



## 2015 WSOP OFFICIAL REPORT

### MIKE GORODINSKY WINS THE POKER PLAYERS CHAMPIONSHIP

Gorodinsky wins his second bracelet and the Chip Reese Trophy.

### MEET THE LATEST WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION

Name: Mike Gorodinsky

Profession: Poker Pro

Number of WSOP Cashes: 12

Number of WSOP Final Table Appearances: 5

Number of WSOP Gold Bracelet Victories (with this tournament): 2

Best Previous WSOP Finish: 1st (2013)

Total WSOP Earnings: \$2,174,665

Mike Gorodinsky has just joined one of the most elite clubs in poker. After five days, Gorodinsky bested a field of 84 of the best poker players in the world to win the 2015 Poker Players' Championship. In addition to his second career WSOP bracelet and the \$1,270,086 first-place prize, Gorodinsky will have his name inscribed on the Chip Reese Memorial Trophy. His is only the ninth name in history to be etched upon it.

"I feel amazing," Gorodinsky said after his victory. "This is literally something that I've gone to bed dreaming about, and it's just cool to legitimately realize a dream. So it's just an amazing day. An amazing five days. "

Before winning the bracelet, Gorodinsky faced a tough heads-up contest against Jean-Robert Bellande. Heads-up play began at roughly 9:00 p.m. Thursday night. Mike Gorodinsky held a slight chip lead over Jean-Robert Bellande, about 7,500,000 to

5,000,000. Gorodinsky quickly extended his lead, gaining a 3-1 edge over Bellande. But Bellande fought back, and after about an hour the stacks were pretty even. There was a break at that point, and when play resumed, Gorodinsky regained his lead. The two players traded the chip lead several times over the next few hours, and [Gordinsky finally emerged victorious](#) at about 12:30 a.m.

This may be been a bit of *deja vu* for the final two players. Gorodinsky's first major tournament victory came five years ago in an eight-game mix event, and Bellande finished runner-up to him. Today, history repeated itself.

Mike Gorodinsky already had one WSOP bracelet on his resume before today, and he's in the midst of a remarkable World Series. His victory today is his third top-three performance of the 2015 summer. He finished second in the Razz Championship, third in the \$5000 Six-Handed No-Limit Hold'em event, and just barely missed the final table in the Stud Championship. He remained humble despite this success, but also recognized that he's put a lot of work into achieving his impressive results.

"I'd like to think that I'm playing really great, that I'm making all the right decisions. But you know, the cards are hitting me in the face. I'm running really good. And I've been really focused on playing, I've been putting in my hours, and it's paying off."

This is only the second final table of Jean-Robert Bellande's WSOP career, and he made it a memorable one with his long, hard-fought heads-up battle with Gorodinsky. For Bellande, however, tournament poker is a side venture. He invests more time in high-stakes cash games. And he is perhaps best known for his endeavors beyond poker, such as his appearance on *Survivor: China*. Despite his limited time at tournament tables, Bellande always makes his mark with his exuberant personality and entertaining table presence.

This is the 10th incarnation of the Poker Players Championship, which began in 2006 as the \$50,000 H.O.R.S.E. event. In 2010, the tournament was changed to Eight-Game Mix, with the addition of Limit 2-7 Triple Draw, No-Limit Hold'em, and Pot-Limit Omaha. That was the first year the name "Poker Players Championship" was used, and Michael Mizrahi earned the first of his two career victories in this event. Now, in 2015, the format of this prestigious event changed for the second time. Two more poker varieties were added to the mix: No-Limit 2-7 Single Draw, and Badugi. The ten-game mix format has been used in other WSOP events, but never at a buy-in bigger than \$2,500. After the tournament, Gorodinsky weighed in on the change.

"I personally like it. I play all the games. Those are two games [Badugi and No-Limit 2-7] I've played a ton. Badugi is actually one of my favorite games. I actually think there should be a standalone Badugi event. I think it's a really complex, good game, so I like the change. Maybe it scared some people away, but I like it."

With the earliest version of the Poker Players Championship being held in 2006, until today there were only eight members of the winners club. Now, Gorodinsky joins those

elite ranks, alongside Chip Reese (2006), Freddy Deeb (2007), Scotty Nguyen (2008), David Bach (2009), Michael Mizrachi (2010 & 2012), Brian Rast (2011), Matthew Ashton (2013), and John Hennigan (2014).

The 2015 Poker Players Championship began four days ago, on Sunday, June 21. Seventy-Seven players took their seats on Day 1, and at the end of the night, Scott Seiver led the 73 who remained. Late registration was open until play restarted on Monday, and another seven players ponied up the \$50,000 entry fee to join the field. Many of them ran deep, including Joe Cassidy, who was [eliminated on the bubble](#), Chris Klodnicki (5th place - \$251,314), and eventual winner Gorodinsky.

Gorodinsky said later he registered on Day 2 because he wasn't feeling well on Day 1, and almost didn't play the event at all. He would've skipped most tournaments, but this one is clearly special to him. "I hate playing sick, he explained. "I hate when other people do it. But I just had to make an exception for this tournament. I won't skip it, and I'm happy I didn't."

Scott Seiver led again after Day 2. By then only 47 of the 84 entrants remained. Abe Mosseri – who finished in 4th place in this event last year – was just behind him. Seiver was eliminated on Day 3, however, while Mosseri took over the top spot at the end of the day. Coincidentally, Mosseri was also the chip leader at the end of Day 3 a year ago. He was unable to match last year's fourth place finish, though, eventually bowing out in ninth place (\$110,073).

Day 4 began with 19 players remaining. The players reaching the money bubble about halfway through the third level of the day. They played hand-for-hand for about 50 minutes before pausing for the dinner break. After dinner, hand-for-hand play continued for another forty minutes before Cassidy was eliminated in 13th place. After another six eliminations, the official final table was set. Chris Klodnick, Mike Gorodinsky, Jean-Robert Bellande, Ben Sulsky, David "ODB" Baker, and Dan Kelly would return the following day to play the final table on the ESPN Main Stage.

Dan Kelly was the first casualty at the final table. He was eliminated in 6th place (\$184,222) after about two and half hours on the final day. Kelly entered the final table as the short stack with just over 1,000,000 in chips, and was eventually eliminated in a [Badugi hand against Jean-Robert Bellande](#). Kelly is a two-time WSOP bracelet winner, and after his performance in this year's Poker Player's Championship, he has 34 WSOP cashes and over \$2,500,000 in WSOP earnings.

About two hours later, Chris Klodnicki fell in 5th place (\$251,314), also in a Badugi hand against Bellande. Klodnicki was over \$5 million in WSOP earnings, but is still seeking his first bracelet. If his impressive resume is any indication, when he does earn his first bracelet, it must may come in this event. Klodnicki's finish today is his [second career final table in the Poker Players Championship](#), and he also has a final-table performance in a H.O.R.S.E. event.

It was only about 40 minutes after Klodnicki's elimination that the final table lost one more. Ben Sulsky moved all in against David Baker in a no-limit hold'em hand, and Baker came out on top. Sulsky is best known for his accomplishments in the online poker arena, and this is only his third career WSOP cash. After today, though, that list of cashes includes two 4th-place finishes – he also finished fourth in the [Heads-Up Championship two years ago](#).

David Baker entered this event looking for his second career WSOP bracelet. As the final table began, he was well-positioned, as he ended Day 4 as the chip leader, and eventually finished in third place for \$514,926. [His bracelet came in an Eight-Game-Mix event in 2012](#). He also ran deep in the 2012 Poker Player's Championship, finishing in 10th place. So it's no surprise to see him run deep in another tournament with a wide array of games. This event is his 45th WSOP cash, and it moves him over \$2,400,000 in WSOP earnings. Perhaps more importantly, he has earned a reputation as an advocate for poker players and the poker community, whose tireless efforts will surely continue to have a positive impact on the game.

The 84 total entrants generated a prize pool of \$4,032,000, and the top 12 players made the money. The 84 entrants included five previous champions: David Bach, Michael Mizrachi, Brian Rast, Matthew Ashton, and defending champion John Hennigan. However, Ashton is the only one of them to cash this year. He finished in 12th place for \$87,010, and Mizrachi is still the only two-time champion.

Here are the full results from the 2015 Poker Players Championship:

- 1 – Mike Gorodinsky – \$1,270,086
- 2 – Jean-Robert Bellande – \$784,828
- 3 – David "ODB" Baker – \$514,926
- 4 – Ben Sulsky – \$353,928
- 5 – Chris Klodnicki – \$251,314
- 6 – Dan Kelly – \$184,222
- 7 – Jason Mercier - \$139,265
- 8 – Shawn Buchanan - \$139,265
- 9 – Abe Mosseri - \$110,073
- 10 – Justin Smith - \$110,073
- 11 – John Racener – \$87,010
- 12 – Matthew Ashton – \$87,010

#### **EVENT DIRECT LINKS:**

For this event's results, visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/results.asp?grid=1136&tid=14244&dayof=142445&rr=5>

For Mike Gorodinsky's official player profile page, visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/players/playerprofile.asp?playerID=40117>

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

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/updates.asp?grid=1136&tid=14244&dayof=142445>

For photos from this event, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/photos.asp?grid=1136&tid=14244&dayof=142445>

For official winner photo, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/pdfs/reports/14244-winner-photo.jpg>

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

<http://www.wsop.com/videos/?vcat=7>

*(Note: Will appear 48 hours after event concludes)*

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