



**Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Man vs. Machine Poker Challenge**

*July 23, 2007 Hyatt Regency Vancouver, B.C.  
In conjunction with AAAI-07*

**Menlo Park, CA – June 12, 2007.** The American Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AAAI) will play host to the first scientific man versus machine challenge in poker. The event will take place the evening of July 23, 2007 at the Hyatt Regency in Vancouver, B.C. in conjunction with the annual AAAI-07 conference sponsored by the Association (<http://www.aaai.org/Conferences/AAAI/aaai07.php>).

Two professional poker players, Phil Laak and Ali Esmali, will play a duplicate match against two copies of the University of Alberta's Polaris poker program. Poker is a game of skill and luck. A "short" match, even one of 10,000 hands, may not be enough to identify the better player. There will be four sessions played, each with \$5,000 at stake.

In a session, each human plays 500 hands against a copy of Polaris. However, the cards dealt in the first match to the human will be dealt to the computer in the second match, and vice versa. The result of a session is the sum of the two humans' scores versus the sum of the two programs' scores. This format, inspired by the rules of duplicate bridge, significantly reduces the luck element, increasing the chances that the best team will win based on skill.

The matches will be played in front of an audience, and the human competitors will be encouraged to think out loud. The result will be entertaining, and give insights as to the state of the art in AI technology for a challenging imperfect information domain.

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**About AAAI**

Founded in 1979, the Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence (formerly the American Association for Artificial Intelligence) ([www.aaai.org](http://www.aaai.org)) is a nonprofit scientific

membership society devoted to advancing the science and practice of AI. Its mission is to: (1) advance the scientific understanding of the mechanisms underlying intelligent thought and behavior, (2) facilitate their embodiment in machines, (3) serve as an information resource for research planners and the general public concerning trends in AI, and (4) offer training for the current and coming generations of AI researchers and practitioners. The Association has sponsored the annual AAAI/IAAI conferences, highly regarded in the AI field, since 1980 and 1989 respectively.