



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

**Official Report
Event #40
Six-Handed Limit Hold'em
Buy-In: \$2,500
Number of Entries: 302
Total Net Prize Pool: \$687,050
Number of Places Paid: 36
First Place Prize: \$182,088
June 21-23, 2012**

TOURNAMENT HEADLINES

Ronnie Bardah Wins First WSOP Gold Bracelet

29-Year-Old Poker Pro Wins \$2,500 Buy-In Six-Handed Limit Hold'em Event

2010 Main Event 24th-Place Finisher Returns to Las Vegas and Gets It Done

Bardah Wins Inspiring Victory – A Huge Crowd Pleaser

Terrance Chan Gets His Eighth Cash in 2012 (Finishes Seventh) – Just Two Behind All-Time Cashes Record

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TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW

The Longest Detour:
From Boston to Las Vegas -- by Way of Bangkok

This is the story of a man who found himself.

It is the story of the man who ultimately discovered who he was and what he longed to be, before it was too late, and before his life could have taken an entirely different, much more ominous direction.

It is the story of a man filled with so much passion and desire to live life to the fullest, that he journeyed to the other side of the globe to try and attain self-fulfillment.

This is the story of Ronnie Bardah.

This true tale does not so much begin at the 2012 World Series of Poker in Las Vegas, but it most certainly ends here – at least for now on this night when he managed to win his first-ever gold bracelet victory.

Bardah's story actually began long before that, in a tough and grimy working-class neighborhood of Boston, called Brockton. There was nothing in his personal background to suggest that he would ever become a professional poker player, let alone a world traveler with deep personal convictions and a deep compassion for his fellow human beings.

A drug dealer --- maybe. A gang member – perhaps. A high school dropout – check. The odds were stacked against Bardah from the start.

But if anything is certain, it's that Bardah is accustomed to beating the odds and defying expectations. He's done it over and over again, from Day One.

Most people had never heard of Bardah until two years ago, when he went on the rollicking roll of a lifetime, outlasting more than 6,000 other poker players in the 2010 WSOP Main Event Championship. He lasted seven long days in the tournament marathon, and seemed on the verge of possibly making that year's November Nine class. No doubt, that would have been something to remember.

But just as Bardah was about to make one final determined run for the world championship, disaster struck.

It wasn't the kind of disaster normally thought of in a poker tournament. It was worse than that. Much worse.

Without any warning or provocation, Bardah inexplicably found himself the victim of a series of seizures and muscle contortions that made the prospect of playing for millions of dollars in prize money and poker immortality completely inconsequential, by comparison.

His facial muscles began twitching. He couldn't control parts of his body. He felt pain and stinging all over.

It was under these peculiar and utterly frightening personal circumstances in which Bardah found himself competing, as the number of finalists was gradually reduced by one – as the survivor numbers were slowly reduced to 100, then 90, to 80, then 70, to 60, then 50, to 40, then 30, and ultimately to the final three tables. Most poker players would think such a scenario to be a dream – free-rolling for six-figures or more under the lights of ESPN television cameras. But Bardah would see the experience as a nightmare.

At the end of the seventh day, while 26 other players were tucked away in the comfort of their homes and hotel rooms, focused and ready to play the best poker of their lives on the game's biggest stage, Bardah was camped out in a Las Vegas emergency room. Perhaps most terrifying was that no one at a local hospital could determine what caused his problem and intense discomfort. Worse, no one could diagnose the symptoms, nor tell if they were life threatening.

Bardah finished 24th that year. It was a remarkable run. But the behind-the-scenes story of Bardah and his astonishing ordeal was the recollection that most affected the then 27-year-old poker pro. Utterly dismissive of the achievement of making a deep run in poker's world championship, Bardah knew that he was suddenly beset with new challenges and different priorities.

"Rebirth" is overused, both as a physical and emotional depiction. But if Bardah was not reborn in the two years that transpired between his deep run in the 2010 Main Event and his return to this year's WSOP, he was most certainly re-invented. In fact, he did the re-inventing all by himself. Not the easy way. Not by reading a couple of self-help books. Not by watching a few TV shows. He took the total plunge. Bardah made the life commitment.

Bardah continued to play poker for a living. But he spent an equal amount of time getting healthier. He took up kick boxing, which he now describes almost in spiritual terms.

Bardah was so taken with Thai kick boxing and the enchantment of the Far East that he took a large share of his poker winnings and decided to move to Thailand.

That's right – Thailand.

While his medical condition remained largely undiagnosed, Bardah sought to shift the focus away from things in his life he couldn't necessarily control – be it his health issues or poker results – and instead focus energies on those things over which he did have control.

For Bardah, kick boxing and the spiritualism of Thailand became a new creed. The same sense of commitment and devotion that once served him so well in his career as a poker player now became his burning embers in the transformation of a man once plagued by fears and uncertainty into a far more-balanced being in comfortable coexistence with the universe.

This is the man who took his seat in the \$2,500 buy-in Six-Handed Limit Hold'em tournament, which began on Thursday. He wasn't necessarily cured from the dangers of his previous experiences. But he most certainly had conquered those inner fears and had come to grips with focusing on the elements of his environment that he could manage, at least in part.

Poker may seem the last place in the universe to seek out balance and control. It's a game where there is great imbalance and perpetual uncertainty. But Bardah would not let it be so.

Two days after the tournament began with 302 of the world's best Limit Hold'em players Bardah took his seat at the final table with the other finalists. No one sitting there on this day could possibly have known the very long journey -- measured both in miles and experiences -- that Bardah endured to get to this defining moment.

It was a journey that began in Brockton then landed in Las Vegas. In between was a detour in Bangkok.

At the end of that long journey was a victory. But by this time -- gold bracelet or no gold bracelet -- Bardah had already won a far more important battle.

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Ronnie Bardah Wins \$2,500 Buy-In Six-Handed Limit Hold'em (Event #40)

Las Vegas, NV (June 23, 2012) -- Ronnie Bardah has been on the world's biggest poker stage before. The professional poker player finished 24th in the 2010 Main Event Championship - an unforgettable experience. But nothing in his previous poker life could quite compare with what happened tonight, when Bardah finally managed to win his first WSOP gold bracelet.

Bardah won the \$2,500 buy-in Six-Handed Limit Hold'em title. This was the 40th of 61 gold bracelet events on the 2012 WSOP schedule. The three-day competition drew another tough field, largely comprised of Limit Hold'em specialists -- their number often overshadowed by the global dominance of No-Limit Hold'em. The tournament began with 302 entrants and concluded on Saturday night with just one player -- a radiant Bardah -- sitting at the feature table at the Rio in Las Vegas surrounded by one of the largest mobs of supporters at this year's WSOP, so far.

Bardah is a 29-year-old poker pro from Brockton, Massachusetts. The part-time kickboxer, who recently took several months off from poker to live and study in Thailand, returned to his profession with a fury.

Fueled with some extra energy and added motivation -- not to mention experience that may have been lacking in previous deep tournament runs, Bardah's skills served him extraordinarily well in this battle. For this achievement, Bardah collected \$182,088 in prize money, plus his first WSOP gold bracelet.

The runner up was Marco Johnson, a 26-year-old poker pro from Walnut Creek, CA.

MEET THE LATEST WSOP CHAMPION -- RONNIE BARDAH

Name: Ronnie Bardah

Birthplace: Brockton, Massachusetts

Childhood: Boston Area

Current Residence: Brockton, Massachusetts

Profession: Professional Poker Player

Age: 29

Marital Status: Single

Children: None

Best Previous WSOP Performance: 24th place in 2010 WSOP Main Event Championship

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE WINNER

Question: This is one of the biggest rails I've seen. So, talk about that.

RB: A lot of my friends, supporters, and great people in my life. There's plenty more where that comes from back home. It's huge. Everywhere I've gone in this country, I've never treated anyone with disrespect. I've always had a big heart. Excuse my language, never (expletive deleted) anybody in my life. In this poker world there's a lot of scum and a lot of things you got to dodge. I just got a heart of gold and a good name, so I have a lot of people that are friends of mine. I formed a big team of friends; almost like a poker family.

Question: When you were going deep in this event you had a lot of chips. I don't think I ever had so many people that asked 'Do you know about him?' They were telling me your story and I think that your story is something that's inspirational to a lot of people. You went to Thailand. You do all the physical fitness – the kickboxing. You do a lot of things. Talk about that and how it helps you in poker.

RB: In the 2010 World Series of Poker, I made my deep run into 24th. On Day Six, I went into the emergency room with something. If I told you things that were going on – I was infected by the evils. I had a flu at first. When the flu went away I had numbness on my face on one side. And I thought it was something bad but it kept going for months and months. But it kept triggering everywhere. My face was going numb, my lips, my hands. I would have heart palpitations. They thought I had anxiety, all this other stuff, and they could never diagnose me. I had CAT-scans on my head, my body. I was really feeling like I was dying for about a year and a half. I got tested for lime disease. Every disease you could think of, I came back negative. So, I just changed my diet completely and started exercising more. I've been pretty fit my whole life, but went to Thailand to really detoxify and get everything out of my system. I went out there and also went to Israel. I go to Israel almost twice a year. It's where my family's from. I'm born and raised in Boston, but my ancestry is from Israel and my family lives there. I was in Thailand for two and a half months. And I went out there. I learned a lot from them. How to fight and had a lot of respect and stuff. It's a lot about respect in Thailand. I'm going back in January for a month and a half with (some other poker players). And everybody else who's close with me is welcome. It's a great experience and it was awesome.

Question: Did they ever diagnose you with anything?

RB: No, I never got diagnosed. It just went away. Thank God. Me sitting here telling you what I went through I would never wish on anybody. My greatest enemy I don't wish it. I went through a lot of stuff. People think 'it's all in your head, it's anxiety, it's depression.' It wasn't. I'm one of the happiest kids ever. It just all went away.

Question: What was your lifestyle before Thailand?

RB: I always ate pretty healthy. I stopped eating fast food about five years ago. I don't eat fast food at all. I drink plenty of water. I just got hit with something. Health is huge. I don't know what it was. I'm just glad it's gone for now. It's been gone for seven or eight months.

Question: Have you seen any difference in your poker game? Any results change since your lifestyle change and going to Thailand?

RB: This is only my second event this summer. I pick and choose tournaments to play. It is expensive. The times I do play I feel fresh and ready to go. Balance is the key. When you have balance in your life when you're playing poker everything's pretty much clear. I've been playing professionally for nine years, so the longer the better.

Question: A lot of the times especially from guys who win gold bracelets that have been playing as long as you have, it's just kind of like another day at the office. Whereas for you, you kind of threw your hands over your head and it looked like a very emotional experience for you. Can you talk about what this means to you?

RB: Well yeah, it's a World Series of Poker gold bracelet. Nothing against the WPT or the EPTs or the APPTs or the Heartland poker tours -- those are all great tours and everything. This is just the highest step. Especially in Vegas to win a bracelet, there's no asterisk next to it. The structures are great. You're playing with the best in the world. Everybody makes it out to the WSOP. Some people can't get out to the WPTs or the EPTs and you're win is great, but everybody like it's not the win. When you win here, everybody makes it out. And everybody wants to play Six-Max on the Hold'em tournament. The best Limit players in the world are playing. I love to play Limit Hold'em. That's where I started, playing with guys like this and another gentleman whose watching me earlier, we play Limit Hold'em day after day after day. I feel like besides Terrence (Chan) I felt I had the second most experience in playing Limit Hold'em. He's played a few more limit tournaments than I have, but I felt I had the upper-hand experience. Once he busted, I felt like I was the best player at the table in terms of Limit Hold'em experience.

Question: You seem to be defined by your experience in Thailand and your refocus on your energy there. I'd like you to talk to someone who doesn't know anything about that life or those things that you did over there. Give me one example of something you did over in Thailand that may have helped you win tonight, where you may have come in somewhere else if you wouldn't have done that. What did you do over there that won this thing tonight?

RB: We have a choice here. Thank God most people in this country have a choice to live free and play and do what they want to do. They can play poker for a living if they're good enough. When you go to Thailand and you see little boys that have to fight to live. Four-year-old kids that are orphans....You should see these kids. They don't have money or nothing....So when you have a choice, these kids have no choice. For me to just go there voluntarily and want to learn with these kids, I take my hat off to them. You don't realize how lucky you have it 'til you go to other countries and other places. I travel all the time. I see poverty. I'm from Brockton, Mass. It's not necessarily the suburbs; it's the inner-city, kind of the hood there. A couple of my friends were shot and killed when they were younger. I've been to about seven or eight funerals in 2001, 2002. Having friends shot and killed there and there. I've always had a good head on my shoulders. When you grow up with kids that become trouble makers, you've known them since you were six or seven years old. You're not going to say you're not my friend anymore. They go this way, you go that way. You try to help, and sometimes you get caught up with them. I'm happy to get away from all that and be here playing for \$200,000 and a gold

bracelet. Things and times have changed over there you know. In ten years you look back on your life, I don't want to say some of the things I used to be doing. The stupid things. Now I'm doing this.

ODDS AND ENDS

This was classified as WSOP schedule Event #40, since it's the fortieth gold bracelet of 61 to be awarded this summer in Las Vegas. The tournament was played over three consecutive days and nights, starting on Wednesday at noon and concluding on Friday night at midnight.

The total duration of the final table was about six hours.

The final table included just one former gold bracelet winner – Sorel Mizzi.

The runner up was Marco Johnson, from Walnut Creek, CA. He is emerging as a solid threat to win a gold bracelet, with 19 career WSOP cashes and nearly \$1 million in WSOP earnings.

The top 36 finishers collected prize money. Among the former gold bracelet winners who cashed were Sorel Mizzi, Rep Porter, Steven Kelly, Jeffrey Lisandro, Johnny "World" Hennigan, and Scott Seiver.

2012 WSOP STATISTICS

Through the conclusion of Event #40, the nationality of gold bracelet winners has been:

United States (30): 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, Brian Meinders, Gabe Scott, Ylon Schwartz, Larry Wright, Allyn Jaffrey-Shulman, Carter Phillips, David "Bakes" Baker, Max Steinberg, Chris Tryba, David "ODB" Baker, Ronnie Bardah, Dung "Gomer" Nguyen

Canada (3): Ashkan Razavi, Simon Charette, Timothy Adams

France (1): Aubin Cazals

Bulgaria (1): Nick Jivkov

The Netherlands (1): Vincent van der Fluit

Belgium (1): Michael Gathy

Japan (1): Naoya Kihara

Great Britain (1): Craig McCorkell

Germany (1): Jan-Peter Jachtmann

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

United States (29): 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, Brian Meinders, Gabe Scott, Ylon Schwartz, Larry Wright, Allyn Jaffrey-Shulman, Carter Phillips, David "Bakes" Baker, Max Steinberg, Chris Tryba, David "ODB" Baker, Ronnie Bardah

Canada (2): Simon Charette, Timothy Adams

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

Japan (1): Naoya Kihara

Great Britain (1): Craig McCorkell

Vietnam (1): Dung "Gomer" Nguyen

Germany (1): Jan-Peter Jachtmann

Through the conclusion of this event, the home state of the 27 American winners has been:

Nevada (7): Brent Hanks, Andy Bloch, Randy Ohel, Joe Cassidy, Allyn Jaffrey-Shulman, Carter Phillips, David "Bakes" Baker, Chris Tryba

California (4): Chip Saechao, John Monnette, Phil Hellmuth, Max Steinberg

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

Texas (3): Ylon Schwartz, Larry Wright, David "ODB" Baker

Florida (2): Leif Force, Cory Zeidman

New York (2): Matt Matros, Andy Frankenberger

Alabama (1): Herbert Tapscott

Ohio (1): Adam Friedman

Washington (1): Brandon Schaefer

Maryland (1): Cliff Goldkind
New Jersey (1): Brian Meinders
Oklahoma (1): Gabe Scott
Kansas (1): Dung "Gomer" Nguyen
Massachusetts (1): Ronnie Bardah

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 (28): 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, Simon Charette, Joe Cassidy, Gabe Scott, Ylon Schwartz, Timothy Adams, Larry Wright, Carter Phillips, David "Bakes" Baker, Max Steinberg, Naoya Kihara, Chris Tryba, Craig McCorkell, David "ODB" Baker, Ronnie Bardah

Semi-Pros (5): Cory Zeidman, Nick Jivkov, Brian Meinders, Allyn Jaffrey-Shulman, Jan-Peter Jachtman

Amateurs (6): Chip Saechao, Herbert Tapscott, David "Doc" Arsht, Cliff Goldkind, Ben Scholl, Dung "Gomer" Nguyen

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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