POKERSTARTERS.COM

DECO 1400/7140: WEB IMPLEMENTATION POSTER
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SUMMARY

My website is called PokerStarters and is aimed at providing information and guidance to players of the classic card game poker. My target audience primarily includes beginners who are interested in learning the basics of poker, as well as casual players looking to improve their skills and knowledge. I came up with the idea for PokerStarters after experiencing the frustration of having to teach new players the rules of poker without a good resource and also realizing that poker can be quite intimidating for newcomers, with its complex strategies, different variations, and specific terminology. I therefore wanted to create a welcoming and informative platform where people could easily access the information they need to learn, play, and enjoy poker without feeling overwhelmed or discouraged. To achieve this I added a number of elements to the site including a Poker playable widget as well as web-pages for: rules and basics, rules of various poker variants (like Texas Hold'em, Omaha, and Seven-Card Stud) and strategies and tips.
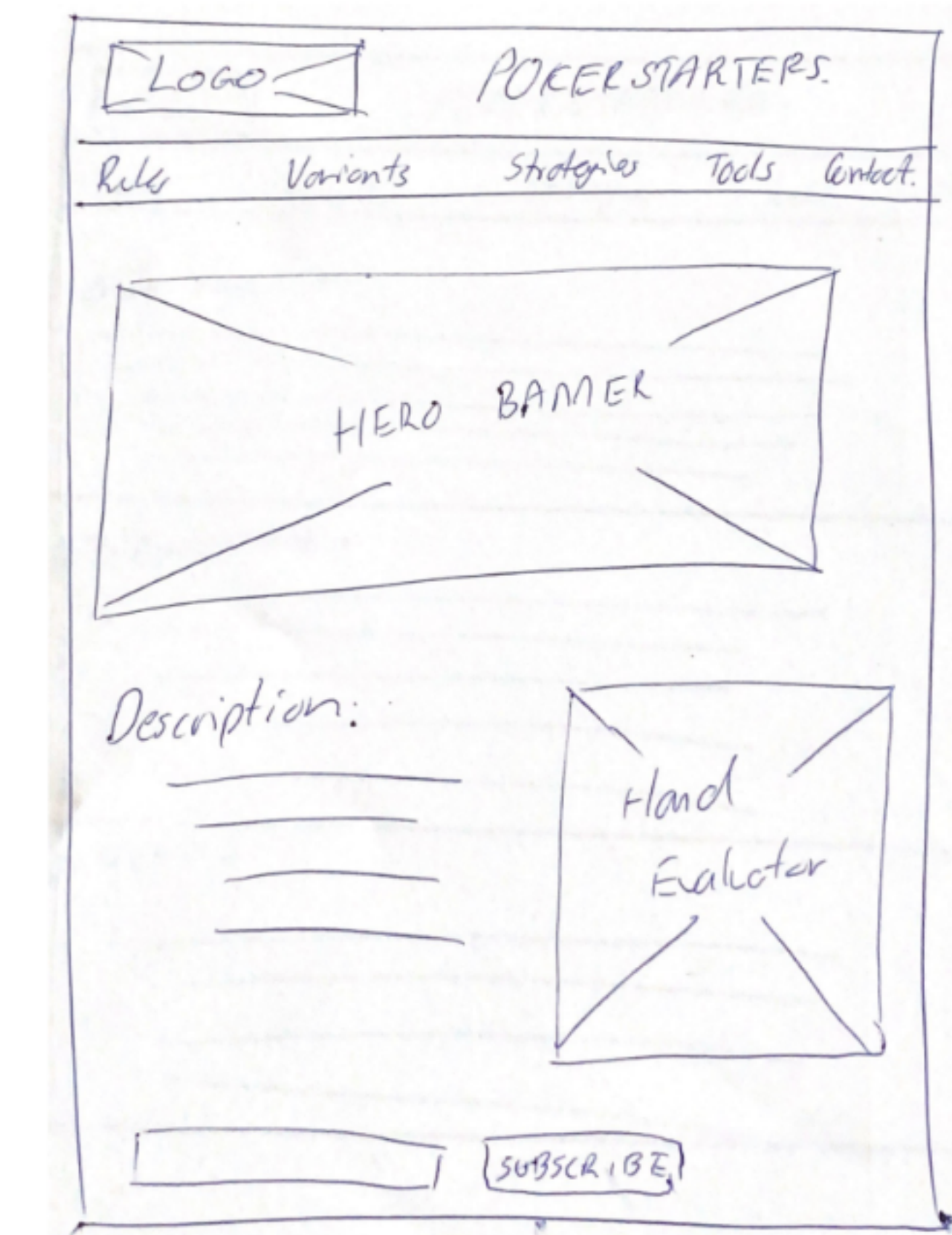
PROTOTYPE

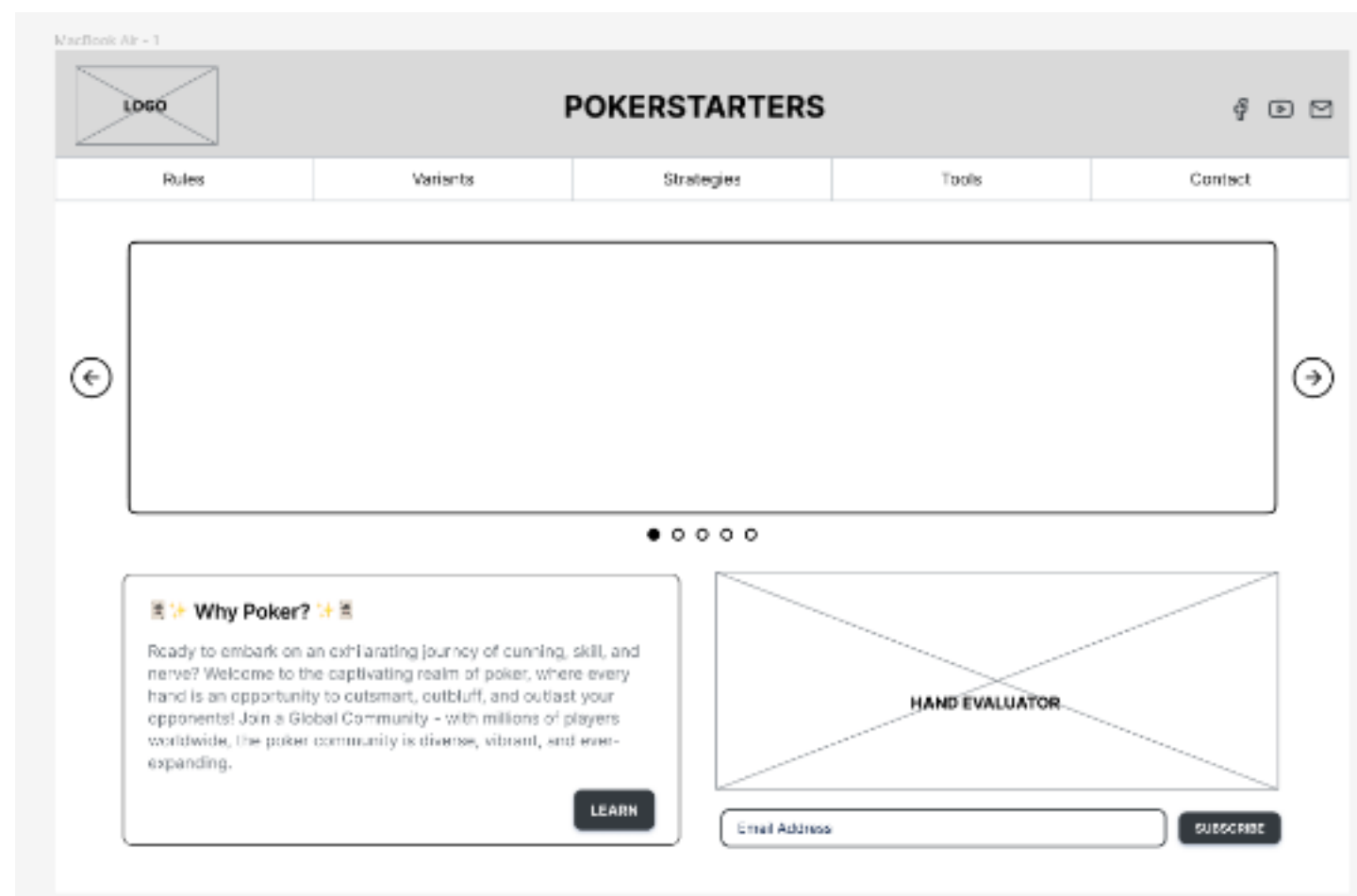Figure 1: Sketch of the landing page.

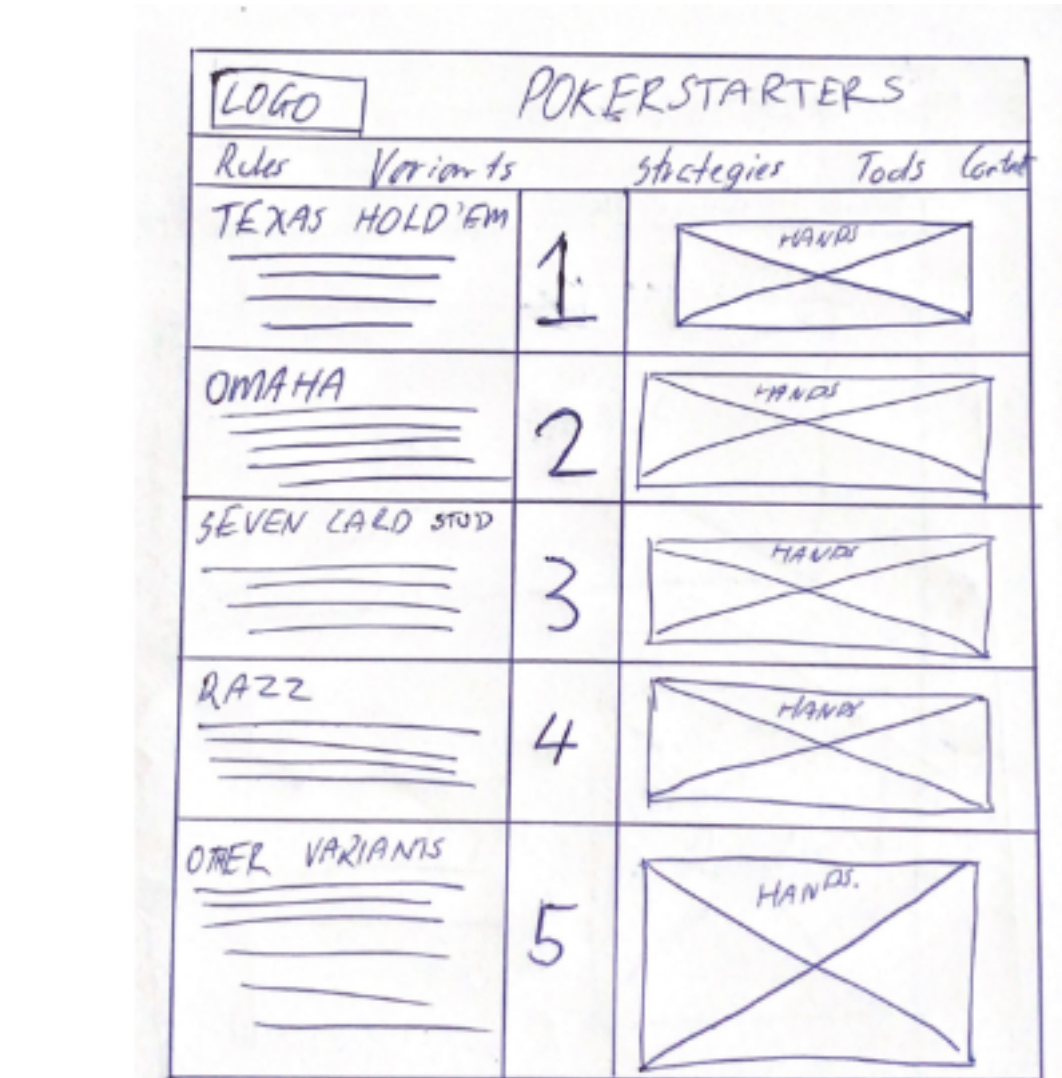Figure 2: Wireframe of landing page.
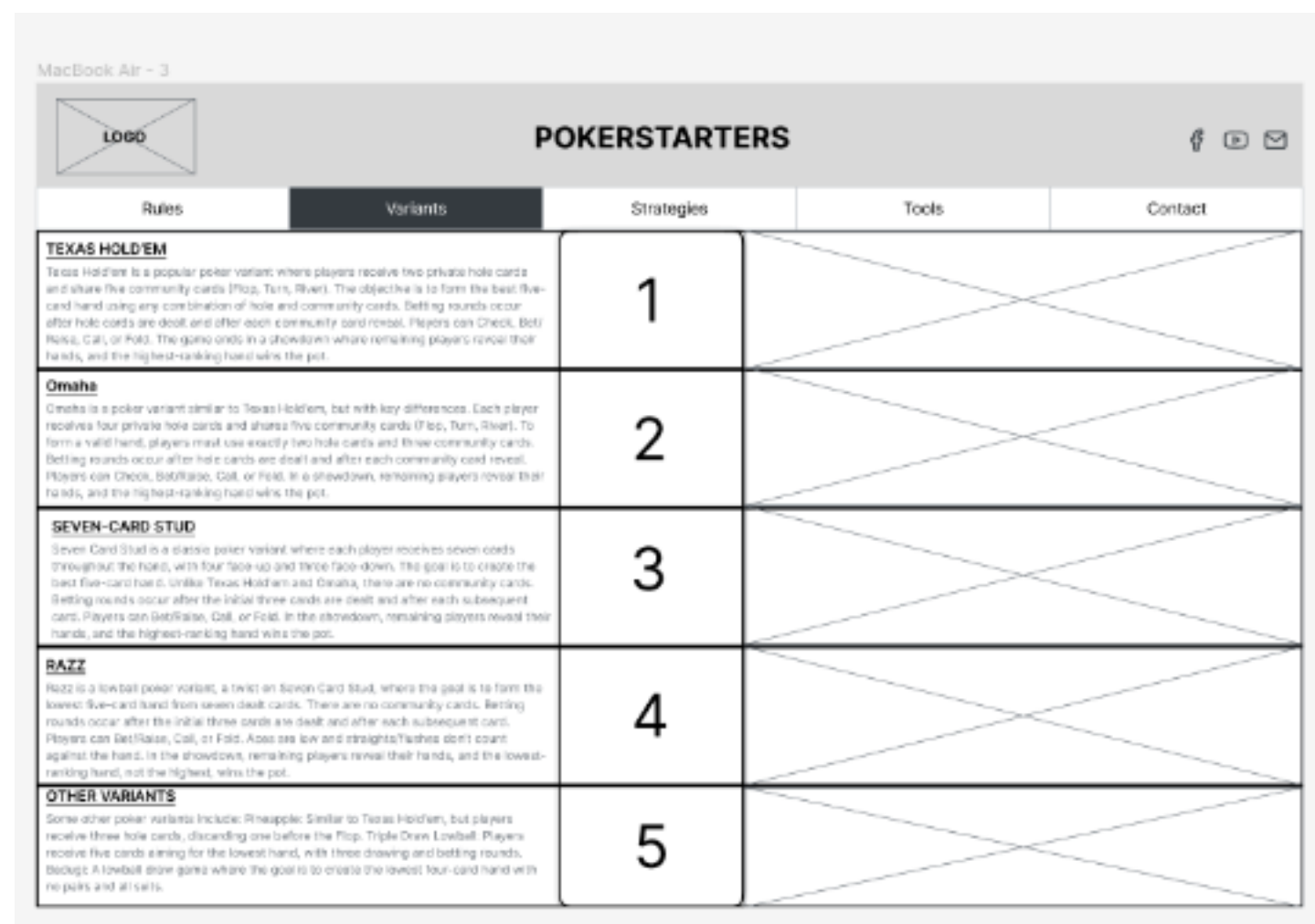

Figure 3: Sketch of the variants page.

Figure 4: Wireframe of the variants page.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The website is designed with a clear navigation bar and descriptive page titles to indicate the user's location. Interactive elements resemble their physical counterparts, and pages are inspired by clear board game like instructions. Users have the freedom to navigate the site using the logo and navigation menu, and the navigation bar reflects their position in the site. The site design maintains consistency with a standard navigation menu placement and a grid system for readability. Errors are minimized through validation checks for email and phone numbers in the contact form and subscription box. The site encourages recognition over recall with concise section labels and emojis (where applicable) for enhanced user engagement. For efficiency, users can skip known sections and navigate quickly to advanced strategies. The design is aesthetically pleasing and minimalist, with text contained and supplemented by images. When errors occur, the problem area is highlighted for easy identification and correction. The site also offers a glossary of poker jargon and YouTube videos as further documentation if required.
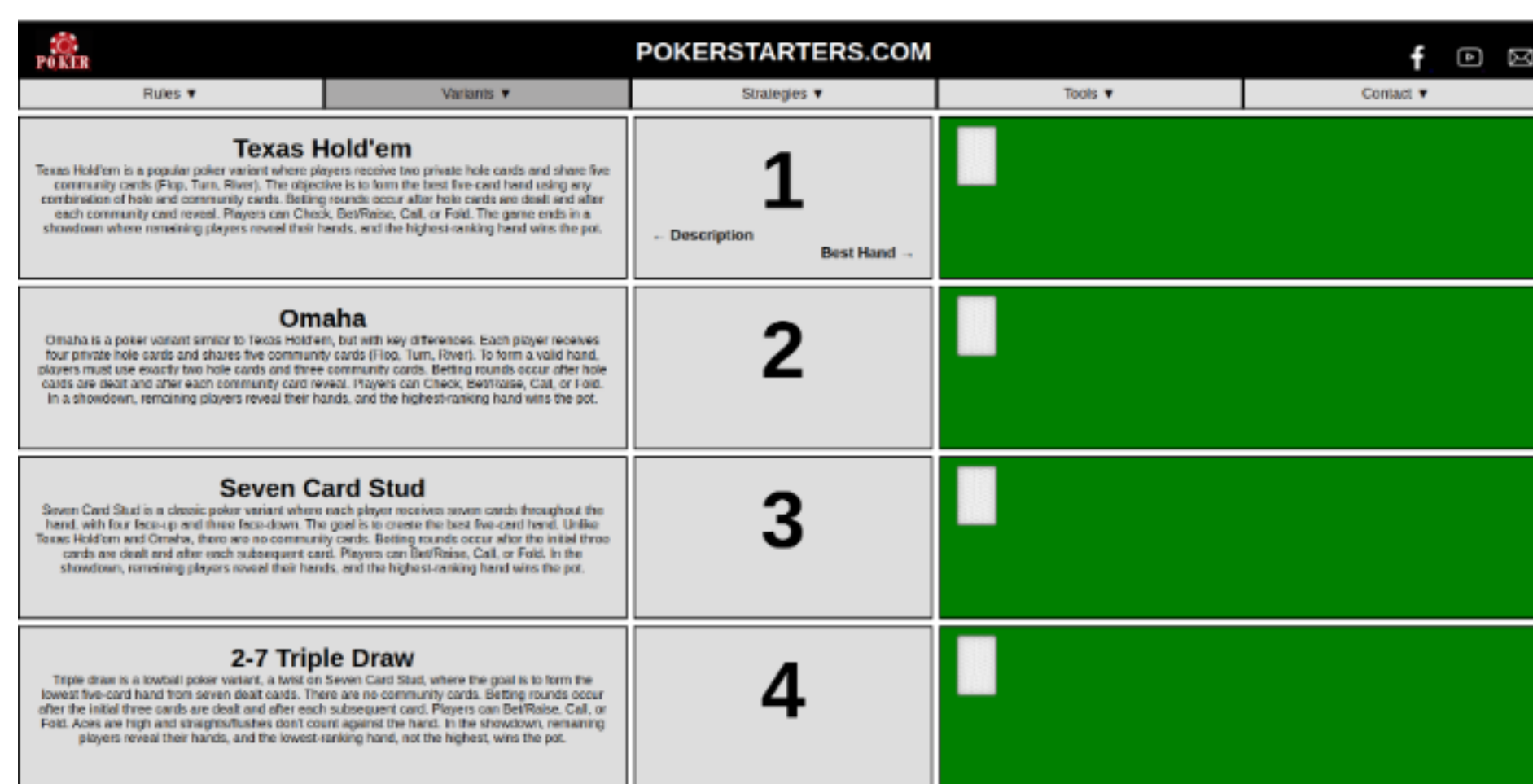
FINAL RESULT

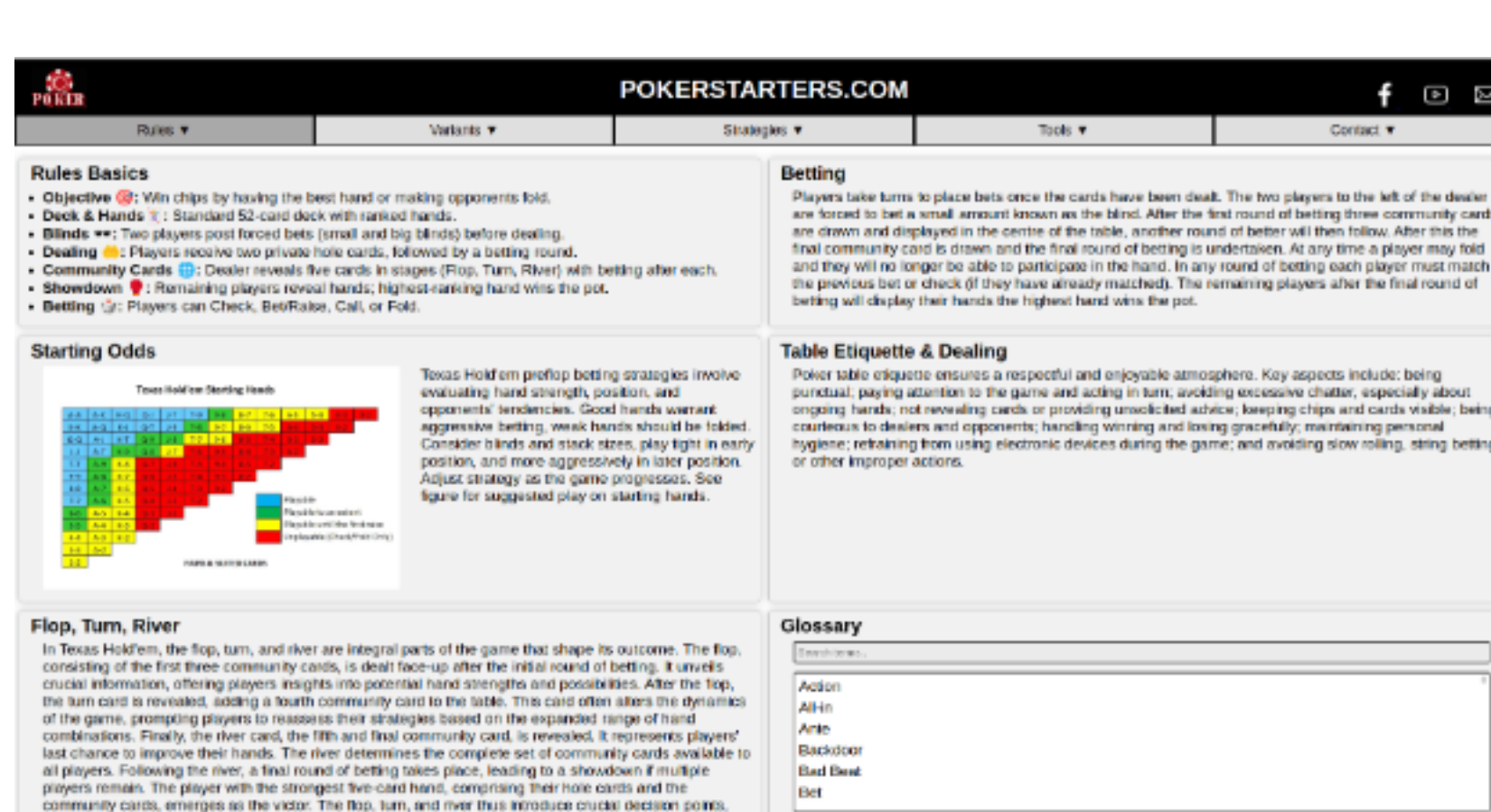Figure 5: Landing Page

Figure 6: Variants Page

Figure 7: Rules Page
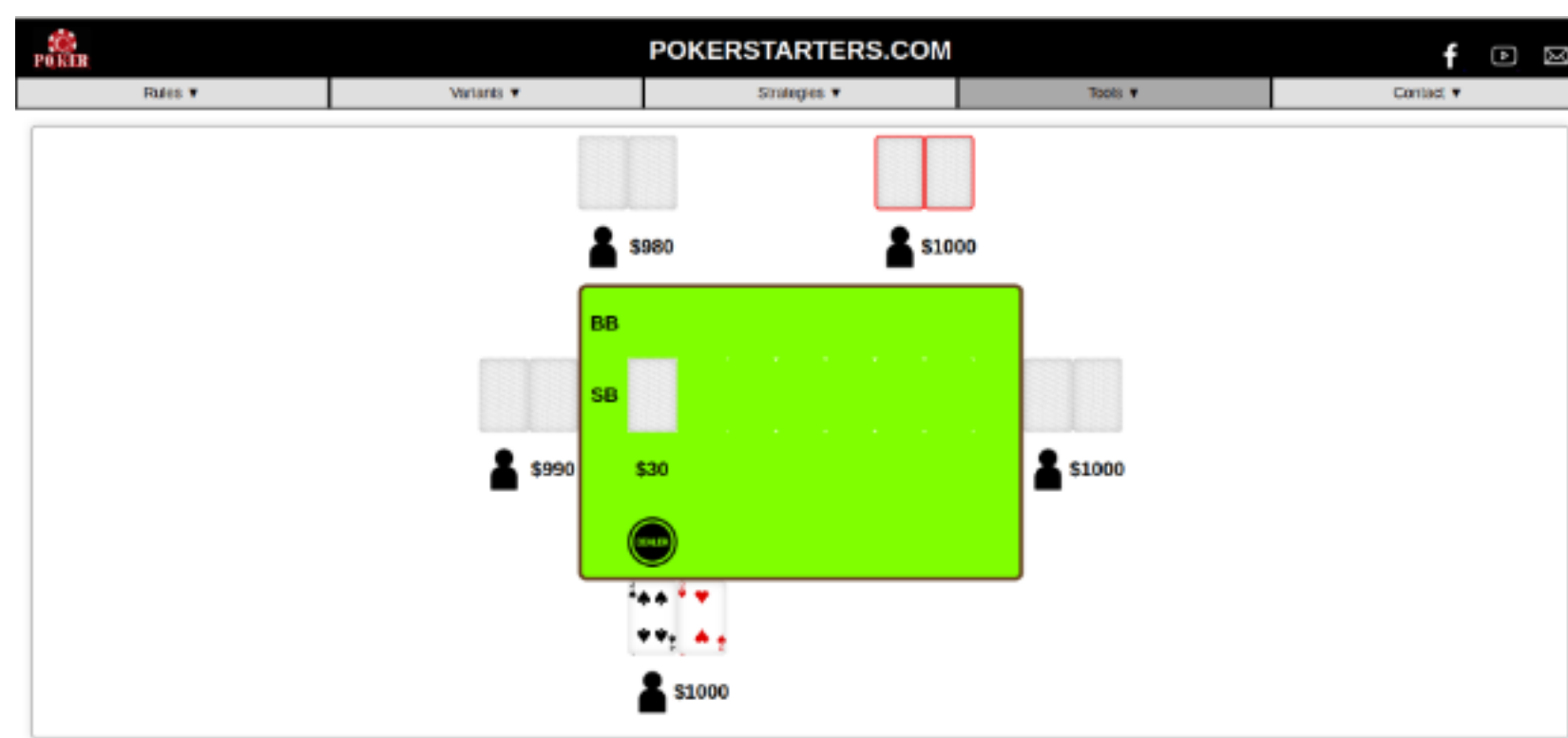

Figure 8: Strategies Page
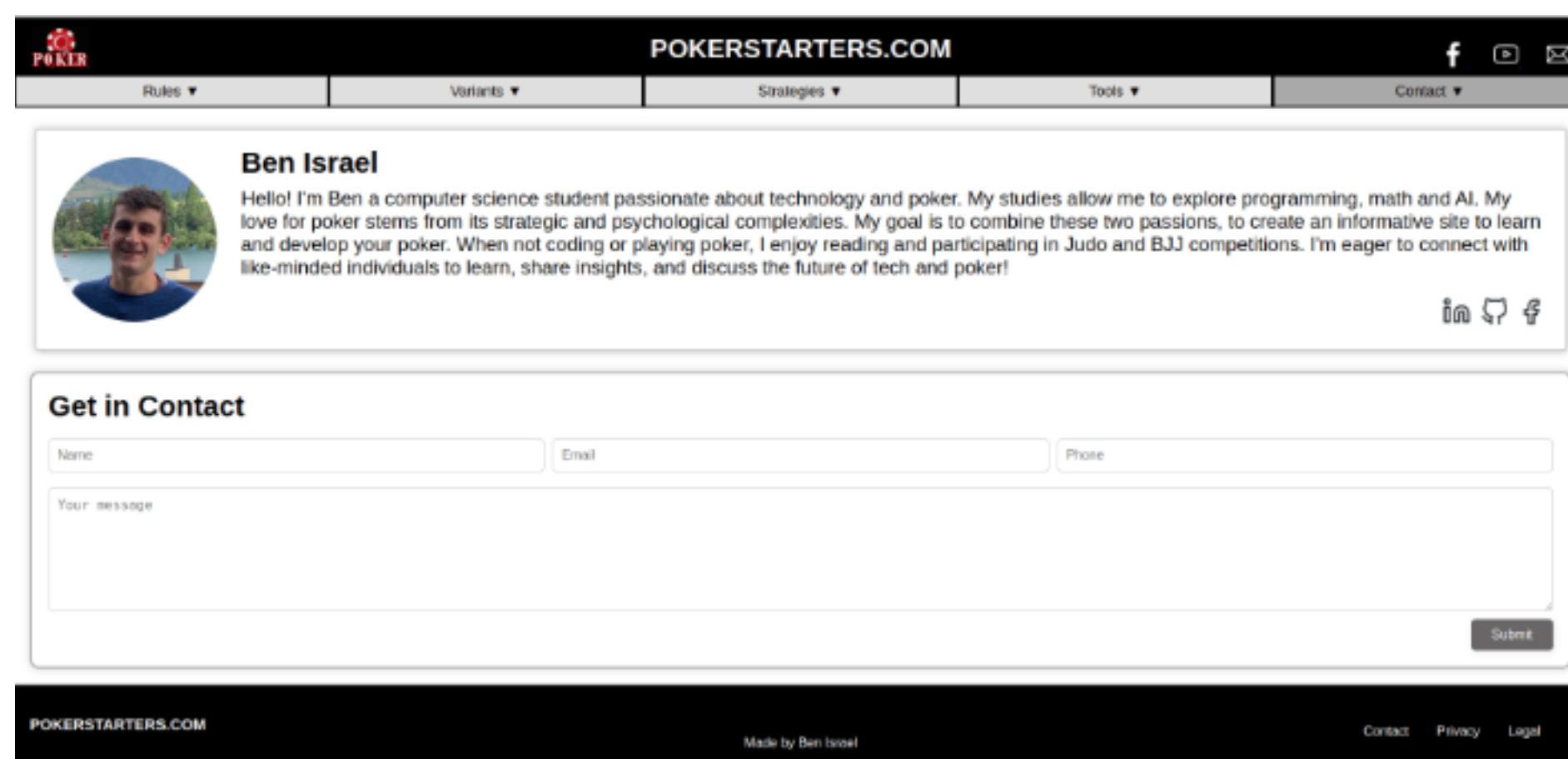

Figure 9: Play widget

Figure 10: Contact Me Page

LESSON LEARNT & FUTURE WORK

Over the course of the project I have learnt a lot about CSS, HTML and JavaScript. It has been rewarding to explore these technologies and use them to implement a useful site. Some of the key takeaways and lessons learnt from this where the importance of variable naming conventions and code portability. I found that as the project grew it was increasingly important to adhere to a sound naming convention, especially as it related to my CSS. At one stage I was unsure of why a particular element was not aligned until I realise I had named its class identically to a previous element. This led me to deploy a better naming convention where names where based on the page the element was on and reused elements shared classes.

When it came to my JavaScript I found that my implementation of the PokerPlayer quickly grew because I had not been reusing objects. I decided to abstract out some objects including the playing deck and some of the game play objects so that these elements where more reusable. Together with better commenting practices I was able to make my code more readable and was able to achieve more.

With respect to future improvements the play widget could be improved such that the bot players are more realistic and difficult. This would involve exploring some of the math around optimal poker play and implementing this in some of the logic. Overall I think more animations could be used and more pages could be added addressing specific parts of the game ie. how to play the turn etc. Finally, it would be good to do some user testing to explore how the sites UI currently performs and address any issues that it has.

Overall, I think that the site acts has a good tool to learn poker!

REFERENCES

World Leaders in Research-Based User Experience (no date) *10 usability heuristics for user interface design, Nielsen Norman Group*. Available at: https://www.nngroup.com/articles/ten-usability-heuristics/ (Accessed: 17 May 2023).