

## *The Orlando Sun-Sentinel*

[http://blogs.trb.com/entertainment/news/gambling/blog/2009/10/why\\_we\\_still\\_dont\\_have\\_nolimit.html](http://blogs.trb.com/entertainment/news/gambling/blog/2009/10/why_we_still_dont_have_nolimit.html)

# I told the governor to hustle it up with poker

By Nick Sortal October 27, 2009 06:31 AM



I asked him. Twice. Even kind of pleaded.

But it looks like any hope of getting true no-limit poker in Florida will be tied in to the compact with the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

Gov. Charlie Crist was at the Hard Rock Monday, and did a brief press conference. All the good reporters at the paper here were in computer training so it fell to me to go.

While I did [the compact story we all had to do](#), what I really wanted was to offer my idea: Why not segment the compact into two pieces with the drop in slot taxes for pari-mutuels and no-limit poker as one part and push that through? Then deal with

the tribe on its own?

Or even just push through no-limit poker? (Right now our 'no-limit' is stuck with a \$100 max buy-in.) No one objects to that, not the tribe, not the paris, not the legislature.

So my first question was to ask about breaking up the compact. The guv said no. My second question, was "so, you're not in favor of breaking up the compact?" (I'm not the sharpest guy on my feet.) Also a no.

Finally, after the official news conference was done, I walked with him to his car, following the lead of Channel 10's Roger Lohse.

"I'm a poker guy," I said. "I'm just trying to get a crumb here."

He laughed. "I don't gamble," he said. (Irony warning: What about this high-stakes game of chicken going on...?) And off he rode. At least he heard one voice from the poker community, expressing some frustration about how far our state is behind the rest of the nation in poker.

My real take is that he won't push through any one piece of the compact -- even if all agree -- because it changes the bargaining dynamic. Right now, the paris have an interest in getting that compact through, pronto. To give them the tax break and/or poker would give them the chance to hardball the Seminoles. Kind of like speaker Larry Cretul's point that the Seminoles can drag its feet with the state as long as the blackjack cards are flying. Same difference.

Still it's just frustrating. No reason the no-limit poker could've been passed July 1, like gambling changes were last year. Or even Aug. 31, when the Seminoles rejected the compact. Now it looks like it'll be a long, long time. [On the Two Plus Two Poker Forum](#), PokerXanadu advises that it might not be until next July 1, if the compact is dead.

If you want to encourage Gov. Crist to do something about poker, click on Share This below, and email him this item and put the words "No-Limit NOW" in the topic field. His e-mail is [Charlie.Crist@MyFlorida.com](mailto:Charlie.Crist@MyFlorida.com).