



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

Official Report  
Event #56  
No-Limit Hold'em  
Buy-In: \$2,500  
Number of Entries: 1,942  
Total Net Prize Pool: \$4,466,600  
Number of Places Paid: 198  
First Place Prize: \$825,976  
July 2 to July 6, 2010

## TOURNAMENT HEADLINES

Tomer Berda Wins WSOP Gold Bracelet in Event 56  
Israeli Software Developer Earns First WSOP Victory  
Berda Wins Final Tournament before Start of Main Event  
Latest WSOP Winner Collects \$825,976 in Prize Money  
\$2,500 Buy-In Tournament Nearly Doubles in Size over Last Year  
WSOP Attendance Increases 20 Percent from Last Year

## OVERVIEW

[Tomer Berda](#) was the winner of the \$2,500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em championship at the 2010 World Series of Poker. This marked his first career WSOP gold bracelet victory. Berda collected a whopping \$825,976 in prize money in what was his fourth time to cash at the WSOP. His most notable previous achievement was a fifth-place finish in Event #5 of this year's series, which took place more than a month ago. Since that time, Berda ran brutally cold in several tournaments, enduring 12 straight non-cashes before finally earning a triumphant breakthrough victory.

Berda is a 34-year-old software developer who owns a highly-successful high-tech company. He spent most of his life living and working in Israel, before immigrating to the United States. He

now resides in Menlo Park, CA.

The runner up was [Vladimir Kochelaevskiy](#), from Moscow, Russia. He nearly became the fifth Russian to win a gold bracelet in the 41-year history of the WSOP. He received \$510,939.

The tournament attracted 1,942 entries, which almost doubled last year's turnout. The total prize pool amounted to \$4,466,600. The top 198 finishers collected prize money. Former WSOP gold bracelet finishers who cashed in this event included – Mike Wattel (5th), James Mackey (10th), David Baker (35th), Jason Dewitt (65th), "Captain" Tom Franklin (83rd), David Singer (87th), Dan Heimiller (129th), and Jamie Gold (195th).

This was Dan Heimiller's seventh time to cash this year. He is having one of his best WSOP years ever, having achieved six five-figure payouts.

Craig Marquis, who was one of the inaugural "November Nine," finished in 16th place. Marquis finished 9th in the 2008 Main Event.

2006 world champion Jamie Gold cashed. This was his first in-the money finish in three years. Gold won the biggest prize against the biggest live field in poker history when he outlasted a field of 8,773 players to take down a record \$12 million top prize.

This was the final WSOP tournament held in Las Vegas in 2010, except for the Main Event, which began on the same day this competition concluded.

## THE CHAMPION – TOMER BERDA

The \$2,500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em champion (Event #56) is Tomer Berda, from Menlo Park, CA.

Berda was born in Israel.

Berda is 34-years-old.

In 1998, Berda came to the United States and started his own software development company. He developed technology that was initially used by major finance companies. Later, universities began using the services of Berda's company. He eventually had clients that included several branches of the federal government, including the U.S. Army.

Berda did very well financially with his company; however, he discovered a passion for poker and he now plans to play as much as possible.

When Berda was a child, he used to watch family and friends play various forms of poker. He was always eager to sit in the games, but rarely had the opportunity to do so. He suspects this is what later fueled his desire to play and learn more.

When Berda began playing poker seriously, he mostly concentrated on online games. However, he has been playing many more live games and tournaments recently. This year was the first time Berda began playing what could be considered full-time hours.

Berda says his father was very supportive of his poker playing. He admits his mother was not as supportive, at first. But as she watched him play and enjoy the game in recent years, she eventually started playing herself to the point where she is now playing online for extra income.

Berda collected \$825,976 for first place. He was presented with his first WSOP gold bracelet.

According to official records, Berda now has one win, two final table appearances, and four cashes at the WSOP. His career WSOP earnings now total \$975,084.

Berda was accompanied by his father, who watched his son win his first WSOP victory from a few feet away along the rail. Moments following the tournament's conclusion, Berda's father had tears in his eyes, visibly proud of his son's well-deserved achievement.

## WINNER QUOTES

On how he began playing poker: "Even though my company was very successful, I had the poker bug. Since I was a kid, I have always loved poker."

On his motivation to play: "I didn't get into poker to make money. Money was not the ambition. I just fell in love with the game. I just wanted to play. Even today, my ambition is not to make a living at it. I just play because I enjoy it."

On having his father alongside him to witness the victory: "I had a feeling all day long that I was going to win. I had a vision. I saw it happening. I really wanted to do it with my father here. I have waited for that moment. I had the goal to win a bracelet. And now, I had my father with me who was happy with me here."

On coming back when playing heads-up and overcoming a 3-to-1 chip disadvantage: "I never lost hope. I think he was playing better than me. I am supposed to be a good player heads-up. He was playing better than me, heads-up – I have to admit. But I was lucky because I did manage to win a coin flip and then another two big pots. So, I was lucky on the big pots. But he kept chopping me down. I was lucky to win the pots that mattered most."

On thanking those who inspired him to win: "I want to thank my father who supported me here, and my mother who was praying for me to win. She was following me online all night. Many of my friends were watching too, so I want to thank them. I felt like because (Vladimir Kochelaevskiy) had a big crowd of supporters, that I was a visiting team in a soccer match. But I also knew that I had people back home cheering for me and supporting me. So, that really helped me."

## THE FINAL TABLE

The final table included only one former WSOP gold bracelet winner – Mike Wattel.

The final table began nine-handed.

The final table included players from four different nations – Italy (2 players), Russia (1 player), Taiwan (1 player), and the United States (5 players).

The runner up was Vladimir Kochelaevskiy, from Moscow, Russia. He nearly became the fifth Russian to win a gold bracelet in the 41-year history of the WSOP. He received \$510,939. This marked his fourth time to cash at the WSOP.

The third-place finisher was Bryan Porter, from Wilmington, NC. He is a 25-year-old poker pro. Porter cashed for the second time this year. Porter collected a huge score in this tournament, worth \$353,260.

The fourth-place finisher was Salvatore Bonavena, from Cessaniti, Italy. This was the

second time the fedora-wearing Italian has cashed in a WSOP event. Bonavena earned \$254,777.

The fifth-place finisher was Mike Wattel, from Scottsdale, AZ. He is a 39-year-old poker pro. Wattel won a gold bracelet back in 1999 in the \$1,500 buy-in Omaha High-Low Split event. Wattel now has 25 career cashes at the WSOP. This one paid \$186,250.

The sixth-place finisher was Hungcheng Hung, from Taipei, Taiwan. He is a 35-year-old businessman. This marked Hung's second time to cash this year, which paid \$137,946.

The seventh-place finisher was Ali Alawadhi, from Longwood, FL. He owns a car dealership. This was Alawadhi's second WSOP final table appearance. Alawadhi, who was born in Kuwait and goes by the nickname "Desert Storm," collected \$103,527 in prize money.

The eighth-place finisher was Joseph Curcio, from New York, NY. He is a 24-year-old professional gambler. This marked Curcio's second time to cash at the WSOP, which paid \$78,705.

The ninth-place finisher was Alfonso Amendola, from Catania, Italy. He is a 50-year-old owner of several restaurants. Amendola was one of two Italians who finished in the top nine. He earned \$60,580.

The final table began at 3 pm and ended at midnight, a duration of about nine hours. Heads-up play lasted nearly three hours.

## OTHER IN-THE-MONEY FINISHERS

The top 198 finishers collected prize money. Former WSOP gold bracelet finishers who cashed in this event included – Mike Wattel (5<sup>th</sup>), James Mackey (10<sup>th</sup>), David Baker (35<sup>th</sup>), Jason Dewitt (65<sup>th</sup>), "Captain" Tom Franklin (83<sup>rd</sup>), David Singer (87<sup>th</sup>), Dan Heimiller (129<sup>th</sup>), and Jamie Gold (195<sup>th</sup>).

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The defending champion was Keven Stammen, from Coldwater, OH. He played in this event but did not cash.

## ODDS AND ENDS

This is the 884<sup>th</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.

This was the final tournament held before the start of the 2010 WSOP Main Event. However,

the final table was played at the same time as Day 1-A of the Main Event.

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.

Berda requested that the national anthem of Israel be played at his WSOP gold bracelet ceremony, held Friday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010. This will be the final gold bracelet ceremony held this year.

## TOURNAMENT PLAY

The tournament was played over five consecutive days, from July 1<sup>st</sup> through July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

There were 1,942 entries. The total prize pool amounted to \$4,466,600. The top 198 finishers collected prize money.

The final table was played in the Pavilion for the first time. The Amazon Room, which is the normal site of all WSOP final tables other than the Main Event, was filled to capacity with the Main Event Day 1-A starters.

Tomer Berda overcame about a 3-to-1 chip disadvantage when play became heads-up.

The final hand of the tournament came when Berda was dealt Ad 4c against Vladimir Kochelaevskiy, holding Tc 6c. The final board came Ah 6h 2c 3h 7c. That gave Berda top pair (aces) and the victory.

Berda is to be classified as a semi-professional player, since he plays for extra income but also has a successful business.

## 2010 WSOP STATISTICS (THROUGH EVENT 56)

Tournament attendance is up significantly from this same point last year. Last year, through 56 events, there were 53,808 entries. Thus far this year, there have been 65,296 total entries, an increase of 21.3 percent.

Prize money is also up from last year's figures. Last year, through 56 events, the amount of prize money won was \$111,631,536. This year's prize money currently stands at \$118,414,865, an increase of about 6 percent.

Through the conclusion of Event #56, the nationalities of gold bracelet winners have been:

- United States (38)
- Great Britain (5)
- Canada (5)
- Hungary (2)
- New Zealand (1)
- France (1)
- Russia (1)

Norway (1)  
Holland (1)  
Israel (1)

Through the conclusion of Event #56, the national origin (birthplace) of winners has been:

United States (31)  
Great Britain (5)  
Canada (5)  
Vietnam (2)  
China (2)  
Hungary (2)  
New Zealand (1)  
France (1)  
Lebanon (1)  
Russia (1)  
Mexico (1)  
Bangladesh (1)  
Norway (1)  
Holland (1)  
Israel (1)

Through the conclusion of Event #56, the breakdown of professional poker players to semi-pros and amateurs who won gold bracelets is as follows:

Professional Players (39): 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, Jesse Rockowitz, Chris Bell, Sigurd Eskeland, Chance Kornuth, Ryan Welch, Brendan Taylor, Daniel Alaei

Semi-Pros (8): Frank Kassela, Tex Barch, Miguel Proulx, Jeffrey Papola, Frank Kassela, Mike Linn, Dan Kelly, Tomer Berda

Amateurs (9): Duc Pham, Aadam Daya, Pascal Lefrancois, Simon Watt, Vanessa Hellebuyck, Jeff Tebben, Konstantin Puchkov, Harold Angle, Marcel Vonk

Through the conclusion of Event #56, 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)  
Daniel Alaei

Through the conclusion of 2010 World Series of Poker -- Event #56:

Youngest Winner – Steven Kelly (21), Dan 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 official news and the latest updates from the 2010 World Series of Poker, visit: [www.wsop.com](http://www.wsop.com)*

*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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