

The following is a post that was placed on a poker forum regarding one player's experiences with on line poker. This poster does not work for nor is associated with Gioia Systems or RealDealPoker.com in any way, shape or form. Stephen was an active poster on this poker forum; he introduced himself, (as you can see in his opening paragraph) and posted his views. His views are well thought out and supported with either logic or supporting data.

Soon after this post he was banned from the forum and is no longer allowed to post his views of online poker on that forum. We did some investigating and found that there were at least four other poster accounts that were banned from this poker forum.

Coincidentally, all of these posters had posted positive viewpoints on the RealDealPoker.com system and process.

The forum has been contacted and as of the posting date of this document no response to inquiries has been received.

Stephen

Poker enthusiast

Let me start off by introducing myself. I'm not a professional poker player, nor have I won a WSOP bracelet (yet.) I've been playing poker for about 6 years now starting with regular home games to spending hours at the tables in Montreal and Atlantic City. I'm a consistent winner in both. I also own a local business in NJ and will make a couple comparisons in this post.

I came across online poker about three years ago and didn't make my first deposit until about two years ago, when I really started to understand the game. I won't make any references to a particular site but I have played on the top 5 most popular sites. Getting right into my first topic:

◆ FIRST DEPOSIT "LUCK"

My first deposit was a test. Just 50\$ to see what the online poker hype was about. To my surprise, I got off to a real hot start (not too surprising, because I consistently win in live play). In my first day, I ran up my winnings to about 175\$, not bad for 5 hours work. I walked away from the computer with dollar signs floating around my head thinking about all the money I could make from this "*internet poker*"....I think you can tell what's coming next. I blew that 175\$ in a matter of 3 days. I couldn't steal a pot, couldn't get a hand to hold up, couldn't do ANYTHING without getting crushed. This could easily be considered bad luck, as I've experienced cold days many times in live poker - but is it?

In any business, new clients are most important. You want to do whatever you can to keep them satisfied/entertained to make sure they come back. First impression is everything.

I experienced this "coincidence" on 3 out of 5 of the sites I have deposited onto. After doing some research through Google I found this boost of luck after a player's first deposit was not uncommon on multiple sites. I have also used sharkscope on hundreds of players and have seen a large majority of them showed profit in the beginning. This cannot be a coincidence. And although there is no evidence except "coincidental" graphs and word-of-mouth between players that tell of a player having "beginners luck", it does prove one thing. If there is any possibility that a site can control a new players "luck" - then it definitely can be controlled throughout the duration of their "online poker career".

Now we have a subject of this post (if you missed the title). **Internet poker is rigged.** These four words, if typed into Google, will bring up 43,100 articles, blog posts, forum posts, etc. of people debating the issue. The subject has obviously gained popularity in the past couple of years, and for an obvious reason. I have been through thousands of these pages and have come to my conclusion long ago. The reason I picked this forum to make

this post is because it is well-known and there are many players who use it.

Now, back to my "internet poker career"

Although I lost my first deposit and all my winnings in days, I did not think much of it and quickly deposited 50\$ again. Skipping ahead - 4 months later.

I had my ups and downs. I was down about 1000\$ and ready to take a month off from poker. I then made a big deposit of 600\$ on a Sunday and ran into an *incredible* streak of luck. In a week, I managed to win 2000\$ and cashed out my initial 600\$ on Saturday morning. After going out for the afternoon, Saturday night I decided to go back to the tables.

Which brings me to my next topic.

◆ **THE CASH OUT CURSE**

Saturday night I managed to lose 300\$ from bad beats and suck-outs. Once again, I could not steal a single pot because my opponents were catching cards every hand. The next week followed the same streak of bad luck and I was now down to my last 350\$. How was it that I could do so well then run into this bad streak of luck right after I had cashed out my winnings?

After looking at more articles and posts written by other players online, I found this also was not uncommon and that many other players were experiencing the exact same thing. Another "coincidence" I guess.

From first glance without much knowledge of the whole "rigged" idea, it's easy to judge these as just "coincidences".

But the fact that so many other players experience the **exact** same thing leads me to use my main power of knowledge.... Common sense.

Let's take a look at the 2 biggest arguments debaters use as to why online poker cannot be rigged:

♣ **They make BILLIONS, why risk it?**

This is the most common argument. The companies already make billions of dollars, why risk it to make a few extra dollars?

First off, you need to understand something. This is a business. If there is a chance to increase profits and get away undetected, they WILL do it. Most of the owners of these companies have been convicted of fraudulent activity in the past (not talking Absolute or UB scandal.) These companies are greedy and money-hungry and if you haven't learned from ENRON, WORLD COM, and WALL STREET then you are ignorant.

Second off, we are not talking a "few extra dollars". We are talking a majority of their income. If bad players get discouraged, they won't deposit anymore.

Here is the goal of the online poker industry: To keep new players coming in rapidly and to make sure the existing players keep depositing. How do you assure this?

You create leverage. We will get into this more later in the post.

♣ **More hands seen online**

This statement is 100% true. In these times, an internet poker by the age of 21 may have played more hands online than Doyle Brunson has ever seen in his life. It is also statistically true that the since you see more hands online, you will see more bad beats. However, the argument here is not about the amount of bad beats you see online compared to live play, it's about the *timing of the beats* in relation to the action that has occurred in the last few hands or the history of the players account.

One good example I notice when playing cash tables online is how the money is dispersed throughout the table. Commonly, in live play, a player on a "hot-streak" will sit at the table with more than 8X the max buy-in and able to stay at the table for hours consistently winning and able to walk away with his winnings. I've had many experiences where I had bought in the maximum on 1/2 in Montreal (\$200) and was able to build it up to \$2000 and walk away clean. This is very common in live play, which is the definition of a "hot-streak". Online, however, is completely different. It is inevitable a player who is on a "hot-streak" will soon see a hand known as a "cooler" that will slash his winnings in half and send them throughout the table. It's almost like a cycle until the next person goes bust and re-buys. Then the cycle continues.

♣Variance

Once again, I do not argue the fact of variance in online poker. I'm sure if you were to get the statistics on the amount AA wins it would probably be on point (although I haven't tried to get such info)... It's the *timing* of these hands as to when they come up that makes the argument. Which is why we see good hands (QQ, KK, AA) come up in crucial situations (on the bubble, when your short stacked, after you've won a big pot, etc.) and why they lose when you need them the most.

Which brings me to my next topic.

THE SECOND PART

♣Professional Players play online poker

Not the biggest argument out of all of them, but another very popular one. Most people are brought to the online poker world from logo's they see on TV worn by Phil Ivey, Mike Matusow (who actually believes internet poker is rigged), Phil Hellmuth, and other great names. When on these poker sites, you can even play along with some of them. People use this fact as a justification that internet poker cannot be a faulty business practice because of these names but that simply does not hold any water. First off, the average professional is paid by the site every time they play in a game (avg. 35\$/hr). Second off, being sponsored by an industry as large as this is definitely rewarding. These sites will sponsor parties in extravagant locations, fly their professionals around the world in private jets, and in most cases share a part of the general revenue.

♣How come some players win?

Most of this part is just my theory, agree with it or not. I believe it's the same reason that most players lose. Because it is a controlled environment. SOMEONE has to profit from these sites, otherwise it would be easy to uncover the fact they are not legit. Just like a casino hands out a JACKPOT, they are following a payout percentage.

Example: When I made my first deposit, I could steal pots easily because my opponents were not catching good cards when I was with them in the hand. When I did have good cards they held up just about every time. Can this be considered a hot-streak? Of course. But anyone of any skill level can win a hand at this rate because most of the hands I was getting were unbeatable.

Now, considering this IS a controlled environment, how hard would it be to insure the fact certain players continue this streak at certain points during their career?

This all goes back to my initial theory - that the software is **rigged**.

♦THE SOFTWARE

Now I have no education in software development but from what I have read and heard (personally) from people who study this field, it's **very** easy to develop software that can be manipulated based on certain factors.

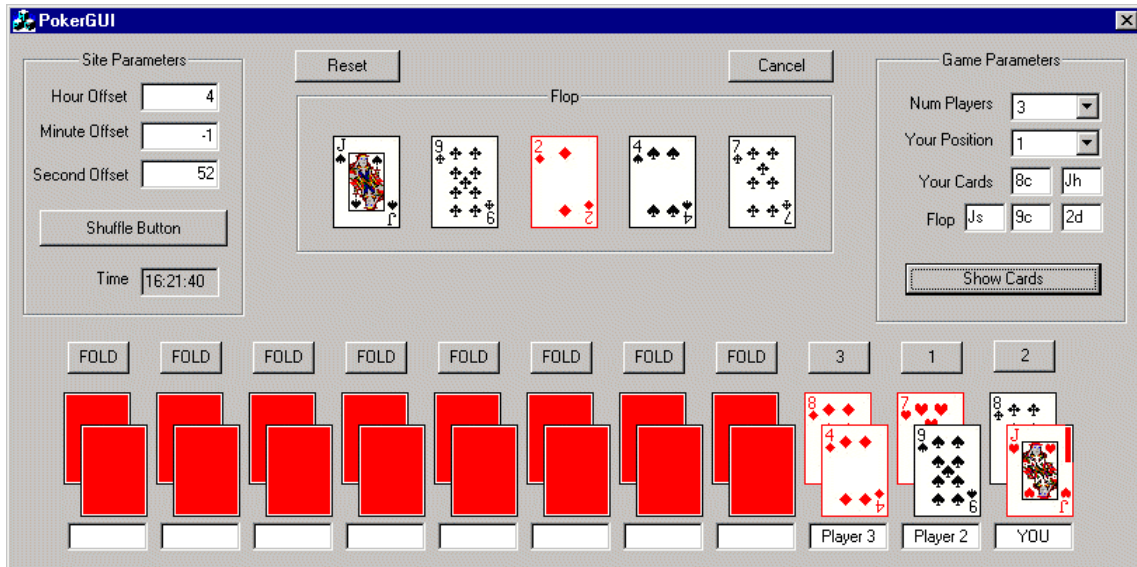
A Random Number Generator (**RNG**) is a "physical device designed to generate a sequence of numbers that lack any form of pattern" (i.e. appear random). In casino's, the RNG is programmed to give out a certain payout percentage. Which means the entire idea of a slot machine can be compared to a scratch-off ticket. This payout percentage is programmed at the manufacturer of the RNG (it is a physical device not just an imaginary being).

1, September 1999

The Software security group at Reliable Software Inc. announced the discovery of a major security flaw in Internet Gambling software. The software in question was created by ASF Software Inc., who at the time, were the largest distributors of Online Texas Hold'em games. After testing the software in a lab, the security group were able to predict what card's were to appear, what card each player was holding in their hand, and who would win. "The shuffle algorithm was **not** random".

This screen shot is an example during an actual real-money game:





⚠ This image has been resized. Click this bar to view the full image. The original image is sized 640x466 and weights 116KB.



An attacker could easily use this exploit to milk innocent players of actual money without ever being caught. This is a prime example of a controlled environment with easily recognizable patterns.

(Although the patterns in today's online games are not as easily recognizable to many, it should be that way... After all, 10 years of technology is a big difference)

30, September 2008

"Russ Hamilton, the WSOP Main Event champion in 1994, has been implicated as the main suspect in the ongoing super user investigation. Hamilton, *who was known to have run the affiliate program for the site* when it first broke into the industry many years ago, has been named along with several others as being one of the main figures behind a scandal that involved stealing millions of dollars from high stakes players through sophisticated cheating methods involving the seeing of hole cards."

This is an example of cheating. Although it does not prove that the software itself is cheating, it does prove that a trusted affiliate (already wealthy) would go as far as cheating the program to increase profits. Greed.

21, December 2008

"Early Saturday morning, hand number 1162170993 was dealt on a well-known online poker room. It featured Phil Hellmuth squaring off against another prominent player. However, at the end of the betting, Hellmuth was awarded the pot despite holding the worst hand. Ultimate Bet officials acknowledged the incident and are investigating."

<http://www.pokernewsdaily.com/phil-h...imate-bet-853/>

I guess this could be brushed off as another "coincidence" to some. But if this does not make you a little skeptical about what is actually happening "behind-the-scenes", what will?

So how would you "rig" a program to make it more profitable?

You create **leverage** in the play-field.

Thank you for all the good feedback I received in my inbox from posters on this forum who feel the same way as I do.

PART THREE

◆ TIMING

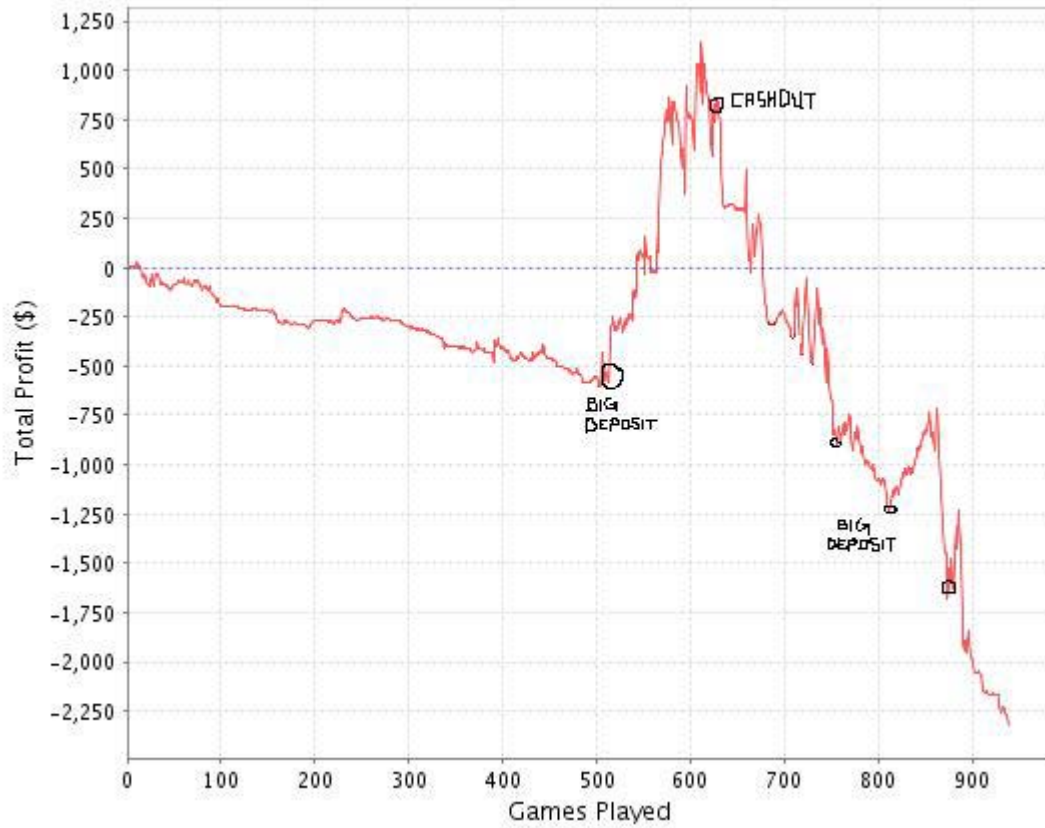
There are two parts to this meaning and its relevance to the topics.

The first part relates to the timing of "The Cash Out Curse" and "First Deposit Luck". I'd also like to refer back to my first post. From my own experiences, it was not only the first time a player deposited that they saw such luck, it was also after they made a substantial deposit. In my case, it was 600\$ that made my "luck" change after continuously making small 50\$ and 100\$ deposits.

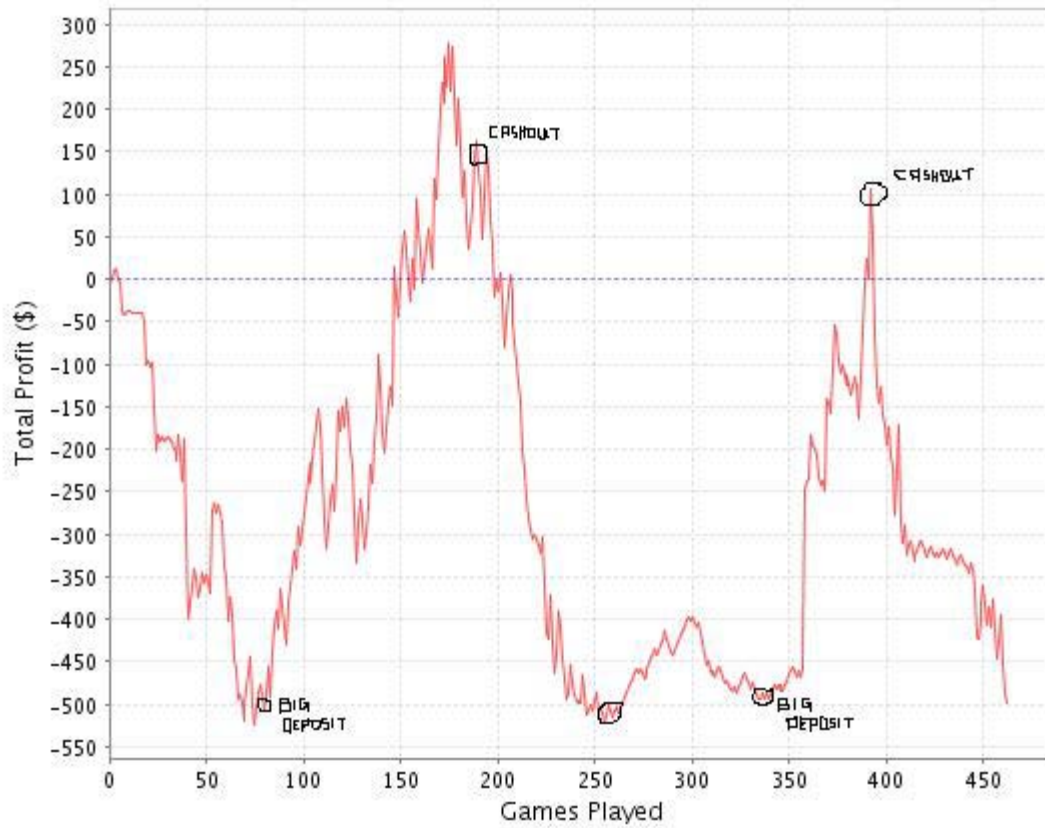
These two graphs shown below are taken from sharkscope.com. These are graphs from both my accounts on the two biggest poker sites in the world.

I'd like to add- I am mainly a cash game player. When I first started at these sites, it was pretty much all I would play. That is the reason you cannot see much of my initial boost after my first deposit (these graphs are of sit and go's/multi-table tournaments only).

Site #1



Site #2



The two graphs have not been altered in any way or form besides the attempts of circles and the sketchy letters that I added (sorry). At the time, I was unemployed so I pretty much playing all day long. As you can see, there is a clear and distinct increase of profits after making large deposits and a decrease after making a withdrawal. I'd also like to add that my cash outs were relatively small compared to what I left in my account.

The second part relates to leverage and the timing of bad beats and suck-outs. As I said earlier in my topic regarding variance, I am not disagreeing on the fact that the numbers (percentages) may be correct. (Although it does not seem this way, it's irrelevant to my point. Bad beats are a part of poker, this is no secret.)

With that said, what I am implying is that these hands are "timed" occurrences to manipulate the play-field; insuring a player does not reach a certain amount of profit and giving "bad" players a chance at winning some pots and enjoying the entertainment. After all... Internet poker is very entertaining.

Just like Poker Trackers mark each player according to the amount of flops they see, their betting patterns in certain situations, etc. It would be EASY for the software program used by these sites to do exactly the same thing and create these "ACTION HANDS" in certain situations.

An example:

You can do your own analysis of the theory of leverage and timing. Take a look at the cash tables on internet poker sites. See how many players you can find that have more than three or four times their initial buy-in... You won't find many, if any. What you will find is that the money is distributed amongst the table and everyone is sharing a piece. Eventually, players start to go bust and start to re-buy, while the cycle continues. But this is the point.

◆ ACTION HANDS

In comparison with live play, there is no doubt in my mind that there is more action in online play. This could definitely be attributed to steadfast players clicking the "call" button and seeing more flops, turns, and rivers - but I believe there is some type of order in which these cards are dealt that stimulates this effect. And not only the effect, but the result.

Skipping back a few chapters to the business aspect of this agenda.

The agenda of the online poker websites are no secret, and anyone with the slightest reality in business knowledge can tell you. They want to make as much money as possible - as does every business. The main source of income for these sites are based on the rake they draw from each cash table. The more people who pay to see these flops, turns, and rivers, the more rake. With this said - how can you bring more people in to the hands to maximize rake (profits)? You lure them. Like catching a fish (no pun intended).

Here is an example of a hand I've seen online that can be considered an "Action Hand"

I'm sitting at a cash table and my roll is nearly tripled after my set cracked player 2's two-pair. I haven't seen good cards in a while then out of nowhere, a pair of aces (A♣A♥)

"magically" shows up. I make a decent raise pre-flop and get two callers. Player 1 (decent amount of chips, won a few big pots) has (8♣8♦)

and Player 2 (shortstack and a weak player) has (10♥J♥).

The flop comes: 8♥9♣A♦

I make a raise and both players call.

Turn comes K♥

Being that I have the best possible hand so far, I move the short stack all-in and he calls with his draws. Player 3 also moves all-in and I call.

River comes 4♥

Player 2, the one who has lost a lot of hands recently, takes down the pot. Player 3 and I both recently won large pots, and were "lured" into the hand thinking we had the better hand. Not only did this hand bring in a lot of rake, but it also continued the cycle of dividing the money amongst the players.

The point of this example is that these are common hands in online poker that appear **way too often** in accordance with a player's position at the table, or their account history. They are used to lure players to invest money into a pot or to chase cards. Who wins? The house. Of course.

◆ THE HOUSE ALWAYS WINS

If you have come this far into reading my thread, then you should obviously be aware of the fact it IS possible for online poker sites to "rig" the dealing in order to maximize profits. And that if they have the chance to do it, they will. Proving that it is actually occurring, in 2009, quite frankly is hard and nearly impossible.

The same can be said for slot and video poker machines in a majority of the most well-known casino's in the world (who use the same RNG). But after using them first-hand for a long enough time, players were keen to develop other "theories".

Without any patterns that *can* be analyzed or given a statistical base, it's hard to prove such a theory. This is what makes "rigging" a poker website so profitable and long-lasting - the ability to go undetected by machines. With this in mind, it's easy to badmouth the thousands of people who have used their common sense and judgment to determine the truth about these greedy, corporate companies. But these actions are understandable. It's hard to notice the truth when it's clouded by deceit.

One point many people use in defense of the RNG is the validation from the

◆ KAHNAWAKE GAMING COMMISSION.

The Kahnawake gaming commission is based in Quebec, Canada in an Indian reservation and licenses most of the top gambling sites on the internet.

For anyone who does not know, Absolute Poker has its servers located within the Mohawk Kahnawake territory. AP was caught in a cheating scandal in which hackers were able to read opponents' hole cards and gain an insurmountable advantage. The matter was initially brought up here at the 2+2 boards and gained a lot of attention. Hundreds of complaints were logged but nothing was done - the site was not even being monitored. The Kahnawake Gambling Commission, who at-the-time were looking to get their operations sanctioned by the UK Gambling Commission, obviously finally saw an opportunity for some good press and decided to actually investigate.

This is the official report: <http://www.kahnawake.com/gamingcommi...GC-AP-0111.pdf>

After the matter was resolved, many people believe the situation was not handled properly and was addressed suspiciously. Take your own viewpoint:

--The people responsible have not been named by the commission, irrespective of the fact that Kahnawake know who they are. There is to be no criminal prosecution of these people regardless of whether they were employee-based or not.

--Absolute Poker has received the sum total of a fine of \$500,000. In spite of the most blatant act of cheating their players, Kahnawake has not pulled Absolute's license, in addition to not recommending criminal action. Absolute Poker remains on Kahnawake servers.

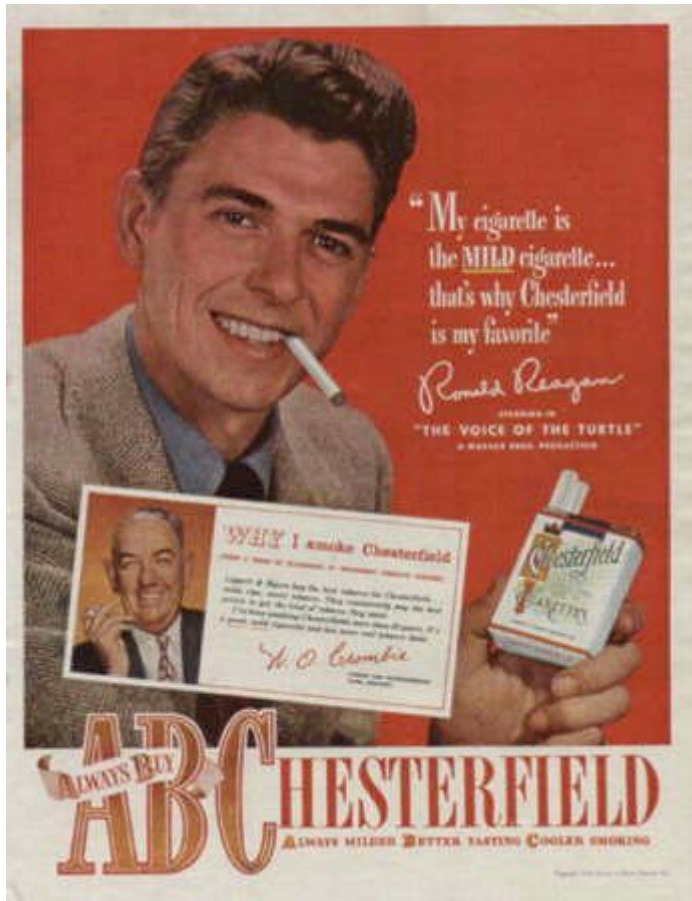
--Kahnawake has required that Absolute Poker "not do this again". People may remember the Golden Palace olympic sabotage events a couple of years ago. After the first one Kahnawake also required that GP "not do it again"; GP did do it again - and Kahnawake did **nothing**."

So if they won't prosecute these sites IF caught cheating.. who will?

Since these sites are based offshore, your answer is no one.

A lot of this information can be found in articles throughout the internet, as they were my main source for information. However, I also came to a lot of these conclusions on my own, *before* I discovered the idea that "internet poker is rigged". It is really up to the player to decide from first-hand experience whether or not they notice these patterns. It's also up to these players whether or not they can accept this reality.

Imagine telling cigarette smokers years ago that they would someday kill them. Kind of hard to believe



Especially when Ronald Reagan is their advertiser.

I believe the theory that online poker is "rigged" is not far-fetched. It gains more support daily from hard-working amateurs/professional poker players. Whether you play as a hobby or you've made it your career - come to your own conclusions, use your own common sense, and most importantly... go with your gut.
