

Online gambling crackdown puts poker world in limbo

Gary Mihoces, USA Today

Greg Raymer, whose \$160 entry fee in an online poker tournament led to a \$5 million win at the 2004 World Series of Poker, says it's hard to tell how a federal crackdown on online gaming will affect WSOP entries this year.

But he's a gambler. If he had to bet, he'd figure on a sizeable drop. The 2011 WSOP, a series of 58 events, starts May 31 in Las Vegas. Its Main Event, which begins July 7, had 7,319 entries last year.

"If I was actually putting a number to bet on, I would say more like somewhere in the low 5,000s (this year)," Raymer said by phone from his home in Raleigh, N.C. "If you made me pick a number because you were going to bet either over or under "» it would be something like 5,250."

Last Friday, federal authorities in New York targeted three online gaming firms: PokerStars, Full Tilt Poker and Absolute Poker. Eleven people were charged with bank fraud and illegal gambling. Restraining orders were issued against about 75 bank accounts allegedly used to process payments in 14 countries.

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