



## 2016 WSOP OFFICIAL REPORT

### **SAFIYA UMEROVA WINS \$1,500 BUY-IN NO-LIMIT HOLD'EM SHOOTOUT EVENT**

Aspiring poker pro from Los Angeles collects \$264,046 top prize in Event #50

Umerova becomes second female gold bracelet winner of 2016 series

Another 1,000-plus player field jams the 2016 WSOP

England's Niall Farrell finishes as runner up

### **MEET THE LATEST WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION**

Name: Safiya Umerova

Birthplace: Russia

Age: 28

Current Residence: Los Angeles, CA

Marital Status: Single

Children: None

Profession: Poker Pro

Number of WSOP Cashes: 2

Number of WSOP Final Table Appearances: 1

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

Best Previous WSOP Finish: 66<sup>th</sup> (2015 Circuit)

Total WSOP Earnings: \$268,484

Personal Facts: Born in Russia and immigrated to the U.S. in 2010

Winner's Quote:

*"I think women poker players are underestimated. It happens to me, all the time when I was at the table. They would underestimate my thinking and my game, overall."*

Safiya Umerova is the newest member of poker's gold bracelet club.

The 28-year-old aspiring professional poker player from Los Angeles won the \$1,500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em Shootout tournament, which was played over three days and nights and just concluded on the ESPN main stage at the Rio in Las Vegas.

Umerova collected \$264,046 in prize money, making this the biggest win of her young poker career, which is just a year old. She's been playing only about 18 months, and until recently limited herself to recreational poker in the local L.A. clubs, primarily The Hustler Casino. However, in recent months, Umerova has taken tournament poker much more seriously, and began attending major events. This is her first year to play at the WSOP.

"I studied the game almost every day. I read a lot of books. I had people help me. I worked very much on my game to get here," she said. "I wouldn't be here if I didn't work hard on my game."

Umerova won her victory by coming out on top at a final table which included several players who, like her, were also aiming for their first gold bracelet victory. It included players from two countries – Argentina and Bulgaria – which sent players to the final table for the first time this year.

After Michael Mixer was eliminated in third place, her final challenger, Niall Farrell, from Great Britain, held about a 4 to 3 chip lead over Umerova. However, she was able to double up a few times when low on chips and seized the lead, eventually winning on the final hand with a pair of aces.

"When the day began, I was just trying to make the final table. It's just surreal to win," Umerova said in her post-victory interview. "I've only been playing poker for a very short time. It's exciting. This is a great start for my career."

With this victory, Umerova became the second female to win a WSOP victory at this year's series, following in the footsteps of Canadian player Kristen Bicknell in the No-Limit Hold'em Bounty tournament, which concluded just two days earlier. Typically, females make up only about 4 to 5 percent of most tournament fields, so 2 wins out of 50 completed events so far is about on par with statistical expectation. However, Umerova clearly beat the odds in many ways just to get to this crowing moment.

Umerova was born in Russia. She immigrated to the United States six years ago. She began playing poker in small stakes cash games in the local card clubs around Los Angeles. Then, more recently she finished deep in a tournament and has been hooked on the excitement of playing in tournaments ever since.

"I went really deep and almost made a final table in the first tournament I played," Umerova said. "That's when I realized how much I liked it. It's a different game. I liked it much more than cash games. I don't want to play cash games anymore."

This marks her Las Vegas poker debut, which now includes two cashes at this year's series. No doubt, her table image will change now that she's won poker's most coveted prize.

"I don't know how it used to be with women in poker, because I have only been playing a short time," Umerova said. "But I have heard the last few years, women became so much better. I love it. It's just so inspiring for women out there."

As for the future, Umerova has big plans in the game and for herself in it.

"I dream big. I want to be the best poker player in the world," she said. "I know I am not there yet. But I want to have the most gold bracelets anyone has ever had. That's the goal. That's what you are supposed to go for -- right?"

This exciting tourney attracted 1,050 entrants which created a prize pool totaling \$1,417,500. The first round, Day One winners, which made up the top 120 finishers, each collected prize money.

Here's more about each of those who made it to the final table of nine players:

**Second Place:** Niall Farrell has been a consistent performer at the WSOP in recent years. The poker player from Glasgow, Scotland made his second final table after coming in sixth in an earlier event. He's also cashed five times in 2016 after collecting \$163,158 for this near-win. This was also his second time to finish second in an event at the WSOP, repeating the feat from 2013. This marks 28 cashes for Farrell and places him at close to \$900,000 in career WSOP earnings.

**Third Place:** Michael Mixer, from East Greenwich, RI was short on chips the entire way, but still managed to land in third place. This was his first time to cash in a WSOP event, which paid out \$118,109.

**Fourth Place:** Yuliyán Kolev, from Sofia, Bulgaria hoped to be the first winner from that nation since Nick Jivkov won four years ago. Kolev went deep, but ended up in fourth place. This marked his first final table appearance and deepest run in 14 WSOP cashes, to date. Kolev received \$86,513.

**Fifth Place:** Damian Salas was aiming to become only the second WSOP champion in history from Argentina (Ivan Luca won last year). However, he went out in the midway point, finishing in fifth place. This was his eighth time to cash at the series and first time to make it to the final table. Salas pocketed \$64,129.

**Sixth Place:** Raymond Ho, from Cerritos, CA made a nice run and ended up in sixth place. He cashed for the sixth time in a series event, which paid \$48,115.

**Seventh Place:** Daniel McAulay, from Glasgow, Scotland went out in seventh place. This was his fourth time to cash at the series, which paid \$36,543. McAulay also finished in-the-money in last year's WSOP Main Event Championship.

**Eighth Place:** Daniel Tang, from Salford, UK finished in eighth place. This marked his second occasion to cash at the WSOP, which paid \$28,101.

**Ninth Place:** Alexander Lakhov, from St. Petersburg, Russia made his first final table at the WSOP after eight previous cashes. This was his highest payout, to date which amounted to \$21,881 following multiple min-cashes.

This was the 50<sup>th</sup> official event on this year's schedule. This leaves only 19 gold bracelet events to be played at the 2016 WSOP.

#### **OTHER NOTABLE IN-THE MONEY FINISHERS:**

Vanessa Selbst, a three-time gold bracelet winner (2008, 2012, 2014), made Day Three and finished in 10<sup>th</sup> place.

Sam Greenwood, a gold bracelet winner (2015), made Day Three and finished in 12<sup>th</sup> place.

Among the notable players who won their first-round matches but were eliminated on Day Two were – Brain Hastings, Ryan Welch, Nick Jivkov, Svetlana Gromenkova, Phillip Hui, James Dempsey, Steve Gross, Eli Elezra, and Konstantin Puchkov,

Yueqi (Rich) Zhu cashed in this event. This marked his 54<sup>th</sup> in-the-money finish at the WSOP. He ranks fourth all-time as the player with most cashes without a win.

### **FUN FACTS:**

The ages of participants ranged from 21 to 73. The eldest player in the field was Ronald Causley.

The average player age was 36 years.

The breakdown of player nationalities for this event was 749 Americans and 301 players from elsewhere. The top five nations represented were the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Brazil, and France. The breakdown of participants by gender was 96.6 percent males and 3.4 percent females.

### **EVENT DIRECT LINKS:**

For this event's official final results (listing all players who finished in-the-money), please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/results.asp?grid=1232&tid=14950>

For Safiya Umerova's official player profile page, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/players/playerprofile.asp?playerID=212967>

For the live reporting logs for this event, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/updates.asp?grid=1232&tid=14950>

To access licensed images from this all other 2016 WSOP gold bracelet events, please visit:

[www.pokerphotoarchive.com](http://www.pokerphotoarchive.com)

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

<http://www.wsop.com/videos/?vcat=2>

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

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