

Victorian Poker Champs **Form Guide**

THE MELBOURNE POKER CHAMPIONSHIPS MAY BE OVER AND MANY MAY HAVE VENTURED TO LAS VEGAS FOR THE WORLD SERIES OF POKER, BUT FOR THE LOCAL TOURNEY JUNKIE, THE WAIT TO SEE CARDS FLY THROUGH THE AIR, CHIP STACKS RUFFLED AND THE TOURNAMENT CLOCKWIND DOWN IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER.

With the buzz of tournament poker heading back to the Crown Poker Room from the 1st to the 16th of August for the Victorian Poker Championships, every poker professional and amateur alike will be licking their lips at the chance to hit the felt again after a small tournament hiatus.

However before you start dreaming of how to spend your tournament winnings, make sure to keep an eye out on the following players – as they are the ones that will prevent those dreams becoming a reality!



Tony Hachem

It's near impossible to catch Tony Hachem without a smile on his face or a story to tell, and for this Melbournian, results have been flowing freely since he began playing tournaments around the world. The early leader in the ANZPT Points Rankings following two consecutive Main Event cashes, Hachem has multiple WSOP cashes as well as results logged in Adelaide, Sydney, New Zealand and many at his local Crown Casino. With a limited WSOP schedule that only includes the 6-max and Main Event, Hachem will be fresh and ready to blast away at the Victorian Poker Championships to cement his place as one of Australia's top tournament players.

Daniel Neilson

Regarded as predominately an online cash game player, Daniel Neilson is definitely reversing that thought since the start of the year – whether or not that is his intent! Following a runner-up performance in Event 2 of the 2009 Aussie Millions, Neilson cashed three times at the recent ANZPT in Sydney, including two final tables and his first title in the High Rollers Challenge for



over \$100,000. With tournaments now becoming so lucrative for this Sydney-sider, it will be no surprise to see Neilson tearing up the tables once again as he returns to Melbourne.



Jai Kemp

Mostly known for his 2007 APPT Grand Final fifth placing for over \$150,000, Jai Kemp has been fairly quiet apart from an Aussie Millions final table. However at the recent ANZPT in Sydney, Kemp hit some form taking down the Six-Handed tourney before leading the charge in the Main Event for most of day one and two before eventually falling short of the money. With some new found confidence Kemp will be tackling the Victorian Poker Championships with gusto as he looks to further his poker CV.

Lisa Walsh

Lisa Walsh is better known for sitting behind a mountain of chips in Crown's cash games, but recently her tournament success has grabbed the attention of the poker community. Her fearlessly aggressive game saw her finish the runner-up in the ANZPT Sydney Main Event where she pocketed \$162,690 for one of the biggest scores by a female player in this country. Walsh is a tough competitor and one to watch out for this August.



Tino Lechich

Last year's Victorian Poker Championships saw Tino Lechich rake in more than \$225,000 in prize money, however he didn't capture a single title. Instead, he finished second in three tournaments including a runner-up finish in the Main Event. Unfazed by a somewhat strange few days of poker, Lechich pushed on collecting a PokerNews Cup Main Event cash as well as a 10th placing in the 2009 Aussie Millions Main Event. With another trip to the WSOP penned in, Lechich will be looking to run into some hot form before returning to Melbourne to rectify his successful but non-rewarding 2008 campaign.

Steve Leonard

Steve Leonard prefers to stick to his strength of online poker under the moniker of 'stevoL', however he is known for his forays into the live arena with three Aussie Millions cashes to his name. Most recently Leonard took down the online Triple Crown after capturing three huge tournament wins in the same day which helped him soar into third place on the online poker rankings. With another expected visit to the WSOP, Leonard will return home with ambitions to follow in the footsteps of his fellow online counterparts who have begun to notch up their fair share of live results.



Harris Pavlou

When he isn't crushing the nosebleed online cash games, Harris Pavlou sometimes dabbles in the tournament world – and following his recent results, he should probably look into it more! After two Victorian Poker Championships cashes last year that included two final tables along with a sixth placing in the Main Event, Pavlou followed it with a PokerNews Cup Main Event cash before logging a \$112,000 second placing in a recent SCOOP event. Hailing from Queensland, Pavlou will be venturing back down to the Crown Poker Room to recreate the form that saw him become one of the most feared Australian poker players.



Paren Arzoomanian

The 25-year old cash game specialist switched gears recently at the ANZPT Sydney where he took down the main event for just under \$250,000 in prize money. With only a few results to his name, Paren "Puzz" Arzoomanian will be looking to use the Victorian Poker Championships as a springboard to grow his poker career that has the potential to soar in leaps and bounds if things fall in Arzoomanian's favour.

Monica Nguyen

This poker darling hails from Sydney and has hit a rich vein of form that saw her capture the Joe Hachem Deep Stack Series High Stakes Hold'em event for over \$60,000 before backing it up with a 43rd placing in the ANZPT Sydney Main Event. With another local championships around the corner, Nguyen will be sure to return to Melbourne where she first tasted success in an effort to be crowned the true poker queen!



Tony Dunst

Tony Dunst is not only popular amongst players, but is also respected for his play on both the virtual felt as "Bond18" and around the world on the tournament circuit. Coming off four WSOP cashes last year, Dunst took down a Bellagio Cup event for close to US\$200,000, followed by results in Macau and Melbourne before logging a second place result at the ANZPT Adelaide Main Event. With another heavy WSOP schedule on the cards, Dunst will be back home down under for the Victorian Poker Championships and will be expected to perform at the level that has seen him excel in the poker community over recent years.

Eric Assadourian

Definitely a player that livens up any tournament floor with his friendly personality, Sydney-sider Eric Assadourian is always a feature at the local championships.



Cashing in the recent ANZPT Sydney and APPT Grand Final Main Events along with falling just shy of an Aussie Millions final table, Assadourian will definitely be looking to take the Victorian Poker Championships by storm as he looks to recapture the form that saw him as Australia's number one tournament player.



Jay Kinkade

Jay "SEABEAST" Kinkade launched himself into the upper-echelon of Australian poker players when he captured last year's Victorian Poker Championships for over \$200,000 in prize money for his first title. With an online CV that ranks him just outside the world's top ten, Kinkade will be looking to use the Vic Champs as another stop on the circuit following a big stint in Las Vegas for the WSOP. Recently relocating to Melbourne, the 27-year old and previous PokerNetwork Young Gun and Player of the Month will be a big obstacle for any player that is dreaming of being the 2009 Champion!

There is no doubt that one, if not all, of these players will feature prominently in the upcoming Victorian Poker Championships, and to follow their progress make sure to head down to the Crown Poker Room or join the PokerNetwork.com Live Reporting Team as they bring exclusive coverage of every flop, turn and river.