



2010 World Series of Poker Presented by Jack Link's Beef Jerky
Rio All-Suite Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas, Nevada

Official Report
Event #31
H.O.R.S.E.
Buy-In: \$1,500
Number of Entries: 828
Total Net Prize Pool: \$1,117,800
Number of Places Paid: 80
First Place Prize: \$256,820
June 16-19, 2010

TOURNAMENT HEADLINES

Konstantin the Great: Puchkov Conquers H.O.R.S.E. at WSOP

Konstantin Puchkov Wins Cold War against Al Barbieri in Tough Heads-Up Match

Russian Collects \$256,820 in Prize Money

Through 30 WSOP Events -- WSOP Attendance Up Over Last Year

OVERVIEW

Konstantin Puchkov was the winner of the \$1,500 buy-in H.O.R.S.E. championship at the 2010 World Series of Poker. This marked his first career WSOP gold bracelet victory. The 58-year-old Russian topped a highly-competitive field of 828 players. He overcame a severe chip disadvantage at the final table and defeated Al "Sugar Bear" Barbieri heads up for the coveted WSOP title.

Puchkov is from Moscow, Russia. He previously won a few major tournaments held in Russia and Monte Carlo. This was the Russian's first time to cash at the WSOP. Puchkov collected \$256,820 for first place, his biggest poker payday ever. He is the fourth Russian in history to win a WSOP gold bracelet, following Ralph Perry (2006), Alexander Kravchenko (2007), and Vitaly Lunkin (2008 and 2009).

[Al Barbieri](#) finished second. The South Philadelphia native who now resides in Los Angeles has

been one of the more colorful personalities on the tournament poker scene for more than 10 years. He's lived just about every poker player's dream and nightmare, except for the most elusive of all fantasies, which is winning a WSOP gold bracelet. For Barbieri, that shining moment will have to wait at least another day. Barbieri received a consolation prize amounting to \$158,647. With this finish, Barbieri now officially has more than \$1 million in career earnings.

The top 80 finishers collected prize money. Former WSOP gold bracelet finishers who cashed in this event included – James Van Alstyne (14th), Cliff Josephy (19th), Linda Johnson (29th), Jason Mercier (44th), Cyndy Violette (46th), Brandon Cantu (47th), Mary Jones (52nd), Robert Williamson III (53rd), and Vasili Lazarou (58th).

The defending champion was James Van Alstyne. His 14th-place finish in this event was the highest finish achieved by any defending champ so far this year.

THE CHAMPION – KONSTANTIN PUCHKOV

The \$1,500 buy-in H.O.R.S.E. champion (Event #31) is Konstantin Puchkov, from Moscow, Russia.

Puchkov is 58-years-old.

Puchkov is married. He has three children – two boys and one girl.

He enjoys playing backgammon and raising horses.

Puchkov is an accomplished horse breeder and trainer. He owns many horses. He names most of them after poker hands. Puchkov owns horses named Royal Flush, Full House, Flush, Freeroll, and others.

Puchkov has previously cashed at various tournaments in Europe, most notably the Six-Handed championship in Russia. He also finished 1st and 2nd in two events played in Monte Carlo.

Puchkov collected \$256,820 for first place.

This was the fourth year Puchkov attended the WSOP. He played in the Main Event (only) in 2007 and 2008. Last year, Puchkov decided to play many more events. He entered 21 tournaments and did not cash once. His confidence was not shaken. Puchkov returned to the WSOP this year and ended up winning a gold bracelet.

According to official records, Puchkov now has one win, one final table appearance, and one in-the-money finish at the WSOP. His career WSOP earnings now total \$256,820.

Puchkov is the fourth Russian-born player in history to win a WSOP gold bracelet, following wins by Ralph Perry (2006), Alexander Kravchenko (2007), and Vitaly Lunkin (2008/2009).

Puchkov speaks Russian and limited English.

WINNER QUOTES (through translator)

On what winning his first WSOP gold bracelet means: "My goal is to win the bracelet. It means the world to me. My family will love it. So will my kids, and all my friends."

On being Russian and visiting the United States and playing in the WSOP: "I was always

anti-Communist. I respected Gorbachev for ending that regime and bringing us together....after I could start traveling outside the country, I have been traveling all over the world. I came to Las Vegas a few times. I feel most comfortable here. This is my favorite spot. Nice country, America.”

On going through a bad time before finally winning a gold bracelet: “Last year, I think I set a record. I played in 21 tournaments. I did not cash once.”

On his background as a horse breeder and trainer: “I love two things -- horses and poker. I name all of my horses after poker terms. The reason why I entered this tournament was because it is called HORSE.”

On what he plans to do with the prize money won, which amounts to more than a quarter-million dollars: “I am going to bring some fresh hay to my horses.”

THE FINAL TABLE

The final table consisted of just one former WSOP gold bracelet winner – Robert Mizrachi.

Four different nations were represented at the final table – Canada, Russia, Sweden, and the United States.

The final table began nine-handed.

The runner up was Al “Sugar Bear” Barbieri. The South Philadelphia native who now resides in Los Angeles has been one of the more colorful personalities on the tournament poker scene for more than 10 years. He’s lived just about every poker player’s dream and nightmare, except for the most elusive of all fantasies, which is winning a WSOP gold bracelet. For Barbieri, that shining moment will have to wait at least another day. Barbieri received a consolation prize amounting to \$158,647. With this finish, Barbieri now officially has more than \$1 million in career earnings.

The third-place finisher was Dustin Leary, a software engineer from San Mateo, CA. Leary had the chip lead part of the way, but ran card dead late in the tournament and had to settle for \$107,979 and third place. This was his first time to cash in a WSOP event.

The fourth-place finisher was Ken Leonard, from Norrtälje, Sweden. Leonard was one of the first Swedes to play at the WSOP. His first of 13 career cashes dates back to 1998. Leonard now has nearly \$600,000 in career WSOP earnings after pocketing \$75,149 in this event.

The fifth-place finisher was Hani Awad, a business manager from Las Vegas, NV. Awad cashed for the fifth time at the WSOP, which paid \$53,386. His biggest previous cash was a 60th-place finish in the 2005 Main Event, which paid \$145,875.

The sixth-place finisher was Andrew Revesz, from Toronto, Ontario (Canada). He works in IT support. Revesz has previously cashed many times in major online tournaments. This was his first time to cash at the WSOP, which paid \$38,698.

The seventh-place finisher was Blake Cahail, from Kansas City, MO. He is a 23-year-old former pharmacy technician who now plays poker professionally. Cahail has a few major tournament final table appearances and also won a huge online poker tournament. This marks six WSOP cashes – and the largest payout so far: \$28,604.

The eighth-place finisher was former WSOP gold bracelet winner Robert Mizrachi, from

Miami, FL. He won a Pot-Limit Omaha event in 2008. Mizrachi also final tabled the Poker Players Championship earlier this year, with his brother Michael “the Grinder” Mizrachi. Eighth place paid \$21,551.

The ninth-place finisher was Las Vegas poker pro, Chip Jett. He has now cashed every year at the WSOP dating back to 2003. Jett and his wife Karina became the first husband-wife duo to make final tables (separate events) this year. Karina Jett finished fourth in Event #27. Ninth place paid \$16,543.

The 13th-place finisher Allen “Chainsaw” Kessler cashed for the fourth time at this year’s WSOP, which currently places him near the top of that category. “Now, I’ve got a real shot at being ‘Player of the Year,’” Chainsaw snapped to a crowd of bystanders, which drew several blank stares and various unintelligible comments.

The final table officially began at 6:30 pm and ended at 5:10 am. The final table clocked in at 10 hours and 40 minutes.

OTHER IN-THE-MONEY FINISHERS

The top 80 finishers collected prize money. Aside from Robert Mizrachi who made the final table, former WSOP gold bracelet finishers who cashed in this event included – James Van Alstyne (14th), Cliff Josephy (19th), Linda Johnson (29th), Jason Mercier (44th), Cyndy Violette (46th), Brandon Cantu (47th), Mary Jones (52nd), Robert Williamson III (53rd), and Vasili Lazarou (58th).

The defending champion was James Van Alstyne. His 14th-place finish was the highest finish achieved by any defending champ so far this year.

Michael Craig, who cashed in 31st place, is a well-known author. He wrote two best-selling poker books, including “The Professor, the Banker, and the Suicide King,” and the “Full Tilt Poker Strategy Guide.”

Jeff Shulman, who finished in 34th place, made his third cash this year. Shulman finished 5th in the 2009 WSOP Main Event championship.

Doug “Rico” Carli from Alliance, OH, who finished in 62nd place, holds the record for most career cashes on the WSOP Circuit (2005-2010) which currently stands at 42.

ODDS AND ENDS

This is the 859th gold bracelet event in World Series of Poker history. Note: This figure includes every official WSOP event played, including tournaments during the early years when there were no actual gold bracelets awarded. It also includes the 11 gold bracelets awarded at WSOP Europe (to date).

The final table was played on the ESPN secondary stage. Both of the final two players had sizable cheering sections.

The official WSOP gold bracelet ceremony takes place on the day following the winner’s victory (or some hours later when the tournament runs past midnight). The ceremony takes place inside The Pavilion, which is the expansive main tournament room hosting all noon starts this year. The ceremony begins at the conclusion of the first break of the noon tournament, usually around 2:20 pm. The national anthem of the winner’s nation is played.

The entire presentation is open to public and media. Video and photography are permitted by both public and members of the media.

Puchkov requested that the national anthem of Russia be played at his WSOP gold bracelet ceremony.

Last year, the Russian national anthem was played inside the tournament room for the first time when Vitaly Lunkin won his second WSOP gold bracelet. This will mark the second occasion the Russian anthem has been played.

EVENT HISTORY

The forbearer of H.O.R.S.E. was S.H.O.E. (a mix of games including Seven-Card-Stud, Limit Hold'em, Omaha High-Low Split, and Stud High-Low Split), which was introduced at the 2001 WSOP.

H.O.R.S.E. was played for the first time as a gold bracelet event at the 2003 WSOP. Organizers thought it would be interesting to hold one H.O.R.S.E. tournament to go with the S.H.O.E. event, which took place at Binion's Horseshoe.

The first WSOP H.O.R.S.E. tournament was won by Doyle Brunson. The official tournament report from that historical 2003 victory can be read at the conclusion of this report.

H.O.R.S.E. is an acronym for five of the most popular poker games played inside American cardrooms today. H.O.R.S.E. tournaments include a rotation of the following games -- Hold'em, Omaha High-Low Split, Razz, Seven-Card Stud, and Seven-Card Stud High-Low Split (also called Eight-or-Better). Many purists consider H.O.R.S.E. to be the ultimate test of poker skill, since it requires that players play all games well in order to win. This claim was perhaps best illustrated at the 2006 World Series of Poker, where H.O.R.S.E. returned to the tournament schedule after a long hiatus. For more than two decades, the late poker legend Chip Reese had been widely regarded as the best all-around player in the world. Appropriately, he won the inaugural tournament which cost \$50,000 to enter and became the first H.O.R.S.E. world champion.

The rotation of games in this tournament lasts eight hands. In other words – following eight dealt hands of Hold'em, there are eight hands of Omaha High-Low followed by eight hands of Razz, and so forth.

TOURNAMENT PLAY

The tournament was played over three consecutive days, from June 16-19, 2010.

The last two players were Al Barbieri and Konstantin Puchkov. Barbieri began heads-up play holding about a 3-to-1 chip advantage. He had his opponent close to all in during the initial stages. But Puchkov fought back and seized the lead about 90 minutes into the duel. Just about everything went right for Puchkov, and wrong for Barbieri, during the last 40 minutes of the match.

The final hand of the tournament came when the duo was playing Seven-Card Stud High-Low Split. Barbieri was dealt (As 7s) 2c 2s 7c 2h (9s), which made three deuces (no low). Puchkov was dealt (4d 4h) Qd 3h 5c Td (8d), which made a diamond flush (no low). Puchkov's flush topped Barbieri's trip deuces.

2010 WSOP STATISTICS

Tournament attendance is up from this same point last year. Last year, through 31 events, there were 29,854 entries. This year, there have been 33,774 total entries through 31 events, an increase of 13.1 percent.

Through the conclusion of Event #31, the nationalities of winners have been:

- United States (20)
- Great Britain (4)
- Canada (3)
- Hungary (1)
- New Zealand (1)
- France (1)
- Russia (1)

Through the conclusion of Event #31, the national origin (birthplace) of winners has been:

- United States (15)
- Great Britain (4)
- Canada (3)
- Vietnam (2)
- China (2)
- Hungary (1)
- New Zealand (1)
- France (1)
- Lebanon (1)
- Russia (1)

Through the conclusion of Event #31, the ratio of professional poker players to semi-pros and amateurs who won gold bracelets is as follows:

Professional Players (21): Michael Chow, Michael Mizrachi, Praz Bansi, Josh Tieman, Peter Gelencser, James Dempsey, Men "the Master" Nguyen, Matt Matros, Yan R. Chen, Steve Gee, Carter Phillips, Jason DeWitt, Eric Buchman, David Baker, Richard Ashby, Dutch Boyd, Sammy Farha, David Warga, Will Haydon, Matt Keikoan, Mike Ellis

Semi-Pros (3): Frank Kassela, Tex Barch, Miguel Proulx

Amateurs (7): Duc Pham, Aadam Daya, Pascal Lefrancois, Simon Watt, Vanessa Hellebuyck, Jeff Tebben, Konstantin Puchkov

Through the conclusion of Event #31, here is the list of repeat WSOP gold bracelet winners at the 2010 WSOP:

- Praz Bansi
- Men "the Master" Nguyen
- Russ "Dutch" Boyd
- Sammy Farha
- David Warga (* his first WSOP win was in a non-open event)
- Matt Keikoan

A LOOK BACK: THE FIRST WSOP H.O.R.S.E. TOURNAMENT

BINION'S HORSESHOE -- LAS VEGAS, NEVADA
PRESS RELEASE APRIL 22, 2003

Number Nine, and Counting.....

"I'll retire when I quit winning."

-- Doyle Brunson

Poker history was made Thursday night when poker legend Doyle "Texas Dolly" Brunson won an unprecedented ninth World Series of Poker gold bracelet. For poker fans and players of all ages, it was the equivalent of seeing Jack Nicklaus win the Masters in the twilight of his career, or watching Babe Ruth hit a home run in his final at bat. Many years from now, those who witnessed this historical milestone will be able to look back and say, "I was there."

Brunson's presence at a final table was enough to guarantee a standing-room only crowd at Binion's Horseshoe, and a large audience tuned in from all over the world to watch the live Internet broadcast. Brunson was making his first final table at the World Series of Poker in five years. He's now cashed 23 times in the world's largest and most prestigious poker tournament -- with two world championships in 1976 and 1977. Between 1976 and 1979, Brunson made six final tables. He won all six.

But there were still a few doubts on this day. Some whispered that the competition has improved dramatically in recent years (it certainly has), while others wondered if Brunson, now in his 70s, could still play the game with as much ability as before. The answer to that question would be answered in a little over four hours.

David Plastik, from Las Vegas, came into the final table with a 3-2 chip lead versus Brunson and a talented field of players which included 1998 world poker champion Scotty Nguyen. Things went well for Plastik in the early stages as he maintained his chip lead -- while Randall Skaggs, Chip Jett, and Bill Gazes were eliminated in 8th, 7th and 6th place respectively.

But everything went terribly wrong for Plastik during a 90-minute series of hands which completely altered the momentum of the final table and set the stage for Brunson's historical breakthrough. First, Scott Numoto, a high-stakes player from San Jose, caught a miracle straight on the last card of the seven-card stud leg of the H.O.R.S.E. cycle and scooped a huge pot against Plastik. A few hands later in the Stud Eight or Better leg, Brunson hammered Plastik's big stack with a 6-low and a 7-high straight to Plastik's two pair. That win catapulted Texas Dolly into the chip lead for the first time and set the stage for Plastik's monumental collapse.

To be fair, much of the misery wasn't Plastik's fault. He usually started off with the best hand, failed to improve, then watched in horror as his opponent managed to catch the perfect card to steal the pot. After Scotty Nguyen was eliminated in 5th place and Scotty Numoto went out 4th, Plastik's nightmare final hour could be summed up in one final hand.

In the hold'em round, Plastik was dealt K-6 of spades. He watched with ecstasy as the flop came with three spades. Plastik's eyes immediately darted towards Brunson's chips -- as he figured at the very least to win a decent-sized pot and draw close to even with The Man. By the time another spade fell on the turn, Plastik was "all in" and still confident he would win the pot. Little did Plastik know, he was drawing completely dead. Brunson showed the Ace of spades for the nut flush, and Plastik's cards were bundled up and thrown across the room in disgust. After shaking off the series of bad beats, Plastik returned to the final table and wished his two former opponents well. It was a nice gesture by Plastik after suffering one of the worst series of defeats at any World Series of Poker final table on record.

When head's up play began, Brunson held a 5-2 chip lead versus Brian Haveson, from Newton, PA. Haveson has slowly, but surely, earned the respect of his tournament opponents in recent years. While not as well-known to the public as the stars of the game, Haveson has developed a well-deserved reputation as a tough player capable of winning on any given day. However, his task on this day might have been too daunting.

Haveson staged a rally at one point when he made fours full of nines versus Brunson during the Omaha High-Low leg of the H.O.R.S.E. series. Then, Brunson stormed back a few hands later and scooped a large pot with a set of fives and a decent low to put Haveson on the brink of elimination. Haveson's final hand of the night came when he was dealt A-2-8-K to Brunson's 5-5-Q-Q. By the time the board showed K-5-3-10 on the turn, all of Haveson's chips were in the pot and he needed a low card (or a king) to stay alive. A picture card fell on the river which meant Brunson's three fives would scoop the pot and guarantee the victory.

"I know I was sitting in the seat that just about every player dreams about," Haveson said afterward. "If I could have won my first gold bracelet playing against Doyle Brunson, that would have been amazing. But I'm still proud of the way I played."

Haveson was right. He played a magnificent game and showed he can hold his own against the world's best poker player. Meanwhile, it seemed to be just another day at the office for The Man, Doyle Brunson.

Interestingly enough, the prize money won by Brunson in this event (\$84K) is dwarfed by a side bet which Brunson made with another well-known poker player, just days earlier. According to Brunson, he bet \$25,000 at 10-1 he would win a gold bracelet at this year's World Series of Poker. It took him all of three events to do it (this is the third event Brunson has played this year). In essence, the win was worth a cool quarter of a million to Brunson in side-action alone.

But money seemed to be the least important thing about winning this poker championship. Brunson said he treasures playing at the World Series of Poker and is proud to carry forth the heritage of this great tournament, which began 34 years ago (Brunson was there at the inaugural in 1970). When asked about his record ninth gold bracelet, Brunson said, "Records are made to be broken. Eventually someone is going to catch me." Nevertheless, the victory guarantees that it will be at least a few more years before anyone catches up to Brunson's record.

Afterwards, Doyle Brunson sat at the final table and went through a question and answer session with reporters. The audience stood and watched in awe as Brunson fielded questions and reflected back on his 50-plus years in poker. He told stories of his early days and conveyed what the game of poker (and the World Series of Poker) meant to him. Brunson closed off his shining moment in the twilight by saying he is determined to win a 10th gold bracelet. "I'll retire when I stop winning," he said. For all fans of the game of poker, and for anyone who was there inside Binion's Horseshoe on this day to witness history being made, it doesn't get any better than this.

-- 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: www.wsop.com. Thank you.

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