



WSOP EUROPE 2017 OFFICIAL REPORT – EVENT #11

MARTI ROCA DE TORRES WINS WSOP EUROPE MAIN EVENT

Roca de Torres wins his first WSOP bracelet after winning his seat in an online qualifier. He earns €1,115,207 for his victory.

Crowd favorites Maria Ho and Niall Farrell eliminated early on the final day.

10 November 2017 (Rozvadov, Czech Republic) – Marti Roca de Torres won the last World Series of Poker bracelet of 2017 late Friday night. After a long, hard-fought final day that lasted about 14 hours, Roca de Torres emerged victorious in the WSOP Europe Main Event, earning his first WSOP bracelet and €1,115,207.

Roca de Torres was among the least experienced players at the final table. He had only about \$30,000 in career earnings before this event, and he won his entry into this tournament via an online satellite.

To secure the win, Roca de Torres had to defeat Gianluca Speranza heads up. Speranza held a substantial chip lead when heads-up play began, but Roca de Torres battled back to take over the lead. There followed a back-and-forth contest that lasted over four hours. Eventually, when the stacks were nearly even, Roca de Torres won a flip to leave Speranza short-stacked, and the tournament was over just a few minutes later.

Afterward, Roca de Torres credited his rail with keeping him focused throughout the lengthy competition. "Here are my friends, who are motivating me," he said motioning to a group of spectators.

For Speranza, this result must feel like *deja vu*. He's finished runner-up once before, in a €1,090 event at the 2011 WSOP Europe. For a while tonight, it looked like succeed where he'd fallen short before, but he ended up in second place again, earning €689,246 for his performance.

The final day (Day 6 of the tournament) started with six players remaining, and it took only about an hour for the fireworks to start bursting. Maria Ho was leading the way to start the day. She had jumped into the lead on Day 4 on Wednesday, and stayed atop the leaderboard throughout Day 5. When Day 6 began, she had a small lead over Marti Roca de Torres. However, Roca de Torres quickly jumped into the lead. Then Niall Farrell doubled through Ho, and she fell to the bottom of the chip counts. Ten hands later, Roca de Torres eliminated both Ho and Farrell in a three-way all in: pocket aces (Roca de Torres) against pocket kings (Farrell) against Ace-Jack (Ho). Ho finished in sixth place (€174,365), and Farrell in fifth (€239,639).

Farrell had won his first WSOP bracelet earlier at this year's WSOP Europe. He won Event #9: €25,000 High Roller. But he was unable to earn his second bracelet of the series in the Main Event.

That double elimination proved to be a key hand for Roca de Torres on his way to victory. But even though it gave him a sizeable chip lead over his three remaining opponents, the win was no guarantee at that point. "Unlucky for me, I have a fishy mind," he said with a smile after the tournament. "And at this point I thought I'm going to win for sure because I'm in the perfect situation with a massive stack. For a moment, I thought that it's done." But then he lost several preflop all-in hands, giving his opponents valuable ammunition while his own stack dwindled. "And for a moment, it looked like it's impossible," he said. "But finally, step-by-step, I won it."

After the double bustout, four-handed play lasted almost six hours. But eventually Robert Bickley was eliminated in fourth place (€335,089). Bickley had returned from a break severely short-stacked, with only about four big blinds. But he nearly recovered, doubling up twice before finally losing the last of his chips to Mathijs Jonkers.

That left three players remaining. Mathijs Jonkers had only about \$8,500 in recorded live earnings before this tournament, and his previous claim to poker fame had been a victory in a large amateur competition in his home country, the Netherlands. Marti Roca de Torres, was only slightly more experienced. Gianluca Speranza, of Italy, has the most impressive prior resume with about \$880,000 in cashes. His biggest score came from his runner-up finish at the 2011 WSOP Europe.

About an hour after Bickley's elimination, Jonkers busted out in third place (€476,585), leaving Speranza and Roca de Torres to battle it out for the bracelet.

The tournament began with two starting days (November 4 and 5) and attracted 529 entries. The top 80 players made the money, and the bubble burst a little before dinner break on Day 3. Over the next few levels, there were 34 more eliminations, including Will Kassouf (64th place), Vivian Saliba (59th), former November Niner Pierre Neuville (53rd), and Phillip Gruissem (47th). At the end of the Day 46 players remained.

On Day 4, they played from 46 down to 12. Along the way they lost David Peters (44th), Mike Leah (39th), Ismael Bojang (36th), Anthony Zinno (24th), Rainer Kempe (22nd), and Kristin Bicknell (18th).

One of the players still alive heading into Day 5 was the defending champion. Kevin MacPhee won this event at the last WSOP Europe, in Berlin in 2015. He started the day 11th in chips out of the 12 players, and his pursuit of back-to-back titles ended when he was eliminated in 10th place.

MEET THE LATEST WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION

Name: Marti Roca de Torres
Nationality: Spain
Birthplace: Barcelona
Current Residence: Martaro
Age: 36
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: 114
Total WSOP Earnings: \$1,295,565
Personal Facts: Former teacher

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