

## = World Series of Poker Casino Employee Championship =

The Casino Employees Championship is one of only three closed tournaments awarding WSOP bracelet 's at the World Series of Poker gathering . While most of the events are open to the general public , participants in the Ladies Championship , Seniors Championship , and the Casino Employees Championship must meet certain eligibility requirements . While these events are closed , the winner of these events is " afforded the same distinction as all gold bracelet tournaments . " The WSOP bracelet is considered the most coveted non @-@ monetary prize a poker player can win .

## = = History = =

The World Series of Poker ( WSOP ) , held annually in Las Vegas , is " the oldest , largest , most prestigious , and most media @-@ hyped gaming competition in the world " . In 2000 , the WSOP started to honor Casino Employees by offering a bracelet event that only they could enter . The first tournament was called the " Dealers World Poker Championship " because it was limited to poker dealers . The following year the field was open to all casino employees .

Since the tournament is restricted to casino employees , most of the big name poker pros and previous bracelet winners are not allowed to participate . Therefore , even though the Casino Employee Championship is a World Series of Poker bracelet event , it has typically received relatively little coverage . Despite this perception , the Casino Employee Championship event does involve numerous recognized names in the poker world . The 2009 tournament included two time bracelet winner Pat Poels , WSOP vice president Ty Stewart , Bellagio Tournament Director / Former WSOP Director Jack McClelland , and Woman Poker Hall of Famer Marsha Waggoner .

Prior to 2003 , the tournament format was a Limit Hold 'em tournament , but in 2004 , No @-@ Limit Hold 'em became the standard . The 2006 tournament , with 1 @,@ 232 entrants , was the largest field ever for the event . Since its inception , with the exception of 2008 , the Casino Employees event has started on the first day of the WSOP . Much of the drama encountered at the Casino Championship often involves informal rivalries between dealers and proposition players . Proposition players are people hired to play poker , with their own money , at casinos to get games started or to ensure that they do not die out . Thus , while both the prop and dealer are casino employees , they sit on opposite sides of the table .

## = = Highlights = =

In 2000 , Dave Alizadeth from Las Vegas outlasted a field of 109 participants to become the first " Dealers World Poker Championship " . While other Dealer Tournaments had a reputation for sloppy play , the first Dealer Championship was noted for the seriousness with which the players approached the game . In the end , however , the winner was not determined by the deal of the cards , but by a deal at the table . According to initial reports , the deal was only achieved because " a World Series bracelet was not available for negotiation , the players decided to take their money and go home . " Other sources , however , indicate that the event was always intended to be a bracelet event . Either way , the official WSOP standings , credits Alizadeth with winning a WSOP bracelet at this event . By contrast the final three contestants at the 2003 Championship were doing Kamikaze shots . " We were all having such a great time , " the winner David Lukaszewski said , " sitting around playing poker that I think we may have forgotten about the prize money and the bracelet . "

The 2002 Casino Employee Championship almost mirrored Treetop Straus 's amazing comeback in the 1982 WSOP Main event . At the 1982 Main Event , Treetop was down to one \$ 500 chip and came back to win the tournament . At the Casino Employee Championship , Dave Crunkleton , who has made 11 final WSOP tables but never won a bracelet , was down to one \$ 500 chip with only four players left in the tournament . Crunkleton went all in with pocket eights and then succeeded in rebuilding his stack to \$ 26 @,@ 000 before being busted in third place . The 2002 winner , David

Warga went on to become the first Casino Employee Champion to win a WSOP open event in 2010

Many of the top professional poker players got their start working in casinos . 1998 WSOP Main Event Champion and five time bracelet winner , Scotty Nguyen 's first job was as a dealer . Ted Forrest , another five time bracelet winner , credits his ability to read players because of his experience as a dealer . One @-@ time bracelet winner Erick Lindgren also boasts a pedigree of starting out as a dealer .

= = Key = =

= = WSOP Casino Employee Championship Events = =