



2011 World Series of Poker Presented by Jack Link's Beef Jerky  
Rio All-Suite Hotel and Casino  
Las Vegas, Nevada

Official Report  
Event #1  
Casino Employees Championship – No-Limit Hold'em  
Buy-In: \$500  
Number of Entries: 850  
Total Net Prize Pool: \$382,500  
Number of Places Paid: 81  
First Place Prize: \$82,292  
June 1-3, 2010

## TOURNAMENT HEADLINES:

Sean R. Drake Wins Rio's First WSOP Gold Bracelet of 2011

Part-Time Poker Dealer from California Wins Casino Employees Championship

2011 WSOP Begins in Grand Style – Thousands Pack Rio for Opening Weekend

Attendance in First Gold Bracelet Event Up 18 Percent Over Last Year

One Gold Bracelet Won – 57 More to Go!

## OVERVIEW

The Rio's first World Series of Poker tournament of the year has come to a thrilling conclusion with the crowning of a new poker champion.

Sean R. Drake, from Folsom, CA won the Casino Employees Championship (Event #1). He won \$82,292 in prize money. Drake was also presented with his first-ever WSOP gold bracelet, which is the ultimate prize in poker.

Drake, age 27, is a part-time poker dealer who works at the Folsom Lake Bowl. Although he still pitches cards across the felt regularly, Drake has also enjoyed a good run in recent poker tournaments, particularly in a few of the major online events. He's won more than \$150,000 playing online this year.

The victory sets Drake up well financially for the summer as he planned to come to Las Vegas and play in several events. With an addition infusion of cash into his bankroll, Drake hopes to catapult himself into an even more successful career as a full-time player.

The runner up was Jason Baker, a poker dealer and floorman from Assiniboia, Saskatchewan (Canada).

The tournament was originally planned as a two-day affair. However, the large turnout mandated that a third day be added to the schedule. Attendance was up significantly for this tournament over last year when there were 721 entrants. The 850 mark this year represented an increase of about 18 percent.

This was classified as the first competition on the WSOP schedule, since it was the first gold bracelet actually awarded at the Rio, which has hosted the world's most prestigious tournament series since 2005. However, in reality -- the first

WSOP gold bracelet of the year was won three days earlier by Sam Barnhart, from Little Rock, AR. He won the WSOP Circuit National Championship, which was afforded WSOP gold bracelet status for the first time.

Just prior to the start of the Rio's first event, WSOP Tournament Director Jack Effel took the main stage inside the Pavilion Tournament Room and began things in grand style. Keeping with ritual that has become an annual tradition, all casino employees in the room were asked to join in with a rousing rendition of the customary announcement which begins all WSOP events.

"Shuffle Up and Deal" boomed across the arena at 12:35 pm on Tuesday, when cards flew into the air for the first time on the tournament floor. Over the next seven weeks, the Rio will be the epicenter of all things poker-related. Poker players, media and fans from all over the world are expected to flood into Las Vegas for what promises to be the most exciting and expansive WSOP in history.

The Casino Employees Championship has been the launching pad of most WSOP calendars since it was first added as a gold bracelet event, back in 2000. The tournament was initially called the "Dealers World Poker Championship," since the tournament was only open to casino dealers at the time. The following year, all casino employees became eligible. The inaugural event attracted only 109 entries. It doubled in size the next year due to the expanded eligibility.

The tournament was originally added to the WSOP schedule to recognize the considerable contributions of many dedicated professionals in the gaming industry. It has been an official gold bracelet event during all 12 years it's been held. From 2000 to 2003, the Casino Employees Championship was played as a Limit Hold'em tournament. Since 2004, the event has been a No-Limit Hold'em tournament. The largest turnout in history for this event took place at the 2006 WSOP when 1,232 players entered.

Sean Drake became only the 12th person in history to win a gold bracelet in this tournament.

## THE CHAMPION – SEAN R. DRAKE

The 2011 World Series of Poker "Casino Employees Champion" is Sean R. Drake, from Folsom, CA.

Drake is a poker dealer. He works part-time at the Folsom Lake Bowl, which houses a bowling alley, bar, and five poker tables. In California, some local communities allow licensed poker games in small venues such as bars and restaurants.

Drake is 27-years-old. He was born in San Luis Obispo, CA.

Drake attended and played football at Modesto Junior College.

Drake is single.

Drake previously worked at a car dealership. He did very well financially as a car salesman, however, the economic downturn a few years ago resulted in a job loss. He then started playing poker more and gradually became a winning player.

Drake played a lot of online poker, up until recent developments. He admits he enjoyed a few winning streaks, but later "blew it all." He says he is wiser and more disciplined as a player now.

When Drake played poker online, his player name was BABYDRAKE.

Drake collected \$82,292 for first place. He was also awarded his first WSOP gold bracelet.

According to official records, Drake now has 1 win, 1 final table appearance, and 1 in-the-money finish at the WSOP.

Drake currently has \$82,292 in WSOP winnings.

Drake is to be regarded as a semi-pro poker player since he both works and plays poker for extra income.

## WINNER QUOTES

On winning his first WSOP gold bracelet: "I did not think it would mean anything at first. But now, it's like 'wow.' I wanted that gold bracelet as soon as they put it on the final table. At that point, it was the only thing I was gunning for. I told my friends, I'm going to win this. I want to be one of the guys who said he would win, and then do it."

On working at Folsom Lake Bowl: "It's a great place. We have five poker tables. It's the best \$1-3 game in Sacramento."

On surviving the swings of playing poker, particularly at a final table where he took at least one bad beat: "I really used to be crazy, emotionally. But (bad) things do not bother me anymore. Maybe you just have to get cold-hearted about it. You have to have a 'I don't give a (expletive deleted)' attitude about the game. A few years ago when I took a beat, it would affect me. But I do not let it bother me anymore."

On his heads-up opponent, Jason Baker: "He had me sweating the whole time. He was very good. For someone who did not play a lot heads-up, he played very well."

On his confidence level entering the final day: "I expected to win at the final table. But the cards have to fall your way, too."

On how things went in the tournament: "I really did not run like God (in this tournament). It's really about aggression."

On people he wanted to thank: "I want to thank my mom, dad, my sister, my grandma, Bill, Alison, and all of my friends at Folsom Lake Bowl."

On returning to work after winning nearly six-figures and a gold bracelet: "I'm here to stay in Las Vegas this summer. If I go broke, they'll let me go back. But, that's not the plan."

## THE FINAL TABLE

The final table contained no former WSOP gold bracelet winners.

The final table was comprised of nine players, which included the following occupations:

Casino Dealer -- 5

Casino Host -- 1

Investor/Owner -- 1

Bartender -- 1

Waiter -- 1

Final table players were from three different nations, including Canada, Italy, and the United States. Five different states were represented at the final table -- including California, Colorado, Nevada, Washington and Hawaii.

Final table participants ranged in age from 27 (youngest) to 58 (oldest).

The runner up was Jason Baker, from Assiniboia, Saskatchewan (Canada). He is a 34-year-old poker dealer and floorman. Baker survived heart surgery back in 2001 and nearly won a gold bracelet. He had a 2-1 chip lead at one point when play was heads-up. But Baker lost a series of late hands and ended up finishing second. He collected a \$50,807 consolation prize.

The third-place finisher was Claudio Falcaro, from Venice, Italy. He became the highest finisher in the history of this event for any Italian player.

The fourth-place finisher was Christopher Perez. He is a 38-year-old server from Las Vegas, NV. He finished in 21<sup>st</sup> place in this same event last year.

The fifth-place finisher was Daniel T. Quach. He is a 30-year-old bartender from Honolulu, HI.

The sixth-place finisher was Richard Kozlowski, from Las Vegas, NV. He is a 41-year-old casino host.

The seventh-place finisher was Adam Falk, from Las Vegas, NV. He is a 27-year-old self-employed poker dealer who works regularly traveling on the WSOP Circuit.

The eighth-place finisher was Joseph Zeman, from Seattle, WA. He is a 58-year-old investor. He previously won a major tournament held at the Wild Horse Casino, in Oregon.

The ninth-place finisher was Edward Marcus, from Blackhawk, CO. He is a 46-year-old casino dealer. He has now played in just two WSOP events -- both Casino Employee Championships -- and has cashed both times.

## OTHER IN-THE-MONEY FINISHERS

No former WSOP gold bracelet winners cashed in this event.

Chuck Thompson, who made the final table of the 1995 WSOP Main Event (finishing 6<sup>th</sup> that year) ended up as the 48<sup>th</sup>-place finisher. Thompson enjoyed his first WSOP cash back in 1984. He is a host at the Bay 101 Casino, in San Jose, CA.

## ODDS AND ENDS

Attendance for this tournament increased over the previous year, when there were 721 entries. The 850 player field in 2011 represents an 18 percent increase over 2010.

The tournament began in grand fashion with WSOP Tournament Director Jack Effel standing tall and proud on the Pavilion Stage welcoming players to the first event on this year's schedule. In his opening remarks, Effel said, "All of you are special to us. Without casino employees, there is no live poker. Without casino employees, there is no Las Vegas. Without casino employees, there is no WSOP." The last comment evoked loud cheers from the gallery of players and spectators.

The tournament was originally schedule to be played over two consecutive days. It was extended by default into a third day due to the large field size.

The Casino Employees Championship is not considered an "open" event, since entry is restricted to workers in the gaming industry. This is one of just three non-open events on the 2010 WSOP schedule. The other non-open events are the Ladies Championship and the Seniors Championship. All the other 55 tournaments are open events, since anyone over the age of 21 is eligible to enter.

The official WSOP gold bracelet ceremony takes place on the day following the winner's victory (or some hours later when the tournament ends very late). The ceremony takes place inside The Pavilion, which is the expansive main tournament room which hosts all noon starts this year. The ceremony begins at the conclusion of the first break of the noon tournament. The ceremony usually starts 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 is permitted by both public and members of the media.

Sean Drake's gold bracelet ceremony is set to take place on Saturday, June 5<sup>th</sup>. The U.S. National Anthem will be played in honor of his victory.

## EVENT HISTORY

The first Casino Employees Championship was held at the 2000 WSOP. It was then called the "Dealers World Poker Championship." At the time, the tournament was only open to casino dealers. The following year, all casino employees became eligible. The inaugural event attracted only 109 entries. It doubled in size the next year due to the expanded eligibility.

The Casino Employees Championship was initially added to the WSOP schedule to recognize the considerable contributions of many dedicated professionals in the gaming industry. It has been an official gold bracelet event during all 12 years it's been held.

From 2000 to 2003, the Casino Employees Championship was played as a Limit Hold'em tournament. Since 2004, the event has been a No-Limit Hold'em tournament.

The largest turnout in history for this event took place at the 2006 WSOP when 1,232 players entered.

This event has traditionally been held either at the very start of the WSOP, or the very end. It has been the first event of the WSOP during the last three years.

The previous list of previous winners of the Casino Employees Championship includes:

Hoai Pham (2010)  
Andrew Cohen (2009)  
Jonathan Kotula (2008)

Eric Narciso (2007)  
Chris Gros (2006)  
Andy Nguyen (2005)  
Carl "Coach" Nessel (2004)  
David Lukaszweski (2003)  
David Warga (2002)  
Travis Jonas (2001)  
Dave Alizadeh (2000)

No event champion has ever repeated, or gone on to win any other WSOP gold bracelet.

## TOURNAMENT PLAY

The \$500 buy-in Casino Employees Championship was a No-Limit Hold'em competition. The tournament attracted 850 entries. The total prize pool amounted to \$382,500. The top 81 finishers collected prize money – which is nine more players than were paid last year.

At one point when play was ten-handed, Jason Baker enjoyed nearly a 3 to 1 chip lead over his closest rival. He had the eventual winner Sean Drake covered by more than a 5 to 1 margin. Baker ended up finishing second.

Day Three included only the last four players. Drake was the chip leader when play became four-handed.

The final table officially lasted about 8.75 hours, but was spread across two days.

The tournament officially began on Wednesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 10:30 pm. The tournament officially ended the following day (after 12 hour break) on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 7:15 pm.

## 2011 WSOP STATISTICS

Through the conclusion of Event #1, the 2011 WSOP has attracted 950 entries. \$1,382,500 in prize money has been awarded to winners, so far (Note the \$1 million freeroll – WSOP Circuit National Championship -- was the first gold bracelet event of the year).

This year, there are 59 gold bracelet events being held in Las Vegas. This is an increase of two events over last year's number --57.

The average age of players in this event was 39.54 years. The average age of those who cashed was 39.58 years. The average age of final table players was 48.44 years.

There were 94 females who entered the first event. This figure represents 11.06 percent of the field.

Through the conclusion of this tournament, the nationalities of gold bracelet winners has been:  
United States (2)

Through the conclusion of this tournament, the national origin (birthplace) of winners has been:  
United States (2)

Through the conclusion of this event, the states of winners has been:  
Arkansas (1)  
California (1)

Through the conclusion of this tournament, the breakdown of professional poker players to semi-pros and amateurs who won gold bracelets is as follows:

Professional Players (0):

Semi-Pros (1): Sean R. Drake

Amateurs (1): Sam Barnhart

*Note: Various categories and statistics will be updated with each gold bracelet event as they are completed.*

*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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