

It was far from your typical lazy Sunday afternoon

It was just a normal Sunday. At least until the afternoon, when things started to heat up. This is my diary of last Sunday afternoon and evening.

2:55 — My youngest daughter text messages me from Las Vegas and says she's nervous. It's only a few minutes before the World Championship Ladies Event at the World Series of Poker. I might be more nervous than her, but I know she's no rookie. She's there to win, and is good enough to win.

5:09 — My daughter calls. It's the first 15-minute break, two hours into the tournament. Anyway, she's been playing well and is among the chip leaders. She asks if I know what it's like to be in the middle of 900 women trying to crowd into a couple bathrooms. I say I don't...because I don't.

5:23 — I check a website that provides live updates of the tournament. Some of the big-name woman professional players have already been knocked out. Movie stars Jennifer Tilley and Shannon Elizabeth are in the tournament.

5:51 — Jennifer Tilley isn't in the tournament any longer. My other daughter and my son-in-law are also in Las Vegas. She doesn't know, but I know, that her boyfriend is going to ask her to marry him later. They drop in to watch the poker

and my eldest thinks it's cool to see Tilley.

6:50 — The World Series of Poker website reveals that this is the largest women's tournament in history, with just over 1,200 participants. The prize pool is \$1,755,000. First place gets \$262,000.

7:31 — My daughter calls. Less than 600 people remain out of the original 1,200. Finishing in the top 99 means finishing in the money.

7:38 — I take a shower.

7:39 — I smell much better.

8:00 — The Sopranos' series finale starts in an hour.

8:06 — My daughter makes news on the World Series of Poker live update website by knocking out four players on



with MURRAY TOWNSEND

On the loose

one hand, something almost never heard of. The website lists her in fifth place.

8:23 — Only 320 players remain in the tournament.

9:40 — My daughter calls. She has about 13,000 chips — they start with 2,000 — and is in good shape.

9:45 — Was busy with my granddaughter so I didn't get to see the Sopranos until the end. Kind of a weird ending, I was hoping for more killing. My granddaughter wanted to hear the story of Little Red Riding Hood...several times. I had to clean it up a bit so that the wolf doesn't want to eat everybody up, just the stuff in the picnic basket.

10:26 — Less than 200 players remain in the tournament. My daughter is at 17,000 chips. The website lists her in 10th place. People in the gallery are placing side bets that she will win the whole thing.

• see DAUGHTER on page B8

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