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The History Of Poker

By Adel Awwad

Poker is a card game with many theories about its history and many debates about its origins.

Poker may have been around for more than ten centuries in the form of other card games. It is believed that the word 'poker' was derived from an underworld slang word 'poke' – this was a term used for pickpockets. When card-sharks cheated somebody out of their money they boasted about having 'poked' that person. An 'r' was added to the term 'poke' so that the sharks could refer to what they were doing in front of their victims, who would be none the wiser!

While there seems to be no clear ancestor to the game, for the United States at least, Poker has a definite history. Poker began in New Orleans when the French settlers introduced poque in the 18th century. This was a card game which involved betting and bluffing and there are many game historians who believe that this is where poker originates. There have been many modifications to the game, including 'stud poker', the 'draw' and the 'straight' which became popular during the Civil War. Slowly 'poker', as the game became known, spread to other states via steamboats, wagons and trains.

Poker initially began with a deck of 20 cards, and eventually evolved into a deck of 32 cards. During the 1830s a 52 card deck became the norm. In 1875 the joker was introduced as a wild card. At the end of the Civil War poker reached the towns of the Old West. It wasn't long before they realized that easy money could be made from playing (or perhaps cheating at) poker. Legends were created involving the potent mixture of saloons, poker and guns. Brave gamblers in the old west towns of Dodge City and Deadwood could be found taking their chances with their backs to the walls and their guns at the ready.

By the end of the 19th century, gambling and poker had spread throughout both the United States and the world. American states and cities began to see an opportunity for raising money. They taxed the gambling dens to raise money for their communities.

Nowadays casinos have taken over from the saloons and the game is strictly regulated by gambling laws. It is played more than any other card game in the world and has even become a sporting event, offering very rich pickings for the serious player. Finally, there is no doubt that poker has a rich and interesting history.

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What Makes A "Good Poker Player"?

By Adel Awwad

The game of poker is arguably the most popular aspect of modern gambling. The intricate skill level and variety of hands and strategies entice even the most seasoned players to get involved in the game of poker.

There are many considerations as to what makes a good poker player, but the core concepts in the gambling realm are similar. The things that make a good poker player are usually the things that will assist you in the world of gambling as a whole.

The first thing that makes a poker player good is probably the most agreed upon consensus with those involved in gambling worldwide: quick and accurate decision making skills. A good poker player will be able to think quickly and apply the decisions they make at the proper time to succeed in the game of poker. Almost comparable to a quarterback on a football team who must possess good decision making skills, a good poker player is put in a similar situation when gambling. They have to think on their feet and quickly. This is the single more important aspect of succeeding at gambling and becoming a good poker player.

Another aspect of a good poker player is the ability to change gears at a moments notice. Poker, like gambling as a whole, is always changing and when playing a poker game, things can change quickly and the ability to adapt with those changes is what makes a poker player good.

Yet, another consideration of gambling, especially in particular poker, is knowing the game - really, really knowing the game. A good poker player or gambling enthusiast in general, will know all of the ins and outs of the game. They will know poker history, popular poker players, online poker rooms, different hands, strategies and more. A good poker player will study the game of poker like a craft and cultivate it accordingly. The good poker players are the people who have a genuine love of the game and have an acute desire to continue to learn developing trends in poker and in gambling as a whole.

Finally, a good poker player will possess the most amount of confidence a human being can have. Gambling requires not only brains, but confidence and poker is no exception. Some of the world's best poker players win because they are confident in their decisions and don't second guess themselves. Confidence will make a good poker player as surely as any of the other traits mentioned above - but the combination of all of the skills makes a good poker player and a great student of gambling as well.

Adel Awwad is the webmaster of Online Casinos – Copyright © 2005

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