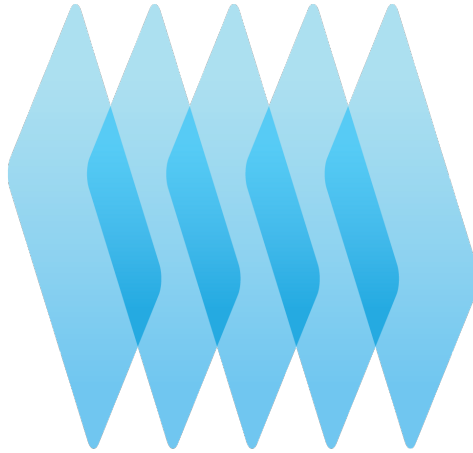


Duplicate Poker



IFP

A guide for players

Introduction

The IFP is proud to be promoting the Mind Sports version of Poker, Duplicate Poker. Duplicate Poker borrows concepts from Duplicate Bridge and offers a way of organising team and individual poker tournaments completely free from the “luck of the draw”. Duplicate Poker tournaments are unique in allowing a fair assessment of the skill of the players without any influence of the random deal of cards.

In Duplicate Poker tournaments, the same order of cards (deck-order) is used at all tables. Every player in a given seat position across the tournament receives exactly the same cards as his fellow competitors in that seat position. His skill in playing these hands and outperforming the others players in the given seat determines his finishing position. In no way does the quality of the cards a player receives influence their chance to win the tournament. Indeed, all players in a given seat may receive such poor cards as to render them unable to win if they were competing in a regular poker tournament. In this situation in a Duplicate Poker tournament, the winning player will be the one that manages to lose the fewest chips with the cards dealt.

For players, little adjustment is needed to understand and compete in Duplicate Poker tournaments. Each hand, in isolation, is still a hand of Pot Limit Texas Hold'em and a player is still looking to win the most (or lose the fewest) chips he can on that given hand. Only the overall mechanic and scoring system needs to be controlled to achieve Duplicate Poker's aims.

Elimination of Luck

In a typical poker tournament, three major factors are outside of the control of the participating players and are determined by random chance:

- The quality of the hands received during the tournament.
- The position in which these hands are received.
- The quality of the other players at the table.

In Duplicate Poker tournaments, players compete against opponents who are playing exactly the same cards in exactly the same position relative to other players. With all players given the same allocation of cards and relative positions, the only determining factor in the result of the tournament is how skilfully the player has acted.

The Duplicate Poker mechanic is ideal for team events where one member of each team is allocated to each table and each team has one player in every seat position across all tables. This structure ensures the quality of players faced by the teams is also balanced. Every team has one player at each table competing against one player from the other teams. A team Duplicate Poker tournament works best when teams are split into groups of 6, with 6 players per table. By starting with multiple groups of 6 and allowing teams to progress to finals stages, large international tournaments with many teams can be arranged.

Preparation of Decks

Prior to the tournament, a random number generator is asked to generate the required number of deck-orders for the tournament. For example, a single tournament group stage might be played over 150 hands. These deck-orders can be transmitted in encrypted form to a dealing machine that can reliably and automatically sort decks of cards into the required order. Each deck-order (1-150) will need to be duplicated for every table in the tournament. For example, a 6 table tournament played over 150 hands will require a total of 900 decks. Each deck leaves the dealing machine security-sealed and ready for delivery to the tables. No human eyes need ever see the deck-orders prior to the security seal being broken by the dealer to commence the hand.

Capped Pot-Limit betting structure and scoring

To preserve fairness and the integrity of the Duplicate Poker concept, in every hand each team must always have a chance to win or lose as many chips as the other teams and so must begin each hand with the same number of chips. The maximum number of chips a player may commit to the pot on any one hand (the cap) is set at 100 times the big blind. Once a player has committed this number of chips to the pot, he is all in. A player may not commit more chips than the cap to any pot, nor may he start a hand with fewer chips than the cap in play. If a player's stack falls below 100 big blinds during the session, the dealer may provide the player with reserve chips.

On each hand, a player will have a net change of chips – negative if he commits chips to the pot and does not win, zero if he folds without committing chips, and positive if he wins the pot. This is his chip-score for that hand. The sum of these chip-scores over the session is the player's total chip-score. The total chip-scores of the six players in the Seat 1 position are compared, and points (6 for 1st, 5 for 2nd, 4 for 3rd, 3 for 4th, 2 for 5th and 1 for 6th) are awarded to each team for their player's performance. The same points structure is applied to the contests in all the other Seat positions similarly, and the total points across the all six Seats determines the ranking of teams in the tournament. In the event of a tie, the chip-scores of the 6 players on each team are added and the team with the highest aggregate chip-score is the winner (akin to goal-difference in football league tables).

In order to score duplicate poker, a console has been designed that allows a tournament official to input the actions of all players at the table (checks, bets, calls, raises and folds) along with the bet amount on each round and the subsequent winner of the pot. These pads communicate directly with a real-time scoring system that displays in-running scores for each seat position and the current standing of the teams.

Security procedure

Knowledge of the cards in play at one table in the Duplicate Poker tournament gives a player knowledge of the exact cards in play at all the other tables in the tournament. For this reason, it is imperative that no communication is allowed between tables. If space allows, tables from the same group (playing the same deck-orders) should be situated in different rooms. In smaller events with the tables in the same room, precautions must be taken to prevent information being exchanged between tables.

Firstly, there must be no clear line of sight between tables. This can be achieved by placing screens between tables to prevent a player from seeing any cards in play at another table. Further, no player may comment about the specifics of the hand in play. Even after a hand is complete, no player may mention the cards in play, the betting patterns of the players or the result of the hand. Finally, to reduce to an acceptable minimum the information transfer between tables from general noise, the hands in the session should be played in different random orders at each table. In a 75 hand session, all tables must play and complete the same 75 hands, with the button in the same position on each hand as at all other tables, but the order of the hands must be random. A player picking up general noise from the nearby tables will not know which hand is in play at that table and will not be able to infer any useful information.

Television Coverage

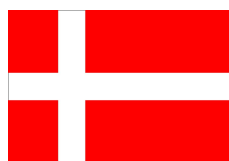
Duplicate Poker tournaments provide a unique and innovative viewing experience. Never before have viewers been able to see exactly the same hands being played in different ways by different participants, and to evaluate the merits of each unique play. Post production use of split-screen can show famous poker players from different teams facing analogous situations and choosing different courses of action. With an astute commentator evaluating each play, Duplicate Poker tournaments will allow viewers an unparalleled depth of analysis.

Example seat-draw and example hand:

The teams (Argentina, Brazil, China, Denmark, Ecuador & Finland) all submit players as follows:



A₁, A₂, A₃, A₄, A₅, A₆



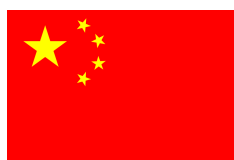
D₁, D₂, D₃, D₄, D₅, D₆



B₁, B₂, B₃, B₄, B₅, B₆



E₁, E₂, E₃, E₄, E₅, E₆


















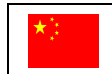
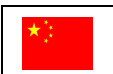
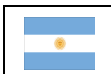





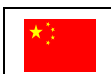












C₁, C₂, C₃, C₄, C₅, C₆



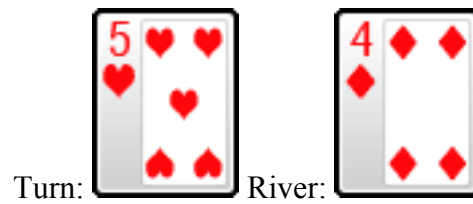
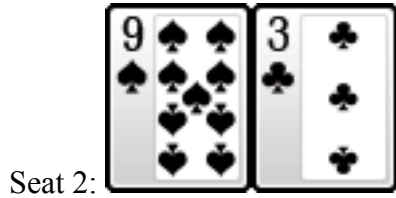
F₁, F₂, F₃, F₄, F₅, F₆

A random seat draw is then made for the tournament (subject to one member of each team on each of the six tables, and one member of each team in each of the six seat positions).

	Seat 1	Seat 2	Seat 3	Seat 4	Seat 5	Seat 6
Table 1						
Table 2						
Table 3						
Table 4						
Table 5						
Table 6						

We see from the random draw that Brazil acts after (“has position on”) Denmark on all tables, Finland acts after Brazil, China acts after Finland, and so on.

An example deal:



The play on each table may turn out completely differently, but as an example, we might predict some action between Seat 3 and Seat 5 here. As we can see that neither starting hand improves with the flop, turn, and river, it is of interest to see which nation plays Kings in Seat 5 the most skillfully and extracts the most chips from the team with Jacks in Seat 3. Likewise, it is of interest to see which nation plays Jacks in Seat 3 the most skillfully and succeeds in losing the fewest chips to the Kings in seat 5. Each team will have had KK vs JJ once, and JJ vs KK once and we can compare which team plays this situation the most skillfully.

Table 1: Here, China's JJ is up against Brazil's KK

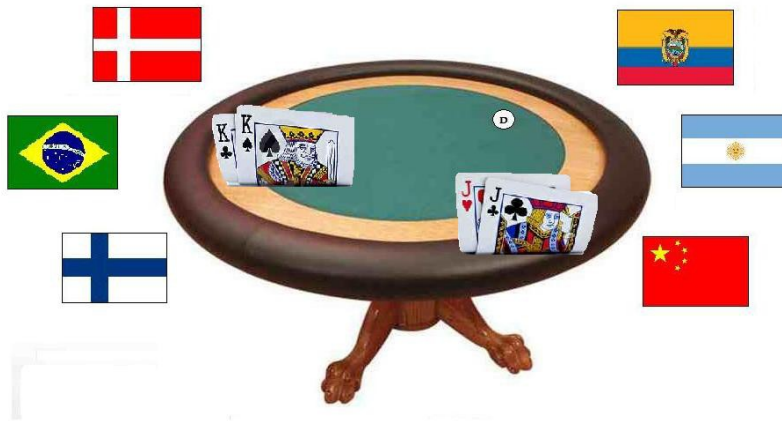


Table 2: Here, Finland's JJ is up against Denmark's KK

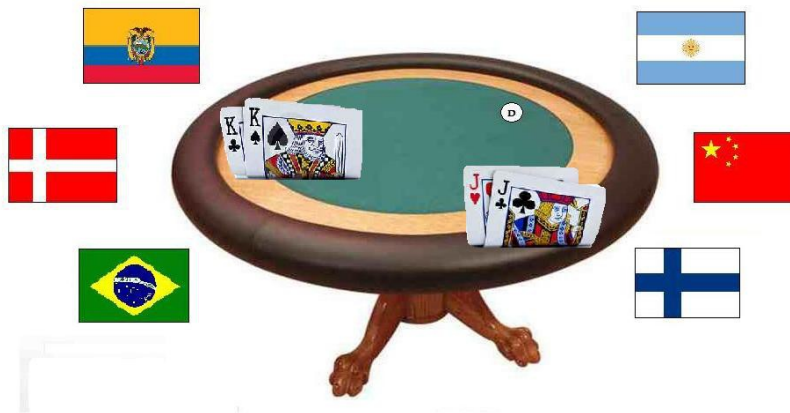


Table 3: Here, Brazil's JJ is up against Ecuador's KK



Table 4: Here, Denmark's JJ is up against Argentina's KK



Table 5: Here, Ecuador's JJ is up against China's KK



Table 6: Here, Argentina's JJ is up against Finland's KK

