

= Mike Matusow =

Michael Matusow (born April 30 , 1968 in Los Angeles , California) is an American professional poker player , residing in Henderson , Nevada . Matusow 's nickname of " The Mouth " reflects his reputation for trash @-@ talking at the poker table . He is also known for sometimes ruining hours or days of good play with a single misjudgment , (known as a " Mike Matusow Blow @-@ up " or " Mike Matusow Meltdown ") .

Matusow began playing poker seriously in the early 1990s , first while working as a poker dealer , then as a professional player . His successes include being a four @-@ time World Series of Poker bracelet winner , and the winner of the 2005 World Series of Poker Tournament of Champions .

= = Early years = =

Matusow 's first experience of poker was playing video poker in the Maxim Casino at the age of 18 , which he played regularly , to the extent that he suffered from repetitive strain injury in his shoulders and arms . He occasionally stole money from his mother 's purse and at one point attended Gamblers Anonymous meetings . Matusow was taught Texas hold ' em in 1989 by a rounder named Steve Samaroff .

= = World Series of Poker = =

At the 1998 World Series of Poker (WSOP) , Matusow paid part of Scotty Nguyen 's entrance fee into a satellite event for the \$ 10 @,@ 000 no limit Texas hold ' em main event . Nguyen went on to win , and gave \$ 333 @,@ 333 to Matusow in return for his partial stake . In 1999 , Matusow won his first WSOP bracelet , winning the \$ 3 @,@ 500 No Limit Hold 'em event defeating Alex Brenes heads @-@ up to win the title .

In 2001 , he finished 6th place in the WSOP \$ 10 @,@ 000 no limit Hold ' em main event . Matusow says that the decisive hand was when he was bluffed by eventual champion Juan Carlos Mortensen , but did not trust his instincts to call .

At the 2002 WSOP , Matusow won his second bracelet by winning the \$ 5 @,@ 000 Omaha Hi @-@ Low Split 8 or Better event . He defeated his friend and fellow professional poker player Daniel Negreanu to win the tournament .

In the 2005 WSOP , Matusow finished 9th out of 5 @,@ 619 players in the main event , winning \$ 1 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 . Several months later , he won the WSOP Tournament of Champions in a heads @-@ up battle against Hoyt Corkins , earning another \$ 1 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 in the process , making him the first player to win two million dollar prizes in the same year . He also placed third in the Tournament of Champions the following year , winning \$ 250 @,@ 000 .

At the 2008 WSOP , Matusow won a third bracelet in the \$ 5000 No Limit 2 ? 7 Draw with rebuys event defeating Jeff Lisandro heads up for the \$ 537 @,@ 862 first prize . Later in the same year he finished 30th out of 6 @,@ 844 players in the Main Event , making yet another deep run in the Main Event .

Matusow won his fourth bracelet in 2013 in the \$ 5 @,@ 000 Seven Card Stud Hi @-@ Lo Split 8 or Better tournament , defeating Matthew Ashton heads @-@ up and earning \$ 266 @,@ 503 .

= = = World Series of Poker bracelets = = =

= = Other poker events = =

In October 2004 , Matusow made his first World Poker Tour (WPT) final table at the UltimateBet Aruba Classic , earning \$ 250 @,@ 000 for 3rd place . In 2006 , he finished runner @-@ up to Tony G in the WPT Bad Boys of Poker II in heads @-@ up play . Matusow also appeared in Poker Superstars III , where he made it to the Elite Eight . In the winner @-@ take @-@ all championship

match , Matusow beat seven other players to win \$ 500 @, @ 000 . He also appeared in the second , third , fourth and sixth season of High Stakes Poker . In September 2006 , Mike made his debut on the European Poker Tour (EPT) in Barcelona ; however , he was eliminated on the first day . In early 2007 , Matusow appeared on two episodes of Poker After Dark where he finished 3rd and 2nd respectively . He plays online poker under the following aliases : " dill pickle " (UltimateBet) ; " mrpokejoke " (PokerStars) ; and " Mike Matusow " (Full Tilt Poker , where he was formerly a member of " Team Full Tilt ") .

In July 2007 , Matusow won \$ 671 @, @ 320 after coming in second place at the World Poker Tour Bellagio Cup III Championship after online pro Kevin Saul defeated him during heads @-@ up play . On November 11 , 2008 at the World Poker Tour Foxwoods World Poker Finals , Matusow made another WPT final table , He was eliminated after his A ? J ? didn 't improve against Jonathan Little 's hand of 9 ? 9 ? , he finished in 6th place , earning \$ 124 @, @ 048 .

As of August 2014 , his total live tournament winnings exceed \$ 9 @, @ 000 @, @ 000 . \$ 3 @, @ 580 @, @ 911 of his winnings have come at the WSOP .

In 2013 , Matusow won the NBC National Heads @-@ Up Championship , defeating Phil Hellmuth 2 @-@ 1 in the final .

= = Personal life = =

Matusow has had several personal problems . He has battled drug issues , including a six @-@ month stint in jail in 2004 and 2005 after being caught providing ecstasy and prescription painkillers to an undercover police officer who pretended to befriend Matusow and gained his trust . After several months of an official Las Vegas Metro Police " Sting Operation " , Matusow was arrested and charged with six category A Felonies , all drug related . A plea deal was later reached where Matusow was incarcerated in the Clark County Detention Center for six months .

Matusow resides in Henderson . He often wears a gold chain with the Hebrew symbol ' chai ' around his neck . Additionally , Matusow hosted Card Player 's poker radio show / podcast , the Circuit , before being replaced by Gavin Smith and Joe Sebok . He was also the host of Card Player 's now defunct online video segment , " The Mouthpiece . " In one particular episode , Mike discussed the controversial Ultimatebet.com superuser cheating scandal , as well as seeking legal action as a victim of the scandal against the main perpetrator , former World Series of Poker Champion Russ Hamilton .

Matusow wrote an autobiography entitled Check Raising the Devil that was released May 12 , 2009 .