



2011 World Series of Poker Television Coverage Expanded; Main Event Schedule Change Announced

A HISTORIC FIRST: ESPN TO TELEVISION ENTIRE EVENT FROM START TO FINISH & SHOW EVERY SINGLE HAND -- SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6th on ESPN2 AND TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8th on ESPN

ANOTHER FIRST: LEGALIZED WAGERS BEING ACCEPTED FOR FIRST TIME AT CAESARS ENTERTAINMENT (LAS VEGAS) SPORTS BOOKS, INCLUDING RIO

LAS VEGAS/BRISTOL (October 18, 2011) – To generate what could very well be the largest televised poker audience ever, the dates of play for the 2011 World Series of Poker Main Event finale have been moved back one day each, in order for the event to be shown in near real time – with every single hand – in its entirety for the very first time in its 42-year history.

“There are moments when you realize you’re turning an important corner,” said WSOP Executive Director Ty Stewart. “This coverage shifts the paradigm for poker’s potential on television and will showcase our championship with unprecedented richness and scale.”

The final nine players, also known as poker’s “November Nine,” are competing for a whopping prize pool totaling \$28,269,365. This year’s victor becomes poker’s world champion. He will win \$8,711,956. The championship tournament started on July 7th with 6,865 players who came to Las Vegas from nearly 100 different countries to participate. Each contestant posted an entry fee totaling \$10,000, creating a mammoth \$64,531,000 prize pool – the third largest ever. Only nine players remain – and those players are set to take a seat on poker’s biggest stage on November 6th for the initial playing session.

The November Nine return to Las Vegas and the Rio to begin play on **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6 at 11:30 AM (Las Vegas time)**. Play will continue until just three players remain. Play will then take a one-day recess.

ESPN2 will televise every single hand of final table action from 9 players to 3 players-- with player hole cards being shown, on a 15-minute delay. (ESPN2 and ESPN3 begins at 3:30 PM ET)

The final act of poker's greatest drama will play out when action resumes with the final three players on **TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8 at 5:30 pm (Las Vegas time)** and will continue until the new 2011 World Poker Champion is crowned.

Poker's flagship network ESPN will carry Tuesday's three-handed play in its entirety, in the same format as Sunday's action -- with player hole cards being shown, on a 15-minute delay. Coverage on ESPN and ESPN3 will begin at 9 PM ET.

"We had great success with our live WSOP Main Event shows this summer and this kind of unprecedented coverage of the Final Table will allow fans to experience the culmination of the biggest event in poker," said Doug White, ESPN's senior director of programming and acquisitions.

This marks a historic milestone for poker. After ground-breaking coverage of the championship event over the summer when several days of the Main Event included a telecast of two feature tables (on a 30-minute delay) for the first time; this finale marks the first time the entire final table of the world's most prestigious gaming event will be shown to viewers around the globe with only a 15 minute delay from play in the actual event itself.

No longer will ESPN post-produce the coverage for quick turnaround. Instead ESPN is committing to coverage across ESPN and ESPN2 to document every flop, turn and river card dealt at the finale. Based on previous final tables, this is expected to be up to 18 hours of coverage.

Poker fans in the United States will be able to view the action on the ESPN family of networks (including ESPN3 for both days coverage), while viewers outside the United States will be able to watch the stream on WSOP.com or ESPN International networks with planned coverage.

As was done during the summer, hole cards will not be revealed to viewers until the hand has been completed. This directive ensures zero impact on players during a live hand. Viewers may see any cards that determine the final winning or losing hand in some manner *after* the hand is completed -- which takes place on 15-minute delay.

Consistent with the WSOP's philosophy since buying poker's most prestigious series in 2004, this marks yet another bold and innovative new step in the evolution of the game. The new changes should continue to help demystify and better introduce the game's incredible drama and pervasive skill-element to an even broader viewing audience. Much like the introduction of hole card cameras to televised poker a decade ago, the ability to show an event in near real time will help the viewing public better appreciate and understand the nuances and dynamics of play during a lengthy poker tournament and final table session, as opposed to the edited, post-produced one-to-two-hour telecast which has become the staple of WSOP coverage in recent years.

In another poker first, legal wagering on the event will now be offered in Nevada sports books, including Caesars Entertainment, Las Vegas-based properties. Multiple proposition bets will be offered including:

- Who will win the event? (with odds for each)
- Will there be more red or black cards on the first flop of the final table?
- What will the winning hand be?
- Will the chip leader at the start of the event win the event?

- Who will finish in 9th place?
- Total number of hands dealt throughout final table.

Wagering closes just before the first hand is dealt on November 6. For updated odds, please visit any Caesars Entertainment Las Vegas-based sports book.

This year's group of finalists promises to put on a terrific show. The final nine players represent seven different countries – the most ever in WSOP Main Event history; Ukraine, Ireland, Germany, Czech Republic, Belize, Great Britain and the United States. The players will return to the Rio All-Suite Hotel and Casino's Penn & Teller Theater in a quest for poker's ultimate trophy – the WSOP gold bracelet – and the lion's share of the Main Event's \$64,531,000 total prize pool.

The November Nine players and their respective chip counts are as follows:

1. Martin Staszko – 40,175,000

Staszko, of Trinec, Czech Republic, is a 35-year-old poker professional. He is the first Czech ever to make a WSOP Main Event final table. In addition to poker, he plays competitive chess and tennis for pleasure. He said it would be “unbelievable” to be the first person to bring a Main Event gold bracelet back to the Czech Republic.

2. Eoghan O’Dea – 33,925,000

O’Dea, of Dublin, Ireland, is a 26-year-old student. The son of Donnacha O’Dea – widely regarded as the greatest Irish poker player of all time – Eoghan is becoming quite the poker force himself. He now has a total of six WSOP cashes, five of which he earned this year. The father-and-son tandem now has a total of three WSOP Main Event final tables, with Donnacha having finished sixth in 1983 and ninth in 1991. It is the first time in WSOP history a father and son has made it to the Main Event final table.

3. Matt Giannetti – 24,750,000

Giannetti is a 26-year-old, self-taught poker professional from Las Vegas. Prior to launching his poker career, Giannetti graduated from the University of Texas. During the break in play, Giannetti was the only member of this November Nine to achieve victory in another tournament.

4. Phil Collins – 23,875,000

Collins, 26, of Las Vegas, Nevada, is a professional poker player. His considerable entourage at the Main Event spurred on the former University of South Carolina student by loudly singing lyrics by the famous musician with whom their friend shares his name. Collins’ chip count kept him near the top of the leader board for much of the past few days, leading to numerous amateur renditions of “In the Air Tonight” echoing throughout the tournament room.

5. Ben Lamb – 20,875,000

Lamb, 26, is enjoying a career year at the WSOP, leading the race in Player of the Year points. In addition to making the Main Event final table, Lamb’s other accomplishments at this year’s WSOP include a gold bracelet win, a second-place finish and eighth- and twelfth-place tournament finishes. The Tulsa, Oklahoma, native now boasts a total of 12 WSOP “in-the-

money” finishes that have paid more than \$2.1 million in total prize money (excluding the minimal ninth-place money he is guaranteed for making the November Nine).

6. Badih Bounahra – 19,700,000

Bounahra is the oldest member of the November Nine. At 49, the resident of Belize City, Belize, has been playing poker for about six years. Away from the felt, Bounahra says he enjoys fishing and sleep.

7. Pius Heinz – 16,425,000

Heinz is a 22-year-old student and poker professional from Cologne, Germany. He is the first German ever to make it to a WSOP Main Event final table, a feat he accomplished after a promising seventh-place finish in a previous WSOP event.

8. Anton Makiievskiy – 13,825,000

Makiievskiy, of Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, is a 21-year-old aspiring poker pro. When he isn't competing on the felt, he enjoys cycling and anything pertaining to music, particularly teaching himself guitar and drums. This year marked his first trip to the WSOP in Las Vegas. Makiievskiy hopes to become the fifth Ukrainian to win a gold bracelet at the 2011 WSOP.

9. Sam Holden – 12,375,000

Holden, a 22-year-old professional poker player from Sussex, Great Britain, will enter the final table as the short stack. This first-time WSOP participant will need to pick his spots carefully in November if he is to bring poker's most prestigious title back to England.

In addition to the first-place prize of \$8,711,956, prize money for the remaining eight spots is as follows*:

2nd place: \$5,430,928

3rd place: \$4,019,635

4th place: \$3,011,665

5th place: \$2,268,909

6th place: \$1,720,396

7th place: \$1,313,851

8th place: \$1,009,910

9th place: \$782,115

When play resumes on November 6th, the players will pick up with 34 minutes and 57 seconds remaining in Level 36. The antes will be \$50,000 and blinds will stand at \$250,000 and \$500,000.

The 2011 Main Event capped the largest-ever WSOP, both in terms of total participation and prize pool. A total of 75,672 players from 105 countries entered the 58 events on this summer's WSOP schedule, generating a total prize pool of \$191,999,010.

The 2011 Main Event was the third-largest in the tournament's illustrious history, drawing 6,865 players from 85 nations. Only the 2006 Main Event (8,773 participants) and the 2010 Main Event (7,319 participants) were larger.

**The final nine players each received ninth-place prize money upon reaching the final table; the remainder of the prize pool will be placed in an interest-bearing account to be added to the prize pool on a percentage basis for the final eight finishers.*

ABOUT THE WSOP

The World Series of Poker (WSOP) is the largest, richest and most prestigious gaming event in the world, awarding millions of dollars in prize money and the prestigious gold bracelet – globally recognized as the sport's top prize. Featuring a comprehensive slate of tournaments in every major poker variation, the WSOP is poker's longest running tournament in the world, dating back to 1970. In 2011, the event attracted 75,672 entrants from more than 100 different countries to the Rio in Las Vegas and awarded more than \$191 million in prize money. In addition the WSOP has formed groundbreaking alliances in broadcasting, digital media and corporate sponsorships, while successfully expanding the brand internationally with the advent of the World Series of Poker Europe. For more information on the World Series of Poker, please visit www.WSOP.com.

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