



**2013 World Series of Poker Asia Pacific
Crown Entertainment Complex
Melbourne, Australia
Event #5
WSOP APAC Main Event
Buy-In \$10,000
Total Entries: 405
Prize Pool: \$3,847,500
April 11-15, 2013**

The last time Daniel Negreanu was heads-up for a bracelet, it was an epic battle for the ages. Back in 2009, Negreanu and Barry Shulman played until dawn in the 2009 World Series of Poker (WSOP) Europe Main Event with Shulman ultimately denying Negreanu the victory despite Negreanu holding a big chip lead at one point in their tete-a-tete battle.

Tonight there was no struggling for Negreanu. Tonight Negreanu put on an incredible performance in the first-ever WSOP Asia Pacific Main Event, dominating the final table action from start to finish to win his fifth bracelet and \$1,038,825 in memorable fashion and bring a close to Negreanu's bracelet drought. He dominated the action as the final table of the event played from eight down to heads-up, but once he got head-to-head against Australia's Daniel Marton, there were a couple of scary moments that had visions of Shulman dancing through Negreanu's head.

"I've had a lot of deep runs in the past couple of years and put up a lot of seconds and thirds, and I've had a lot of heartbreak when I got close," Negreanu said after his win. "In the World Series of Poker Europe, I was in a very similar situation and, yeah, I had a lot of flashback moments and my emotions were running high and I was like, 'Please not again! Can't it be easy? I want this over! No outs at all. Just flop me quads!'"

It wasn't as simple as flopping quads, but the late stages of this event did prove to be relatively smooth sailing, as Negreanu came in with a big stack and came out with a gold bracelet and a career-high WSOP score. Negreanu admitted that, even before they got to the final table, he felt it was his tournament to lose.

"Even from two tables, I went from 1.3 million to 2.6 million without winning a big pot, really small ball poker to the extreme. I won all the pots I was supposed to win, I minimized in the spots where I was beat, and overall I played on feel, which is something that has always made me successful. I didn't overthink things and I just went with my gut."

Negreanu credits his recent participation in a personal development course to this renewed ability to trust his gut. While the course has been under scrutiny from many in the poker world, Negreanu insists it was a positive experience and not what people think it is.

"I went to do these personal growth courses and the biggest thing I got out of that was confidence and self-trust. I trust myself and I trust myself to make the right decisions. Antonio [Esfandiari] also went to the same thing and he won a couple bracelets, made a couple of final tables, and came ninth here. I just graduated myself and I've come fourth and first. People can hate all they want. I'm not in a cult, they're nuts, and I would never be in one. I went through a course, I've done the course, and I am so happy I did it."

Happy was a good word to describe Negreanu on this memorable day at the poker tables. He is a player known for his cheerful demeanor and table talk, both of which were on display for the duration of the action. While some players at the table agonized over decisions and displayed visible nerves at their first major final table, Negreanu was all smiles and jokes. While some might argue he wasn't taking his game seriously, the man known as Kid Poker credits this approach with his success.

"One of the things I realized about poker is that I've always been the most successful when I am enjoying what I'm doing, not taking myself too seriously, not overthinking things," Negreanu explained. "Just play, man! And that's what I did from the get go in this tournament. I didn't worry about what the fundamentals are or what people would say. I just did what I do. I played my way. And in the end it paid off."

It certainly paid off, as this is Negreanu's fifth career WSOP bracelet and his first victory since 2008. He now joins the ranks of other five-time winners like Stu Ungar, John Juanda, Ted Forrest, and Scotty Nguyen. This is Negreanu's biggest WSOP payday of his career and push his career earnings to more than \$17 million. Even though he has a long list of tournament accomplishments, he did say this one already ranks up there with the best of them.

With the win, Negreanu is also the early frontrunner in the 2013 WSOP Player of the Year race. This year, players can earn points towards the title in Australia, Las Vegas, and the WSOP Europe stop in Paris. With 360 points for this bracelet and 44.8 points for a fourth place finish in the AU\$2,200 Mixed Game event, Negreanu is now out front with 404.8 points going into Las Vegas. With that strong start, Negreanu says becoming the first-ever two-time WSOP Player of the Year is certainly a new goal on his 2013 list. For a man who sets a lot of lofty goals every year though, he can already check several off the list after today.

"With this win, I achieved a few of my goals. Winning a million dollars in a tournament, winning a major tournament. That list of goals I usually set is really lofty. I set eight or ten and I am happy to get three or four and I feel like I've got three already, so, who knows? Maybe I will get all eight."

A positive attitude, a lot of confidence, and a lot of drive. It is a recipe that certainly worked well for Negreanu tonight, so it seems a safe bet to say it is likely going to work for him again in the future.

When the final table began, Negreanu and German pro Benny Spindler were the big stacks at the table, but the early goings of the final table were not kind to Spindler. He saw his stack dwindle while the short stacks at the table continued to hold on.

The bustouts began with the exit of Octo-niner Russell Thomas in eighth place. Thomas was chip leader at the start of Day 4, but the playdown day and final table action depleted his stack and he was the first to exit the line-up. Local player MikelHabb was the next to go in seventh. While these two short stacks failed to double, that was not the case for Hong Kong-based high stakes cash game player Winfred Yu, who managed to double up an astounding eight times over the course of final table action. While he doubled, Spindler struggled, eventually exiting in sixth place.

Two more local players were the next to go, as Kahle Burns busted in fifth and satellite qualifier George Tsatsis took fourth place. That left Yu, Marton, and Negreanu battling for the bracelet and seven-figure payday, but it would be an uphill battle for Negreanu's opponents, as Negreanu was sitting with 10 million chips while the other two struggled to grow their stacks over 2 million.

It was around this time that Yu's incomparable luck started to run dry. His ninth attempt at doubling up was foiled when he got it all-in against Negreanu in a hand where Negreanuflopped a flush. That sent the match into heads-up play with the four-time bracelet winner holding a 10-1 chip advantage.

The first-ever AU\$10,000 WSOP APAC Main Event drew 405 players, generating a prize pool of \$3,847,500. The top 40 finishers made the money, with a min cash earning players \$20,392. Notables who made the money include Erik Seidel (39th), Jeff Lisandro (35th), Todd Terry (24th), Raymond Rahme (17th), and final table bubble boy Antonio Esfandiari (9th).

This concludes the inaugural WSOP APAC series. In the end, the bracelets went to three Americans, one Australian and, of course, our Canadian Main Event Champion.

WSOP APAC Main Event final table results:

1st: Daniel Negreanu—Canada - \$1,038,825
2nd: Daniel Marton—Australia - \$637,911
3rd: Winfred Yu —Canada - \$423,225
4th: George Tsatsis—Australia - \$284,715
5th: Kahle Burns —Australia - \$201,994
6th: Benny Spindler—Germany - \$146,205
7th: MikelHabb—Australia - \$107,730
8th: Russell Thomas —USA - \$82,721