



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

**Official Report
Event #7
Seven-Card Stud
Buy-In: \$1,500
Number of Entries: 367
Total Net Prize Pool: \$495,450
Number of Places Paid: 40
First Place Prize: \$126,363
May 31 - June 2, 2012**

TOURNAMENT HEADLINES

Andy Bloch Finally Gets His Elusive First Gold Bracelet

Bloch Defeats Barry Greenstein Heads-Up in Seven-Card Stud -- Finally Earns First WSOP Victory

Barry Greenstein Takes Runner-Up Spot -- Barely Misses Fourth WSOP Victory

American Players Now Six for Six in Gold Bracelet Events

Chau Giang Cashes – 62nd for Career, Ranking Sixth All-Time

Stud King Artie Cobb Cashes – Three-Time Stud Gold Bracelet Champion Adds to Legacy

Six Gold Bracelets Won – 55 More at Stake!

TOURNAMENT OVERVIEW

At last!

Andy Bloch breathed a colossal sigh of relief on Saturday night when he finally won what had been an elusive accolade of near-mythical proportions. He finally won his first World Series of Gold bracelet, following 18 years of hammering away in the world's most prestigious tournaments and ultimately suffering the perennial heartache of disappointment after disappointment at each and every WSOP since 1995.

No doubt, Bloch's most painful moment took place six years ago, in one of the most epic confrontations in poker history. Bloch faced legendary poker icon David "Chip" Reese heads-up in the inaugural \$50,000 buy-in Poker Players Championship, which was nationally televised on ESPN. Bloch had the great Reese all-in and drawing slim a few times. But Reese managed to survive and eventually won what turned out to become the longest heads-up match in WSOP history -- clocking in at a mind-numbing seven hours.

But tonight, Bloch erased all that. He woke up from a nightmare. Literally on the *exact same spot* at the Rio Las Vegas where Reese had slain Bloch in 2006, leaving him bracelet-less once again, this time the roles were reversed and Bloch got to feel what it was like to drag the final pot of a WSOP tournament.

Bloch won the \$1,500 buy-in Seven-Card Stud tournament, which included a stellar final table lineup of rivals that made the victory all the more poignant. His comeback finale included former two gold bracelet winners playing the roles of

extras in Bloch's triumphant biopic -- David Williams and Barry Greenstein -- their golden amulets of previous accomplishment, no doubt, annoyingly ringing in Bloch's ears each time a new hand was dealt and chips were bet.

But in the end, which came at 10 pm in front of a small circle of intimate friends and well-wishers, Bloch was the victor and vanquisher of all the demons of WSOPs past -- finally righting the recurrent wrong that had plagued his otherwise astral tournament career like a mustard stain on a tuxedo.

"Now, no one can say, 'Andy Bloch is the best player to never win a gold bracelet,'" Bloch said moments after the victory. "That is really annoying because there are so many great other players too, who have not won. I've been coming here for 18 years now. I never thought it would have taken so long."

The radiant new poker champion collected \$126,363 in prize money. However, this victory wasn't so much about dollars as it was about shedding a monkey and slaying a ghost.

Bloch's victory gives him his first WSOP title, to go along with 28 cashes, 8 final table appearances, and more \$2,411,554 million in WSOP earnings, to date.

MEET NEW WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION – ANDREW BLOCH

Name: Andrew (Andy) Bloch

Birthplace: New Haven, CT (USA)

Childhood: Connecticut (USA)

Current Residence: Las Vegas, NV (USA)

Age at Time of Victory: 43

Marital Status: Single (girlfriend)

Children: None

Education: Graduated from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (electrical engineering) and Harvard Law School (JD degree)

Profession: Professional Poker Player

Number of WSOP Cashes: 28 (3 WSOP Circuit cashes – 1 gold ring won in 2005)

Number of WSOP final table appearances: 8

Number of WSOP gold bracelet victory (with this tournament): 1

Best Previous WSOP finish: Second (twice)

Total WSOP Earnings: \$2,324,284 (\$2,411,554 with WSOP Circuit earnings included)

Bio Fact 1: Part of the MIT Blackjack team, which was the basis of the book *Bringing Down the House* and movie *21*.

Bio fact 2: Was the first player ever to volunteer to have all of his play tracked in a WSOP Main Event (1997). That became known as "The Andy Bloch Project," published in *Card Player* magazine.

WINNER QUOTES (POST-TOURNAMENT INTERVIEW)

On frustration the last 18 years, seeing everyone else seemingly win a gold bracelet, but repeatedly missing out: Yeah, it's only been 18 years or something like that. I think you can look back at my first WSOP cash. I think that was the first year I played the World Series (in 1995). I finished 9th in the stud tournament, and I've been replaying that bust-out hand over and over many times (in my head). You know the first time you bust out of a World Series event. And the first time I got heads up against Chip Reese six years ago—2006. Of course that was a little bit of a letdown at the end, but I was just proud and happy to be at that final table with such great poker players and to make it heads-up and have a chance to win. And looking back on those events, I felt like played not as well as I could have—sure you could always do better—but I thought I played pretty well and, you know, had a chance to win. And the cards didn't just come. It doesn't feel as bad as if the reason I lost was because I made a really bad mistake, like bluffed off all my chips in a horrible spot

or called off all my chips when I was drawing dead. And that kinda' thing is much easier to deal with coming in second I think—at least for me because I'm not superstitious—when you did everything that you pretty much could do.

On if he's surprised that he won first gold bracelet playing Seven-card Stud? I'm not really too surprised. Some people think, 'Oh, you're a no-limit Hold'em player,' and they tell me that all the time, not realizing that I've been playing for a long time. I began my casino poker career at Foxwoods (Casino) back east where stud was king. Almost nobody played Hold'em, and when they did, it was limit Hold'em. Big games were all Stud, 75/150 Stud and up. So, I played a lot of Seven-card Stud over the years, and my cashes in the World Series run the whole breath of games that are offered here. I don't know if there's any game type that I haven't cashed in at least a little bit. I mean, except Badugi (laughing).

On playing against Barry Greenstein heads-up and against many other good players: Yeah. I mean, you know what, sit down at a table like this, and you see great players in the game with like multiple bracelets, and you know, David Williams who won this event a couple years ago, and yeah, you'd rather have completely unknowns that play badly. But when you do win, people can't say, 'Oh, you know, he got lucky because he was against such bad players.' In some sense, certainly after you win, it's weird if the table is tough. The final table was tough, the final three opponents especially. I think if I had to choose, I wouldn't have wanted those three guys to be at the final four. And I got really lucky (late in the tournament). I went on a bad run before dinner, and I went down to 250,000 or something, and pretty much tripled-up almost right away after dinner.

On previously being called the "Best Player Not to Win a Gold Bracelet:" I joke around sometimes that it gets to me. People will say, 'Oh, you have a bracelet.' Usually, they're not actually needling me, but I'll just say, 'Screw you. What are you talking about?' You know, joke with them cause they didn't really mean it. I had opportunities where I probably could have played better and also opportunities that I probably could have gotten lucky. So, it didn't really bother me. You can look down; I'd waste time looking at the Hendon Mob list and see who the biggest winners are that never had a bracelet or final tabled the Main Event. I think I might've been number one. I didn't actually go through the whole list and figure it out as far as most money won in tournaments. I don't know. I think Tom McCormick is due to win a bracelet. I haven't seen him here yet (laughs).*

Writer's Note: McCormick is/was similar to Bloch in that he's cashes many times and come close to winning, but still has no gold bracelet. Bloch was joking that McCormick should be next to win.

More on the "Best Player Not to Win a Gold Bracelet: There are a lot of other great players. It's kind of embarrassing, I think. People will say all the time, 'Andy Bloch is one of the best players to never win a bracelet.' Especially when they say, 'Andy Bloch is the best player to never win a bracelet.' There are so many great players out now-a-days and so many better ones, and most of the ones...you know, some of them weren't even born when I started—well I guess, I started playing the World Series 20 years ago—but when I could've started playing the World Series, some of them weren't even born yet. And they're better players than I'll probably ever be. And some of them, nobody's ever heard of, and some of them people know who they are, and they just haven't played enough. It takes awhile. You can't win every 400-player tournament you enter. Even winning one out of 100 is a huge accomplishment.

On how things went in this tournament: You know, when I got heads up or when I got close to a million in chips, I started thinking, 'Now I've got enough chance.' Obviously you start the tournament like, 'Okay, I got a half-percent chance of me winning.' Then every day you increase your chips and you think, 'Okay, I've got a larger chance of winning a bracelet, coming to the table with double average chips.' And I'm thinking, 'Probably going to be my best chance to win a bracelet this year, if not in a long time.' It's not often that you have 20/25 percent of chips in the tournament. But you never think with those kind of players—with David Williams sitting to my left and Barry Greenstein at the table and these other guys—you never take it for granted. You can't because once you do, you're going to start playing too loose. You know, then you're really going to have to get lucky to win.

On the past 12 months being a tough year and the meaning of winning at the 2012 WSOP in light of other circumstances that happened to poker in April 2011: It's certainly a bittersweet win. I don't think it does anything to ease the pain that a lot of people have gone through the past year, and people have gone through absolute hell for some of them. I hope things end up getting resolved for everybody involved in the right way. We'll see. Hopefully there'll be some kind of announcement during the World Series. I don't know anything else.

THE FINAL TABLE

The final table was comprised of the top eight finishers.

Two former gold bracelet winners were present at the final table – including Barry Greenstein (3 wins) and David Williams (1 win).

Final table players came from two nations – including the United States (with 7 players) and Canada (1 player).

Final table participants ranged in age from 25 (youngest) to 72 (oldest).

The runner up was Barry Greenstein, a three-time gold bracelet winner from Rancho Palos Verdes, CA.

Final table play began at 2:00 pm and lasted until 10:00 pm. The duration was about 7 hours (excluding one hour dinner break).

OTHER IN-THE-MONEY FINISHERS

The top 72 finishers collected prize money.

Tournament results are to be entered into all official records as an open event. Results are also to be included in the 2012 "WSOP Player of the Year" race.

Multiple former WSOP gold bracelet winners cashed in this event. The most notable were Barry Greenstein (2nd), David Williams (4th), Fabrice Soulier (10th), Steve Billirakis (11th), Chau Giang (14th), Vitaly Lunkin (26th), Justin Smith (30th), David Singer 32nd), Artie Cobb (35th) and Viacheslav Zhukov (40th).

This was cash number 61 for Chau Giang, who currently ranks alone in sixth place all-time.

Artie Cobb cashed for the 22nd time in a WSOP Stud-formatted event, which ranks as the most of all-time.

Chris Tryba, the bombastic Las Vegas poker-playing grinder cashed 17th in this event, to go along with a 10th-place finish two days earlier. Tryba is one of only two players with two top-20 finishes, so far (Mike Sexton is the other).

Eugene Katchalov won this same event last year. He did not cash this time.

EVENT HISTORY

This was Seven-Card Stud first debuted at the 1973 WSOP. Walter Clyde "Puggy" Pearson was the first-ever Seven-Card Stud champion.

Eight players in WSOP history have won two gold bracelets in Seven-Card Stud. They are Johnny Moss, Bones Berland, Marty Sigel, Ted Forrest, Mel Judah, Rod Pardey, Sr. and Men 'the Master' Nguyen.

Artie Cobb and Men "the Master" Nguyen are the only players in WSOP history who won three gold bracelets in Seven-Card Stud.

Other former Seven-Card Stud gold bracelet winners include two deceased poker legends -- Stu Ungar and Chip Reese.

Years ago, Seven-Card Stud was the most popular game in casinos on the East Coast, primarily in big poker markets including Atlantic City and Foxwoods. In fact, Seven-Card Stud games outnumbered Hold'em games several times over. Some East Coast casinos did not offer Hold'em, since Seven-Card Stud was the primary game of choice. But everything in changed in 2003, most crediting (or blaming) the cosmic shift on Chris MoneyMaker's WSOP victory, which instantly created millions of new players who became curious about No-Limit Hold'em. Seven-Card stud has been steadily declining in popularity ever since. However, it remains popular enough to merit inclusion on the WSOP schedule. Its close cousin - Seven-Card Stud High-Low Split, a.k.a. Eight-or-Better, is actually more popular now as a tournament game. It appears headed for Mixed-Game formats, rather than multiple stand-alone events based on steadily-declining participation.

Last year's tournament drew 357 entries, which marked the most significant decline of any WSOP tournament at last year's series. However, this year attendance increased by ten players. This is a positive sign which possibly indicates Stud's gradual decline in popularity may be leveling off.

Last year's two Seven-Card Stud champions were Eugene Katchalov (from Ukraine, but now living in US) and Bertrand Gropellier (from France). Neither player cashed in this event.

ODDS AND ENDS

This was classified as WSOP schedule Event #7, since it's the seventh gold bracelet of 61 to be awarded this summer in Las Vegas. The tournament was played over three consecutive days and nights, starting on Thursday at 5 pm and concluding Saturday night at 10:00 pm.

There were 16 female entrants, which represented 4.7 percent of the field.

The average age of all entrants was 44.2 years – which skews about ten years older than the average WSOP participant, so far.

The average age of players that cashed was 42.4 years – just slightly below the average age of entrants.

There were 19 different nations represented by players in the field. There were only 5 nations represented by players that cashed (40 spots were paid).

2012 WSOP STATISTICS

Through the conclusion of this tournament, the nationality of gold bracelet winners has been:

United States (6): Chip Saechao, Brent Hanks, Leif Force, Cory Zeidman, Nick Jivkov, Andy Bloch

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

United States (4): Brent Hanks, Leif Force, Cory Zeidman, Andy Bloch

Thailand (1): Chip Saechao

Bulgaria (1): Nick Jivkov

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

Nevada (2): Brent Hanks, Andy Bloch

Florida (2): Leif Force, Cory Zeidman

California (1): Chip Saechao

Illinois (1): Nick Jivkov

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 (3): Brent Hanks, Leif Force, Andy Bloch

Semi-Pros (2): Cory Zeidman, Nick Jivkov

Amateurs (1): Chip Saechao

The streak of consecutive male gold bracelet winners is currently at 225 consecutive events, and counting. Aside from the annual Ladies Poker Championship (a non-open event), the last female to win an open WSOP event was Vanessa Selbst, back in 2008. The longest cold streak for female players had previously been 221 consecutive open events, which took place between 1982 and 1996.

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.

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