



Press Release Contact Information:

Bob Garcia
Poker Road
Marketing
Voice: 1.800.258.0716
E-Mail: [Email us Here](mailto:Bob.Garcia@PokerRoad.com)
Website: [Visit Our Website](http://www.pokerroad.com)

The National Heads-Up Poker Championship is Back!

NBC hosts one of the best poker on TV championships for six Sundays straight.

/24-7PressRelease/ - COSTA RICA, April 20, 2008 - The fourth season of NBC's National Head-s Up Poker Championship is complete and this year, many big name professional players from the poker world and well known celebrities have turned out for the tournament. The 64 player heads-up championship was held over three days (February 29 - March 2) at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada. The tournament began airing this past Sunday and will air the next five Sundays at noon EST on NBC. The show is presented by Vonage and it features a \$1.5 million dollar prize. In addition, the winner gets bragging rights as poker's best one-on-one player.

This year the field was filled with legends and champions. Playing this year were two legendary poker players - "The Texas Dolly" Doyle Brunson and Johnny Chan - owners of 10 World Series of Poker bracelets each, second only behind Phil "The Poker Brat" Hellmuth, who also played at the National Head's Up Poker Championship. Despite what is sure to be a full poker event calendar, also attending this year was Daniel "Kid Poker" Negreanu (himself the owner of three World Series of Poker bracelets and two World Poker Tour Championship titles).

Also at this year's tournament was the 2006 National Heads-Up Poker Championship winner Chris "Jesus" Ferguson and the 2007 champion Paul Wasicka. Chris MoneyMaker, one of the best poker stories of 2003, will also appear in the televised event.

In addition to big names in poker, there are also many celebrity poker players at this year's championship. Jason Alexander from television's "Seinfeld," Academy Award nominated actor Don Cheadle, actress Shannon Elizabeth (who took out Jeff Madsen, Barry Greenstein, and Humberto Brenes in the 2007 championship), Academy Award nominated actress Jennifer Tilly (who won a bracelet in the World Series of Poker in 2005), and Cy Young Award Winner and World Series MVP Orel Hershisier were also playing.

First round upsets shown on last Sunday's episode include Paul Wasicka losing to Freddy Deeb, Phil Hellmuth going all in with pocket aces and losing to online player Tom Dawn, and Shannon Elizabeth losing to Andy Bloch. Also eliminated in the first round were Daniel Negreanu, Howard Lederer, and last year's runner up, Chad Brown. Orel Hershisier was one of the most talked about players at this year's championship, making it to the quarterfinals by bulldogging and outplaying his opponents, which included Ted Forrest, Allen Cunningham, and Freddy Deeb. His run was eventually stopped by Andy Bloch, who came in second behind the eventual winner of this year's championship, Chris Ferguson.

Jon Miller, the Executive Vice President of NBC Sports, said, "This has truly been the best year ever for the National Heads-Up Poker Championship. The players were better than ever, Orel Hershisier provided a great deal of excitement and buzz, we had a superb final four players and a genuinely exciting finale."

Tune in next Sunday to see the Shannon Elizabeth vs. Andy Bloch match, Ted Forrest vs. Orel Hershisier, Jennifer Tilly vs. Clonie Gowen, and Daniel Negreanu vs. Mike "The Grinder" Mizrachi. The championship match will air on Sunday, May 18th Noon - 3pm EST. It is sure to be one exciting game of poker of tv!

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