



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

**Official Report
Event #24
Omaha High-Low Split World Championship
Buy-In: \$5,000
Number of Entries: 256
Total Net Prize Pool: \$1,203,200
Number of Places Paid: 27
First Place Prize: \$294,777
June 11-13, 2012**

TOURNAMENT HEADLINES

Joe Cassidy Finally Wins First WSOP Gold Bracelet

Las Vegas Poker Pro Prevails in Omaha High-Low Split World Championship.

1998 World Champion Scotty Nguyen Finishes Second

Phil Ivey Makes Third Final Table Appearance in Six Days – Finishes Third

24 Gold Bracelets Won – 37 More at Stake!

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW

Las Vegas, NV (June 14, 2012) -- When Phil Ivey wins a poker tournament, the headline always reads – *PHIL IVEY WINS!*

When someone else wins, the headline all too often reads – *PHIL IVEY LOSES!*

On Thursday afternoon, in the midst of the 2012 World Series of Poker in Las Vegas, a first-time gold bracelet winner managed to write his own headline in bold block letters – **JOE CASSIDY WINS A GOLD BRACELET!**

Phil Ivey was nowhere in sight.

Also out of sight was the ultimate runner-up, another mega-superstar, Scotty Nguyen -- who proved to be no match for Cassidy in the final heads-up match.

In what was unquestionably the brassiest of all final tables played so far this year, Cassidy demolished a playing session that included not only Phil Ivey and Scotty Nguyen, but also Mike Matusow, Meng La, and four relative newcomers to the ESPN Main Stage -- including Greg Jamison, Elie Doft, Bart Hanson, and Ryan Lenaghan.

No doubt, Ivey's third final table appearance within a six-day window was the talk of the WSOP when cards initially flew into the air at the start of the third day of competition. By that stage of the tournament, the initial field size of 256 players -- each posting the \$5,000 entry fee in order to play in the biggest buy-in Omaha High-Low Split tournament of the year -- had been reduced to a small cast of supremely skilled characters, with Ivey unquestionably playing the starring role.

The final table area was filled to capacity and standing-room only during much of the day and night, despite a playing session that dragged out until 3 a.m. late on Wednesday night. The match went so long, that once Ivey bit the dust in third place, the two finalists agreed to postpone the ultimate showdown for an unscheduled fourth day, which took place in Thursday.

It's inconceivable to think of a scenario where either 1998 world poker champion Scotty "the Prince" Nguyen (owner of five gold bracelets) or Mike "the Mouth" Matusow (owner of three gold bracelets) ever would be overshadowed at any final table. But that's precisely what happened when Ivey strolled quietly and confidently into his all-too familiar kingdom and took his seat, determined to toss the disappointment of two previous crash and burns onto the ash heap of public consciousness and win what he hoped would be a ninth gold bracelet, thus moving him into a tie with late great poker legend Johnny Moss.

No doubt, the runner-up had something to prove as well. Still stung somewhat by what many in poker considered to be a tainted victory that happened four years ago in the ultra-prestigious 2008 Poker Players Championship, when Scotty Nguyen won his biggest cash prize of his life and achieved his second-greatest career accolade – a night marred by Nguyen's boisterous and less-than-gentlemanly conduct – the far more subdued Nguyen on this stage hoped to make a bold return to the winner's circle in an event he had won two times previously.

But Joe Cassidy had something to prove, as well - and he did just that. Cassidy proved once and for all that he could not only play with the very best under the pressure of the poker world's eyes watching, he could also defeat the very best at their own game.

As things turned out, it was Ivey, Nguyen, Matusow, and many more who ended up as extras, mere footnotes in a grand show that had only one real star – and that was Joe Cassidy.

WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION -- JOE CASSIDY

Joe Cassidy is a professional poker player from Las Vegas, NV. He grew up in Wyoming and attended George Washington University, prior to making the bold decision to play poker full-time.

Cassidy diverted a career path once set to become a lawyer when he began playing poker regularly in Atlantic City, a four-hour drive from his dorm on the nation's capital. Once Cassidy discovered a penchant for the game and an aptitude for success, he began concentrating on cash games, where he spent most of his playing time over the past eight years as a pro.

Cassidy's WSOP resume now includes 15 cashes, five final tables appearances, and one victory. His first cash at the WSOP occurred in 2004.

With this debut victory, Cassidy's WSOP earnings now total \$678,190.

Cassidy's overall tournament resume now includes more than 30 major cashes and nearly \$2 million in live earnings. His breakthrough moment on the tournament scene took place back in 2004 when he finished second at the United States Poker Championships, held at the Taj Maha in Atlantic City.

MEET THE LATEST WSOP CHAMPION – JOE CASSIDY

Name: Joe Cassidy

Childhood: Wyoming

Education: Attended George Washington University (Washington, DC)

Current Residence: Las Vegas, NV (USA)

Profession: Professional Poker Player

Number of WSOP Cashes: 15

Number of WSOP final table appearances: 4

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

Best Previous WSOP finish: 4th (2004)

Total WSOP Earnings: \$678,190

INTERVIEW WITH THE WINNER

Question: *What an amazing final table! Talk about the experience of what you just went through the last few days.*

Cassidy: Well, you saw who all was at the table. It was Mike and Phil and Scotty and obviously their résumés speak for themselves. You know, it's great to play with players like that, too. You learn a lot watching them and seeing some of the little things they do in hands and things that you might not think to do in tournaments. Just a great experience as a poker player.

Question: *We noticed on your tournament résumé, not just WSOP, but other tournaments as well, you had a breakthrough cash in 2004 at the U.S. Poker Championships. Next, you went through a lot of close calls and high finishes. Then, you have not done anything over the past year, or so. What happened?*

Cassidy: You know what? I haven't been playing as many tournaments. Just in general. And, I was never much of a tournament player to begin with. But I've been playing a little bit. I went over to Europe a couple of times and played WSOP Europe. I played a couple tournaments in Canada, as well. I played the EPT Grande Finale. I've been kind of traveling a little bit to play tournaments. Doing some sports betting things and, you know, I'm here and there and everywhere last year

Question: *How important is the glory to you? In your case, it may just be about the cash, but the gold bracelet is special. Do you agree?*

Cassidy: You know, it's kind of one of those things where I think it means more to people outside of poker. Inside of poker it means a lot too. But in terms of talking about when you say what you do for a living or talking to your family they always want to know if you have a gold bracelet. Now, I think it kind of validates me outside of poker in a way. I think people already knew I was a good player already and I didn't need to prove that to anyone, but just to have that on the résumé means something that way.

Question: *Is the win sweeter because you had Phil Ivey and Scotty Nguyen in the final?*

Cassidy: Absolutely. To be able to look down and to see those guys and say that at least on one day you were able to beat them. That's pretty amazing.

Question: *Obviously, Phil and Scotty in particular relish the idea of winning more gold bracelets. Did that ever run through your mind when playing shorthanded?*

Cassidy: Of course! That's the thing that I was thinking as I was walking through on the last break after Scotty had doubled up for the fourth time. I thought, 'does this guy REALLY need his sixth bracelet?' Yeah, you think about that and how many times they've been there and how much experience they have in those situations. Obviously, they're both winners and they both can get the job done. So, it kind of forced me to elevate my play a little bit.

Question: *It seemed like it was a home field advantage for Phil Ivey with all the cheering that was going on. The entire crowd wanted to watch Ivey win his ninth bracelet, it seemed. Did it feel like you were battling against the crowd too?*

Cassidy: Yeah, but what can you expect? If you're a no-name golfer and it's you and Tiger Woods on the final nine on the fourth day of a major, you don't expect to have everybody cheering for you. People are going to go crazy for him, because they know him and he's a loved player. I wasn't turned off by that.

Question: *Would you talk about growing up and give us a little bit more about your bio?*

Cassidy: I grew up in Cheyenne, Wyoming until I was 18. I kind of got introduced to gambling at a younger age than most people. My uncle played in a lot of dice games around my home town and I learned gambling that way. I saw some underground poker games when I was young. I went to George Washington University when I was 18 and started going to Atlantic City on the weekends about half way through that year. I spent the next three years kind of going to school, but not really. Mostly going to Atlantic City and sleeping through my week and sleeping through my classes. Then, I realized eventually that I wasn't going to finish school and dropped out. I moved to LA in 2003 after what my senior year would have been. I've been between here and LA ever since.

Question: *Any regrets about taking that career path?*

Cassidy: No, not at all. I've always been bad about waking up on time. I was 15 minutes late for this tournament. I'm not an organized person. So, I was thinking about being a lawyer, which obviously wouldn't have suited me very well considering those things.

ODDS AND ENDS

This was classified as WSOP schedule Event #24, since it's the 24th gold bracelet of 61 to be awarded this summer in Las

Vegas. The tournament was played over four consecutive days and nights, starting on Monday at noon and concluding on Thursday evening.

The final table began at 6 p.m. and ended at 3 a.m. (first session). Play concluded on an unscheduled second day that went from 2 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. (second session). The total duration was 11.5 hours.

The final table included three former gold bracelet winners – Phil Ivey (8 wins), Scotty Nguyen (5 wins), and Mike Matusow (3 wins).

This was Scotty Nguyen's deepest run in a WSOP event since his controversial victory in the 2008 Poker Players Championship. He now has 41 career cashes and over \$5 million in WSOP earnings.

Other notable cashers were former gold bracelet winners Mike Wattel (11th), Dan Kelly (12th), Brendan Taylor (13th), Brian Hastings (16th), Viacheslav Zhukov (17th) and John Guth (26th).

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.

2012 WSOP STATISTICS

Through the conclusion of Event #24, the nationality of gold bracelet winners has been:

United States (18): Chip Saechao, Brent Hanks, Leif Force, Cory Zeidman, Andy Bloch, Herbert Tapscott, John Monnette, Brian Hastings, David "Doc" Arsht, Brandon Schaefer, Adam Friedman, Matt Matros, Andy Frankenberger, Phil Hellmuth, Cliff Goldkind, Ben Scholl, Randy Ohel, Joe Cassidy

Canada (2): Ashkan Razavi, Simon Charette

France (1): Aubin Cazals

Bulgaria (1): Nick Jivkov

The Netherlands (1): Vincent van der Fluit

Belgium (1): Michael Gathy

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

United States (17): Brent Hanks, Leif Force, Cory Zeidman, Andy Bloch, Herbert Tapscott, John Monnette, Brian Hastings, David "Doc" Arsht, Brandon Schaefer, Adam Friedman, Matt Matros, Andy Frankenberger, Phil Hellmuth, Cliff Goldkind, Ben Scholl, Randy Ohel, Joe Cassidy

Thailand (1): Chip Saechao

Bulgaria (1): Nick Jivkov

France (1): Aubin Cazals

Iran (1): Ashkan Razavi

The Netherlands (1): Vincent van der Fluit

Belgium (1): Michael Gathy

Canada (1): Simon Charette

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

Nevada (4): Brent Hanks, Andy Bloch, Randy Ohel, Joe Cassidy

California (3): Chip Saechao, John Monnette, Phil Hellmuth

Pennsylvania (3): Brian Hastings, David "Doc" Arsht, Ben Scholl

Florida (2): Leif Force, Cory Zeidman

New York (2): Matt Matros, Andy Frankenberger

Illinois (1): Nick Jivkov

Alabama (1): Herbert Tapscott

Ohio (1): Adam Friedman

Washington (1): Brandon Schaefer

Maryland (1): Cliff Goldkind

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 (17): Brent Hanks, Leif Force, Andy Bloch, Aubin Cazals, John Monnette, Ashkan Razavi, Vincent van der Fluit, Brian Hastings, Brandon Schaefer, Adam Friedman, Matt Matros, Andy Frankenberger, Phil Hellmuth, Randy Ohel, Michael Gathy, Joe Cassidy, Simon Charette

Semi-Pros (2): Cory Zeidman, Nick Jivkov

Amateurs (5): Chip Saechao, Herbert Tapscott, David "Doc" Arsht, Cliff Goldkind, Ben Scholl

The streak of consecutive male gold bracelet winners (or put another way – no female winner) is currently at 243 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

For official spectator photographs from the 2012 World Series of Poker, visit: www.imagemasterspoker.com

For specific media photo requests, email dcurley@hillmanpr.com and list "Urgent Media Request" as the subject line.

Note: All photos must be credited as follows: Photographer's Name/WSOP

The 2012 World Series of Poker's title sponsor is Jack Link's Beef Jerky. For more information, visit: www.jacklinks.com