



2016 WSOP OFFICIAL REPORT

HANI AWAD WINS \$2,500 BUY-IN MIXED OMAHA/SEVEN-CARD STUD HIGH-LOW SPLIT EVENT

Israeli-born Las Vegas collects \$213,186 top prize in Event #36

After coming in 2nd in same event last year, Awad storms back and earns victory this time around

Awad dedicates victory to his 93-year-old mother

Top poker pro and ambassador Fabrice Soulier finishes as runner up

Jason Mercier makes another deep run, but no final table – finishes 11th

MEET THE LATEST WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION

Name: Hani Awad

Birthplace: Nazareth, Israel

Age: 65

Current Residence: Las Vegas, NV (USA)

Marital Status: Married

Profession: Taxi cab company owner

Number of WSOP Cashes: 10

Number of WSOP Final Table Appearances: 3

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

Best Previous WSOP Finish: 2nd (2015)

Total WSOP Earnings: \$614,441

Personal Facts: Lived in Las Vegas 50 years – played poker with all the greats

Winner's Quote:

"This means everything. I don't even care about the money. I just wanted to win the gold bracelet."

Hani Awad is the newest member of poker's gold bracelet club.

The high stakes recreational poker player now residing in Las Vegas won the \$2,500 buy-in Mixed Omaha/Seven-Card Stud High-Low Split tournament. The competition was played over three days and nights and just concluded on the ESPN main stage at the Rio in Las Vegas.

Awad, age 65, collected \$213,186 in prize money, making this the biggest win of his career. He now has ten WSOP cashes and more than \$600,000 in career winnings. However, that's just part of the story.

Incredibly, Awad finished second in this same event last year, losing heads-up to Konstantin Maslak, from Russia. This time, Awad reversed the final outcome defeating a tough and widely-popular poker pro from France – Fabrice Soulier.

Awad's victory even took on an almost supernatural undertone. Following his runner-up finish in this same tournament last year, he learned that his 93-year-old mother living back in his native Israel was undergoing open heart surgery. She survived the procedure, and to honor his mother who continues to live near Nazareth, which is Awad's birthplace, he vowed to come back to this same event again this year and win it for her.

That, he did.

"I promised her I was going to win it for her," Awad said. "It was my dream to win this, and it means the world."

Fifty years ago, Awad immigrated to the United States and settled down in Las Vegas. He's been a witness to the city's colorful history, including the neon lights and some of the darker chapters, as well. One of Awad's relatives was Elvis Presley's doctor. His brother is one of the city's most famous attorneys. He also worked at Binion's Horseshoe as a poker dealer way back in the 1970's.

Awad has played with just about every big name in poker, including the late Stu Ungar.

"When I first moved here, I lived in the same building as Ungar – at the Regency," Awad said. "I played with all the people you know – Ungar, Seymour (Leibowitz) – all of them. I have been gambling for over 50 years in Las Vegas, I still play all the action games. I am in the Bellagio for those games."

In his formative years as a Las Vegas resident, Awad saw the area was going to boom, and like any great poker player thinking ahead, he began investing in real estate. Later, he eventually purchased ownership of Lucky Cap, which is a local taxi company.

That said, it wasn't luck that gave Awad his first victory at the WSOP. This achievement came from skill and hard work, and most of all – perseverance.

Awad won his well-deserved victory by coming out on top at a final table which included a solid lineup of pros, sprinkled with a few amateurs. The final moment of triumph came when Awad scooped the final pot of the tournament against Fabrice Soulier who finished as the runner up. The French poker player's consolation prize amounted to \$131,762.

This tourney attracted 394 entrants which created a prize pool totaling \$896,350. The top 60 finishers collected prize money.

Aside from the winner, here's a brief report of the other top finishers who made the final table:

Second Place: Fabrice Soulier, from Paris, France finished as the runner up. He hoped to repeat his win from 2011 (\$10,000 buy-in HORSE). He added another \$131,762 to his poker winnings, which placed him close to \$2.2 million at the WSOP. Soulier now has 31 cashes – including 1 first, 2 seconds, 1 fourth, and 4 sevenths.

Third Place: Aditya Prasetyo, from Cambridge, MA came in third. He's a former business analyst-turned poker pro. He also used to be a highly rated chess player. This marked Prasetyo's 13th time

to cash in a WSOP tournament. His payout came to \$89,409. Prasetyo has also accumulated three WSOP Circuit gold ring victories.

Fourth Place: Denny Axel, the former owner of Card Player Magazine and a longtime poker player and sports bettor, enjoyed his deepest WSOP finish in 21 years with this impressive finish. This marked his fourth time to make a final table at the series. Axel, known by serious NFL bettors for his season-wins futures, will have an additional \$61,888 in his bankroll.

Fifth Place: Michael Chow, from Las Vegas, NV came in fifth. This marked his 25th time to cash at the series, which paid \$43,717. Chow's WSOP earnings to date now total close to \$900,000.

Sixth Place: Gleb Kovtunov, from the Ukraine, ended up as the sixth-place finisher. He's now cashed seven times overall and five occasions at this year's series after collecting \$31,527 for his deepest run yet.

Seventh Place: Per Hildebrand, from Marsta, Sweden came in seventh place. Just days after coming off a sixth-place finish in the \$10K Omaha High-Low Split Championship, the Swede made another final table. This was his ninth time to cash at the WSOP, which paid \$23,222.

Eighth Place: Timothy Burt, from Diberville, MS rounded out the final table and came in eighth place. He's a former Army veteran who served two tours of duty in Iraq. This marked Burt's 13th time to cash in a WSOP. He collected \$17,479. Burt has also won three gold rings on the WSOP Circuit.

This was the 36th official event on this year's schedule. That leaves 33 gold bracelet events still to be played at the 2016 WSOP.

OTHER NOTABLE IN-THE MONEY FINISHERS:

Jason Mercier, who's been the talk of the 2016 WSOP thus far (two 1sts, one 2nd, one 8th) and a five-time gold bracelet winner, came in 11th.

Todd Bui, a gold bracelet winner, took 14th place.

Cyndy Violette, a gold bracelet winner, finished in 21st place.

Matt Savage, the Tournament Director for the World Poker Tour and co-founder of the Tournament Directors Association (TDA), finished in 23rd place.

Aaron Steury, a gold bracelet winner, cashed in 24th place.

Allen "Chainsaw" Kessler, the tournament grinder and social media curmudgeon, cashed for the 50th time at the WSOP.

Brandon Shack-Harris, a gold bracelet winner, finished in 29th place.

Josh Arie, a two-time gold bracelet winner, came in 31st.

Robert Mizrachi, a four-time gold bracelet winner (including one win at the 2016 WSOP), finished in 34th place.

Marco Johnson, a two-time gold bracelet winner (including one win at the 2016 WSOP), finished in 41st place.

Bob Slezak, a gold bracelet winner, finished in 44th place.

Mike “the Mouth” Matusow, a four-time gold bracelet winner, took 45th place.

Randy Holland, a gold bracelet winner, came in 51st.

Konstantin Maslak, a gold bracelet winner, ended up finishing 58th.

FUN FACTS:

The ages of participants ranged from 21 to 92. The eldest player in the field was Constantin Zdanowic. The average age of participants was 45 years, one of the highest among non-seniors' events this year

The breakdown of player nationalities for this event was 325 Americans and 69 players from elsewhere. The top five nations represented was the United States, Russia, Canada, France, and Great Britain.

The breakdown of participants by gender was 383 males and 17 females – or 95 percent versus 5 percent.

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=14936>

For Hani Awad’s official player profile page, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/players/playerprofile.asp?playerID=3294>

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

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/updates.asp?grid=1232&tid=14936>

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

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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