



**2012 World Series of Poker Presented by Jack Link's Beef Jerky
Rio All-Suite Hotel and Casino
Las Vegas, Nevada**

**Official Report
Event #45
Poker Players Championship
Buy-In: \$50,000
Number of Entries: 108
Total Net Prize Pool: \$5,184,000
Number of Places Paid: 108
First Place Prize: \$1,451,527
June 24-28, 2012**

TOURNAMENT HEADLINES

Michael Mizrachi Wins \$50,000 Buy-In Poker Players Championship (Event #45)

"The Grinder" Becomes First Player in History to Win Chip Reese Memorial Trophy Two Times

Poker Superstar Collects \$1,451,527 in Prize Money

Mizrachi Wins Gold Bracelet for Third Consecutive Year

Highly-Respected Pro Chris Klodnicki Finishes as Runner-Up

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW

A VOLCANIC VICTORY FOR MICHAEL MIZRACHI

"The Grinder" Erupts Again, Wins Third WSOP Gold Bracelet

Over the past decade, so much has been written and said about Michael "the Grinder" Mizrachi, that it's nearly impossible to list all his poker accomplishments.

His meteoric rise to the top of poker's hierarchy during the early to mid-2000s, followed by an epic crash and burn some years later that many claimed was foreseeable. That was followed by a majestic and monumental comeback at the 2010 World Series of Poker, which only served to reconfirm his elite standing as one of the living legends of the game. Then, there was another strong 2011, followed by what happened tonight in one of the most anticipated tournaments of the year.

To say Mizrachi outdid himself with yet another triumph here at the WSOP would be audacious. But he did, indeed. Fact is, Mizrachi *expects to win*. He *expects* to succeed each and every time he sits down at the poker table. That's not arrogance. That's not conceit. That's self-confidence. And Mizrachi has it in spades with the ranks of a Royal Flush.

Mizrachi just won the 2012 Poker Players Championship, which includes a mix of the eight most popular forms of poker. He collected a whopping \$1,451,527 in prize money, which – hard to believe – ranks as only the *third* biggest WSOP score on the Mizrachi uber-skewed scale of success. But he was hardly complaining about the paltry million and a half when last seen snapping on WSOP gold bracelet number three for his career.

Mizrachi won his first WSOP gold bracelet in this same event two years ago. That victory paid \$1,559,046. He went on to cash four more times over the next four weeks, making four final table appearances. Most impressive of all, was his astounding run in the 2010 Main Event Championship – where he outlasted 7,314 players and ultimately finished in fifth place. That paid another \$2,332,992. If anyone was counting, Mizrachi's financial take from 2010 alone at the WSOP amounted to more than \$4 million.

Then, he won a second gold bracelet last year, which took place at WSOP Europe. His victory in the Mixed-Game event brought in another \$400,000, which added yet another memorable chapter in the Mizrachi legacy.

Coming into 2012, if any poker player had a tough act to follow, it was the player everyone knows as “the Grinder.” And frankly, up until this week Mizrachi hadn't done much nor been heard from in what was starting to seem like a very long time. Then, like a sleeping smoldering volcano, the incontestable skill of a great poker champion finally burst into the sky and rolled across the Rio like burning lava.

Those burned by the Mizrachi eruption included several notable tournament players who very well might have won their own coveted bracelet had it not been for the tenacity of a certain poker pro from Miramar, FL. Falling by the wayside like scorched trees in the path of molten magma was just about every poker superstar in the world. “Mount Mizrachi” took out everything in its path, a magnificent spectacle to observe from afar, but a frighteningly perilous position, if in the unenviable state of being nestled aside such a powerful force of nature.

If they were a “somebody” in the game of poker, they probably played in this event, and they most certainly helped to line Mizrachi's pocket with an unintended contribution.

With this victory, the next mystery surrounding Mizrachi is not so much if he'll win another gold bracelet, but when. Given the ups and downs of his tumultuous past, no one really knows exactly what's in the next poker chapter to be written by Mizrachi. But one thing is for sure. It's going to be fascinating to watch and witness.

Las Vegas, NV (June 28, 2012) – From the many, many thousands of participants who have attended the World Series of Poker in recent years, if one single poker player were to be chosen for the “Best Overall Performance,” Michael “the Grinder” Mizrachi would probably be the unanimous winner.

Consider his WSOP accomplishments over just the past two years:

May 28, 2010 – Won his first WSOP gold bracelet in the \$50,000 buy-in Poker Players Championship, for \$1,559,046.

June 3, 2010 – Sixth place in the \$10,000 buy-in Seven-Card Stud World Championship.

June 15, 2010 – Eighth place in the \$10,000 buy-in Limit Hold'em World Championship.

November 9, 2010 – Fifth place in the \$10,000 buy-in Main Event Championship, which paid \$2,332,992.

June 27, 2011 – Second place in the \$2,500 buy-in Mixed-Split Omaha/Seven-Card Stud event.

October 12, 2011 – Won his second gold bracelet in the 10,400 Euro buy-in Split-Format event at WSOP Europe, good for 336,008 euros (about \$420,000).

May 29, 2012 – Fifth place in the \$1,500 buy-in Seven-Card Stud High-Low Split event.

June 15, 2012 – Fourth place in the \$1,500 buy-in Deuce-to-Seven Draw Lowball event.

June 28, 2012 – Won his third gold bracelet in the \$50,000 buy-in Poker Players Championship, for \$1,451,527.

In case anyone's keeping track – that's three gold bracelet victories, nine final table appearances, a deep run into the Main Event as one of the “November Nine,” and about \$5 million in prize money earned....all within about a two-year span.

Oh, and he just won one of the game's most prestigious titles for the second time in three years.

Indeed, Michael “the Grinder” Mizrachi rose to yet a higher plateau in the plethora of poker greats on this night, when he triumphed in this year's Poker Players Championship. The ultra-prestigious competition is played in the name of the late great Chip Reese, who won the inaugural in 2006. The event trophy is named in Reese's name.

Now, the Chip Reese Memorial Trophy has Mizrachi's name in duplicate. Two years following a monumental personal

and professional breakthrough victory in this same event played back in 2010, the poker player known as “the Grinder” pretty much turned everyone’s dreams to dust. He dominated the final two sessions of the five-day marathon, holding the chip lead most of the way.

His final table included a tough lineup. Alas, just about every seat in this tournament of 108 starters was a superstar or known player on the brink of taking the next step towards the game’s most elite class. Mizrachi overcame former gold bracelet winners Bill Chen and Andy Bloch. He also defeated the highly-respected Chris Klodnicki in heads-up play, who is still in search of his first WSOP victory.

The stacked tournament concluded on Thursday night on the ESPN Main Stage, in front of a large crowd and a worldwide viewing audience following final table action the WSOP.com live stream broadcast.

Perhaps just as remarkable was the manner in which the victory took place -- in a lightening quick five hours, well under the marathon times posted for this event over each of the past six years. Unlike previous finales, which dragged out at 12, 13, 14, and (once, back in 2009) 16 hours, Mizrachi acted as though he had 8 p.m. dinner reservations.

No doubt, plenty of fluted glasses will be raised to the sky to salute Mizrachi's repeat victory in this incredible night, including a symbolic hoist from everyone in poker who realizes what a remarkable talent we are witnessing.

MEET THE LATEST WSOP CHAMPION – MICHAEL “THE GRINDER” MIZRACHI

The winner was Michael “the Grinder” Mizrachi, from Miramar, Florida (USA).

Mizrachi is 30-years-old. He was born in Miami, FL.

Mizrachi is a professional poker player. He has been playing full-time since 2004. Prior to playing poker, Mizrachi was a college student. He entered college and was studying to become a doctor, but decided to pursue a poker career instead, after performing so well early in his career.

Mizrachi is married. He has three children.

Mizrachi’s father is of Iraqi-Jewish decent. Mizrachi and most of his family are fluent in Hebrew.

Mizrachi won his first WSOP gold bracelet in the \$50,000 buy-in Poker Players Championship, played in 2010. His victory was nationally-televised on ESPN and proved to be one of the most thrilling finales in WSOP history. He ended up playing heads-up against his brother Robert, another former gold bracelet winner. “The Grinder” won the battle of the two brothers and \$1,559,046 in prize money.

Prior to his first victory in 2010, Mizrachi had won just about every major title in poker except a WSOP gold bracelet.

Mizrachi’s first recorded tournament cash took place in March 2004.

Mizrachi was Card Player Magazine’s “Player of the Year” in 2006.

Mizrachi was one of the 2010 WSOP Main Event “November Nine.” He finished in fifth place and collected \$2,332,992.

According to official records, Mizrachi now has 29 cashes, 15 final table appearances, and 3 wins. His career WSOP earnings now totals nearly \$7 million.

Mizrachi is called “the Grinder” due to his never-give-up mentality. Mizrachi certainly does not fit the mold of the traditional poker grinder, however. The term is usually meant to describe a tight player. Mizrachi is actually one of poker’s most aggressive and unpredictable tournament pros.

Other members of the Mizrachi family have adopted the “Grinder” moniker. His is married to Mrs. Grinder. His mother is Mama Grinder. His children each have been called Baby Grinder at various times.

Note: Mizrachi will be classified as a professional poker player in WSOP records, since he plays full-time exclusively and has no other occupation.

INTERVIEW WITH THE WINNER – MICHAEL “THE GRINDER” MIZRACHI

Question: *You have an enormous number of accolades on your tournament resume. Where does this one rank?*

The Grinder: Well, to win it first back in 2010, with some people feeling that I was going through rough times, and you know, it's an amazing thing—I mean, I can't even explain it—to win the 50K Poker Players Championship twice. It's a dream come true. It's another part of the books and another part of my history. And I'm hoping to make history happen and become the all-time money winner in tournament poker history. I got a long way to go. I'm still young. I'm 30-years-old. I expect to do a lot and have high expectations and goals.

Question: *We're usually here many, many hours for this event. How did you get it done in five hours?*

The Grinder: Remember, there's No-Limit and Pot-Limit Omaha. So, things could happen. And I was just running really, really well. It's the best you can run at a final table. The cards went my way. Everything went my way. I thought I played my best. And I think I played my best. But you know, when I was heads up against Chris, he kind of like fell apart. I was just getting all the cards, you know. It's tough to play against somebody who keeps winning every hand and is super aggressive. He was in such bad sports. You know, I kept making a seven in Deuce-to-Seven. I mean, everything went my way. And I'm very appreciative of that outcome, of winning this championship, holding the Chip Reese Memorial trophy twice. It's an amazing feeling. Hopefully we'll have another bracelet in the World Series, and hopefully it's a million-dollar or whatever one I'm playing at. I'm not sure. I'm taking a break until Sunday. But we'll see what happens.

Question: *You are going to play in the million-dollar tournament?*

The Grinder: I'm definitely going to play in the million-dollar event. I'm excited and can't wait to play.

Question: *How did you approach this one? If you won, then were you planning on playing in the million-dollar event?*

The Grinder: No. I was already buying into the million-dollar. I decided a week ago because I just thought, you know, I just thought it out. No one is going to buy into it; it's very expensive, especially for a poker player. So, I asked a few guys, you know, 'Are you interested?' And before you knew it, I rounded up \$900,000 in four days. So, I was like 'Wow. Just like that. Now I'm in.' I'm sure everybody wants a piece now. But we're sold-out.

Question: *Are you still kind of bitter about how you finished in the Main Event a few years ago?*

The Grinder: If you told me that I was going to finish fifth place in the Main Event, I'll take it.

Question: *Was this final table a little less stressful than the one in 2010?*

The Grinder: This one, you know, wherever I finish, it'd be a respectful because I've already won this title before. Now to win it, it's just beyond that. I just can't believe it. I can't believe I won it twice. It's just an amazing feeling. And I'm very excited.

Question: *Did you like this format, going back-and-forth between different events?*

The Grinder: I won them both, so I can't really say. But I think the format should always stay the same. The way you start is the way you're supposed to finish. I know for television, people want No-Limit Hold'em because the public doesn't know how to play the other seven games that we're playing. But, you know, it is what it is. So, hopefully one day we'll televise eight games, and we'll get people playing eight games and grow a bigger field for the Poker Players Championship.

Question: *You got on the phone immediately after you won. Who'd you call?*

The Grinder: When I was on the phone, it was my mother. I wish she could be here, but she's at home. I said, 'Don't worry. Take it easy. I got this.' She'll probably come out for the million-dollar buy-in.

ODDS AND ENDS

This is the 1,004th gold bracelet to be awarded in WSOP history. It is also the 998th WSOP event in history.

This was classified as WSOP schedule Event #45, since it's the 45th gold bracelet of 61 to be awarded this summer in Las Vegas. The tournament was played over three consecutive days and nights, starting on Sunday at noon and concluding on Thursday night.

The total duration of the final table was about five hours. Play began at 2 p.m. on a Thursday afternoon and ended at 7 p.m.

The final table included three former gold bracelet winners – Michael Mizrachi (2), and Bill Chen (2), and Andy Bloch (1).

The runner-up was Chris Klodnicki, from Philadelphia, PA. At one point, Klodnicki had the chip lead. But he could not hold the advantage. Klodnicki collected a nice consolation prize totaling \$896,935.

The top 16 finishers collected prize money. Aside from final table players, among the cashers were former gold bracelet winners -- David "ODB" Baker, Daniel Alaei, Johnny "World" Hennigan, Jeff Lisandro, and Mike Wattel.

The official WSOP gold bracelet ceremony takes place on the day following the winner's victory (or some hours later when the tournament end very late). The ceremony takes place inside Brasilia. The ceremony begins at the conclusion of the first break of the noon tournament. The ceremony usually starts around 2:20 p.m. The national anthem of the winner's nation is played. The entire presentation is open to public and media. Video and photography is permitted by both public and members of the media.

2012 WSOP STATISTICS

Through the conclusion of Event #46, the nationality of gold bracelet winners has been:

United States (34): Chip Saechao, 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, Dung "Gomer" Nguyen, Greg Ostrander, Henry Lu, Joey Weissman, Michael "the Grinder" Mizrachi

Canada (3): Ashkan Razavi, Simon Charette, Timothy Adams

France (1): Aubin Cazals

Bulgaria (1): Nick Jivkov

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

Ukraine (1): Okelsii Kovalchuk

Italy (1): Rocco Palumbo

Through the conclusion of this tournament, the national origin (birthplace) of winners has been:

United States (32): 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

Canada (2): Simon Charette, Timothy Adams

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

Vietnam (1): Dung "Gomer" Nguyen

Germany (1): Jan-Peter Jachtmann

Ukraine (1): Okelsii Kovalchuk

Italy (1): Rocco Palumbo

Through the conclusion of this event, the home state of the 34 American winners has been:

Nevada (8): Brent Hanks, Andy Bloch, Randy Ohel, Joe Cassidy, Allyn Jaffrey-Shulman, Carter Phillips, David "Bakes" Baker, Chris Tryba

New York (5): Matt Matros, Andy Frankenberger, Greg Ostrander, Henry Lu, Joey Weissman

California (4): Chip Saechao, John Monnette, Phil Hellmuth, Max Steinberg

Pennsylvania (3): Brian Hastings, David "Doc" Arsht, Ben Scholl

Texas (3): Ylon Schwartz, Larry Wright, David "ODB" Baker

Florida (3): Leif Force, Cory Zeidman, Michael "the Grinder" Mizrachi

Alabama (1): Herbert Tapscott

Ohio (1): Adam Friedman

Washington (1): Brandon Schaefer

Maryland (1): Cliff Goldkind

New Jersey (1): Brian Meinders

Oklahoma (1): Gabe Scott

Kansas (1): Dung "Gomer" Nguyen

Massachusetts (1): Ronnie Bardah

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

Professional Players (35): Brent Hanks, Leif Force, Andy Bloch, Aubin Cazals, John Monnette, Ashkan Razavi, Vincent van der Fluit, Brian Hastings, Brandon Schaefer, Adam Friedman, Matt Matros, Andy Frankenberger, Phil Hellmuth, Randy Ohel, Michael Gathy, Simon Charette, Joe Cassidy, Gabe Scott, Ylon Schwartz, Timothy Adams, Larry Wright, Carter Phillips, David "Bakes" Baker, Max Steinberg, Naoya Kihara, Chris Tryba, Craig McCorkell, David "ODB" Baker, Ronnie Bardah, Greg Ostrander, Okelsii Kovalchuk, Henry Lu, Rocco Palumbo, Joey Weissman, Michael "the Grinder" Mizrachi

Semi-Pros (5): Cory Zeidman, Nick Jivkov, Brian Meinders, Allyn Jaffrey-Shulman, Jan-Peter Jachtman

Amateurs (6): Chip Saechao, Herbert Tapscott, David "Doc" Arsht, Cliff Goldkind, Ben Scholl, Dung "Gomer" Nguyen

Note: Various categories and statistics will be updated with each gold bracelet event as they are completed.

-- 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: WSOP.com. Thank you.

For official news and the latest updates from the 2012 World Series of Poker, visit: WSOP.com

For statistics and historical information from the 2012 World Series of Poker, contact Nolan Dalla at: nolandalla@aol.com

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