



2010 World Series of Poker Presented by Jack Link's Beef Jerky  
Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino  
Las Vegas, Nevada

Official Report  
Event #8  
No-Limit Hold'em  
Buy-In: \$1,500  
Number of Entries: 2,341  
Total Net Prize Pool: \$3,160,350  
Number of Places Paid: 243  
First Place Prize: \$568,974  
June 2-4, 2010

## Tournament Headlines

Pascal Lefrancois Wins First WSOP Gold Bracelet

Montreal College Student Collects \$568,974 in Prize Money

Lefrancois Cheered on to Victory by "Team V-Neck"

United Nations – Six Countries Represented at Final Table: Australia, Brazil, Canada, England, Israel, and the United States

The Poker Brat is Back: Phil Hellmuth Cashes, His 76<sup>th</sup> All-Time In-the-Money Finish

## Overview

[Pascal Lefrancois](#) was the winner of the \$1,500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em championship (Event #8). He is a 23-year-old college student from Montreal, Quebec. He is currently pursuing a business degree at Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales de Montreal (HEC), which is affiliated with the Universite de Montreal. The Canadian victor collected \$568,974 in what was a display of total dominance, particularly at the final table. Lefrancois earned his first WSOP gold bracelet.

Lefrancois topped a huge field of 2,341 players and won the game's most coveted prize. The tournament began on Wednesday, June 2nd and ended at 2:30 am on Saturday, June 5th. His victory was cheered on at the Rio in Las Vegas by a rowdy group of French Canadians, who ringed the final table and roared every time Lefrancois won a big hand. Indeed, a World

Cup atmosphere prevailed most of the night, as six different nations were represented at the final table -- Australia, Brazil, Canada, England, Israel, and the United States.

The runner up was Max Josef Steinberg, a 21-year-old poker pro who cashed at the WSOP for the first time. Among those who also cashed was 11-time WSOP gold bracelet winner [Phil Hellmuth](#). With his 15th-place finish, Hellmuth extended his lead as the all-time WSOP leader in cashes, currently at 76.

For official tournament results and additional details, please [CLICK HERE](#).

## The Champion – Pascal Lefrancois

The \$1,500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em champion (Event #8) is Pascal Lefrancois, from Montreal, Quebec (Canada).

Lefrancois is 23-years-old. He was born in Montreal.

Lefrancois speaks both English and French.

Lefrancois is a college student majoring in finance. He is currently in his senior year at Ecole des Hautes Etudes Commerciales de Montreal (HEC), which is affiliated with the Universite de Montreal.

Lefrancois will graduate from college in December 2010.

Lefrancois began playing poker with friends at the age of 17.

Lefrancois is a huge fan of the NHL's Montreal Canadiens.

Oddly enough, Lefrancois wore a MLB Colorado Rockies cap at the final table. He wore the cap because he likes to support fellow Canadians. He is a fan of Canadian-born Rockies pitcher Jeff Francis.

Lefrancois played ice hockey in high school. When he was 17, he began playing poker for fun and gradually became more involved in the game.

Lefrancois has only one other recorded cash in tournaments, which was a 243<sup>rd</sup>-place showing in a No-Limit Hold'em event at last year's WSOP.

Lefrancois collected \$568,974 for first place. He was presented with his first WSOP gold bracelet.

According to official records, Lefrancois now has one win, one final table appearance, and two cashes at the WSOP. His career WSOP earnings now total \$571,782.

Lefrancois becomes the second Canadian champion so far at this year's WSOP. Aadam Daya won the \$1,000 buy-in NLHE tournament (Event #3) which concluded two days ago.

Lefrancois joins several fellow Canadians who have won WSOP gold bracelets, including Daniel Negreanu, Robert Cheung, Randy Holland, Nenad Medic, and Greg Mueller.

Following his victory, Lefrancois ripped off his shirt and posed bare-skinned in the traditional winner's photo shot. It was the first time any player in the history of the WSOP had gone bare-chested for the champion's portrait. Lefrancois was inspired to do something different by his friends, who are part of a group which calls themselves, "Team V-Neck." The group

routinely wears v-neck t-shirts.

Lefrancois says he expects to take a year off and play poker, but expects to return later to a conventional job working in the business world.

## Winner Quotes

On how he first became interested in playing poker: "I always liked to play cards. Five years ago, I was playing hockey and I learned about poker. That became a passion for me. I did that while I studied."

On how winning may change his future plans: "I will graduate (from college) in December. After that, I might take a year off to play poker on the circuit. This is a big accomplishment for me. For sure, I will be playing poker for a couple of years."

On why he decided to rip off his shirt and pose bare-chested for the traditional WSOP portrait, which was hosted moments after his victory: "It was an inside joke with my friends. We always laugh about our v-necks. We are "Team V-Neck," because we wear those kinds of shirts. They were all cheering for me to take off my shirt. I was excited, so I did it."

On having the support of friends during a poker tournament, particularly at a final table: "It's incredibly important. When you are playing three days in a row, you get tired. But when you hear your friends and they are cheering for you, it helps to keep your mind in the game and not to do dumb things. I do not want to disappoint them."

## The Final Table

The final table consisted of no former WSOP gold bracelet winners.

Six different nations were represented at the final table -- Australia, Brazil, Canada, England, Israel, and the United States

The final table began nine-handed.

Final table participants ranged in age from 21 to 39.

The runner up was Max Josef Steinberg, from Fairfield, IA. He is a 21-year-old professional poker player who has never held any other job other than as a poker player. He is a devoted believer in the power of Transcendental Meditation and grew up in a small community that ascribes to the values and virtues of TM. He took fourth place in an event held at the Latin American Poker Tour in Costa Rica. This was his biggest cash ever, and his first WSOP in-the-money finish – worth \$352,916.

The third-place finisher was Kevin Howe, from Kent, UK. He was formally enlisted in the Royal Navy for nine years and now plays poker professionally. Howe cashed for \$200,000 in an online tournament, but eclipsed that figure with this third-place finish, which paid \$249,351.

The fourth-place finisher was Daniel Wjuniski, a high-tech entrepreneur from Sao Paulo, Brazil. He hoped to become the second WSOP gold bracelet winner from Brazil (Alexandre Gomes was the first, in 2008). But Wjuniski ended up in fourth place instead – worth \$179,286 in prize money.

The fifth-place finisher was David Aue, from Houston, TX. He also cashed in the \$1,500 No-Limit Hold'em tournament (Event #3), which means he outlasted nearly 7,000 players between the two events. Aue was paid \$130,617.

The sixth-place finisher was Jim Anderson, from Canberra, Australia. This was his first time to cash in a WSOP event. Anderson collected \$96,422 in prize money.

The seventh-place finisher was Kurt di Sessa, from Oakland, CA. This was his first time to cash in a WSOP event. Di Sessa received \$72,087.

The eighth-place finisher was Josh Brikis, a poker pro from Pittsburgh, PA. Last year, he finished second in the \$5,000 Six-Handed No-Limit Hold'em event, worth \$619,608. This time he received \$54,579 for eighth place.

The ninth-place finisher was Saar Wilf, from Tel Aviv, Israel. Last year, he cashed in both the WSOP Main Event championship as well as the WSOP Europe Main Event championship. Wilf, who sold his high tech company to eBay for nine-figures (that's no typo) a few years ago, received \$41,842.

The final table officially began at 8:10 pm and ended at 2:30 am. The final table clocked in at 6 hours, 20 minutes.

## Other In-the-Money Finishers

The top 243 finishers collected prize money. Aside from those who made the final table, former WSOP gold bracelet finishers who cashed in this event included – Phil Hellmuth, Vincent Burgio, Andrew Cohen, David Daneshgar, John Esposito, Maciek Gracz, Cliff Josephy, Jordan Smith, and Steve Sung

With his 15th-place finish, Phil Hellmuth extended his lead as the all-time WSOP leader in cashes, currently at 76

## Odds and Ends

This is the 838<sup>th</sup> gold bracelet event in World Series of Poker history. Note: This figure includes every official WSOP event played, including tournaments during the early years when there were no actual gold bracelets awarded. It also includes the 11 gold bracelets awarded at WSOP Europe (to date).

The total prize pool amounted to \$3,160,350.

The final table was played on the ESPN secondary stage. The mix of international players made for a festive atmosphere as some of the finalists were cheered on by large contingents of fellow countrymen. Daniel Wjuniski, from Sao Paulo, was draped in the Brazilian flag. Other groups of spectators were chanting in foreign languages.

The official WSOP gold bracelet ceremony takes place on the day following the winner's victory (or some hours later when the tournament runs past midnight). The ceremony takes place inside The Pavilion, which is the expansive main tournament room hosting all noon starts this year. The ceremony begins at the conclusion of the first break of the noon tournament, usually around 2:20 pm. The national anthem of the winner's nation is played.

The entire presentation is open to public and media. Video and photography are permitted by both public and members of the media.

Lefrancois requested that the national anthem of Canada be played at his WSOP gold bracelet ceremony.

## Event History

An alternative lower buy-in No-Limit Hold'em tournament (less than \$10,000) has been included as part of the WSOP schedule every year since 1973. Over the years, these buy-in amounts have ranged from \$1,000 up to \$5,000. However, more \$1,500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em tournaments have now taken place at the WSOP over the past 39-years than any other event.

There were seven \$1,500 No-Limit Hold'em tournaments on the 2009 WSOP schedule. This game and buy-in level has consistently proven to be the most popular draw on the schedule in recent years, aside from the Main Event. However, with the expansion of \$1,000 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em tournaments, attendance for the \$1,500s is expected to drop slightly from last year, since many players chose to play in the lower buy-in events.

The 2010 WSOP is hosting huge No-Limit Hold'em events every weekend. Fridays include a \$1,500 No-Limit Hold'em tournament. Then, a \$1,000 buy-in event takes place on Saturday and Sunday (two flights/starting days). Each Monday includes another \$1,500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em event. All Day One starting times are noon.

The equivalent of this tournament (the second \$1,500 NLHE tournament on the schedule) was won by Peter Vilandos, from Houston, TX. He did not enter this tournament.

## Tournament Play

The tournament was played over three consecutive days, from June 2-4, 2010. Actually, given the tournament officially ended past midnight, the tournament stretched into a fourth day.

Lefrancois dominated play at the final table. He held the lead most of the way and was more than 2 to 1 ahead of the rest of the field for a majority of play. When heads-up play began, Lefrancois enjoyed a 9 to 1 chip lead over Max Josef Steinberg.

The final hand of the tournament came when both players saw a flop cheaply. The initial board cards showed Kh Jc 4c. Steinberg bet out, and Lefrancois called. The 5h came on the turn, and Steinberg made a modest-sized bet, which attracted a quick call by Lefrancois. The Td came on the river. Steinberg moved all-in and was called by Lefrancois. Steinberg tabled 4h 3d – good for a pair of 4s. Lefrancois showed Js 6c, good for a pair of jacks. Lefrancois became the champion as about a dozen French Canadians roared.

## 2010 WSOP Statistics

Through the conclusion of Event #8 the 2010 WSOP has attracted 11,082 total entries; \$19,343,700 in prize money has been awarded to winners.

Through the conclusion of Event #8, the nationalities of winners have been:

United States (4)  
Canada (2)  
England (1)  
Hungary (1)

Through the conclusion of Event #8, the national origin (birthplace) of winners has been:

United States (3)  
Vietnam (1)  
Canada (2)  
England (1)  
Hungary (1)

Through the conclusion of Event #8, the ratio of professional poker players to semi-pros and amateurs who won gold bracelets is as follows:

Professional Players (4): Michael Chow, Michael Mizrachi, Praz Bansi, Josh Tieman, Peter Gelencser

Semi-Pros (0): None

Amateurs (3): Duc Pham, Aadam Daya, Pascal Lefrancois

*Note: All results are now official and may be reprinted by media. If you are posting these results on a website, we would appreciate providing a link back to: [www.wsop.com](http://www.wsop.com). Thank you.*

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*For official news and the latest updates from the 2010 World Series of Poker, visit: [www.wsop.com](http://www.wsop.com)*

*For statistics and historical information from the 2010 World Series of Poker, contact Nolan Dalla at: [nolandalla@aol.com](mailto:nolandalla@aol.com) or [nolandalla@gmail.com](mailto:nolandalla@gmail.com)*

*For official photographs from the 2010 World Series of Poker, visit: [www.wsopphotos.com](http://www.wsopphotos.com)*

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