



2015 WSOP OFFICIAL REPORT

WILLIAM KAKON WINS \$1,500 BUY-IN LIMIT HOLD'EM CHAMPIONSHIP

Miami Real Estate Broker Closes the Deal and Wins First WSOP Gold Bracelet, which Pays a \$196,055 Commission

Kakon Believed to be the First Moroccan-Born WSOP Champion in History

MEET THE LATEST WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION

Name: William Kakon

Birthplace: Casablanca (Morocco)

Age: 38

Current Residence: Miami, FL (USA)

Marital Status: Married

Children: None

Profession: Real Estate Broker / Healthcare Business

Number of WSOP Cashes: 7

Number of WSOP Final Table Appearances: 2

Number of WSOP Gold Bracelet Victories (with this tournament): 1

Best Previous WSOP Finish: 6th (2010)

Total WSOP Earnings: \$324,936

Personal Facts: Has lived in Casablanca, Paris, New York, Los Angeles, and Miami

“Coming out here, this is my vacation every year,” William Kakon said just moments after winning a prestigious gold bracelet at the 2015 World Series of Poker.

Wait. What kind of “vacation” allows someone the opportunity to make \$196,055 after spending a few days in Las Vegas?

Kakon won the \$1,500 buy-in Limit Hold'em event, which was played over a three-day period at the Rio. The 38-year-old real estate broker and healthcare professional "on vacation" from Miami, FL topped a larger than expected field of 660 players and was also presented with his first WSOP title. The victory was particularly satisfying, since Kakon previously made two other deep runs in Limit Hold'em events in the past, finishing as high as 6th place back in 2010.

"I'm very familiar with this game, so I really do feel comfortable playing it," Kakon said. "It's harder to find now in casinos, so I try to make an effort to (play them at the WSOP)."

Kakon has an interesting background, highly unusual for a WSOP champion. He was born in Morocco, believed to be the first native from that country to win a title. Kakon grew up in Casablanca, then moved to Paris at age 18. Next, it was on to New York, Los Angeles, then back to Paris again. Now, Kakon resides in Miami.

"I'm a very competitive person," Kakon revealed, somewhat overstating the obvious given his domination of the later stages of this tournament. "If it's business or poker, I just play to win all the time."

Now, Kakon is not only a gold bracelet winner. He's been listed among the top one percent of all brokers in the United States for six consecutive years, with more than \$3 billion in overall sales volume. However, even that wasn't enough to satisfy his competitive spirit. So, Kakon went into the healthcare field more recently, where he now operates another successful business – that is, while he's not winning gold bracelets while on vacation.

Kakon didn't have much trouble at this final table once he seized the chip lead. It appeared that Daniel Needleman might pose a challenge when play was three handed and the two big stacks were battling for supremacy. However, once Mike "Champagne" Lancaster was eliminated in 3rd place, Kakon used his big stack along with the high blinds and limits to gradually grind down his final opponent.

"When I get deep in an event, I play to win it," Kakon revealed.

Perhaps William Kakon should take more vacations.

Here's the succession of other finishers who made the final table, which clocked in at about 6 total hours of playing time:

Second Place: Daniel Needleman, a 45-year-old poker player from New York City finished as the runner up. This marked his first WSOP-related cash, which was worth well over six figures at \$121,051.

Third Place: Mike "Champagne" Lancaster finished 3rd. He's a 33-year-old businessman originally from Australia, now living in San Francisco. The former

collegiate track and field athlete (full scholarship) cashed for the 6th time at the WSOP, which paid \$78,693.

Fourth Place: Bryan Pimlott went out in 4th place. He is a 44-year-old orthopedic surgeon from Phoenix, AZ. Pimlott enjoyed his best WSOP finish in this tournament, which was his eighth time to cash. His share of the prize pool came to \$57,799.

Fifth Place: Shannon Shorr took 5th place. He is a 29-year-old professional poker player from Birmingham, AL. This marked Shorr's 38th time to cash in a WSOP event, and was his 7th final table appearance. Shorr, now frequently mentioned among the best players still without a gold bracelet victory, pocketed \$43,053.

Sixth Place: Kevin Song, a longtime poker pro originally from South Korea and now living in Brea, CA, finished 6th. He won his gold bracelet 18 years ago, and now has 34 cashes in WSOP events. Song earned \$32,485 for this finish.

Seventh Place: Brandon Cantu, the bombastic 34-year-old poker pro from Las Vegas was aiming for what would have been his 3rd gold bracelet, following wins in 2006 and 2009, which would have created the third three-bracelet winner this year, so far (Robert Mizrachi and Max Pescatori were the other two.). Instead, Cantu had to settle for a relatively early exit from the final table, which paid \$24,796.

Eighth Place: Hector Contreras, a 32-year-old driver from Los Angeles, CA ended up in 8th place. This was his first time to cash in a WSOP event of any kind, which paid \$19,138.

Ninth Place: Alexander Kostritsyn, a 28-year-old poker pro from Volzsky, Russia was the first elimination from the official final table. He has many cashes in European events, and 17 WSOP in-the-money finishes, worth in excess of \$1 million in earnings. Ninth place paid out \$14,924.

OTHER NOTABLE IN-THE MONEY FINISHERS:

Five-time gold bracelet winner David Chui finished 14th.

FUN FACTS:

For many years during the 1980s and 1990s, \$1,500 buy-in Limit Hold'em was the first event listed on the WSOP schedule. It routinely drew the biggest field sizes, even larger than the Main Event Championship during an era when Limit Hold'em was far more popular than No-Limit in public cardrooms. The popularity of this event began to decline about eight years ago, as field sizes dipped below 500 for the first time in two decades. However, each of the last two years has seen an increase in turnout for this event, as 657 turned out in 2014, which increased up to 660 this year.

EVENT DIRECT LINKS:

For this event's results, visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/results.asp?grid=1136&tid=14211>

For William Kakon official player profile page, visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/players/playerprofile.asp?playerID=15751>

For the Live Reporting Log for this event, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/updates.asp?grid=1136&tid=14211>

For photos from this event, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/photos.asp?grid=1136&tid=14211>

For official winner photo, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/pdfs/reports/14211-winner-photo.jpg>

For the live stream archive of this event, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/videos/?vcat=11>

(Note: Will appear 48 hours after event concludes)

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