



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

Official Report  
Event #44  
Mixed Hold'em (Limit/No-Limit)  
Buy-In: \$2,500  
Number of Entries: 507  
Total Net Prize Pool: \$1,166,100  
Number of Places Paid: 54  
First Place Prize: \$268,238  
June 24-26, 2010

## TOURNAMENT HEADLINES

Gavin Smith Wins WSOP Gold Bracelet in Event 44

Poker's Court Jester Crowned King of Mixed Hold'em

Canadian Poker Pro Collects \$268,238 in Prize Money

After Numerous Crashes and Burns, Gavin Smith Finally Crosses the Finish Line

Through 44 WSOP Events -- WSOP Attendance up Nine Percent over Last Year

## OVERVIEW

It's time to destroy the list. Rip it up. Burn it. Torch it.

The unceremonious list captioned with "Best Poker Players Never to Win a WSOP Gold Bracelet," has become about as outdated as a Pensacola postcard showing pristine beaches.

On June 26th, 2010, when the local clock ticked to midnight, the shiny glass slipper fit. It fit perfectly. And "Cinderella" was none other than a long-haired, half-shaven, partially-balding, pork-bellied, man-child named [Gavin Smith](#).

Gavin Smith. His name is a permanent punch line. Mention Gavin Smith's name in a crowd of poker players and everyone instantly smiles. Despite never having won a World Series of Poker

gold bracelet until this memorable night, he's been one of poker's most enchanting personalities for half a decade. His personality is part Jack Black, part Don Rickles, and part Ozzy Osborne -- all wrapped up in a 5-foot, 9-inch dynamo of a poker player with indisputable natural talent for cards and an unparalleled passion to win. In short, Gavin Smith was and is a living contradiction -- a devoted professional when engaged in the game as well as a disorderly court jester when away from it.

Gavin Smith is a 41-year-old professional poker player from Las Vegas, NV. He is originally from Guelph, Ontario (Canada). Smith has earned a near-astronomical sum of \$3 million dollars since turning pro about six years ago. But the one achievement that had eluded the fast-living, hard-drinking, Butterball-shaped poker superstar was the long-coveted WSOP victory.

This time, when the [final hand](#) was dealt out, someone else turned into the tournament pumpkin. Gavin Smith was the last player sitting and the newest poker champion standing. His dramatic win in the \$2,500 buy-in Mixed Hold'em (Limit/No-Limit) championship paid \$268,238, which might put a serious dent in the bar tab at the post-victory celebration. Indeed, what Gavin Smith was really playing for over the past three long days and nights was redemption from past failures and irrevocable affirmation in the shape of a circular sparkling sphere of laced gold. Indeed, in the poker world, boy Cinderella Gavin Smith doesn't wear glass slippers. He now wears the gold bracelet.

## THE CHAMPION – GAVIN SMITH

The \$2,500 buy-in Mixed Hold'em champion (Event #44) is Gavin Smith. He currently resides in Las Vegas. Smith is originally from Guelph, Ontario (Canada).

Smith is 41-years-old.

Smith is engaged. He and his fiancée are expecting their first child in November.

Smith is one of poker's most beloved personalities. He has established a well-deserved reputation as the player almost everyone loves to hang out with, which has taken its toll over the years -- mostly on Smith himself.

Smith grew up in a town about an hour away from Toronto. Prior to playing poker for a living, Smith held a series of odd jobs, including working at a golf course where he mowed the grass. He also drove a taxi for a time.

Smith began playing poker in and around Toronto. He started to play tournament poker when casinos on the East Coast began holding major events. The early events Smith attended were mostly held in Foxwoods (Connecticut) and Atlantic City (New Jersey).

Smith's favorite drink is rum and diet coke.

Smith's first tournament victory took place in 2000 at the World Poker Finals (Foxwoods), where he won a Seven-Card Stud event.

Smith was the 2003 B.A.R.G.E. champion. B.A.R.G.E. is a social group of poker players who hold an annual gathering in Las Vegas every August. B.A.R.G.E. has now produced a number of gold bracelet winners -- including Chris Ferguson, Greg Raymer, Bill Chen, Jerrod Ankenman, and now Gavin Smith.

Smith had a breakout period in 2004 when he blistered through several televised poker events held at the Plaza Casino in Downtown Las Vegas. The Ultimate Poker Challenge filled an early void in the public's appetite for more poker programming, in the aftermath of

Chris Moneymaker's 2003 WSOP Main Event victory. Smith took up temporary residency in Las Vegas and focused on the small high-profile events being held at the Plaza. Although Smith did not get rich from several cashes, his television appearances were so well received that he became one of the game's most popular players.

Smith's persona led to television appearances on High Stakes Poker and Late Night Poker. He also appeared on NBC's "Face the Ace."

Smith now has more than \$4 million in career tournament earnings.

Smith posted mixed results in WSOP tournaments over the past seven years. His first cash took place in 2003. Smith, despite obvious talent and dedication, endured heartbreaking losses in several events – some of the beats self-inflicted. He finished second both in WSOP events and WSOP Circuit championship events.

Smith collected \$268,238 for first place. He was presented with his first WSOP gold bracelet.

According to official records, Smith now has one win, three final table appearances, and 16 cashes at the WSOP. His career WSOP earnings now total \$836,454. Combined with his WSOP Circuit earnings (\$404,192), Smith now has \$1,240,646 in WSOP-related cashes.

Smith's victory was arguably the biggest crowd pleaser of any so far at this year's WSOP. As players were eliminated from the final table, the number of spectators swelled to the point where the entire ESPN Main Stage was filled to capacity. One veteran tournament reporter, B.J. Nemeth, stated that in all his years of covering poker tournaments he had never witnessed so many people – fans, players, media, and staff – coming up to offer heartfelt congratulations to the winner.

Smith was uncharacteristically emotional following his victory. His eyes were filled with tears and he was unable to speak for a few moments when given the opportunity to make a celebratory address to the standing-room only crowd.

When Smith took the microphone and was able to address the hundreds of spectators and well-wishers, it was quite poignant that the first thing Smith noted was the fine performance of the tournament runner up, Danny Hannawa. Guided perhaps by a long personal history and appreciation for the empathy of angst that accompanies a non-win, Smith offered kind words to the second-place finisher.

## WINNER QUOTES

On the perfect storm that produced his first WSOP victory after waiting for many years: "Yeah, I seem to be pretty good at screwing things up. I have had a lot of issues through the years. I know this year I came in trying to try my ass off. I have not always done that. In the past, I sometimes went out and got drunk or hung out. But this year, I decided to come in and try to play my best the whole time. I came in and the first several events I kept getting my teeth kicked in. I was playing well. I was playing my best. But I wasn't seeing the results. And then when I cashed in the Heads-Up that helped. Then, the last three days everything just clicked. I played well and things went well and everything clicked at the right time."

On the energy of the crowd, which was (mostly) cheering for Smith to win: "At the start, there were not that many people. All of my friends are drunks who show up late. It was actually a very cool final table. Some of the other players had cheering sections. Once it got heads-up there were more people probably for me than Dan, but I think that's a testament to the fact I'm an old man who has been around a long time and I live here and have a lot of friends

around here.”

On playing both Limit Hold'em and No-Limit Hold'em in this tournament: “In this format, the Limit Hold'em takes on more weight than the No-Limit. My memory is not always my strength, but I think at this table it became my strength because I do not think most people here picked up on it. Everyone was splashing around too much. Where you could really pick up a lot of chips was in the Limit Hold'em rounds by playing aggressively and not spewing pots by just trying to win every hand.”

On waiting a long time to finally win: “I've been in this game a long, long, long, long time. Basically, a while ago, I used to go on tilt. Now, I try to think of the goal. Anything worth having is worth also going through a few adversities. You are always going to have peaks and valleys. Some people do not always do well dealing with the valleys and the people that don't – don't win. I tried to learn from that.”

On being Gavin Smith: “I'm just an older guy from Guelph, Ontario, who used to drive a taxi and cut greens. Now, I'm sitting here and hundreds of people have come over to me. Play poker for a living, and I just won hundreds of thousands of dollars. There is nothing in my life that can be considered a curse. Every single minute of it is a blessing.”

On what his first WSOP victory means: “It doesn't change things. It doesn't change who I am. I'm going to come back again tomorrow and start over. But what it does mean is that I'm part of that club that I always wanted to be a part of.”

## THE FINAL TABLE

The final table included no former WSOP gold bracelet winners, which guaranteed a first-time champion.

The final table began nine-handed.

The final table included players from three different nations – Canada (2 players), South Africa (1 player), and the United States (7 players).

The runner up was Danny “Hurricane” Hannawa, from West Bloomfield, MI. He is a 28-year-old poker pro. This was his first time to cash in a WSOP tournament. Second place paid \$166,005.

The third-place finisher was Timothy Finne, from Fanwood, NJ. He cashed for the 7<sup>th</sup> time at the WSOP. Last year, he also finished in third place in the \$3,000 buy-in H.O.R.S.E. tournament. This time, the repeat third-place showing paid \$110,324.

The fourth-place finisher was Michael Michnik, from Vorhees, NJ. He is a student at Rutgers University. This was Michnik's fourth time to cash this year and was his best showing to date. He collected \$81,871 in prize money.

The fifth-place finisher was Jamie Rosen, from Boa Raton, FL. He made his third WSOP final table – following two final table appearances in 2008. Rosen, who lost his big brother recently, dedicated this effort to his beloved family member. Rosen was paid \$61,441 for a fine achievement.

The sixth-place finisher was Jarred Solomon, from Johannesburg, South Africa. He has a number of major cashes throughout Asia and Australia. Solomon also made his second final table appearance this year after taking fifth place in the Six-Handed No-Limit Hold'em

competition. Solomon accepted \$46,562 in prize money.

The seventh-place finisher was Dan Idema, from Vancouver, BC (Canada). He is a former semi-pro hockey player. Idema has previously won major poker events in British Columbia. He finished second in the \$10,000 buy-in Limit Hold'em World Championship, which completed last week. That consolation prize paid \$263,243. Idema earned \$35,601 for another fine effort in a Hold'em competition.

The eighth-place finisher was Dwyte Pilgrim, from Brooklyn, NY. Pilgrim made his first WSOP final table appearance in this event after spending the past two years playing tournament poker professionally. Pilgrim holds three WSOP Circuit gold rings. He was the unofficial WSOP Circuit "Player of the Year" during the 2009-2010 season. Pilgrim, who is still seeking his first gold bracelet win, accepted \$27,438 for eighth place.

The ninth-place finisher was "Karate" Mike Santoro, from Egg Harbor Township, NJ. He is a 40-year-old poker pro and business owner. Prior to playing poker seriously, Santoro was a champion who competed in full contact Tae Kwon Do and Karate. He is a martial arts expert who has hundreds of trophies and awards to his name. However, Santoro was the first player to be chopped away from the final table. He has several impressive cashes in other poker tournaments, but this marked his first WSOP in-the-money finish. Ninth place paid \$21,304.

The final table began at 2:30 pm and ended at 12:20 pm, for a duration of 9 hours and 50 minutes, which is about the average length for a nine-handed Hold'em final table.

## OTHER IN-THE-MONEY FINISHERS

The top 54 finishers collected prize money. Former WSOP gold bracelet finishers who cashed in this event included – Eli Elezra (23<sup>rd</sup>), Ivo Donev (51<sup>st</sup>), Svetlana Gromenkova (52<sup>nd</sup>), and Eric Froehlich (53<sup>rd</sup>).

Jeff Shulman, who was one of last year's November Nine, ended up as the 50<sup>th</sup>-place finisher. Shulman now has four cashes in 2010. He took fifth place in last year's Main Event.

The defending champion was Bahador Ahmadi, from Vancouver, BC (Canada). Ahmadi did not enter this year's tournament.

## ODDS AND ENDS

This is the 872<sup>nd</sup> 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 to date at WSOP Europe.

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.

Smith requested that the national anthem of Canada be played at his WSOP gold bracelet

ceremony, held Sunday June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

## EVENT HISTORY

Mixed Hold'em events are fairly new to the WSOP, but have gained popularity despite their short history. Mixed Hold'em means that two games are played in rotation -- Limit Hold'em and No-Limit Hold'em. The games alternate as each game is played for 30 minutes per (one-hour) level.

## TOURNAMENT PLAY

The tournament was played over three consecutive days, from June 24-26, 2010.

There were 507 entries. The total prize pool amounted to \$1,166,100. The top 54 finishers collected prize money.

Attendance declined slightly from last year, when there were a record 527 entrants. This is one of the few tournaments this year that saw a decline in attendance. About 80 percent of all events have increased participation.

Smith held the chip lead once play became four-handed. The heads-up duel with Danny Hannawa lasted about 75 minutes.

The final hand came during the Limit Hold'em round when Smith was dealt Ah Qh against Hannawa's Tc 8d. The final board showed Ad Kh 2c Jd Js giving Smith top two pair – aces and jacks.

While Smith lives in the United States, he is to be identified as a Canadian.

## 2010 WSOP STATISTICS

Tournament attendance is up significantly from this same point last year. Last year, through 44 events, there were 43,050 entries. Thus far this year, there have been 47,948 total entries, an increase of 9.2 percent.

Prize money is just about even with last year's figures. Last year, through 44 events, the amount of prize money won was \$84,868,394. This year's prize money amounts to \$84,328,915.

Through the conclusion of Event #44, the nationalities of gold bracelet winners have been:

United States (29)  
Great Britain (5)  
Canada (5)  
Hungary (2)  
New Zealand (1)  
France (1)  
Russia (1)

Through the conclusion of Event #44, the national origin (birthplace) of winners has been:

United States (22)

Great Britain (5)  
Canada (5)  
Vietnam (2)  
China (2)  
Hungary (2)  
New Zealand (1)  
France (1)  
Lebanon (1)  
Russia (1)  
Mexico (1)  
Bangladesh (1)

Through the conclusion of Event #44, the breakdown of professional poker players to semi-pros and amateurs who won gold bracelets is as follows:

Professional Players (31): 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, Luis Velador, Ayaz Mahmood, Phil Ivey, Luigi Kwaysser, Scott Montgomery, Steven Kelly, Steve Jelinek, Dean Hamrick, Ian Gordon, Gavin Smith

Semi-Pros (5): Frank Kassela, Tex Barch, Miguel Proulx, Jeffrey Papola, Frank Kassela

Amateurs (8): Duc Pham, Aadam Daya, Pascal Lefrancois, Simon Watt, Vanessa Hellebuyck, Jeff Tebben, Konstantin Puchkov, Harold Angle

Through the conclusion of Event #44, here is the list of repeat WSOP gold bracelet winners:

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  
Luis Velador  
Phil Ivey  
Frank Kassela (two wins this year)

Through the conclusion of 2010 World Series of Poker -- Event #44:

Youngest Winner – Steven Kelly (21)  
Oldest Winner – Harold Angle (78)  
Female Winners (open events) – None  
Multiple-Event Winners (this year) – Frank Kassela

-- 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](http://www.wsop.com). Thank you.*

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*For statistics and historical information from the 2010 World Series of Poker, contact Nolan Dalla at: [nolandalla@aol.com](mailto:nolandalla@aol.com) or [nolandalla@gmail.com](mailto:nolandalla@gmail.com)*

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