

World Series of Poker Main Event - The Final Table Debate.

For the first time in its 28 year history, the 2008 World Series of Poker Main Event final table will be held months after the final 9 are known. The event is scheduled to kick off on July 3rd and has room for up to 12,000 players who will battle it out for 11 days leading up to July 14th... with the final 9 playing over 2 days on November 9th and 10th.

"Our intent is to provide an even bigger stage for our players," said Jeffrey Pollack, Commissioner of the World Series of Poker. "Now fans and viewers will ask 'who will win' our coveted championship bracelet instead of 'who won.' The excitement and interest surrounding our final nine players will be unprecedented."

Since the news was announced by hosts of the event, Harrah's Entertainment, much has been documented by bloggers and journalists venting frustration at the change. But, is it really a bad thing for the game?

The major complaint many pro's have had regards this change is that it will allow those few lucky amateurs who draw their way to the final table a chance to get some real training in prior to the showdown. It also opens up all sorts of possibilities regards players being able to study the play of their opponents, something any poker player will tell you can give a huge advantage.

So, where are the advantages? Clearly this is something which has been done for the benefit of TV audiences. Last year official broadcaster ESPN ran a highly successful pay-per-view schedule of the WSOP. With 4 months of build up, it would only seem natural that even more people would be eager to pay to see the final 9 battle it out for the multi-million dollar prize. This kind of coverage can only be good for the game, with even more money pumped into guaranteed prize funds put up by broadcasters and advertisers alike.

Whilst the fact ESPN, official broadcaster of the event, has clearly had a major say in the decision shouldn't be overlooked, I think making a real spectacle of the final table is only good for the game. In recent years the event has brought much controversy, but this change for 2008 can maybe... just MAYBE bring back some of the old magic that once was the WSOP Main Event.

About the Author

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