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POKERSTARS AND MONTE-CARLO®CASINO EPT GRAND FINAL BECOMES RICHEST POKER FESTIVAL EVER HELD IN EUROPE

EPT Grand Final sets new prize pool record with players winning more than €19 million

LONDON, MAY 2 – The PokerStars and **Monte-Carlo®Casino** European Poker Tour Grand Final finished Monday, May 1 and set a new record for the richest poker festival ever held in Europe, with more than €19 million awarded to players during the nine-day event.

In total, 1,359 poker players from across the world headed to Le Sporting Casino in Monaco from April 23 to May 1 to compete in 37 poker tournaments and help make the final stop of the most popular poker tour in Europe the biggest ever.

Season 8 of the EPT has been the most spectacular season so far with stops all over Europe, as well as the Bahamas in January for the PokerStars Caribbean Adventure, and seen 8,397 players from 85 countries compete for over €46 million in main event prize pools.

Edgar Stuchly, President of the European Poker Tour, said: “Season 8 has been another great year for the EPT and was topped off with the Monte Carlo Grand Final becoming the biggest and richest poker festival in Europe. Plans are now well under way to make Season 9 even better for poker players and fans alike.”

PokerStars satellite winner

One of the biggest winners from the festival was PokerStars qualifier, Mohsin ‘Chicagocards1’ Charania, who turned a \$33 PokerStars satellite buy-in into a €1,350,000 payday when he emerged victorious in the €10,000 EPT Grand Final Main Event. Mohsin, who comes from Chicago but lives in Canada, beat fellow qualifier Lucille Cailly heads-up to take the title. Both players were among 160 players who won their seat to the event online at PokerStars. As well as his cash prize, Charania received a stunning bracelet worth €25,000 from Shamballa Jewels, the Official Bracelet Sponsor of EPT8 Main Events.

In total 665 players from 54 countries took their seats in the €10,000 Main Event to compete for a share of the €6,650,000 prize pool. The final table was filmed for TV, and broadcast live online at PokerStars.tv, cards-up with a one-hour delay. Some notable players were at the final table, including Italian Poker Tour Season 2 San Remo champion Sergio Castelluccio (who came fourth for €400,000), and EPT Season 6 Warsaw finalist Clayton Mozden, who finished seventh for €185,000. Cailly, 29, from Paris, was the first woman ever to make the final of the EPT Grand Final and took €1,050,000 for her runner-up finish.

Among the Team PokerStars Pros to make the money were Matthias De Meulder, Richard Toth, Sandra Naujoks, Angel Guillen, Pierre Neuville, Max Martinez and Nacho Barbero. [Click here for Main Event images.](#)



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High-roller

For American poker pro Justin Bonomo, the EPT Grand Final was his finest hour, as he enjoyed a series of large cashes. He said of his amazing run that he was “hotter than the sun” after first besting a field of 38 of the world’s best players in the €100k Super High Roller ([Click here for SHR images](#)) at the beginning of the festival to win €1,640,000, then coming 28th in the Main Event for €35,000. Not satisfied with that, he continued his winning streak with a fourth-place finish in the €25k High Roller, picking up another €266,000, to take his total winnings for the nine days to an astonishing €1,941,000.

The €25,000 High Roller event actually became the biggest ever held in Europe, with 133 entries (including 16 re-entries) combining to create a prize pool of €3,325,000.

First all-female EPT final

Team PokerStars Pro Vicky Coren and Melanie Weisner made up the first ever all-female EPT final, when they met heads-up in the €5,000 NL Heads-Up event. In total, 27 players turned out for the tournament to create a prize pool worth €130,950, but it was Coren who came out on top and pocketed the €58,900 first prize. Heaping praise on her vanquished opponent after the match was completed, Coren said: “It was lovely playing with Melanie who played brilliantly and was fun and funny to talk to. Well done both of us.”

Coren then went on to finish off a sterling week of poker when she came second in the €1k Women’s event for €10,950, taking her total EPT Grand Final winnings to €69,850.

Triple for Daniel Smith

Daniel Smith won three €5k NL Hold’em events in a row at this week’s EPT Grand Final. The young American won the first €5k side event for €250,500 and then took down the €5k Turbo version for €161,650. Not content with that, he then went on to beat former EPT Vilamoura champion Toby Lewis heads-up in the €5k 6-max side event to snag another €118,000, bringing his combined total for the week to €530,150.

EPT Awards

The Season 8 awards were also announced at the EPT Grand Final closing party. Welsh whiz Roberto Romanello won two awards – EPT Achievement of the Year (voted for by media) and Player’s Choice (voted by EPT players) – while overall Player of the Year went to the Czech Republic’s Ondrej Vinklerek, who had an incredible 11 cashes in EPT events in Season 8.

Other awards went to Khiem Nguyen (Omaha Player of the Year), Salvatore Bonavena (Mixed Game Player of the Year), Melanie Weisner (Heads-Up Player of the Year), Pierre Neuville (Online Qualifier of the Year) and Lebanon (Best Country).

EPT Season 9



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EPT Season 9 will kick off in Barcelona in August 2012, as part of seven major stops lined up in Europe, as well as the PokerStars Caribbean Adventure in the Bahamas. Each event will be a spectacular 'can't-miss' Festival of Poker featuring an even greater range of events including more High Roller action. The EPT Barcelona Festival, which runs August 15-25, 2012, will include – for the first time – a €50,000 televised High Roller event, the highest buy-in event ever held in Spain. The tour will then visit San Remo, Prague, the Bahamas, Deauville, London and Berlin before returning to Monaco for next year's Grand Final. For more info, visit www.ept.com.

About PokerStars:

PokerStars operates PokerStars.com, the world's most popular [online poker site](#) that serves the world's largest poker community, with more than **49 million registered members** since it launched in December 2001. It's the first choice of the world's top players, with more daily tournaments than anywhere else, and with the best security online. More hands have been dealt on PokerStars.com than any other site; that's over **75 billion hands** and more than **500 million tournaments** played.

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