

Mike Marcum, pictured holding the trophy among the Southeast Hold'em family, won the league's first bi-monthly tournament, June 13 at Wings, Pizza N Things in Daytona Beach. He bested 67 players to earn \$300 in Daytona Beach Kennel Club Poker Room vouchers. The remaining top 10 were Jay Stinnett, Rosemarie Card, John Browning, Donald Chartrand, Patty Puzzo, Mike McMahon (who also received a trophy for top points earner), Bob Rhoads, John Peterson and Mike LaCroix.



In league news, Southeast Hold'em recently purchased the Hold'em or Fold'em league, which has venues in the Orlando, Ocala, Ft. Myers, and Gainesville areas. If you have any questions please email info@southeastholdem.com

All in! Poker Series

Recently, Felipe De La Fuente, pictured at left, won a \$1,500 seat to the WSOP's Event 51, plus the champion's bracelet, airfare and hotel to Las Vegas.

The tournament was capped at 40 players and entrants had to win a monthly event to qualify.

De La Fuente has been playing with All in! Poker Series since November 2007 and only plays at one location.

Also, the league held its monthly invitational at Buffalo's Southwest Cafe on June 14 with Jay Henson winning his second monthly. Henson took home a cruise package for two, which will set sail in October. Henson, who has been playing with All in! for about four years, beat nearly 60 players to win the champion's trophy. For more information visit allinpokerseries.com



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- Sunday, Oct. 18, 2009

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Call the poker hotline at 561.818.5771 or email joe@pokerroompb.com.

WILL FLORIDA EMBRACE ONLINE POKER?

By Scott Long

Gulfstream Park and PokerStars.com as partners?

As odd as it sounds, that just might be the end result of a long sentence tucked into a bill loaded with changes for the Florida's Department of Business and Professional Regulation. Gov. Charlie Crist signed House Bill 425 on June 16, and the state's Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability has until Dec. 1 to research and report to the Legislature on the state of online poker and how Florida may want to address it.

Florida poker players — at least those who were able to find the sentence all the way down on line 2,209 of the bill — likely were a little worried about the intention of the bill, with phrases such as “unregulated poker activities” and “provide for protection and remedies.”

“I think the way it started out was with a jaundiced eye toward Internet gaming and what can we do to shut these guys down and preserve the monopoly for the card rooms in the state,” Poker Players Alliance executive director John Pappas said on a recent episode of the *Ante Up PokerCast*. The PPA is a grassroots organization that seeks to protect poker players' rights.

But Pappas says once the PPA and other organizations got involved, the intent changed to “how is the best way to deal with the (online) industry.”

And that brings us back to the seemingly unlikely partnership between a parimutuel poker room and an online poker giant.



“With a couple of tweaks to existing statutes, you could have regulated online poker right now,” says **Marc Dunbar**, a lawyer who lobbies on behalf of Gulfstream Park and other parimutuel interests. Those tweaks, Dunbar added, would allow Florida poker rooms to team up with online poker rooms to provide an online product that benefits both.

“A partnership between PokerStars and Gulfstream could be huge,” Dunbar said, adding that such a deal would legitimize online gaming, which now operates in a somewhat hazy legal area in the United States. “(Online rooms) could fully come out of the closet.”

Dunbar says existing poker laws in the state are essentially set up to allow an online product. For example, he says the laws don't define a “poker table” and therefore, the table could be a “virtual” one.

“Use the existing regulatory statutes and legitimize a ‘virtual’ table around existing card rooms,” he said.

Dunbar said an enterprising online room could become the “vir-

What does the bill say?

The online poker legislation is just one sentence in a much larger bill addressing the state's Department of Business and Professional Regulation. The sentence: “The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability shall perform a study and make recommendations to the Legislature by December 1, 2009, regarding the enactment of laws to provide for protection and remedies from existing and unregulated online poker activities, which currently lack oversight and consumer protection under s. 849.086, Florida Statutes. Section 66.”

tual backroom for the state of Florida,” dealing cards and sharing proceeds with the brick-and-mortar rooms with which it partners. Dunbar also says age verification and other software exists to ensure only qualified players, such as those 18 and older, can participate.

But much work remains before Florida gets into the online poker game.

The bill directs the state's Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability to research the online poker industry and report back to the Legislature by Dec. 1 with recommendations. Researchers from the office are looking at how other states have dealt with online poker. Dunbar and Pappas hope the research shows that trying to ban online poker is not an attractive option, especially in light of Minnesota's failure to get Internet service providers to block access to online gaming sites.

“People will find their online fix regardless of what the state does,” Dunbar said.

Once the Legislature gets the recommendations, the ball is in its court to decide how to proceed. Dunbar says gambling legislation historically doesn't fare well in election years, so he's not expecting much action on it until 2011.

Dunbar and Pappas disagree on the best route to regulate online poker. Pappas believes it to be through the federal government, saying patchwork bills in states, such as in California and Florida, will cause confusion. Rep. Barney Frank of Massachusetts has introduced a federal bill to regulate online gaming.

But Dunbar says doing it intrastate, rather than interstate, has a better shot at success.

“In my roughly 20 years of doing lobbying, I've seen that they can tilt at windmills all day and not get the legislation they want,” Dunbar said of the federal level.

St. Johns Greyhound Park

“It was *Rounders* that inspired me,” Eric Bush said, referring to the 1998 Matt Damon film. “After I saw it I went out and bought a copy of *Winning Poker for the Serious Player* by Edwin Silberstang. That was it!”

The inspiration and the book (along with 10 years' experience) helped make Bush the top finisher in June's Super Stack Summer Series. His two first-place wins and two second-place finishes earned him \$10,173.

Bush prides himself on being patient. “People get too rattled and go broke before they need to,” the St. Johns resident said. He admires Daniel Negreanu's ability to read people and Phil Hellmuth's truth-telling — though not necessarily personal style.

For more information go to jaxpokerroom.com.

Pleasure Island Poker



Billy Harwood won the monthly event June 22 in Shalimar. He beat 96 players to earn a seat in a tournament at the casino of his choice in Biloxi, Miss.



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NOTHIN' BUT 'NET

JOHN LANIER • A look at Florida's online players and beyond



ONLINE PROS CASH IN AT WORLD SERIES

With all the action at the World Series of Poker the past two months, I'd like to examine the successes of Internet pros. Pocketfives.com reported more than \$30 million was won by online pros at this year's WSOP events, proving the best online players can compete in the live games. Two of the best Internet players from Florida squared off heads-up for a pot-limit Omaha WSOP bracelet, Steven Burkholder of Largo and Jason Mercier of Davie, with Mercier taking it down.

Florida is a true hotbed of Internet poker, and there are more than 10 players in the Sunshine State consistently making more than \$500,000 annually online, plus more than 100 Florida players earn \$50,000-plus per year.



Doyle on the silver screen?

ONLINE POKER MOVIE: Leonardo DiCaprio has signed on to star in Paramount's untitled poker project based on Internet poker. DiCaprio will play an Internet rounder living in Costa Rica. The writers of *Rounders*, widely considered

AIPS primer

On Aug. 12 the Ante Up Intercontinental Poker Series will host its seventh event, a no-limit hold'em rebuy tournament on PokerStars. The cost will be \$1.10, with unlimited rebuys. This shouldn't be too steep for your bankroll, but just in case it is, there will be a freeroll into the event on July 29. Be sure to go to anteupmagazine.com/aips for all details. Also, for strategy on how to play in a rebuy event, go to: www.pokereagles.net/home-poker/buyin-rebuy.php

the best poker movie of all time, have written a new script that supposedly centers on the world of online poker, according to *Hollywood Reporter* and *Variety*. Expect a cameo role from many prominent poker players, most notably Doyle Brunson. DiCaprio was seen at a Los Angeles Lakers game wearing a Doyle's Room hat. Brunson once donated to an environmental movie DiCaprio produced and narrated called *11th Hour*.

FLORIDA EMBRACING ONLINE POKER? In case you missed it, be sure to turn back to Page 20 to read Scott Long's interview with lawyer Marc Dunbar regarding recent online poker legislation and how it pertains to Florida card rooms.

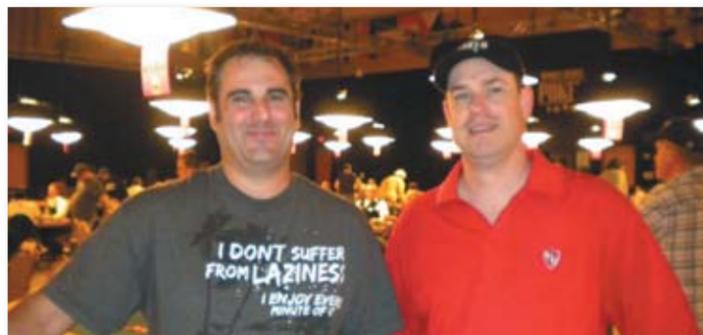
ANTE UP POKERCAST PRESENTED BY POKERSTARS



Ante Up, the longest running poker show on the Internet, is still cranking out the best PokerCast on the planet. Tune in Fridays at anteupmagazine.com or subscribe on iTunes for free.

The Ante Up Intercontinental Poker Series (a.k.a. AIPS) is *Ante Up's* monthly fan tournament series on PokerStars.com. Battle the Ante Up Nation for bragging rights, cash and, yes, the ultimate prize — the AIPS banana. And new this year: Every winner gets a PokerStars stuffed monkey! Email us a photograph of you with your banana and monkey to editor@anteupmagazine.com and we'll publish it.

For bragging rights, knock out one of the *Ante Up* publishers — Scott "OffDeadline" Long and Chris "aun2112" Cosenza. Don't have a PokerStars account? No problem. Go to anteupmagazine.com/aips and click on the PokerStars banner. Use the code "psante50" to get a 100 percent matching deposit bonus up to \$50!



Carbidexxx (a.k.a. Dave) and Seitz333 (a.k.a. Chuck), two AIPS regulars, snapped this shot about five minutes before the start of the WSOP's Event 31 \$1,500 H.O.R.S.E. tournament. Seitz busted early, but Carbide finished 44th out of 770 to cash. Nice job, guys. AIPS also had a bracelet-winner this year! Turn to Page 34 to find out who he is.

Event #7	Event #9	Event #11
Aug. 12 NLHE Rebuy \$1.10	Oct. 7 Razz \$5.50	Dec. 9 Badugi \$5.50
Event #8	Event #10	Event #12
Sept. 9 Omaha/8 \$5.50	Nov. 11 NLHE Heads-Up \$5.50	Jan. 13 H.O.R.S.E. \$22

Doyle Brunson photo courtesy of WPT

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Robert Earl Keen

The Moon, Tallahassee, Aug. 16

Pitch: Traditional country, folk, y'all-ternative, however you classify him, this guy is cool. He cut his guitar teeth in Austin and tells a story about his car burning at Willie Nelson's 1974 Fourth of July Picnic. Stand at the stage, or pay a little more for a reserved seat. www.moonevents.com

Poker: Steer north toward Monticello and meet poker room manager John Lyons at Jefferson County Kennel Club.



Laura Long in front of the Plaza Theatre.

RAISING THE ROOF!

When it comes to music, *Ante Up's* Scott Long and his wife, Laura, couldn't be more different. Scott rocks out to his collection of cassette tapes from the '80s, while Laura travels the country following musicians who are more concerned with harmony than their hair. Here's Laura's lineup for a perfect August concert road trip:



John Brown's Body w/Passafire and Hours Eastly

Gainesville, Common Grounds, Aug. 5

Pitch: John Brown's Body calls themselves a progressive reggae band. We're not sure what that is, but Common Grounds only books the coolest indie bands. They pour a mean Jack and Coke and have a nice patio.

www.commongroundslive.com

Poker: Ocala Poker & Jai-Alai offers a lot of play in its Ante Up Poker Tour events, with 10,000 in starting units, 30-minute levels and a slow structure.

Def Leppard & Poison with special guest Cheap Trick

Ford Amphitheatre, Tampa, Aug. 14

Pitch: In interviews with *Rolling Stone* and *Billboard*, the boys admit they teamed up for the cash, but that's OK. Half of *Ante Up* has not been to the Ford Amphitheatre and wants to find out if the view of I-75 and the Hard Rock Casino adds to the beauty of '80s hair rock. www.livenation.com

Poker: You're literally right across the street from the Hard Rock Tampa and its expansive poker room.

Take us on your trip!

E-mail your unique poker road trip to editor@anteupmagazine.com, and if we use it, we'll run your photo and give you some great Ante Up swag! Each trip must be themed (golf courses! biker bars! amusement parks! fishing holes! you name it!), and include as much of the state as possible.

About Road Trip

With 30 poker rooms and dozens of free poker leagues all across Florida, you don't need a reason to make a road trip. But in case you do, each month we'll give you a unique road map to Florida fun and poker.

Jackson Browne

St. Augustine, St. Augustine Amphitheatre, Aug. 7

Pitch: You can *Take It Easy* under the pavilion or on the lawn under the stars. They must know we're old, doors open at 6 and the show's at 7. www.staugamphitheatre.com

Poker: You're a short drive from St. Johns Greyhound Park, with a great variety of cash games, good tournaments and freshly made sushi.

Poco and Pure Prairie League

Orlando, The Plaza Theatre, Aug. 2

Pitch: After driving from wherever you were playing poker, since it wasn't Orlando, you'll appreciate singing along to '70s hits like *Amie* and *Crazy Love* from your plush, air-conditioned seat. This show is so anticipated, show time and ticket prices were being kept secret (actually they just weren't announced by press time).

www.theplazatheatre.com

Poker: We'll keep saying it until it isn't true anymore. There's no poker-for-money in Orlando, so hop on the casino shuttle and set sail on the Port Canaveral SunCruz.

Bobby MacDonald Unplugged

Island Jacks Patio Bar and Grill, West Palm Beach Fridays and Saturdays, 6-10 p.m.

Pitch: Sometimes in Florida all you need is a guy playing Jimmy Buffett songs on an acoustic guitar while you sip Coronas and eat crab fritters on a beachside patio. Their theme song says it all! www.islandjacks.net.

Poker: Hop aboard the Palm Beach Princess and watch Lou Patierno bring "Old Vegas" back to his poker room.

Hot Tuna with Old School Freight Train Revolution, Ft. Lauderdale, Aug. 29

Pitch: Most folks probably would go to see jam band Hot Tuna, but we'd like to see Old School Freight Train. You've seen their CDs at Best Buy when you're shopping for John Mayer and Coldplay (*Pickin' on John Mayer* and *Coldplay: A Bluegrass Tribute*). Our favorite is their all bluegrass version of Wilco songs, *Pickin' on Wilco: Casino Side*.

Poker: Give the hard-working folks at Dania Jai-Alai a try as they pack them in for tournaments and give cash-game players free booze!

Judas Priest with Whitesnake

Seminole Hard Rock, Hollywood, Aug. 17

Pitch: Admit it, you rock out to Judas Priest's *You've Got Another Thing Comin'* on Guitar Hero, or maybe you bought *Whitesnake's Greatest Hits* for \$2.99 when Laura sold Scott's copy on the Amazon Marketplace. Or perhaps you just want to play poker after dropping your dad off at the show. www.seminolehardrockhollywood.com

Poker: Just walk outside to the Paradise Poker Room and take in the sports-bar atmosphere and try to win an event in its great monthly tournament series.



AUPT IS IN FULL SWING

What a start to the Ante Up Poker Tour!

June saw more than a dozen events spread out across Florida as players traveled coast to coast to participate (Players admitted traveling from the bay area to the Isle Casino at Pompano Park and from Naples and Orlando to Derby Lane in St. Pete specifically for those AUPT events). Some rooms reported record numbers for their events (more than 300 players in some cases and alternate lists in others), while some managers said they nearly tripled their usual tournament business for that evening.

This is exactly what *Ante Up* envisioned when it dreamed up this concept: get players visiting rooms all over Florida to not only help poker rooms increase business, but to expose more players to different structures, buy-ins, staffs and facilities.

That's not to say there weren't hiccups along the way. Some players at Ocala Poker & Jai-Alai thought the AUPT events were merely for points and no prize pool. Not the case. On the same day, nearly three hours south of Ocala at Derby Lane, a rumor got started that *Ante Up* was somehow taking a portion of the prize pool. *Ante Up's* Chris Cosenza laughed and quickly had the tournament director announce this was Derby's usual Saturday tournament, only as a bonus the event was an AUPT stop and they could earn points toward player of the year. *Ante Up* in no way receives money from any prize pool at any AUPT event, so please tell a friend.

We're donating our pages and prizes (in-



Players packed Derby Lane for its first AUPT tournament.

cluding the one-of-a-kind Ante Up Player of the Year bracelet designed by Madison Jewelers) for this tour as a thank-you to the poker rooms that partner with us on these events.

At the Isle Casino, director of poker operations Mike Smith designated the Florida State Poker Championship Main Event as his first AUPT tournament and it had a record 319 entries. Harrison Gimbel of Jupiter won the title with the 10♠-2♠, just like legendary Doyle Brunson when he won his two World Series of Poker Main Event titles in the '70s. Gimbel pocketed \$67,860 and earned 1,000 points toward the AUPT player of the year race and that coveted *Ante Up* cover story.

But the story of the month had to be the father-son duo aboard the Palm Beach Princess. Walt Strakowski Sr. and his son, **Walt Jr.**, both from West Palm Beach, not only made the final table of their AUPT event, but they went heads-up for the title. And they refused to chop the prize pool! They played out the tournament for the AUPT points and bragging rights, and Junior won this round. You'll get him next time, Mr. Strakowski.

Ante Up's Scott Long got on the board with an eighth-place finish at Ocala, getting a leg up in his contest with Cosenza. (While Long and Cosenza will accrue points, they're not eligible for any player of the year prizes). Long later finished second at the Palm Beach Kennel Club tournament and third at the Mardi Gras event, where Ken Basilio won and took over the lead in the player of the

year race. Basilio, a Ft. Lauderdale resident, knocked Long out of the Mardi Gras tournament, and combined with his third-place finish at the Palm Beach Princess tournament, he has 1,600 points as of July 1.

At One-Eyed Jacks tournament in Sarasota on June 27, Brendan Jordan of Venice eliminated Cosenza. The two players had discovered earlier they used to live in the same hometown in Connecticut. Jordan put those chips to good use and went on to finish fifth in the 93-player field.

The poker rooms in Jacksonville (St. Johns Greyhound Park and Orange Park Kennel Club), Hard Rock Hollywood and Ebro Greyhound Park have joined the AUPT so stay tuned for more results coming out of the First Coast, Panhandle and beyond.

Speaking of Ebro, poker room manager Dennis Hone has agreed to make the first Sunday of every month an official AUPT event. And Ebro isn't the only room to set a permanent schedule for its AUPT events. Tampa Bay Downs' \$350 AUPT tournament is the third Sunday every month; One-Eyed Jacks in Sarasota is making the last Saturday of the month its \$100 AUPT event; Ft. Pierce Jai-Alai's \$150 Deep-Stack is the third Saturday every month and has been designated an AUPT tournament while Seminole Immokalee has reserved the first Saturday of every month for its \$225 AUPT tournament. Any poker rooms wishing to host an AUPT event should contact Long at 727-331-4335 to learn how.



DANIA JAI-ALAI

- JUNE 12**
1. Trevor Samuels, Miami
 2. Mark Weyman, Miami
 3. Art Marchaena, Hollywood
 4. Steve Bugax, Pembroke Pines
 5. Jay Oderet, Miami
 6. Giovana Henad, Pembroke Pines
 7. Luis Cristobol, Coral Gables
 8. Richard Curry, Miami
 9. Ronald Everage, Hollywood
 10. Peter Bleyer, North Miami

DERBY LANE

- JUNE 20**
1. John Hopkins, Clearwater
 2. Lance Hall, Seminole
 3. Mike Laake, Punta Gorda
 4. Craig Bozza, Sarasota
 5. Doug Salz, St. Petersburg
 6. Gerald DePaul, Treasure Island
 7. Alice Bozza, Sarasota
 8. Joey Dunn, Seminole
 9. Larry Miller, Clearwater Beach
 10. Collin Williams, Tampa
- 100-pt. bounty:** Tim Brenner, Sarasota

FT. PIERCE JAI-ALAI & POKER

- JUNE 20**
1. Jerry Giulio, Port St. Lucie
 2. Raymond Bishop
 3. Eric Steele
 4. Perry Lawrence
 5. Michael Ludocco
 6. Mike Jostock
 7. Alan D. Long
 8. Katherine Murphy
 9. Edward P. Morgante
 10. Donald Gousse

GULFSTREAM PARK

- JUNE 20**
1. J.C. Harris, Miami Beach
 2. Player declined points
 3. Augustine Torralba, Miami
 4. Player declined points
 5. Player declined points
 6. Player declined points
 7. Ruth Bigio, Miami
 8. Eric Uy, Queens, N.Y.
 9. Player declined points
 10. Player declined points



Here are the top 10 players from Ocala's first AUPT event.

ISLE CASINO

- JUNE 19**
1. Harrison Gimbel, Jupiter
 2. Taylor Jon Steffox, Maryland
 3. Claudionel Barbosa, Deerfield Beach
 4. Glenn Fullone, St. Petersburg
 5. Rob Blanchette, Ft. Lauderdale
 6. Marc Bronstein, Delray Beach
 7. Daniel Vranich, Lake Park
 8. Jerry Leong, Boca Raton
 9. Peter Han, Boca Raton
 10. Greg Rosen, Plantation

MARDI GRAS GAMING

- JUNE 25**
1. Ken Basilio, Ft. Lauderdale*
 2. Mitchell Abrahams, Miami
 3. Scott Long, Safety Harbor
 4. Walt Strakowski, Jr., West Palm Beach
 5. Alberto Dominguez, Hollywood
 6. Ely Amar, Miami
 7. Tony Ameche, Miramar
 8. Victor Gordon, Pembroke Pines
 9. William Gordon, Pembroke Pines
 10. Lesley J-Paul, Miami
- *Basilio: 100-pt. bounty

OCALA POKER & JAI-ALAI

- JUNE 20**
1. Peter Nadeau, Gainesville*
 2. John Lanier, Lutz
 3. James Gibson, Crystal River
 4. Jason Swanson, Gainesville
 5. Bruce Fetzer, Lady Lake
 6. Mike Mowery, Ocala
 7. Tom Morson, Alachua
 8. Scott Long, Safety Harbor
 9. Jeff Struthers, Wesley Chapel
 10. Joe Gerace, Ocala
- *Nadeau: 100-pt. bounty

PALM BEACH PRINCESS

- JUNE 14**
1. Walt Strakowski, Jr., West Palm Beach
 2. Walt Strakowski, Sr., West Palm Beach
 3. Ken Basilio, Ft. Lauderdale
 4. Christy Golden, Waxahatchee
 5. Joe Catalano
 6. Michael Herman
 7. Daniel Balena
 8. David Stuart
 9. Hung Le
 10. Ryor Holdberh

PALM BEACH KENNEL CLUB

- JUNE 27**
1. Randy Johnston, Boynton Beach*
 2. Scott Long, Safety Harbor
 3. Gary Samuels, West Palm Beach
 4. Georgia Felger, Lantana
 5. Spinner Catchem, West Palm Beach
 6. Mike O'Brien, Palm Beach Gardens
 7. Jerry Giulio, Port St. Lucie
 8. Paul Gert, Palm Beach Gardens
 9. Jim Kintz, Atlantis
 10. Bill Herman, Jupiter
- *Johnston: 100-pt. bounty

SARASOTA KENNEL CLUB

- JUNE 27**
1. Joe Loiacono, Bonita Springs
 2. Michael Cohen
 3. John Kaufstein
 4. Greg Dornon
 5. Brendan Jordan, Venice*
 6. Rex Raymond
 7. Shawn Sullivan
 8. Player declined points
 9. Roger Eicher
 10. Casey Yniguez
- *Jordan: 100-point bounty

SEMINOLE IMMOKALEE

- JUNE 6**
1. Fred Garcia, Naples
 2. Paul Chin, Ft. Myers
 3. Allan Beraquit, Ft. Myers
 4. Muktan Hossain, Immokalee
 5. Jonathan Ronisvalle, Naples
 6. Martin Leddy, Naples
 7. Cary Kleinfield, Ft. Myers
 8. Elmo Mariathasan, Ft. Myers
 9. Joe Loiacono, Bonita Springs*
 10. Frank Dimeglio, Naples
- *Armstrong: 100-pt. bounty

TAMPA BAY DOWNS

- JUNE 21**
1. Dean Christopher, Tampa
 2. Jamey McMullen, Land O'Lakes
 3. Bill Dubay, Tampa
 4. Andre Papangelou, Dunedin
 5. John Ritchie, Spring Hill*
 6. Frank Grice, Largo
 7. Chris Barabash, Hudson
 8. Eric Moffett, Tampa
 9. Debbie Pullen, Tampa
 10. Jeff Struthers, Wesley Chapel
- *Ritchie: 100-point bounty

Mistakes? Omissions? Please contact editor@anteup magazine.com.



Ken Basilio of Ft. Lauderdale won the Mardi Gras event and took third in the PB Princess tournament. He is the leader in the player of the year race.



Play gets under way at Sarasota's first AUPT event, left, and Randy Johnston of Boynton Beach poses with all the chips after taking down the Palm Beach Kennel Club event.



Ante Up Player of the Year bracelet provided by Madison Jewelers. Go to www.madison-jewelers.com.

Race for the Bracelet

Points are earned by finishing in the top 10 and are distributed as follows: 1,000, 700, 500, 300, 250, 200, 175, 150, 125 and 100. Players also receive a 100-point bounty for eliminating an *Ante Up* publisher from an event. Here are the Ante Up Player of the Year leaders as of July 1. For complete results be sure to log on to anteupmagazine.com/tour

1. Ken Basilio, Ft. Lauderdale	1,600
2. Scott Long, Safety Harbor	1,350
3. Walt Strakowski Jr., West Palm Beach	1,300
4. Jerry Giulio, Port St. Lucie	1,175
5. Randy Johnston, Boynton Beach	1,100
5. Peter Nadeau, Gainesville	1,100
7. Dean Christopher, Tampa	1,000
7. Joe Loiacono, Bonita Springs	1,000
7. John Hopkins, Clearwater	1,000
7. Trevor Samuels, Miami	1,000
7. Harrison Gimbel, Jupiter	1,000
7. J.C. Harris, Miami Beach	1,000
7. Fred Garcia, Naples	1,000
14. Michael Cohen	700
14. Paul Chin, Ft. Myers	700
14. Raymond Bishop	700
14. Walt Strakowski Sr., West Palm Beach	700
14. John Lanier, Lutz	700
14. Lance Hall, Seminole	700
14. James McMullen, Land O'Lakes	700
14. Taylor Jon Steffox, Edgewater, MD	700
14. Mark Weyman, Miami	700
14. Mitchell Abrahams, Miami	700
24. James Gibson, Crystal River	500
24. Eric Steele	500
24. Allan Beraquit, Ft. Myers	500
24. Art Marchaena, Hollywood	500
24. Augustine Torralba, Miami	500
24. Bill Dubay, Tampa	500
24. John Kaufstein	500
24. Mike Laake, Punta Gorda	500
24. Gary Samuels, West Palm Beach	500
24. Claudionel Barbosa, Deerfield Beach	500
34. John Ritchie, Spring Hill	350
34. Brendan Jordan, Venice	350

Schedule of events

- July 25: Palm Beach Kennel Club, 1 p.m., \$200
- July 25: Sarasota Kennel Club, 7 p.m., \$100
- July 25: Ocala Poker and Jai-Alai, 2 p.m., \$120
- July 30: Mardi Gras Gaming, 6:30 p.m., \$100
- Aug. 1: Seminole-Immokalee, 4 p.m., \$225
- Aug. 2: Ebro Greyhound Park, 2 p.m., \$100
- Aug. 2: Palm Beach Princess, 10 a.m., \$100
- Aug. 7: Dania Jai-Alai, 6:30 p.m., \$100
- Aug. 8: Gulfstream Park, 6:30 p.m., \$150
- Aug. 14: Hard Rock Hollywood, 11 a.m., \$150
- Aug. 15: Ft. Pierce Jai-Alai, 3 p.m., \$150
- Aug. 16: Tampa Bay Downs, 1 p.m., \$350
- Aug. 17: Isle Casino, 1:30 p.m., \$440 w/1 rebuy
- Aug. 21: Orange Park Kennel Club, 7 p.m., \$100
- Aug. 23: St. Johns Greyhound Park, 4 p.m., \$100
- Aug. 26: Palm Beach K.C., 1 p.m., \$100 (HORSE)
- Aug. 27: Mardi Gras Gaming, 6:30 p.m., \$100
- Aug. 29: Sarasota Kennel Club, 7 p.m., \$100
- Aug. 29: Ocala Poker and Jai-Alai, 2 p.m., \$120

Updated schedule at anteupmagazine.com/tour

Dania Jai-Alai

Phone: (954) 927-2841
www.dania-jai-alai.com
Tournaments: \$25 with \$5 bounty daily at 12:30, plus M&W at 6:30; \$50 with \$250 player bounty Thurs. at 6:30; \$100 w/9K chips & 30-minute blinds Fri. at 6:30; First Sat. of month has reduced rake, 6:30 (\$150).
SNGs: \$30 or \$50 between 2-5 p.m.
High hands: \$50 hourly 1-8 p.m.; royal flush \$500.
Special event: Aug. 7 (6:30 p.m.) Ante Up Poker Tour, \$100.
Promotions: Progressive bad-beat jackpots in stud, Omaha/8 and hold'em. Noon-12:30 p.m., \$5 bonus with first buy-in of \$20 or more; free drinks to cash game players all day, plus free choice of sandwich from 1-3 p.m.; coffee and sweets served at 3 p.m. to all players; Happy Hour 5-7 p.m.

Daytona Beach Kennel Club

Phone: (386) 252-6484
daytonagreyhound.com/pokerroom
Tournaments: Daily, including Wed. Ladies Day (\$25) at 1 p.m.; Sat. deep-stack (\$225) at 2 and Pot-Limit Omaha/8 (\$65) at 6:30.
SNGs: \$40-\$220.
High hands: M-Su every two hours; high hands win \$50-\$100; royal flushes in cash games \$250-\$500, all payouts depend on game and limits. Any royal in tournaments pays \$1,750.
Bad beat: Quad fives.

Derby Lane

Phone: (727) 812-3339 ext. 7
www.derbylanepoker.com
Tournaments: Daily, (1, 4 and 7:30 p.m. Su-Th and 2, 6 and 8 p.m. F-Sa), and pays the bubble with 60-plus players and two bubbles with 100-plus.
High hands: Royals (hold'em, stud).
Special event: Aug. 1 (2 p.m.) Pewter Report Players Invitational, \$220.
Promotions: **Diamonds are Forever** — Players getting a diamond straight flush Su-Th win a share of \$2,500;
Aces Cracked — Every day in the first two hours get aces cracked and win a rack of chips.

Ebro Greyhound Park

Phone: (850) 535-4048
www.ebrogreyhoundpark.com
Tournaments: Big Stack Sundays, (\$100, 2 p.m.).
Special event: Aug. 2 (2 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$100.
High hands: Royal flush jackpots and two high hands per day.
Bad beat: Quad deuces.

Flagler Greyhound Track

Phone: (305) 649-3000
flaglerdogs.com
Tournaments: Sun. 2 p.m. Winner Take All, 50-player limit (\$25); Mon., 7 (\$75).
SNGs: \$65-\$800.
High hands: \$200 all day; non-heart royals win \$1K, heart royal progressive.
Other: \$500 progressive hot table (visit Web site for details).

Ft. Pierce Jai-Alai and Poker Room

Phone: (772) 464-7500
www.jaijai.net/poker.php
Tournaments: Mon. 7 p.m. (\$75); Wed. bounty 6:30 (\$100); Sat. 1:30 (\$100); Sun., 4 (\$55). Deep stack is third Saturday every month, 3 p.m. (\$150).
SNGs: Thursday-Saturday (\$65-\$110)
Special event: Aug. 15 (3 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$150.
High hands: Every two hours Monday and Tuesday (call for payouts).
Bad beat: Aces full of queens (hold'em, \$106K at press time), quads (stud) and quad jacks (Omaha).
Other: Free coffee & doughnuts 11:30-1 p.m. M-Th.

Gulfstream Park

Phone: (954) 457-6336
www.gulfstream.com/casino/poker
Tournaments: Daily at 6:30 p.m. (\$60-\$150), plus bounties M-W-F and Sat. Special, (\$150, 8K units).
SNGs: \$60-\$120 (10 players, pays three spots).
Special event: Aug. 8 (6:30 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$150.
Promotions: Play in nightly qualifiers and earn points until Sept. 6, when top 50 point-earners will play for a 2009 "Fat Boy" Harley-Davidson Cruiser. See ad for details.

Hamilton Jai-Alai

Phone: (800) 941-4841
hamiltondownsjaijai.com
Tournaments: Super Bounty Sunday (every other Sun.) 1, \$35, high hand of tournament gets \$100; Double Prize Pool Sunday (every other Sun.), 1, \$20, limited to 100 players and prize pool is matched with jackpot money; Fri. 7, \$65 (w/ rebuys); Sat. bounty, \$100.
High hands: \$100 at 5 and 10 p.m. W-Th; F-S-Su wins \$500. Progressive spade royal wins a minimum of \$1K jackpot, mini-royal wins 10 percent of main.
Bad beat: Aces full of kings (\$10K).
Promotions: "Splash the Pot Mondays" \$50 added to a random pot every hour; "First to Hit" runs weekdays until 7 p.m., paying \$100 to the first player to make a straight flush each day, plus \$50 to the first four players to make quads and \$25 to the first six to make a flush.

Isle Casino at Pompano Park

Phone: (954) 972-2000 x5123, x5124
www.theislepompanopark.com
Tournaments: \$60-\$550.
SNGs: (\$60-\$225).
Special event: Aug. 17 (1:30 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$440, plus rebuy, \$30K guaranteed prize pool.
High hand and bad-beat jackpots: Call for details.

Jefferson County Kennel Club

Phone: (850) 997-2561
www.jckcpokerroom.com
Tournaments: Fri.-Sat., 7:30, (\$50).
High hand: Royal flushes win jackpot.

Mardi Gras Gaming

Phone: (877) 557-5687 x3167
www.playmardigras.com
Tournaments: Mon.-Sat., \$35, 11:30 a.m.; Sun.-Thurs., \$45, 7 p.m.; daily \$35, 2 a.m.; Sundays, \$145, 11:30 a.m. (includes buffet).
SNGs: \$55-\$110.
Special events: July 30 and Aug. 27, Ante Up Poker Tour, 6:30, \$100.
High hands: Royals win \$599; any steel wheel in Omaha/8 wins \$200; straight flushes pay \$100, quad aces pay \$50 and any quads pay \$25. Special \$500 NLHE jackpot.
Bad beat: Aces full of jacks (HE), quad jacks (O/8), aces full of kings (stud).
Promotions: All quads payouts are doubled in limit games only.

Melbourne Greyhound Park

Phone: (321) 259-9800
www.melbournegreyhoundpark.com
Tournaments: \$65-\$880.
Promotions: Call for details.

Miami Jai-Alai

Phone: (305) 633-6400
www.miamijaijai.net
Tournaments: Sat., 3 p.m., \$20 (extra 1K chips for \$5 dealer toke, unlimited \$20 rebuys in first four levels for 2K chips, \$20 add-on gets 3K chips); Sundays, 1:30, \$45 (\$10 bounties).
High hands: Progressive royals; \$100 every hour (win three a day and get an extra \$500); Four aces or a straight flush (with two cards in the pocket) wins \$100.

Miccosukee Resort

Phone: (877) 242-6464
www.miccosukee.com
Tournaments: Saturday, 7 p.m.
Promotions: Call for current offers.

Naples-Fort Myers Greyhound Track

Phone: (239) 992-2411
www.naplesfortmyersdogs.com
Tournaments: Sun. bounty 2 p.m. (\$125); Mon. 7 (\$65); Tue. 7 (\$45); Wed., 7 (\$65); Thurs. noon and 7 (\$65) and Fri. 7 (\$65). Deep stack events third Sat. every month, 2 p.m.
SNGs: Six-player (\$125-\$550)
High hands: \$500 every three hours in July; diamond royal flush pays \$10,000, other suits pay \$5K.

Ocala Poker and Jai-Alai

Phone: (352) 591-2345
www.ocalapoker.com
Tournaments: Daily (\$65-\$240).
SNGs: (\$45-\$80).
Special events: Aug. 29 (2 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$120.
Bad beat: Any quads.
Promotions: Call for details.

Orange Park Kennel Club

Phone: (904) 646-0002
www.jaxpokerroom.com
Tournaments: Daily, except Tuesday (\$30-\$65).
Special events: Aug. 21 (7 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$100.
High hands: Royals \$250 (but spades pay \$500).
Promotions: Super High Hand, M-W-Th, noon-3, hourly high hand wins \$100 and other players at winning table get \$25.
Bad beat: Call for details.

Palm Beach Kennel Club

Phone: (561) 683-2222
www.pbkennelclub.com
Tournaments: \$65-\$200; bounty tourneys on Tuesdays at noon.
Special events: Palm Beach Poker Classic, Aug. 24-29.(The \$100 H.O.R.S.E. tournament on Aug. 26 at 1 p.m. will be an AUPT event).
SNGs, high hands and bad beats: Call for details.

Tell your poker room managers to email us at editor@anteupmagazine.com

Palm Beach Princess

Phone: (561) 818-5771
www.palmbeachprincess.com
Special events: Aug. 2 (10 a.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$100; Aug. 16, WPT satellite (See ad).
Promotions: Call for offers.

Sarasota Kennel Club

Phone: (941) 355-7744 ext. 1054
www.skcpoker.com
Tournaments: \$35-\$100, including \$40 Friday Night Madness, 8K chips; Titanic Turbo (20K chips, 10-minute blinds, \$80 buy-in); Saturday \$330, 3:30 p.m., 9K chips, 40-minute blinds.
SNGs: \$35-\$300.
Special events: Aug 29, Ante Up Poker Tour (7 p.m.), \$100.
High hands: Progressive jackpots; quads (hold'em), quad 10s (stud) and straight flushes (Omaha) or better.
Bad beat: Call for details.
Promotions: Rack Attacks and Rays Days. Every time the Rays score someone in the room wins \$50 and if the Rays win someone wins \$150.

Seminole Casino Brighton

Phone: (866) 222-7466
www.seminolecasinobrighton.com
Tournaments: Sundays, 6:30 p.m. \$40 no juice with one optional \$40 add-on; Mon. & Wed., 6:30, \$20 with optional \$20 add-on; Tue. & Thurs., 6:30, \$40 w/rebuys in first hour.
SNGs: \$42-\$250.
Promotions: Fridays offer double punches on reward cards, plus aces cracked between 4-7 p.m. wins \$100; double punches given to the first player to buy-in to a live game on Saturdays; Seniors 55 or older receive \$55 for a \$40 buy-in to a live game. If they're dealt 5-5 in the hole, they win a gift. They also may buy a hot dog and drink for \$.50. Any four aces wins \$50, straight flushes win \$100 and any quads win a gift.

Seminole Casino Coconut Creek

Phone: (866) 222-7466
seminolecoconutcreekcasino.com
SNGs: \$55, \$85, \$135.
Bad beat: Aces over jacks.
Promotions: Call for current offers.

Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood

Phone: (866) 502-7529
seminolehardrockhollywood.com
Tournaments: \$100-\$1,100.
SNGs: \$140-\$1,050.
Special event: Aug. 14 (11 a.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$150, \$25K guaranteed prize pool.
High hands: Noon-midnight gets \$50, plus a free entry into a specified tourney (\$100 value).

Bad beat: Sun.-Thurs., 8 a.m.-midnight, if quad eights or better are beaten in hold'em then \$30K will be added to jackpot. If the bonus is still up for grabs, \$10K will be added every week until there's a winner.
Promotions: Poker Dollars reward program and card (see ad for details); Aces cracked begins daily at 8 a.m. with the first 15 aces cracked receiving entry into a specified tournament (\$75 value) plus a gift.

Seminole Hard Rock Tampa

Phone: (866) 502-7529
www.seminolehardrocktampa.com
Tournaments: \$100-\$550.
SNGs: \$125-\$1,075.
Bad beat: Quads or better.
Promotions: **Four of a Kind Bonus Days** — cash-game players through July 31 (except on Saturdays) may win \$400 if they're dealt quads in the value of the bonus card drawn for the day.

Seminole Casino Hollywood Classic

Phone: (866) 222-7466
seminolehollywoodcasino.com
SNGs: \$25-\$50.
High hands: Sat.-Sun., every hour from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. top-two hands get \$100; every Wednesday from 9 a.m. till noon every high hand for that hour gets \$100; royals Mon.-Thurs. using both hole cards win \$500.
Promotions: Mon.-Thurs., starting at 2 p.m. and then again at 6, first 10 players to get aces cracked win \$100; Fridays (1-midnight), every hour a table will be picked at random and its next pot will be splashed with \$100.

Seminole Casino Immokalee

Phone: (866) 222-7466
theseminolecasino.com
Tournaments: Wed., 7 p.m. (\$35); Thurs., 7, (\$50); Fri., 7 (\$50+\$5+\$5 dealer toke); Sat., 1, Knockout (\$60); Sun., 7, \$115, 10K chips, 20-minute levels.
Special event: Aug. 1 (4 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$225.
High hands: Quad aces win \$100, straight flush wins \$200; progressive royal jackpots.
Bad beat: Aces full of jacks (hold'em), Aces full of kings (stud).
Promotions: Weekly \$2K High Hand Freeroll. Call for details.

St. Johns Greyhound Park

Phone: (904) 646-0002
www.jaxpokerroom.com
Tournaments: \$30-\$200, including shootouts, bounties and deep stacks.
Special events: Aug. 23, (4 p.m.) Ante Up Poker Tour, \$100.
High hands: Royals \$250 (but spades pay \$500).
Promotions: Super High Hand, M-W-Th, noon-3, hourly high hand wins \$100 and other players at winning table get \$25.
Bad beat: Call for details.

SunCruz — Port Canaveral

Phone: (321) 799-3511
www.suncruzcasino.com
Tournaments: \$115.
SNGs: \$40-\$60.
Promotions: Call for details.

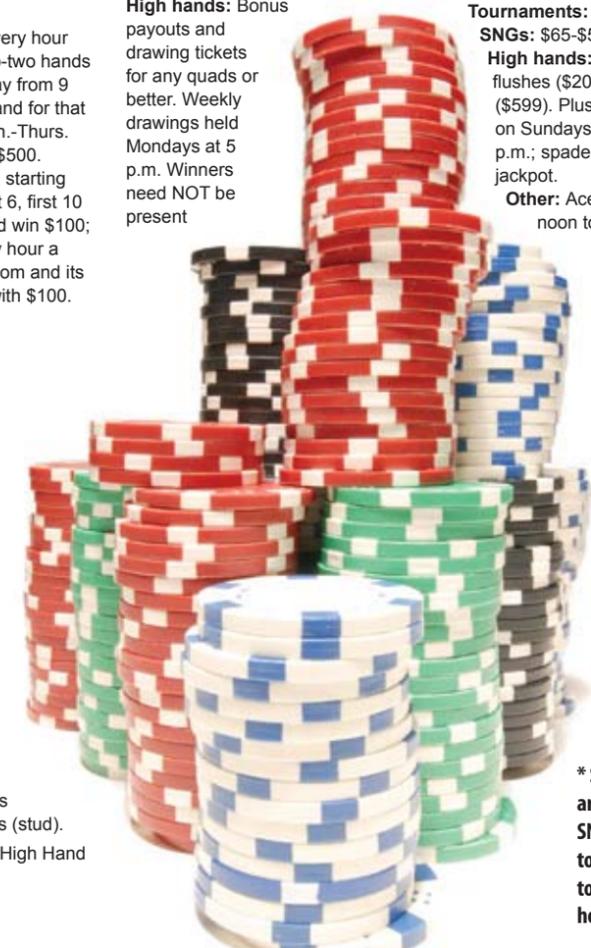
Tampa Bay Downs

Phone: (813) 298-1798
www.tampabaydowns.com
Tournaments: \$20-\$540.
SNGs: \$60-\$535.
Bad beat: Jackpots are available in live games and tournaments. See site for amounts and details.
High hands: Bonus payouts and drawing tickets for any quads or better. Weekly drawings held Mondays at 5 p.m. Winners need NOT be present

to win. Winners will be posted online and in the poker room. Winners will have from the time of the drawing until the following week's drawing to claim prizes. Monthly grand prize drawing held last Wednesday of the month.
Special events: Aug. 16, Ante Up Poker Tour, 1 p.m., \$350.
Promotions: Rays dueling rack attacks for all televised games. Players can rack up to \$500 and win tickets to Rays games every inning the Rays score. The tickets for the games are given away in the room two days before the home game. Also, between 8-9 p.m. and 9-10 p.m. the first player each hour to win a hand with aces full wins a pair of front-row press-level seats. They're not included with the rack attacks, which are done for every televised Rays game; **Double or Nothing SNGs:** Tournament is over when it reaches five players in a 10-handed game or three players in a 6-handed game. Each player starts with 2,000 units; Happy Hour giveaways 5-8 p.m. daily. (See ad for more promotions.)

Tampa Greyhound Track

Phone: (813) 932-4313
www.luckycards.com
Tournaments: \$45-\$200.
SNGs: \$65-\$500.
High hands: Quads (\$75), straight flushes (\$200) and royal flushes (\$599). Plus high hand wins \$100 on Sundays from noon-3 and 8-11 p.m.; spade royal progressive jackpot.
Other: Aces cracked wins \$100, noon to 2 p.m.



* Schedules and events are subject to change; SNG = single-table tournaments; all tournaments are no-limit hold'em unless noted.

SO CLOSE, SO OFTEN

Daytona Beach's Tony Cousineau may have the most World Series cashes without a victory, but his remarkable consistency and positive attitude make him a true champion.

By Christopher Cosenza

The epiphany hit Tony Cousineau like a one-outer on the river to save his tournament life. His eyes widened and an almost impish smile decorated his face as he said, "I'm the Dan Marino of poker!"

Cousineau, 41, is a Daytona Beach poker pro who relates well to the Miami Dolphins' Hall of Fame quarterback, and not just because he played football in college. Cousineau, born and raised in Miami, is the most prolific casher in the

World Series of Poker ... without a bracelet. With 42 cashes, including seven at this year's WSOP, Cousineau knows all too well the feeling of making the money, but never having all of the chips.

"I may have all these ridiculous cash records, like (Marino's) passing records, but you know, maybe it's just not in the cards," he said.

"Nobody is entitled to anything. You keep thinking, 'Oh, I'm due. I'm due for a win, or I deserve this.' The cards don't remember anything. Every situation you think 'I can't lose this again,' (but) you can. There's random luck in poker and there's a lot of skill. ... When I do get there it'll just be all the sweeter, and if I don't I'll just know



FACES IN THE FIELD

Ante Up Nationals were spotted throughout the World Series. Here are just a few we found during the main event.



Waseem Tarawneh



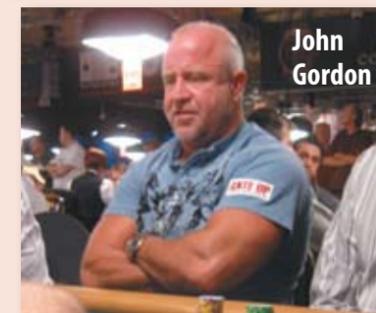
Jena Delk



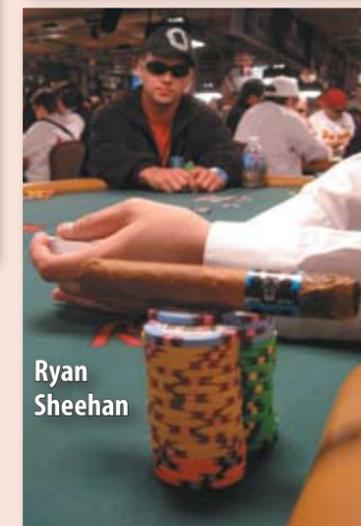
Philip Starner



Bill Burdick



John Gordon



Ryan Sheehan

that I gave it my all and I always competed and did enough to keep me above water."

Like a lot of veteran players, poker wasn't his first choice in life. He attended Pace High in Opa-locka before moving on to the University of Arizona, where he made the football team as a walk-on defensive back. But just like Doyle Brunson had to give up his basketball career after a leg injury, so, too, did Cousineau, who blew out his knee in spring practice during his first semester.

"First time away from home I said, 'This is great; I'm playing football, life is awesome, the girls are everywhere and I'm 19 years old.' Next thing I know I blow out my knee playing football and was like 'Whoa! That was a mistake.' So I had to take up some other hobbies."

Cousineau admits to being a gambler his whole life, but it was different when he discovered poker.

"Some of my friends said 'Hey, we're going to Vegas,' and the ride isn't too bad from Tucson, so we'd go and I'd be playing \$5-\$10 limit hold'em. I really kinda liked the game and I started going to various bookstores where I could get information. You know how they have those plush little seats? I'd sit there all day and they were like, 'You gonna buy a book there, Buddy?' I'd read every book in the store on poker just to try to understand what people do well. I wanted to get an advantage over my opponents and eventually that worked out.

"There was a time while I was in college where they passed a law

Cousineau's 2009 WSOP

June 27	\$1,500 NLHE	131st	\$3,568
June 20	\$10K PLO	22nd	\$25,816
June 15	\$2K NLHE	55th	\$7,119
June 10	\$1,500 NLHE Shootout	48th	\$5,236
June 8	\$2,500 NLHE 6-Handed	88th	\$4,863
June 6	\$5,000 NLHE	44th	\$14,191
June 3	\$2,500 PLO/Hold'em	18th	\$10,293

where you could play blackjack and poker in bars and restaurants. It was really weird. So I went into New Saigon, a Vietnamese restaurant, and we're in the back, mamasan and everybody. We're playing poker and I'm like 'Is this game legit? Are we gonna get raided?' And I'd have good nights and was thinking what a great way to make money. So I kinda did that throughout college."

But he needed a more steady game to test his skills. After college, he went home to run a billiards place for his family in Melbourne. But when that grind proved too much to stomach he moved to Daytona Beach with a girlfriend and started playing in really soft home games.

"Nice people," he said. "Good people who liked to give their money away."



Continued from previous page

He often wonders had he kept playing those games (making \$500-\$1,000 a night) if he'd actually be more financially successful today, but his first trip to the WSOP made that a question to which he'd never find the answer.

"I didn't even know what tournament poker was till the day I stepped into the World Series of Poker and I cashed in my first event."

It was 1999 (pre-poker boom) and the event was a \$3K limit hold'em tournament. Cousineau said he looked around the room and saw the Howard Lederers and Annie Dukes of the poker world and knew he had found his place. And as he has done just about every year since, he cashed more than once in that Series, earning more money than he paid out (finishing 17th for \$5,575 and then 20th in a \$1,500 Omaha/8 event four days later for \$2,185). It wasn't a stellar WSOP, but it was enough to give him the itch and confidence to eventually turn pro.

"There are a lot tougher careers people can do to make a living," he said.

Now, 10 years later, Cousineau is *Ante Up's* 2009 WSOP Player of the Year. No, he didn't win a bracelet, and he wasn't the Floridian with the most money won (heck, he didn't even make a final table). But Tony Cousineau was the most consistently successful Florida poker player in Las Vegas this year, cashing seven times in a variety of events, from a \$1,500 NLHE tournament that had nearly 3,000 entrants to the \$10K World Championship of Pot-Limit Omaha with 295 of the best players on the planet.

"It should easily be 10 (cashes)," said Cousineau, who continues to be one of the most upbeat and positive players on the circuit. "I've had multiple one-table bubbles where I've been one table away. My goal is kinda to hit that 10 mark, which would tie the record. It was amazing how I came up just short a few times. As happy as I am with the results and the consistency, I'll walk away from this Series thinking, 'What if?' based on two tournaments in particular where I played pots for the chip lead. One was in the \$10,000 pot-limit hold'em, late, almost in the money, we were down to like 45 players and, of course, I had aces and the guy had kings. We got it all-in and I was thinking 'Oh, there's the chip lead for me' and as soon as they turned the cards over that first card was that beautiful king. That one felt like a kick in the stomach. You see it all the time, but that one hurt."

"The other one was the event right before the main event, the \$5,000 short-handed. Almost at the end of Day 1 I played a pot for near the chip lead with an open-end straight and flush draw against a pair. I went home and quickly on the computer verified I was a 57 percent favorite. It wasn't like the aces, which were 82 percent, so I wasn't as shocked by the outcome, but in those two, you win those key pots, you get the chip lead, the money's a foregone conclusion, and now you're thinking final table. So like I said, I'll walk away thinking what could have been, and then looking forward to the next World Series."

When you consider he's never cashed for more than \$190K (and he only has two six-figure cashes overall) yet he has nearly \$2 million in career earnings, you can appreciate how much Cousineau has had to grind to make a living. Cashing in tournaments day-in and day-out is no easy task, but there's no one better at it than Tony.



Tony Cousineau has nearly \$2 million in career winnings.

From Tony's perspective

The most successful professional poker players tend to live where big events predominantly are held: Nevada and California. But there are plenty who choose to live elsewhere because that's where they grew up or they enjoy the different seasons, etc. Tony Cousineau has always lived in Florida (except when he attended college in Arizona), so you'd think he'd embrace the Sunshine State becoming a true poker powerhouse with no limits. When asked about the pending legislation and Seminole compact his answer may surprise you, but it is loaded with wisdom:

"I have mixed feelings about it. I've been (in Las Vegas) since February, so (that's) six months straight playing almost every day. I almost hope they don't pass it so when I go home I can just not think about working anymore. (laughs) But, if they do, I'll go and play. I'm just not going to play that lottery poker where the maximum buy-in is \$100, the blinds are \$5-\$10 and you just push your stack in and pray. But I would love for them to have good tournaments with structures and decent buy-ins."

"I think my style will get you to the money a large portion of the time," the former *CardPlayer* PLO Player of the Year said. "It seems like I'm always able to hang in there enough until I find a certain situation where I may be able to accumulate chips, and 90 percent of the time that situation comes to me. It takes a lot of patience, and along the way you pick your spots to keep yourself in the chips. ... Mostly I think it's my style of waiting for the right opportunity, and if I do get it, I push it. So that gets me to the money more often than not."

But being labeled the Dan Marino, Colin Montgomery, Ernie Banks and/or Charles Barkley of poker has to hurt a little, no?

"I was talking to Howard Lederer the other day and he was telling me it took him 20 final tables before he won his first bracelet and I was thinking 'Wow, that's a lot of final tables to get to.' I have (six) final tables that I've gotten to at the World Series without winning ... and if it took Howard that many times I guess I can't cry too much. At first it annoyed me a little bit. Is this an honor or a stab in the back? But now I've kinda embraced it as like my little badge of honor. People like it; my friends like it. They're like 'Hey, don't win, man. Keep the streak alive!'"

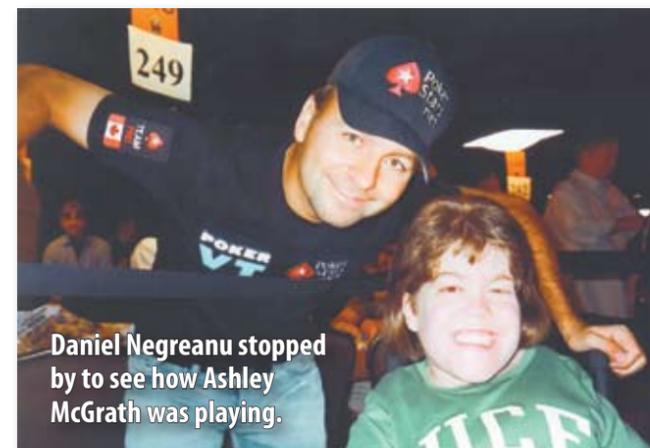
Since Cousineau has remained under the radar for most of his career, it's tough to point to one moment as his greatest poker achievement, but he definitely knows what he's most proud of

in poker.

"I'd have to say my reputation throughout the years as being somebody that's going to be there as a contender and not give anything away," he said. "For now I'll take that as what I feel as one of my better accomplishments. Hopefully in the future it'll be a couple of top-notch first-place finishes instead of fourth or third. I'll be the bridesmaid for a while. I've got plenty of years, don't I? I hope. I keep saying to everybody as long as I don't get hit by a bus we'll be OK."

WORLD SERIES OF POKER

A dream come true



Daniel Negreanu stopped by to see how Ashley McGrath was playing.

Editor's note: Last month we asked Ante Up readers to send us photos and stories related to their experience at the 40th World Series of Poker. The following is the best of the bunch, and we thank Ashley for allowing us to share her story.

I am a young woman with a rare genetic disorder that has forced me to use a wheelchair, and I am working on my master's degree in Applied Sociology at the University of Central Florida. That being said, my trip to the 40th WSOP with my parents was a dream come true. I'm a regular participant in BigSlickHoldemPoker league tournaments and they inspired me to play in the Series.

I competed in the Ladies' No-Limit Hold'em World Championship (Event 17), which began June 7. After almost an hour of play, my favorite male pro poker player, Daniel Negreanu, dropped by my table, shook my hand and asked me how I was doing while handling my higher valued chips. As he was leaving for his tournament, Negreanu told me to "Hang in there and get pocket aces or something"

About five minutes later I was dealt pocket kings and won the pot, which was exciting. Though I only lasted three hours in my event and did not come close to cashing, I was not too disappointed about my loss. During the rest of my week at the Rio Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, I observed other tournaments, received autographs from several famous players, and had photo opportunities with poker pros including Negreanu, Annie Duke and Doyle Brunson. My week at the 40th WSOP was positively memorable, and I can't wait to go back.

Sincerely,
Ashley McGrath, 23
Palm Bay

The best of the rest

There were some other great Florida stories from the World Series of Poker, including Jason Mercier of Davie winning his first bracelet in a battle with Largo's Steven Burkholder, and North Miami Beach's Steve Karp coming oh so close to winning Event 7, a \$1,500 no-limit hold'em event with 2,791 players. He pocketed a whopping \$414,116 for second place.

A few Florida women had strong showings, led by Hobe Sound's Vanessa Rousso. You can read their recap in Lauren Faglia's Women in Poker column on Page 41.

The pages that follow list every Floridian casher in events 7-56. The WSOP Main Event results (sans the November Nine) were not completed by press time, and Events 1-6 were published in last month's issue of *Ante Up*, which you can read at anteupmagazine.com

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EVENT #7 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 2,791
- 2. Steve Karp, North Miami Beach, \$414,116
- 31. Sarang Ahuja, Hallandale Beach, \$15,429
- 37. Michael Glasser, Boca Raton, \$11,505
- 83. Jacobo Fernandez, Hollywood, \$4,609
- 84. Mario Rodriguez, Miami, \$4,609
- 112. Bruce Macgregor, Port Orange, \$3,581
- 115. Richard Jackson, Key West, \$3,581
- 130. Elliott Fodera, Orlando, \$3,581
- 135. Allan Bieler, Plantation, \$3,581
- 143. Derrick Dichiaro, Oviedo, \$3,276
- 178. Randall Cohen, Naples, \$3,047
- 216. Frank Sinopoli, Hollywood, \$2,895
- 227. Daniel White, Mount Dora, \$2,895
- 229. Craig Ettelman, Pinecrest, \$2,895
- 230. Vincent Graziano, New Port Richey, \$2,895
- 251. Robert Barkan, Key West, \$2,895
- 269. John Greene, Orlando, \$2,742
- 278. Rajesh Vohra, Lake Worth, \$2,742
- 280. Chris Feindt, New Smyrna Beach, \$2,742

EVENT #8 (NO-LIMIT 2-7 LOWBALL)

- Buy-in:** \$2,500 • **Entries:** 147
 - 17. Vanessa Rouso, Hobe Sound, \$4,094
- EVENT #9 (NLHE 6-HANDED)**
- Buy-in:** 1,500 • **Entries:** 1,459
 - 6. Manny Minaya, Tampa, \$59,049
 - 21. Matthew Waxman, Parkland, \$10,973
 - 47. Richard Freire, Miami, \$6,253
 - 116. Ryan Franklin, Jacksonville, \$2,967
 - 119. Alexander Michaels, Hollywood, \$2,967

EVENT #10 (PLHE-OMAHA MIXED)

- Buy-in:** \$2,500 • **Entries:** 453
- 17. Jamie Rosen, Boca Raton, \$10,293
- 18. Anthony Cousineau, Daytona Beach, \$10,293
- 45. Eugene Bauerlin, St. Petersburg, \$5,074

EVENT #11 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$2,000 • **Entries:** 1,646
- 4. Adam Adler, Ft. Lauderdale, \$161,768
- 23. Jose Rosenkrantz, Miami Lakes, \$14,828
- 35. Mark Tarich, North Miami Beach, \$12,761
- 41. Yesniel Pulido, Pembroke Pines, \$10,425
- 63. Jason Mercier, Davie, \$7,639
- 79. Jesse Chaney, Rockledge, \$6,081
- 97. Jack Land, Ocoee, \$4,942
- 99. Gabriel Sack, Weston, \$4,942
- 117. Stephen Hyvonen, Lake Mary, \$4,523
- 130. Fausto Lendeberg, Miami Lakes, \$4,194
- 166. David Farber, Heathrow, \$3,894

EVENT #13 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$2,500 • **Entries:** 1,088
- 7. Todd "Turkish" Altinbas, Dania, \$59,356
- 82. Joseph Healy, Jupiter, \$5,780
- 83. Adam Shuman, Jacksonville, \$5,780
- 116. Eduardo Gil, Miami, \$4,929

EVENT #15 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$5,000 • **Entries:** 655
- 44. Anthony Cousineau, Daytona Beach, \$14,191

EVENT #16 (SEVEN-CARD STUD)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 359
- 16. Jason Mercier, Davie, \$4,645

EVENT #17 (NLHE LADIES WORLD CHAMP.)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 1,060
- 43. Thuy Beltran, Parrish, \$3,790
- 87. Nicole Honour, Keystone Heights, \$2,228
- 113. Robin McCarty, Coconut Creek, \$1,900

EVENT #18 (OMAHA/8 WORLD CHAMP.)

- Buy-in:** \$10,000 • **Entries:** 179
- 11. Jacobo Fernandez, Hollywood, \$39,709
- 14. Ted Lawson, Plantation, \$31,632

EVENT #19 (NLHE 6-HANDED)

- Buy-in:** \$2,500 • **Entries:** 1,068
- 70. Richard Cleveland, Boynton Beach, \$5,404
- 71. Thomas Gabriel, Lake Mary, \$5,404
- 82. Tim Seidensticker, Miami, \$4,863
- 87. Adam Levy, Orlando, \$4,863
- 88. Anthony Cousineau, Daytona Beach, \$4,863
- 90. Seth Fischer, Palm Harbor, \$4,863



EVENT #20 (POT-LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 633
- 24. William Beasley, Hollywood, \$5,901
- 46. Yesniel Pulido, Pembroke Pines, \$3,352
- 56. Frank Andrews, Boca Raton, \$2,851

EVENT #21 (H.O.R.S.E.)

- Buy-in:** \$3,000 • **Entries:** 452
- 32. Dale Phillips, Naples, \$6,449

EVENT #22 (NLHE SHOOTOUT)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 999
- 18. Rajesh Vohra, Lake Worth, \$5,236
- 25. Gregory Thorson, Miami Beach, \$5,236
- 28. Alan Fixel, Jacksonville, \$5,236
- 32. Srinivasa Yarlagadda, Sarasota, \$5,236
- 38. John Racener, Port Richey, \$5,236
- 48. Anthony Cousineau, Daytona Beach, \$5,236
- 86. Peter Alan Smurfit, Aventura, \$5,236
- 99. John Dolan, Bonita Springs, \$5,236

EVENT #23 (2-7 DRAW WORLD CHAMP.)

- Buy-in:** \$10,000 • **Entries:** 96
 - 9. Justin Smith, Kissimmee, \$19,870
- EVENT #24 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)**
- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 2,506
 - 87. Philip Gurian, Boca Raton, \$4,344
 - 96. Michael Halprin, St. Petersburg, \$3,796
 - 107. John Napoli, Daytona Beach, \$3,352
 - 126. Thayer Rasmussen, Largo, \$3,352
 - 150. Dean Schmaus, Altamonte, \$3,044
 - 158. Michael Bury, Jupiter, \$3,044
 - 198. Bryan Arnett, North Port, \$2,839
 - 225. Humberto Brenes, Miami, \$2,839
 - 235. Andrew Mullens, Miami, \$2,668
 - 240. Bobby Binsky, Hallandale Beach, \$2,668
 - 265. Manelic Minaya, Tampa, \$2,668

EVENT #25 (OMAHA/8-STUD/8 MIXED)

- Buy-in:** \$2,500 • **Entries:** 376
 - 14. Chad Brown, Margate, \$10,481
- EVENT #26 (LIMIT HOLD'EM)**
- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 643
 - 62. Jerry Dunning, Sarasota, \$2,896

EVENT #27 (POT-LIMIT OMAHA/8)

- Buy-in:** \$5,000 • **Entries:** 198
- 4. Robert Campbell, North Miami, \$72,121
- 7. John Racener, Port Richey, \$36,200
- 9. Armando "Tiny" Ruiz, Tamarac, \$32,105

EVENT #28 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 2,638
- 20. Arthur Evans, Naples, \$18,688
- 29. Grace Gurganus, Deerfield Beach, \$14,835
- 59. Stephen Cain, Palmetto Bay, \$7,237
- 77. Stuart Elkin, Delray Beach, \$5,293
- 80. Corey Burbick, Davie, \$5,293
- 108. Stanley Tavanese, Oldsmar, \$3,528
- 111. Derek Tomko, Winter Haven, \$3,528
- 112. Michael Glasser, Boca Raton, \$3,528
- 160. Evan Wrenn, Wesley Chapel, \$3,204
- 185. Chester Adamson, Cape Coral, \$2,988
- 223. John Dolan, Bonita Springs, \$2,988
- 225. Melissa Buccì, Pembroke Pines, \$2,988
- 230. David Singh, Winter Garden, \$2,808
- 250. William Carey, Clearwater, \$2,808
- 256. James Farley, Sanderson, \$2,808
- 258. Steven Karp, North Miami Beach, \$2,808
- 261. Daniel Hicks, Lithia, \$2,808

EVENT #29 (HEADS-UP WORLD CHAMP.)

- Buy-in:** \$10,000 • **Entries:** 256
- 11. Benjamin Sprengers, Plantation, \$38,424
- 13. Justin Smith, Kissimmee, \$38,424
- 16. Jason Mercier, Davie, \$38,424

EVENT #30 (POT-LIMIT OMAHA)

- Buy-in:** \$2,500 • **Entries:** 436
 - 10. Leif Force, Tallahassee, \$17,488
 - 38. Anders Taylor, Gainesville, \$4,883
- EVENT #31 (H.O.R.S.E.)**
- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 770
 - 19. Vanessa Rouso, Hobe Sound, \$5,906
 - 23. John Racener, Port Richey, \$5,906
 - 24. Peter Moore, Fernandina Beach, \$5,906
 - 57. Reginald Simmons, Tampa, \$3,163
 - 62. Vincent Lonardo, Davie, \$3,163

EVENT #32 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$2,000 • **Entries:** 1,534
- 18. Matthew Waxman, Parkland, \$19,012
- 55. Anthony Cousineau, Daytona Beach, \$7,119
- 60. David Tiffenberg, Tampa, \$7,119
- 81. Hans Winzeler, Miami, \$5,667
- 86. Todd Louer, Ft. Lauderdale, \$5,081
- 98. Noah Schwartz, Bay Harbor Island, \$4,606
- 122. Jeffrey Cohen, Parkland, \$3,908
- 138. Todd Arnold, Pompano Beach, \$3,908
- 150. Jay Cohen, Boca Raton, \$3,629
- 168. Howard Mash, Coral Springs, \$3,629

EVENT #33 (LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$10,000 • **Entries:** 185 players
- 3. Chad Brown, Margate, \$188,855

EVENT #34 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 2,095
- 30. Victor Lento, Sunrise, \$12,325
- 127. Elliott Merlin, Plantation, \$3,231
- 148. David Pleat, Miramar Beach, \$2,945
- 42. Reginald Simmons, Tampa, \$2,945
- 169. Ronald Pall, North Ft. Myers, \$2,945

EVENT #35 (POT-LIMIT OMAHA)

- Buy-in:** \$5,000 • **Entries:** 363
 - 36. Justin Smith, Kissimmee, \$11,345
- EVENT #36 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)**
- Buy-in:** \$2,000 • **Entries:** 1,695
 - 21. Kyle Brown, Ft. Lauderdale, \$15,270
 - 79. Corey Burbick, Davie, \$6,262
 - 87. Robert Zelinka, Delray Beach, \$5,614
 - 89. Jason Sackler, Orlando, \$5,614
 - 100. Kyle Thacker, Naples, \$4,658
 - 113. Thomas Gabriel, Lake Mary, \$4,658
 - 154. Ashley Butler, Tampa, \$4,010
 - 160. Agop Rustemoglu, Ft. Lauderdale, \$4,010
 - 164. David Whitley, Homestead, \$4,010

EVENT #37 (STUD/8 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP)

- Buy-in:** \$10,000 • **Entries:** 164
- 8. Justin Smith, Kissimmee, \$54,896

EVENT #39 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 2,715
- 33. Tristan Wade, Boynton Beach, \$15,268
- 66. Paul Stanechewski, Lutz, \$6,300
- 72. Adam Levy, Orlando, \$6,300
- 80. Vitor Coelho, Tampa, \$5,447
- 195. Brian Gray, Coral Springs, \$3,075
- 207. Martin May, Plantation, \$3,075

EVENT #40 (PLO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP)

- Buy-in:** \$10,000 • **Entries:** 295
- 15. Noah Schwartz, Bay Harbor Islands, \$46,225
- 22. Anthony Cousineau, Daytona Beach, \$25,816

EVENT #42 (MIXED GAMES)

- Buy-in:** \$2,500 • **Entries:** 412
- 19. Thayer Rasmussen, St. Petersburg, \$7,050
- 37. Henry Paloci, Sarasota, \$4,813

EVENT #43 (SENIORS NLHE)

- Buy-in:** \$1,000 • **Entries:** 2,707
- 5. Charles Simon, Sunrise, \$95,332
- 11. Theodore Garner, Seffner, \$37,270
- 26. Mark Jagiello, Dover, \$12,784
- 44. Robert Zelinka, Delray Beach, \$7,636
- 66. Jeffrey Cavan, St. Augustine, \$4,187
- 90. Robert Aden, New Smyrna Beach, \$3,128
- 112. Amelio Amato, Sarasota, \$2,414
- 115. Kevin Hayes, Fleming Island, \$2,414
- 141. Alan Rauchwarger, Ponte Vedra, \$2,192
- 158. Martin May, Plantation, \$2,192
- 183. Roger Stewart, Sanford, \$2,044
- 186. Bruce Sparks, North Ft. Myers, \$2,044
- 224. William Melvin, Boca Grande, \$2,044
- 253. Allan Bieler, Plantation, \$1,921
- 267. Steven Fischer, Keystone Heights, \$1,921
- 268. Bill Eggerton, New Smyrna Beach, \$1,921
- 270. Mark Dolan, Gainesville, \$1,921

EVENT #45 (PLHE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP)

- Buy-in:** \$10,000 • **Entries:** 275
- 6. Jason Lester, Miami, \$110,431
- 15. Vanessa Rouso, Hobe Sound, \$43,091

WORLD SERIES OF POKER

EVENT #46 (OMAHA/8)

- Buy-in:** \$2,500 • **Entries:** 424
- 28. Dale Phillips, Naples, \$5,890
- 33. Paul Siem, Clearwater, \$5,890

EVENT #47 (MIXED HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$2,500 • **Entries:** 527
- 28. Omar Abede, Miami, \$7,030
- 34. Frank Sinopoli, Hollywood, \$7,030

EVENT #48 (PLO/8)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 762
- 11. Cung Tran, Punta Gorda, \$15,664
- 61. Matthew Gregoire, Orlando, \$3,432

EVENT #50 (LIMIT HOLD'EM SHOOTOUT)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 571
- 17. Humberto Brenes, Miami/San Jose, \$4,356
- 33. Robert Campbell, North Miami, \$4,356
- 42. William Beasley, Hollywood, \$4,356

EVENT #51 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 2,781
- 28. Robert Diaz, Tierra Verde, \$15,374
- 42. Eric Tomberlin, Orange Park, \$11,464
- 65. Rick Lenoble, Coral Springs, \$6,187
- 76. Robert Brickman, Jacksonville, \$5,314
- 118. Joshua Frank, North Miami Beach, \$3,568
- 128. Salman Jaddi, Pembroke Pines, \$3,568
- 131. Anthony Cousineau, Daytona Beach, \$3,568
- 146. Larry Bass, Tamarac, \$3,264
- 170. June Amer, Pembroke Pines, \$3,264
- 172. Scott Hurwich, Orlando, \$3,036
- 183. Steven Schechtman, Hollywood, \$3,036
- 186. Kevin Risener, Trinity, \$3,036
- 251. Richard Blanchard, Ft. Lauderdale, \$2,885
- 253. Daniel Restrepo, Boca Raton, \$2,733
- 270. Steven Miller, Key Largo, \$2,733

EVENT #52 (TRIPLE CHANCE NLHE)

- Buy-in:** \$3,000 • **Entries:** 854
- 40. Steven Burkholder, Largo, \$10,559
- 74. Tracy Scala, Boca Raton, \$5,892

EVENT #53 (STUD/8)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 466
- 4. Chad Brown, Margate, \$44,494
- 26. Matthew Smith, Lithia, \$3,288
- 35. Simon Kearney, Ft. Lauderdale, \$2,976
- 39. Thuy Beltran, St. Petersburg, \$2,976
- 43. John Wenzel, Lantana, \$2,690

EVENT #54 (NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM)

- Buy-in:** \$1,500 • **Entries:** 2,818 players
- 35. Omar McFarlane, Lake Worth, \$15,578
- 42. Mario Rodriguez, Miami, \$11,616
- 88. Francisco Musalem, Miami, \$4,654
- 108. Steven Serle, Highland Beach, \$3,615
- 118. Philip Starmer, Belleview, \$3,615
- 159. Lawrence Shawe, West Palm Beach, \$3,308
- 161. Jerry Skelton, Miami Beach, \$3,308
- 223. Richard Wyrick, Lake Mary, \$2,923
- 225. Todd Arnold, Pompano Beach, \$2,923
- 279. Frank Sinopoli, Hollywood, \$2,769
- 287. Patrick Devan, Tampa, \$2,769
- 289. Mark Gearhart, Tampa, \$2,769

EVENT #55 (2-7 TRIPLE-DRAW)

- Buy-in:** \$2,500 • **Entries:** 258
- 7. Kris Lord, Palm Harbor, \$17,934
- 10. Jacobo Fernandez, Hollywood, \$13,424
- 22. Justin Smith, Kissimmee, \$5,148

EVENT #56 (NLHE 6-HANDED)

- Buy-in:** \$5,000 • **Entries:** 928
- 6. Matthew Waxman, Parkland, \$138,393
- 10. Alexander Venovski, Clermont, \$72,446
- 75. Jeffrey Coutroulis, Tampa, \$10,162

* If you don't see an event listed it means no Floridians cashed in that event.

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8/29	*50K Guaranteed NL

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A HEALTHY BET

DR. FRANK TOSCANO • A look at how to stay healthy at the poker table

A SICK BEAT ON THE GULF IS NO LAUGHING MATTER

The last time I went on a cruise was with my wife and kids and a big-cared mouse from Orlando. It was fun, but there was no casino and no poker. The most decadent thing I could find to do on board was have a hot tub fantasy involving Cinderella and Pocahontas.



FRANK TOSCANO M.D.

This time it will be different. On Aug. 20, the Ante Up Poker Cruise sets sail from Tampa and I'm stoked. For four nights we'll be razzing and triple-drawing and maybe even Badugi-ing for only \$359. Geez, I can eat more than that in pasta alone. And the way I've been playing lately, the whole trip should cost me only a few grand.

I figured this would be an ideal time to go over some health advice for cruising rounders. First, if you're on medications, for gosh sakes write down the names and dosages. Don't just bring the pills. That little travel case with compartments for each day may be handy for you, but without a list, its contents are a mystery. Surprise, there are dozens of pills that are little and red and have a score going down the middle. Don't force the ship's doc to choose between pumping on your chest and taking a break to go look up your pills. Make a simple call to your doctor or pharmacist.

And while you're on the phone with your doctor, get a copy of your EKG and a list of your medical conditions, too. With a copy of your EKG and the knowledge of whether you have GERD, PUD, IBS or some other dreaded initials, it just might help the ship's doc decide to give you an antacid or call for a chopper.

And speaking of gastrointestinal distress, just because food is included doesn't mean it's time to gorge. Your gall stones and your fickle colon haven't gone on vacation so if you're normally not supposed to eat fatty, greasy, fried, spicy, dairy, cheese, nuts, whatever, you don't get to do it at sea either. Discretion, it's more than just good advice.

What about seasickness? I've been seasick twice in my life and both times weren't pretty. I prayed for death. Nevertheless, a ship as large as the *Inspiration* isn't likely to rock and roll enough to bother most

people. If you're particularly sensitive, ask for a cabin near the middle of the ship and ask your doctor if Dramamine or a scopolamine patch might be right for you. If you get the patch, be particularly careful not to touch it and then rub your eyes. Your pupils could dilate so much that you mistake 4-4 for A-A and that could hurt more than vomiting in your shoe.

While we're on the subject, cruise ships are notorious for harboring the dreaded norovirus, a malady that will surely interfere with your ability to last more than one round at the final table. Mama knew best. Wash your hands. Use hot water. Hand sanitizer, too.

To avoid the Mexicali bacterial version of the trots, you should be particularly careful of what you eat and drink in Cozumel. Bad bacteria can wash downstream from Pedro's baño to the produce fields and it never quite gets washed off. Salads, uncooked fruits that can't be peeled, even salsa can be contaminated. And don't forget about those ice E.coli cubes floating in your soda. Just say "No!" Thankfully, the bottled beer and straight tequila at Señor Frog's tend to be quite safe.

I'm not really worried about swine flu. We're going to Cozumel, not Ground Zero Mexico City. The "pandemic" seems a bit over-hyped to me. Anyway, if you're older than 60 (There are still a few poker players over 60 not named Doyle, aren't there?) you already may have some immunity from a previous flu. Otherwise, avoid large crowds, cover your nose and mouth when someone coughs, and wash your hands. And don't worry about eating pork. You can't get swine flu from *puerco verde*.

Also, don't forget sunblock. UVB protection (the SPF number) by itself is not enough. You need a physical blocker like titanium, zinc or avobenzone to give you UVA protection, too. The Caribbean rays are brutal. Use moisturizer. Wear a hat.

I'm looking forward to meeting every single Ante Up cruiser. Please look me up. If I'm not at the poker tables I'll be in the hot tub on the lido deck with Pocahontas.

— 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. Email your poker-health questions to ftoscano@redbamboomedispa.com

TOP FIVE POKER VILLAINS

Send your list of five to editor@anteupmagazine.com. One lucky reader will win some cool swag for having his or her list printed!



They're the players you love to hate, or maybe you hate to love them. Either way, poker villains make for great entertainment, and since you're usually safe from them in the comfort of your living room, you can sit back and enjoy the ride. Here are *Ante Up* publishers Chris Cosenza and Scott Long's top five picks for favorite poker villains.

CHRIS' PICKS

1. Phil Hellmuth (a.k.a. Poker Brat)



Anyone who has a WSOP penalty rule essentially named after him gets my vote as top villain. If I received royalties every time he called someone an idiot at the poker table I'd kick off my diamond-studded shoes and relax in my castle built of gold bricks on the Tuscan countryside as my servants feed me seedless grapes imported from Napa Valley.

2. Antanas Guoga (a.k.a. Tony G.)

Where Hellmuth makes you laugh, this guy makes you cringe. If you've never seen Tony G. berate a player you're missing the Aurora Borealis of poker: beautiful, yet stupefying. You can't believe what you're seeing, like driving past a nasty car wreck. You know it's horrible, yet you can't help but stare. Enter "Tony G. and Ralph Perry" into YouTube and then buckle up.

3. Teddy KGB (a.k.a. John Malkovich)

Yes, he's fictional, but Malkovich's over-the-top portrayal of this poker mobster was pure cinema gold. "You must be kicking yourself for not walking out when you could. Bad judgment. But, don't you worry, Son. It will all be over soon." There's always a seat open for Teddy KGB in my game. And I'll even bring the Oreos.

4. Mike Matusow (a.k.a. The Mouth)

These days Matusow is clean and sober, and he takes medication for his disorders (see his Q&A in this month's issue), but he still has his moments at the table. Plus his past blowups were so monumental and legendary he deserves a spot on my list. Telling a 300-pound Greg Raymer he has little cojones? Classic Mouth.

5. Larry Schwartzman (a.k.a. David Cross)



Is it fair to use a character from the mockumentary *The Grand* that embodies my aforementioned picks? Absolutely. From Hellmuth's words ("If people played correctly, I would win every single hand, ever.") and Tony G.'s belittling tirades to Teddy KGB's fashion sense and Matusow's emotional crashes, Schwartzman is the ultimate poker villain.

SCOTT'S PICKS

1. Shahram "Shawn" Sheikhan



Am I the only poker player left who believes the game should still be played with honor? Don't answer that, Jerk. It was just one clip, but that's all it took for me to lose all respect for "Sheiky." At the NBC Heads-Up Championship a few years back, he had the audacity to ridicule Doyle Brunson on national television.

Doyle freakin' Brunson! Mom was right: to get respect, you need to give it.

2. Phil "Poker Brat" Hellmuth

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know I'm supposed to put this condescending acid-laced tongue at the top of my list just like every other lemming in poker does. But Phil wants me to put him at the top of my list. And, sorry, I'm just not going to oblige. Let the tantrum begin.

3. The rake on cruise ship poker tables

The businessman in me says it's pure genius — rounders are so ecstatic to find a game aboard the floating city that they don't realize that 10-percent-to-oblivion that's lost in every "winning" hand. The poker player in me says I wish more folks like *Ante Up* would have their own poker cruises with realistic rakes.

4. Joan Rivers and Annie Duke

I know I'm supposed to hate Joan Rivers now for the outrageous things she said about poker players on *The Celebrity Apprentice*. Oh, and believe me, I do. Totally uncalled for. But raise your hand if deep down you know that Annie is just as villainous to drive most anyone as insane as she did Joan. I think they're perfect for each other.



5. Internet punks with entourages and egos

I get it. You've played 6,789,234,546,236 hands of poker by the time you were 18. You've won \$45,769,216 on PokerCake.Net or whatever. I'm impressed. But show some respect for the men and women who have blazed the trail for your success with a lifetime of poker experience. You're not all that and a bag of poker chips just yet.

able to escape problems • Keep gambling to recover losses • Lie about
Can't stop gambling • Become agitated when trying to cut back • Gamb
Keep gambling to recover losses • Increase bets to keep the excitement
ing • Argue with family about gambling • Think about gambling all the ti

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USE THE INTERNET TO HELP PREPARE FOR DAY 2

Most tournaments take one day. You show up, register, get your seat, settle in and start assessing your competition. Perhaps you're at a local casino with lots of regulars and you know a few familiar faces. Or perhaps you're on a poker trip and you simply don't know anyone. You have to make assessments of your competitors based on how they



LEE CHILDS

look, act and play. Maybe you notice a World Series of Poker circuit ring or even a bracelet shining in your face because they want you to know they mean business.

As the first level or two progresses, you start to formulate some strong opinions about your foes and you may even learn quite a bit about them from the conversations at the table. More and more multi-day tournaments are popping up all over the world, especially in Florida, and with the Internet and constant tournament reporting, we now have some extra tools at our disposal to help us prepare.

First, find a site that lists seating assignments with chip counts for that day of the event. Pokerpages.com has a full listing ordered by chip counts so I just use my handy mouse and copy that information into a spreadsheet. Once in the spreadsheet, I use the sorting feature to order by table and seat. Then a quick search for my name and the fun begins. Since I don't have a printer with me in the hotel, I write out the names in order of seat and chip counts. I want to have this with me when I head to the table to make sure I know who everyone is

and what stack they're have. I also search for their names and "poker" on Google. This helps identify a strong Internet player who may or may not have a lot of live results. I spend quite a bit of time looking at different sites because they don't all have the same information.

Then it's a good idea to draw an oval to represent the table and write in the player names, hometowns and chip counts. It provides a very clear representation of what your table will look like to start the day. For me, this is critical as it lets me know where the big stacks (and small stacks) are, who has position and who will be in my blinds.

After assessing my table for Day 2 of this year's WSOP Main Event, I saw I had a very strong Internet player, a bracelet-winner from this year and an aggressive accomplished Dutchman all on my left. I had Patrik Antonius' wife, Maya Geller, on my right along with a few players that don't have many posted results but looked to be pretty solid. It will be a tough table with known strong players on my left, but knowing this ahead of time helped me get in the right mind-set as I would know what kind of moves these players can make.

One final benefit for researching Day 2 opponents at the WSOP Main Event is you may discover a big-name pro is at your table, which means you might have the ESPN cameras and microphones surrounding you most of the day (or you might even get moved to a feature table). How is this a benefit? This way you can be extra sure to brush your teeth to whiten up that smile, and comb your hair ... well, those of you lucky enough to have hair. Decide to win!

— Lee Childs is founder and lead instructor of Acumen Poker. He also is an instructor with the WPT Boot Camp. Check out his site at www.acumepoker.net.

WHAT EVERY "BODY" IS SAYING

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

ASSUME YOU'RE READABLE



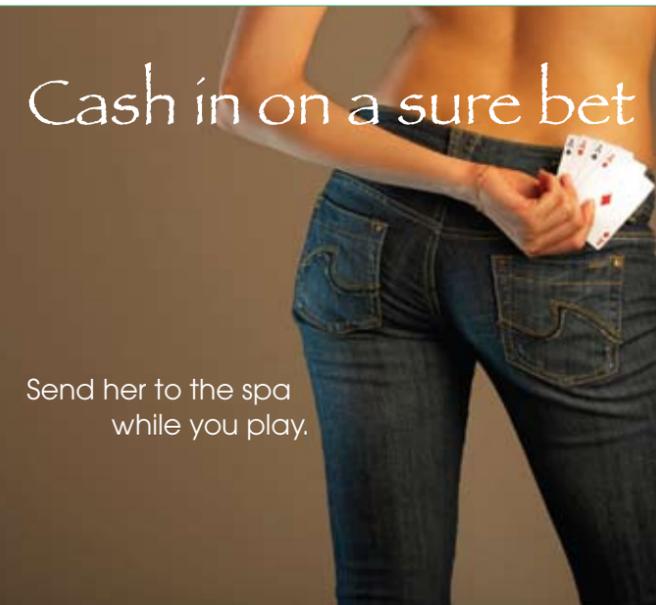
JOE NAVARRO

How do I know if I'm giving out major tells? I know that when I started playing live that my hands would shake with a great hand, but I think that's under control now. (I hope anyway). I also know my heart still beats very hard in similar situations, but I don't know if anyone can pick that up. Any suggestions in self-analyzing yourself or is this even possible?

— PAUL MOLNAR VIA ANTE UP FORUM

Paul, you ask a question that everyone, including professionals, ask. Unfortunately not many people take the time to be honest with themselves. It looks like you are. Obviously if others say they can read you well then that's a clue. I think you should assume always that someone at the table can read you. I always say "There are poker faces, but there are no poker bodies." We, all of us, will always leak something. Try to conceal as much as you can by minimizing what you expose (face, neck, eyes, etc.). I talk about this in my book *Read 'em and Reap* and Phil Hellmuth has taken it to heart. One of the easiest ways to analyze yourself is to get a video camera and record yourself as you play with a few friends. Now run the video at double the speed or faster and you'll see your tells jump out.

— Ex-FBI counterintelligence officer Joe Navarro of Tampa specialized in behavioral analysis for 25 years. He's a star lecturer with the WSOP Academy and has penned *Read 'Em and Reap*, which you can find on Amazon.com. Email Joe at editor@anteupmagazine.com and he'll answer your questions.



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FLORIDA FELT

Insight and analysis on poker in the Sunshine State

HOW ABOUT A BAD BEAT ON BAD-BEAT JACKPOTS?

The call from Ocala Poker & Jai-Alai was music to my poker ears. The room was tossing its bad-beat jackpot. They said it was tying up too much of their players' money. They wanted to do more promotions. Get the money back into the community more quickly. I couldn't agree more, I told them.



SCOTT LONG

A few days later, I arrived in Ocala for an Ante Up Poker Cruise event. My eyes couldn't miss it. A big sign greeting all players said, "Bad-Beat Jackpot is Back By Popular Demand."

Ugh. So much for a victory.

I can't blame Ocala. You have to listen to your players. If they say, "Give us a bad-beat jackpot!" then, well, you have to give them a bad-beat jackpot.

But I do wish players would take a step back and consider the cost of a bad-beat jackpot.

A poker room executive once told me, "Players love bad-beat jackpots." I corrected him. "No, gamblers love bad-beat jackpots. Poker players hate them."

Why? It's simple. Poker is a game of skill. So why would you want the poker room to take a dollar (or more) from your skillfully won pot to give to some luckbox who happens to get his quads cracked by a royal? It's simple. You shouldn't.

I used to be against that dollar disappearing from my pot for any reason. But I'll admit that since rooms are handicapped so much by

our state's crazy poker laws (for now), that putting on good promotions is essential to break out of the pack. And everything short of a bad beat is much easier to hit. Rack attack? Sure, that's fun. High hand? OK, still kinda tough, but I'll take it. But the astronomical odds of not only getting a big boat, but also hoping someone has a bigger boat or better? Sorry, I'm just not buying it.

I got a giggle from a poker room manager when I told him, "Heck, instead of dragging a buck from my pot for a bad-beat jackpot, I'd rather you just give me a Powerball ticket."

I was only half-kidding. Sure, the odds of hitting the Powerball are insane, but so is the money. Hitting the Powerball is life-changing. Hitting a bad beat? Unless you're on food stamps, it's just not.

And here's the one that really kills me: You grind away day after day in your local room. But that conventioneer from Kansas shows up one night, hits that jackpot, and ferrets that six-figure payout back to DorothyLand.

You want him taking our money out of Florida? I don't.

But are bad-beat jackpots good for the rooms? Sorry, not buying that either. Sure, when the jackpot hits big numbers, people are beating down the door to get into your room. But as soon as it hits they'll trample right back out the door you just re-hung. In fables, it's akin to killing the golden goose.

I'll give the Bad-Beat Brigade one small victory. A bad-beat jackpot packs the room with gamblers. And a smart player should always want to play against a gambler.

But for my dollar, that's just not enough.

WOMEN IN POKER

LAUREN FAILLA • Founder of High Heels Poker Tour

FLORIDA LADIES ENJOY MODEST WSOP SUCCESS

The 2009 World Series of Poker has come and gone and as I reflect on the events and activities over the past month, it still amazes me that it's over. This year's WSOP was filled with success and disappointment. The ladies event saw a 10 percent decline over last year's attendance while most other events were up. I attribute this to the economy. So look for 2010 numbers to go up.

This year I found a number of casinos that hosted ladies events in conjunction with the World Series, plus there was an increase in female players in mainstream events, which is a great thing.

As far as my cashes, you can see I'm not on this list, but I was the bubble girl more than once. At least I had that going for me. I have no excuses except I need some major practice this year. So all players this is my request: Bring me your best game because I'm determined to improve my one chip at a time!

Here's a list of some of our Florida ladies who cashed in the WSOP and other notable events.

Event 17 WSOP Ladies Event

- 43. Thuy Beltran, Parrish, \$3,790
- 87. Nicole Honour, Keystone Heights, \$2,228
- 113. Robin McCarty, Coconut Creek, \$1900

Event 28 \$1,500 WSOP NLHE Event

- 29. Grace Gurganus, Deerfield Beach, \$14,835
- 225. Melissa Bucci, Pembroke Pines, \$2,988

Event 51 \$1,500 WSOP NLHE Event

- 170. June Amer, Pembroke Pines, \$3,264

Event 53 \$1,500 WSOP Stud/8 Event

- 39. Thuy Beltran, Parrish, \$2,976

Venetian DeepStack \$500 NLHE Event

- 40. Jena Delk, Merritt Island, \$745

Rouso stands above the rest

Let's not forget Vanessa Rouso, a Floridian and poker pro who had a fantastic showing at the WSOP. We are proud to have her on this list. She placed 15th in the \$10K Pot-Limit Hold'em World Championship (\$43,091), 19th in the \$1,500 H.O.R.S.E. (\$5,906), 17th in the \$2,500 deuce-to-seven lowball event (\$4,094) and 27th in the \$40K NLHE anniversary tournament (\$71,858).



As we move into the fall, there are a slew of upcoming ladies-only events all over the country so keep your eyes open and refer to Web sites such as HighHeelsPokerTour.com, PokerJet Setters.com and your local poker rooms for schedules.

Next month we will be interviewing poker pro Susie Isaacs. If you have any ideas for stories please email me. I look forward to hearing from you.

— Lauren Failla writes a monthly column for *Ante Up*, tracking the progress of women in poker. Email her at lauren@highheelspokertour.com.

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DEAL WITH IT!

An occasional column from a Florida dealer

Dealers' words can affect so many outcomes

By Chaz Allen

Editor's note: This is Part 3 of Chaz Allen's look at dealers around Florida.

Some dealers don't realize how much effect their words have on the game. One of the things I've seen in most Florida poker rooms can be traced back to when we just had \$2 poker.

Dealers are taught to move the game along by pushing the action. They're also taught the proper phases to say, but soon after training they lose those phases. Let me give you a scenario: It's a \$2-\$4 limit hold'em game and the blinds are posted. After pitching the last card the dealer points at the first player to act and says, "two to you." The dealer just told that player he has to bet \$2. But that player has several options: He can fold, call the \$2 or raise to \$4. I tell my students there are only four things you can say to the next player:

- It's your action.
- It's \$2 to call.
- It's \$2 to play.
- It's \$2 to stay.

When a player bets or raises he usually doesn't want everyone to call. He's trying to force players out of the hand. So when a dealer says, "two to you," it drives me nuts.

With the pending law changes, Florida poker rooms have to get their dealers out of this \$2 poker mentality. Players are going to expect a higher level of professionalism from the dealers and I agree. The



new laws will bring higher level betting structures and I can imagine how well it will go over when a dealer says to the acting player, "\$50 to you." Maybe he doesn't want to call \$50. Or maybe the original bettor doesn't want a call, so please stop encouraging him.

Another problem I often see is rabbit-hunting. In a stud game this is usually the guy who folds on Sixth Street because he didn't want to pay to chase his straight or flush. The dealer will burn and turn Seventh Street and as he finishes the deal the player will say, "Can I see that next card?" The proper thing to do is say, "Sorry, Sir. We do not allow rabbit-hunting here," and be done with it.

But far too many dealers feel that because they're working for tips they'll let him see the card, especially if he's a good tipper. Well, most poker rooms don't allow this. It slows down the game, which means fewer hands to other players, less revenue for the room and less chance for that dealer to make a tip.

In board games it usually happens after the flop or turn when there's been a substantial raise and everyone folds. Someone will say, "Can you put out the turn and the river, so we can see how it would have gone down?"

"Sorry, Sir. We don't rabbit-hunt here."

— Chaz Allen is director of Professional Dealer And Player School, Inc. and recently served as poker room manager at Ocala Poker and Jai-Alai. If you're a dealer and would like to respond to his comments or would like submit a column please send it to editor@anteupmagazine.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Correspondence from the Ante Up Nation

Allen's point has readers, dealers split

I respectfully disagree with Chaz Allen regarding the pulling in of bets before starting the action of the next betting round (*Dealers need to be efficient, but no shortcuts, June 2009*). It definitely slows the game (and rake) down. You could even make a case that it aids the less attentive dealers. They see the bets in front of players and they know who's in and who's out. The bets getting mixed together is a weak argument. The best dealers get into a rhythm and everything just flows.

Dealing poker in Florida has gone from one of the worst dealing jobs in the country to one of the best. That happened overnight when the betting limits were changed and the \$10-max pot went away for good. The players were used to tipping on a very small pot. With much larger pots tipping exploded. What used to take a week to make could be made in a day. The players were just happy for the opportunity to play for more money.

If the betting limits continue to increase and poker reaches its full potential, you will

see dealers improve because the pressure from players on management for a better product will increase. The weaker dealers will be weeded out or relegated to dealing the lower limit games.

Pete Menard
Fort Myers

...

I was a poker dealer in Las Vegas in the late '70s and I've trained dealers for 30 years. I especially liked what Chaz has to say about his goal to develop a dealer into a professional. Chaz says many times a floor manager has to be called to a table because the dealer took too long to rake in the chips and doesn't know whether the player called because the bets got mixed together.

This situation may lead a dealer to deal before a player has called a bet for that round. I agree this problem (premature dealing) happens far more frequently than it should. It's also been my experience that a well-trained

VERBAL IS BINDING

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dealer that clearly stacks each wager in front of the correct bettor will never experience that embarrassment.

I teach that procedure in the last week of my five-week poker dealing class. When good dealers execute the fundamentals of "speed dealing" it is a beautiful thing to see.

Chaz, I'm with you, let's do everything we can to improve the poor dealers that are giving players and management headaches, but let's not take away from the really good dealers who do it right.

Nick Ciavarella
Lackawanna, N.Y.
NYS licensed instructor

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Q&A

WITH "THE MOUTH"



Mike "The Mouth" Matusow recently released his autobiography and talked with *Ante Up* via Skype about his bouts with bipolar disorder, ADHD, drug addiction and imprisonment.

It's not like you're hurting for money anymore, so you didn't need to tell everyone your darkest secrets. Why'd you write *Check-Raising the Devil*?

I wrote it more than anything to help the younger generation of poker players that have a lot of money and throw it all away partying and aren't really aware of what's going on in the world; more to help people more than anything.

How difficult was it to open up and let everyone see the skeletons in your closet?

It was pretty easy for me because I wanted it to be out there. I was sick of hearing about, "Mike's a drug dealer" or "Mike's this" or "Mike's that." I wanted people out there to know the real me. I just really needed to set the record straight about what happened with my life and how I had to do six months in jail for pretty much nothing. I just got sick of hearing on ESPN or whatever "Mike got in trouble for selling drugs." ... I wanted people to know who the real me is because I just hated being portrayed as somebody I wasn't, so I really wanted people to read the book and know what type of person I am.

Was it important to you to explain your actions, like with Greg Raymer at the 2004 WSOP?

Yeah, everybody gets to understand that it was done in jest and fun and the cameras came over and I was just having fun with it. Of course I didn't think he was ever gonna win the World Series. And if he never did win the World Series it probably wouldn't even ever been shown. It would have just been something funny. (laughs) Believe it or not, that was one of the worst things I ever said or did where I was having a lot of fun and it came out in a situation where it brought me across as a bad person and I didn't want that.

Can you tell people what the signs are for bipolar disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder so that they might avoid "self-medicating" themselves and dodge the tumultuous life you had?

The main thing is when you're sitting there and you're winning every day in poker yet you're going home and you're crying and you're upset, there's a good chance there's something wrong with you. When you are running around and talking a million

miles an hour to people and you're acting like a little child and you don't know why, there's a good chance there's something wrong with you. My personality was always like that, and when I don't have medicine to help me with this ... I guess I'm always gonna be a little kid inside my body, but it won't be coming out so much in public like it used to. My ADHD did that. I'm really a changed person because of it.

What do you think about drug testing in poker and if it would be fair for everyone to take ADHD medications for concentration? Doesn't it give those that do an unfair advantage?

If you take Adderall for more than three days you will have really bad side effects from it if you don't have ADHD. ... It's a Catch-22 there. These hard medications are meant for people who have ADHD, not for people to try to help their poker game. ... The people that don't (have ADHD) and try to use it, it will work as an enhancer for the first couple of days, but then after that it reverses on them and has really bad side effects and they won't be able to play worth a shit.

Two couples had a huge influence on how your life. One got you hooked on Ecstasy, the other literally forced you to take coke. With friends like the four of them, who needs enemies?

Well, the first two were good friends of mine that really wanted me to stop being depressed and it worked. And the second ones were two of my really good friends who came in town to visit me and they were staying the weekend at my house and they were sick of hearing how depressed I am and how much I hated life and how I wanted to kill myself. So the reason why they wanted me to do some lines of coke was to stop being depressed. And it worked,



Photo courtesy of Rob Gracie

'The Mouth' finally sucks out on his demons

By Christopher Cosenza

Now it all makes sense.

If you're a fan of televised poker then you know who Mike "The Mouth" Matusow is, and you love him or hate him. Watch enough poker reruns and you'll see an arrogant, belligerent Matusow at the table one minute and then in a blink of an eye he'll be crying and somber. Was it just a passionate player letting his emotions get the best of him, or was it something deeper and more serious?

In his autobiography, *Check-Raising the Devil*, Matusow takes you on a surreal voyage he poignantly calls "self-medication," as Ecstasy, coke and crystal meth quite literally allow him to live, yet they're killing him at the same time. Unbeknownst to Matusow, he was bipolar and suffering from Attention Hyperactivity Attention Disorder.

Check-Raising the Devil is a candid account of Matusow's rise from trailer-park trash to high-stakes poker prominence, his fall into depression from bad beats and going broke, and his drug-dependency, which ultimately lands him six months in the Clark County Detention Center. He admits to writing this book to help others who may be suffering from the same disorders, especially in the poker world (see accompanied story). He also admits he needed help from Amy Calistri and Tim Lavalli to complete the book.

"I've never written anything before," he said. "Since I lost like half my motor skills from all the stupid drugs and stuff I did I'm not very good at writing. So basically they just helped me translate my autobiography into writing and they wrote it up into my words and I thought they did a fantastic job."

And the writing team certainly captured Matusow's personality. Like all very good autobiographies, *Check-Raising the Devil* makes you feel like you're in Henderson, Nev., sitting in Matusow's living room as he recounts all of his struggles and triumphs. And

sometimes both of these attributes happen in the same scene, such as when Matusow makes the final table of the 2002 World Series of Poker's Omaha/Hi-Lo event. During the tournament he keeps a vile of meth in his pocket but refuses to use it as he wants to prove to himself he could win without street drugs.

"Every five minutes I had to tell myself 'No, no, no. You're not going to do it. You're not going to do it.' I had the meth in my pocket," he writes, "It was there all day, just waiting for me to give in. This wasn't like ex-heroin addicts, who keep a syringe to remind them of their bad times. I had the real thing in my pocket, just in case."

There are times when you want to reach into the book and slap him, but you understand his disorders and addictions are ruling his life, so you read on, rooting for "The Mouth." And just when he has everything licked, when you can finally be happy for him, he "befriends" an undercover narc who actually helps Matusow stay clean, working out with him at the gym and serving as a sort of sponsor, to use 12-step vernacular. But this cop, who called himself Mike Vento, later presses Matusow to buy him some cocaine for some "friends" and that's when things start to unravel. Matusow reluctantly gets the blow and gives it to Vento.

It's not hard to imagine what happens after that, but the \$25 you'll spend on this book is worth every penny when you read Chapter 18: Judas Revealed. What happens in the hallway of the Clark County Courthouse during Matusow's preliminary hearing is one of the most shocking scenes you'll ever read.

And this book is not without poker content. Some of the best writing comes as he describes hands and situations in tournaments and at cash tables, when he was high and when he was sober. Matusow is as honest as he can be in *Check-Raising the Devil*, and after reading it there will be many more people in the "love him" camp.



Check-Raising the Devil

By Mike Matusow
with Amy Calistri and Tim Lavalli
Cardoza Publishing
\$24.95, 267 pp

Continued from previous page

too. (laughs) Believe it or not, all of them were just looking out for my best interests, so that's really what happened there.

Do they regret it now?

You know, the first two I don't regret because Ecstasy was a lot of fun for me. The second two, they don't even party at all anymore, and they just wanted me to not be depressed. I mean, how'd you like to come visit somebody in town for the weekend and your entire weekend all you hear about his how depressed your friend is and how he doesn't want to go out? He's crawled up in a ball in the corner. ... They were just trying to get me to get out of the shell that I was in.

The parallels between you and the late Stu Ungar are remarkable: brilliant card player, sports-betting

junkie, anti-drugs at first, then drug dependant. Once you realized you were on his destructive path why wasn't that enough to scare you straight? What had to happen?

What had to happen was I needed to come back from Paris and realize it was one thing to be up for like five of the seven days that I was in Paris; it was another thing to come back and then go party with a stripper for two more days and don't sleep and realize I had been up for seven out of nine days. Once I realized I had two days' sleep in nine days and was more dependent on doing meth than anything else, that's when I knew I had a problem. I just didn't want to do it anymore, and every time I came down and quit doing it I would get super depressed. So I just went to a psychologist and said I don't want to be depressed anymore. Somebody help me, and

that was it. I just listened to what he had to say to get me off of what I needed to get off of and I stayed strong. ... That was basically what got me off of it.

There's an undercover cop in the book named Mike Vento ... only, that's not his real name. What did he do to you?

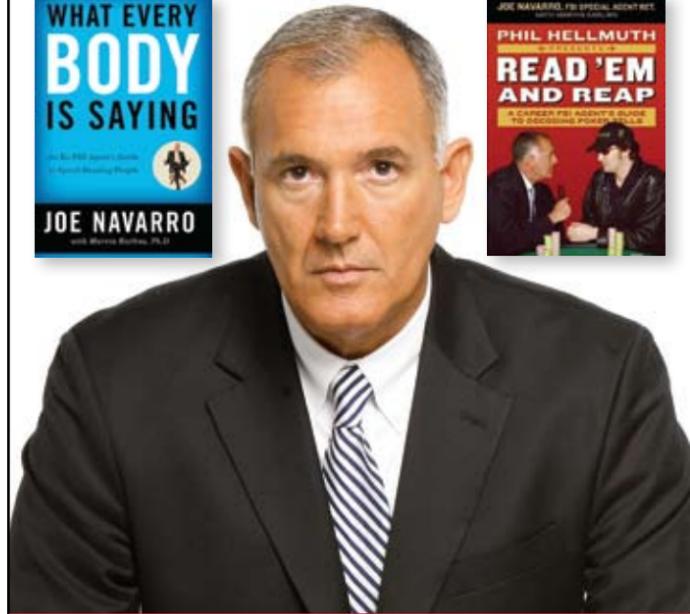
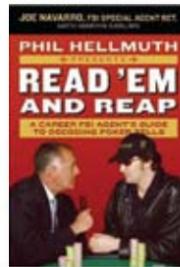
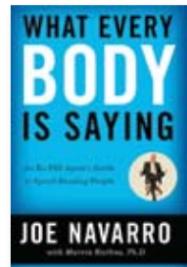
The funny thing was he met me the last party that I did. I had actually pretty much quit doing drugs. ... He met me right at the very end of my drug-partying. He just pretended to be my best friend. He kept wanting me to go out and I kept saying, "Dude, I don't want to go out. I quit doing this shit."

What would you do to him if he came across your path today?

I don't hold nothing against him. He was doing his job. I hold a lot against my doctor because he knew (Vento) was an undercover



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ON THE BUTTON

With Mike "The Mouth" Matusow

Continued from previous page

cop who put him in my life for no reason. So that's the guy I hold a lot of the grudge against. I'm a very forgiving person. If he was to tell me one day why he did it, I might even forgive him.

The courthouse scene is shocking and sad.

It was pretty amazing to me. Out of all the things that happened to me in that book and things in the past, definitely one of the most shocking things that happened to me was the preliminary hearing. ... I still couldn't believe him tapping me on the knee and then saying he was going to fix things and (then) doing what he did. ... It was pretty amazing.

So you went to prison for six months. How scared were you that you might not come out of there alive?

When I went in I was really worried ... but it was really weird. It was like "We're gonna make it really rough on Mike but we're going to make sure nothing happens to him, too." ... I never really did anything and I got so much shit it was ridiculous.

The poker scenes in the book are captivating. The best one might be your 2002 Omaha Hi/Lo bracelet victory when you were determined to win without taking any street drugs.

It will always be the greatest poker accomplishment of my life. And now when people read the book they'll really understand what I went through. ... It's still, to this day, indescribable the pain I was going through as I was trying to make it to the final table that day. I was just screaming from the inside out. ... Till the day I die, it was probably the most agonizing day of my entire life that I was awake. ... When I won that tournament the emotional high that I got was bigger than any other street drug, any other high that I had ever gotten in my life. It was almost like an out-of-body experience the second I won that tournament.

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