



2012 World Series of Poker Europe
Hotel Majestic Barriere / Le Croisette Casino Barriere
Cannes, France
Official Report
Event #1

Six-Handed No-Limit Hold'em

Buy-In: €2,500 + 200

Number of Entries: 227

Total Prize Pool: €544,800

Number of Places Paid: 24

First Place Prize: €147,099

September 21-23, 2012

Tournament Headlines

Imed Ben Mahmoud Wins Event 1 at the Sixth Annual WSOP Europe

37-year-old Kitchen Worker Becomes the First-Ever WSOP Champion From Tunisia

France's Yannick Bonnet Falls Short of Becoming the Country's First WSOPE Winner

Tournament Overview

Cannes, France (September 23, 2012) —The first event of the sixth annual World Series of Poker Europe concluded Sunday at Hotel Majestic Barriere in Cannes, France.

Imed Ben Mahmoud, a Tunisian-born kitchen worker who resides in Antibes, France, beat 227 entrants to become Tunisia's first-ever WSOP champion.

"For me, (the win) is exceptional," Mahmoud told the WSOP following his victory. "And for Tunisia it's fabulous. It's priceless. I'm very, very happy."

Mahmoud was born in Tunisia but resides just seven kilometers away from Hotel Majestic Barriere in Antibes, France. He is 37 years old and says he plans to buy an apartment for his family with the €147,099 in first place prize money. Having been playing poker recreationally for three years, Mahmoud wasted no time breaking through on the game's biggest stage.

Similarly to Mahmoud, France's own Bonnet Yannick was vying for his country's first WSOP Europe championship. France lays claim to ten WSOP bracelets, but the host country has yet to break through on its home turf. The pair's heads-up battle lasted less than a half hour and ended with the elimination of Yannick in second place. France's shot at its first gold will have to wait at least another day, as the next WSOPE champion will be crowned Tuesday.

"I think it will happen," Mahmoud said of France's chances to win a bracelet this year. "There are more Frenchmen here than (at the WSOP) in Las Vegas, and they've won some there."

The two-week long poker series in Cannes, France is the sixth annual WSOPE and marks the second year the tournament has taken place on France's Gold Coast. The event began Friday and will run through the conclusion of the Main Event, set to take place October 4. In all, seven new WSOP champions will be crowned, bringing the year's total winners to 69.

In addition, a €50,000 Super High Roller Event with Re-Buys is scheduled to take place October 2. Though sure to attract some of the biggest names in poker, the exclusive event will not be recognized as a bracelet event.

This was the first of seven gold bracelet events scheduled to take place in Cannes, France. Officially listed as Event 1, the €2,500 (+200) No-Limit Hold'em Six-Handed tournament attracted 227 entrants. The total prizepool came to €544,800. The top 24 finishers were awarded prize money. Mahmoud was awarded €147,099 for first place.

The tournament began at 5 p.m. local time Friday and played out over the course of three consecutive days. Day 1 play lasted eight levels and saw almost 65 percent of the field hit the rail. Day 2 began at 2 p.m. Saturday with 50 players. By end of day, just eight remained.

Meet Your Champion

Name: Imed Ben Mahmoud

Age: 37

Occupation: Kitchen Worker

Residence: Antibes, France (born in Tunisia)

Family: Married with one child

Poker Experience: Been playing recreationally for three years

Total WSOP cashes (including this one): 1

Total WSOP final tables (including this one): 1

Totally career earnings at the WSOP: €147,099

Winner Quotes

How does it feel to represent Tunisia on one of the biggest stages in poker?

For me it's exceptional and for Tunisia it's fabulous. It's priceless. I'm very, very happy.

What's your opinion on the WSOPE's move from London to France's Gold Coast?

I prefer that it's here. It's nicer and I know a lot of people. I did not play in London, but I played in Las Vegas in the Main Event.

A Frenchman has never won a WSOP Europe bracelet and you beat a Frenchmen heads up. Do you think France is going to get a bracelet this year?

You never know. Anything could happen. You can't say a Frenchmen is not going to win. I think it will happen because there's more Frenchmen here than in Vegas and they've won some there.

The Final Table

The third and final playing day began at 1 p.m. Sunday with eight players remaining. Romain Chauvassagne started play with less than one big blind and after his elimination in eighth the remaining seven players combined for the unofficial final table.

The official final table was reached shortly after 1:30 p.m. Play finished at approximately 10:50 p.m. making the total duration of the final table nine hours and 20 minutes (including a one-hour dinner break).

Notable participants at the final table included Robert Romanello (15 WSOP cashes, two final tables), Martin Krakow (fourth in this same event last year). Bonnet and Sylvain Ribes were the lone Frenchmen to make the final table, they finished second and sixth respectively.

Other in-the-Money Finishers

- The WSOP's all-time bracelet leader Phil Hellmuth finished in 24th place and earned €4,887. In addition to boasting the most WSOP championships, Hellmuth now has 92-career cashes, placing him well in front of Men Nguyen who sits second with 76.
- Two-time gold bracelet champion Brandon Cantu finished the tournament in 20th place. Cantu began Day 2 second in chips but was unable to earn his seventh WSOP final table appearance. Cantu matched Hellmuth's €4,887 in prizes.

- Also making a deep run was actress and WSOP champion Jennifer Tilly. Tilly is familiar with the South of France, having attended the world-famous annual Cannes Film Festival. Tilly's 17th place finish in Event #1 awarded her €6,548.
- David "ODB" Baker could have overtaken Greg Merson in the current WSOP Player of the Year points race with a fourth place finish or better in Event #1. His strong play propelled him through most of the field, but he finished 14th for €6,548.
- Roberto Romanello finished the tournament in fifth place and earned €31,925. With a win, Romanello would have become only the sixth player to win poker's Triple Crown, recording victories in each of the three major tournament circuits -- the EPT, the WPT and the WSOP. Gavin Griffin, Rolan de Wolfe, Jake Cody, Bertrand "ElKy" Grospellier and David Kitai remain the only five players with that honor.

A full list of in-the-money finishers can be found on WSOP.com.

Last Year's Event

2012 marked the third year in a row the WSOPE kicked off with a six-handed event. In 2011, the opening event marked the first time the WSOP crowned a Swiss champion. Guillaume Humbert beat Azusa Maeda heads-up for that title. Maeda's runner-up finish marked the highest finish of a Japanese-born player in the WSOP. That record stood until Naoya Kihara won Event 34 at the WSOP this summer.

2012 WSOP Bracelet Update

Through the conclusion of this tournament, the nationality of 2012 WSOP champions, including the 62 bracelet events that took place in Las Vegas this summer, has been:

United States (42): 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, Greg Ostrander, Henry Lu, Joey Weissman, Michael "the Grinder" Mizrachi, Steven Loube, Kenny Hsiung, Greg Hobson, Vanessa Selbst, Jim Willerson, Will Jaffe, Antonio Esfandiari, Greg Merson, Nick Schulman, Ryan Eriqezzo

Canada (2): Simon Charette, Timothy Adams

Vietnam (2): Dung "Gomer" Nguyen, Yen Dang

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

Germany (1): Jan-Peter Jachtmann, Dominik Nitsche

Ukraine (1): Okelsii Kovalchuk

Italy (1): Rocco Palumbo

Greece (1): Pete Vilandos

Czech Republic (1): Tomas Junek

Russia (1): Viacheslav Zhukov

Tunisia (1): Imed Ben Mahmoud

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