



2015 WSOP OFFICIAL REPORT

EVENT #39: \$1,500 buy-in Ten-Game Mix

ENTRIES: 380

PRIZE POOL: \$513,500

FIRST PLACE PRIZE: \$133,403

PLACES PAID: 42

BRIAN HASTINGS BECOMES FIRST DOUBLE-WINNER OF 2015 WSOP

High-Stakes Poker Pro Pulls-Off another Masterful Performance Ten Days after His Previous Win

Hastings Collects Third Career Gold Bracelet, Rockets into Serious Contention in WSOP "Player of the Year" Race

MEET THE LATEST WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION

Name: Brian Hastings

Birthplace: Luzerne County, PA (USA)

Age: 26

Current Residence: Hanover Township, PA (USA)

Marital Status: Single

Children: 0

Profession: Professional Poker Player

Number of WSOP Cashes: 15

Number of WSOP Final Table Appearances: 8

Number of WSOP Gold Bracelet Victories: 3

Best Previous WSOP Finish: 1st (2012, 2015)

Total WSOP Earnings: \$1,272,776

Personal Facts: Before he played live tournaments, Hastings was already one of the world's top online poker players with millions in earnings

[Note: All statistics above include the results of this tournament]

Brian Hastings is the latest winner player to win a gold bracelet at the 2015 World Series of Poker. This marks his second victory of the summer and third career win overall.

Just ten days after his triumph in the \$10,000 buy-in Seven-Card Stud Championship (Event #27), Hastings returned to the same stage and seat where he won previously. Hastings' first WSOP occurred back in 2012 in the \$10,000 buy-in Heads-Up No-Limit Hold'em Championship.

However, for all those who saw this victory, what is likely to stand out and be remembered was Hastings' confident demeanor throughout play. From the smiles on his face to the laughter he shared with his supporters, even when behind in chips, it was as though Hastings knew he was going to win.

"I really felt like it -- yeah I thought I'd win," Hastings replied when asked if his overt confidence was just a tactic, or did he really think another victory was predestined. "You have to feel that way when you go into one of these, but I think I'm going to win almost every time I sit down and play."

The high-stakes poker pro from the Philadelphia area topped a 380-player field in the \$1,500 buy-in Ten-Game Mix (Six-Handed) championship, which was played over a three-day period at the Rio in Las Vegas. The victory was made even sweeter by staging a significant comeback during the tournament's final stages, during which his last human obstacle, a tough Ukrainian-born poker player named Rostislav Tsodikov, enjoyed a 4 to 1 chip advantage at one point early in the match. However, Hastings never gave in and patiently waited for moments to push his stack, which ended up reversing what some thought might be Tsodikov's first major victory.

In fact, the final duel was a brutal back-and-forth battle of swings, which lasted nearly three hours. However, Hastings never seemed in danger of going bust, despite being at a disadvantage during almost half of the duel. Hastings thought the difference might have been his mastery of all games, whereas he sensed his opponents had certain weaknesses.

“I really pride myself on being able to play all of these games well,” Hastings said. “I hope this carries over into the \$50K (Poker Players Championship).”

Indeed, Hastings enters the next Mixed-Game format as one of the favorites. One of poker’s most prestigious poker events of the year, the annual Poker Players Championship is scheduled to begin just 14 hours after Hastings won this victory.

This tournament was completed on a Saturday night on the ESPN Main Stage in front of a large group of spectators and large viewing audience watching the live stream on WSOP.com, largely attracted by a star-lineup and interesting format of games.

Most of the modest-sized field was eliminated on Thursday, during Day One. Once the prize money was reached during the middle of Day Two on Friday, the pace of play slowed down considerably as the 42 in-the-money finishers jockeyed for position down the homestretch hoping to reach the final table.

Among those who cashed, but fell short of the finale were gold bracelet winners Daniel Negreanu (41st), Young Phan (35th), Max Pescatori (32nd), Jeffrey Lisandro (26th), Eli Elezra (24th), Phil Hellmuth (17th), Dan Kelly (15th), and Ylon Schwartz (13th). Other notable players who ran deep in this event but missed the feature table included Bruno Fitoussi (12th) and Matt Glantz (10th). Of special note was Phil Hellmuth’s third cash this year, which was the 111th cash of his illustrious career, the most of any player in WSOP history.

Mixed-game formats have become increasingly popular attractions in recent years at the WSOP. No less than eight events on this year’s schedule include multiple games. Seven events require participants play 5 games or more, with two “Dealers Choice” events serving as the supreme test of variety and adaptability (up to 18 games spread).

Ten-Game Mix (Six-Handed) was first offered at the WSOP in 2011. Chris Lee was the debut winner that year. Since then, it’s been a staple game on the schedule, usually attracting veteran players who play multiple games quite well.

Ten-Game Mix includes a rotation of the following poker games:

- Seven-Card Stud
- Pot-Limit Omaha
- No-Limit Hold’em
- Razz

- Badugi
- Omaha High-Low Split
- Limit Deuce-to-Seven Triple Draw
- No-Limit Deuce-to-Seven Single Draw
- Limit Hold'em
- Seven-Card Stud High-Low Split

As expected, the final table included a blistering lineup of veterans, with a few lesser known players sprinkled in. Best known among the final seven players were Hastings, Todd Brunson, and Owais Ahmed, all former bracelet winners. Brunson last won at the WSOP ten years ago. Hastings won ten days ago. And Owais won his WSOP title back in 2011.

Ahmed hit the rail first, finishing 7th. Brunson lasted considerably longer, going out in 3rd place after holding onto the chip lead for a bit.

Hastings' share of the \$513,000 prize pool came to \$133,403, one of the lesser top prizes of this year's tournament. But that didn't dampen the intensity of competition or the enthusiasm of the winner. Hastings now believes he can become the fifth player in history to win three gold bracelets within a single year (the others were Puggy Pearson, Phil Hellmuth, Ted Forrest, and Phil Ivey).

Having a double-winner this year also keeps a surprising streak alive, which is the 14-year run the WSOP has had a winner of two or more gold bracelets within the same year. Hastings is the first multi-winner of 2015, although others have come close.

Tsodikov, the runner up, now resides in Daly City, CA. He's now cashed 8 times at the WSOP. Up to this point, his highest previous finish had been a 7th-place showing in a HORSE event back in 2007.

Hastings is primed to shatter some records given the number of events still to play on the schedule, with nearly half of the events still to come (plus ten events at 2015 WSOP-Europe held in Berlin, Germany). Given how well he's playing at the moment, and so many Mixed-Game events coming up, Hastings could be on pace to establish some staggering results.

When asked about what changes he's made in 2015 versus previous years that has him playing at the top of his game, Hastings thought having his girlfriend Sonya with him in Las Vegas gave his life more balance. She is a poker dealer at Best Bet Casino in Jacksonville, Florida and has been flying back and forth to work and watch Hastings play. Now, Hastings insists Sonya will stay by his side.

“I really think that’s one of the more underrated aspects of this game, having the balance between your personal life and what goes on at the tables,” Hastings said. “She really helps me to believe in myself and I really love her a lot.”

This marked Hasting’s fifth cash of the year, his third final table appearance, and second win. He’s now likely to be one of the players to catch atop the leaderboard in the WSOP “Player of the Year” race, as the contest continues to build excitement.

Following Hastings’ finish in the top spot, the descending order of results was as follows:

Second Place: Rostislav Tsodikov played arguably the best poker of his life and just happened to run into a buzz saw of an opponent who playing as well as anyone in the world at the moment. Tsodikov held the chip lead during significant parts of the finale, but was never quite able to put Hastings away. The Ukrainian-American collected \$82,398.

Third Place: Todd Brunson was born to be a poker player. He’s been one of Las Vegas’ top earners in high-stakes cash games on The Strip for years. However, Brunson has won just one time at the WSOP, which came exactly ten years ago to the day when he won a gold bracelet in the Omaha High-Low Split event. He’s made 7 final table appearances since then, finishing 2nd twice. He now has two 3rd-place finishes, as well. Of Brunson, winner Hastings said, “There’s no doubt Todd is a great player, one of the best, especially in the Limit games. But I thought the difference was I had an advantage against him in the No-Limit games.” \$52,977 for 3rd place won’t make a huge difference in Todd Brunson’s life, but he’ll be eager to get back to the Main Stage and hopefully reverse the outcome and get what seems to be a long overdue second gold bracelet.

Fourth Place: Alexey Makarov, from Russia took 4th place. This was his fifth career cash, which paid \$35,130.

Fifth Place: Tim Reusch, from Hamburg, Germany took 5th place. This was the second cash of the series for Reusch, which paid \$23,982.

Sixth Place: Mike Watson, from Toronto, Ontario (Canada) ended up in 6th place. This was his fifth time to cash at this year’s series and 36th in-the-money finish for his career at the WSOP. Sixth place paid out \$16,846. Special Note – this was Watson’s third final table appearance of the summer, with 7th, 7th, and now a 6th.

Seventh Place: Owais Ahmed, from Anaheim, CA rounded out the final table as the 7th-place finisher. He collected \$12,163. Ahmed won his gold bracelet in a Mixed format, playing two split games – Omaha and Stud.

OTHER IN-THE-MONEY FINISHERS:

Aside from the final table finishers, other *notable* gold bracelet winning players who cashed included – Daniel Negreanu (41st), Young Phan (35th), Max Pescatori (32nd), Jeffrey Lisandro (26th), Eli Elezra (24th), Phil Hellmuth (17th), Dan Kelly (15th), and Ylon Schwartz (13th).

FUN FACTS:

Hastings with this victory, joins some of his widely-respected peers who have garnered additional titles at this year's series. Among those who are multi-gold bracelet winners adding to their jewelry collection in 2015 have been Robert Mizrachi, Max Pescatori, John Gale, Phil Hellmuth, Tuan Le, Keith Lehr, Daniel Alaei, Andre Boyer, Phil Galfond, Jason Mercier, Jeff Madsen, and Dan Idema. That's 12 out of 38 completed events, to date.

This was Phil Hellmuth's third cash this year, which was the 111th cash of his career, the most of any player in WSOP history.

EVENT DIRECT LINKS:

For this event's results, visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/results.asp?grid=1136&tid=14239>

For Brian Hastings' official player profile page, visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/players/playerprofile.asp?playerID=90986>

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

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/updates.asp?grid=1136&tid=14239>

For photos from this event, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/photos.asp?grid=1136&tid=14239>

For official winner photo, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/pdfs/reports/14239-winner-photo.jpg>

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

<http://www.wsop.com/videos/?vcat=39>

(Note: Will appear 48 hours after event concludes)

Written by Nolan Dalla (WSOP Media Staff)