

paddypowerpoker

IT'S THE REAL DEAL!

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A brief history of poker

The origins of poker are shrouded in mystery. It is generally thought to be an amalgam of card games such as As Nas (Persian), Pochen (German), and Poque (French) brought to the melting pot of New Orleans, USA in the early 19th Century.

The 'international rules' game of poker was spread from New Orleans up the mighty Mississippi river and into the 'wild west' by both pioneers and outlaws.

The game boomed during the California Gold Rush of the 1850s and the American Civil War of the early 1860s. Variations such as stud and draw appeared.

Over the next 50 years further styles were developed to enhance the elements of skill or chance including wild card, lowball, and split-pot poker.

The modern game

Texas Hold 'Em is now the most popular form of poker in the world. Legend has it the first games were held in Robstown, Texas, in the early 1900s.

Texas Hold 'Em is a 'community' card game. Players are dealt 'hole cards' specific to them and must attempt to make the best hand from 'community cards' in the middle of the table which all players can use.

Roll of champions

In 1970, Benny Binion wanted to capitalise on poker's high thrill potential and held the first World Series of Poker (WSOP). The winner – voted for by his poker peers - was Johnny Moss.

The following year, the players played until one of them had all the chips. That man was, again, Johnny Moss.

Each subsequent year the tournament grew in size and a modern roll of champions and legends were born – ‘Amarillo’ Slim Preston, Puggy Pearson, Sailor Roberts, Doyle Brunson, Stu Ungar, Johnny Chan and Phil Helmuth and Irishman Noel Furlong.

In 1999 it was won by Irish entrepreneur Noel Furlong and in the 21st Century poker's popularity exploded with the help of television and the internet.

Back to the future

In 2005 the WSOP became probably the largest, richest, competitive event in the world with 5,619 entrants. Australian Joseph Hachem won the \$10,000 No-Limit Hold' 'Em main event, pocketing \$7.5 million.

Irishman Andrew Black came fifth, the \$1.75 million catapulting him to the top of the all-time earning list of Irish players.

This fascinating game continues to evolve, moving from strength to strength and capturing the imagination of all ages, sexes and skill levels around the world.