



2016 WSOP OFFICIAL REPORT

COURTNEY KENNEDY WINS \$10K WOMENS WORLD POKER CHAMPIONSHIP

Detroit casino dealer collects \$149,108 top prize in Event #65

Amanda Baker finishes as runner up

MEET THE LATEST WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION

Name: Courtney Kennedy

Birthplace: Detroit, MI

Age: 37

Current Residence: Detroit, MI

Marital Status: Single

Children: None

Profession: Casino Dealer (Poker)

Number of WSOP Cashes: 1

Number of WSOP Final Table Appearances: 1

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

Best Previous WSOP Finish: None

Total WSOP Earnings: \$149,108

Personal Facts: Has been playing poker since age of 2 / Works at Motor City Casino

Winner's Quote:

"I'm all about spark. I like to make people laugh, even as a dealer. Some people might say I talk too much, but I keep talking even while I deal."

Courtney Kennedy is the winner of the 2016 Ladies World Poker Championship.

The 37-year-old poker dealer from Detroit, MI won the \$10,000/\$1,000 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em tournament, which was played over three days and nights at the Rio in Las Vegas.

Kennedy collected \$149,108 in prize money, making this the biggest win of her career. Incredibly, this was her first time to cash in a WSOP event of any kind.

Kennedy won her well-deserved victory by coming out on top at a final table which included quite a challenging lineup. Amanda Musumeci, a WSOP Circuit gold bracelet winner and runner up in a 2012 WSOP gold bracelet event was present. So too was Wendy Freedman, another talented poker

pro and WSOP Circuit winner. However, Amanda Baker, another gold ring winner from the Circuit would outlast them both and ultimately pose the biggest threat to Kennedy.

“When we all cashed, I was excited just to do that,” Kennedy said. “I cashed – so I’m good is what I thought. Once again, I never saw this coming.”

Once Musumeci was eliminated in fifth place, Kennedy opened up her lead on the remaining competition. She held nearly a 3 to 1 chip lead over the other three players and more than half the chips in play, and then coasted to victory.

“I had to be careful about having the chip lead. I didn’t want to get carried away, especially with my rail cheering for me and all,” Kennedy said. “I just wanted to play my strong game and pick my spots.”

After Natalia Breviglieri busted out in fourth place, and Michelle Deng went out third, the closing moment came when Kennedy scooped the final pot of the tournament, against a highly-experienced player -- Amanda Baker, from San Diego -- who finished as the runner up. Her consolation prize amounted to \$92,121.

The champion has been playing poker most of her life. “I’ve had cards in my hand since I was two years old,” Kennedy joked afterward. “I’m a home game player and I deal at Motor City Casino in Detroit. This game has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember.”

Kennedy works as a poker dealer at Motor City Casino in Detroit. She plays in recreational games as well as at local casinos in the Detroit area. This was the sixth time Kennedy has played in the annual Ladies event. It was her first time to cash. The win came at a great time, since many of her friends and co-workers also decided to make the trip to Las Vegas to play in the Ladies championship. Kennedy was surrounded by her supporters afterward and cheered her victory.

This tourney attracted 819 entrants which created a prize pool totaling \$745,200. The top 123 finishers collected prize money. Attendance increased for this event over last year’s turnout, which totaled 795 entries.

This event actually had a \$10,000 buy-in. However, females were granted a \$9,000 discount, which meant they paid \$1,000 to enter. One male entered the tournament, paying the full \$10,000 entry fee. Since he didn’t cash, all that money went into the prize pool.

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

Second Place: Amanda Baker, from San Diego, CA has enjoyed considerable success in WSOP events over the years. This marked her 16th time to cash and was her biggest cash win, which paid \$92,121. Baker now has 16 cashes in series events, in addition to a WSOP Circuit gold ring win back in 2006.

Third Place: Michelle Deng (a.k.a. Xiu Deng) has enjoyed a big summer, making this final table along with a ninth-place finish in the 21,000-player field known as Colossus II. Deng collected \$64,401 and heads into the final week of the series with \$150K in winnings, so far.

Fourth Place: Natalia Breviglieri, a poker pro from Great Britain made a deep run, finishing fourth. This was her first time to cash at the WSOP. She collected \$45,683.

Fifth Place: Amanda Musumeci, from Philadelphia was aiming for her first gold bracelet victory, and came close to the prize. However, the runner up in a \$1,500 NLHE tourney four years ago, ended up having to settle for a payout totaling \$32,889.

Sixth Place: Shelly Johnson-Ochoa, from Tucson, AZ cashed for the first time at the WSOP with this sixth-place finisher. She received \$24,037.

Seventh Place: Wendy Freedman, from Las Vegas was another player seemingly due to win a gold bracelet with the talent to pull it off. However, Freedman busted out fairly early and accepted \$17,837 for her seventh place finish. Freedman, a WSOP Circuit gold ring winner (2013 at the Bicycle Casino in Los Angeles), cashed for the seventh time at the summer series.

Eighth Place: Nicole Schwartz, from Wilmington, DE made a nice run and went out in eighth place. This was her first time to cash at the WSOP. Schwartz pocketed \$13,443.

Ninth Place: Yaxi Zhu, from Shanghai, China rounded out the final table as the ninth-place finisher. She now plays poker full-time as a PokerStars-sponsored pro. Zhu earned \$10,292.

This was the 65th official event on this year's schedule. This leaves 4 gold bracelet events still to go at the 2016 WSOP.

OTHER NOTABLE IN-THE MONEY FINISHERS:

Vanessa Selbst, a three-time gold bracelet winner, finished in 23rd place. This was her 27th time to cash at the WSOP, which has paid out nearly \$2.2 million in prize money.

Other notable females who cashed included – Ebony Kennedy, Marie-Lizette Acoba, and Jamie Kerstetter.

FUN FACTS:

The ages of participants ranged from 21 to 83. The eldest player in the field was Soon Freeman.

The breakdown of player nationalities for this event was 665 Americans and 154 players from elsewhere. The top five nations represented were the United States, Canada, Great Britain, France, and Japan. SIDE NOTE: 5 of the 12 entrants from Japan cashed in this event.

The breakdown of participants by gender was 818 females and 1 male. The sole male was reported to have lost a wager and had to play in the Ladies event, paying 10 times the normal buy-in amount.

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=14965>

For Courtney Kennedy's official player profile page, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/players/playerprofile.asp?playerID=98295>

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

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/updates.asp?grid=1232&tid=14965>

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Written by Nolan Dalla (WSOP Media Staff)