

Poker Pro's Corner: Players on the European circuit you don't want to face

by *Gavin_Griffin*

Q: Who are the toughest players on the European circuit?

- Andreas, Stockholm

GAVIN GRIFFIN - In 2004, Gavin Griffin was the youngest player to win a World Series of Poker bracelet . A European Poker Tour Grand Final Champion, he made close to 2 million euros in Monte Carlo play. CNS Photo.

A: The top of the list has to include Roland de Wolfe and Andy Black. They seem to be everywhere in the EPT. Other people I didn't really enjoy playing with were Ram Vaswani, Johnny Lodden and Noah Boeken. And not because I don't enjoy their company, either.

Q: I'm thinking of playing the WSOP Main Event, with thousands of players. How should my strategy change from playing an EPT event with 400-700 opponents?

- Wondering in Walsall

A: There really shouldn't be any adjustment based on the number of players, especially in the early stages. You may be able to pound the bubble more in the WSOP Main Event because of the money pressure on a lot of the World Series players. Smaller fields seem to have less people hanging on for the money than that huge WSOP field.

Q: If I put a beat on Phil Hellmuth and he starts ranting at me, should I confront him or just keep my mouth shut?

- Punch First, Hull

A: I would say just keep your mouth shut and let him go. I've been around a while and I can shoot back at Phil a little bit, jab him back without getting too emotionally involved. A lot of people would let his talking get to them and if that happens, if he's in your head, he's going to beat you eventually.

Q: If you see A-Q in a tournament, are you happy or worried?

- Timid Tim, West End

A: Depends on the action. I'm usually happy to see any sort of hand that I can open the pot with a raise. Now, if it's raised and reraised in front of me, or if I get played back at, I don't like it as much.

Q: Why do so many people say pocket aces is a terrifying hand?

- Sam T., Manchester

A: I think a lot of people say that because of the potential to lose a big pot with them on a non-threatening board. They are quite often hard to get away from and you find yourself in a bad situation more often than you would like.

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European Poker Tour Grand Final Champion Gavin Griffin is only 25 years old, but is no stranger to the limelight - in 2004 he became the youngest player to win a WSOP bracelet when he took down the \$3,000 pot-limit hold 'em event. He won \$270,000 for that feat, which pales in comparison to the almost 2 million euros he hauled away from Monte Carlo.

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