

Dealer Profile
Jimmy Ganis



Many poker players, or dealers, often wonder what it would be like to play, or deal, in the mecca...or Las Vegas. Jimmy Ganis doesn't have to wonder. He spent ten years dealing poker in Vegas, and another 8-10 years working the floor in a Vegas casino. He returns to his former hometown once a year to deal during the World Series of Poker. The rest of his time is spent pitching cards at The Seabrook Poker Room.

One of the few SPR dealers who doesn't play in the room when he's not working Ganis moved to New England almost a year ago for much more than just the severe seasons. The father of one came to the east coast because he had just been awarded sole custody of his little, 4-year-old, daughter. Ganis auditioned for a job at the SPR in September 2008. It didn't take long for management to notice they were getting a diamond from the desert.

And it didn't take us long to sit down with him and get his thoughts on these 10 questions.

SPR: What would you be doing if you weren't dealing poker?

JG: Here in New England, I don't know. In Vegas I wouldn't be doing anything else. I'd still be in the poker business.

SPR: What's your ideal job?

JG: My ideal job is a Poker Shift Supervisor.

SPR: You're dealing at a fantasy table. Who's playing at the table?

JG: Richard Nixon (he used to have poker games in White House), Ben Franklin, Phil Helmuth, Ronald Reagan, Larry Bird, Napoleon, Bobby Fisher, Condoleezza Rice and Aristotle.

(That was Jimmy's 1st list. He walked back into the SPR the very next day and asked if he could submit another list. He apparently had thought all night about this question and felt more comfortable with the following November Nine).

JG: Richard Nixon (he used to have poker games in White House), Ben Franklin, Phil Helmuth, Muhammad Ali, Leonardo DaVinci, Abe Lincoln, Bobby Fisher, Sigmund Freud and Red Auerbach.

SPR: What did you like most about working in Vegas?

JG: I loved the diversity of people that I met. I met billionaires and average Joe's. I met film and sports celebrities, too, and that's something I could never do anywhere else.

SPR: Who is the best poker player you've ever dealt to?

JG: Phil Helmuth. 1. He's fantastic at reading people and 2. He's already planning two steps ahead. He's like the Wayne Gretzky of poker.

SPR: If you could change one rule in poker...what would it be?

JG: The betting line. It should be enforced with the cards, too, as well as the chips.

SPR: What's one mistake you see young poker dealers make more often than any other?

JG: There are two. 1. Talking too much when they're dealing so their attention is not fully on the betting and action. 2. Certain procedures that are supposed to be done that are not done. Like mixing the burn cards with the muck cards after the river is turned. If there's a discrepancy, or controversy, there's no way of knowing which cards are which if they're all mixed.

SPR: Present company excluded. Who is the best dealer at the SPR and why?

JG: Alex. He gets out a lot of hands and he's very accurate with his calling of the game and controlling of the game. He doesn't make mistakes and doesn't talk too much.

SPR: What did you like least about working in Vegas?

JG: Even though there are two million residents in Vegas there are a lot of lonely people.

SPR: What's your biggest pet peeve as a dealer?

JG: Hearing players talk about the hand while it's still going on.