



MSPT

MID-STATES POKER TOUR

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POKER TOUR

JANUARY 2018



Rich Bai

WINS 2017 WISCONSIN
STATE POKER CHAMPIONSHIP
FOR \$139,086

Ben Marsh

WINS SEASON 8 FINALE
TO BECOME TWO-TIME CHAMP
FOR \$102,493

BACK TO VEGAS:
POKER BOWL II
PREVIEW

SEASON 9 KICKS
OFF AT TROPICANA
EVANSVILLE

FOODIES DELIGHT:
MSPT BURGER
& SANDWICH

CHRIS MEYERS
SEASON 8
POY

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Letter from the Editor

THANK YOU FOR A RECORD-BREAKING MSPT SEASON 8

BY MSPT POKER STAFF

Season 8 of the MSPT is in the books, and it was a record-breaking affair. We hosted eight Regional Events, 18 Main Events, catered to 19,484 entrants, awarded \$13,992,243 in prize money, and broke nearly a dozen records in six states. All told, the MSPT has awarded \$52,675,375 in prize money through eight seasons.

We kicked things off last January with a \$350 Regional Event at Potawatomi Hotel & Casino in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The tournament drew 1,228 entries to become the largest tournament ever held in Wisconsin. The WSOP Circuit would break it a month later, but we reclaimed the record in July when 1,658 entrants took to the felt.

Early on in 2017, we also hosted our 100th Main Event, the #MSPT100, which drew 466 entries, the largest turnout in 16 visits to Meskwaki Casino. Here's a look at other records we set in Season 8:

- March's MSPT \$360 Regional Event at Golden Gates Casino was the most-attended poker tournament in Colorado history.
- April's MSPT Canterbury Park drew 475 entries to make it the largest poker major (\$1K+ buy-in) in Minnesota history. We broke our own record in December with 493 entries.
- May's MSPT FireKeepers proved to be the largest tournament in Michigan history with 1,066 entries. Again, we broke our own record when 1,067 turned up for October's 2017 MSPT Michigan State Poker Championship.
- The summer's MSPT Venetian was the largest tournament in both MSPT and The Venetian history with 3,273 entries.
- July's 2017 MSPT Iowa State Poker Championship at Meskwaki was largest major poker tournament in state history with 496 entries.
- August's first-ever MSPT \$350 Regional Event held at Canterbury Park set the Minnesota state record for largest poker tournament with 1,169 entrants (previous record was 1,114 set in eight flights Canterbury's 2015 \$115 buy-in Ultimate \$100K).
- September's MSPT Running Aces was the largest major ever at that property with 383 entries.
- November's 2017 MSPT Wisconsin State Poker Championship at Potawatomi was largest poker major ever held in the Badger State.

In addition, 2017 was the year we debuted the "Poker Bowl" at The Venetian, introduced both the MSPT Burger and MSPT Sandwich, brought on Kimo Sabe Mezcal as our Player of the Year sponsor, and established the MSPT Hall of Fame.

On behalf of the entire MSPT crew, we thank all the players who supported us throughout the year and look forward to an even bigger Season 9!



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Our Mission

MSPT Magazine is a monthly magazine dedicated to serving poker players and gaming facilities through MSPT news, results, tournament schedules, player profiles and professional tips. Coupled with our website, msptpoker.com, we are the Nation's #1 Poker Tour.

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Event Recap

RICH BAI WINS 2017 WISCONSIN STATE POKER CHAMPIONSHIP AT POTAWATOMI HOTEL & CASINO FOR \$139,086

BY MSPT POKER STAFF

The 2017 MSPT Wisconsin State Poker Championship, which for the first time was held at Milwaukee's Potawatomi Hotel & Casino, drew 701 entries (311 on Day 1A, 390 on 1B) in late November. That surpassed February's 677 entries from the World Series of Poker Circuit Main Event to become the largest major poker tournament (\$1,000+ buy-in) in Wisconsin history.

It also became the largest MSPT Potawatomi in history surpassing the previous record of 635 entries set back in the Spring of 2016. After a weekend full of play, Illinois' Rich Bai emerged victorious to capture a career-high \$139,086 first-place prize.

The fourth time was the charm for the 29-year-old Bai, who had previously made three final tables at the MSPT Potawatomi. In Season 6, he finished in fourth place for \$42,397, and in 2016 he final tabled both events finishing ninth and sixth respectively. The win is also part of a recent heater for Bai, who back in October won the World Series of Poker Circuit Horseshoe Hammond Event #8: \$1,125 NLHE for \$38,919 and his first gold ring.

"This is cooler than a ring," Bai said while posing with his new MSPT trophy. "I've been running so good lately. Feeling great. It's nice to final table four times and finally win one. You hear it all the time, but it just rings true, you just win flips and run good when it counts. That's really it."

Bai, who says he dabbles in crypto, spends about 90 percent of his time playing high-stakes mixed and no-limit hold'em cash games in Chicago and Vegas, though he admits he'll be working a bunch more local tournaments into his schedule.

On Day 2, 105 players returned to action, each looking to make the money at the top 72. Among those to fall short of a cash were inaugural MSPT Wisconsin State Poker Champion Ben Wiora, the boisterous Reggie Mims, and World Poker Tour champ Kevin "BeLoWaB0Ve" Saul, just to name a few.

After Robert Peppe busted as the bubble boy, the result of his pocket queens failing to hold against Big Slick after a king spiked on the river, the in-the-money finishes came quick. One player to exit early was Chris Meyers, who won the 2017 MSPT Michigan State Poker Championship and finished fifth



Rich Bai

in the MSPT FireKeepers before that.

He began the penultimate event of Season 8 as the Kimo Sabe Mezcal Player of the Year points leader. Thanks to a 64th-place finish, he extended that lead to 3,350 points, ahead of Keith Heine's 2,967 and Mike Shanahan's 2,700 points with one stop left to go.

Others to earn a payday were Mikiyo Aoki (55th - \$2,375), 2016 MSPT Michigan State Poker Champion Brett Blackwood (52nd - \$2,510), defending MSPT Wisconsin State Poker Champion Andy Rubinberg (51st - \$2,510), former MSPT Players of the Year Rich Alsup (33rd - \$2,985) and Mark Hodge (27th - \$3,935), World Series of Poker bracelet winner Nick Jivkov (22nd - \$4,885), Howard Hankin (13th - \$8,142), and World Poker Tour champ Ravi Raghavan (11th - \$10,177).

At the final table, the short-stacked Paul "Big Daddy" Elfelt doubled straight out of the gate, and then he got a boost when he shoved under the gun with pocket jacks. David Harth called off with tens, and he was sent packing when the flop delivered two more jacks to give Elfelt quads.

Potawatomi Casino



Potawatomi Casino

Buy-in: \$1,100 ♣ 701 Entrants

Start-of-the-day chip leader Adam Dembowski was the next to go, the result of running pocket tens into Bai's queens, and he was followed out the door by both Adam Westell and Ahmed Taleb.

In regards to the latter, he was the last MSPT champ remaining in the field. Earlier this season, he won the MSPT Grand Falls for \$54,089. By finishing in seventh place, the result of running pocket sixes into Bai's aces, he earned 1,000 POY points and moved into a two-way tie for fifth place.

WSOP Circuit Harveys Lake Tahoe Main Event champ Max Young bowed out in sixth after running nines into aces, and then a rare double elimination took place in Level 29 (40,000/80,000/10,000). It began when Paul Flynn raised to 200,000 from the cutoff with the J♣J♠ and David Kowal three-bet to 740,000 holding the A♦K♥ on the button.

Elfelt then jammed for roughly 2 million with the Q♥Q♣ in the small blind, Flynn called off for 1.3 million, and Kowal called to put both players at risk. The board ran out 3♥5♦6♣A♠7♠ and the ace on the turn gave Kowal the double elimination and a massive chip lead.

The short-stacked Richard Rosas fell shortly thereafter, and that set up a deep heads-up match between Kowal (9 million) and Bai (5 million). Despite the stacks being so deep in relation to the blinds, it didn't take long for a winner to emerge.

First, Bai doubled with pocket aces against jacks to take the lead, and a few hands later things came to a head. Bai

Place	Name	City, State	Prize
1	Richard Bai	Schaumburg, IL	\$139,086
2	David Kowal	Lake of the Hills, IL	\$84,809
3	Richard Rosas	Chicago, IL	\$63,098
4	Paul Elfelt	Brookfield, WI	\$46,814
5	Paul Flynn	Milwaukee, WI	\$35,280
6	Max Young	Seaside, OR	\$26,460
7	Ahmed Taleb	Moorhead, MN	\$20,354
8	Adam Westell	Woodridge, IL	\$16,283
9	Adam Dembowski	Arlington Heights, IL	\$12,214
10	David Harth	Madison, WI	\$10,177

raised to 225,000 from the button with the A♦K♦ and Kowal three-bet to 570,000 with the 10♠10♥. Not to be outdone, Bai popped it to 1.5 million and then snap-called when Kowal moved all in for 4.5 million.

It was another big heads-up hand, and the 7♥8♦6♦ flop made things interesting by giving Bai a flush draw to go with his overs. The 9♠ turn improved Kowal to a straight, but then the 10♦ spiked on the river to give Bai a flush and the win. Kowal had to settle for second place and an \$84,809 consolation prize. 🍀



Final Table

WHY SETTLE FOR TEQUILA?

STEP UP TO KIMO SABE



TRIPLE AWARD WINNER





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MID-STATES POKER TOUR

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

2017 Season 8 Final Standings

Rank	Player Name	Points
1	Chris Meyers	3,750
2	Keith Heine	2,967
3	Osama Aweida	2,917
4	Jon Hanner	2,800
5	Rob WazWaz	2,767
6	Mike Shanahan	2,700
7	Max Havlish	2,600
8	Keith Block	2,500
	Ahmed Taleb	2,500
10	Jason Ramos	2,250
11	Altaf Motiwala	2,200
12	Al Hedin	2,100
	Dapreesch Scates	2,100
14	Nadar Kakhmazov	2,000
15	Jason Bender	1,950
16	Brayden Gazlay	1,800
17	Richard Bai	1,700
	Carter Myers	1,700
	Satish Thakur	1,700
	Aaron Massey	1,700
	Brian Berthiaume	1,700
	Maury Solano	1,700
	Brian Reinert	1,700
	Jordan Young	1,700
	Millard Hale	1,700



Chris Meyers - Buffalo, NY

◆All players who cash in a MSPT event are ranked for Player of the Year points. At the end of the calendar year, the top-ranked player will receive POY recognition, four MSPT \$1,100 Main Event buy-ins, \$250 toward a satellite or Main Event at every MSPT event the following season (max \$4,250), as well as a \$1,100 Main Event seat with \$400 travel to Venetian Mid-Season Championship - over \$10,000 value

◆MSPT Player of the Year points are awarded based on the total prizepool of the tournament

◆For more POY information, including how points are awarded, and to follow the race in 2017, visit www.msptpoker.com/pages/poy



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Event Preview

MSPT RETURNS TO LAS VEGAS FEB. 1-3 FOR THE \$1,100 BUY-IN, \$500,000 GTD POKER BOWL II AT THE VENETIAN

BY MSPT POKER STAFF

The MSPT is headed back to Las Vegas!

From February 1-3, we'll be at The Venetian for the MSPT Poker Bowl II, an \$1,100 Main Event with a \$500,000 guarantee!

The MSPT Poker Bowl II, which is a part of The Venetian's 2018 Deepstack Extravaganza I, will feature 40-minute levels, start players with 20,000 in chips, and offer two starting flights beginning with Day 1 at Noon on Thursday, Feb. 1 (late registration will remain open until 7 p.m.). Day 1B will take place at the same time on Friday, Feb. 2. The surviving players will then return at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 3 to play down to a winner.

That ensures players will be free on Sunday so they can enjoy the National Football League's Super Bowl LII, which is being held on Sunday, Feb. 4 at U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis, Minnesota, just a stone's throw away from Canterbury Park.

"The Venetian and MSPT continue to break records together, and we're excited to return to Las Vegas in 2018 for another edition of Poker Bowl," said MSPT President Bryan Mileski. "Unless you have tickets to the game, there's no better place in the world to watch the Super Bowl than Vegas. We hope you'll join us for both a huge tournament and kickoff."

Last year, the inaugural MSPT Poker Bowl attracted 695 entries and saw poker pro Jordan Young take home \$139,624 after a heads-up deal with Ankush Mandavia, who earned

\$107,381. Four months later, Young, who is expected to attempt a title defense, nearly won a World Series of Poker bracelet finishing runner-up to David "The Dragon" Pham in the WSOP Event #12: \$1,500 NLHE.

Also at that MSPT Poker Bowl final table were MSPT regulars Chris Moon (3rd - \$63,342) and Jason Vanstrom (6th - \$26,563). Others to cash the event were MSPT Season 2 Running Aces champ Jason Seitz (23rd - \$4,904), three-time bracelet winner Dutch Boyd (35th - \$2,997), Minnesota's Hank Mlekoday (40th - \$2,656), and Wisconsin's Eric Baldwin (48th - \$2,520).

More recently, the MSPT was at The Venetian in June for what turned out to be the largest tournament ever held in both MSPT and Venetian history. That tournament attracted 3,273 entries and saw Nader Kahkmazov, who would go on to win a WSOP gold bracelet, win it for \$395,888.

The MSPT Poker Bowl II marks the first stop of Season 9 in our expanded relationship with the Venetian. We'll once again host our popular \$1,100 Main Event in early June, but we've also joined forces with The Venetian to offer four other events—with buy-ins of \$1,600, \$3,500, \$5,000 and \$10,000—over the summer. All of the final tables from those events will be live streamed on the MSPT's RFID table. We'll also be holding an \$1,100 Main Event at The Venetian in September.

The Venetian's 2018 Deepstack Extravaganza I runs from January 29 through February 25 and is offering \$3,000,000 in guaranteed prize pools across 47 events. 🎰





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MID-STATES POKER TOUR

MSPT EARNINGS

Leaders as of December 31, 2018

Rank	Player Name	Amount
1	Nadar Kakhmazov	\$395,888
2	Thomas Boivin	\$352,153
3	Carl Carodenuto	\$347,283
4	Richard Alsop	\$335,757
5	Aaron Massey	\$335,633
6	Brayden Gazlay	\$316,782
7	Peixin Liu	\$315,830
8	Mukul Pahuja	\$304,491
9	Blake Bohn	\$284,063
10	Jeremy Dresch	\$272,741
11	Jason Zarlenga	\$272,194
12	Chris Meyers	\$241,625
13	Kou Vang	\$241,330
14	Mike Shanahan	\$239,157
15	Angelina Rich	\$234,829
16	Richard Bai	\$220,539
17	Keith Heine	\$220,019
18	Travis Lauson	\$216,934
19	Maury Solano	\$209,244
20	John Hayes	\$206,648
21	Hao "John" Sun	\$201,718
22	Andrew Rubinberg	\$201,218
23	Keven Stammen	\$199,635
24	Brett Blackwood	\$199,508
25	Thupten Thondup	\$198,015
26	David Gonia	\$193,310
27	Ben Marsh	\$189,438
28	Mark Sandness	\$181,373
29	Jonathan Kim	\$181,055
30	Nick Jivkov	\$180,202
31	Matt Kirby	\$176,265
32	Dan Hendrickson	\$172,403
33	Drake Bronk	\$171,889
34	Rob WazWaz	\$171,813
35	Dan Sun	\$170,588
36	Bill Rogers	\$170,206
37	David Mowery (WI)	\$169,837
38	David Lee (TN)	\$166,822
39	Josh Reichard	\$162,916
40	Rodger Johnson	\$161,260
41	Jacob Balsiger	\$157,169
42	Ryan Hartmann	\$157,058
43	Daniel Goepel	\$153,311
44	Jason Mirza	\$152,443
45	Michael Rudolph	\$147,122
46	Kentraylus Pates	\$144,905
47	Jason Ramos	\$144,392
48	Mark Hodge	\$143,629
49	Harry Tisdale	\$142,637
50	Osama Aweida	\$141,021



Nadar Kakhmazov - Russia

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Event Recap

BEN MARSH WINS MSPT SEASON 8 FINALE AT CANTERBURY PARK FOR \$102,493, BECOMES 9TH TWO-TIME CHAMP IN TOUR HISTORY

BY CHAD HOLLOWAY

The MSPT Season 8 finale \$1,100 Main Event at Canterbury Park attracted a record 493 entries, which surpassed the spring event (475 entries) as the largest major poker tournament (\$1K+ buy-in) in Minnesota history.

By the time the stop wrapped, 32-year-old poker pro Ben Marsh finished as the last player standing for \$102,493 and his second MSPT title. Marsh, who way back in Season 2 won the MSPT Treasure Island for \$40,071, became the ninth player in tour history to win multiple titles.

“I am feeling pretty great,” said Marsh, who spends most of his time playing online. “I haven’t played a ton of live poker this year and didn’t have any luck when I did. This is only my second tournament since the WSOP in Las Vegas.”

All told, Marsh now has four MSPT final tables, two wins, and seven cashes totaling \$189,438.

“The tour has grown so much,” Marsh said when asked about the six-year gap between wins. “When I won the first time, first place was only \$40K. Everyone involved with the tour has done a great job growing the events. Now they’re tournaments that you can’t miss. I think in general poker is a lot tougher these days.”

A Streak Falls, Final Table Action & More

Among those to make the trip to the Minnesota venue were 2016 MSPT Michigan State Poker Champion Brett Blackwood, MSPT first-timer and poker Twitter legend Kevin “Kevmath” Mathers, and Joe Matheson, who saw his streak of cash-



Ben Marsh

ing every MSPT season come to an end when he fell on Day 1B.

Matheson’s failure to cash in Season 8 means Kou Vang, Matt Kirby, Dan “DQ” Hendrickson and Jeremy Dresch are the only four players to cash every season of the MSPT.

On just the third hand of the final table, James Huynh fell after getting his short stack all in preflop holding the $K\heartsuit J\spadesuit$ and failing to get there against the $A\clubsuit K\clubsuit$ of Thomas Wu. Former champ David Gonias was next to go after his $A\heartsuit 9\spadesuit$ failed to hold against the $A\heartsuit 8\spadesuit$ of 2017 Minnesota State Poker Champ Jon Hanner, who rivered a flush.

Canterbury Park

Marsh then got his first elimination of the final table when he defended his big blind against Vlad Revniaga's short-stack shove in the small blind. Revniaga got it in good with the K♦9♦ but was bested by Marsh's Q♣10♦ after a 10♥Q♦8♣4♠10♣ runout.

Norberto Santamaria followed him out the door in seventh place – the results of his A♦3♣ failing to get there against the 7♥7♣ of Rob Wazwaz – and then Osama “Sammy” Aweida, the only player at the final table not from Minnesota, hit the rail when he ran A♥J♣ into the A♦K♥ of Marsh.

Brian Berthiaume exited when he ran pocket jacks into Wu's queens, and then Wazwaz fell shortly after losing most of his chips holding A♠Q♠ to Wu's K♣K♦. Not long after, Marsh won a crucial flip against Wu, the former's 2♣2♦ making quads against the latter's K♣10♣.

Wu, the Day 1B chip leader, took his leave in third place after getting it in with the A♥4♥ against Hanner's A♠Q♣ after an 8♣7♣10♣3♣8♦ runout.

Hanner and Marsh entered heads-up play near even in chips, but before long Marsh pulled out to a healthy lead. In the final hand of the tournament, which took place in Level 32 (80,000/160,000/20,000), Hanner raised to 330,000 with the A♠K♣ and Marsh defended holding the 10♥9♣.

The 9♣4♠K♣ flop saw Hanner continue for 300,000, Marsh called, and the dealer burned and turned the 9♥. Marsh led



Canterbury Park

Buy-in: \$1,100 ♣ 493 Entrants

Place	Name	City, State	Prize
1	Ben Marsh	Duluth, MN	\$102,493
2	Jon Hanner	St. Paul, MN	\$62,973
3	Thomas Wu	Minneapolis, MN	\$45,383
4	Rob Wazwaz	Minneapolis, MN	\$34,323
5	Brian Berthiaume	Cottage Grove, MN	\$25,742
6	Sammy Aweida	Broomfield, CO	\$19,545
7	Norberto Santamaria	Columbia Heights, MN	\$15,255
8	Vlad Revniaga	Burnsville, MN	\$11,918
9	David Gonia	White Bear Lake, MN	\$9,057
10	James Huynh	Brooklyn Park, MN	\$7,151

out for 330,000 with trips, Hanner called, and the 5♣ fell on the river. Marsh moved all in and Hanner hesitantly called off his remaining 1.395 million.

“There are a lot of really good players in Minnesota, a lot of them at this final table,” Marsh said after the win. “Jon Hanner is a great player, I just got some cards and things went my way.” 🎰



Final Table



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**MID-STATES
POKER TOUR**
February 2018

**MN STATE POKER
CHAMPIONSHIP**
March 2018

**MID-STATES
POKER TOUR**
April 2018

RACEBOOK OPEN DAILY

Event Preview

MSPT VISITS CANTERBURY PARK FOR FIRST TIME IN SEASON 9 FEB. 17-25

BY MSPT POKER STAFF

For Season 9 of the MSPT, we've expanded our relationship with Minnesota's Canterbury Park, home to the first-ever MSPT event.

In 2018, we'll host five tournaments at the card room including a \$350 Regional Event and four \$1,100 Main Events. In December, we'll once again hold our Season 9 finale at Canterbury Park, but for the first time ever it will feature a massive \$500,000 guarantee.

As for the four \$1,100 Main Events, the first will take place February 17-25, and players need be just 18 years old to play. A series of satellites at Canterbury Park—a suburb minutes south of the Twin Cities—will feed into an \$1,100 buy-in, \$300,000 GTD Main Event held the weekend of February 23-25.

The final table will be broadcast LIVE (15-minute delay) worldwide on msptpoker.com using RFID technology allowing all viewers to see the hole cards. In addition, the entire Main Event will be live reported in the MSPT live blog.

The MSPT last visited Canterbury Park in December for the Season 8 finale, which was the 14th MSPT Main Event ever held at the Casino. Ben Marsh, 32, bested a field of 493 entries—the largest poker major (\$1K+ buy-in) event held in Minnesota—for \$102,493 and his second MSPT title (he became the ninth player in tour history to win multiple titles).

It was also at that MSPT Canterbury Park that Chris Meyers locked up the Kimo Sabe Mezcal MSPT Season 8 Player of the Year title and MSPT President Bryan Mileski was inducted into the Minnesota Poker Hall of Fame.

Meanwhile, back in April at Canterbury Park, Mark Wadkamper topped a field of 475 entries to win \$110,220. At the end of Season 7, Jonathan Kim prevailed over a field of 464 entrants for \$107,659. Amazingly, Kim nearly defended his title, but ultimately finished runner-up to Wadkamper.

Recently, Canterbury Park unveiled a \$400-million redevelopment plan that would facilitate the development of restaurants, hotels, entertainment, offices, medical, retail and commercial recreational uses. Plans include an extended-stay hotel, boutique hotel, hotel and water park, an office space, new restaurants, specialty options, family entertainment venues and more. The live part includes a luxury apartment complex, upscale townhomes and a senior housing co-op. The vision for the redevelopment is a place to “live, stay,



work, play.”

In mid-December, the Canterbury Poker Room and Casino swapped out all their used chairs for brand new ones. MSPT players will definitely look forward to testing them out this February.

Canterbury Park Racetrack and Card Casino is Minnesota's only thoroughbred and quarter horse racing facility. There is also year-round wagering on simulcast horse racing and hosts a variety of other entertainment and special events at its facility. 🏇



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MN Poker Hall of Fame

MSPT FOUNDER BRYAN MILESКИ INDUCTED INTO MINNESOTA POKER HALL OF FAME CLASS OF 2017

BY CHAD HOLLOWAY

During the MSPT Canterbury Park, the Minnesota Poker Hall of Fame committee announced its 2017 inductee and welcomed Bryan Mileski of Lakeville, Minn. as its newest member. In 2009, Mileski founded and subsequently grew both the Minnesota State Poker Tour and Minnesota Poker Magazine. Since then, the MSPT has grown into one of the nation's premiere poker tours.

"I am extremely humbled and honored to be inducted into the Minnesota Poker Hall of Fame," said Mileski. "Helping to grow poker in Minnesota has been a longtime passion, and I can still recall the early days trying to report tournaments at Canterbury and Running Aces, and put together a magazine without much more than a laptop. Thanks to tremendous support from players and venues, the MSPT has grown into something we can all be proud of."

In 2011, after eight events in Minnesota, the poker tour crossed the border into Iowa for the first time and subsequently morphed into the Mid-States Poker Tour while keeping the MSPT acronym.

To date, Mileski, who would soon bring on Event Manager Eric Anderson and Media Director Chad Holloway as part of the MSPT family, has hosted 35 major tournaments (\$1,100 buy-in) in Minnesota including 14 at Canterbury Park, 11 at Running Aces Harness Park, four at Northern Lights Casino, three at Grand Casino Mille Lacs, and one each at Treasure Island Resort & Casino, Grand Casino Hinckley, and Jackpot Junction.

While Mileski's induction comes thanks to his contributions to the overall growth of the game, he also plays on occasion. Since 2004, he has amassed \$101,629 in live tournament earnings including \$13,264 for finishing 40th in the 2012 World Series of Poker Event #59: \$1,000 No-Limit Hold'em and earned over \$100,000 in tournaments online prior to 2011.

"I've always loved poker, I recall my first ever cash came in a \$330 Limit hold'em event back in 2004 during the Fall Poker Classic. With the amount of tour travel we do now I haven't played much the last few years so I definitely miss that, but it's been worth it. I truly believe some the world's best players are right here in Minnesota," Mileski added. "Not only that, the cardrooms here offer some of the best action not only in the Midwest, but in the entire country. You'd be hard pressed to find better limit hold'em games anywhere else. Minnesota



Bryan Mileski

is serious about poker, and because of that the poker world takes Minnesota players seriously."

Mileski joins Tony Hartmann, "Minneapolis" Jim Meehan, Blake Bohn, Mike Schneider and Lyle Berman as members of the Minnesota Poker Hall of Fame.

The Minnesota Poker Hall of Fame is governed by a board consisting of poker industry professionals, poker players, and poker media. It was created in 2013 to recognize Minnesota poker players who have met the following criteria:

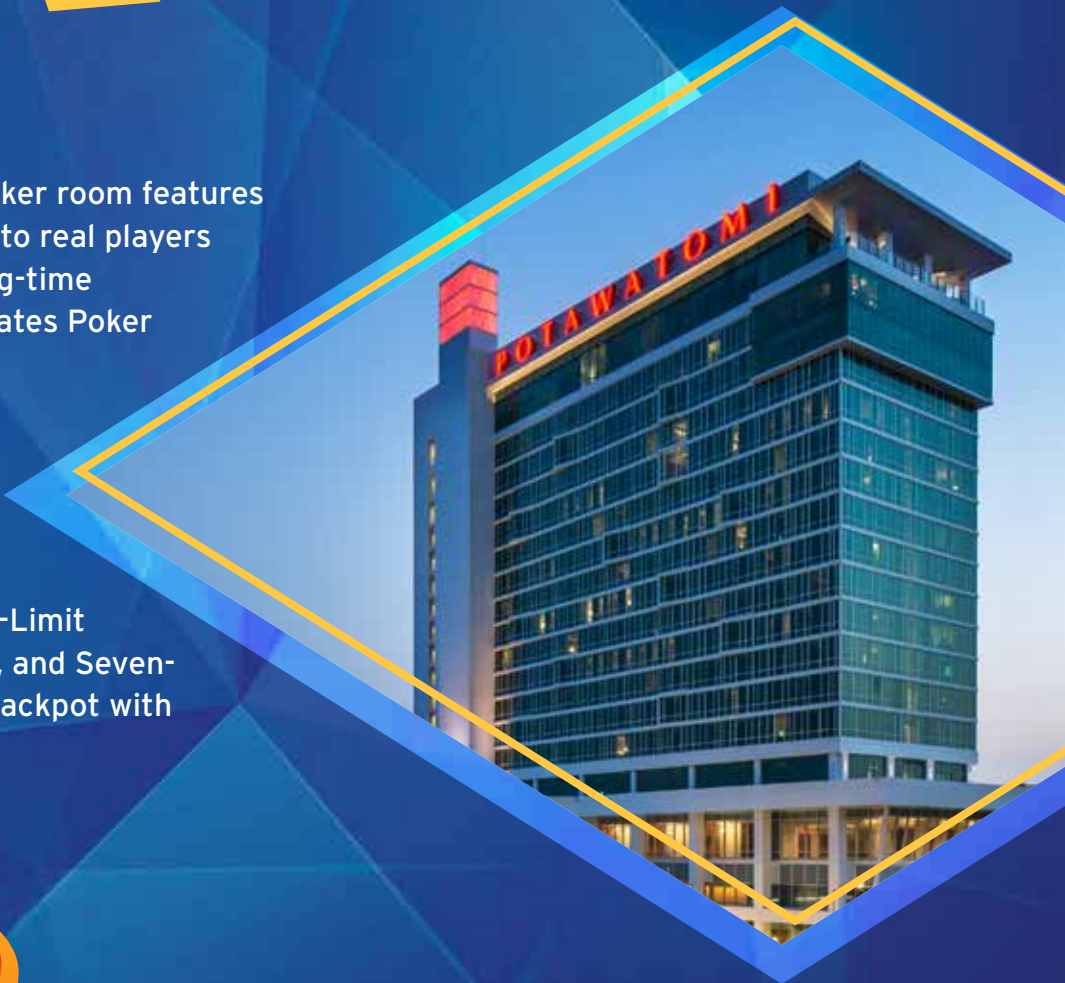
- The nominee must have a strong Minnesota connection, either by birth or residence.
- The nominee must have played consistently amongst acknowledged competition.
- The nominee must have withstood the test of time.
- The nominee must have played at a high level, consistently well, gaining the respect of peers.
- Or the nominee must have significantly contributed to the overall growth and success of the game of poker in Minnesota. 🍀



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Foodies Delight

MADISON MAYOR PAUL SOGLIN AMONG THOSE TO SAMPLE “MSPT BURGER” AT PLAYERS BAR

BY MSPT POKER STAFF

Leading up to November’s 2017 MSPT Wisconsin State Poker Championship at Potawatomi Hotel & Casino, the MSPT partnered with poker legend Mark “Poker HO” Kroon to offer players a special treat at Madison’s legendary sports and poker bar, Players Bar.

Players Bar, which is owned by Kroon, is where Phil Hellmuth cut his chops before heading out to Vegas and winning the 1989 World Series of Poker Main Event. It has also been named one of Madison’s best dive bars and has a reputation as the place to go for bar food, especially their “Burger of the Week.”

That’s where the partnership came in as for one week leading up to the 2017 MSPT Wisconsin State Poker Championship, Players Bar offered guests the MSPT Burger, which included Mayo, Sweet potato fries (on the actual burger), Pepper jack cheese, Topped with Avocado, and a jalapeno gravy.

“We were very excited to partner with Players Bar for the MSPT Burger promotion,” said MSPT President Bryan Mileski. “It turned out to be quite the hit, and we’re already planning to do it again in Season 9.”

As a bonus, anyone who bought a MSPT Burger at Player’s Bar was automatically entered into a drawing for two \$250 satellite seats. Mike Mecum and Will Komin were the two lucky winners.

All told, 117 burgers were sold in a week, a record for Players Bar. Given \$1 from every sale was earmarked for charity, it also means \$117 was raised for the “Keep Madison Warm and Fed” fundraiser.

Among those to consume a MSPT Burger were MSPT Season 4 Ho-Chunk champ and eight-time WSOP Circuit ring winner Josh Reichard, Jason Reno, Mikiyo Aoki, and Madison mayor Paul Soglin, an experienced poker player himself.

As if that wasn’t delicious enough, Canterbury Park got in on the action by building a “MSPT Sandwich” for the last stop of the season. It was offered as their “Sandwich of the Week,” and for just \$6.75 players could get a MSPT Sandwich

with chips and pickles.

It proved to be a massive hit as 302 MSPT Sandwiches were sold throughout the week. That’s an average of 43 per day, and triple the average sales of the weekly special sandwich.

The MSPT Sandwich was comprised of all local ingredients including maple syrup from Anderson’s Farm, smoked cheddar cheese from Ellsworth Valley Farm, pecan smoked pork shoulder bacon, pulled pork, and Traitor Ale from Badger Hill Brewery, all on a Pretzilla pretzel bun. 🍷





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Strategy presented by Jonathan Little

WAS KEITH HEINE RIGHT TO GET IT IN WITH POCKET QUEENS IN WILD FOUR-WAY HAND?

BY CHAD HOLLOWAY

On Day 1B of the 2017 MSPT Wisconsin State Poker Championship at Potawatomi Hotel & Casino in downtown Milwaukee, registration was closed when, in Level 11 (800/1,600/200), Player of the Year contender Keith Heine looked down at the $Q\heartsuit Q\spadesuit$ and he opened for 4,000 UTG+2.

John “Farmboy” Kurfman, who was next to act, then moved all in for 26,000 with what turned out to be the $A\heartsuit Q\clubsuit$.

“In my opinion he was itching to get in,” Heine would later say. “To my delight, he jammed.”

Robert Yench was next to action and he called off for 12,000 with the $9\clubsuit 7\clubsuit$, and then action folded to Lloyd Mandel (50,000), who called for 26,000 from the big blind with the $A\heartsuit K\spadesuit$. Heine then moved all in for his remaining 36,000 and Mandel made a reluctant call for around 10,000 more.

The board ran out $8\spadesuit A\spadesuit 9\heartsuit 6\heartsuit 10\spadesuit$ and Yench got lucky to quadruple up in the main pot, while Mandel took down the sizeable side pot. Both Heine and Kurfman were eliminated in the hand.

Heine had lingering questions about the hand, so we decided to consult with poker pro Jonathan Little

MSPT: In your opinion, did Heine play this hand correctly?

Little: I certainly think he played his hand correctly. He raised from middle position with queens, which is perfectly fine and after two small all-ins and an effective all-in call, he put his 25-big-blind stack in the middle. It would take an insane amount of action to get me to fold queens preflop, and even then, you will likely be priced in to call.

Could he have possibly just called for 26,000 preflop and then find a fold on the ace-high flop?

Little: No. The only time he loses when an ace comes is when Mandel has an ace. Mandel could easily have a worse pair, meaning Heine would be making a terrible fold on ace-high flops some amount of the time. When you have a large equity advantage, as Heine likely does, you want to get all the money in immediately.

What do you make of Yench going with nine-seven suited in this spot? Is there any merit to him calling off with the protection of Kurfman’s shove?

Little: Nope. Nine-seven suited is an easy fold when you



Keith Heine

are against two likely strong ranges. Against two decently strong ranges, $9\clubsuit 7\clubsuit$ only wins about 25% of the time, which is nowhere near enough to justify getting all in unless you think you are much worse than your opponents.

With a three-bet shove and another player calling off, not to mention Heine left to act behind him, what was Mandel’s best move holding Big Slick in the big blind?

Little: This is a tough spot for ace-king, but given stacks are quite short, I am fine getting all in. If there is a significant payout jump looming, perhaps folding would be fine. I would have made the call in his spot as well, especially if you know your opponents are getting in with hands like ace-queen and nine-seven!

PokerCoaching.com is an interactive poker learning experience from two-time WPT Champion Jonathan Little. Try it for free at PokerCoaching.com/mspt.

Player of the Year

CHRIS MEYERS WINS KIMO SABE MEZCAL MSPT SEASON 8 PLAYER OF THE YEAR

BY MSPT POKER STAFF

With 27 players remaining in MSPT finale at Canterbury Park, everyone was guaranteed 200 POY points on the Kimo Sabe Mezcal MSPT Season 8 Player of the Year leaderboard. That meant Buffalo, New York's Chris Meyers, who at the time sat atop the leaderboard with 3,350, was guaranteed to bring his total up to at least 3,550 points.

No other player in the field could catch him, meaning he locked up the POY title and accompanying \$10K prize package right then and there. Others who made the trip to the Twin Cities hoping to supplant Meyers were longtime points leader Keith Heine, Colorado's Osama "Sammy" Aweida, MSPT FireKeepers champ Mike Shanahan, and "Big" Al Hedin.

In Season 8, Meyers had three cashes coming into the final stop. In May, he placed fifth out of 1,066 entries – then a Michigan state record – in the MSPT FireKeepers for \$42,333. Five months later, he returned to the venue and topped a record field of 1,067 entries to win the 2017 MSPT Michigan State Poker Championship for \$191,196.

His third cash, which was \$2,375 for finishing in 62nd place, came in last month's 2017 MSPT Wisconsin State Poker Championship at Potawatomi Hotel & Casino. He ultimately finished MSPT Canterbury Park in 15th place for \$5,721 and 400 POY points to bring his winning total up to 3,750 points.

For winning the Kimo Sabe Mezcal MSPT Season 8 Player of the Year, Meyers will be awarded four MSPT Main Event Season 9 seats (\$4,400 value) to be used at events of his choosing, a seat into the MSPT Venetian summer event with \$400 toward travel costs (\$1,500 value), and \$250 at each Main Event stop he attends up to \$4,250.

In addition, poker tax specialists Kondler & Associates, CPAs will provide the MSPT Season 8 Player of the Year with free tax services for the 2017 tax year (\$800 value). This includes preparation of all tax forms (1040, 1099, etc.) as well as year-long tax planning and guidance.

"Chris' back-to-back final tables in the two largest tournaments ever held in Michigan was a remarkable feat," said MSPT President Bryan Mileski. "After those two strong performances, he set his eyes on the prize and chased POY among stiff competition. Players like Keith Heine, Sammy Aweida, and 'Big' Al Hedin certainly gave him a run for his money."

Congratulations to Chris Meyers on winning the Kimo Sabe Mezcal MSPT Season 8 Player of the Year! 🏆



Chris Meyers



Season 8 Final POY Standings

Place	Name	City, State	Points
1	Chris Meyers	Buffalo, NY	3,750
2	Keith Heine	Hillsboro, MO	2,967
3	Osama "Sammy" Aweida	Broomfield, CO	2,917
4	Jon Hanner	St. Paul, MN	2,800
5	Rob Wazwaz	Minneapolis, MN	2,767
6	Mike Shanahan	Avon, IN	2,700
7	Max Havlish	Coon Rapids, MN	2,600
8	Keith Block	Pomona, NY	2,500
9	Ahmed Taleb	Moorhead, MN	2,500
10	Jason Ramos	Carol Stream, IL	2,250



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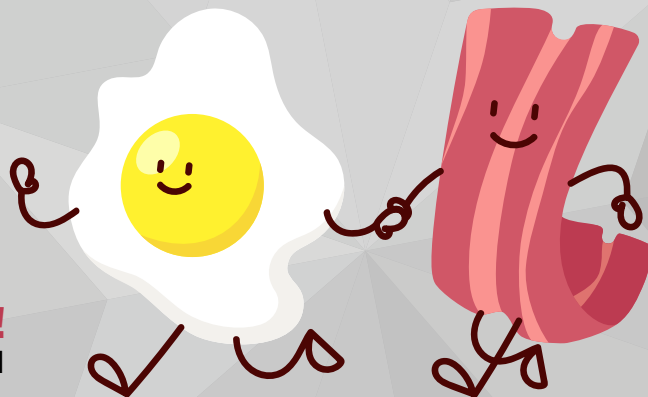
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