Texas Hold’em Let’s Students Go All In
By Ross Bentley
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This Saturday, February 15th, SUNY Oswego Campus Recreation put on their annual No-Limit Texas Hold’em Poker Tournament in the Campus Center Food Court.

Over 35 players participated in the event for a chance at an Intramural Championship T-Shirt and a $50 gift card to the Campus Book Store.

After a lengthy tournament, Logan Scalise was able to outlast his opponents and take home the top prize. Scalise was the chip leader going into the final table, and managed to hold off the competition to win the tournament.

Runner ups were James Silverheart, who placed second and won a $30 gift card to Sub Shop, and Ken Quinn who came in third place and won $15 to Mark’s Pizzeria.

“I think it was great, there was a good turnout and everyone that went seemingly had a good time,” said Assistant Director of Campus Recreation Scott Harrison, who oversaw the event.

The Texas Hold’em tournament is the only of its kind to happen at Oswego and always brings a large turnout of card sharks who think they have what it takes to bring home the top prize. “I started it with some students back in 2005 and we’ve had it ever since,” said Harrison.

There were many dramatic moments in the tournament, including one hand where five different players went all-in, and there were three different side pots won. “There were a number of all-in hands, a lot of people had their tournament life on the line which makes no-limit exciting for that reason alone,” noted Harrison.

Texas Hold’em Poker has been around since the early 1900’s, but really caught on in popular culture after the turn of the millennium. Due to a the invention of the “pocket cam”, poker began catching on national television especially on ESPN, which has transformed Texas Hold’em into one of the most watched games on television.

In 1999 there were 393 entrants in the World Series of Poker Event in Las Vegas, compared to a whopping 6,598 entrants in 2012.

Harrison believes that while TV has brought Texas Hold’em Poker to the mainstream, its popularity also has to do with how fun and exciting of a game it can be to play. “I think that TV and ESPN have done a good job marketing it, I think they are partially responsible. A lot of people enjoy cards, and putting a little something on the line can
make it more exciting. No-limit is exhilarating because at any point, somebody can put you all-in. You can get bailed out on the river, or you can get beat."

Texas Hold’em Poker continues to grow in popularity also due to the boom of online poker over the last decade. Like they can in person, people can play online just for fun, or for serious cash, which is another reason why poker has taken off around the world.

“It’s easy to learn and you can have a lot of different forms of it, you can have a large tournament or just a quick game with friends. You can make it a social thing without having it be a huge gamble,” said Harrison.

The event was free to enter for all students, and each player began the tournament with the same amount of chips. Students who attended were also provided refreshments by Auxiliary Services that included pizza, soft drinks, pretzels, and cookies.

References:

