



POKERSTARS LAUNCHES BIGGEST EVER WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP OF ONLINE POKER FEATURING 82 EVENTS

Over \$50 million guaranteed and first \$102,000 Super High Roller scheduled

ONCHAN, Isle of Man – August 17, 2016 – The 15th annual [World Championship of Online Poker](#) will feature a record-breaking 82 events and more than \$50 million in guaranteed prizes on PokerStars, an Amaya Inc. (Nasdaq: AYA; TSX: AYA) brand. PokerStars' flagship online tournament championship, which is widely regarded by poker players as the must-play event of the year, will take place September 4-26. It will also be joined by a low-stakes companion series for the first time ever, Mini-WCOOP (see below for more).

The highlight of the World Championship is the \$10 million guaranteed Main Event, which will take place over three days (September 25-27) making it one of the five richest poker tournaments of the year, likely behind only the World Series of Poker Main Event, and the High Roller for One Drop. The reigning online poker world champion is 'Coenaldinho7', from Belgium, who won \$1.3 million in WCOOP 2015.

SUPER HIGH ROLLER

Last year, there was a massive amount of buzz among the game's elite players and poker fans for the biggest buy-in tournament ever held online, the \$51,000 Super High Roller. PokerStars has upped the ante this year by doubling that record buy-in to an incredible \$102,000. The Super High Roller on September 11 will be one of several high-profile events, including the NLHE 8-Max High Roller and Main Event, to be streamed on the PokerStars Twitch channel at: <https://www.twitch.tv/pokerstars>. Team PokerStars Pros will also play and stream a variety of events on their Twitch channels throughout WCOOP. There will also be cards-up final table replays of select events. More information will be revealed throughout WCOOP.

Team PokerStars Pro and two-time World Championship of Online Poker winner, Jason Mercier, said: "I'm so pumped for this year's World Championship. It's bigger and richer than ever, and the volume and range of events make it a must-play online series for me

and anyone who wants to be a world champion. The \$102,000 Super High Roller, \$10,000 8-game event and Main Event will be the ones I'm looking forward to the most."

WCOOP SCHEDULE

The 2016 World Championship schedule is set to be the most exciting in WCOOP history, with a number of firsts and headline tournaments built with feedback from players (as discussed by Bryan Slick, Senior Manager of Online Championships for PokerStars [here](#)). Here's a rundown of WCOOP 2016 highlights:

- WCOOP-01: Sep 4, 08.00 ET – \$109 NLHE [\$1m GTD Phase tournament]
- WCOOP-23: Sep 10, 10.00 ET – \$10,300 NLHE [Heads-Up, High-Roller]
- WCOOP-28: Sep 11, 12.30 ET – \$102,000 NLHE [8-Max, Super High-Roller]
- WCOOP-53: Sep 18, 12.30 ET – \$10,300 NLHE [8-Max, High-Roller]
- WCOOP-70: Sep 23, 13.00 ET – \$21,000 PL Omaha [6-Max, High Roller]
- WCOOP-74: Sep 24, 13.00 ET – \$10,300 Eight-Game Championship
- WCOOP-78: Sep 25, 14.00 ET – \$5,000 NL Hold'em Championship Main Event
- A \$1,050 Marathon Event (WCOOP Event 03), which is the first four-day event in PokerStars Championship history, and will be held September 4-7
- Two Players' Choice events (WCOOP 48 and 50) – one NL Hold'em, one non-NL Hold'em on September 17
- Two Mix-Max events:
 - WCOOP-49: NL Hold'em (8-Max to 4-Max to Heads-Up)
 - WCOOP-76: PL Omaha (9-Max to 6-Max)
- Two 3-Max Progressive Knock-Out Zoom events – NLHE (WCOOP-20) and PLO (WCOOP-08)
- Win the Button event (WCOOP-59), a format which has proved popular at PokerStars-sponsored live events like the European Poker Tour, where the person who wins the hand gets to be 'on the button' for the next hand.

For a full tournament schedule go to <https://www.pokerstars.com/wcoop/>.

MINI-WCOOP

For the first time, PokerStars is also running a companion series, 'Mini-WCOOP', which will take place September 4-26 and feature identical events from WCOOP at a fraction of the cost, with buy-ins ranging from 1/100 to 1/10,000 of the official WCOOP events, with the exception of the Mini-WCOOP Main Event, which has a buy-in of \$50.

Mini-WCOOP is intended to give players who typically do not play WCOOP due to the high buy-ins a chance to participate in their own large-scale tournament series in September and feel some of the WCOOP excitement.

Mini-WCOOP events do not count towards the WCOOP Leaderboard and aren't found in the WCOOP tab of the lobby – they have a separate 'Mini-WCOOP' tab in the Tournaments section.

SATELLITE QUALIFIERS

Online satellites to the WCOOP Main Event have been under way since early August, and satellites to Events 01-05 are now available from today (Aug 17) with the launch of the full schedule. The satellite offering will continue to expand as the beginning of the series approaches. Players can find the current offering of satellites by logging on to PokerStars and clicking Online Events > WCOOP.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Additional prizes will be awarded to the top 10 most consistent performers across the series. The overall 'Player of the Year' wins a Champion's Trophy, Ultimate Bahamas Experience (worth \$40,000), and TCOOP Main Event ticket. Second to fifth places on the Leader Board receive cash prizes ranging from \$10,000 to \$2,500 plus 2017 TCOOP Main Event tickets, while sixth to tenth-place players are rewarded with 2017 TCOOP Main Event tickets. In total more than \$70,000 worth of added prizes will be awarded to the top 10 players.

HISTORY

The World Championship of Online Poker is the world's longest-running online poker tournament series and regarded as the most prestigious by the poker community. It began in 2002 with just nine events and \$730,000 in total prizes, but has grown to such an extent that last year it had 70 events and saw more than \$66 million awarded to players, making it the richest World Championship in the event's 14-year history. A WCOOP history page is available here: <https://www.pokerstars.com/wcoop/history/>

The reigning Main Event champion, 'Coenaldinho7', won \$1.3 million last September, but the record first prize still belongs to Tyson 'POTTERPOKER' Marks, an American player who won \$2,278,097.50 in 2010. Other past winners include well-known high stakes pros JC 'area23JC' Tran, Yevgeniy 'Jovial Gent' Timoshenko and Fedor 'CrownUpGuy' Holz.

For more information, please email press@pokerstars.com.

About PokerStars

PokerStars operates the world's most popular online poker sites, serving the global poker community. Since it launched in 2001, PokerStars has become the first choice of players all over the world, with more daily tournaments than anywhere else and with the best online security. More than 155 billion hands have been dealt on PokerStars, which is more than any other site.

PokerStars.com and PokerStars.eu operate globally under licenses from the Isle of Man and Malta governments, respectively. PokerStars also holds local licenses or approvals to offer services to players in many jurisdictions, including Italy, France, Estonia, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Bulgaria, Greece, United Kingdom, Schleswig-Holstein in Germany, Ireland, Romania and New Jersey in the United States of America.

PokerStars is the flagship brand of Rational Group, which operates gaming-related businesses and brands, including PokerStars, Full Tilt and the European Poker Tour. In 2012, 2013 and 2014, Rational Group companies in the UK and Isle of Man was recognised as one of the top 25 best places to work by the Great Place to Work Institute's Best Workplaces – Large category ranking. Rational Group entities in Costa Rica and Dublin also achieved the same accolade in their respective local rankings in 2014. PokerStars is ultimately owned by Amaya Inc. (Nasdaq: AYA; TSX: AYA).