



2015 WSOP OFFICIAL REPORT

SHAUN DEEB FINALLY WINS A WSOP GOLD BRACELET

High-Stakes Poker Pro Defeats Paul Volpe Heads-Up, Wins \$318,857

Stacked Final Table Includes Deeb, Volpe, Stein, Merson, Koon, Les, Sammartino, Bojang, and Andrulis

Paul Volpe Takes Second – Again (Now has Three Top-12 Finishes)

2012 World Champ Greg Merson Makes a Final Table Again, Finishes Fifth

Ismael Bojang Cashes for Third Time at this Series – Most ITM Finishes of Any WSOP Player Since 2013

MEET THE LATEST WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION

Name: Shaun Deeb

Birthplace: Syracuse, NY (USA)

Age: 29

Current Residence: Troy, NY (USA)

Marital Status: Married

Children: 1

Profession: Poker Pro

Number of WSOP Cashes: 23

Number of WSOP Final Table Appearances: 3

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

Best Previous WSOP Finish: 4th (2011)

Total WSOP Earnings: \$860,903

Personal Facts: Before this victory, was widely considered one of world's best players without a gold bracelet

The most stacked final table of the 2015 World Series of Poker to date showed up on Saturday at the Rio Las Vegas, and the cast of superstars didn't disappoint the large crowd of spectators gathered around the ESPN Main Stage, nor the many thousands of poker aficionados watching the live stream at WSOP.com who were taking notes, no doubt.

Shaun Deeb put on what can best be described as a "poker clinic," outmaneuvering and finessing several of the game's very best players, ultimately coming from behind as he ended up winning his first gold bracelet.

"This was one of the toughest final tables I've ever played against," Deeb said afterward. "This was the second time I've made the final in this \$10K PLO event, and to come out on top against these caliber of players was just great. It was really special to get this against Paul (Volpe), because we play together all the time. I know he wanted to win, but to get my first against him was just amazing the way it all happened."

This was quite an elusive victory for the 29-year-old poker pro originally from Troy, NY who's frequently mentioned among the game's best all-around players. For Deeb -- who plays high-stakes cash games, tournaments, and excels particularly at Chinese Poker -- the \$318,857 for first place wasn't life changing, but rather all in a day's work. Still, the realization that he'd finally won a WSOP title, joining so many pals and colleagues, provided the ultimate satisfaction.

"This is the biggest stage of all, where it's at in poker, and where you have to win to prove yourself," Deeb said. "I wanted to cross this off my bucket list for quite some time, and I finally took it down."

The \$10,000 buy-in Pot-Limit Hold'em Championship attracted 128 entrants, and was undoubtedly one of the thickest player fields of poker skill and experience on this year's schedule. The tournament was played over three days, concluding on a Saturday night.

No doubt, the toughest stage of the finale took place when play was three-handed. Shaun Deeb, Jason Les, and Paul Volpe fought a long three-way battle which ultimately determined the winner. Deeb broke from the pack, and won in the most unconventional manner imaginable, snapping off a stone cold bluff by Volpe near the end that basically decided the outcome of the tournament.

On a bizarre hand which will be talked about between all those who witnessed it for quite some time, Volpe enjoyed a slight chip lead and was the aggressor throughout the most dramatic moment of the tournament. Trouble for Volpe was, Deeb had flopped a set. Nonetheless, Volpe kept right on barreling away, and made a pot-sized bet on the river when he thought a scary card might push Deeb off his hand. Deeb snap re-raised all in, and Volpe was left sitting at the final table with the equivalent of his pants down, realizing there was no way he could win the hand. With millions of chips in the pot, Volpe folded sheepishly, and was left with just a tiny stack. Everyone laughed, including Volpe, as the two close friends could only amuse themselves over what had

happened. Deeb won the final hand a short time later, and Volpe was the first to rush across the stage and congratulate his fellow poker pro.

Volpe finished as the runner up and was denied the opportunity for his second gold bracelet. Incredibly, the Philadelphia-based pro now has two second-place finishes, after coming in the same spot just a few days ago in \$10K NLHE Heads-Up Championship. He's also posted a 12th place finish in \$10K Deuce-to-Seven, and is undoubtedly in strong contention for 2015 WSOP Player of the Year honors.

Getting lost in the shuffle of superior finishes by Deeb and Volpe, Jason Les took third place, which followed a previous second-place finish here at this series.

The final table included three gold bracelet winners – Greg Merson (2), Paul Volpe (1), and Sam Stein (1). Among the former winners who cashed (10th through 18th) were Josh Arieh (12th), Todd Brunson (14th), and Matt Waxman (15th).

Also of note was Ismael Bojang's cash in this event (8th place), his third this year. Bojang now has 22 cashes since the start of the 2013 WSOP, the most by any player during that span. Last year, he broke the record for most cashes by any player within a single year, posting 13 in-the-money finishes. He certainly looks to expand upon this hot run during the remainder of the series.

As for Deeb, he admits he takes the game more seriously now. His reputation as a high-stakes gambler is well-deserved. However, Deeb admits he's more focused and in control of things.

"I got married and had a child within the last couple of years," Deeb said. "That changes things. I'm a family man, now. I play a little tighter than I used to. I have a better time playing now."

Here's the succession of final table finishers, 2nd through 9th place:

Second Place: Paul Volpe is having a great WSOP, despite no wins yet. He's posted three cashes and with the \$197,048 he collected in this tournament, he's earned close to \$500,000 overall.

Third Place: Jason Les moved into serious contention in the 2015 WSOP Player of the Year race, coming in 3rd. This follows a 2nd-place finish in the Shootout tourney, held just days earlier. Les, from Costa Mesa, CA collected \$142,747.

Fourth Place: Sam Stein, another gold bracelet winner, took 4th place. He's a 27-year-old poker pro from Cardiff, CA. Stein – an event winner in 2011 (\$3K Pot-Limit Omaha), with 21 WSOP cashes and more than \$1.2 million in career WSOP earnings – picked up another \$105,364.

Fifth Place: Greg Merson, the 2012 world poker champion and two-time gold bracelet winner from Laurel, MD finished 5th, becoming the first player this year to make multiple final tables. Merson finished 4th earlier. He now has three cashes already, and added another \$79,182 to his poker bankroll, which exceeds \$10 million in career earnings, remarkably at the age of 27.

Sixth Place: Dario Sammartino took 6th place, paying \$60,545. He is a 28-year-old poker pro from Naples, Italy. Sammartino hoped to become the second Italian winner this year, following Max Pescatori's earlier win. However, Sammartino fell short in what ultimately was his 12th time to cash at the WSOP.

Seventh Place: Kristijonas Andrusis ended up in 7th place, worth \$47,081. He's a 26-year-old poker pro from Vilnius, Lithuania. With this showing, Andrusis has now made final tables at each of the last three WSOPs.

Eighth Place: Ismael Bojang, who is becoming the most prolific casher at the WSOP in the modern era, added to his growing resume with this 8th-place finish, worth \$37,227. The poker pro from Hamburg, Germany has already cashed three times at this year's series.

Ninth Place: Jason Koon – noted poker pro, strategist, and book author – rounded out the final table with his 9th-place finish. His payout amounted to \$29,911. This was Koon's 26th time to make the money at the WSOP. He's still seeking his first win.

OTHER NOTABLE IN-THE MONEY FINISHERS:

Among the gold bracelet winners that cashed (10th through 18th), the big names were Josh Arieh (12th), Todd Brunson (14th), and Matt Waxman (15th).

FUN FACTS:

This was the first event on the 2015 schedule which did not attract any female players. All 128 entrants were males.

The average age of entrants was 35.2 years, a typical mean number for most WSOP events. The youngest player was 23, and the oldest was 72.

Players were about 75 percent American. There were 95 players from the United States and 33 from other nations.

EVENT DIRECT LINKS:

For this event's results, visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/results.asp?grid=1136&tid=14215>

For Shaun Deeb's official player profile page, visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/players/playerprofile.asp?playerID=26176>

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

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/updates.asp?grid=1136&tid=14215>

For photos from this event, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/photos.asp?grid=1136&tid=14215>

For official winner photo, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/pdfs/reports/14215-winner-photo.jpg>

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

<http://www.wsop.com/videos/?vcat=15>

(Note: Will appear 48 hours after event concludes)

Written by Nolan Dalla (WSOP Media Staff)