



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

Official Report
Event #12
Triple-Chance No-Limit Hold'em
Buy-In: \$1,500
Number of Entries: 1,340
Total Net Prize Pool: \$1,809,000
Number of Places Paid: 144
First Place Prize: \$352,808
June 7-9, 2011

TOURNAMENT HEADLINES:

David Diaz Wins Triple-Chance No-Limit Hold'em Championship

Honduran-Born Poker Grinder Wins First WSOP Gold Bracelet

Memphis Poker Pro Collects \$352,808 Top Prize

Norwegian Anders Meli Finishes as Runner-Up

2011 WSOP Continues Attendance Increase over Last Year

One Dozen Gold Bracelets Won – 46 More Still Up For Grabs

OVERVIEW

Las Vegas, NV (June 9, 2011) – Every so often the World Series of Poker spawns a very special story that transcends card playing and places towering bundles of prize money and shiny new gold bracelets into their proper context.

David Diaz has provided such a story.

Beneath the glow of the Las Vegas Strip, Diaz just won the most recent WSOP event, which was the \$1,500 Triple-Chance No-Limit Hold'em Championship. He collected \$352,808 in cash for his victory and was presented with the ultimate symbol of achievement in the game of poker -- the WSOP gold bracelet.

But Diaz' greatest lifetime victory took place 22 years ago.

As a child growing up in Honduras, Diaz was accustomed to daily struggle. His family's daily ritual didn't include casino gambling or entering big-time poker tournaments. Staying alive and remaining healthy were the equal to being dealt pocket kings and aces. For a little boy named David -- beset with the griping trials of incessant poverty, lack of nutritious food, and little opportunity for education or advancement -- things were about to go from bad to worse. The four-year-old was hit with his biggest challenge of all when he was diagnosed with cancer.

Cancer.

It's a six-letter word no four-year-old can quite understand nor comprehend in terms of its potential devastation.

At the time, for most children living in Central America, a cancer prognosis might as well have been a death sentence. Diaz had few medical facilities that could treat his condition. Worse, his family did not have the money to pay for proper treatment.

But Diaz and his family got a big break. In poker parlance, they hit a proverbial one-outer on the river. The "dealer" in the game of life and death was none other than the late, great actor and philanthropist Danny Thomas and the extraordinary medical facility he helped to create, called St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. It was quite literally young David's salvation.

Diaz was taken from Honduras to Memphis, TN, to undergo medical treatment. Some years later, he was finally cured and cancer free.

Diaz and his family eventually went on to settle down as legal residents in the United States. They moved to New Jersey, where he attended school. Diaz learned English. He made new friends.

Now, at the age of 26, Diaz is a professional poker player. He's become a self-described "grinder," which means he spends countless hours squeezing out a profit playing in cash games. In recent years, Diaz has traveled around the tournament circuit. Wherever the action may be, Diaz shows up. He could usually be found sitting in a juicy cash game or hanging out with one of his many friends, who tend to congregate around major card rooms located in the American South.

Even with some modest success as a player, no one could have possibly foreseen the monster-sized score he would earn at this year's WSOP. Diaz entered a \$1,500 buy-in poker tournament with 1,340 entrants. Three days later, he was the new champion.

Late on a Thursday night, as Diaz reached across the green felt of the final table he had just conquered preparing to snap on his gold bracelet for the first time, what the rest of the world didn't know was -- *he was a two-time winner.*

This was the 12th event (of 58) on this year's WSOP schedule. The total prize pool amounted to \$1,809,000. The top 144 finishers collected prize money. Among those who cashed were former WSOP gold bracelet winners – Bill Chen (4th), J.C. Tran (28th), Cliff Josephy (37th), Carlos Mortensen (40th), Ted Forrest (80th), and David Sklansky (142nd).

So far, this year's tournament series has produced several newcomers to WSOP stardom, including Diaz. Remarkably, all of the first dozen gold bracelet winners have been first-time winners. In fact, several tournaments (five of 12) were won by players who had never previously finished in-the-money in any WSOP tournament.

For a list of all players who cashed, in Event #12, and for all the details of this event, click [HERE](#).

EVENT #12 CHAMPION – DAVID DIAZ

The 2011 World Series of Poker \$1,500 buy-in Triple-Chance No-Limit Hold'em champion is David Diaz, from Memphis, TN.

Diaz is 26-years-old.

Diaz was born in Honduras. He immigrated to the United States at the age of four with this family.

Diaz is a cancer survivor. He initially came to the U.S. for medical treatment at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, in Memphis. He made a full recovery.

Diaz spent several years growing up in New Jersey.

Diaz is a professional poker player. He plays mostly in cash games. Diaz plays in many card rooms around the country – mostly in Tunica, Biloxi, New Orleans, and casinos throughout the Midwest.

Diaz is fluent in both English and Spanish.

Diaz has played at the WSOP during each of the last three years. His best previous finish was a sixth-place showing in the \$1,500 buy-in Six-Handed No-Limit Hold'em tournament, held last year.

Diaz collected a \$352,808 for first place. He was also awarded his first WSOP gold bracelet.

Prior to this victory, Diaz's best major tournament performance was a second-place finish at the WSOP Circuit Main Event Championship at the Isle (in Biloxi, MS), last November. He finished in second place and earned more than \$82,000.

Diaz now has 30 major tournament cashes.

According to official records, Diaz now has 1 win, 2 final table appearances, and 5 in-the-money finishes at the WSOP.

Diaz currently has \$454,778 career WSOP winnings. He has an estimated \$800,000 in live tournament career winnings, according to several major popular websites. This does not include online play.

Diaz is to be regarded as a poker pro, since he has been playing full-time for about five years.

WINNER QUOTES (*Note: The winner was interviewed at tableside moments after the victory*)

On beating cancer and immigrating to the U.S.: "I had cancer when I was four-years old. I had family that lived in New Jersey – my Aunt Rosa and Ramon. They brought me down to Memphis because that was the only hospital for children that had been treated with that type of thing. They pretty much saved my life."

More on St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis: "Great hospital. They saved my life, and saved a lot of kids' lives."

On what he expected/expects at this year's WSOP: "I really thought I was going to win two bracelets for some reason, I don't really know why."

On winning his first WSOP gold bracelet: "It feels great. I can't even take it all in yet."

On his plans in the foreseeable future: "We're about to go party tonight, that's for sure."

THE FINAL TABLE

The official final table was comprised of nine players.

The final table contained only one former gold bracelet winner – two-time champion, Bill Chen.

Four different nations were represented at the final table. Players represented the following countries -- Great Britain (1 player), Italy (1 player), Norway (1 player), and the United States (6 players).

The runner-up was Anders Meli, from Norway. He is a 25-year-old student making his first WSOP in-the-money finish. Meli made this one count, good for \$218,183.

The third-place finisher was Andrea Dato, from Rome, Italy. He is a 32-year-old poker pro, who previously worked as an engineer. Following the tournament, Dato was praised for being a tough player by the eventual winner, Diaz. This marked his first time to cash at the WSOP.

The fourth-place finisher was two-time gold bracelet champion, Bill Chen. The quantitative analyst who works in high finance is widely-acknowledged to be one of the brightest minds in the game. He co-authored "The Mathematics of Poker." Chen's victories were both in 2006 (\$3,000 buy-in Limit Hold'em and \$2,500 buy-in Six-Handed No-Limit Hold'em). Chen is a graduate of both Washington University in St. Louis and UC-Berkeley.

The fifth-place finisher was Corey Hastings, from Amarillo, TX. He holds a B.A. from West Texas A&M University. He is a 35-year-old manager. This was the second time he cashed in at a WSOP event.

The sixth-place finisher was Richard Trigg, from Sheffield, UK. He is a 26-year-old poker pro. With his appearance at a final table, at least one British player had appeared in 8 of the 12 final tables played, so far.

The seventh-place finisher was Justin Sternberg, from Post Falls, ID. This was his first time to cash at the WSOP.

The eighth-place finisher was Nicholas Rampone, from Las Vegas, NV. He is a 24-year-old poker pro who holds a B.S. in psychology.

The ninth-place finisher was Matthew Henson, from Joliet, IL. He is a 30-year-old online poker pro. He previously served in the U.S. Navy. This was WSOP cash number one.

Final table play began at 3 p.m. on Thursday. Play ended at 11:10 p.m. The finale went about 8 hours and 10 minutes.

The final table was played on ESPN's main stage. The final table areas are getting rave reviews in terms of design and appearance. No stage in the history of poker has ever looked as spectacular. Early reports from the television crew are that this year's preliminary footage looks "spectacular." Viewers will be able to see ESPN's coverage again once the WSOP Main Event begins.

Action was streamed live over WSOP.com. Viewers can tune in and watch most of this year's final tables. Although hole cards are not shown, viewers can follow an overhead camera as well as a pan-shot of the table. The floor announcer will provide an official account of the action.

OTHER IN-THE-MONEY FINISHERS

The top 144 finishers collected prize money.

The defending champion was Ryan Welch, from Henderson, NV. He did not enter this year, perhaps because he went quite deep in the preceding tournament (Six-Handed No-Limit Hold'em), where he finished 12th.

Several former WSOP gold bracelet winners cashed in this event – including Bill Chen (4th), J.C. Tran (28th), Cliff Josephy (37th), Carlos Mortensen (40th), Ted Forrest (80th), and David Sklansky (142nd).

With this cash, three-time gold bracelet champion and noted poker author and theorist David Sklansky has now cashed six consecutive years. He has also cashed 19 different years at the WSOP.

Tournament results are to be included in the WSOP official records. Results are also to be included in the 2011 WSOP "Player of the Year" race.

ODDS AND ENDS

This is the 905th gold bracelet awarded in World Series of Poker history. This figure includes every official WSOP event ever played, including tournaments during the early years when there were no actual gold bracelets awarded. It also includes the 16 gold bracelets awarded to date at WSOP Europe (2007-2010). Moreover for the first time ever, one gold bracelet was awarded for this year's winner of the WSOP Circuit National Championship.

This tournament enjoyed a significant increase in attendance over the previous year. There were 965 entrants in 2010. This year, there were 1,340 entrants. However, it should be noted this year's buy-in was \$1,500, as opposed to \$3,000 last year.

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 hosting 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 the public and media. Video and photography is permitted by both the public and members of the media.

Diaz's gold bracelet ceremony is set to take place on Saturday, June 11th. The winner's choice of a national anthem (United States or Honduras) had not been determined at press time.

EVENT HISTORY

This is only the fifth Triple-Chance tournament in WSOP history.

Re-buy tournaments were discontinued following the 2007 World Series. One reason was because re-buys gave a competitive edge to players with deeper pockets. A different format was introduced called the "Triple-Chance" tournament. This format provides all players with an equal opportunity to win, irrespective of bankroll size. Triple-chance tournaments debuted in 2008, as the two biggest Pot-Limit Omaha tournaments were played using this format.

In this year's Triple Chance tournament, players were given a starting stack, plus two free lammers, which could be used at anytime to re-buy more chips. All players are given the same number of lammers. Some players choose to re-buy for the maximum number of chips immediately, preferring a large stack from the start. Other players preferred to minimize the risk of going bust by using the lammers to re-enter the tournament (re-buy) with a new stack. So all players theoretically begin with the same number of chips and had an equal chance to win.

This is the first of two Triple-Chance tournaments. The upcoming tournament will be a \$5,000 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em event.

TOURNAMENT PLAY

The tournament was played over three consecutive days.

The tournament officially began on Tuesday, June 7th at noon. The tournament officially ended on Thursday, June 9th, at 11:10 pm.

2011 WSOP STATISTICS

Through the conclusion of Event #12, the 2011 WSOP has attracted 12,064 entries. \$23,891,800 in prize money has been awarded to winners, so far.

Through the conclusion of this tournament, the nationality of gold bracelet winners has been:

United States (9)
Great Britain (2)
Russia (1)

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

United States (6)
Great Britain (2)
Ukraine (1)
Israel (1)
Russia (1)
Honduras (1)

Through the conclusion of this event, the home-states of (American) winners have been:

Nevada (2)
California (1)
Illinois (1)
New York (1)
New Jersey (1)
Florida (1)
Texas (1)
Tennessee (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 (9): Jake Cody, Cheech Barbaro, Eugene Katchalov, Allen Bari, Harrison Wilder, Matt Perrins, Sean Getzwiller, Viacheslav Zhukov, David Diaz

Semi-Pros (2): Sean R. Drake, Amir Lehavot

Amateurs (1): Geoffrey Klein

All of the first 12 tournaments completed so far have been won by first-time champions (non-winners from previous years).

Five of the first dozen winners this year also enjoyed their first-ever WSOP cash with their victory.

Every WSOP over the past 11 years has included at least one multiple gold bracelet champion (wins within the same year). 1999 was the last year the WSOP was comprised exclusively of single-event winners. The record for most multiple gold bracelet winners in a single year was in 2009, when five players managed to win two or more titles.

The streak of male WSOP gold bracelet winners has now reached 174 consecutive events. Aside from the annual Ladies Championship, the last female player to win a WSOP tournament open to both sexes was Vanessa Selbst, in 2008.

The highest finish by a female player (open events) at this year's WSOP was Maria Ho, who finished second (\$5,000 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em).