

AUSSIE MILLIONS POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

MEDIA RELEASE

MAIN EVENT FINAL TABLE – PLAYER PROFILES 2018 AUSSIE MILLIONS POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

Seat 1 – Espen Solaas (28, Norway) – Known as “Essi” to his friends, Espen Solaas, is a young Norwegian based in London whose live breakout came in the €880 Norwegian Championship Main Event in 2015. There, Solaas won just over \$100,000 and has since won about another \$180,000 live, supplementing his online earnings, where he plays pot-limit Omaha cash games and has been grinding since he was a 17-year-old. Solaas showcased his PLO skills at last year's Aussie Millions, where he won the A\$5,000 PLO event for A\$100,815. He'll try to grab a second, much bigger title here in 2018.

Seat 2 – Johan Schumacher (18, Belgium) – Schumacher might a relative neophyte to live poker – he's just 18, after all – with just \$8,761 in recorded cashes, but he said a different game is his specialty: Mario Kart. Don't challenge him on Bowser's Castle. Poker, he says, is something he only plays “after every moon eclipse” when taking breaks from dodging red shells. Jokes aside, the Belgian comes into the final table with the shortest stack but appears to be long on personality and certainly long on garish fashion, if his bright pink attire on Day 4 is any judge.

Seat 3 – Mike Del Vecchio (29, USA),– “Mikey D” announced his presence on the tournament scene in a big way last year, when he added his name to the WPT Champions Cup at WPT Rolling Thunder. He nearly grabbed an even more prestigious title less than two months ago, when he finished third at WPT Five Diamond for a career-best \$752,196. The Las Vegas-based pro made his first trip to Aussie Millions this year and has had a wild ride going from massive chip leader to shortest stack on Day 4 and now back to around average heading into the final table.

Seat 4 – Toby Lewis (28, UK) – At just 28, Lewis is the class of this final table in terms of live tournament earnings with over \$3.2 million in cashes. The British pro was grinding €300 tournaments in 2009 until a huge win at EPT Vilamoura in 2010 for \$594,568. Since then, he has posted final table finishes at several EPT and WPT events, most recently getting fourth at PCA in 2016 for \$267,340. He said after playing and constantly talking poker to learn the game, he isn't playing quite as much nowadays, but he made his first final table in Australia count after notching several smaller cashes at Crown Melbourne over the years.

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Seat 5 – Chul-Hyon Park (41, Australia) – A recreational player based here in Melbourne, “Charlie” Park works as a “tradie” – Aussie slang for a skilled worker – and learned the game playing with friends, and he said he still plays only casually. He has \$24,000 in cashes all from small tournaments under A\$400, so this Aussie Millions Main Event final table means “Super Soju” has already booked by far the biggest cash of his poker career. Put Crowded House on the karaoke if you want to get him going.

Seat 6 – Stefan Huber (31, Switzerland) – Huber is based in Zurich and said he learned poker through “friends and sunny beers.” Judging from the makeup of his loud, heavily-imbibing rail, some of those friends must have been German. Nowadays, Huber can be found “wherever life takes me,” sometimes playing poker to the tune of \$1.3 million in live cashes. A good chunk of that goes to the charity he co-founded, Raising for Effective Giving, which has raised more than \$3 million toward good causes worldwide.

Seat 7 – Ben Richardson (30, Australia) – An Aussie playing poker abroad for a living – he currently resides in Hungary – Richardson has over \$400,000 in cashes, much of it coming in his home country at Aussie Millions, which he called the “best in the world.” He has three previous final tables here, including a sixth-place finish in the A\$1,150 Opening Event a couple of weeks ago for A\$40,990. He's not a high-volume player, as “Oppositeland” said he only plays about twice a week. One thing he has going for him is support of the local crowd, as he had plenty of cheering fans gathered to compete with the German contingent as Day 4 drew to a close.

Seat	Player	Country	Chip Count
1	Espen Solaas	Norway	5,680,000
2	Johan Schumacher	Belgium	955,000
3	Mike Del Vecchio	USA	3,065,000
4	Toby Lewis	United Kingdom	5,835,000
5	Chul-Hyon Park	Australia	1,670,000
6	Stefan Huber	Switzerland	1,975,000
7	Ben Richardson	Australia	4,870,000

2018 Main Event payouts:

1 st place	\$1,800,000
2 nd place	\$1,100,000
3 rd place	\$645,000
4 th place	\$470,000
5 th place	\$370,000
6 th place	\$300,000
7 th place	\$235,000

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ABOUT AUSSIE MILLIONS POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

Hosted by Crown Melbourne, one of the world's leading integrated entertainment resorts, the Aussie Millions transforms Crown into a mecca of the poker world during the peak of the Australian Summer.

With a reputation that ranks it alongside the highly acclaimed World Series of Poker, the Aussie Millions is the marquee event on the Asian-Pacific poker calendar. Since its inception in 1998, the tournament has grown into a major stop on the international poker circuit for the world's greatest poker players

Crown Melbourne's Tournament Director, Joel Williams, said "Crown Melbourne's Aussie Millions continues to be seen as a 'must-attend' on the global poker tour among both recreational players and seasoned pros alike. With a schedule featuring 26 official championship events, 2018 looms as one of the biggest events yet".

There are few tournaments in the world that offer the kinds of prize pools that the Aussie Millions delivers each year, and in 2018 the schedule will comprise of 26 separate poker events with buy-ins ranging from AUD\$1,150 to AUD\$50,000. The comprehensive slate of the game's most popular variations will be on offer and a total of 26 coveted Aussie Millions ANTON Jewellery 'Championship Rings' will be awarded to each event winner.

The prize pools provide a substantial incentive to travel and, in addition, each winner will receive a 'Championship Ring' for their victory. While the entry fees may sit outside the budget of some players, everyone can qualify via the countless satellite tournaments held during the year and during the event itself, offering players the chance to win a place in the coveted Aussie Millions 'Main Event' for a fraction of the AUD\$10,600 entry fee.

Nearly 100 poker tables will be set up across the award-winning complex to accommodate the thousands of players from around the world who attend Asia-Pacific's largest poker event. In terms of prize money, the prestigious Aussie Millions 'Main Event' shares the limelight with some of Australia's other major events including the Melbourne Cup, Australian Open and the AFL Grand Final.