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European Poker Grand Final Heats Up

Cyril Bensoussan has the chip lead in the 2008 European Poker Grand Final (EPT) after Day 1B.

/24-7PressRelease/ - COSTA RICA, April 20, 2008 - The 2008 (EPT) made poker news today as it is now the largest poker tournament every to take place in Europe. Day 1A brought out 392 players while Day 1B brought out an additional 450 entrants at the Monte Carle Bay Hotel and Casino Resort.

Plenty of big name poker players turned out at the tournament, including Chris Moneymaker, the 2003 World Series of Poker winner and last year's Grand Final winner, Gavin Griffin. A Cinderella story like Moneymaker, Griffin won the \$2.4 million dollar title last year after qualifying in a \$240 online satellite tournament sponsored by Pokerstars.com.

However, having a big name didn't equal survival as Moneymaker and Griffin both found themselves with plenty of time to spare as they were out by the end of Day 1B. But, not all the well-known players were out after day one. Surviving Day 1B was 2005 World Series of Poker no-limit Texas Hold'em main event winner Joe Hachem, The Great Dane Gus Hansen, and three-time World Series of Poker bracelet winner Daniel Negreanu.

Marc Karan had hoped to make the fourth time a charm, having made it to the final table of the EPT three times before, but it was not to be. He went lost out big in a pot of eights vs. Kings against World Poker Tour winner Markus Lehmann and never recovered.

Day 1B found more players on the rail including Chad Batista, Nenad Medic, Max Pescatori, Alex Kamberis, Thor Hansen, William Thorsson, Nick Schulman, and Ram Vaswani. Day 1B was also a day in which the chip lead changed hands several times. The lead was held at times by Chad Brown, James "POKERPRO" Campbell, and Jordan "Octavian" Rich, but at the end of the day, the unofficial chip count went to Cyril Bensoussan with 135,000 chips. He was also the first player to break 100,000 chips in the tournament. Rich was eventually sent to the rail in the closing minutes of the day while Campbell held on with a count of 62,000 chips. The rest of the Day 1B top ten found Raul Paez in second with 82,000, Uffe Holn in third with 79,000, Campbell in fourth with 62,000, Danny Ryan in fifth with 55,000, Surinder Sunar in sixth with 42,700, Dario Alioto in seventh with 42,000, Marc Goodwin in eighth with 41,000, Joe Hachem in ninth with 40,400, and the always dangerous Negreanu in tenth with 35,200. Overall, Stephen Kjaerstad just trails Bensoussan with 111,200 chips.

Two hundred and twenty five players remain and tomorrow, the survivor's from Day 1A and Day 1B will meet in the same room. The poker buzz is that the payout structure of this big money tournament should be known by early in the morning. The Internet poker bloggers are sure to be talking about this ETP for a while.

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