

# ANTE UP

FLORIDA'S POKER MAGAZINE™

NOVEMBER 2009 | anteupmagazine.com

NOVEMBER NINE PREVIEW:

## KEVIN SCHAFFEL

FOR THE LOVE OF THE GAME

+

**MARC DUNBAR**  
NO REAL FLA. POKER IN '09

**ANTE UP TOUR**  
RACE FOR THE BRACELET

**HEALTHY BET**  
SWINE FLU'S COMING

**ROAD TRIP**  
SALUTE TO VETERANS





**DANIEL NEGREANU**

World Champion & Team PokerStars.net Pro

# FRIEND OR FOE?



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DOLLAR  
CHALLENGE**

IN A BRAND NEW TV SHOW ON FOX, WORLD POKER CHAMPION DANIEL NEGREANU TAKES ON TWO ROLES...

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**DANIEL THE FOE:** In the climax of the show he turns enemy, as the winning contestants get to face-off across the poker table against their former mentor - for \$1 million.

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FROM THE PUBLISHERS



# A CHAMPION WE'D APPRECIATE

As the World Series of Poker Main Event rolls around every summer, pundits often reflect on the year gone by and debate whether the reigning world champion was a good ambassador for poker.

The discussion usually centers on the player's qualities vs. his qualifications. It's similar to the argument pro sports have: Should the MVP be the best player in the league, or the player who was most valuable to his successful team? In poker, however, our MVP isn't selected; it's earned.

Some believe the world champ should be the face of poker, attending many events and being available to the public for autographs and charity work. Others argue the world champ should be a great player, perhaps a pro who has paid his dues, not someone who got lucky for a week and a half winning coin-flips on his way to the title.

Can't we have a good player and a good ambassador? In Kevin Schaffel we can.

After spending some time talking with the Coral Springs player, *Ante Up* believes Schaffel to be an ideal candidate for the job. Qualifications? He has plenty. Schaffel has cashed in the biggest buy-in tournaments around the country, and he's done it at a clip that makes most records pale by comparison, finishing in the money an astonishing 50 percent of the time. Plus he's been playing semi-professionally for a few years, flying to the West Coast every month to log some serious hours at

the cash tables in California and Nevada. Yeah, he's paid his dues.

As far as being someone to admire, someone to take good care of the crown, Schaffel is our man. A few years ago he had to close the family business, but he had 22 employees. Not wanting them to lose their jobs, Schaffel found someone who could hire all but one of his employees, and the day Schaffel had to tell them he was shutting down, no one cried more than him. Integrity? Check! We know Schaffel would do great things with an \$8.5 million payday and a world title.



Kevin Schaffel reacts to making the final table.

He'll be in sixth place as the November Nine reconvenes Nov. 7 to play for the WSOP title. We'll be rooting for him, and we hope you will, too. To learn more about Schaffel please turn to Page 34.

Also in this issue we pay our respects to veterans with a Road Trip that honors their sacrifices, and we celebrate our one-year milestone with a party and tournament at One-Eyed Jacks Poker Room in Sarasota.

Finally, Floridians continued to make their presence known around the country as they took down several titles at the Beau Rivage's Gulf Coast Poker Championship in Biloxi and Atlantic City's Borgata Poker Open. Congrats, fellas.

We'll see you at the tables.

**Christopher Cosenza and Scott Long**

## ANTE UP

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

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Crave some immediate feedback? Log on to [anteupmagazine.com/forum](http://anteupmagazine.com/forum) to talk Florida poker.

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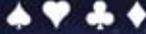
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Beau Rivage

# SOUTHERN POKER CHAMPIONSHIP



Play the best, at the best.



## JANUARY 6 - 27, 2010

DATE	EVENT#	TIME	GAME	BUY-IN	
Jan 6	Wednesday	6 PM	Satellites and Nightly Events Begin		
Jan 7	Thursday	1	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$300 + \$40
Jan 7	Thursday	2	3 PM	Seven Card Stud 8 or Better	\$300 + \$40
Jan 8	Friday	3	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$500 + \$50
Jan 8	Friday	4	3 PM	Limit Hold 'Em	\$300 + \$40
Jan 9	Saturday	5	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$500 + \$50
Jan 9	Saturday	6	3 PM	Limit Omaha 8 or Better	\$300 + \$40
Jan 10	Sunday	7	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$500 + \$50
Jan 10	Sunday	8	3 PM	HOSE	\$300 + \$40
Jan 11	Monday	9	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$300 + \$40
Jan 11	Monday	10	3 PM	Pot Limit Omaha/Re-entry	\$300 + \$40
Jan 12	Tuesday	11	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (Deep Stack)	\$300 + \$45
Jan 12	Tuesday	12	3 PM	Limit Hold 'Em	\$500 + \$50
Jan 13	Wednesday	13	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (Deep Stack)	\$300 + \$45
Jan 13	Wednesday	14	3 PM	Limit Stud 8 or Better/Omaha 8 or Better	\$300 + \$40
Jan 14	Thursday	15	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (Deep Stack)	\$300 + \$45
Jan 14	Thursday	16	3 PM	Seven Card Stud	\$300 + \$40
Jan 15	Friday	17	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$500 + \$50
Jan 15	Friday	18	3 PM	HORSE	\$1,000 + \$70
Jan 16	Saturday	19	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$1,000 + \$70
Jan 16	Saturday	20	2 PM	Ladies No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$300 + \$40
Jan 17	Sunday	21	12 PM	Seniors No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$500 + \$50
Jan 17	Sunday	22	3 PM	Pot Limit Omaha 8 or Better	\$300 + \$40
Jan 18	Monday	23	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (Deep Stack)	\$500 + \$55
Jan 18	Monday	24	3 PM	Pot Limit Omaha/Re-entry	\$500 + \$50
Jan 19	Tuesday	25	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (Deep Stack)	\$1,000 + \$80
Jan 19	Tuesday	26	3 PM	Limit Omaha 8 or Better	\$500 + \$50
Jan 20	Wednesday	27	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$2,000 + \$100
Jan 20	Wednesday	28	3 PM	Lowball Draw A-5/2-7	\$1,000 + \$70
Jan 21	Thursday	29	12 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$300 + \$40
Jan 21	Thursday	30	3 PM	Pot Limit Omaha Championship	\$5,000 + \$150
Jan 22	Friday	31	12 PM	WPT Mega Satellite	\$500 + \$40
Jan 22	Friday	32	1 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em	\$3000 + \$120
Jan 22	Friday		4 PM, 8 PM	WPT Mega Satellites	\$1,000 + \$60, \$500 + \$40
Jan 23	Friday/Saturday		12 AM	Midnight Turbo WPT Mega Satellite	\$500 + \$40
Jan 23	Saturday		2 PM	No-Limit Hold 'Em (1 day event)	\$200 + \$30
Jan 23	Saturday		12 PM, 4 PM, 8 PM	WPT Mega Satellites	\$500 + \$40, \$1,000 + \$60
Jan 23	Saturday/Sunday		12 AM	Midnight Turbo WPT Mega Satellite	\$500 + \$40
Jan 24	Sunday		10 AM	Last Chance Turbo Satellite	\$500 + \$40
Jan 24	Sunday		2 PM	WPT No-Limit Hold 'Em Championship Event	\$9,700 + \$300
Jan 27	Wednesday		4 PM	WPT Final Table (Beau Rivage Showroom)	



\$500 + \$40 Mega Satellites for Championship Event every day at 4PM, January 7 - 21. \$175 + \$25 No-Limit Hold 'Em nightly events at 7PM, January 6 - 23.

Registration begins at 12PM on January 6. Registration is open from 8AM - 9PM daily. For more information call 228.386.7111 ext. 7254. Blind structures and other details are available at [beaurivage.com](http://beaurivage.com).

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# ANTE UP CONTENTS

## NEWS



### **Emerald Coast Championship**

Dave Rauschkold headlines the champs at Ebro's annual series. **22**

### **Happy birthday to us!**

*Ante Up* celebrates its first-year milestone by throwing a birthday bash at One-Eyed Jacks, which hosted a tournament in the magazine's honor. **14**

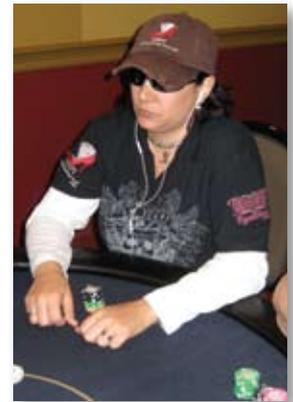
### **Mardi Gras makeover**

The Big Easy Poker Room is moving to the first floor of the casino this month and is getting more amenities. **12**

### **Floridians go national**

At the Beau Rivage's Gulf Coast Poker Championship, five titles went to players from the Sunshine State, including two to Margate pro Chad Brown. **24**

• Floridians captured four tournament titles at the Borgata Open in Atlantic City. **25**



### **Meet Lee-Lee**

Lisa Teebagy is the most prolific player in High Heels Poker Tour history with three titles. **10**

## LIFESTYLE

### **You swine!**

Poker players should prepare to get the swine flu. **40**

## STRATEGY

### **Live and learn**

If you make a mistake at the poker table it's only a big deal if you don't learn from it, says pro Lee Childs. **44**

## ON THE BUTTON



### **Poker and Hollywood**

Shannon Elizabeth explains why actors gravitate toward poker, and how she got her start playing the game. **53**

## COVER STORY

### **Love of the game**

Coral Springs' Kevin Schaffel says he loves competition, especially at the poker table. The November Nine member is about to get all the competition he can handle. **34**



## ANTE UP TOUR



### **Here comes Ronnie!**

Gainesville's Ronnie Browne had a big month on the Ante Up Poker Tour, including a victory in Jacksonville, above, and a second-place finish at Derby Lane. See where he stands in our Player of the Year race. **30-31**

## ROAD TRIP

### **Pay your respects**

We salute our veterans by taking you on a tour of the state's finest memorials, museums and parades dedicated to our brave protectors of freedom. **28**



## PERSPECTIVE

### **Anti-discrimination laws made it legal, but was it right?**

*Ante Up* columnist Lauren Failla is upset with a man who entered (and won) the Borgata Poker Open's ladies event. **50**

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Poker Challenge

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## DiGiacomo wins Gulfstream Park's Fat Boy Challenge



Gulfstream assistant manager Michael May congratulates Harley-Davidson Challenge winner Rob DiGiacomo.

Rob DiGiacomo outlasted a field of 50 to win the Harley-Davidson Challenge at Gulfstream Park on Sept. 6.

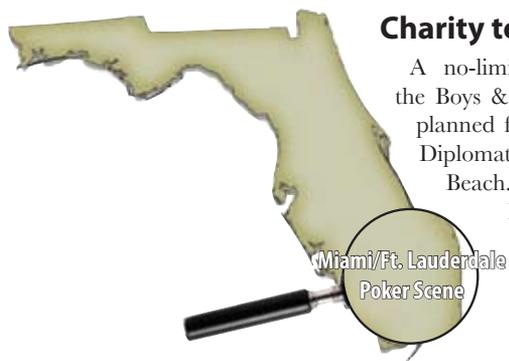
He earned a 2009 Harley-Davidson Fat Boy motorcycle plus more than \$13,000. Fred Attias finished second.

Diane Devereaux was the top female finisher (eighth).

Gulfstream Park's second annual Mercedes-Benz Challenge began Oct. 1 and runs until Dec. 6. Top 50 point-earners from the nightly 6:30 tournaments will be invited to play in the freeroll on Dec. 6.

Here are the final results of the Fat Boy Challenge:

1. Rob DiGiacomo	Harley "Fat Boy" plus \$13,150
2. Fred Attias	\$6,662
3. Khampetch Seignarack	\$3,903
4. Albert Eskenazi	\$2,637
5. Steven Becker	\$2,098
6. Daniel Alonso	\$1,715
7. Yuda Osturkan	\$1,445
8. Diane Devereaux	\$1,251
9. Michael Johnson	\$1,114
10. Erwin Saltos	\$1,025



### Charity tournament in Hallandale Beach will award WSOP seat Oct. 23

A no-limit hold'em tournament benefiting the Boys & Girls Clubs of Broward County is planned for 6:30 p.m. Oct. 23 at the Westin Diplomat Country Club & Spa in Hallandale Beach.

Registration begins at 5:30 p.m.

The buy-in is \$100 (\$25 for spectators and \$2,000 for sponsors, which includes 10 entries and signage).

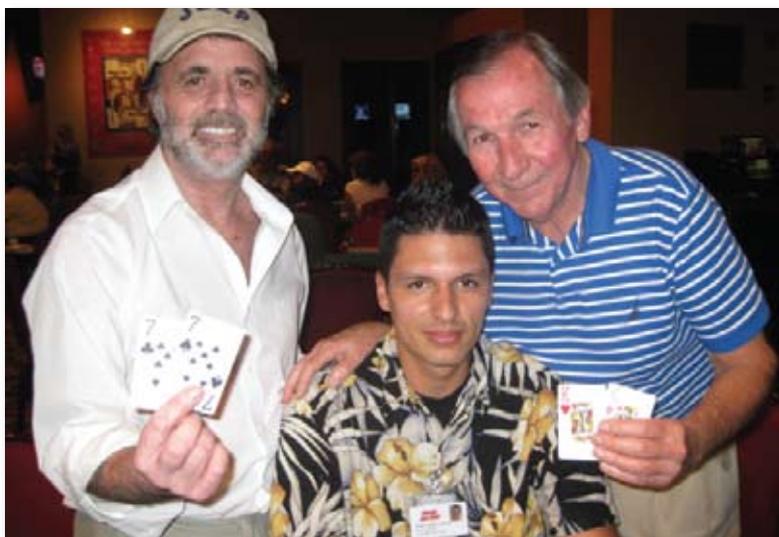
With a minimum of 150 players,

first place will win a seat in the 2010 World Series of Poker Main Event. Second place will win a diamond tennis bracelet and three more places will win prizes.

The tournament is an Ante Up Poker Tour event, so top 10 finishers earn points toward the Ante Up Player of the Year title.

To register, contact Matt Organ or Megan Johansen at (954) 537-1010 or [morgan@bgcbc.org](mailto:morgan@bgcbc.org) or [mjohansen@bgcbc.org](mailto:mjohansen@bgcbc.org).

### Dania Jai-Alai and Poker



Stephen Lupo, left, didn't mind having his quad sevens cracked by Gene Midyette's four kings in a recent cash game at Dania's poker room. The table erupted in applause once the players realized they'd be part of the bad-beat jackpot payout.

Lupo received \$22,730 for being the "loser" and Midyette got \$13,637. The remaining six players won \$1,515.

### Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood



The Main Event took place at the Paradise Poker Room on Sept. 7-11 as the \$1,100 Heavyweight Division went to Doron Malinasky of Hollywood. He bested nearly 70 players and pocketed \$24,550.

The Middleweight Division (221 entries), went to David Samoel of North Miami Beach (\$18,705).

Plantation's Franklin Rojas bested 67 players in the Cruiserweight Division and won \$12,275.

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### During Promo Times:

- All 4 of a kinds and straight flushes will also win a Satellite ticket
- Royal Flushes win \$225 Halloween Tournament ticket (pocket pairs for 4 of a kinds and both cards for straight flushes and Royal Flushes must play)

### All other Times . . .

#### Cash games:

- 4 of a kinds \$25 and Satellite ticket
- Straight Flushes \$50 and Satellite ticket
- Royal Flushes \$100 and a \$225 Halloween Tournament ticket.

#### Tournaments:

- 4 of a kinds wins a Satellite ticket,
- Straight Flushes \$60 voucher toward any tournament entry & Satellite ticket. Royal Flushes win \$225 Halloween Tournament ticket.

\*Satellite Tickets for our Halloween Tournament will be good for the next available tournament date, check your tournament schedule.



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## PLAYER PROFILE: LISA TEEBAGY

An occasional interview with a Florida player • By Christopher Cosenza

**L**isa Teebagy is the most successful player in High Heels Poker Tour history. She's only been playing for three years, yet she owns three HHPT titles and has two World Series cashes in her young career. She recently sat down with *Ante Up* publisher Chris Cosenza to answer questions about life as a female poker player.

**Age:** You know a woman never likes to be asked that! (laughs) People don't believe me when I say it, but I'm 43.

**Hometown:** Lighthouse Point.

**Born:** I was born in Boston but I've lived here almost all my life. I came here when I was 2. I consider myself a Florida girl. Everybody thinks I'm from New York. (laughs)

**Family:** My whole family, my mom, my dad and my grandma play at the Isle. We're all into poker. So on any given day that one of us is there you'll probably catch the other three. We're a family that plays poker and we stay together.

**Nickname:** I go by L.L. My nieces and nephews call me Lee-Lee.

**Favorite hold'em hand:** I have several and on any given day it could vary. ... I don't have one in particular, but whatever the winning hand is, that's my favorite hand.

**How often do people mispronounce your last name?** Very often! (laughs) It's to the point where I don't even correct them anymore. (It's pronounced tee-BADGE-ee)

**Do you play any mixed games?** I've dabbled in it, seven-card stud and a little bit of pot-limit ... but I want to get as much experience and expertise in Texas Hold'em 'cause I definitely would like to make this my living one day. I definitely want to learn a variety of games, but I'm a tournament player for Texas Hold'em and I'm now getting into cash games, two totally different animals. So I'm branching into that. Once I get a good grip on that I will start to go into Omaha because I think that's up-and-coming, especially online.

**How and when did you get started in poker?** It's probably going on three years ago. ... I was over (my parents') house for dinner one day, and my father came home and he was talking about a hand he had played in the poker room at the Isle. He was saying all this stuff I didn't understand about the hand. But it was so intriguing and it presented such a challenge with his decisions as he went through talking about this hand. Because I didn't understand it, it really got my interest totally piqued. I love challenges and I love to solve things, and I'm very competitive. ... I decided, after getting so interested in that hand, to go play a sit-n-go. So I entered a low-scale SNG at the Isle and I actually won it. ... It was like my blood was flowing inside of me and it was very addicting, just grabbed me and wouldn't let go.

**How important is the High Heels Poker Tour?** Oh! I am very thankful for the High Heels Poker Tour in many ways, first and foremost of the format that it provides for women. I never was afraid to play with men, but I do know other women that weren't playing because they were very intimidated. They were just afraid to make a mistake, to get yelled at, and that does happen. So this allowed women to come in, just relax a little bit, know that they're not going to be judged or criticized. It's kinda like a more social yet competitive arena for women.

... I think playing with women is much harder than playing with all men, because women can be fickle, they can be stubborn, they can sit on a hand, and it might not even be the best hand, but they can call you down to the river on a bluff and you're done. It's more of a challenge. ... You have the whole variety and it's a very versatile game.

**You've won three HHPT events. Why do you do so well in these?** Maybe because I am a woman and I have the range that I can turn on aggression and I can turn it off. I'm really good with people skills as far as reading people, intuitive. Through the years I've gathered a good capacity of knowledge of the math of poker. So between the two of them I can really hone my game into the skill sets of playing with women vs. men.



Lisa Teebagy

**What would you say to a guy if he forced his way into an HHPT event and sat next to you?** I wouldn't say anything to him. If he talked to me I probably wouldn't talk because I don't usually talk at the poker table anyway. It wouldn't make me happy and I'd be like, "Why do you find it necessary to do it?" But he has just as much right as anyone else to play in it and that's his choice and I'm not going to judge anybody for their actions.

**Should there be segregation in poker as far as men vs. women?** I don't think it will always be this way. But I know women outside of poker like to hang with other women. They really like that break, so to speak. So I think there will always be venues for the High Heels Poker Tour and other women-only events. That definitely will always be a popular venue, but is it always going to be segregated like it is? I hate to think of it like that, but I don't think it's going to be essential or needed. Lauren (Failla), when she started the HHPT, she found a niche and a need and made it happen. She deserves a lot of

credit, especially in this area, and now she's branched out all over the United States.

**How often do you travel to play poker?** Probably three or four times a year. I'll go to Vegas, I'll go to Biloxi, or wherever the big events are.

**Is there a buy-in ceiling for you?** I'm not into the mega-stakes. With the HHPT I won a seat to the (WSOP) main event. However, I took the cash and played in other venues at the WSOP. I cashed in two World Series events so I was pretty proud of my abilities there. My goal is to play in the main event, but I wanted to wait to hone my skills before I did that. I have a target that within the next two years I will play in the main event.

**What's your greatest poker accomplishment?** Definitely my HHPT wins, because like I said I consider playing against women probably one of the hardest fields to win against. And then I would say my cashes in the WSOP.

**What do you think of Florida poker players?** I definitely play different when I play in Florida than when I play in Vegas. You have really low-profile pros that play in Vegas. You never know where they're going to be, if you're playing against an online guru or what have you. When I play in Florida I'm not so much worried about that. I'm actually putting a little bit of safety play on my game so I can compete against the donks, so to speak.



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### High Heels Poker Tour



The all-ladies poker tour stopped at Dania Jai-Alai's poker room on Sept. 12 and Lake Worth's Kelly Elliott came away with the cool trophy and \$1,120.

Here are the final results:

1. Kelly Elliott	Lake Worth	\$1,120
2. Patty Hederson	Ft. Lauderdale	\$700
3. Robin Deeter	Daytona	\$500
4. Peggy Penning	Miami	\$440
5. Karen Hudson	Davie	\$375
6. Stephanie Streeter	Hallandale	\$315

### Mardi Gras Gaming



Construction is expected to be finished in November.

The Big Easy Poker Room is on the move. The room is headed to a new, more upscale location on the first floor, which means poker players will have a dedicated entrance to the room and easy access from the parking area.

Also, there will be a full-service bar, video poker bar tops and a kitchen with sit-down meal service.

The new location, which will have a special no-limit area, allows the room to have 30 tables, which will have new, comfortable chairs.

"All of our guests that have tried a sample of the chair love it and can't wait for all of the tables to get these new chairs," director of poker operations Wil Herrera said.

Perhaps the most exciting news is the addition of the Genesis-Bravo system, which expedites beverage service and helps rate and comp players.

Most of the tables will have automatic shufflers, and Herrera has an eye toward getting these shufflers for all tables.

"We are very excited about the new room and we expect to be the place to play in South Florida." Herrera said.

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# Poker Run

October 26th - November 1st

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727.812.3339 ext 214  
www.derbylanepoker.com



Participate in any or all of the 13 Derby Lane Poker Run (DLPR) Events and receive points based on your finishing position.

At the end of the run, we will tally all of the points in order to determine the winners. Each of the events listed below are eligible for DLPR points and there are opportunities for bonus points by participating in certain numbers of events.

## DERBY LANE POKER RUN QUALIFYING EVENTS

- Monday, October 26th  
1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- Tuesday, October 27th  
1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, October 28th  
1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- Thursday, October 29th  
1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- Friday, October 30th  
2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.
- Saturday, October 31th  
2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.
- Sunday, November 1st  
1:00 p.m. \$435 Main Event

## DERBY LANE POKER RUN TOP PRIZES

The 5 players that win the most points throughout the run will win the following prizes:

- 1<sup>ST</sup> Men's Tag Heuer Watch  
(valued over \$2000)
- 2<sup>ND</sup> Ante Up Poker Cruise  
(approximate value \$1000)
- 3<sup>RD</sup> \$500
- 4<sup>TH</sup> \$250
- 5<sup>TH</sup> \$125

If you play in 6 or more events, you will receive **150 bonus points** and you will be entitled to play in the Main Event with **no house fee**.

To earn points during the DLPR, you must finish in the top 20 positions in a qualifying event. The number of points that you will earn is based on your finishing position, the buy-in amount and the total number of players in the event.

### Poker Run Points Breakdown for tournaments \$100 or less

- 1st = 10 X number of players
- 2nd = 9 X number of players
- 3rd = 8 X number of players
- 4th = 7 X number of players
- 5th = 6 X number of players
- 6th = 5 X number of players
- 7th = 4 X number of players
- 8th = 3 X number of players
- 9th = 2 X number of players
- 10th = 1 X number of players
- 11th - 20th = .5 X number of players

### EXAMPLE POINTS:

- \$60 buy-in Deep Stack
- 100 Players
- 1st = (10x100) = 1000
- 2nd = (9x100) = 900
- 3rd = (8x100) = 800
- 4th = (7x100) = 700
- 5th = (6x100) = 600
- 6th = (5x100) = 500
- 7th = (4x100) = 400
- 8th = (3x100) = 300
- 9th = (2x100) = 200
- 10th = (1x100) = 100
- 11th-20th = (.5x100) = 50

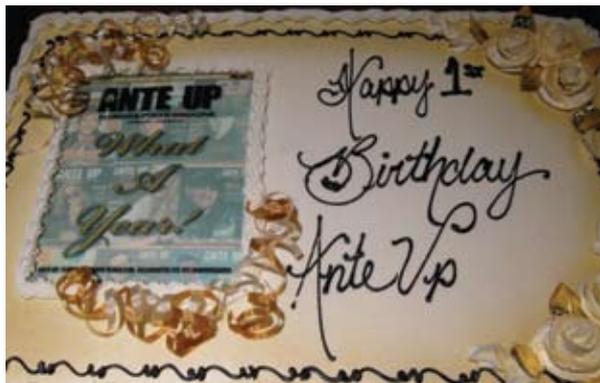
### Poker Run Points Breakdown for tournaments \$150 or higher

- 1st = 15 X number of players
- 2nd = 13.5 X number of players
- 3rd = 12 X number of players
- 4th = 10.5 X number of players
- 5th = 9 X number of players
- 6th = 7.5 X number of players
- 7th = 6 X number of players
- 8th = 4.5 X number of players
- 9th = 3 X number of players
- 10th = 1.5 X number of players
- 11th - 20th = .75 X number of players

# ANTE UP BIRTHDAY BASH

**SEPT. 19 • ONE-EYED JACKS POKER ROOM • SARASOTA KENNEL CLUB**

What better way to celebrate our 1-year milestone than with cake and a tournament? Ante Up would like to thank One-Eyed Jacks and all of those who attended. Oh, and thanks for singing to us!



The Ante Up birthday cake lasted until the first break of the tournament, then it was gone!



Room manager Sam Minutello poses with the top 3: Kim Unger, Alex Jackson-Palin and John Huckle.



Here's the final table from the Ante Up Birthday Bash tournament, which had 70 players.

### Final results

1. John Huckle (chop)
1. Kim Unger (chop)
3. Alex Jackson-Palin
4. John Vale
5. Matthew Queior
6. Grady Yeager Jr.
7. Bob Conrad
8. Parry Shaw
9. Shari Amato

### The Bounty Hunters



Grady Yeager Jr. of Cape Coral and Alex Jackson-Palin from Bromley, England earned the \$60 bounties for knocking out the publishers.



Jacksonville Greyhound's director of poker operations Josh Zuckerman had a great showing in the tourney.

# STATE REPORT

## Southwest Florida Poker Scene

### Sarasota Kennel Club



The \$330 Labor Day tournament at One-Eyed Jacks drew 321 players and ended with a chop when it got to heads-up play. Here are the results of the two-day event:

1. Mike Patitucci	\$20,000	17. Natasha Barbour	\$900
1. John Falisiri	\$20,000	18. Kevin Malick	\$900
3. James Kerr	\$10,000	19. Parry Shaw	\$800
4. Rick O'Leary	\$7,000	20. Joe Pieloch	\$800
5. Orlando Brewer	\$5,000	21. Adam Farjam	\$800
6. David Shorty	\$4,000	22. Bill Burdick	\$800
7. Lou Merola	\$3,200	23. Jeremy Trueschel	\$800
8. Walter Brown	\$2,400	24. Steve Murphy	\$800
9. Oliver Agostini	\$1,600	25. Steve Wolter	\$800
10. Ken Boyce	\$1,200	26. Cory Grelle	\$800
11. Bob Conrad	\$1,200	27. Bob Almy	\$700
12. Rod Rodrigue	\$1,200	28. Alice Bozza	\$700
13. Bill Anderson	\$1,050	29. James Martz	\$700
14. Elizabeth Scanlin	\$1,050	30. Marshal Naimo	\$700
15. Glenn Kelly	\$1,050	31. Fari Davarpanah	\$700
16. Alex Wilcoxon	\$900	32. Bobby Reardon	\$700

### Naples-Ft. Myers Greyhound Track



Loic Neron receives the keys to his new car from poker room manager Cindy Fra. “(Neron) didn’t realize what he had won until the dealer told him,” Fra said.

### Club Poker League

Albert Davis, right, won the Season 3 final, pocketing \$600 in player sponsorships and an entry to the year-end bracelet tournament. There were 186 players in the event at the Holiday House in Venice.

David Kuxhausen finished second, followed by Lauren Cook, Mary Johnson, Bill Richette, Brad Shaw, Gary Reece, Tom Fedora and Leo Polejewski.



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## BAD BEATS, HIGH HANDS AND ROYAL FLUSH GIVEAWAYS

### November Events:

**NOVEMBER 1ST** - High Heels Poker Tour  
1 p.m. at St. Johns Greyhound Park - \$125 buy-in

**NOVEMBER 8TH** - WSOP<sup>SM</sup> Satellite Event  
1 p.m. at St. Johns Greyhound Park - \$150 buy-in

**NOVEMBER 22ND** - WSOP<sup>SM</sup> Satellite Event  
1 p.m. at Orange Park Kennel Club - \$150 buy-in



### December Events:

**DECEMBER 6TH** - WSOP<sup>SM</sup> Satellite Event - 1 p.m. at St. Johns Greyhound Park - \$150 buy-in

**DECEMBER 20TH** - WSOP<sup>SM</sup> Satellite Event - 1 p.m. at Orange Park Kennel Club - \$150 buy-in

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## ON A WHIM, O'DELL CASHES IN AT COMMERCE HOLD'EM SERIES IN L.A.

Sometimes you're just meant to go deep in a tournament. Take Punta Gorda's Mike O'Dell for instance. The regular from One-Eyed Jacks in Sarasota was in Los Angeles recently to hang out with his son, actor Dalton O'Dell, who's been on *iCarly*, and he decided to play the \$65 daily at the Commerce Casino.

"When I got there they informed me the regular tourneys had been cancelled for the Commerce Hold'em Series," he said. "The day I was there they were running the \$120 re-buy. I didn't have enough with me to re-buy or add-on, but I said what the heck," and he hit the ATM.

There were 425 entrants and O'Dell barely made Day 2, never getting above average as he rebought just once.

"At 2 a.m. when we broke for the day, I was at the two final tables, in 18th place with a pathetic 14K in chips."

On Day 2 he started in the small blind so his stack went to 12,500 without even playing a hand. One player said, "Dude, what'd you even come back for?"

The under-the-gun player shoved for about 30K and O'Dell called with Q-8. The UTG showed K-10 and the flop was 4-8-10. The turn was a jack but the river was an 8.

He then went on a rush that saw him nearly tied for the chip lead as he made the final table. He ultimately finished fourth for \$8,928.

No other Floridians made any final tables in this series.



### Texas Hold'em Tours



Thirty-six women competed in the league's first Ladies Invitational on Sept. 26 at the Highland Manor in Apopka. Mildred Walsh, pictured above with tournament director Matt Ehlert, won the title. She was followed by Lynn Dehlinger in second, Hazel Walters and Deborah Seymour.

The Highland Manor also was the site for the recent quarterly event, which attracted about 240 players competing for the \$5,000 prize pool. Daytona Beach Kennel Club poker room manager Mark Hayes was on-hand as many of the prizes were tournament buy-ins to Hayes' poker room.

Here are the final results, which includes a four-way chop on top:

- |                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Adam H., \$1,062.50  | 7. Brian M., \$125   |
| 2. Billy D., \$1,062.50 | 8. Majorie C., \$100 |
| 3. David E., \$1,062.50 | 9. Joel F., \$100    |
| 4. John W., \$1,062.50  | 10. Randy C., \$75   |
| 5. Brian T., \$150      | 11. Summer B., \$75  |
| 6. Jack P., \$125       | 12. Alan F., \$50    |



### WPTAPL

The World Poker Tour Amateur Poker League recently held its semi-annual regional championships where players advance to the next level to compete for a seat in a \$10,000 WPT main event.

The top eight from the semi-annual regional championships (SARC) and top 10 percent from the semi-annual regional points championship (SARPC) as well as the regional point leader from each region and the top 10 overall point-earners nationally for the year will be invited to the nationals in Orlando on April 15-18.

There were six regional championships hosted across Florida and the following people won the events in their area. These players also won several prizes, including vacation getaways:

#### Region 201: South Florida

**SARC:** Rose Competiello  
**SARPC:** Jon Zigmant

#### Region 202: South Central Florida

**SARC:** Jeremy Lentz  
**SARPC:** Matthew Schreiner

#### Region 203: North Central Florida

**SARC:** Mike Buchanan  
**SARPC:** Bob Wordelmann

#### Region 205: Northwest Florida

**SARC:** Stephen Jolly  
**SARPC:** Robert Lawson

### Showdown Poker Tour

Randall Schrader outlasted a field of nearly 90 players to capture the title for the quarterly tournament Sept. 19 at Tiger Dugout in Lakeland.

Here are the final results: 1. Randall Schrader, \$600; 2. P.J. Mayo, \$300; 3. Eddy Tufino, \$150; 4. Murat Akay, \$100; 5. Murray Dodd, \$50; Justin Beauchesne, Michele Shough, Cliff Waterman and Chris English each received gift certificates for finishing 6-9, respectively.

### All in Poker Series



Robert Colde and Yvonne Hoevenaar chopped first and second, beating a field of 50 to take home \$125 in gas cards. They'll be entered into the WSOP seat giveaway Dec. 5.

On Nov. 6 there will be an All in for a Cure tournament in Orlando. First place will be a \$1K Visa gift card.

Go to [allinforcurecharity.com](http://allinforcurecharity.com).

### Pleasure Island Poker



On Sept. 25 Chris Siler bested 80 players to win the monthly event in Fort Walton Beach.

His opponent, Loria Walters, who had rallied from one chip at the final table, was all-in with Q-10 preflop as Siler called with A-3, which obviously held up.

# MORE WAYS TO WIN!



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Palm Beach Princess Casino also offers a NEW State-of-the-art Sports Book. Featuring Keno, high quality digital TV screens and co-mingle wagering with prominent tracks. The Palm Beach Princess Casino Poker Room heats up by hosting the Ante Up Poker Tournament on the first Sunday day cruise of every month. With a \$3,000 estimated prize pool, the final three players will also receive a pre-paid entry into the monthly \$10,000 WPT Satellite Tournament. Make your reservation online and receive \$5 in casino play!



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### \$10,000 WPT Tournament Seats

We will hold "One Day" satellite tournaments on the following 10:30am day cruises:

- Saturday, Oct. 17, 2009
- Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009

Call the poker hotline at 561.818.5771 or email [bbush@pbcasino.com](mailto:bbush@pbcasino.com).

**Book your own poker tournament!**

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# ANTE UP CRUISE RETURNS

*Ante Up, Florida's Poker Magazine*, has announced its second Ante Up Poker Cruise will be March 25-29 aboard Royal Caribbean's *Grandeur of the Seas*. The four-night cruise leaves from Tampa with a port call in Cozumel, Mexico.

"Our first cruise was such a success that we can't wait for the sequel," said Scott Long, who publishes *Ante Up* with Chris Cosenza. "And we're excited that we'll have a much more spacious poker room away from the ship's other activities on this cruise."

The cruise will feature a \$350 Ante Up Poker Tour event, five other multitable tournaments and SNGs, and cash games that range from \$2-\$4 limit to no-limit with no maximum buy-in. Mixed games were



popular on the last cruise, and any game at any limit will be spread based on demand.

Poker room managers Jody Russell and Cassie Greene will return, as well as much of the experienced dealer staff. Prices start at \$479 per person, based on double occupancy, and bookings must be made through Mary Kolb at GO Travel (727-733-3498) to be admitted to the private poker room.

Also, many Florida poker rooms will be giving away cruise vouchers to their players. For a list, turn the page to see the ad or visit [www.anteupmagazine.com/cruise](http://www.anteupmagazine.com/cruise).

## Treasure Chest Poker



Ron Paar, left, had an great run in September as he won the TCP monthly tournament (Sept. 12) at Brothers Tavern in Dunedin, and then a week later captured the Battle of the Bars.

After six hours of play and 107 players eliminated, Paar found himself heads-up with Jeremy Conway (who has taken second in this event three times but never has won).

In the end Conway was runner-up again as Paar won a trip to Las Vegas, which he plans to take after tax season next year. Conway had to settle for an HD stereo.

The next week Paar led Largo's Country Club Lounge to victory over defending champ Last Call Bar from Bradenton. For his efforts Paar won a \$50 gift card and bragging rights over the 45 other competitors.

In other news, **Robert Franklin** won the Stokers Monthly and received a \$100 buy-in to a tournament of his choice at a local casino or parimutuel card room. Franklin is a two-year veteran of Treasure Chest Poker and has won a few other events, though this was his first victory at the Stokers Monthly.



## Seminole Hard Rock Tampa



Another stellar bad-beat jackpot hit at Seminole Hard Rock in Tampa, this time on Sept. 2 to the tune of \$211,065. The beat came in Texas Hold'em when David E. Crowder of Winter Park's quad nines beat the four deuces of **Phyllis A. Bell** of Tampa.

**Crowder** pocketed \$52,766 while Bell was the biggest winner, taking home a staggering \$105,531.

This bad beat pushed the bad-beat jackpot payouts to more than \$3 million in 2009 at Hard Rock Tampa.



JACKSONVILLE  
POKER SCENE

Dealer Brenda Woodard controls the action for Uehara (middle) and Curri.

## St. Johns Greyhound Park

More than 100 starters made their way to The Poker Room at St. Johns Greyhound Park on Sept. 26 for the \$330 MegaStack tournament and its \$31,200 prize pool.

Players began with 10,000 chips (30-minute blinds) and in the end it was Sokol Curri who defeated Eddie Uehara for the victory. Curri earned \$11,855 while Uehara took home \$6,550.



*Bad Beats, High Hands & Four-of-a-Kind Giveaways*

**Florida's Best "Deep Stack" Tournament  
On The 3rd Saturday Of Every Month**



### **Spin The Wheel Mondays**

Flush Or Better Entered For Drawing To Spin



### **Quad Tuesdays**

Amounts Double After 6:00 PM!



### **2K Wednesdays**

High Hand Giveaways From 12 PM -to- 5 PM

Flush Or Better Drawings From 7 PM -to- 11 PM



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# ANTE UP PO

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## **WIN YOUR WAY ON BOARD!**

Florida poker rooms will be giving out cruises-for-two through the end of December!

**TAMPA BAY DOWNS:** Ante Up Poker Cruise tournaments will be at 1 p.m. on Nov. 1, Nov. 8, Nov. 22 and Nov. 29. \$10 entry fee, with unlimited \$10 rebuys and one \$20 add-on. Also, the winner of the Nov. 15 \$350 monthly tournament will win a cruise in addition to their first-place winnings.

**SARASOTA KENNEL CLUB:** Two Players of the Month in October, November and December win cruises.

**DERBY LANE:** Second-place finisher in the Derby Lane Poker Run Oct. 26-Nov. 1 wins a cruise.

**OTHER:** Visit [www.anteupmagazine.com/cruise](http://www.anteupmagazine.com/cruise) for giveaways from Ocala Poker, Palm Beach Kennel Club, Naples-Ft. Myers Greyhound Track and more! All Florida poker rooms and leagues have been invited to give away Ante Up cruises. If you'd like to participate call 727-331-4335.

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## EMERALD COAST POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

SEPT. 14-19 • EBRO GREYHOUND PARK • EBRO

The third annual series had a nice turnout as an Ebro regular captured the main-event title.

Dave Rauschkolb is an Ebro Greyhound Park regular who owns a beautiful restaurant by the beach, and he plays poker for the love of the game.

And there's nothing he loves more than winning a big tournament, which is exactly what he did Sept. 19 when he took down the \$500 main event of the third annual Emerald Coast Poker Championship at Ebro.

Once the tournament reached heads-up play the lead changed hands at least twice before Rauschkolb's final hand with Alan S.

With the blinds at 9K-18K and 2,500 ante, Alan called on the button with 7-7, but Rauschkolb shoved for 650K with two jacks.

With 340K Alan made the call and got no help from the board, finishing second for \$6,204.

Rauschkolb let out a huge "YES!" when the final card fell and he earned more than \$9K and the glass trophy for his efforts.

**Event 1:** The ladies event kicked off the festivities on Sept. 14, and Lisa spiked an ace on the river to beat Trudy's paired king on the turn to end it.

**Event 2:** Destin's Chris W. and Paul Tomas from Panama City Beach went heads-up for the title after beating a field of 70. But Chris' two-pair on the final hand won the \$100 event on Sept. 15.

**Event 3:** The \$150 bounty event had 49 entrants as Charles and Steve chopped first- and second-place prize money (\$1,495) and played for the trophy. After 40 minutes Charles won the hardware.

**Event 4:** Wayne eliminated Doug in the \$200 event, winning \$2,600.

**Event 5:** Friday's \$250 tournament began at 6 p.m. with 40 players and ended five hours later when Georgia's Mike P. knocked Joe G. out of the event to win \$3,486 on Sept. 18.



Dave Rauschkolb won the main event with two fish hooks.



Charles won Event 3.



Chris won Event 2.



Mike won Event 5.



Wayne won Event 4.



Lisa won the ladies event.

# MONTHLY POKER SHOOT-OUT MEGA PRIZES

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Greyhound Park  
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Ebro reserves the right to revise, cancel, suspend or modify tournament events at it's sole discretion and without prior notice. If a tournament is not concluded within 30 minutes of closing, play will continue on the following day at 6p.m.



**November Bonus Days - Every Friday**  
Nov. 11th Veterans Day  
Nov. 25th, 26th - Thanksgiving Day

**\$100.00**  
**High-Hands**  
(Every 15 minutes!)

# GULF COAST POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

SEPT. 3-14 • BEAU RIVAGE • BILOXI, MISS.

Margate's Chad Brown, who was the "host" of the tournament series, leads Floridians with two victories, including the \$5K no-limit hold'em main event. All told, Floridians captured five titles out of 14 events.

**By Christopher Cosenza**

When Beau Rivage teamed with Hobe Sound's Vanessa Rousso to have her "host" its Gulf Coast Poker Championship in September, the Biloxi, Miss., casino got the added bonus of having her new husband, Chad Brown, come along for the ride. Rousso was prominent in the advertisements, but in very small type there was this line: *Plus, double down with well-known poker pro and TV celebrity, Chad Brown.*

It turns out Brown was the one who *doubled down*, winning the only two events he entered, including the \$5K main event. He may have gotten smaller type in the ad, but he's getting the headlines now.

Brown, the Margate resident who was the subject of the *Ante Up* cover story in July, laughed when asked if people were chanting "FIX!" after the co-host of the series won twice.

"To tell you the truth," Brown said from London as he played in the PokerStars WCOOP series, "the feeling I got from most of the players that were at my table all along in both the pot-limit Omaha and no-limit hold'em was they were actually happy to be playing with me."

Brown's victories highlighted another stellar performance by Floridians at the Beau as they took five titles out of 14 events.

The first of Brown's back-to-back wins (it's the first time he's done that in his impressive career) came in Event 11, a \$500 PLO tournament with rebuys. And he wasn't even supposed to play in it.

"I wasn't planning necessarily to play the PLO," said the 2006 *Bluff* Player of the Year. "I got off the plane and knew the event was going on ... I called up my friend who was in it and asked how much time I had to enter, and this was while I was at the airport. He said, 'You have 10 minutes,' because it had already been running for an hour and 20 minutes."

Brown earned \$32,301 for the victory. Then a few days later he took down the main event. There must be something in the Mississippi water that agrees with him.

"As far as Mississippi I have an amazing track record overall in Tunica and Biloxi," he said. "Just the month prior I made the final table of the (Gold Strike World Poker Open) main event in Tunica. (In) Mississippi, I played three tournaments, made three final tables and won two of them!"

The main event had 143 starters and the \$225K Brown won is his

biggest score this year, plus he won a \$10K main-event seat in the Beau's upcoming Southern Poker Championship in January.

During heads-up play with Tyler Smith of Smithdale, Miss., Brown limped with 4-7 and saw a flop of 6-3-5 rainbow. Brown bet 25K and Smith min-raised to 50K. Brown moved all-in and Smith insta-called with 4-9 of clubs for the straight draw. Brown had the nut straight and the turn and river were no help to Smith.

"The fields are very soft," Brown said, "and what I mean by that is there aren't a lot of the young Internet players that show up there. At that (main event) final table there were like four talented Internet players. And it wasn't by coincidence because compared to the other big tournaments around the country they're usually loaded with Internet players. Usually all the ones in Mississippi, a lot of the old timers are still playing the game they played 10-15 years ago."

Other notable Florida cashes in the main event include Ron Haveard of Pensacola (sixth, \$34,178); Chris O'Rourke of Tampa (ninth, \$13,671); Brian Hawkins of Ft. Myers (11th, \$9,570); and John Dolan of Bonita Springs (16th, \$6,836). Hawkins, a very successful young pro, was the subject of a cover story in *Bluff Magazine* recently and is famously known as Snoo0man in the Internet poker world.

- Shirley "Smiley" Slusher, who hails from Pensacola, captured Event 7, a \$340 Omaha/8 tournament that attracted 122 players. She won \$12,782 and said she's extremely excited to have her first tournament win under her belt, which was her first mixed

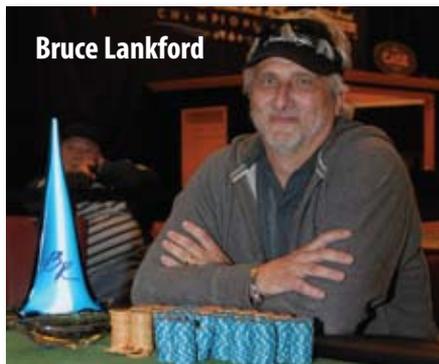
event tournament. Smiley usually plays ring games and has been playing since 2005

- Dolan, who cashed in the main event, had tasted success when he won Event 8, a \$340 deepstack NLHE tournament that saw 445 players. For his victory Dolan earned nearly \$33K.

- Bruce Lankford of Orlando won the \$340 NLHE deepstack event that attracted 449 players. When the final table of Event 10 reached four players they made a deal and Lankford was called the champ, winning the trophy and more than \$26K. But he wasn't the only Floridian at that final table as Kim Scopatow of Coconut Creek finished second (\$14,559) and David Andrew Clancy of Jacksonville was third (\$8,541).



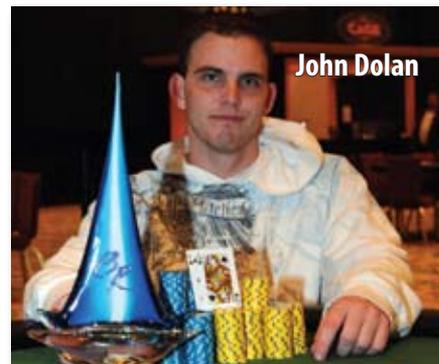
Chad Brown



Bruce Lankford



Shirley Slusher



John Dolan

**RESULTS**

**Event 1: \$400 no-limit hold'em**

850 entries - \$297,500 prize pool

57. Robert Negrin, Weeki Wachee, \$744

81. Thomas Murphy, Naples, \$595

**Event 2: \$560 NLHE**

379 entries - \$189,500 prize pool

11. Maurice Hawkins, Ft. Lauderdale, \$2,463

**Event 4: \$770 NLHE**

337 entries - \$235,900 prize pool

23. Marc Davis, Orlando, \$1,415

34. Christopher Miranda, Miami, \$1,180

**Event 5: \$400 Omaha/8**

213 entries - \$74,550 prize pool

18. Jill Gold, Aventura, \$671

21. Thomas Noyes, Pompano Beach, \$559

**Event 6: \$1090 NLHE**

364 entries - \$364,000 prize pool

13. Eric Kolodny, North Miami Beach, \$3,640

25. Steven Karp, North Miami Beach, \$2,184

**Event 7: \$300 Ladies NLHE**

269 entries - \$69,940 prize pool

19. Holly Raba, Micanopy, \$525

**Event 8: \$560 Deep Stack NLHE**

935 entries - \$467,500 prize pool

21. Steven Frankel, Hollywood, \$2,103

74. Christopher Miranda, Miami, \$935

**Event 9: \$560 6-handed NLHE**

232 entries - \$131,000 prize pool

11. Jeffrey Coutroulis, Tampa, \$1,703

13. Arthur Evans, Davie, \$1,441

**Event 12: \$400 NLHE**

483 entries - \$169,050 prize pool

1. Justin Levy, Coconut Creek, \$48,382

**Event 13: \$1090 NLHE**

285 entries - \$285,000 prize pool

4. Stephanie Lowe, Rotonda West, \$19,950

19. Steven Karp, North Miami Beach, \$2,138

**Event 14: \$400 7-card stud**

103 entries - \$36,050 prize pool

4. John Womack, Lauderhill, \$2,884

7. Sherry Byrd, Lakeland, \$1,442

**Event 16: \$560 NLHE**

414 entries - \$207,000 prize pool

1. Adam Adler, Ft. Lauderdale, \$59,242

7. Brian Goldstein, Pompano Beach, \$8,280

17. Diane Casino, St. Augustine, \$1,428

22. Kevin Malick, Lakewood, \$1,139

42. Lloyd Mandel, Ft. Myers, \$766

43. Marc Duquette, Ft. Lauderdale \$766

**Event 17: \$1,625 NLHE**

238 entries - \$357,000 prize pool

1. Vitor Coelho, Tampa, \$107,100

3. Jeffrey Coutroulis, Tampa, \$33,380

6. Sharon Levin, Ft. Lauderdale, \$17,850

7. Chris Dombrowski, Wesley Chapel, \$14,280

18. Brian Hawkins, Ft. Myers, \$3,213

**\$400 Seniors NLHE**

179 entries - \$62,650 prize pool

1. Kenny Levy, Boca Raton, \$19,296

3. Joseph Bovino, Boca Raton, \$5,951

7. Ronald Puleo, Sarasota, \$2,506

**Event 19: \$450 NLHE**

346 entries - \$138,400 prize pool

2. John Spadavecchia, Lighthouse Pt., \$23,215

26. Frank Conway, Ft. Myers, \$830

36. Diane Casino, St. Augustine, \$692

**Event 20: \$400 NLHE**

324 entries - \$113,400 prize pool

5. Rafael Comas, Miramar, \$6,804

21. Eric Kolodny, Miami, \$680

31. Jena Delk, Merritt Island, \$567

36. Glen Cressman, Boca Raton, \$567

**Event 21: \$350 NLHE**

403 entries - \$120,900 prize pool

20. Henry Miller, Miramar, \$665

36. Arthur Gallinaro, Pembroke Pines, \$508

**Main Event: \$3,500 NLHE**

1,018 entries - \$3,359,400 prize pool

13. Maurice Hawkins, Ft. Lauderdale, \$28,218

17. William Campbell, P.B. Gardens, \$16,125

19. Antuan Bunkley, West Palm Beach, \$12,765

30. Steven Wolansky, Cooper City, \$10,750

37. Saturnino Rodriguez, Rockledge, \$9,406

43. Stephen Brite, Bradenton, \$9,406

44. Steven Karp, North Miami Beach, \$9,406

48. Lloyd Mandel, Ft. Myers, \$8,062

62. Brian Goldstein, Pompano Beach, \$7,391

65. Jason Sackler, Melbourne, \$6,719

89. Matthew Waxman, Parkland, \$5,376

96. Donald Dauria, Palm City, \$4,704

# BORGATA POKER OPEN

SEPT. 9-24 • BORGATA HOTEL AND CASINO • ATLANTIC CITY

As if more proof was needed, Floridians continue to dominate outside the Sunshine State, this time in New Jersey. The list of Florida cashers is impressive, but their four victories overall is downright remarkable.



Adam Adler, a poker pro from Ft. Lauderdale, won Event 16, a \$560 no-limit hold'em event, good for nearly \$60K.



Justin Levy of Coconut Creek shows off his winning cards, chips and trophy after winning \$48,382 for capturing Event 12.

Isn't it amazing what Floridians can do when they aren't restricted by small buy-ins?

Dozens of our players made their way up the East Coast to the Borgata for a chance at big money, and four players came away with victories they'll never forget.

In a series that saw a man win the ladies event (no, thankfully he wasn't from the Sunshine State), we had some other great success stories as well, such as Steven Karp from North Miami Beach, who cashed three times for nearly \$14K, and legend John Spadavecchia of Lighthouse Point, who finished runner-up in Event 19. If you don't see an event listed in the results that means no Floridians cashed.



Tampa's Vitor Coelho made it back-to-back wins for Floridians when he took down Event 17 for \$107,100.



Kenny Levy of Boca Raton won the \$400 seniors event and nearly \$20K. He bested 178 players for the title.

NOTHIN' BUT 'NET

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



# WCOOP PROPELS SOME TO TOP OF LEADERBOARD

Faster than you can click a mouse, Floridians had another shake-up on the Internet poker leaderboard. ... and the PokerStars World Championship of Online Poker was a major reason.

Cesar "makaveilyces" Fuentes from Coral Gables stormed into the rankings in late 2007 by winning the PokerStars Sunday \$200 rebuy and Nightly Hundred Grand for a combined \$88,600. He continued his winning ways in early 2008 by winning the Full Tilt 50-50 tournament, but this year is his best by far.

Fuentes had a pair of fourth-place showings this year in the Stars Sunday 500 for \$35,500 and in the \$1K Super Tuesday (\$29,400) in May. He also finished second in the Wednesday Quarter Million for \$50K in August; was third in the Full Tilt \$1K Monday (\$42,800) and in September he was runner-up in the WCOOP Event 39 (\$1,050 limit hold'em six-max) for \$61,200. All of these results have catapulted him to the top of the Florida leaderboard.

Corey Burbick, a.k.a. comandr\_cool, has moved into second place. He won the \$70K guarantee on Stars for \$38,418 in May, but September was his best month, winning the \$60K guarantee on Full Tilt for \$28,314 and finishing fourth in the WCOOP Event 29, (Mixed PLHE-PLO) \$400K guarantee for \$28,280.

Grayson Nichols is a veteran Internet player who has put up consistent results in high-stakes online tournaments for years. Nichols, 24, plays under the names graybone or The\_Dean221. He caught fire in September with a fifth-place finish in the WCOOP Event 9 (\$215 NLHE) for \$89K along with a runner-up in the Full Tilt \$1K Monday for nearly \$60K. He also won the Full Tilt \$50K guarantee for another \$29K, was second in the Full Tilt \$1K Monday for \$30K and he won the Stars \$100 rebuy for \$20K in June.

Slipping into fourth in Florida online rankings is Thayer Rasmussen of St. Petersburg, THAY3R to the online world, he had an excellent WCOOP last year, but his results slipped in the recent PokerStars tournament cycle. Recently, however, he finished first in the \$100 buy-in, \$33,000 guarantee on Full Tilt for \$21,562.

..... **Steven Burkholder**, a former points leader from Largo, is in fifth place. Burkholder (PiKappaRaider) finished fourth in the Full Tilt Online Poker Series' Event 24 for \$48,227. In

September he scored again in the \$200K Double Deuce on Tilt, taking down first place for \$33,393.

Florida online poker is alive and well. Don't forget to sign up for your PokerStars account so you can dominate the next WCOOP. Details are at anteupmagazine.com.



ANTE UP POKERCAST PRESENTED BY POKERSTARS

The Ante Up PokerCast is the longest running poker show on the Internet. Tune in Fridays at anteupmagazine.com or subscribe on iTunes for free.



**Rob Greco, a.k.a. GapBand85, stares down the monkey (with the help of girlfriend Sandy) after winning AIPS Event 4, Limit Hold'em.**

## Ante Up Intercontinental Poker Series

The Ante Up Intercontinental Poker Series (a.k.a. AIPS) is our PokerCast's monthly fan tournament series on PokerStars.com. Square off against 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!

If you're fortunate enough to win an AIPS event then 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 and click on our online poker rooms link. Use marketing code ANTEUPMAG and signup code STARS600 to get a 100 percent deposit bonus up to \$600!

### AIPS schedule

Event #10	Event #11	Main Event
Nov. 11	Dec. 9	Jan. 13
Heads-Up	Badugi	H.O.R.S.E.
\$5.50	\$5.50	\$22

### AIPS primer

This month's AIPS event is heads-up NLHE. Here are some Web sites to help your one-on-one game.

- [pokerroomschool.com/HU\\_flv](http://pokerroomschool.com/HU_flv)
- [quazen.com/games/gambling/heads-up-limit-hold-em-tips-and-tricks](http://quazen.com/games/gambling/heads-up-limit-hold-em-tips-and-tricks)
- [pokernews.com/strategy/heads-play.htm](http://pokernews.com/strategy/heads-play.htm)

**SPECIAL OFFERS!**

# EXCLUSIVE FREEROLLS!

## THINKING OF PLAYING ONLINE POKER?

LET US HOOK YOU UP WITH THE BEST FIRST-DEPOSIT BONUSES AVAILABLE AT

# ANTEUPMAGAZINE.COM

**PokerStars**  
BONUS: \$600  
SIGNUP CODE: ANTEUPMAG  
BONUS CODE: STARS600

**FULL Tilt POKER**  
BONUS \$600  
CODE ANTEUPMAG

**Players Only™**  
BONUS \$650  
CODE PNEWS

**RPM poker**  
BONUS: \$1,000  
CODE: PNEWS

**ABSOLUTE POKER**  
BONUS: \$500  
GO TO ANTEUPMAGAZINE.COM  
AND USE OUR BONUS LINK

**[carbonpoker]**  
BONUS: \$100  
CODE: POKERNEWS

**bodog**  
BONUS: \$1,000  
GO TO ANTEUPMAGAZINE.COM  
AND USE OUR BONUS LINK

**sportsbook.com™**  
BONUS: \$1,000  
CODE: PNEWS

**ultimatebet.com**  
BONUS: \$1,600  
GO TO ANTEUPMAGAZINE.COM  
AND USE OUR BONUS LINK

Go to [anteupmagazine.com/online-poker-rooms](http://anteupmagazine.com/online-poker-rooms) for the easiest way to start playing and earning your bonuses!



## National Museum of Naval Aviation

### Pensacola

**Flags:** This museum is a testament to Naval Air Station Pensacola's history as "The Cradle of Naval Aviation." The base is also home to the Blue Angels, who practice for free most weeks.

**Flops:** We're still waiting on Pensacola Greyhound Track to open its poker room, so you'll have to travel 90 minutes east to Ebro Greyhound Park, but its Bonus Days make it a drive worth taking.



Olustee Battlefield Historic State Park

## Olustee Battlefield Historic State Park

### Olustee

**Flags:** Pay your respects to the 2,807 Americans who lives in Florida's largest Civil War battle on Feb. 20, 1865, the soldiers fighting that day were African-American soldiers from Massachusetts, whose story was depicted in the movie "Glory."

**Flops:** You're not very far from Jasper's Hamilton Jai-Alouette. Carlos Pita runs a friendly room with a great waiting list. Plus, be sure to get into the \$1-\$5 spread-line.

## National Armed Services and Law Enforcement Memorial Museum

### Dunedin

**Flags:** The Tampa Bay area is home to MacDill Air Force Base, U.S. Central Command, but this 14,000-square-foot museum hosts artifacts that go back as far as the Revolutionary War.

**Flops:** Head east on SR 580 just past Oldsmar to Tampa Bay. The museum holds at least two tournaments daily and has a great rewards card. Also, win an Ante Up Poker Cruise event.

## Military Heritage Museum

### Punta Gorda

**Flags:** This free-admission museum is dedicated to keeping the memory of our military heroes alive for future generations. On Veterans Day, veterans from all eras are invited to the museum to give you (and your children) first-person accounts of their service.

**Flops:** Head north on Interstate 75 to Sarasota for one of the best poker rooms in the state. One-Eyed Jacks at Sarasota Kennel Club offers.

# THEY WENT ALL-IN FOR FREEDOM

On Nov. 11, we'll honor our veterans across the great state of Florida. But there's no reason not to honor the sacrifices of those brave men and women all month long. Florida has a rich military history, so celebrate your patriotism and play a little poker, too.

## About Road Trip

With 31 poker rooms and more all across Florida, you don't need a road trip. But in case you do, here's a unique road map to Florida's best poker rooms.



## Veterans Day Parade

### Jacksonville

**Flags:** Parades honoring veterans will be in just about every city and town in Florida on Nov. 11, but the Blue Angels will be in Jacksonville, as well as ship tours aboard U.S. Navy and Coast Guard vessels.

**Flops:** Take your pick between Josh Zuckerman's two hopping rooms at Orange Park Kennel Club and St. Johns Greyhound Park. If you head there a few days early you can play in St. Johns' \$150 WSOP satellite on Nov. 8.

## "Korea: Forgotten War, Remembered Heroes"

### Flagler College

**Flags:** On Nov. 8, come out to this St. Augustine college for a free night of entertainment from the Korean War era, including the stories of five local Korean War veterans.

**Flops:** Head south to Daytona Beach Kennel Club. If you're a World War II veteran, enter the veterans tournament Nov. 11 at 2 p.m. And if you're not, stop by to tell those who are "thank you."

## The National UDT-Navy SEAL Museum

### Ft. Pierce

**Flags:** The only museum dedicated to the "elite warriors of Naval Special Warfare" calls home the city recognized as the birthplace of U.S. Navy Frogmen. SEALs are among the most highly trained naval teams.

**Flops:** Stop by Ft. Pierce Jai-Alai for some great promotions and tournaments, including its monthly deepstack tournament, which is a designated Ante Up Poker Tour stop.

## Wings Over Homestead Air Show

### Homestead Air Reserve Base

**Flags:** Check out some of the neatest flying vehicles in the U.S. military's arsenal, but the real treat will be high in the sky Nov. 7-8. The A-10 Thunderbolt Fighter Jets, affectionately known as "Warthogs," will be among the flying attractions.

**Flops:** Miami's Calder Race Course is putting the finishing touches on its new Studz Poker Club, which will be open to the public Oct. 23.

## Take us on your trip!

E-mail your unique poker road trip to [editor@anteupmagazine.com](mailto: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, fishing holes, you name it!), and include as much of the state as possible.



# POINTS RACE IS HEATING UP

When is a chop not a chop? When it's an Ante Up Poker Tour event.

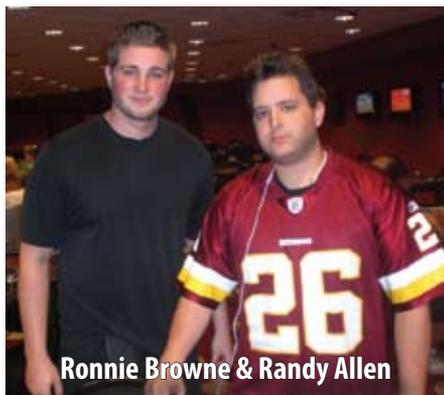
Derby Lane's AUPT stop in St. Petersburg on Sept. 27 came down to two young players, Randy Allen and Ronnie Browne. Allen had the slight chip lead but they decided to chop the remaining prize pool, giving them more than \$1,800 each.

But, as per the AUPT rules, points may not be chopped and it's up to the host room to decide how to proceed with distributing points, whether it be by chip stacks or by letting them play it out. Most rooms don't want to surrender a dealer for mere points, so usually chip stacks determine the order of finish.

Derby Lane picked a great day to host its AUPT event as football games were streaming throughout the card room for the entire tournament. The impressive room, staff and structure clearly contributed to the 90-player turnout for this \$100 buy-in tournament, not to mention the chance to compete for the more than \$7K prize pool and AUPT Player of the Year points.

Players started with 10K units and blinds increased every 25 minutes, allowing for a lot of play in the later stages.

When the final table was reached, play moved quickly and the eliminations were prompt from the start. Shane Devan (\$100)



Ronnie Browne & Randy Allen

was the first to be eliminated, soon followed by the two women at the table, Angela Sampaio (\$290) and Pat Westcott (\$370).

As the play got down to three-handed, it was a long battle of blind-stealing and folding to reraises. When the third-place finisher, Jim Henry (\$950), finally exited, Browne and Allen decided to chop.

But because Allen had more chips he was awarded the 1,000 points for finishing first, and Browne received 700, much to his dismay.

"If I had known I would have played it out for the points," Browne said afterward.

So let this serve as a reminder to hosting card rooms: Please be sure all final-table players are aware of the points rules, which can be found at [anteupmagazine.com/tour](http://anteupmagazine.com/tour).

**ST. JOHNS SELLS OUT:** The Sept. 20 event at St. Johns Greyhound Park was a sellout, filling all 50 seats available as the prize pool reached \$4K for this \$100 buy-in tournament.

During Level 5, with 30 players left, an interesting hand occurred with *Ante Up* online columnist John Lanier. After a flop of 8-J-J, Lanier went all-in with what was the rest of his small stack. His opponent called and turned over 3-3. Lanier removed his skull card protector to reveal K-Q. But Lady Luck was smiling on Lanier as the turn and river blessed him with K-K and a full house. Lanier went on to make the final table, finishing 10th and collecting 100 AUPT Player of the Year points.

Initially, the pace of

the final table was slow, as the final-six money bubble approached. Once the seventh-place player was eliminated and the remaining players were in the money, the chips began flying and "all-in" became the favorite phrase.

When the dust settled, Ronnie Browne (yes, the same Browne from the aforementioned Derby Lane event) edged out Jeff Lowan to win the tournament and \$1,800.

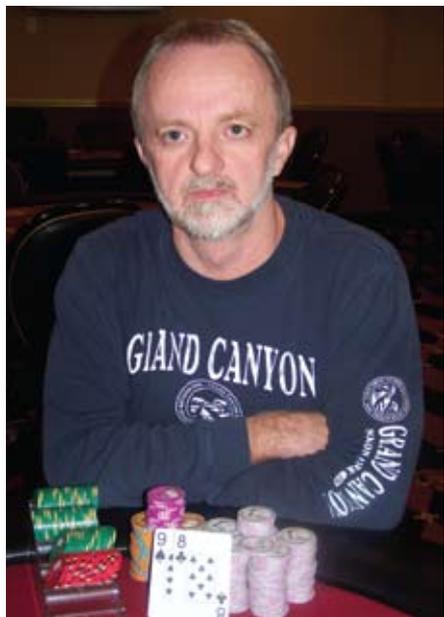
**POY RACE:** This was the most volatile month for the Ante Up Player of the Year race as new players are making their way up the leaderboard. Browne, from Gainesville, says he is making a serious effort to follow the tour around the state, as evidenced by his victory at St. Johns Greyhound Park in Jacksonville and his "second-place" finish at Derby Lane a week later. He has 1,700 points.

Another player who cracked the top 10 this month is Jay Roden of Estero. He leapfrogged former leader Ken Basillio of Ft. Lauderdale and landed in second place by virtue of his victory at Seminole Casino Immokalee on Sept. 5 and his fifth at the Isle's Sept. 7 event. He has 2,350 points, but still trails tour leader Walt Strakowski Jr. of West Palm Beach (3,100).

Basillio is in third place (2,275), but right on his heels in fourth place is Mitchell Abrahams (2,075) of Miami, who won the Palm Beach Kennel Club's \$200 event on Sept. 19, his first AUPT victory but fourth points nothing.

Remember, the player of the year receives a custom-made bracelet from Madison Jewelers, will be on the cover of *Ante Up* and will be interviewed on the *Ante Up PokerCast*.

— **Ante Up** correspondents **Garrett Roth** and **Steve Washick** contributed to this report.



**The AUPT is becoming a national sensation! Dan Williamson of Raleigh, N.C. won the Ocala Poker event Sept. 26.**



The St. Johns final table draws a crowd.

Mistakes? Omissions? Please let your poker room manager or tournament director know. Or you can feel free to contact us at editor@anteupmagazine.com.

**Sept. results**

**DANIA JAI-ALAI SEPT. 5**

1. John Turk, West Palm Beach
2. Spyder McCarthy, West Palm Beach
3. Nigel Murray, Miami
4. June Anor, Miami
5. Brian Coppola, Miami
6. Chris Barnett, Port St. Lucie
7. Richard Curry, Miami
8. Paul Brettler, Miami
9. Peter Berry, Miami
10. Charles Jones, Pembroke Pines

**DERBY LANE SEPT. 27**

1. Randy Allen
2. Ronnie Browne, Gainesville
3. Jimmy Henry
4. Matt Blaxberg
5. Declined points
6. Doug Duling
7. Pat Westcott
8. Angela Sampaio
9. Fari Davarpanah
10. Shane Devan

**FT. PIERCE JAI-ALAI & POKER SEPT. 19**

1. Albert Cline, Ft. Pierce
2. Ray Steele, Vero Beach
3. Michael Fife, Ft. Pierce
4. Sam Soljic, Jupiter
5. Declined points
6. Eugene Castaneda, Port St. Lucie
7. Eric Steele, Vero Beach
8. Johnny Maalouf, Ft. Pierce
9. Phil Cooper, Port St. Lucie
10. Garmin Gilberti, Port St. Lucie

**ISLE CASINO SEPT. 7**

1. David Bell, Parkland
2. Robert Bradley, Wellington
3. Omar Diaz, Coconut Creek
4. Payam Pourghassem, Lake Worth
5. Jay Roden, Estero
6. Bruce Smith, West Palm Beach
7. Gus Maestras, Delray Beach
8. Richard Maltzman, Lake Worth
9. Harvey Freedman, Plantation
10. Declined points



Ocala Poker's Sept. 26 point-getters and final table.

**OCALA POKER & JAI-ALAI SEPT. 26**

1. Dan Williamson, Raleigh, N.C.
2. Joe Riser Jr., Knoxville, Tenn.
3. Patrick Cahill, Ocala
4. Ron Durham, Lake City
5. Eugene Link, Cocoa Beach
6. Ray Garant, Leamington, Ontario
7. Kylee Small, Gainesville
8. Richard Joseph, Gainesville
9. Yegor Moroz, Gainesville
10. Patrick Wilson, Miami

**ORANGE PARK KENNEL CLUB SEPT. 18**

1. James Richard Harris
2. Joe Weng
3. Tomas Singens
4. Peter Ocasio
5. Stephen DeJesus
6. James Thomas Slattery
7. Maria Elkaz
8. Virgie Pado Hahn
9. Scott Kasliner
10. Anderson Premdaj

**PALM BEACH KENNEL CLUB SEPT. 19**

1. Mitchell Abrahams, Miami
2. Paul Ardaji, Juno Beach
3. Roman Ojeda, Lake Worth
4. Maria Safavi, Jupiter
5. Vincent Mollica, Wellington
6. Mike Bory, Jupiter
7. Georgia Felger, Lantana

8. Mike White, West Palm Beach
9. Stuart Henson, Royal Palm Beach
10. Don Pearsall, Jupiter

**PALM BEACH PRINCESS CASINO SEPT. 6**

1. Manny Leone, West Palm Beach
2. Wade Dirr, Sarasota
3. Craig Catallo, Mich.
4. Luis Cristobol, Coral Gables
5. Oscar Gamez, West Palm Beach
6. Frank Culotta, Jupiter
7. Ken Basilio, Ft. Lauderdale
8. Dominic Basile, Jupiter
9. Ross Blow, Port St. Lucie
10. Judy Durr, Sarasota

**SARASOTA KENNEL CLUB SEPT. 26**

1. Cyrus Smith
2. Roland Botel
3. Mike Skoyec
4. Todd Adams
5. Dale Austin
6. Elmo Mariathasan, Ft. Myers
7. Brad Webb
8. Seth Templeton
9. David Maddox
10. Aaron Scott

**SEMINOLE H.R. HOLLYWOOD SEPT. 7**

1. David Samoel, North Miami Beach
2. Donald Penning, Biscayne Park
3. Dwight Barday, Sunrise
4. Peter Chin, Pembroke Pines
5. Richard Semander, Pembroke Pines
6. Declined points
7. Daniel Shiff, Aventura
8. Declined points
9. Declined points
10. Kelvin McClendon, North Miami

**SEMINOLE IMMOKALEE SEPT. 5**

1. Jay Roden, Estero
2. Mark Hobeard, Naples
3. Mike Jutica, Cape Coral
4. Ralph Ronk, Naples
5. John Lallo, Ft. Myers
6. Declined points
7. Mike Muchovej, Naples
8. Bruce Niles, Arcadia
9. Rosa Muchovej, Ft. Myers
10. Jonathan Ronsisballe, Naples

**ST. JOHNS GREYHOUND PARK SEPT. 20**

1. Ronnie Browne, Gainesville
2. Jeff Lowan
3. Steve Mitchell
4. Alan Steven Phillips
5. Lencer Lockaby
6. Kasim Yousef
7. Becky Dery
8. Robert Membrino
9. Pam Moore, Jacksonville
10. John Lanier, Lutz

**TAMPA BAY DOWNS SEPT. 20**

1. Ryan Carter, Sarasota
2. Jeff Gamber
3. Angelo Pinkham, Tampa
4. Steve Born, New Port Richey
5. Soren Asadov, Palmetto
6. Ricardo Rodriguez, Tampa
7. Cheryl Somers, Tampa
8. Marsha Wolak, Sarasota
9. Dee Diikush, Tampa
10. Tony Hart, Palm Harbor



Ante Up Player of the Year bracelet provided by Madison Jewelers. Go to [www.madison-jewelers.com](http://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 press time. For complete, up-to-date results be sure to log on to [anteupmagazine.com/tour](http://anteupmagazine.com/tour)

1. Walt Strakowski Jr., West Palm Beach	3,100
2. Jay Roden, Estero	2,350
3. Ken Basilio, Ft. Lauderdale	2,275
4. Mitchell Abrahams, Miami	2,075
5. Robert Beyra, Hollywood	2,000
6. Ronnie Browne, Gainesville	1,700
7. Peter Nadeau, Gainesville	1,525
8. Luis Cristobol, Coral Gables	1,475
9. Brian Capobianco, Tampa	1,400
10. Scott Long, Safety Harbor	1,350
11. Raymond Witt, Lake City	1,300
12. Jerry Ciullo, Port St. Lucie	1,175
13. Harvey Freedman, Plantation	1,125
14. Tim Brenner, Sarasota	1,100
15. Randy Johnston, Boynton Beach	1,100

38 players are tied with 1,000 points.

**Upcoming events**

Oct. 23: Orange Park K.C., 7:30 p.m. \$100
Oct. 24: Palm Beach K.C., 1, \$200
Oct. 24: Ocala Poker and Jai-Alai, 2, \$120
Oct. 25: Gulfstream Park, 6:30, \$150
Oct. 25: Derby Lane, 1, \$100
Oct. 25: St. Johns Greyhound Park, 4, \$100
Oct. 30 & 31: Tampa Bay Downs, 2, \$225
Oct. 31: Sarasota Kennel Club, 6:30, \$100
Nov. 1: Palm Beach Princess, 10 a.m. \$100
Nov. 1: Ebro Greyhound Park, 2, \$100
Nov. 7: Dania Jai-Alai, 12:30, \$150
Nov. 7: Seminole Immokalee, 4, \$225
Nov. 15: Tampa Bay Downs, 1, \$350
Nov. 15: St. Johns Greyhound Park, 4, \$100
Nov. 20: Orange Park K.C., 7:30 p.m. \$100
Nov. 21: Ft. Pierce Jai-Alai & Poker, 3, \$150
Nov. 21: Ocala Poker, 2, \$120 (10K chips)
Nov. 21: Gulfstream Park, 6:30, \$150
Nov. 23: Isle Casino, 1:30 p.m., \$440
Nov. 28: Palm Beach K.C., 1, \$200 (\$25K guar.)
Nov. 28: Sarasota Kennel Club, 6:30, \$100
Nov. 29: Derby Lane, 1, \$100 (10K chips)

Updated schedule at [anteupmagazine.com/tour](http://anteupmagazine.com/tour)

The Ante Up Poker Tour champion will win a cover story in *Ante Up*, an interview on the Ante Up Poker-Cast and a custom bracelet from Madison Jewelers.



The Derby Lane final table.



David Samoel defeated 220 players at Hard Rock Hollywood, good for more than \$18K.

**Calder Race Course**

**Phone:** (305) 625-1311  
 www.calderracecourse.com/poker  
**Tournaments:** Daily, \$60-\$550, including \$550 10K deepstack on Saturdays at 11 a.m. and a \$350 bounty event Wednesdays at 7 p.m. (bounties are \$100).  
**SNGs:** Turbos \$40-\$300; standard \$500-\$800.  
**High hands:** Royals pay \$250.  
**Bad beat:** Mega is any quads; mini is aces full of jacks.

**Dania Jai-Alai**

**Phone:** (954) 927-2841  
 www.dania-jai-alai.com  
**Tournaments:** Daily \$25 with \$5 bounty, 12:30, plus M&W, 6:30; \$55 T&Th, 6:30, Sun, 8; \$100, 9K chips, Fri., 6:30; first Sat. of the month, 12:30 (\$150, rake is just \$10); \$70 Omaha/8 Sun., 4 p.m.  
**SNGs:** \$30 or \$50 between 2-5 p.m.  
**High hands:** \$50 hourly 1-8 p.m.; royal flush \$500.  
**Bad beat:** Stud, Omaha/8 and hold'em; call for details.  
**Special events:** Nov. 7 (12:30 p.m.) Ante Up Poker Tour, \$150; Nov. 28 (12:30 p.m.) Shootout, \$100 (max 100 players).  
**Promotions:** 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 sandwich from 1-3 p.m.; coffee and sweets served at 3 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 7.  
**SNGs:** \$40-\$220.  
**Special event:** Nov. 2-15, Daytona Beach International Tournament.  
**High hands & bad beats:** Check Web site for current payouts and details.  
**Promotions:** Daily spins for winners of drawings (tickets for quads or better) must have player card at time of drawings and spins at 4, 7 and 10 p.m. (various prizes, up to \$250)

**Derby Lane**

**Phone:** (727) 812-3339 ext. 7  
 www.derbylanepoker.com  
**Tournaments:** Daily, (1, 4 and 7 p.m. Su-Th and 2, 6 and 8 p.m. F-Sa), and pays the bubble over 60 players and two bubbles with more than 100; The Friday 535 is the third Friday of every month (Nov. 20, 6 p.m.) \$535.  
**High hands:** Royals (hold'em, stud).  
**Special event:** Nov. 29 (1 p.m.) Ante Up Poker Tour, \$100.  
**Promotions:** Derby Lane Poker Run Oct. 26-Nov. 1 (For details please see ad on Page 13.); **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) 234-3943  
 www.ebrogreyhoundpark.com  
**Tournaments:** Big Stack Sundays, (\$100, 2 p.m.).  
**Special event:** Nov. 1 (2 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$100.  
**High hands:** Royal flush jackpots and two high hands per day.  
**Bad beat:** Quad deuces.  
**Promotions:** Bonus Day on Halloween (\$100 given away every 15 minutes) plus get aces cracked that day and win \$100. More Bonus Days are Veterans Day (Nov. 11) and Thanksgiving (Nov. 25-26.) See ad on Page 23 for promotions and details.

**Flagler Greyhound Track**

**Phone:** (305) 649-3000  
 www.flaglerdogs.com  
**Tournaments:** Sun. 1 p.m. bounty (\$40); Mon., 7 (\$75).  
**SNGs:** \$65-\$800, including turbos.  
**High hands:** \$200 all day; non-heart royals win \$1K, heart progressive and Big Slick progressive (see Web site for details).  
**Promotions:** \$500 progressive hot table (see Web site for details).

**Ft. Pierce Jai-Alai and Poker Room**

**Phone:** (772) 464-7500  
 www.jaialai.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 Sat. every month, 3 p.m. (\$150).  
**SNGs:** Thurs.-Sat. (\$65-\$110)  
**Special event:** Nov. 21 (3 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$150.  
**High hands:** Call for details.  
**Bad beat:** Aces full of queens (hold'em, \$76K at press time), quads (stud) and quad jacks (Omaha).  
**Promotions:** See ad on Page 19 for list of all-new promotions.

**Gulfstream Park**

**Phone:** (954) 457-6336  
 www.gulfstreampark.com  
**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:** Nov. 24 (6:30 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$150.  
**Promotions:** 2nd Mercedes-Benz Challenge. (See ad on Page 7.)



**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.  
**High hands:** Royals win \$599; quad 10s or better in Omaha pay \$50. Quad 10s or better pay \$50 from 2 a.m.-8 a.m. plus \$100 hourly to the high hand during this time period (Omaha excluded). At 6 p.m. high hand is worth \$500 M-F. See site for details.  
**Bad beat:** Aces full of jacks (HE), quad jacks (O/8), aces full of kings (stud).  
**Promotions:** Payouts doubled in no-limit games (up to \$500).

**Hamilton Jai-Alai & Poker**

**Phone:** (800) 941-4841  
 hamiltondownsjaialai.com  
**Tournaments:** Super Bounty Sunday 2 p.m., \$35 (\$10 bounties, 100-player cap); Rake Break Saturday, no rake on \$40 entry, 5 p.m. (2K chips, \$20 add-on gets 2K more, plus \$10 add-on at first break gets another 1K chips)  
**High hands:** Fri.-Sun. \$500; spades royal \$2,396; mini-royal \$239.  
**Bad beat:** Aces full of kings (\$5K).  
**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. **Football Fever:** For selected NFL games, every player gets paid \$50 if there's a safety scored, \$25 for a kickoff returned for a touchdown and \$20 for an interception returned for a touchdown. See Web site for list of games.

**Melbourne Greyhound Park**

**Phone:** (321) 259-9800  
 www.mgpark.com  
**Tournaments:** \$65-\$120, including a heads-up event on Friday nights at 7.  
**Promotions:** Call for details.

**Miami Jai-Alai**

**Phone:** (305) 633-6400  
 www.miamijaialai.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.

**Isle Casino at Pompano Park**

**Phone:** (954) 972-2000 x5123, x5124  
 www.theislepompanopark.com  
**Tournaments:** \$40-\$230, including 7 p.m. bounty events (T, Th, Sa. & Su) and a \$10K guarantee Tuesdays at 2 p.m. (\$230, 5,500 chips, 30-minute blinds).  
**SNGs:** \$60-\$225  
**Special event:** Nov. 23 (1:30 p.m.) Ante Up Poker Tour, \$440.  
**High hand and bad-beat jackpots:** Call for details or visit Web site.  
**Promotions:** Texas Hold'em players can win a share of \$10K every Sunday during the NFL season. Tickets can be earned all week by making a full house in jackpot-eligible hold'em games.

**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, noon.  
**SNGs:** Six-player (\$125-\$550)  
**High hands:** \$200 hourly until 11 p.m.; all royals pay \$5K.

\* Please call the poker room to confirm, and ask for hours of operation, games spread, details, rules and limitations.



Tell your poker room managers to email us at [editor@anteupmagazine.com](mailto:editor@anteupmagazine.com)

## Ocala Poker and Jai-Alai

**Phone:** (352) 591-2345  
[www.ocalapoker.com](http://www.ocalapoker.com)  
**Tournaments:** Daily (\$65-\$240).  
**SNGs:** (\$45-\$80).  
**Special event:** Nov. 21 (2 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$120.  
**High hands:** \$300 every hour, Mon. and Thurs. 6-11; Tue. 1-4, Fri. 2-5 and all day Saturday.  
**Bad beat:** Any quads.  
**Promotions:** 75-cent drafts; FREE DRINK coupon in ad on Page 42.

## Orange Park Kennel Club

**Phone:** (904) 646-0002  
[www.jaxpokerrroom.com](http://www.jaxpokerrroom.com)  
**Tournaments:** Daily (\$30-\$150).  
**Special events:** Nov. 1 High Heels Poker Tour (1 p.m.), \$125; Nov. 20 (7:30 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$100; Nov. 22 (1 p.m.), WSOP qualifier, \$150 (see ad Page 15).  
**High hands:** Royals \$250 (but spades pay \$500).  
**Bad beat:** Call for details.  
**Promotions:** Super High Hand, M&W, noon-3, hourly high hand wins \$100 and other players at winning table get \$25; aces cracked, T&Th., 3-6 p.m. First pocket aces to get beat every 30 minutes wins \$100.

## Palm Beach Kennel Club

**Phone:** (561) 683-2222  
[www.pbkennelclub.com](http://www.pbkennelclub.com)  
**Tournaments:** \$65-\$200.  
**Special events:** Nov. 1, Firefighters Charity tournament (See ad Page 39 for details); Nov. 28 (1 p.m. Ante Up Poker Tour, \$200. (\$25K guar.)  
**SNGs, high hands and bad beats:** Call for details.  
**Promotions:** Players Club Rewards Card; Hourly high hands can spin the wheel for prizes. Call for details.

## Palm Beach Princess Casino

**Phone:** (561) 818-5771  
[www.palmbeachprincess.com](http://www.palmbeachprincess.com)  
**Tournaments:** 6:30 Wed. (\$30+\$5+\$5 toke); 6:30 p.m. Thur. (free, \$300 prize pool); 7 p.m. Fri. (\$50); 6:30 p.m. Sat. (\$60).  
**SNGs:** \$40/\$60/\$100; \$35 satellites for monthly \$10K WPT satellite  
**High hands:** \$50-\$100 per table  
**Special events:** Nov. 1 (10 a.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$100 (Top three in this event also win seats into the monthly \$10K WPT satellite, Nov. 14 (\$330 value).  
**Promotions:** Free 100 Florida Lotto ticket player pool every Wednesday; no flop/no drop all games; \$3 max rake on Sat.&Sun. a.m. cruises; \$500 minimum buy-in \$5/\$10 no-limit game (call ahead to put your name on the list); free food-drinks-boarding for qualified players.

## Sarasota Kennel Club

**Phone:** (941) 355-7744 ext. 1054  
[www.skcpoker.com](http://www.skcpoker.com)  
**Tournaments:** New payouts and structures; see Web site for details  
 Also, Fridays at 1 p.m. (\$100) deep-stack (25K chips, 25-minute blinds).  
**SNGs:** \$35-\$300.  
**Special event:** Nov. 28 (6:30 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$100.  
**High hands:** On Fridays and Saturdays all qualifying high hands pay \$599; Progressive jackpots; quads (hold'em), quad 10s (stud) and straight flushes (Omaha) or better.  
**Bad beat:** Quad sixes. Jackpot was \$95K at press time.  
**Promotions:** **Tournament Daily Double** — Cash in 1 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. tournaments on same day and win a share of the Daily Double Jackpot. Win both tournaments and earn more.  
**Monday Night Football Squares** — get a flush and win \$5 plus a square. See Web site for details.

## Seminole Casino Brighton

**Phone:** (866) 222-7466  
[www.seminolecasinobrighton.com](http://www.seminolecasinobrighton.com)  
**Tournaments:** Mon. \$65, 6:30; Wed. \$20; Sat. \$100, 6:30.  
**SNGs:** \$42-\$250.  
**High hands:** Any four aces wins \$50, straight flushes win \$100 and progressive royals win a minimum of \$1K (spades win posted amount).  
**Promotions:** Tuesday is "Rolling Cash Fever" — \$500 drawings at 8 p.m., 10 p.m. and midnight (drawings roll over if unclaimed). Full houses or better earn entries; Thurs., aces cracked between 4-7 wins \$100; Fri., double-reward punches; Sun.

## Seminole Casino Coconut Creek

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

## Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood

**Phone:** (866) 502-7529  
[www.seminolehardrockhollywood.com](http://www.seminolehardrockhollywood.com)  
**Tournaments:** \$75-\$1,100.  
**SNGs:** \$60-\$1,050.  
**Special event:** Oct. 31 (11 a.m.) Big Slick, \$1,100 (\$75K guar., 10K chips).  
**High hands:** 10 a.m.-midnight gets \$50, plus free entry into a specified event (\$100 value). Royals win \$100.  
**Bad beat:** Offered daily.  
**Promotions:** Poker Comp Dollars reward program with a poker player card; beginning at 6 a.m., first 20 hold'em hands to make quads get \$50, plus a free entry into a specified tourney (\$75 value).

## Seminole Hard Rock Tampa

**Phone:** (866) 502-7529  
[www.seminolehardrocktampa.com](http://www.seminolehardrocktampa.com)  
**Tournaments:** \$100-\$550.  
**SNGs:** \$125-\$1,075.  
**Bad beat:** Quads or better.  
**Promotions:** Full houses earn entries into cash giveaways. Call for details.

## Seminole Casino Hollywood Classic

**Phone:** (866) 222-7466  
[www.seminolehollywoodcasino.com](http://www.seminolehollywoodcasino.com)  
**SNGs:** \$25-\$50.  
**High hands:** M&F, noon-midnight, quads pays \$100, straight flushes pay \$150 (hold'em only), also on Wed. if the playing makes the posted four-of-a-kind they win \$1K.  
**Promotions:** Mon. & Wed., starting at 10 a.m. and again at 2 and 6 p.m., first 10 hold'em players to get aces cracked win \$100; Tue. & Thurs., (11 a.m.-11 p.m.) every half-hour a hold'em table will be picked at random and its next pot will be splashed with \$100; M-Th. (midnight to noon), every half-hour a player will be picked to spin the Whammy Wheel and players can win up to \$500 in free play.

## Seminole Casino Immokalee

**Phone:** (866) 222-7466  
[www.seminolecasino.com](http://www.seminolecasino.com)  
**Tournaments:** Wed., 7 p.m. (\$35); Thurs., 7, (\$50); Fri., 7 (\$60); Sat., 1, KO event (\$50); Sun., 7, \$115, 10K chips, 20-minute blinds.  
**Special event:** Nov. 7 (4 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$225.  
**High hands:** Quad aces win \$100, straight flush wins \$200; progressive royal flushes.  
**Bad beat:** Aces full of jacks (\$30K).  
**Promotions:** Weekly \$2K high hand freeroll; hourly spins T&Th on poker wheel. (See ad on Page 12 for details.)

## St. Johns Greyhound Park

**Phone:** (904) 646-0002  
[www.jaxpokerrroom.com](http://www.jaxpokerrroom.com)  
**Tournaments:** \$30-\$150.  
**Special events:** Nov. 8 (1 p.m.), WSOP qualifier, \$150; Nov. 15, (4 p.m.) Ante Up Poker Tour, \$100. (See ad Page 15.)  
**High hands:** Royals \$250 (but spades pay \$500).  
**Bad beat:** Call for details.  
**Promotions:** Super High Hand, M-W, noon-3, hourly high hand wins \$100 and other players at winning table get \$25.

## SunCruz — Port Canaveral

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

## Tampa Bay Downs

**Phone:** (813) 298-1798  
[www.tampabaydowns.com](http://www.tampabaydowns.com)  
**Tournaments:** \$20-\$540.  
**SNGs:** \$60-\$535.  
**Bad beat:** Jackpots are available in live games and tournaments. See Web site for amounts and details.  
**High hands:** The Silks Poker Room plans to give away an estimated \$100,000-plus in cash and tournament entries during October (Oct. 17 and 24, \$599 paid every half-hour, plus Mon.-Thurs. from 4-9 p.m. \$100 every 30 minutes in cash games). See ad on Page 9 for full details.  
**Special events:** Halloween Tournament (a designated Ante Up Poker Tour event), Oct. 30 (Day 1A 2 p.m.) and Oct. 31 (Day 1B 2 p.m.), \$225, 10K chips, 30-minute blinds, \$25K guaranteed for first place. Also on Nov. 15 (12:30 p.m.), Ante Up Poker Tour, \$350.  
**Promotions:** Ante Up Poker Cruise giveaways in November (See ad on Page 9).

## Tampa Greyhound Track

**Phone:** (813) 932-4313  
[www.luckycards.com](http://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.

# COVER STORY

KEVIN SCHAFFEL



# STILL JUST A GAME

CORAL SPRINGS' KEVIN SCHAFFEL WOULDN'T CALL HIMSELF A TRUE GAMBLER. HE SAYS HE'S JUST AN AVID COMPETITOR. WELL, HE'S ABOUT TO ENTER THE MOST COMPETITIVE ARENA OF HIS LIFE, AND IF HE BEATS HIS NOVEMBER NINE BROTHERS, HE'LL BE CALLED SOMETHING ELSE: WORLD CHAMPION.

BY CHRISTOPHER COSENZA

It's 40 years ago, the Beatles are breaking up, Apollo 13 can't land on the moon, and poker is about to have a revelation. The ripples from this landmark decision still are being felt decades later as countless lives within the poker world have been affected along the way.

Must be referring to Benny Binion's launching of the World Series of Poker, right?

Wrong. Try this: An 11-year-old Kevin Schaffel decides to sit down with his fellow South Florida pre-teen buddies in a makeshift home game, and the rest is history.

"We were playing for quarters," the 51-year-old Coral Springs resident said with a chuckle. "The stakes were probably \$.25-\$.50 and we played mostly mixed games."

OK, so it's not THAT significant in the grand scheme of poker things, but when you consider Schaffel's path in life and that he's a member of this year's November Nine, it's a pretty big deal. Most 11-year-olds are concerned with knee scrapes, fears of junior high and staying up late. But Schaffel's thirst for competition, particularly in card games, was borne in these prepubescent gatherings and served as a catalyst in his drive to succeed.

Just how competitive is Schaffel, a lifelong Floridian? He had to postpone this interview a couple of times and was 30 minutes late when he finally was available because of a "prior engagement."

"I'm gonna admit the reason I was a half-hour late," he said, laughing. "I was playing gin rummy and I couldn't get away. I play for \$25, \$50 a column, but I love it. I love the competition and I love the game. I could play backgammon for nothing; I could play gin rummy for nothing. Scrabble. I'm just a game-player, and I love the competition. The money part of it is not why I play. I guess if you really wanna analyze it I'm not a true gambler like some people are."

But that doesn't mean Schaffel doesn't take calculated risks. He grew up in North Miami Beach and went to Florida State,

graduating with an education degree in 1979. The market wasn't exactly ripe with jobs in his field, so he reluctantly took a position in the family business, a direct-mail company his father started in 1952. Schaffel focused on sales, and from the beginning he couldn't ignore the comfortable salary he earned.

"I could see that I could never make that kind of money in my chosen profession," he said, "so I just stayed in it. In 1986 I ended up buying (the business) from my father and his partner."

His participation in home games never faded, however, and owning a business afforded him the luxury of being able to travel the country to play regularly in the country's best card rooms.

"I'd been playing probably for 10 years," he said, "and four or five times a year I would travel to California and Vegas. When I had the business they'd be five-day trips."

It was a great life, but a life that was about to get turned upside down.

"I had a partner for the last nine years and I had about 22 employees," said Schaffel, who has two children attending college in Tallahassee. "He came in one day and said he decided to open up his own business ... and he took half the business with him. So I was stuck with half the amount of business with the same amount of employees because he didn't take any of them. So it was hard to maintain the numbers. I couldn't afford to keep

them all."

Fortunately, Schaffel found another business that could use most of his employees.

"I think I was able to get jobs for everybody except one person. That was the hardest day of my business life, walking in one day and telling everybody that our company was shutting down. I mean I literally was crying. It was really tough. But once that day was over and I knew a lot of the people were going to have jobs it made it a lot

easier for me and it was actually the best thing that ever happened from a financial standpoint. It probably would have gone out of business on its own because of the economy."

Schaffel went into brokering and was very successful, plus his poker game evolved. Since he didn't have to be home for the business anymore, he could travel often to West Coast card

## Cashing in

Making money in big tournaments is nothing new to Kevin Schaffel. Here's a list of his career cashes, according to HendonMob.com:

Date	Event	Place	Earnings
8-22-09	WPT \$10K Legends of Poker	2nd	\$471,670
7-3-09	WSOP \$10K Main Event	6th*	TBD*
12-13-08	WPT \$15K Doyle Brunson Classic	100th	\$21,620
9-14-08	WPT \$10K Borgata Open	41st	\$17,500
7-3-08	WSOP \$10K Main Event	324th	\$32,166
1-5-08	EPT \$8K PCA	86th	\$16,000
8-17-07	\$5K Legends of Poker	5th	\$21,375
5-22-04	WSOP \$10K Main Event	42nd	\$60,000

\* The November Nine takes place Nov. 7.





Schaffel credits his WSOP run to hours of patience.

Continued from previous page

rooms, and he could stay there longer as well. But his employer eventually moved north and that's when Schaffel had enough.

"There's no question I wasn't thrilled with what I was doing and I said to myself, 'You know, it's been almost 30 years and this is the time.'"

The time to play more poker, that is.

"I was always very successful playing," the North Miami High grad said. "And then a year ago February, I just decided to make (West Coast trips) a monthly deal. I would stay away 12 or 13 days, almost half the month. And I would just play a lot of cards, and I mean A LOT of cards. ... 15, 16, 18 hours a day, because that's what I was out there to do. I wanted to try to simulate as close as I could what it would be like to play 40 hours a week, but unfortunately I had to squeeze it into two weeks. So I played a lot of hours, which never really bothered me, but now that I've done it, it would be so much better if it was in my back yard."

So you can imagine Schaffel, a scratch golfer, is pulling pretty hard for legislation to pass regarding the Seminole Compact and true no-limit poker in Florida.

"I spend a lot of money traveling to California or to Vegas, besides the tournaments, just to play in cash games," he said. "It would be nice to go play golf in the morning or go to the gym and then go to play. And if I'm not having a good day after like three or four hours I don't feel like I have to stay there. It's not as easy as people think, traveling all over the country and playing. When you're not in your own bed and when you're not in your own environment and doing the things you normally do every day, it's not as easy as people think. I know a lot of people think that once they get (no-limit) poker down here (in Florida) that it's going to be a gold mine. ... I think it's gonna be really good, but I don't think it's gonna be as easy as people think. ... You have to make a lot more money when you're traveling than when you're at home. It'll be interesting to see. I hope they get it soon."

## The grind pays off

Once Schaffel turned "semi-pro" he was faced with more hours on the felt, and that meant more chances at "running bad." The pressure to make money certainly weighed on him, and before you learn the story of his November Nine berth and quest for that \$8.5 million payday, you must know the stretch he faced before that.

"I never ran so bad in my life leading up to the World Series," he said. "It started around January and I just never had experienced what it was like to run that bad. Not just for hours, but for days and then for weeks. It was pretty rough. I maintained my cool as best I could. I'm not saying I did all the time, but I maintained and tried to limit my losses.

"I credit my success in this year's World Series to the bad streak that I had. My friend said, 'Who would have ever thought that you running so bad for so many months would've helped you just keep throwing away bad hands after bad hands after bad hands and not feeling pressured to play a hand that you shouldn't be playing?' And I'm 100 percent in agreement with him. ... I

## A true magician

If you play a tournament for nine days you're bound to have some interesting hands. Kevin Schaffel's most memorable hand during his run to the November Nine came courtesy of Antonio "The Magician" Esfandiari. Here's how Schaffel describes the scene:

The most fun I've ever had at a table was with Antonio Esfandiari. What a good guy he is, and I can't wait to see him again. He was on my left (on Day 3). ... He'd been raising me all day, and if he doesn't raise me he calls me to my left. I just got up to like 500K in Day 3 and he's got about 250K. I get  $K\heartsuit-9\heartsuit$ , one from the button, and he's on the button. I raise to 6K and, of course, he makes it 18K, which I fully expected. And the flop comes  $K-3-2$ . I check and he bets, but he only bets like 22,500 into a pot of like 45K. And I check-raise him to 60K, so I raise him 37,500. He thinks about it for a minute and he decides to min-raise me to 75K. So he only raised me 37,500, which left him 58K.

I thought about it for a long time. The cameras are rolling, ya know. I said 'Jeez, I'm gonna be down to 300K if I lose the hand; I'll be to like 600K if I win. You know I just don't like my kicker.' I mean

there's a lot of things I could be beat by, aces, ace-king, whatever. So I lay it down, and he says, 'Kevin, you're not going to like this, but only 'cause the cameras are rolling,' and he turns over queen-jack offsuit. OK? There's only about, I don't know, one player, HIM, who would have done something like that. (laughs)

It's bad enough I check-raise him. It's like, OK, just throw your hand away and you'll still have about 100K left, and just be happy you still have chips left, right? No, he decides to min-raise me. And he left himself with about 58K in chips in case I pushed all-in on him, which obviously he couldn't call. But that was the beauty of the play.

"And I just took it so well. I congratulated him and said nice play and patted him on the back. I can't wait to see the hand and see how I reacted. But my reaction to the hand was what I was so proud of. I didn't get upset, I didn't let it bother me, I didn't go on tilt, and in the past stuff like that would've really bothered me. I acknowledged a really nice play that he made.

He's so tough to play against and he's such a nice guy on top of it. I really enjoyed playing with him.

— Christopher Cosenza



Courtesy of Commerce Casino



## Success breeds success

After making the WSOP's final table (guaranteeing himself at least \$1.263 million), Schaffel entered the WPT's Legends of Poker main event and finished second for \$471K. "To tell you I wasn't surprised would be a lie," he said. This achievement continued a trend that has arisen over the past few years as formerly unknown players who tasted final-table success in the WSOP Main Event turned that into ensuing immediate victories or more final tables.

**2005:** Joe Hachem won the WSOP title and followed up the next year with a WPT title.

**2006:** Paul Wasicka was runner-up to Jamie Gold, but he finished fourth in the WPT's L.A. Classic six months later, then won the NBC National Heads-Up Championship.

**2007:** Hevad Khan finished sixth and then won \$10K Caesars Classic the next year.

**2008:** Ivan Demidov made the November Nine, then in the meantime finished third in the WSOP-Europe Main Event. He returned to Vegas and finished second.

**2009:** After making the November Nine, Kevin Schaffel finished second in WPT Legends for \$471K. Fellow November Niner Steven Begleiter finished ninth in the same event.



hear people say all the time after like 30 minutes or 45 minutes 'Jesus, I haven't had a hand for hours!' And I wanna just say, 'Try 14 hours or three days and see how you feel.' It was no question it helped me."

## All-in on Day 1, then never again

About five years ago Schaffel began playing poker tournaments fairly regularly, especially the World Series and World Poker Tour circuits. His success rate in these events laughs at variance, cashing in nearly 50 percent of all tournaments he entered with \$5K buy-ins or greater, including a 42nd-place finish in the 2004 WSOP Main Event. Does he have some magic formula or strategy? Probably, but after outlasting nearly all of the 6,494-player field he's in lockdown mode for now.

"I actually do have an opinion, but I really don't want to say," he said, laughing. "I have some ideas as to why I do better, but I just don't want to get into specifics on that right now. We can talk on Nov. 11 and I'll be happy to answer any of those questions.

"For a long time I felt like I really wasn't that lucky. There were a couple of World Series where I got it in with the best of it almost every time and that's how I got knocked out. And that happens to a lot of people, I know, but it just seemed like it was happening a lot."

And his 2009 WSOP campaign very nearly had the same outcome. But something was different this year, and Schaffel will be the first one to tell you he believes in destiny.

"I lost 5K in the first level, so I was down to 25K after two hours. Five minutes into Level 2 I get pocket 10s in the big blind. ... It comes around to the button and he raises. Now he'd raised every time before on the button, so it was no surprise. And I just call, and the flop comes 8-10-J with two to a suit. I didn't want to give him any free cards. I led out and he raised me, pretty big. And I re-raised all-in. I didn't want to mess around with the hand; I didn't want to give him a free card, and he insta-called me. So I said 'Oh, boy.' And he turns over 7-9. He flopped a straight, OK?"

"But what's really strange is, I carry this bag with me with all my stuff, and in the past I would just be like ready to leave. ... go to pick my bag up and just stand up and ready to leave. And there was something about it, I was just really calm and I knew the board was going to pair. A 4 comes on the turn, no help at all, and I just sat there still, and the board paired a jack on the river. I got to 50K and (five) hands later I was at 100K. And I never looked back, but obviously that was very fortunate. The hand played itself. He's raising on the button with any two cards, this particular guy, got lucky enough to flop a straight while I flop a set, so there's no chance the money's not going in at any point, whether it's on the flop or the turn. ... I was in the top 1 or 2 percent the entire tournament, and to my knowledge, I don't think I was

ever all-in where the hands were turned up at the end. I may have gone all-in late on Day 8 or 9 but I was never in jeopardy with the hands up."

He's careful not to rely on fate, but he firmly believes he was meant to win that hand. His son Jeremy, before the main event, inspired Schaffel by giving him a doctored photo of Peter Eastgate holding up his hands in victory, only Jeremy had superimposed his dad's face on Eastgate's body.

"I'm not gonna sit here and tell you I believe that because I had the picture in my wallet and I looked at it every day that that was the reason, because my mind was so focused on winning with my hands up and the money," said Schaffel, who has been known to play at Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood and the Isle Casino with his son. "I'm not sure what it is. I do believe in fate and that things are meant to be. I've been competitive all my life. There is no rhyme or reason to how things happen. ... but they just happen. I'm a big believer in fate but don't know how it works yet. I wish I did. At the end of the day it's either meant to be or it wasn't. ... How do you account for someone getting pocket aces seven times in a day and winning with them every time? You can't answer something like that."

## Final-table thoughts

Schaffel, who is sponsored by PokerStars, sits in sixth place for the Nov. 7-10 final table with 12,390,000 chips, and in the stands will be about 100 of his closest friends and family members.

"It's unbelievable," he said. "I was just at my golf club (TPC at Eagle Trace) and one of the guys said 'Can you believe 20 people from the golf club are coming out to watch you?' Forget about the 50-70-80 family and close friends that I knew were coming out. It's just unbelievable. Not that a lot of people need an excuse to go to Vegas, by the way. I'm not so sure how many of them wouldn't have wanted to go anyway. ... I keep saying no matter what happens it's been great and I'm as happy as can be. Of course I want to do as well as I can do once I'm out there, but to have all my family and friends out there when it happens is just going to be great."

Plus being a millionaire can't hurt.

"The financial part of it is just a bonus," said Schaffel, who got divorced in 2006. "It's not like I was broke. There have been some articles written, you know, down on my luck, this and that. I wasn't broke and I wasn't close to that point. It's a beautiful thing and I'm gonna be able to buy a house. ... and there'll be a little something extra there for the kids at the end of the day, down the road."

When the idea of the November Nine was presented to the public a couple of years ago people speculated players would enlist coaches and scour YouTube for poker footage of their competition. But Schaffel

**Jeff Shulman****Seat 9:** 19,580,000 chips**Age:** 34**Home:** Las Vegas**Random fact:** The publisher of *Card Player* says he might trash his

bracelet if he wins, a protest toward Harrah's handling of media policies.

**Antoine Saout****Seat 8:** 9,500,000 chips**Age:** 25**Home:** Saint-Martin-des-Champs, France**Random fact:** No Frenchman has won the WSOP Main Event. If he wins look for home games to break out under the Eiffel Tower.**Joe Cada****Seat 7:** 13,215,000 chips**Age:** 21**Home:** Shelby Township, Mich.**Random fact:** If he wins he'll supplant Peter Eastgate as youngest WSOP M.E. champ.**Darvin Moon****Seat 1:** 58,930,000 chips**Age:** 45**Home:** Oakland, Maryland**Random fact:** Moon, a logger by day, has no agent, no sponsorship deal with a major online room and no fear. What he does have is a massive chip lead.**James Akenhead****Seat 2:** 6,800,000 chips**Age:** 26**Home:** London**Random fact:** He used to be a train driver and 9-ball pro, but don't let that fool you. He's a pro poker player and made a WSOP final table in '08.**Eric Buchman****Seat 6:** 34,800,000 chips**Age:** 29**Home:** Valley Stream, N.Y.**Random fact:** A poker pro for eight years, Buchman has had plast success with numerous WSOP final tables, but no bracelet.**NOVEMBER NINE****Phil Ivey****Seat 3:** 9,765,000 chips**Age:** 33**Home:** Las Vegas**Random fact:** Ivey won two bracelets this year, giving him seven for his career, yet none of those wins has been in no-limit hold'em.**Kevin Schaffel****Seat 4:** 12,390,000 chips**Age:** 51**Home:** Coral Springs**Random fact:** Schaffel came in 324<sup>th</sup> at last year's WSOP Main Event and finished 42<sup>nd</sup> in 2004, the year Greg Raymer won it all.**Steven Begleiter****Seat 5:** 29,885,000 chips**Age:** 47**Home:** Chappaqua, N.Y.**Random fact:** He met Schaffel in the Bellagio coffee shop on Day 3 of the WSOP Main Event and they've remained friends.

## COVER STORY

### Coral Springs' Kevin Schaffel and the World Series

#### Davie's Mercier finishes fourth at WSOPE



Most players would be overjoyed with a fourth-place finish at the World Series of Poker Europe's Main Event, especially when it meant scoring nearly a half-million dollars. But most players aren't Jason Mercier.

The Davie resident, who won a bracelet at this year's American WSOP, went to the final table of the WSOPE Main Event as the overwhelming chip leader, but the end result was a bitter disappointment.

Mercier ultimately lost his lead, his edge, and the remainder of his chips and ended up in fourth at a final table that included two members of this year's November Nine (James Akenhead and Antoine Saout) plus famed pro Daniel Negreanu and *Card-Player* owner Barry Shulman. In the end Shulman got lucky on Negreanu by hitting a flush on the turn when they were all-in and then captured the title.

Mercier would add an undercard event victory at the EPT London just days later for another \$185K.

Continued from Page 37

makes a great point about trying to prepare for this final table.

"I'm a little torn because obviously I'm gonna watch all the shows and gonna watch how they play," he said. "But I don't know how to simulate the situation. I can play sit-n-go (tournaments), but no SNG is going to have Darvin Moon with a third of the chips. And no SNG is going to put me in sixth place. There's just no way to simulate it. I think just playing and having cards in front of me is all I'm going to do. I contemplated briefly having a coach, but I just don't think that's the way to go for me.

"I don't want to overthink things. I've been playing a long time and I kinda have a sense as to what I need to do. But I'd hate to think at the end of the day, *Jesus Christ, my coach told me to do this, or we talked about this, but my gut told me to do something else.*"

No matter what happens Schaffel will have made at least \$1.7 million since July when you factor in his WPT cash, so does that mean the poker circuit will have a new full-time player?

"Some of it's gonna have to do with how I finish," he said. "If I finish 1-2-3, yeah, I'm probably going to play in a lot more events. If I finish 9-8-7 where things aren't really going to change that much I'll still probably play four to six events like I've been doing for the last five or six years. I still enjoy the games that I play in. I've been playing at the Commerce (in L.A.) for I don't know, about seven-eight years. I play \$10-\$20 no-limit. I've been saying from the very beginning no matter where I finish I'm still going to play \$10-\$20 no-limit. I don't even think I want to go up to the next level in the cash games because I really don't want to risk \$50K or \$100K in a seating. I may change my mind down the road, but I enjoy the game for the game."

Like he said, he's not a true gambler, he just loves the competition.



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

## SMALL BLIND VS. BIG BLIND: ONE WILL CATCH SWINE FLU

I felt badly for Daniel Negreanu. In a recent World Series of Poker event he was hacking and dripping and sneezing and spreading swine flu all over everyone. Now I don't know for sure it wasn't just a simple cold, but if he had muscle aches and fever, too, it was probably flu. And more than 95 percent of flu cases in the world since June have been H1N1 — the proper name for swine flu.



Watching Daniel made me realize what a great winter this virus is going to have on the poker circuit. Hundreds of people in the same room sitting in close quarters for hours at a time, passing around chips and cards and occasionally playing the tournament version of musical chairs — virus heaven. And if you don't catch it in Barcelona, there's always Tunica, Foxwoods or Aruba. Remember, a sneeze shoots 40,000 droplets across the poker table at about 100 mph. Scientists estimate 50 percent of the general population will get H1N1. If you're a professional poker player (or a dealer), the pot odds are even worse.

I'd like to try to put this whole flu thing in perspective and answer three questions: If you're exposed, should you get tested? If you get the flu, should you take antiviral drugs? Should you get the flu shot?

Let's take the last one first. At the time I'm writing this article, the Chinese, Europeans and Americans are racing to produce a H1N1 vaccine estimated to be available by mid October. There are a lot of unanswered questions about the vaccine, but one thing is quite certain, there won't be enough for everyone.

So who gets it? As an ER worker and guardian of our nation's healthcare safety net, I get one. (Hooray, I knew there had to be some perks to my job!) Pregnant women can have one. Sick people with heart disease, emphysema, asthma, diabetes, hepatitis and immunocompromise, sure, you get one, too. Do we have any doses left? How about school-aged children? Senior citizens? Do we have enough?

If we haven't run out by the time all those other people get theirs, there might be some left for you brick-and-mortar poker players. Convince your doctor that your job puts you at very high risk for exposure and get the shot if you can because you WILL get exposed.

Let's say you get the flu. What do you do? Unless you're in one of those risk groups I just mentioned (sick, older or pregnant), just stay home, have some soup and take Tylenol. Do not go back to work, or to the poker room (I'm talking to you, Daniel) until you have been fever-free for at least 24 hours. Play online instead. That's why God invented Internet poker.

The antivirals like Tamiflu don't work very well. They make you

less contagious, reduce the symptoms a little and shorten the course by a day or two, but they are expensive (about \$16 per pill) and they're certainly not a cure. And you have to start taking them within 48 hours of the first symptoms to be effective. Geez, it takes me at least 48 hours to figure out whether I'm really sick.

Here's a key point: "The Flu" comes around every winter killing about 35,000 people in the U.S. H1N1 isn't particularly severe, it's just very, VERY easy to catch, so eventually most everyone in the world will get it or be exposed. It may seem like a lot of people end up dying from this flu, but it's a very tiny percentage of a very big number. For most of us, it will be a relatively mild illness. For a tiny few, it can be pretty bad.

Last question, if you get sick or exposed, should you go to your doctor's office or the ER (horrors!) to get tested? For gosh sakes, no! If you have flu symptoms (think sniffly Daniel plus muscle aches and fever), you've got it. End of story. It's swine flu. There's no need to prove it. All other flu viruses on earth are hibernating on some pretty beach up some seagull's nostrils waiting for next year's contest to see who's going to be virus of the year.

Truly, there aren't enough nasal swabs or healthcare dollars in the world to test everyone who's going to get exposed. It's all swine flu anyway. The Florida Department of Health has asked doctors to stop sending swabs. We're supposed to become the Soup Nazi: "No test for you!"

So basically, try to limit your exposure. Wash your hands — a lot. If you're an active live player or in one of those risk groups I've mentioned, get the flu shot. If you do get the flu, there's no need to infect your doctor or your local ER personnel (like me) unless you're truly dying. Stay home. Drink some hot tea and stiff it out.

Here's one final curious point: Nearly everyone who's gotten sick from H1N1 is younger than 60. Scientists believe swine flu may be related to the virus that caused the 1957 pandemic. If you were old enough to go to grade school (and get exposed) in 1957, you may have some immunity to H1N1. In 1957 I was home watching *Howdy Doody* on a TV the size of a dinner plate and wearing jammies with footies, so I'm probably still at risk.

This leads me to my final piece of advice: If you're old enough to remember the first time Jimi Hendrix set a guitar on fire, you're probably old enough to have some immunity to swine flu. That means this is a great year to sign up for some winter tournaments because all of the Internet phenoms will be home sick.

— 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](mailto:ftoscano@redbamboomedispa.com)

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# VENETIAN \$5K STOPS THE BLEEDING

*Editor's note: This is the final installment in Chris' three-part look back at his summer in Las Vegas.*

I really needed to get my mind off poker after busting out of the World Series of Poker Main Event, and luckily a friend from home was in Vegas for the week. We got a room on the 51st floor of the Palms Place hotel with a fantastic view of the Strip. Taking a few days off was great. We golfed one day with my friend Seth, and RPM pro Brent "astrolux85" Roberts, had some great dinners and hung out with other friends. By the time my friend went home, I was exhausted and ready to get back to poker. There were a few more tournaments at the Venetian and Bellagio, and I was determined to get deep in something before my summer ended.

I entered the Venetian \$5K, which had 25K starting chips and 90-minute levels, so there would be plenty of play.

The tournament had 260 players and was paying \$377K for first, which was a nice improvement over last year. My starting table was great, as it was full of terrible players. I was able to chip up fast, getting to 70K by the end of Level 2. As the day wore on, though, I began to lose some chips and my table began to get a lot tougher as it seemed like with every fish that busted, a good player replaced them. I fell to about 40K at 400-800 when I was able to win a race with  $K♥-T♥$  against  $J-J$  on a  $10♣-7♥-2♥$  flop. A king fell on the river and I doubled up to 80K. I followed that up with a good last level and finished the day with 98K, a little above average.

My new table on Day 2 looked pretty good as I only recognized one or two players, but after an uneventful 30 minutes my table broke and I got moved to a fairly tough table. I tried to get a little aggressive against a player who looked like he could be pushed around a little bit, but I was wrong. He bluffed me out of a big pot and showed me, so I dropped to 60K.

I quickly recovered when I won a 120K race with  $Q-Q$  against  $A-K$  and was right back in it. I spent the next two hours playing small pots and staying between 100K-150K for the most part. With about 40 players left (they paid 27), I got moved to balance the tables. The new table seemed to be split about half and half between good players and randoms, but the good players had a lot of chips. One of the younger players had a huge stack and seemed to be pushing everyone around, playing extremely aggressive, but he was playing very well, too. Luckily for me, he was on my immediate right, giving me position. So, I tightened up a bit and played quality hands in position against him. I exploited his overaggressiveness and took a bunch of pots off him near the bubble, nearly doubling my stack to close to 300K.

When the bubble broke, we redrew for seats, and I was stuck at probably the toughest of the three tables. With only a couple of minutes left in the day, I hung back and finished with 295K, putting me in about sixth or seventh with 26 left.

Finally, a cash! But I wasn't finished. I wanted to make the most of this opportunity. We kept the same seats for Day 3 and I started off on fire. I busted someone on the third hand when my  $Q-Q$  held up against  $K-Q$ , boosting my stack to 380K. I won a few more pots to push my stack to about 450K. That's when I got into a big pot with a very good online player, Garrett "GBecks" Beckman. We had pretty large stacks, as he began the hand with almost 400K, and the blinds were 3K-6K. He raised in middle position to 16.5K and I had  $J♠-10♠$  on the button and called; both the blinds folded. The flop came  $J♣-10♥-6♣$  and he bet 22K, which I raised to 62.5K. He called very fast and the turn was the  $2♣$ . He checked. If I bet here, I was going to have to play for stacks with him if he check-raised, because he's the type of player who would do this with a large range, from a flush to an overpair with a club to  $KQ$  with a club. So, I checked behind to control the pot and keep in some worse hands that would fold to a turn bet. The river was the  $8♠$ , which was a great card for me, and he quickly checked again. I thought it over for a while and bet 88.5K. I received a pretty quick call, and then a pretty quick muck after I turned over my hand.

That hand boosted me past 600K, and I was able to bust GBecks shortly after when I raised to 18K at 4K-8K with  $A♠-10♠$  and he shoved 150K with  $A-9$  offsuit. I called and was happy to see his hand. I got a nice sweat when he flopped a 9, but I rivered a 10.

Ultimately I went into the final table with 810K. It was a pretty tough final table, with really only one or two weak spots. I found myself really card dead early on at the final table and sat back a bit. I ended up losing a small pot right before dinner break and went to dinner with 585K and nine players left. The blinds were only going up to 6K-12K after dinner, so I

still had plenty of room to maneuver.

The next level would turn out to be a killer, though. Nothing seemed to go right. I wasn't able to pick up any huge hands, but I got a lot of good hands that ended up killing me as I kept getting put in terrible spots, falling to less than 300K by the end of the level. With the blinds going up to 8K-16K, I need to get something going very fast. I grabbed a small pot to start the level and get beyond 300K, when I picked up  $A♦-Q♦$  with a raise from an aggressive player in front of me. I happily shoved my stack in, only to have the BB wake up with  $KK$  and call me before the original raiser folded. I got a little help on the flop with a queen, but that was it, as I busted in eighth place for \$36K.

While I was able to make up a lot of my losses in the tourney, I still finished the summer down a decent amount. But it was a great experience and I can't wait to do it again next year.

— Chris Dombrowski is a member of the RPM Poker team and he lives in Wesley Chapel.



SUSIE ISAACS • No lady's written more on poker.

## POKER RENAISSANCE BEGAN IN THE JUNGLE

Before 2001, the poker world was a small world. Dedicated players dotted its population, but frankly, as they died off, there were no young ones to take their place. The World Series of Poker was (and still is) the grandest event in the poker world.



SUSIE ISAACS

The first time I played the main event was in 1989. That year there was a record-breaking field of 350! In Las Vegas, poker was dying a slow, sad death. Poker rooms closed right and left. But then 2002 was the year I refer to as "The Poker Renaissance."

There are quite a few contributors that helped the popularity of competitive poker go from tiny to gargantuan in a very short time. Most know the ball began rolling when Chris MoneyMaker, an amateur player from Tennessee, earned his WSOP Main Event seat online and went on to win the most prestigious and coveted prize in poker, becoming an instant millionaire.

And that feat goes hand-in-hand with the Internet poker explosion. These events lit the match, but many say the explosion came when the World Poker Tour aired its first season in 2002. It found the secret formula, the tiny "lipstick" cameras built into the poker table so the audience could see players' holdings.

Suddenly, poker was fun to watch, it was exciting and it became



Among the trees of Costa Rica the idea of the WPT grew.

a spectator sport. But did you ever wonder how the concept for the WPT came about?

Believe me, there weren't a bunch of Hollywood suits sitting around a conference table talking about poker on television. Remember, poker was still in the dark ages and considered by the majority to be a





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EXP 12/31/09

## CHIP CHATTER

SUSIE ISAACS • No lady's written more on poker.

Continued from previous page

backroom activity.

Linda Johnson, who has been hailed by her peers as the First Lady of Poker because of her many contributions to the game, tells her story.

"Steve Lipscomb, Mike Sexton, and I were tourists in Costa Rica," she said. "We were in a rain-forest talking about poker, of course. Steve told us his vision for the World Poker Tour. You might say that the World Poker Tour was born in the jungle! All Steve needed was funding, Mike was with Party Poker, which was a nice fit, as they became a charter member. We went to see Lyle Berman (CEO of Lakes Entertainment and poker player extraordinaire) when we got back to Vegas. He said that we would need six or eight charter members to make it all work. We had six months to get them. We got them in six weeks and the deal was on!"

Linda really thought the concept of the WPT would be a home run, but it turned out to be a grand slam. And the poker world is forever changed because of visionaries in the jungle.

And now you know the rest of the story!

— Susie Isaacs is the most published female author on the subject of poker and she has a new novel *White Knight*, *Black Nights*. Visit [www.susieisaacsbooks.com](http://www.susieisaacsbooks.com) for details.



Linda Johnson, the First Lady of Poker, helped mold the concept of the WPT.

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## MISTAKES AREN'T FATAL, NOT LEARNING FROM THEM IS

Most poker literature focuses on helping you play correctly, or at least how the author deems correct. This can be useful when you're first learning or looking for enhancements to take your game to the next level. I know I've had several major steppingstones in my poker development that have stemmed from books or even an article or blog that gave me a new perspective.



LEE CHILDS

However, just as important, and sometimes more important than learning what to do, is making an effort to learn what not to do. I learned this first-hand when I worked in the business world. I learned how to properly manage people and deal with clients from the mistakes of certain bosses and co-workers. Paying attention to other players' mistakes and having an honest, objective approach to evaluating your play can really take your game to another level.

I do an enormous amount of experimenting online to incorporate new tactics into my game. It allows me to become more comfortable with certain plays and reading hands. Then I can use these things into my live game.

One day it dawned on me: I wasn't simply trying these things to figure out what was working; I was spending more of my energy trying different things and finding what was not working and learning from those mistakes. This mistake-based learning is something we use in our everyday lives and it must be carried over to the poker tables so we

can achieve the highest level of competence. Mistakes = Experience!

Physicist Niels Bohr once said, "An expert is a person who has made all the mistakes that can be made in a very narrow field." Well, poker certainly isn't a narrow field, and I think most would argue you can't be an expert. But, you can achieve greatness in poker and become one of the elite players in the world if you put in the time to make as many mistakes as quickly as possible. This is how you learn. Whether it's playing online (where you can get years of playing experience in months) or playing live, it's so important to realize the value of mistakes and how to channel them into experience. However, mistakes without a dedicated effort to learn from them means you'll just continue to repeat them. Not only will you not get better, you'll likely get worse.

Watch others play, read poker literature and try new strategies. Constantly analyze your play, not just the hand you lost but the entire tournament or cash-game session. Figure out which tactics were optimal and which weren't. Recognize your mistakes, embrace them and learn from them to make you a winner. Don't get down about a mistake. That can just put you on tilt and lead to more incorrect decisions. Recognize what you did wrong and try your best not to repeat it. Appreciating mistakes will lead to success at the tables.

Decide to Win!

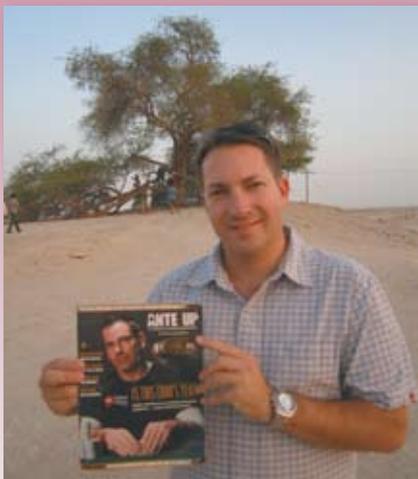
— Lee Childs is founder and lead instructor of Acumen Poker. He also is a Lock Poker Pro and an instructor with the WPT Boot Camp. Check out his site at [www.acumepoker.net](http://www.acumepoker.net).

Tune in to the Ante Up PokerCast on Fridays at [anteupmagazine.com/podcast](http://anteupmagazine.com/podcast) to hear Lee Childs analyze listeners' play during our Hand of the Week segment.

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# GOING GLOBAL

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## WHAT EVERY "BODY" IS SAYING

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

# SELF-INFLICTING PAIN ISN'T RECOMMENDED

Does intentionally causing self discomfort hide tells? Like a thumbtack in your shoe to press on? — JASON, VIA ANTE UP FORUM

Jason, in the '60s there was a movie called *The Ipcress File*. In that movie a government agent used a nail to cause himself pain to attenuate the effects of a mind control experiment. I don't recommend it for poker.

You can conceal tells, honest feelings or thoughts, though mimicry of something positive or negative, this is what actors do. You also can try to focus your emotional state on something recent that was pleasant or unpleasant, depending on how you want to present yourself. Your brain will reflect your emotional state. So if you have a rag hand and are bluffing, you could think about something pleasant and that may mask your tells.

You also can practice concealing yourself, just as Phil Hellmuth and others have adopted. Known as the "Navarro Perch," you basically you put your elbows on the table and rest your chin on your thumbs while covering your mouth. You will be a tough read whether weak or strong.

— 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*. Email Joe at [editor@anteupmagazine.com](mailto:editor@anteupmagazine.com) and he'll answer your questions.



JOE NAVARRO

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## GET INTO COMFORT ZONE BY GETTING OUT OF IT

Recently, I listened to a clip online from poker legend Doyle Brunson, who advised playing poker within your comfort zone. Then I read other articles that suggested breaking out of my comfort zone if I wanted to become more advanced.



DR. BLOOMFIELD

We seem to spend most of our adult lives trying to be successful and comfortable, but how does the average poker player achieve this with contradictory advice?

First, find your comfort zone. It's the state in which you operate in a stress-neutral condition to deliver a steady level of performance usually without the sense of risk.

For a poker player this means playing in a game that feels good, where you can manage the variance, regularly meet your goals and control the stress and risk. But for those who want to perform at their peak, more is needed. Peak performers ...

- Operate in a state of optimal stress, not one free of stress.
- Deliver at an enhanced level, always improving, meeting the next goal.
- Take sensible risks.
- Expand their comfort zone, wrapping themselves around the next level.
- Always keep their head in the game.

Your comfort zone defines the type of game you choose, the stakes, the style and how you assess your opponents. But expanding your comfort zone is a good way to advance in poker and play at your peak.

The best way to do this is to get to know yourself a little better, by understanding your general personality and the way you play, which is key to peak performance.

Are you normally tight or loose? Aggressive or passive? Passive players don't raise or bet much, but they call a lot. Aggressive players bet and raise a lot. If you're loose you tend to play a lot of hands and pursue draws. Tight players don't play many hands and tend to like draws. Weak players give up easily. Tough players don't give up at all.

You also have your sense of risk tolerance and it's important to know what this is. You don't want to play in a game where you can't

take the risk of losing your stake, yet we want to play in game that offers enough risk for the anticipated return.

Comfort zones define whether you prefer online or brick-and-mortar poker. Some online players who were "gamers" have turned to poker because of the initial success or fun. They may treat poker as they would a game. What does this mean? Less concern about money, more concern about action. That's why we see online stars play poor hands hard. This gamer mentality can lead to success, but it takes having that comfort zone. This person is different than the poker-room regular who's content playing smaller stakes in a tighter zone and with much less fluctuation. He still wins, though his winnings are smaller.

You can become a peak performer by expanding your comfort zone and embracing the new zone, only to expand it again and again.

The easiest ways to expand your comfort zone are to try different styles and different games:

- Play a live game if you're an online player and vice-versa.
- If you play cash, enter a tournament.
- Limit players should shift to no-limit.
- No-limit players should try Omaha.
- Play at a different venue or for different stakes.
- Try loosening up or tightening up.
- Try aggression if you're passive.
- If you're quiet then talk more, etc.

If after a short time you start feeling comfortable and start doing well consistently, you are there.

To expand your comfort zone you have to be able to shift your play and, by playing differently, get your opponent out of his comfort zone. If you can get an opponent unwillingly or unknowingly out of his comfort zone, he will make mistakes, giving you the upper hand.

The advantage of understanding comfort zones is you can better control your game and use your knowledge to get a read on your opponents and yourself. Ideally you want to expand your comfort zone, either incrementally or by leaps and bounds, and get players out of their comfort zones.

And, as always, keep your head in the game.

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

## DON'T CRACK UNDER PRESSURE!

### ASK THE "DOC"

Stephen Bloomfield, a.k.a. the Doc, is one of Florida's leading psychologists.

He wrote **Head Games** in the late '80s to help competitors of every type use the skills he had learned about the effects of the mind on performance.

- ♣ After five years of playing poker in Florida, Mississippi, Las Vegas, Connecticut and occasionally online, Doc has decided to share his skills with Ante Up readers through periodic columns, titled **Head Games**. In addition Doc will be offering support to some of the region's best professionals and amateur players with one-on-one advising sessions and group workshops.
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Design Playing Cards is proud to be the official card of *Ante Up Magazine!* Scott Long, well-known co-publisher at *Ante Up*, recently offered this assessment of Design: “From the first time we saw Design’s unique cards, we were entranced by the creative designs.” At Design, the passion is playing cards and designing them well. From easy-to-see and classy indices to the stunning back and face designs, this passion resonates which each shuffle and deal.

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# TRUE NO-LIMIT POKER WON'T MAKE 2009

By Marc Dunbar

The winds are shifting a bit in Tallahassee, which may signal some changes for Florida's poker rooms and casinos. Since Gov. Charlie Crist signed the most recent gaming compact with the Seminole Tribe, the sentiment in Tallahassee has been distinctly negative. The parimutuel industry and the members of the Florida Legislature have come out overwhelming against the proposal. Significant questions exist as to why the governor did not follow the Legislature's template and what the ramifications are of the numerous loopholes in the revenue-sharing portion of the compact. In short, the compact was flagged "dead-on-arrival" in Tallahassee.

As a clear signal as to its disdain for the agreement, legislative leaders not only rejected the governor's suggestion of a special session in October to ratify the compact, they also canceled committee meetings to even consider the ramifications of the compact. What does this mean for Florida poker rooms? Plenty!

The new provisions benefiting Florida's poker rooms, which passed during the 2009 regular legislative session, are tied to the ratification of a compact. Increased hours of operations and removal of betting limits will continue to hang in limbo until the resolution of a tribal compact. Based on the three-party staring contest going on between the tribe, the governor and the Florida Legislature, I would not be placing wagers that true no-limit poker will be dealt in 2009.

For poker players who like to dabble in blackjack from time to time,

this apparent impasse affects them as well. As long as the Seminoles and the Legislature remain at odds, the longevity of blackjack and other table games at Seminole casinos is seriously in doubt. The tribe cannot keep blackjack without a compact signed with the state. The bluff of getting these games from the feds is a very empty one, and if you're a reader of this magazine, it is one you would never run to the river no matter what the size of your stack or quality of your opponent.

So where do we go from here? Stay tuned as the talks continue. At some point, both sides will have to blink and come to the middle. The parimutuels need the gaming bill that passed during the 2009 session, SB 788, and the tribe wants (and needs) to keep blackjack, and the Legislature needs the money to help plug a deficient 2010-11 budget.

On another front, new slot machine games are on their way to the South Florida parimutuel casinos. After almost 18 months of administrative proceedings, the Department of Business and Professional Regulation is allowing blackjack-, roulette- and keno-themed slot machines into the casino market.

By Christmas, you should see some pretty innovative products from top slot machine manufacturers like Bally Technologies, Shuffle Master and IGT. Themes such as Bally Roulette, Multi-hand Black Jack, Royal Match 21, Bet the Set, Ultimate Texas Hold'em and Ultimate Draw Poker will start popping up in the South Florida parimutuels and most likely at the Seminole casinos this winter. While they aren't expected to satisfy the fix of hardcore table-game players, they may help whet the appetite of those who enjoy these gaming environments.

It appears secretary Chuck Drago and his staff at the Department of Business and Professional Regulation recognize the winds of change have come to our marketplace. The demand for more diverse games, the eventual agreement on a Seminole gambling compact and resulting new games at the state's parimutuels mean a new hand has been dealt in Florida gaming.

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

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Real poker may not be here in 2009, but South Florida parimutuels and the Seminoles may have games such as Royal Match 21 by Christmas.

# DON'T COUNT OUT FLORIDA POKER JUST YET

On a recent road trip, I stopped in a half-dozen or so poker rooms and the greeting I received was almost universal. "It's slooooooow," poker room manager after poker room manager told me, shaking their heads in a state of frustration.

So it came as no surprise to me when I logged on to Ante Up's forum ([www.anteupmagazine.com/forum](http://www.anteupmagazine.com/forum)) and saw a post headlined "Is poker starting to die in Florida?" The post came from a player — "Fishhead" — who spends a lot of time in a lot of Florida poker rooms. "Fishhead" is not one to apologize for his bluntness in posts, so his jump in conclusion from leaving one of the largest rooms in the state "with just 17 people playing" to an end of a poker era didn't surprise me.



SCOTT LONG

But there's no doubt that the two of us have witnessed the same thing.

So just how valid is Fishhead's doom-and-gloom hypothesis?

We can start by acknowledging that it's football season. And football season turns Florida poker rooms into ghost towns. One poker room manager recently told me, "We have 50 TVs, great food, hot cocktail waitresses and poker; where else would you rather watch the game?" It's a compelling statement ... unless, of course, you have tickets to the Big Game.

I tried to give away a Saturday satellite seat I won last week. Couldn't find anyone to take it from me. Many were headed to Tallahassee to watch South Florida beat Florida State. And why couldn't I use it? Well, I was going to be on a plane to St. Louis to watch the Packers trounce the Rams.

Interestingly enough, one poker room manager suggested their room might just punt on Saturdays and Sundays until football fades to baseball. Load up on the promotions Monday-Friday. Sun Tzu would be proud: Why send soldiers to slaughter in a bloody fight where they're the underdog? Rather, save them for decisive victories elsewhere.

And if Florida's pro teams keep playing like they have been, maybe rooms will start taking back Sundays even sooner.

And we also should remember that fall is a dead time for tourism statewide. The busy summer season in North Florida ended on Labor Day, and the busy snowbird season elsewhere doesn't ratchet up until Thanksgiving at least. And that's assuming the economy hasn't convinced some snowbirds to stay in the snow.

We can't lay the totality of the perceived malaise on the doorstep of football and tourism. But let's also take a look at whether the malaise is indeed "perceived," or whether there's something to it.

A scan of numbers reported to the state's Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering shows that from July to August, only three of the state's 22 parimutuel poker rooms showed gains in gross poker receipts. However, overall receipts at all 22 tracks were down just \$252,764 in the same span, a fairly insignificant drop when you consider August's total was still \$8,369,456. (These numbers don't count the seven Indian poker rooms and the state's two-day cruises, which don't report their numbers to a state agency).

If we compare year-to-year, which is perhaps a better barometer, 13 of the state's 22 parimutuel rooms reported fewer gross poker receipts in August 2009 than in August 2008, but again, the overall drop was insignificant, just \$72,021. That's about as flat as you can get.

So, by these yardsticks, while the state's poker economy isn't growing, it's nowhere near as dire as perceptions would lead you to believe.

Yes, statistics can only look backward, so if you find yourself in your

favorite poker room today reading this column, and realize that far fewer of your buddies are there, you're right to wonder what's up. So here are few theories knocking around in my skull:

**TAIL END OF THE RECESSION:** Yes, the economy is dreadful. But more and more, we're hearing from economists the worse is behind us, maybe even that we're no longer in an official "recession." Different segments of the economy recover more quickly than others. I'd venture to say the poker industry is on the tail end of the recession. Folks held out playing as long as their personal economics allowed because poker is their top source of entertainment and/or it's a source of entertainment where one big score can keep you afloat for a while at the table and at home.

**PROMISE OF HIGHER LIMITS:** Floridians have been teased since May with the promise of higher poker limits and longer hours. The issue has become a political football, sadly, with no solid timeframe for implementation. Do we hazard a guess on how many players scaled back their play to keep their bankrolls healthy for the day when "real" poker can be played in the state, rather than grinding out in the less-optimal games we have to choose from now?

But again, those are just suppositions, more to temper the flames of those who are convinced that Florida poker is in the doldrums. I'm often accused of having rosier glasses than most, but in this case, I'm trusting the stats.

I say quit polishing off the eulogy, and stop chiseling the epitaph. Florida poker isn't dead, nor is it even dying. If anything, it's merely hibernating. And when new limits and longer hours wake this sleeping bear, watch out. Florida poker will be more ferocious than ever.

— Email Scott Long at [scott@anteupmagazine.com](mailto:scott@anteupmagazine.com).

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# HE HAD THE RIGHT, BUT HE STILL WAS WRONG

I'm prefacing this column by saying this topic truly does not deserve any more attention, but it needs to have the women's perspective.

Women's poker events are created as an outlet to bring more women to the game and increase their presence in the poker community. Unfortunately, sometimes there are occasions when the integrity of the actions becomes cloudy, as in the case where a 65-year old man bought in to the ladies event at the recent Borgata Poker Open in Atlantic City and won the tournament.

What bothers me the most was the reason behind his entry. *Ante Up* partner PokerNews.com reported this man (whose name is not worth mentioning) only entered the tournament because he had not played in a while and wanted to use this event as a springboard to other events.

According to a Borgata statement, the casino could not prevent the Ventnor City, N.J. resident from playing because New Jersey gaming laws and a federal statute forbid discrimination during poker tournaments. It was nearly two years to the day that Jose Canseco, the now infamous ex-baseball player from Miami, entered the California State Championship Ladies Event at the Commerce Casino in Los Angeles, and he used a similar anti-discrimination law in California to be granted entrance. Some appropriately referred to Canseco and the five other guys who entered that event as "men from trees."



My first question: Why did the 65-year-old man think it was appropriate to use the Borgata's ladies event to get his feet wet? Only now that he's coming under scrutiny is he saying he will donate his winnings (\$20,982) to charity. But will he? That remains to be seen. Hopefully someone will be checking up on him to see if he keeps his word.

I would've preferred for him to use the seniors event (since he qualifies) as his "springboard" and not make a mockery of a ladies tournament that saw Holly Raba of Micanopy finish 19th for \$525.

As far as I'm concerned the real winner was **Nicole Rowe** of Salisbury, N.Y. (who officially finished second and earned \$11,889). I wish to congratulate Rowe on her accomplishment and for remaining a good sport, which is part of any game regardless of the hype and outcome. You see, Rowe is fighting breast cancer, and she has come a long way with her illness, and her poker. One bad apple should never spoil the bunch, so keep on playing, Nicole, and show everyone that class IS a big part of the game.

I wish her much luck with her fight as she continues to thrive and lead a fantastic productive life.

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

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## PERSPECTIVE

### Learning poker etiquette

# NO. 1 RULE FOR BEGINNERS IS BE SURE YOU KNOW THE RULES

By Bryan Oulton

Many bar poker league players are new to the game or are coming from friendly home games that are loose around the edges with rules. Besides the chance to work on your game in a free environment, many leagues teach you the proper rules so when you transition to the card room scene, you'll be a veteran. These articles will be tailored more toward those who are still learning and growing.

There's an old adage in poker: "If you can't spot the sucker at the table in the first five minutes, then you're the sucker." Well, in poker, just like in life, there are those boorish people who think it's their job to make life miserable for those around them. If there's someone at the table people are complaining about and you can't pick them out, then it's probably you. Not a good way to approach the game.

Many people watch poker on TV and see Phil Hellmuth or Tony G berating other players for the way they play. That's part of their TV draw and part of their marketing. Many top players will bait other players with certain antics to get future results. By belittling a player after a certain play, they can influence future behavior out of that player. This can work for them, but for newer players to the game, it's something that should be avoided at all costs.

The more you talk, the more you tell. By trying to get information out of other people, you're giving information, too. *Ante Up* columnist Joe Navarro, a former FBI agent, says you want to give as little information as possible while gaining the most back. Easy to say, tough to do. It starts with keeping your mouth shut; let the pros on TV act their way. Remember, no matter if you're playing in a bar or at your local casino, odds are there aren't any ESPN cameras filming you, so avoid acting like they are.

Treat the dealers, players and staff with respect. Ever see the player who does nothing but complain about the dealer never giving them good cards? Well, the dealer is not out to get you or anyone else. Cards will run cold.

Trash-talking is the most overused tactic of poor etiquette. You shouldn't talk trash; it's called trash for a reason. All it does is put you in a poor light. If someone makes a poor play, don't lambaste them as it will only encourage them to play better against you. Try complimenting them. It will only help you in the long run. People never gun for the classy player.

Lastly, know the rules and status of the game. Don't always ask what the amount you can bet is when you know what it is. Act in turn. Don't talk about your hand or the

board while the game is live. Act in turn. Show up on time, or better yet, early. Act in turn. Let the dealers do their job. If something is questionable, bring it up or ask for the floor person if necessary, then defer to the judgment of management. Oh yeah, act in turn.

Be nice, play well, tip your dealers and service staff of the bar or casino, and good luck.

— Bryan Oulton owns All In Free Poker, a poker league based in Pompano Beach, with Sandy Swartzbaugh.



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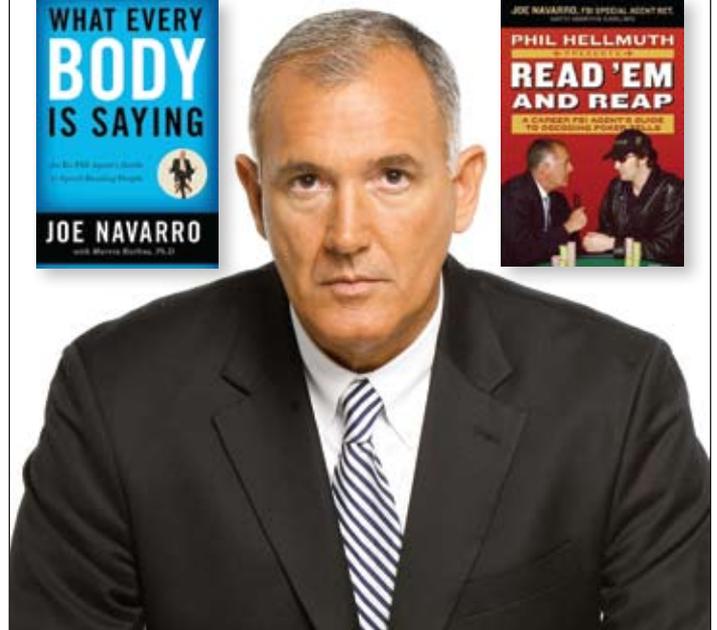
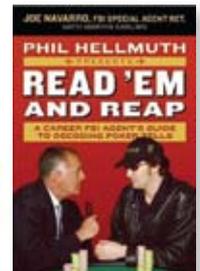
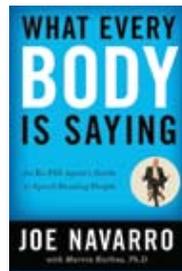


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Correspondence from the Ante Up Nation

# THERE'S MORE TO 'RUNNING IT TWICE' SCENARIO

First off, great magazine. I love to see how poker is growing in Florida and feel things like your magazine contribute to the momentum.

I did want to comment on the *Cards So Nice, Let's Run it Twice* article from the September 2009 edition. I think the article missed one aspect of running it twice that I think is the most relevant and that relates to how it affects the action.



I think we all understand how it levels out variance and reduces bankroll swings, but the aspect of it that I think warrants more discussion is how it changes some of the game's dynamics. By that I mean people will be inclined to play differently, especially in drawing hands, when they know their opponent (and the house rules) will allow them to run it twice. They essentially can risk less in marginal situations. I'm not sure if this is good or bad, but I think it's a significant factor in how people play in games where it is common to run it twice.

Barry Greenstein has commented on this aspect as well in an interview I heard. He claims he never runs it twice. According to Barry, he publicizes this fact so people don't push light on him so often when they know they don't have the option to run it twice.

**Jody Haneke**  
Tampa

## VERBAL IS BINDING

Got something to say? Email us at [letters@anteupmagazine.com](mailto:letters@anteupmagazine.com) and be sure to give us your name and hometown and we'll print it.

### Bad-beat article couldn't be more true

Thanks for your August article (*How about a bad beat on bad-beat jackpots?*). Your publication keeps getting better and better! This year I will play about 500 hours at the cash table (10 hours a week for 50 weeks). At 25 hands per hour, I'll see 12,500 hands. If I win my statistical 10 percent, I'll take in 1,250 pots. With a \$1 drag for the bad-beat jackpot, that's \$1,250 I have to win just to break even! (Actually, it's more like \$1,375 because I give the dealers 10 percent).

Now that we've added the jackpot, my break-even is more than \$2,500. To date I have won \$825 (less 10 percent) in jackpot prizes, so I will have to get very lucky just to break even for this year.

So, I agree with you completely. I want to play poker, not buy Lotto tickets. Thanks again for a great magazine!

**Mike Scarborough**  
Sarasota

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# Q&A

## WITH SHANNON ELIZABETH

Most of you got your first glimpse of Shannon as the sexually charged foreign exchange student Nadia in the *American Pie* flicks, but these days most poker players know her for her exploits on the felt. She recently spent some time with the *Ante Up* brass to discuss her poker history, why actors are drawn to the game and whether she would have won the 2007 heads-up title had Paul Wasicka not gotten lucky.

**You were born and raised in Texas, and we all know the roots of poker there. What influence did that have on your game?** When I was really little we would go over to my grandparents' house when I lived in Houston and we would play penny poker, like 5-card draw, 7-card .... I remember there being wild-card games, and I remember Dr Pepper and Baseball ... but I never learned Texas Hold'em. That was a whole new thing that came to me later. I just remember loving to play cards with usually my dad and my grandparents. I did that at a really young age and it wasn't until I got older that I was taught what Texas Hold'em was and got into that. So I guess my roots did start really young.

**So who were the people who taught you the game when you got older?** In the very beginning I started to really want to learn so I could get better at raising money for my charity and everybody was starting to play Texas Hold'em everywhere. It's funny 'cause a friend of mine said I'm gonna bring over a poker pro to your house that I'm friends with and he's gonna sit down and help teach us. So he brings over two guys and a girl, and I recognize the girl as being Jennifer Tilly. Didn't know either one of the guys, and I spent the next few hours with them trying to figure out which one was the pro, because he said I'm bringing over a pro. And this is in the beginning of me starting to watch poker. Well, one of the pros was sitting there making charts on paper with percentages and ... it looked like a big complicated thing. The other one was like, "Don't even listen to him. All you have to do is this, this and that." So later I find out that one of them obviously is [Phil Laak](#) and the other was [Antonio Esfandiari](#). At the time I knew the names "The Magician" and "The Unabomber" but I never had seen the face of the Unabomber really at that point. I always just recognized sunglasses and a sweatshirt, the hoodie. So I'm literally sitting there going, "Who's the pro? I don't know. Maybe one's the pro and the other's his friend who thinks he knows it all." Like, I don't get it. (laughs) So it was really funny and finally I ask my friend, "Which one's the pro?" and he's like "Both of them!" (laughs) I was so confused. Somewhere in my house of paperwork I still have that chart that Phil had made for us. 'Cause I was just fascinated, like one day I'm gonna actually know what this means.

**You once considered playing tennis professionally. Is poker your way of staying competitive or fulfilling that competitive drive?** I definitely have a competitive nature. But it's too competitive. I have to learn to tone it down. I guess I grew up doing a bunch of things that I felt like I would excel at, and do well at. And I did fairly well at tennis growing up. But poker is the first thing (in my life) where most of the time you're going to lose in general, especially tournament poker, which is mainly what I play, you know, there's one winner. So it's been very difficult for me because I had to try to tone down the competitive edge that I'm so used to. But still have such a love of playing the game that I try to think about it different. It fulfills it and frustrates it at the same time. (laughs)

**Why do you think a lot of actors are attracted to playing poker?** You know, there's a lot of acting in poker. You're definitely trying to read your opponent; you're trying to fool your opponent; there's such an acting aspect. I think it just kinda made that crossover into Hollywood not just because of that but because so many actors in general like to do a lot of charity work. It's become something that everyone can do in that it's an easy, great, fun event to put on and it kinda just sucks everyone in, everyone likes to play. It's a good fit for everyone; you can still use those acting chops but still use the other side of your brain as well.

**Most celebs only play hold'em because it's the popular game, but you play more than that. You played very well in one of the WSOP's H.O.R.S.E. events.**

**Which is your favorite game?** Honestly I think my favorite game has to be Omaha Hi-Lo, 8-or-better. Annie Duke was my coach for a year and she's a genius at all of those mixed games, and I know that that's her favorite game so I really wanted to do everything I could to learn as much as possible about all of the games she was so expert at. ... So I really worked hard at trying to absorb everything she could give me with that. ... and it just became one of my most favorite games.

**Normally when actors play poker they tend to play in the many L.A. card rooms, but you fly to Vegas a lot to play. Why is that, are the games better in the desert?** Usually if I'm in Vegas it's for a specific tournament. Like I said, I play a lot more tournaments than cash games, and if I fly around and do any of the pro circuit it's usually the tournaments, you know, the big tournaments



Photos courtesy of mojohd.com (Laak and Esfandiari) and NBC (Shannon Elizabeth)



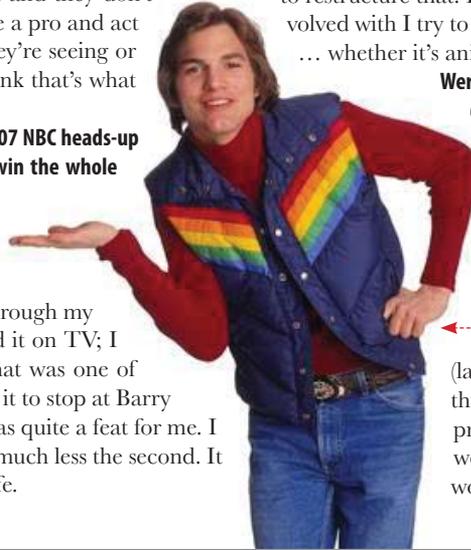
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they're going to.

**How often do you use your acting skills at the table?** The more you learn about the game the more you realize less is more. With some people that are just starting out, you can tell they have something just because of the simple little smile on their face, even if they don't think they're smiling. I think acting comes in where if you can just hide that and do absolutely nothing, you're doing a lot. I think people who aren't used to that have a lot of little tells and they get really excited and they don't know how to cover that. So if you can act like a pro and act like somebody who's not affected by what they're seeing or act like you're not as excited as you are, I think that's what goes a long way.

**If Paul Wasicka doesn't suck out on you in the 2007 NBC heads-up semifinals, do you beat Florida's Chad Brown and win the whole thing?** ABSOLUTELY! (laughs)

**What was that run like for you and have you gotten over that beat?** I try not to think about it. The only time I think about it is when you guys bring it up. (laughs) It just does not go through my head anymore. I actually never even watched it on TV; I didn't want to see it. But the run up until that was one of the most amazing times in my life. I expected it to stop at Barry (Greenstein). And even getting up to Barry was quite a feat for me. I didn't even expect to get past the first round, much less the second. It was just a great, amazing, lucky time in my life.



**You do a lot of charity work, and not just related to poker. You founded Animal Avengers. Can you tell us about it?** Animal Avengers is an animal rescue I started in 2001, and I've actually kinda put it on hold this past year because I want to restructure how it works. I really feel that there's a way I can help more animals in an easier amount of time and not do the rescues one by one, but actually change a lot of laws, get a lot of puppy mills shut down. My goals are getting much bigger now so we're trying to restructure that. But, honestly, any charity I can help with and be involved with I try to do that, whether it's playing poker or anything else. ... whether it's animals or children, they're all equally as important.

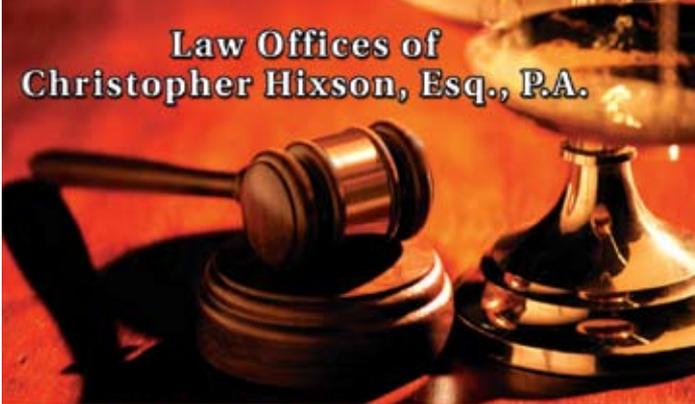
**Were you disappointed you didn't play a larger role in *The Grand*?**

You always want a bigger role, but I was so honored to be a part of that film and to work with Woody Harrelson that I was happy to have the moment we had. ... I was so honored to be a part of that cast and at the end of the day I'm just really happy to have worked with them.

**And, finally, who do you think would be a better poker player, Stiffler from *American Pie* or Kelso from *That '70s Show*, and why?**

They're both equally not smart (laughs). They're equally not so smart that I don't think either of them would do too well. But they both probably would have that beginner's luck because they wouldn't know what they were doing so nobody else would know what they were doing either. (laughs)

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