

NEWS

50% of British poker players mistrust online poker sites 16/02/2009

Half of all British poker players mistrust online poker websites, according to a survey commissioned by mobile gambling firm Probability in the run up to the launch of its head-to-head mobile poker product.

When asked how much they trusted online poker sites, just 12.5% of the respondents were prepared to say: "I trust them, they provide a good service". That compared with 36.9% who said they "mostly trusted them", with one or two doubts. However, 19.4% said they mistrusted poker sites and had "a lot of doubts" about them, while 31% of respondents said they did not trust them "at all".

The reasons for this lack of trust ranged from not trusting the randomness of the cards dealt online for 33% of respondents, while 32.3% said they were worried about the safety of their funds and bank details. A fifth of respondents, 21.3%, said they were concerned about regulation and 13% said they were unhappy with the use of "software bots".

The customer service offered by online operators was average (51.8%) according to most respondents, the majority of whom believed that more than three quarters of sites used "house players", even if the poker sites denied it.

Despite this, 36.7% still rated online as their favourite poker venue, although home games were the overwhelming winners at 57.7%. Just 5.5% said they preferred casinos or poker clubs, but 36% said they would be more likely to visit such venues if the atmosphere were less intimidating.

Charles Cohen, chief executive of Probability, said: "We don't have any axe to grind on this issue. In fact, the reverse is true - a healthy poker industry is good for us because the more people who are comfortable with playing remote poker the more business there is for us to shoot for.

"Some 50 per cent of players surveyed by the Great British Poker Survey said they did not trust the online poker sites. A third said they did not trust them at all. Those figures are striking and came as a surprise even to us. There is clearly an issue here that the industry needs to address."

The Great British Poker Survey was carried out by market research specialist 72Point among more than 2,500 players.

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