



**2012 World Series of Poker Presented by Jack Link's Beef Jerky
Rio All-Suite Hotel and Casino
Las Vegas, Nevada**

**Official Report
Event #12
Heads-Up No-Limit Hold'em World Championship
Buy-In: \$10,000
Number of Entries: 152
Total Net Prize Pool: \$1,428,800
Number of Places Paid: 32
First Place Prize: \$371,498
June 5-7, 2012**

TOURNAMENT HEADLINES

Here's the Heads-Up: Brian Hastings Now Has a Gold Bracelet

Nosebleed-Stakes Online Pro Storms into Las Vegas and Ships First Place in Heads-Up No-Limit Hold'em World Championship

23-Year-Old Poker Pro Wins Eight Straight Matches – Earns First WSOP Victory

Jason Mo finishes as Runner-Up

Brock Parker and Tommy Chen Make the Final Four, but Miss Finale

Twelve Gold Bracelets Won – 49 More at Stake!

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW

Brian Hastings, a 23-year-old professional poker player from Hanover Township, Pennsylvania, won his first WSOP gold bracelet tonight at the Rio in Las Vegas. He won the \$10,000 buy-in Heads-Up No-Limit Hold'em World Championship, collecting \$371,498 in prize money.

But this victory wasn't at all about the money.

"I've had much bigger scores than this online," Hastings confided to reporters, moments after his victory. "But there's only one gold bracelet, and this means more than the money to me."

Indeed, Hastings typifies an ultra inner-circle of young superstars who have come to dominate the game in recent years. This is especially true for No-Limit Hold'em. Hastings is one of a small clique of chic twenty-somethings stoked with six- and seven-figure bankrolls who typically buy into games in dollar amounts greater than the cost of an average house. Hastings once (or perhaps twice) reportedly won a pot of over \$1 million dollars online, which he now looks upon pretty much as just another (good day) at the office.

Now, Hastings' "office" is in Vancouver, BC (Canada). The Pennsylvania native jetted up to the great white north last year in an effort to preserve his bankroll and continue his success as an online poker pro. He recently bought a home in Fort Lauderdale, Florida -- which is primarily to be used, he says, as a jumping off point to the Bahamas.

"I plan to go over to the Bahamas every so often and stay there for a week or two and play online," Hastings explained. "It's a convenient place, to stay in the U.S. in a way, but also continue to do what I do."

So, while current federal laws prohibit online poker from taking place inside the United States, Hastings has very cleverly managed to have his cake and eat it too – living within the U.S. and essentially "commuting" to work in places like Canada and the Caribbean.

Yet while Hastings is a near-legend in the online world, his status as a live tournament player is one of near anonymity – which suits the former college student just fine. His two previous cashes in WSOP-related events show an eighth-place finish last year at WSOP Europe. Hastings also posted an 11th-place finish at West Palm Beach during last season's WSOP Circuit. Nice results – but nothing to brag about. So, in a sense, prior to this event, Hastings wasn't simply *under* the radar. He wasn't even on the screen, at least in the public consciousness.

Consider the morning line the Rio Sportsbook posted on Hastings and his chances to win the coveted gold bracelet. Arguably one of the very best Heads-Up specialists in the world at the moment, Hastings was listed as an underdog among the finalists.

"Who's the fool who made that line?" Hastings' buddies hollered from across the ESPN stage, while clutching several WIN tickets on their favorite poker horse.

"That would be me!" a suddenly interested Howard Greenbaum barked out, causing several heads to snap turn. "Yeah, we really blew that one," the Vice President of Specialty Gaming for Caesars Entertainment sheepishly added.

Hastings' ultimate victory demanded that he win eight consecutive heads-up matches that were randomly drawn in a bracket format. Given that he faced most of the world's best short-handed players, Hastings' overall win was as impressive as it was well-deserved. Indeed, this was one of the most coveted of poker titles, a coronation of sorts for players who pride themselves on playing one-on-one.

The payoff came on the last day, when Hastings defeated Jason Mo -- a 24-year-old poker pro from St. Louis -- in the last heads-up match of the bracket, which was played in front of a worldwide viewing audience following the live stream at WSOP.com. As the runner-up, Mo also enjoyed a nice run, winning seven of his eight matches. He collected second place prize money amounting to \$229,722.

The top 32 finishers from a starting field of 152 entrants collected prize money. That required them to advance from the first three rounds. Among the better-know in-the-money finishers was two-time gold bracelet winner Brock Parker, who made the final four. Vanessa Selbst, another former winner, made the round of 16, as did Antonio "the Magician" Esfandiari. But neither player reached the elite eight.

Hastings' victory gives him his first WSOP title -- and instant publicity and fame. While this marked his first time to make the money in Las Vegas, odds are it won't be his last...and, next time, the odds *won't* be so generous.

MEET NEW WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION – BRIAN HASTINGS

Name: Brian Hastings

Birthplace: State College, Pennsylvania (USA)

Age: 23

Childhood: Grew up in Pennsylvania

Current Residence: Vancouver, BC (Canada) / Fort Lauderdale, Florida (USA)

Marital Status: Single

Children: None

Profession: Professional Poker Player (primarily online)

Previous Occupation: Student and Teacher

Number of WSOP Cashes: 2 (plus 1 WSOP Circuit cash)

Number of WSOP final-table appearances: 2

Number of WSOP gold bracelet victories (with this tournament): 1

Best Previous WSOP finish: 8th (10,000 No-Limit Hold'em Mixed-Max at WSOP Europe 2011)

First-Place Prize Money: \$371,498

Total WSOP Earnings: \$448,232

WINNER QUOTES (POST-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW)

QUESTION: *You won your first WSOP gold bracelet. How does it feel?*

HASTINGS: It feels great. I was amongst everyone else, when I started getting into poker in like 2003. You know, I was part of the poker boom generation watching all the WSOPs on TV. Winning a bracelet was always a goal of mine. I'm more of a cash game player now, so I think that had taken a little bit of a back seat as a goal. But, it's still pretty darn cool.

QUESTION: *Is it better to be under the radar when you play? Some people may know about your online experience, but you have relatively few live tournament results worthy of note, until now.*

HASTINGS: I don't think I'm under the radar with any of the players in this field. I don't think I'm sneaking up on anyone here - maybe the sportsbook linemaker in the Rio (laughing). Yeah, one of my roommates bet \$1,000 on me and cashed.

QUESTION: *Talk a bit about your final match. It was quicker than many were expecting.*

HASTINGS: Well, for one thing, he seemed like -- from what I know about him, he's a mid-stakes no-limit cash game player. I read a tweet by him this morning saying, 'Is my opponent going to man-up and buy-in for all three?' So I'm just like 'no, I'm going to buy-in for one and he's going to be pissed off.' And, I just got off to kind of a quick start. I had a hand where I over bet K-4 on a king-high board on the river and got paid off by the second pair where I made a really big bet -- like 225K into 160K or something like that. He re-bought like right away after that. From there it was some back and forth, but I still had my chips and we just played a bunch of 20-30 big-blind poker and I got lucky in some good spots.

QUESTION: *How does Jason Mo compare to the other guys you played on no-limit?*

HASTINGS: He was tough. He was one of the toughest opponents I played, for sure. I thought he played a good game. If anything though, I'd say he's stronger and deeper than he is shorter. Although, I don't think he did anything badly shorter, but you could just tell it's not his thing and he doesn't play it very much.

QUESTION: *You've posted some huge scores online. How does this compare to big pots you win online?*

HASTINGS: My biggest days online were a bit bigger than this, but this is still no joke. It's for sure one of the bigger winning days I've had in my life. I think the bracelet means more than the money, honestly. I mean, the money's great. Especially when I've been on a downswing playing cash games out here. 370K is a lot of money to win.

QUESTION: *What are your plans for the next year? Are you going back to Canada to play online poker?*

HASTINGS: I don't really have any plans to go back there at the moment. I actually recently bought a condo in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida -- and I know one option for playing online, and I don't actually know how much I'm going to do this, but they have cheap quick flights to the Bahamas. So I can see myself making some few day trips, some week long trips going to the Bahamas and playing online. But other than that, I'm going to get more involved with DraftDay, a company I'm involved with and some of my good friends, Taylor Caby and Andrew Wiggins founded. And, I'm going to play some live poker in Florida and travel a little bit. Play some WTP's and the rest of the WSOP, obviously.

QUESTION: *Here's your chance. What's DraftDay?*

HASTINGS: Draftday.com is a website in which you can play daily fantasy sports for money. It's completely legal in the U.S. UIGEA permits it. You can deposit via credit card or PayPal. Basically the games are daily fantasy sports, meaning they last one day. It's kind of structured like an online poker lobby. There are guaranteed tournaments and sit-and-go tournament that only run if they fill up the players. It's really fun. Right now we have football, basketball, baseball, and hockey. We're hoping to add more sports like Premier League Soccer and MMA in the future, and I'm real excited with where it's going.

QUESTION: *This is a very unique tournament in the sense that it allows you between the matches to go research your opponents. You have the opportunity to go online or ask some friends about an opponent. It's a very unusual kind of format.*

HASTINGS: I'm not doing anything too advanced. Tommy Chen -- who I played in the semifinals -- I already knew who he was. He was pretty active posting on CardRunners a few years ago and one of my roommates has played a lot of mixed games cash with him, so I got some reads there. And then, Jason Mo -- I found out from Twitter. Mutual friends were tweeting. So I found out who he was that way. And then basically found out he's a mixed stakes no-limit regular and that's really all I knew. I didn't know anything specific.

QUESTION: *Last thing. Anyone you want to give a shoutout to in terms of your poker career or maybe a mentor?*

HASTINGS: I think I'm done with shoutouts for now.

THE FINAL TABLE

The final table was comprised of the top two finishers – an unusual configuration since this was a Heads-Up competition.

No former gold bracelet winners were present at the final table.

The runner-up was Jason Mo, a 24-year-old poker pro from St. Louis, MO.

Final table players came from one nation – United States

Final table participants ranged in age from 22 to 24.

Final table play began at 1 p.m. and lasted until 5 p.m. The duration was about four hours.

OTHER IN-THE-MONEY FINISHERS

The top 32 finishers collected prize money – which means players that advanced from the first three rounds.

Tournament results are to be entered into all official records as an open event. Results are also to be included in the 2012 “WSOP Player of the Year” race.

Multiple former WSOP gold bracelet winners cashed in Event #12. They included – Brock Parker, Vanessa Selbst, Antonio Esfandiari, and Eric Froehlich.

Each of the last three champions of this event participated, but none cashed. Leo Wolper, who won this event in 2009 made an unwanted walk to the exit early, as did 2010 winner Ayaz Mahmood. Jake Cody, the defending champion, lasted a bit longer but went out during the third round.

TOURNAMENT HIGHLIGHTS

The \$10,000 buy-in Heads-Up No-Limit Hold'em World Championship began with 152 players. Day One at noon, players were randomly grouped into brackets. The odd-number field size meant that 104 players received a first round bye. Only 24 first-round matches were played. Once there were 128 players, round two began and played to 64 survivors. Then, the day concluded with the round three -- where 64 players played down to 32 (which guaranteed an in-the-money finish).

ROUND 1: Highlights from the initial round included recent WSOP gold bracelet winner Andy Bloch's early match against Swedish online poker marvel Viktor “Isildur1” Bloom. Bloch proved to be no match for Bloom, playing in his first WSOP tournament on U.S. soil (he played previously at WSOP Europe). However, he had a tougher go in the next round, losing to Tommy Chen. Hence, Bloom's WSOP intro was less than spectacular.

Brit Sam Trickett has been crushing the world's biggest cash games the last few years. Good thing, because he's off to a rough start at this year's WSOP. Trickett was bounced out of the first round by Victor Ilyukhin, from Russia.

ROUND 2: Second-round action began with a more balanced field of 128 players. Notable happenings from the next series of matches included a few upsets -- including Russell Rosenbloom upsetting Vladimir Shchmelev as well as Cristiano cleaning out Shaun Deeb. Another notable match saw Jacob Godshall ax Jason Mercier. Battles of titans included Steve O'Dwyer besting Yevgeniy Timoshenko and Antonio Esfandiari making Isaac Haxton disappear.

ROUND 3: In the third round, the first player to reach the round of 32 – which meant a guaranteed in-the-money

finish -- was Steven Landfish. Tommy Vedes, who is already enjoying a good WSOP, joined the money celebration soon thereafter. Less fortunate was Phil Ivey, who suffered a knockout blow, with Chae An throwing the final punch. Michael "the Grinder" Mizrachi also hit the rail, kicked to the side by Mark Radoja.

This year, many eyes were on Jake Cody, the defending champion. He won the 2011 No-Limit Hold'em World Championship, defeating runner-up Yevgeniy Timoshenko in the final showdown. However, Cody failed to reach the money this time -- exiting at the hands of Michael Drummond during the third round.

With players in the money, notable highlights from Day Two included the following:

ROUND 4 (32 players to 16): Antonio Esfandiari was an early advancer, besting Scott Baumstein. Brian Hastings wiped out Tommy Vedes, who had hoped to make his second uber-deep run in this year's series. Also of note was Tommy Chen's destruction of "E-Fro," a.k.a. two-time title holder Eric Froehlich. Brock Parker, another duel champ, fared much better -- axing Mark Radoja. Wonder woman Vanessa Selbst moved into the Sweet 16, after busting Kevin Saul. Evert Kokkonen won the final match of the round, cutting away Max Steinberg from the field.

ROUND 5 (16 players to 8): Antonio "The Magician" Esfandiari did an early disappearing act in the next round. His chips vanished at the hands of Tommy Chen. Brock Parker rocketed into the elite eight after busting Douglas Polk. Jason Mo knows poker, or at least he knows how to play heads-up poker, evidenced by vacuuming up Evert Kokkonen's final chips. Brian Hastings defeated Amritraj Singh relatively quickly, while Vanessa Selbst showed mortality against Jeffrey Gross. Michael Drummond is shooting for his first gold bracelet, and used Alexander Venovski as cannon fodder. Andrew Robl made the final eight, as well -- forcing Jonathan Jaffe to the rail.

ROUND 6 (8 players to 4): Brock Parker moved one step closer to winning his third gold bracelet, after wiping out Michael Drummond. Jason Mo took no time to sweep away Andrew Robl and advance to the final four. Meanwhile, Brian Hastings had a tougher battle with Jeffrey Gross, but prevailed. The final player of foursome was Tommy Chen, who took out Chris Moore.

ROUND 7: On Day Three, the final four was played: Brian Hastings defeated Tommy Chen. Jason Mo beat Brock Parker.

ROUND 8: Brian Hastings beat Jason Mo in the finals.

ODDS AND ENDS

This was classified as WSOP schedule Event #12, since it's the 12th gold bracelet of 61 to be awarded this summer in Las Vegas. The tournament was played over three consecutive days and nights, starting on Tuesday at noon and concluding Thursday afternoon at 5 p.m.

The official WSOP gold bracelet ceremony takes place on the day following the winner's victory (or some hours later when the tournament end very late). The ceremony takes place inside Brasilia. 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 public and media. Video and photography is permitted by both public and members of the media.

EVENT HISTORY

Last year was the first time in history that a \$25,000 buy-in No-Limit Heads-Up tournament had been held at the WSOP. That event was won by Jake Cody, from the UK. The buy-in was returned to \$10,000 this year, as had been the case in 2007-2010.

Last year's tournament created the largest prize pool for any Heads-Up poker competition in history. The previous high mark was set during each of the last three years, 2008-2010. Those \$10,000 buy-in tournaments were capped at 256 entrants. Accordingly, the prize pool for each was identical -- at \$2,406,400. Last year, the buy-in increased by 150 percent, up to \$25,000. Although the turnout was half the previous size, the prize pool eclipsed the previous all-time record by a wide margin.

This is the sixth time a Heads-Up event has been included on the WSOP schedule. The Heads-Up No-Limit Hold'em Championship winners for the previous events were:

2011 -- Jake Cody (\$25K buy-in)

2010 -- Ayaz Mahmood

2009 -- Leo Wolpert

2008 -- Kenny Tran

2007 -- Daniel Schreiber

2012 WSOP STATISTICS

Through the conclusion of Event #12, the nationality of gold bracelet winners has been:

United States (8): Chip Saechao, Brent Hanks, Leif Force, Cory Zeidman, Andy Bloch, Herbert Tapscott, John Monnette, Brian Hastings
France (1): Aubin Cazals
Bulgaria (1): Nick Jivkov
Canada (1): Ashkan Razavi
Netherlands (1): Vincent van der Fluit

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

United States (7): Brent Hanks, Leif Force, Cory Zeidman, Andy Bloch, Herbert Tapscott, John Monnette, Brian Hastings
Thailand (1): Chip Saechao
Bulgaria (1): Nick Jivkov
France (1): Aubin Cazals
Iran (1): Ashkan Razavi
Netherlands (1): Vincent van der Fluit

Through the conclusion of this event, the home state of (American) winners has been:

Nevada (2): Brent Hanks, Andy Bloch
Florida (2): Leif Force, Cory Zeidman
California (2): Chip Saechao, John Monnette
Illinois (1): Nick Jivkov
Alabama (1): Herbert Tapscott
Pennsylvania (1): Brian Hastings

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 (8): Brent Hanks, Leif Force, Andy Bloch, Aubin Cazals, John Monnette, Ashkan Razavi, Vincent van der Fluit, Brian Hastings
Semi-Pros (2): Cory Zeidman, Nick Jivkov
Amateurs (2): Chip Saechao, Herbert Tapscott

The streak of consecutive male gold bracelet winners (or put another way – no female winner) is currently at 231 consecutive events, and counting. Aside from the annual Ladies Poker Championship (a non-open event), the last female to win an open WSOP event was Vanessa Selbst, back in 2008.

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

-- by Nolan Dalla

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. Thank you.

For official news and the latest updates from the 2012 World Series of Poker, visit: WSOP.com

For statistics and historical information from the 2012 World Series of Poker, contact Nolan Dalla at: nolandalla@aol.com

For official media photographs from the 2012 World Series of Poker, visit: www.pokernews.photoshelter.com

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