

NETWORK REVIEW · PRIVATE-CLUB POKER

The State of Private-Club Liquidity

A year-in-review of managed liquidity, integrity monitoring and operations across the private-club poker ecosystem – what changed for operators in 2025, measured across our network.

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COVERAGE

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01 · EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The year private clubs professionalised.

2025 was the year private-club operators stopped treating liquidity, integrity and operations as afterthoughts and started managing them as infrastructure. The clubs that did pulled away from the ones that didn't.

- Across the network, managed-liquidity engagements moved the median club from sporadic peak-only activity to near-continuous coverage — **off-peak table presence rose from roughly a quarter of hours to near-continuous**.
- The rake effect followed the activity: managed clubs saw a **median rake uplift around +50% within 90 days**, with the strongest hot-field clubs clearing +60%.
- Retention — the metric operators undervalue most — improved materially where the field stayed balanced, with recreational-player 14-day retention rising from the low-30s into the low-50s percent.
- On the integrity side, external automation and collusion remained the quiet revenue leak. Continuous detection surfaced suspicious clusters across the network with high precision once accounts reached a few hundred hands of observable play.
- Platform risk stayed real: two notable union failures in the ecosystem cost players millions, a reminder that operational diversification is not optional.

02 · METHODOLOGY & DATA NOTE

How to read these numbers.

Every figure in this report is an **anonymised network aggregate**. Nothing identifies an individual operator, club or platform account. Figures are drawn from our own engagement telemetry across managed-liquidity, detection and operations programmes active during 2025, then reduced to medians, ranges and directional movements.

CAVEATS WE WANT YOU TO CARRY INTO EVERY CHART

These are aggregates, not guarantees. Outcomes for any single club depend heavily on Field Temperature — how recreational the underlying player base is — along with stakes, platform and operator policy. A median is a midpoint, not a promise.

Self-reported where noted. Rake and retention movements are measured from operator-side data the operator shares with us. We report ranges rather than false precision, and we flag where a number is a directional estimate rather than a hard count.

No client is identifiable. Consistent with how we run every engagement, no figure here can be traced to a named club. Privacy is the product.

03 · THE NETWORK AT A GLANCE

Scale, by the numbers.

The network spans operator relationships built over more than two decades of working inside private-club poker. The 2025 footprint:

<p>200+</p> <p>Private-club operators served across the network in 2025</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Club platforms integrated at the operator level</p>	<p>24/7</p> <p>Coverage model – managed presence across every time zone</p>
<p>~99%</p> <p>Off-peak table-alive rate in mature managed clubs</p>	<p>+50%</p> <p>Median rake uplift in managed clubs within 90 days</p>	<p>2002</p> <p>Year the operation began – two decades of continuity</p>

Platform coverage

Managed engagements ran across the major private-club applications. We integrate at the operator level – using union credentials, no new client for players to install:

- PPPOker
- ClubGG
- X-Poker
- PokerBROS
- Suprema Poker
- HHPoker
- WePoker
- Poker1111 2
- UPoker
- KKPoker
- PokerMaster
- + others on request

"After 60 days, our peak-hour fill improved by 40%. Tables that used to break in off-peak now hold through the night."

– PPPoker union operator · multi-club · anonymised

04 · THE LIQUIDITY STORY

Activity compounds into rake.

The mechanism is unglamorous and reliable: managed AI seats hold tables through the hours real players won't carry alone, real players attach to tables already running, and more hands mean more rake. The seats target **break-even balance** — softer against recreational players, tougher against regulars — so the field stays comfortable and casual players return.

Why this matters: cold-start mortality

Liquidity is the entry point for almost every engagement because the cold-start window is lethal. Across new clubs we observed in 2025, **roughly 77% went dark within their first 14 days** — a player who opens the lobby to empty seats rarely returns, and a club that can't hold its first fortnight usually never recovers.

ON THAT 77% — AND HOW TO READ IT

This is our own network observation, not a published industry statistic — and we present it as such. It is consistent with the well-documented early-attribution of online consumer products: independent benchmarks find the average mobile app loses **~77% of daily active users within three days** of install (Quettra data, popularised by Andrew Chen), with day-seven retention near 10%. Cited as adjacent context for plausibility, not proof of our figure.

The three movements that mattered in 2025



Directional network medians, anonymised; "after" reflects the 90-day mark. Individual clubs vary with Field Temperature.

Retention is the underrated number

Operators fixate on rake and underweight retention, but the two are linked. A balanced field keeps recreational players from busting in one evening and leaving for good. The clubs that protected their casual base in 2025 compounded; those that let regulars and external automation strip the field stalled, regardless of volume.

Field Temperature set the ceiling — every time

The best predictor of a club's 2025 outcome was not deployment size but Field Temperature. Hot, recreational-heavy clubs produced the strongest results; cold clubs of regulars grinding each other produced modest ones. Liquidity amplifies an ecosystem — it doesn't manufacture one.

05 · THE INTEGRITY STORY

The quiet leak operators kept missing.

The most consistent 2025 retention complaint was the one operators could not explain: real players leaving for no visible reason. In the majority of audited cases, the cause was the same — unsanctioned external automation or collusion quietly stripping the recreational base, weeks ahead of any operator not actively hunting it.

A single uncontrolled bot is a revenue problem, not just a fairness one. It plays mathematically strong poker against players who have no edge, burns out five to ten recreational players a month, and takes their lifetime value with them. The second-order damage is reputational: a club only has to be *suspected* of foul play to start losing members.

What detection surfaced across the network

SIGNAL FAMILY	WHAT IT CATCHES	RELIABILITY
Behavioural biometrics	Flat decision-timing, no human texture	High
Statistical audit	Mechanically perfect ratios, narrow bands	High
Collusion graphs	Chip-dumping, soft-play, paired folds	Medium-High
Network & device	Shared IP / device / geography overlap	Lift signal

No single layer is decisive; the high-confidence signal is overlap. Across the network, a suspicious account was generally identifiable within a few hundred to roughly a thousand played hands, after which the high-confidence tier is reliable enough for the operator to act on. The honest caveat is the sample requirement — a brand-new account has to play before it can be judged.

"We thought our Q3 retention drop was players leaving for another union. The audit showed a single farm — nine accounts coordinating across our cash tables. Two weeks after we removed them, the curve stabilised."

— HHPoker union operator · anonymised

The operator, not the software, made every call. Detection surfaces ranked evidence; bans, refunds and watch-lists stay with the operator who owns the club relationship.

06 · PLATFORM & RISK LANDSCAPE

Where the **fragility** showed.

Private-club infrastructure carried its usual operational risk in 2025, and two high-profile union failures underlined it. A union collapse on one major platform froze roughly \$4M in player funds; a separate exit scam saw organisers vanish with deposits totalling around €5M. Neither was a technology failure – both were governance and custody failures.

- **Vet union leadership** before concentrating any volume under it.
- **Withdraw on a regular cadence** – never let large balances accumulate in a single structure.
- **Diversify across platforms** so no one app's failure is existential.

The operators who treated diversification and custody discipline as core practice – not paperwork – absorbed these shocks. The ones who concentrated everything in a single union inherited its fragility.

07 · OUTLOOK 2026

Three things **we expect**.

- **Operations becomes a discipline, not a side task.** More operators and access-holding partners will hand off the operational lifecycle entirely rather than half-staff it – the gap between a managed operation and a self-run one widened all through 2025.
- **The detection arms race tightens.** As external automation gets cheaper, the clubs that survive will be the ones running continuous, club-specific detection rather than complaint-driven platform defaults.
- **Field quality beats deployment size.** The 2026 winners won't be the operators with the most seats – they'll be the ones who protect a genuine recreational base and use liquidity to amplify it.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Authored by Andrew Kuznetsov, Poker AI Research. Andrew leads the algorithmic side of our work – opponent modelling, strategy approximation and the detection arms race. His public technical writing is at poker-ai.org.

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