

= Vanessa Rousso =

Vanessa Ashley Rousso ( born February 5 , 1983 ) is an American professional poker player . Born in White Plains , New York , Rousso holds dual citizenship with the United States and France . Rousso was a member of Team PokerStars from 2006 to 2015 , with the online name Lady Maverick . She is a spokesperson for GoDaddy.com. She has earned money as a professional poker player since 2005 , and has become one of the game 's sex symbols .

As of 2015 , Rousso has finished in the money in numerous live poker events and accumulated over \$ 3 @, @ 500 @, @ 000 in career earnings . She has placed in the money seventeen times at the World Series of Poker . In 2007 , she won over \$ 700 @, @ 000 with a second @-@ place finish in the main event of the World Championship of Online Poker . She ranks among the top five women in poker history in terms of all @-@ time money winnings .

Rousso has been a pro @-@ gambling campaigner and activist . She has appeared on several reality television shows including Big Brother where she finished third .

= = Background = =

Her parents are Marc Rousso and Cynthia Bradley of Hobe Sound , Florida . Rousso began talking and reading at early ages says her mother , Cynthia Ferrara . Born in New York , she moved with her family to France at the age of three . She lived in Paris , in her father 's homeland until she was 10 , when she moved briefly to Upstate New York . After her parents divorced in 1992 , her mother moved Vanessa to Florida to be near her maternal grandparents . Rousso attended Wellington Landings Middle School . The oldest of three athletic girls , Rousso was active on the high school swimming , lacrosse and debating teams . She also played softball and basketball for fun . In debating , Rousso excelled in national debating tournaments in policy debating . Her mother is a guidance counselor at Jupiter Community High School . In 2001 , Rousso graduated as valedictorian of her high school in Wellington , Florida . She maintained a 4 @. @ 0 GPA at Wellington High School while participating in the National Honor Society , and French Honor Society . She founded the Environmental Club and served as its president . She was also active as a violinist , varsity swimmer , and volunteer for Mothers Against Drunk Drivers . Rousso has two younger sisters : Tiffany , a high school teacher and contestant on the eighteenth season of Big Brother and Leticia , who was a pre @-@ med student at University of Florida as of 2009 .

In college , she was on the Dean 's list . After studying some game theory , she became proficient with the Rubik 's Cube and then chess . However , because she considers both to be fairly objective static games , she began to prefer poker , which incorporated human psychology that allows for inferior hands to win . She graduated early from Duke University after two and a half years with a major in economics and a minor in political science in December 2003 . Her collegiate duration of two and a half years was the shortest time to graduate in the history of Duke . Rousso began law school in 2004 and was the inaugural recipient of the Chaplin Scholarship from the University of Miami . During Law School at the University of Miami School of Law , she served on the editorial board of the University of Miami Law Review .

A poker player since the age of five , Rousso began serious poker tournament play during her summer break from law school . Rousso was in the top 5 % of her law school class , but she did not finish law school . Now , excluding online winnings , she ranks among the top five women in poker history in terms of all @-@ time money winnings . She currently resides part @-@ time in Las Vegas , Nevada and part @-@ time in Hobe Sound , Florida . Her nickname was given to her by a relative when she sold shares of herself to enter a \$ 25 @, @ 000 buy @-@ in event in a manner reminiscent of the eponymous hero of the 1994 Western movie Maverick .

= = Poker career = =

She built her first stake at Hard Rock sit and go 10 @-@ player tables , where first prize was \$ 250 . From there , she was able to save for a \$ 1 @, @ 500 entry fee in Atlantic City in late 2005 , which

she parlayed into \$ 17 @, @ 500 . This enabled her to afford entry into the World Poker Tour event at the Bellagio Vegas . She has been televised numerous times on both ESPN and The Travel Channel . She has made several appearances on the Poker After Dark television program . She has also been televised as part of the World Poker Tour . She is known for wearing a cap , headphones and designer sunglasses .

Her first win in a professional event came on June 13 , 2005 in Las Vegas , Nevada during the No @-@ Limit Hold 'em Summer Series . At the 2005 World Series of Poker , she placed 45th in a field of 601 in the Event 26 , \$ 1 @, @ 000 Ladies No @-@ Limit Texas hold ' em event won by Jennifer Tilly two weeks later ( on June 26 , 2005 ) .

On February 12 , 2006 , Rousso placed fifth at the final table of the 195 @-@ entrant \$ 1 @, @ 500 No Limit Hold 'em WSOP Circuit event at Harrah 's Atlantic City . This appearance at the final table established a record at 23 years , 7 days as the youngest female player at the time to reach a World Series of Poker circuit final table .

Rousso joined the professional poker tour in April 2006 and by October was among the top 80 in earnings that year . In her first year of playing , Rousso had multiple in the money tournament finishes , including a seventh @-@ place finish in a field of 605 at the \$ 25 @, @ 000 April 26 , 2006 World Poker Tour ( Season four ) No @-@ Limit Hold 'em championship event in which she earned \$ 263 @, @ 625 in prize money . By that time she was spending Tuesday through Thursday taking her law school classes , spending the rest of the week playing in poker tournaments and fielding endorsement offers from online poker clubs . On September 13 , 2006 she won \$ 285 @, @ 450 with a first @-@ place finish at the 173 @-@ entrant \$ 5 @, @ 000 no limit hold ' em event at the 4th Borgata Open . At 2006 World Series of Poker she had three in the money finishes . She finished 80th in a field of 1068 in Event 4 , \$ 1 @, @ 500 Limit Hold 'em , 63rd in a field of 824 in Event 5 , \$ 2500 Short Handed No @-@ Limit Hold 'em , and she placed 8th of 507 in the Event 30 , \$ 5000 Short Handed No @-@ Limit Hold 'em event .

By 2007 , Rousso was a notable poker star . In October 2007 , Rousso was part of a contingent of poker industry representatives and leaders of the 800 @, @ 000 @-@ member Poker Players Alliance who flew to Washington , DC to attempt to convince the United States Congress to overturn the 2006 Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act . The law compels financial institutions to monitor and stop their customers ' cash transfers to unlawful online gaming sites . The group met with both the United States House Committee on the Judiciary and the United States House Committee on Financial Services . She spoke in favor of a proposal by Barney Frank to license and regulate online gambling . The alliance also spoke in favor of the Skill Game Protection Act proposed by Robert Wexler to exempt poker , mah @-@ jonn , chess , bridge and other games where contestants compete against each other rather than the " house " from the Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act . In May 2009 , Frank , who had become the chairman of the House Committee on Financial Services in 2007 , continued his efforts to " establish a framework to allow licensed gambling operators to process bets from players in the United States , " with the support of the Poker Players Alliance and Harrah 's Entertainment among others .

In 2007 , she earned \$ 700 @, @ 782 @. @ 50 , her largest career payday at that time , during the World Championship of Online Poker NL Hold 'em Main Event with a second @-@ place finish in the 2998 @-@ entrant field . She had originally placed third in the event , but the winner was found to have violated the Pokerstars terms of service , which caused a disqualification ruling and caused all contestants to be elevated one place in the rankings . The tournament is run online by Rousso 's sponsor , PokerStars , and she had originally earned the third place prize of \$ 463 @, @ 940 @. @ 50 . At 2008 World Series of Poker she again had three in the money finishes . She placed 57 of 605 in Event 38 , \$ 2000 Pot Limit Hold 'em , placed 44 of 2693 in Event 52 , \$ 1500 No Limit Hold 'em , and 625 of 6844 in the Main event 54 , \$ 10 @, @ 000 No Limit Hold 'em .

In January 2009 , Rousso just missed the televised six @-@ handed WPT final table while playing at the World Poker Tour Season VII Southern Poker Championship , She finished in seventh place and earned \$ 79 @, @ 117 . In the head @-@ to @-@ head single @-@ elimination 2009 National Heads @-@ Up Poker Championship tournament , Rousso made it to the finals of the 64 @-@ person field before losing to Huck Seed . Along the way to her runner @-@ up finish , she defeated

Doyle Brunson , Phil Ivey , Paul Wasicka , Daniel Negreanu and Bertrand Grospellier . Previously , Shannon Elizabeth 's 2007 semi @-@ final appearance had been the best female finish in the annual event . The March 6 ? 8 tournament was broadcast on NBC over six consecutive Sundays from April 12 ? May 17 , 2009 . As of July 2011 , her tournament winnings exceed \$ 3 @,@ 100 @,@ 000 . In May 2009 , Rousso won the 79 @-@ entrant ? 25 @,@ 000 EPT High Roller Championship , which had a first prize of 720 @,@ 000 Euros . However , at the final table , the three final contestants elected to chop chips at ? 420 @,@ 000 and leave ? 150 @,@ 000 for the winner . The ? 570 @,@ 000 win , which converts to \$ 749 @,@ 467 , represents the highest payday of her career . The win propelled Rousso to sixteenth place on the 2009 earnings list as of May 5 .

In 2009 , Rousso spoke in favor of changes to Florida gambling laws that would remove caps on buy @-@ ins and wagers on poker in the state . She felt the gambling limitations precluded more strategic skilled deeper stack competition and said that Florida gamblers " don 't have enough chips in front of them to play out the bets and raises that are required in the skillful aspect of the game " . In 2007 , a \$ 100 cap replaced a \$ 2 / bet limit . This cap still prohibits large tournaments with multi @-@ thousand dollar buy @-@ ins from occurring in Florida .

Rousso had her own April 2009 poker instructional camp in South Florida . The camp related poker @-@ playing and strategies to the strategies of military conflict in Sun Tzu 's book , The Art of War . She called her camp " Big Slick boot camp " and charged a \$ 399 participation fee . The camp 's website makes the analogy of the Art of War and the Art of Poker .

At the 2009 World Series of Poker she had four in the money finishes : She placed 27 of 201 in Event 2 , \$ 40 @,@ 000 No Limit Hold 'em , placed 17 of 147 in Event 8 , \$ 2500 No Limit 2 @-@ 7 Draw Lowball , placed 19 of 770 in Event 31 , \$ 1 @,@ 500 H.O.R.S.E. , and 15 of 275 in the Event 45 , \$ 10 @,@ 000 World Championship Pot @-@ Limit Hold 'em . In the main event , she busted out on day 6 ( officially known as day 2B ) . Rousso will be hosting Stars of Poker in France . On January 9 , 2010 , she finished first among 91 entrants to earn \$ 24 @,@ 725 at the \$ 1 @,@ 000 No Limit Hold 'em ? Ladies Event at the PokerStars Caribbean Adventure .

At the 2010 World Series of Poker she has had two in the money finishes : She placed 421 of 4345 in Event 3 , \$ 1 @,@ 000 No Limit Hold 'em , and was eliminated in the quarter @-@ final round of 256 entries , earning \$ 92 @,@ 580 in the \$ 10 @,@ 000 Heads @-@ Up No @-@ Limit Hold 'em Championship . On December 8 , 2010 , she finished 3rd in a field of 438 at the \$ 10 @,@ 000 World Poker Tour No Limit Hold 'em Doyle Brunson Five Diamond World Poker Classic and won by Antonio Esfandiari , earning \$ 358 @,@ 964 .

= = = World Series of Poker = = =

= = Endorsements = =

Rousso was formerly sponsored by the PokerStars online poker cardroom under the screenname LadyMaverick as part of their Team PokerStars . Her sponsorship with PokerStars ended in February 2015 .

Pokerstars approached Sports Illustrated about including a poker player in their Swimsuit edition . Rousso was sent to the Bahamas to be photographed by Sports Illustrated , but she appears in an advertisement in a bikini bottom and cutoff wetsuit top rather than in the editorial portion of the magazine . Rousso announced on her January 4 , 2009 vlog that Sports Illustrated asked her to be a part of its Swimsuit Edition and a photo shoot took place at time of the 2009 EPT PCA event in Nassau , Bahamas . Rousso confirmed on January 15 , 2009 that she would appear in the February 10 , 2009 issue . Rousso 's thoughts on the Sports Illustrated publicity was that " It was a great opportunity for poker in general and for me in particular . " Rousso had previously been featured in Maxim , written on game theory in American Poker Player , and flown to Las Vegas , Nevada to teach poker to the Forbes 100 Most Powerful Women .

In March 2009 , Rousso signed to promote internet domain names by GoDaddy , a sponsor of the

2009 National Heads @-@ Up Championship . Rousso signed with GoDaddy on March 5 , the day before the tournament began . Rousso , along with IndyCar racer Danica Patrick , became an official GoDaddy Girl and acted as a spokesperson for the site . GoDaddy 's full lineup of spokespersons included Rousso , Patrick , Candice Michelle , Dale Earnhardt Jr . , Anna Rawson and Brad Keselowski . Rousso and Keselowski replaced Amanda Beard and Chad Johnson as spokespersons . Rousso is regarded as one of the sexiest poker players in the world , ranking 18th by Bleacher Report in 2010 , and in the top 20 by Maxim in 2010 .

= = Non @-@ poker activities = =

Rousso appeared on Million Dollar Challenge in 2009 . She was a celebrity judge on Bank of Hollywood where she helped award some of her own money to contestants . She was a contestant on season 17 of the reality television show Big Brother in 2015 , finishing in third place .

Rousso has become a music producer and DJ and has forming a DJ Duo called Girl on Girl with her life partner Melissa Ouellet .

= = Personal life = =

She met her future husband Chad Brown at the final table of the \$ 25 @, @ 000 April 26 , 2006 World Poker Tour event . She was engaged to Brown in 2008 , and the couple eloped in early 2009 , making them the first married couple to be featured on the same major online poker team . The couple separated in 2012 . The reasons for the separation were not stated , however , Rousso and Brown made comments to their followers on Twitter , announcing the breakup . Vanessa wrote " Despite great mutual fondness and respect , Chad and I have separated . "

At the wrap party for Big Brother , Vanessa announced her engagement to her long @-@ term girlfriend Melissa Ouellet .