

# Poker May Be The Death Of You

By **Alexander Baron** - May 1, 2015

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Poker may have a glamorous reputation, but it could also be the death of you; Wild Bill Hickok was famously murdered while playing poker. On August 2, 1876, he was sitting in a draw poker game at Deadwood when Jack McCall shot him in the back of the head. Hickok was holding aces and eights – the dead man’s hand.

Likewise, the man many people believe to have been the greatest poker player of all time went to an early grave, albeit for an entirely different reason. The big game today and for some time has been Texas hold ’em, and the biggest title in poker is the Main Event at the World Series. Stu Ungar won the Main Event in 1980, 1981 and 1997. He died



*Wild Bill Hickok*

broke in a Las Vegas hotel room on November 22, 1998, a drug addict aged just 45 years old.

Dave Ulliott, the man known as the Devilfish, was arguably the greatest English player of the modern age; born April Fool's Day 1954, life dealt him a bad hand, but he played it well, albeit after a poor start. Leaving school aged 15 he was well on his way to becoming a professional criminal, serving more than one prison sentence, but by the 1990s he had found safer ways to make easy money. In 1993, **he cashed** in two seven card stud tournaments at London's famous Grosvenor Casino.

He was sixth in January winning £200 for a £200 buy-in – not something to write home about – but in June he picked up £4,360 for runner up in a £100 tournament. His first win at Texas hold 'em was a modest £600 for a £300 buy-in that October, but he would go on to win much bigger prizes, including \$150,925 in the \$5,000 Pot Limit Omaha Hi/Lo event at the World Series in 2010. He was also a big cash game player.



*Dave "The Devilfish" Ulliott (Credits: flipchip)*

Dave Ulliott died April 6 from colon cancer. Although not directly related to his chosen profession, alcohol and smoke-filled card rooms are not conducive to anyone's good

health. His funeral was held at All Saints' Church in his native Hull on April 16.

Ulliott's death was relatively sudden, but that of another professional poker player was both dramatic and shocking. Mehmet Hassan was murdered in March last year. He was said to have been the victim of a honeytrap. Leonie Granger who was more than thirty years his junior started a relationship with him after meeting him in a casino, a relationship he thought was genuine. Instead she set him up to be robbed by her real lover Kyrron Jackson, and a second man, Nicholas Chandler. The two tied him up then kicked and stamped him to death. Conveniently for the legal authorities, they filmed themselves ransacking his home.



*Mehmet Hassan (Credits: Nick Edwards)*

At **their trial** earlier last month, Granger, who was not present at the crime scene, was convicted of manslaughter; the two men were convicted of murder. The judge warned them they faced substantial sentences, and when they returned on April 28, Granger was given sixteen years while Chandler and Jackson were given the mandatory life terms with recommendations they each serve a minimum of 36 years.