



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

Official Report
Event #43
No-Limit Hold'em
Buy-In: \$1,500
Number of Entries: 2,857
Total Net Prize Pool: \$3,856,950
Number of Places Paid: 297
First Place Prize: \$675,117
June 25-27, 2011

TOURNAMENT HEADLINES

Crazy Days and Wild Nights

Andre Akkari Wins \$1,500 Buy-In No-Limit Hold'em Competition

Akkari Becomes Second WSOP Champion in History from Brazil

Brazilian Poker Pro Rakes-In \$675,117 in Pot

Congressman Joe Barton (R-TX) Performs "Shuffle Up and Deal" Honors

Full House at the 2011 WSOP -- Tournament Attendance Shows No Signs of Slowing Down

43 Gold Bracelets Won – 15 More Still to Go

OVERVIEW

Depending upon one's perspective, everything that is either right or wrong with poker in the modern era was manifested in the heads-up duel between the final two players in the latest mega-tournament, held at the 2011 World Series of Poker.

Three long days, countless poker hands, and hundreds of bad beat stories after it started, an initial starting tournament field of nearly 3,000 had been whittled down to an American versus a Brazilian playing for the coveted WSOP gold bracelet.

The stage was set for the final showdown of the \$1,500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em championship -- the 43rd gold bracelet event (of 58) on this year's WSOP schedule.

In a very crude sense, the names of the two players didn't really matter. What did matter was what each player represented to those who were watching and cheering them on. Both players attracted a dedicated following of fawning fans who came to the ESPN main stage with one purpose in mind -- to make as much noise as possible while partying their brains out.

Nachman Berlin, a 31-year-old poker pro from Brooklyn, NY enjoyed as high-powered an entourage as anyone at any final table. Several of his friends cheering up in the stands were highly-accomplished poker players. It was a smattering of anarchistic talent, nauseatingly self-confident, yet seemingly incomplete for one of their own having not yet won a WSOP title.

Staring down the opposition on the other side of the table was Andre Akkari, who is considered by many to be the best poker player from Brazil. If Berlin's supporters were a maxed out "10" in volume, the brassy Brazilians – to borrow a line from the quirky niche film "Spinal Tap" – were dialed up to an "11." All that was missing from the final table festivity was Metallica bursting out of the wings and blasting out everyone's collective eardrums with some deafening guitar riff.

Indeed, the atmosphere was a cross between the Olympics, the World Cup, and Carnival (make that Mardi Gras, for the American readers -- this is the Rio, after all). There was ceaseless chanting. There were flags (all Brazilian). The wave was even performed dozens of times.

I know, the wave. At a poker tournament. What next? Poker riots?

And so, this was the bizarre setting for the latest WSOP heads-up showdown, a surreal mix of gamesmanship and showmanship. A game once played in the quiet stillness, amidst the incessant hum of air conditioners, is now one step away from an episode of Glee. All night marathons with half a dozen bored silent witnesses have been jettisoned to the proverbial stone age -- their living corpses replaced by a sort of superfandom embodying the notion that poker is a real actual sport.

While the spirit seems fun for most, some detractors don't care much for the recent changes where many spectators have quite literally become part of the game. It's easy to understand this criticism, as top-flight poker usually requires tremendous concentration and focus, which can be difficult when a hundred spectators are screaming in Portuguese on one side of the arena, while the other half are hollering out "USA! USA! USA!" at the other.

After the sea of noise and revelry finally parted following a two-day final table, walking through the abyss like Moses headed to the promised land was Andre Akkari, a 36-year-old poker pro from Sao Paulo, Brazil. He defeated his final adversary in heads up play, leaving scores of Brazilians in a state of ecstasy as though they'd just won the World Cup. By doing what may have seemed impossible days earlier when there were 2,857 players who started the race, Akkari won his first WSOP gold bracelet.

Akkari collected a whopping \$675,117 in prize money. He'd already won more than \$2.2 million in online tournaments. Akkari became only the second WSOP gold bracelet winner in history from Brazil. Alexandre Gomes, who won in 2008, was the first.

Three days before the circus atmosphere that was the final table, the tournament began on quite a different note. Prior to the start of play, a distinguished guest was introduced to the huge gallery of players and spectators. Congressman Joe Barton (R-TX) was present to rally support for a pro-online poker bill he recently introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives. Over the years, several notable political figures have appeared at WSOP events. The most notable appearances in recent years were by (former) Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA), Rep. Shelley Berkley (D-NV), Rep. Robert Wexler (D-FL), and others.

Barton asked the nearly 3,000 poker players who were assembled in the tournament room to contact their elected representatives in Washington and ask them to support efforts to legalize, license, and regulate online poker inside the United States.

Ah, the irony. A U.S. congressman appearing at the WSOP, trying to drum up support and enthusiasm for a new law which allows Americans to play poker. Then four days later, a Brazilian poker champion is crowned. Indeed, Akkari's moment of triumph was clear proof of what a large mass of unified people cheering for one common goal can accomplish.

Victory.

For a comprehensive recap of Event #43, please visit the WSOP.com tournament portal page [HERE](#).

EVENT #43 CHAMPION – ANDRE AKKARI

The 2011 World Series of Poker \$1,500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em champion is Andre Akkari, from Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Akkari is a 36-year-old professional poker player. He has won an estimated \$2.2 million in online poker tournaments alone.

Akkari was born in Sao Paulo, Brazil – which is the nation's largest city.

Akkari is married. He has two children.

Akkari is one of Brazil's most famous poker players.

Akkari is close friends with Alexandre Gomes, who was the first Brazilian WSOP champion in history. Akkari was with Gomes when he won his gold bracelet in 2008. Three years later, Gomes returned the favor and stood cheering the crowd with about 50-60 other Brazilian supporters.

This marks the fourth year that Akkari has attended the WSOP.

For this victory, Akkari collected \$675,117 for first place.

According to official records, Akkari now has 1 win, 1 final table appearance and 9 in-the-money finishes at the WSOP.

Akkari currently has \$747,790 in career WSOP winnings.

This was Akkari's second cash this year.

Prior to this victory, Akkari's best previous showing at the WSOP was a 27th-place finish in the WSOP Europe Main Event, held in 2009.

Akkari is to be classified as a professional poker player (in WSOP records and stats), since he has been a full-time player for about four years.

WINNER INTERVIEW

Tell us about Alexandre Gomes winning three years ago and being the first Brazilian champion:
"It was unbelievable. After he won the bracelet, it changed everything about poker in Brazil. Poker was growing before he won the bracelet, but after that, it was unbelievable. Three million people play

poker online and play poker live, it changed everything about poker in Brazil. I was so happy. I was here, rooting for him, and now he is here rooting for me.”

What do you think your victory will do for poker in Brazil?

“Oh, it’s going to be amazing. You have no idea what is happening in Brazil, right now. Poker is an American sport. It’s an American game and maybe the Americans don’t know what happens outside the country. But in Brazil, just to give you one idea. I received 1,500 messages a minute on Twitter, it’s unbelievable.”

1,500? A minute?

“A minute. Unbelievable. It’s so sick. It’s so sick.”

What is it about Brazil, the culture, whether it’s soccer, or Carnival, what is it about your people that celebrate life?

“We are a party people. We like to enjoy life. And have a good time, like this. And anything that includes competition in Brazil is looked like soccer. We root like soccer. Soccer is the main thing in Brazil. Everything is about soccer. Here in poker, it will not be different. It’s amazing.”

How did you focus during such a long match?

“I was pretty confident that I had some edges to play against him. I lost a lot on the turn and river, so I was trying to not put all my chips in before the flop, all the time, since yesterday. But yesterday, he was hitting everything. He had like three pocket tens. Kings and queens so many times. So, if we wouldn’t have had the break yesterday, probably I would have lost the bracelet. The break was very good for me.”

You lost your father recently. Can you talk about what impact that had on how you played?

“Yeah, for sure. I was playing in the (Latin American Poker Tour) in Lima, Peru, and on Day 1, I finished the Day 1 third in chips, in the Top 3, and I went to my room, so happy because I had so many chips, and it was one hour before I started playing Day 2, I got a call from Brazil saying my father had passed away. So it was the worst day of my life. And I was pretty sure something, something good would happen here this time. And it happened.

THE FINAL TABLE

The official final table was comprised of the top nine finishers.

The final table contained no former gold bracelet winners.

Four nations were represented at the final table – including Belgium (1 player), Brazil (1 player), Lebanon (1 player), and the United States (6 players).

When play began, two players distanced themselves from the rest of the field as the chip leaders. The biggest stacks belonged to Jacob Naquin and Matthew Carmody. However, they went out in 4th-place and 3rd place, respectively.

The runner up was Nachman Berlin, from Brooklyn, NY. He is a 31-year-old professional poker player. Berlin has an interesting story as a former landlord. Several years ago, a certain poker player named Ari Engel moved into Berlin’s basement. Berlin saw him playing online poker and gradually developed a friendship and student-teacher relationship with the very successful online pro. That instruction and support paid off in this tournament, as Berlin ended up earning \$419,173 for finishing second.

Final table play began Monday evening at 6:30 pm. Play concluded about 11 hours later (playing time wise) at 5 pm the following day. The final table was interrupted when play was heads-up, due to the mandatory hard-stop being reached after ten levels of play (daily).

The final table was played on ESPN's main stage. The new final table set this year is getting raves in terms of design and appearance. No stage in the history of poker has ever looked as spectacular. Viewers will be able to see ESPN's coverage again once the WSOP Main Event begins in July.

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.

OTHER IN-THE-MONEY FINISHERS

The top 297 finishers collected prize money.

Among the former gold bracelet winners who cashed in this tournament were the following players: Simon Watt (22nd), Andre Boyer (68th), Phi Nguyen (79th), Jordan Smith (84th), Justin Scott (118th), Kathy Liebert (148th), David Bakes Baker (149th), Eric Baldwin (214th), and Thomas "Thunder" Keller (252nd).

Soi Nguyen, one of last year's November Nine finalists, cashed in 207th place.

WSOP Circuit all-star Doug "Rico" Carli finished in 223rd place. He has more WSOP Circuit cashes than any player in history – currently at 50.

Tournament results are to be included in all official WSOP 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 at WSOP.com [HERE](#).

ODDS AND ENDS

This tournament attracted 2,857 entries.

The tournament began with introduction of a special guest to the huge gallery of players. Congressman Joe Barton (R-TX) was present to rally support for a pro-online poker bill he recently introduced in the House of Representatives. Political figures have appeared at many WSOP events over the years. The most notable appearances in recent years were by (former) Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-NY), Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA), Rep. Shelley Berkley (D-NV), Rep. Robert Wexler (D-FL), and others.

This tournament attracted 94 female players, which represents 3.3 percent of the total field.

The average age of entrants was 36.4 years. The average age of those that cashed was 35 years. The average age of those that made it to the final table was 31.4 years.

This is the 935th 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 p.m. 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.

Andre Akkari's gold bracelet ceremony is set to take place on Wednesday, June 29th. The national anthem of Brazil will be played in honor of his victory. This will be the first time the Brazilian anthem has been played at an official gold bracelet ceremony.

TOURNAMENT PLAY

The tournament was to be played over three consecutive days/nights – which extended into a fourth day.

Day One began with 2,857 players.

Day Two resumed with 385 players.

Day Three resumed with 34 players and played down to two players.

The unscheduled fourth day started with 2 players and played down to the winner.

The tournament officially began on Saturday, June 25th at noon. The tournament officially ended on Tuesday afternoon, June 28th at 5 pm.

2011 WSOP STATISTICS

Through the conclusion of Event #43 the 2011 WSOP has attracted 49,765 combined total entries. \$90,318,360 in prize money has been awarded to winners.

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

United States (26)
Canada (5)
Great Britain (3)
France (3)
Ukraine (3)
Russia (2)
Brazil (1)

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

United States (24)
Canada (5)
Great Britain (3)
France (3)
Russia (2)
Ukraine (1)
Israel (1)
Honduras (1)

Indonesia (1)
Germany (1)
Brazil (1)

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

California (5)
Nevada (4)
New York (3)
Texas (2)
Illinois (2)
Florida (2)
Connecticut (2)
New Jersey (1)
Tennessee (1)
Indiana (1)
Maryland (1)
Virginia (1)
Michigan (1)
North Dakota (1)

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

Professional Players (34): Jake Cody, Cheech Barbaro, Eugene Katchalov, Allen Bari, Harrison Wilder, Matt Perrins, Sean Getzwiller, Viacheslav Zhukov, David Diaz, Andrew Badecker, Tyler Bonkowski, Brian Rast, John Juanda, Aaron Steury, Darren Woods, Jason Somerville, Bertrand Grespellier, John Monnette, Elie Payon, Mark Radoja, Chris Viox, Dan Idema, Andy Frankenberger, Chris Lee, Sam Stein, Mark Schmid, Jason Mercier, Mikhail Lakhitov, Fabrice Soulier, Mitch Schock, Matt Jarvis, Justin Pechie, Ben Lamb, Andre Akkari

Semi-Pros (5): Sean R. Drake, Amir Lehavot, Oleksii Kovalchuk, Eric Rosawig, Arkadiy Tsinis

Amateurs (4): Geoffrey Klein, Foster Hays, James Hess, Kirk Caldwell

Since tracking first started in 2005, this year's WSOP has the greatest disparity of professionals winning over semi-pros and amateurs than any year recorded, so far – with 39 out of 43 events being won by pros or semi-pros.

Through the conclusion of this tournament, the victories of 8 of the 43 winners (18 percent) marked the first time the new champion had ever cashed at the WSOP.

Every WSOP held over the past 11 years has included at least one multiple gold bracelet champion (meaning two or more wins within the same year). The last year the WSOP was comprised exclusively of single-event winners was back in 1999. The record for most multiple gold bracelet winners within a single year was in 2009, when five players managed to win two or more titles. So far this year, no player has yet won two gold bracelets.

The streak of consecutive male WSOP gold bracelet winners has now reached 202 consecutive events. Aside from the annual Ladies Poker 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 any female (open events) at this year's WSOP was by two players. Maria Ho finished second (\$5,000 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em). Kim Nguyen also finished as the runner up (\$1,500 buy-in Six-Handed Limit Hold'em).

The highest finish by any defending champion at this year's WSOP was by David Baker, who after winning the previous \$10,000 buy-in No-Limit Deuce-to-Seven Draw Lowball World Championship finished in sixth place in defense of his title.

Reigning world poker champions rarely perform well the following year after their victory. Chris "Jesus" Ferguson was the last world champion to win a gold bracelet the next year, which happened in 2001. Perhaps it's due to the increasing size of the fields. But there's also great pressure on the champions to do well. What follows is a list of the only world champions in history to win a gold bracelet after winning the championship during the previous year:

Johnny Moss (1975)
Doyle Brunson (1977)
Bobby Baldwin (1979)
Johnny Chan (1988)
Hamid Dastmalchi (1993)
Chris "Jesus" Ferguson (2001)

By contrast, players who make it to the final table of the Main Event Championship (November Nine) one year tend to do quite well in subsequent WSOP years. Consider that last year, three former Main Event finalists won gold bracelets – Eric Buchman, Tex Barch, and Scott Montgomery. This year, Matt Jarvis won his first gold bracelet one year after making it to the November Nine in 2010.

New tournament records set at the 2011 WSOP (to date):

Biggest Heads-Up tournament prize pool in history (\$3,040,000) – Event #2
Largest live Omaha High-Low Split Tournament in history (925 entries) – Event #3
Largest live Six-Handed tournament in poker history (1,920 entries) – Event #10
Biggest Deuce-to-Seven tournament prize pool in history (\$1,184,400) – Event #16
Largest live \$1,500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em tournament in history with single day start (3157 entries) – Event #18
Largest live \$1,000 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em tournament in history with single day start (3175 entries) – Event #20
Largest consecutive-days starting field sizes in poker history (combined 6,332 entries) – Event #18 and Event #20
Largest live Pot-Limit Omaha tournament in poker history (1,071 entries) – Event #22
Largest Mixed-Game (Eight-Game Mix) in poker history (489 entries) – Event #23
Largest Seniors tournament in poker history (3,752 entries) – Event #30
Biggest Seniors No-Limit Hold'em championship prize pool in history (\$3,376,800) – Event #30
Largest single-day live tournament start in poker history (3,752 entries) – Event #30
Largest consecutive-days starting field sizes in poker history (combined 6,580 entries) – Event #30/Event #32 (broke Event #18/Event #20 record from earlier in 2011 WSOP)
Largest four-consecutive days field sizes in poker history (2,500+3,752+2,828+3,144 =12,224 entries) -- Events 28, 30, 32, 34, June 16-19, 2011
Largest Mixed Pot-Limit tournament in history (606 entries) – Event #39
Biggest Pot-Limit Omaha prize pool in live poker history (\$3,393,400) – Event #42

New player records set at the 2011 WSOP (to date):

The 35-year span between Artie Cobb's first cash in this event (1976) and most recent cash in the same event (2011) represents the longest time span in WSOP history. He accomplished this in Seven-Card Stud High-Low Split (Event #25).

Phil Hellmuth added to his record as the individual all-time leader in cashes (82) and final table appearances (42).

RAISING AWARENESS: BAD BEAT ON CANCER AND THE WSOP

Bad Beat on Cancer was created in 2003 by Phil Gordon and Rafe Furst as an easy and fun way for poker players to donate to the Prevent Cancer Foundation. It all began when Chris MoneyMaker pledged 1 percent of his 2003 Main Event winnings and went on to capture the championship, contributing \$25,000 when he was awarded the \$2,500,000 first-place prize. By taking the pledge, wearing the patch, and joining 'Team 1%', players can feel good supporting a cause that only benefits when they win. As the official charity of the WSOP, pledges simply indicate to the payouts staff that they are donating 1 percent of their winnings, and the funds are automatically withheld. A tax receipt is generated and sent to their mailing address. Several high profile professionals have made 'life pledges' of 1 percent of all their winnings -- including Annie Duke, Phil Hellmuth Jr., Lee Childs, Paul Wasicka, Andy Bloch, Dennis Phillips, and others. Since 2003, the initiative has raised over \$3,500,000 for cancer prevention research, education, and community outreach programs. Players can pick up a patch and join Team 1% by stopping by the Bad Beat on Cancer booth, located at the 2011 WSOP opposite the Amazon Room in the concourse. The Nevada Cancer Institute based in Las Vegas is a benefiting charity from the Bad Beat on Cancer.

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
