



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

Official Report
Event #14
Limit Hold'em
Buy-In: \$3,000
Number of Entries: 337
Total Net Prize Pool: \$920,010
Number of Places Paid: 36
First Place Prize: \$220,817
June 8-10, 2011

TOURNAMENT HEADLINES:

The Big Bonkowski

Tyler Bonkowski Wins Limit Hold'em Championship

Canadian Poker Pro Collects First WSOP Gold Bracelet

Limit Hold'em Champion Wins \$220,817 Top Prize

First Canadian Winner at 2011 WSOP

Brandon Demes Finishes as Runner Up

2011 WSOP Attendance Remains Ahead of Last Year

Fourteen Gold Bracelets Won – 44 More Still Up For Grabs

OVERVIEW

Tyler Bonkowski is the dude.

The Canadian poker pro was declared winner of the most recent World Series of Poker tournament, held at the Rio in Las Vegas. The 14th tournament on this year's schedule, which includes 58 events, was the \$3,000 buy-in Limit Hold'em Championship.

The tournament started midweek with 337 entries. Three days after it began, Bonkowski was the only player standing – make that sitting – at the final table at well past midnight. Piled high in front of his beaming smile were thousands of multi-colored poker chips and one very coveted prize – the WSOP gold bracelet. Bonkowski collected first-place prize money totaling \$220,817.

Bonkowski is a 26-year-old pro from Regina, Saskatchewan. He spent three years in college before finally deciding he didn't quite know what to do with this life. So, instead he started playing poker full-time. During that first year, Bonkowski discovered something he was both suited to do and enjoyed.

Prior to his WSOP win, Bonkowski's best tournament finished was a 14th-place showing at the 2011 Aussie Millions. He also took 19th-place in the 2010 Irish Open.

Bonkowski cashed three times at last year's WSOP. With each tournament played, he steadily improved his skills and stamina. The investment and experience paid off this year, as Bonkowski endured a wide gambit of strategic situations -- being the chip leader at one point and also being desperately low on chips when playing heads-up.

Bonkowski was down by about a 12 to 1 margin at one stage, but was never rattled. He stuck to his game plan and waited for the cards to turn in his favor. When they did, Bonkowski was there patiently waiting ready to enjoy the breeze of a wind in his sails.

The runner up was Brandon Demes, from Tempe, AZ. He is a 24-year-old poker pro. Demes put up a strong fight at the final table, but was never able to finish off the very determined Bonkowski. Second place paid \$136,419.

Among the more notable players who cashed in this event were Jeff Shulman, who made the final table of the 2009 WSOP Main Event. Sorel Mizzi also cashed, along with Victor Ramdin.

For a list of all players who cashed, in Event #14, and the entire tournament recap, please click [HERE](#).

EVENT #14 CHAMPION – TYLER BONKOWSKI

The 2011 World Series of Poker \$3,000 buy-in Limit Hold'em champion is Tyler Bonkowski, from Regina, Saskatchewan.

Bonkowski was born in Regina.

Bonkowski is a 26-year-old professional poker player.

Bonkowski attended college for three years. He changed majors several times. He finally decided to leave school and play post full-time.

Among the careers Bonkowski seriously considered before playing poker were police officer, accountant, and pharmacist.

Bonkowski has played at the WSOP during each of the last few years. His best previous finish was a 19th-place showing in the \$1,500 buy-in Limit Hold'em Shootout, last year.

Bonkowski collected a \$220,817 for first place. He was also awarded his first WSOP gold bracelet.

According to official records, Bonkowski now has 1 win, 1 final table appearances, and 4 in-the-money finishes at the WSOP.

Bonkowski currently has \$241,627 career WSOP winnings.

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

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

On his life before playing poker professionally: I started going to University right after high school and I spent three and a half years there. I changed what I wanted to go into like four or five times -- police officer, accountant, working in radio, and pharmacist. I don't think I had enough ambition for school at the time. After I was moving out of my first place I started playing poker online. Well I started playing with my friends first after the 'MoneyMaker' boom and then I got online, and it all went from there. After a year of fiddling around on there I got good enough that I thought I could do it as a living."

On the impact of "Black Friday" for him as a Canadian poker player: "It affects it but it does not impact my decision to play live tournaments. The American players are gone now, so I think there is less appeal to it. I actually think they are a little bit juicier, because there are not as many players. The tournaments are ok, but the cash games are destroyed."

On why he is now playing more live tournaments: "I get bored of grinding everyday online that's for sure."

On how it feels to win a WSOP gold bracelet: *“Winning the gold bracelet is huge. All I could think about last night was I was third in chips with 18 players left, and that’s still so much play to go. All I could think about was winning. Just kept telling myself -- ‘you’re going to play your best and things will happen if it happens.’ I tried to take my mind off it, but it was tough.”*

On making a big comeback when he was heads-up: *“When I was down 250 thousand, I was really mad. But I didn’t let it affect my play at all. But it was very frustrating. But then I got a couple of hands in a row and I started playing with confidence again and it just kind of went on a roll.”*

On anyone he wanted to thank and acknowledge afterward: *“(Fellow poker pro) Darren Woods. He helped my game since we joined, as we are sponsored pros. He’s usually the guy I go to and talk about strategy stuff and talk to him about all that stuff. He knows a lot more about No-Limit than I do. But even like heads-up play and short-handed, he knows different styles than I do because we both play a little bit different.”*

THE FINAL TABLE

The official final table was comprised nine players.

The final table contained no former gold bracelet winners. However, several players were well-known for multiple poker accomplishments and high finishes. In fact, this was a final table made up largely of (several) players considered by many to be among the best in the game not to have at least one WSOP victory.

Only two different nations were represented at the final table. Players represented the following countries – Canada (1 player) and the United States (8 players). This was perhaps a testament to Limit poker being primarily a North American game. No-Limit and Pot-Limit poker has always been much more popular than Limit poker in most countries, other than the U.S. and Canada.

The starting chip counts at the final table were as follows:

Brandon Demes -- 800,000 in chips
Shawn Keller -- 690,000 in chips
Tyler Bonkowski -- 474,000 in chips
Andrew Brongo -- 420,000 in chips
Mitch Schock -- 240,000 in chips
Casey McCarrel -- 162,000 in chips
Matt Sterling -- 117,000 in chips
Ron Burke -- 115,000 in chips
Jeff Shulman -- 58,000 – in chips

The runner up was Brandon Demes, from Chandler, AZ. He collected a consolation prize amounting to \$136,419.

The ninth-place finisher was Jeff Shulman, from Las Vegas, NV. He has made the WSOP Main Event final table twice, mostly recently finishing fifth in 2009.

Final table play began at 6:40 pm on a Friday afternoon. Play ended at 2 am on Saturday morning. The finale went about 7 hours and 20 minutes.

The final table was played on ESPN’s main stage. The final table areas are getting raves in terms of design and appearance. No stage in the history of poker has ever looked as spectacular.

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 provides an official account of the action.

The top 36 finishers collected prize money.

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.

WSOP “Player of the Year” standings can be found [HERE](#).

ODDS AND ENDS

This is the 907th 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.

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.

Bonkowski's gold bracelet ceremony is set to take place on Sunday, June 12th. The national anthem of Canada will be played in honor of his victory.

EVENT HISTORY

Limit Hold'em made its debut at the 1983 WSOP. The first-ever Limit Hold'em champion was Tom McEvoy, who won a preliminary even the same year he won the Main Event Championship.

During the 1990s, WSOP Limit Hold'em tournaments attracted the largest fields of any tournaments anywhere in the world. During many years, WSOP Limit Hold'em events had twice number of entrants as the Main Event.

The start of Limit Hold'em's popularity can be traced back to California's legalization of flop games (including Texas Hold'em) in 1988. Prior to the late 1980s, Limit Hold'em was spread in only a few small Las Vegas casinos and underground games, located mostly in the American South.

Limit Hold'em was the king of all games during most of the 1990s, except in the northeastern United States, where Seven-Card Stud was the dominant form of poker. In fact, finding a No-Limit Hold'em game was next to impossible anywhere – except at the most prestigious events such as the WSOP and the Hall of Fame (now defunct). In 2003, things started to change. No-Limit Hold'em quickly became the most popular form of poker played -- not only in the United States but worldwide. Today, Limit Hold'em tournaments are relatively uncommon except in the biggest poker markets.

The first time any poker tournament cracked the 1,000-player mark was during the 1999 Orleans Open (held at the Orleans in Las Vegas). It was a watershed breakthrough for tournament poker. Predictably, the then-record was set in a Limit Hold'em tournament. However, Limit poker tournaments no longer draw the big numbers of yesteryear, as No-Limit Hold'em is king in just about every country where poker is played.

The list of former Limit Hold'em champions is quite an illustrious group. Former champions include – Tom McEvoy, Berry Johnston, Humberto Brenes, Johnny Chan, Mickey Appleman, David Chiu, Jay Heimowitz, and Farzad Bonyadi.

TOURNAMENT PLAY

The tournament was played over three consecutive days.

The tournament officially began on Wednesday, June 8th at 5 pm. The tournament officially ended on Saturday, June 11th, at 2 am.

2011 WSOP STATISTICS

Through the conclusion of Event #14, the 2011 WSOP has attracted 13,841 entries. \$26,755,810 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 (10)

Great Britain (2)
Russia (1)
Canada (1)

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

United States (7)
Great Britain (2)
Ukraine (1)
Israel (1)
Russia (1)
Honduras (1)
Canada (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)
Connecticut (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 (11): Jake Cody, Cheech Barbaro, Eugene Katchalov, Allen Bari, Harrison Wilder, Matt Perrins, Sean Getzwiller, Viacheslav Zhukov, David Diaz, Andrew Badecker, Tyler Bonkowski

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

Amateurs (1): Geoffrey Klein

All of the first 14 tournaments completed so far have been won by first-time champions (non-winners from previous years).

Five of the first 14 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 175 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 longest cold streak for female players occurred between years 1982 and 1996, when 221 consecutive open events passed without a female champion.

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).

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: WSOP.com

For official news and the latest updates from the 2011 World Series of Poker, visit: WSOP.com

