

AUSSIE MILLIONS

POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

MEDIA RELEASE

2018 AUSSIE MILLIONS POKER CHAMPIONSHIP WORLD CLASS EVENT SMASHES RECORDS



Melbourne, Australia. Tuesday 27 February 2018. The 2018 Aussie Millions has officially finished and once again it smashed all expectations, drawing poker aficionados from around the world and breaking entrant records. The Main Event drew an all-time record 800 entrants and, with 7,746 tournament entries across the series, the Aussie Millions lived up to its name as the Southern Hemisphere's richest and most prestigious poker tournament.

Over AUD\$21 million in cash was awarded to winners and place getters during the course of the 26 championship events and the 2018 series hosted some of the world's biggest poker players including Fedor Holz, Mustapha Kanit, Sam Greenwood, Dietrich Fast, Felipe Ramos, Manig Loeser, Martin Jacobson, David Steicke, Allen Kessler, Jan Schwippert, Claas Segebrecht, Christain Christner, Matt Salsberg, Kenny Hallaert, Samantha Abernathy, Kristen Bicknell, Alex Foxen, Chance Kornuth, Gillian Epp, Jack Salter, Joe Hachem, along with past Aussie Millions Main Event winners Shurane 'Shaz' Vijayaram, Ari Engel, Manny Stavropoulos, Tyron Krost, and David Gorr.

Local Australian identities were also spotted on the tables including cricket hero Shane Warne, NRL star Billy Slater and AFL legend Adam Goodes.

Event #11: \$10,600 Aussie Millions 'Main Event'

The biggest story of them all is and will always be the Aussie Millions 'Main Event', which has been taking place at Crown since 1998. The buy-in in 1998 was only \$1,000, and 74 players entered the championship that year, with the winner, Alex Horowitz, taking home AUD\$25,900. Compare that to 2018 which saw a Main Event prize pool of AUD\$8,000,000. The Championship winner was slated to receive an impressive AUD\$1,800,000, making the 2018 Aussie Millions Main Event the largest of all time.

Toby Lewis (UK) was crowned the Main Event Champion. Along with his impressive first place haul, he received the custom made diamond-encrusted gold bracelet by ANTON Jewellery.

Lewis soars up his country's all-time money rankings with this win, and now has over US\$4,000,000 in lifetime earnings. A regular on the poker scene, his previous biggest score came back in 2010 when he won EPT Vilamoura. Since then, he has posted final table finishes at several EPT and WPT events, most recently placing fourth at PCA in 2016 for US\$267,340. However, this result eclipses all of them and stands as the biggest title of his poker career.

AUSSIE MILLIONS

POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

MEDIA RELEASE

"The last time I won a big tournament was seven and a half years ago," said Lewis after his win. "I've played a lot of poker in that time, with lots of fourth and fifth places over the years. So once I got a big stack in this one, it seemed like a great spot to go on and win!"

"Over the last few months I've been working on my game a lot harder than I ever have. Today I made sure my concentration was 100% no matter how tired I was, and it worked out."

"Melbourne is my favourite city in the world, and I haven't been in five years because of other commitments! I definitely should have come back sooner, because this is my favourite tournament in the world!"

Aussie Millions - High Roller Action

While the 'Main Event' attracted the biggest field since its inception, the Aussie Millions has also become a hotbed for some of the largest buy-in poker tournaments across the globe.

This year's Event 24 \$100,000 Challenge was no exception comprising of 19 entries, including Fedor Holz (GER), Manig Loeser (GER), Mustapha Kanit (ITA) and Jack Salter (UK).

However, they were no match for recreational player Michael Lim (MYS) who came into the day with a comfortable stack of 45 big blinds, and navigated the star-studded field to emerge with AUD\$931,000 in prize money and the coveted ANTON Jewellery championship ring.

Let's not forget Felix Stephenson of Norway. After finishing up play in the Poker Room went upstairs to the cash tables and scored himself the Caribbean Stud Jackpot of AUD\$1,056,535! He then went on to win Event 19 \$2,500 Pot Limit Omaha, scoring AUD\$81,900 and the ANTON Jewellery championship ring. This trip is certainly one to remember.

Huge Numbers and Huge Audiences

This year's record numbers would not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication from the Aussie Millions team who are vital in ensuring the tournament runs smoothly and on-par with any other tournament around the globe.

Tournament Director Joel Williams states that 'The Aussie Millions has a fantastic reputation for offering smooth and quality tournaments as well as a high variety of cash game activity, and this ensures our overseas players return every year. Smaller buy-in side events also create a successful tournament environment that keeps the players engaged and offers great opportunities, value and prizepools to players on varying budgets. 2018 saw us scale new heights and exceed all expectations so we can be confident of achieving year-on-year growth in 2019.'

This year's preliminary events topped all expectations with 16 of the 26 total events seeing big year-on-year increases. The 7,749 total entries into this year's tournaments was up almost 10% compared to 2017. The ever popular Event 1 drew a staggering 1538 entries and, along with the Deep Freeze and a range of 6 max and PLO Events, Aussie Millions continue to show increasing popularity at all price points and across all disciplines.

The growth was no surprise to the Aussie Millions team, or Williams who pinned the success onto the bulletproof planning of the Crown working group who started planning the 2018 championship on the 15th February 2017.

The team continually addresses player feedback, and work on making improvements which this year included new events being added to the schedule as well as adding new and exciting ways to qualify to the Aussie Millions 'Main Event'. Over 400 local satellite entrants to the Main Event emphasize the success of these strategies to give players more of what they want.

"The Aussie Millions team has great relationships with almost every single top poker player in the world, and conversations around the next tournament with these players start as early as May," Williams says. "Crown hosted "Warm-Up Weeks" and other Satellites from March 2017 which were highly successful

AUSSIE MILLIONS

POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

MEDIA RELEASE

and we will no doubt do that again in 2018 as we build towards the 2019 tournament," continued Williams. "We will extend and progress the publicity program and work towards generating as much awareness and excitement of the 2019 event within the poker community as possible."

In addition to the huge increase in players who set foot at Crown's Aussie Millions, the event was once again streamed live on Twitch.tv and hosted exclusively by poker superstars, Jason Somerville, Randy Lew & Kevin Martin.

The streaming team worked with Vim and Phantom to produce the 39.5 hours of live stream to a global audience of 850,000 unique viewers who watched over 20,700,000 minutes.

The stream is building year-on-year with average concurrent views at 10546, peaking at 15,016 concurrent views.

Whether it's the amazing number of Main Event entrants and the largest Main Event prize pool, or the world class employees that work year-round to put on an event that players around the world only dream of attending, the 2018 Aussie Millions was bigger and better than ever, and is here to stay.

The 2019 Aussie Millions Poker Championship will run from the Tuesday 15 January - Monday 4 February 2019 and as always, the action-packed schedule will include the official gold bracelet event, satellites and cash games, along with daily tournament entries running for 21 consecutive days.

- Ends -

Please see entire Aussie Millions image library [here](#). Image credit: Nguyen Tien at Creative Corp

For further media information, please contact:

Catherine Wilcox
Senior Communications Manager
Crown Resorts
T. +61 3 9292 8608
E. catherine.wilcox@crownresorts.com.au

For information on the 2019 tournament, please contact:

Hayley Breen
VIP Customer Liaison
Crown Resorts
E: Hayley.Breen@crownmelbourne.com.au