



## **2015 WSOP OFFICIAL REPORT**

### **FLORIDA HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL COACH PULLS OF A WSOP SHOCKER**

JEFF TOMLINSON STUNS POKER WORLD BY CRACKING STACKED FINAL TABLE  
IN ONE OF TOUGHEST EVENTS ON WSOP SCHEDULE

Tomlinson's Victory Worth \$567,724 and First Gold Bracelet

Pierre Milan Puts Up Tough Heads-Up Fight and Nearly Wins a Second WSOP Title,  
But Finishes Second Instead

### **MEET THE LATEST WSOP GOLD BRACELET CHAMPION**

Name: Jeffrey Tomlinson

Birthplace: Philadelphia, PA (USA)

Age: 51

Current Residence: Jupiter, FL (USA)

Marital Status: Single

Children: 3

Profession: High School Teacher / Football Coach

Number of WSOP Cashes: 5

Number of WSOP Final Table Appearances: 1

Number of WSOP Gold Bracelet Victories: 1

Best Previous WSOP Finish: 58<sup>th</sup> (2013)

Total WSOP Earnings: \$587,209

Personal Facts: Tomlinson's football team, the Palm Beach Gardens Gators, made it to the Florida State Championship semi-finals two years ago.

The only thing that's predictable about the World Series of Poker is that it's often unpredictable.

Anything can happen. Surprises do occur. Upsets aren't just a part of the game, they are an absolute necessity. All those poker players who come to Las Vegas and pluck down their hard-earned cash to play amongst many of the world's best pros must have hope that lightning could strike and they might win a gold bracelet.

That said, Jeffrey Tomlinson's victory in one of the toughest events on the entire 2015 WSOP schedule wasn't a lightning strike so much as a four-day long hurricane out of South Florida that flooded the Rio in Las Vegas with jubilation.

Jeffrey Tomlinson, a high school teacher and football coach from Jupiter, Florida, won the \$5,000 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em (Eight-Handed) tournament. This competition was a slight derivative of the usual nine-handed variety which is the standard for most Texas Hold'em games.

Tomlinson is a 51-year old part-time poker player who is used to facing stiff competition. He's a football coach at Palm Beach Gardens High School, home of the Gators. His team even made it so far as the semi-finals in the Florida State High School Football championship a few years ago.

Tomlinson's victory was something of a surprise – actually more of a shock -- given the brutally tough lineup he faced at the final table. He even managed a dramatic comeback, overcoming a 3 to 1 chip disadvantage when heads-up play began.

"I don't have any fear. I mean, I'm here to play my game," Tomlinson said afterward. "It doesn't mean I'll win ten gold bracelets, but from the moment I sat down I knew I could win."

Tomlinson was more than aware of the challenge he was up against.

"Before the final table started, one of my buddies told me – do you know that guy? He won a few bracelets. That one of there? He wrote a poker book," Tomlinson said. "Me? Hey, I'm a football coach."

Tomlinson topped a final table which included German poker-pro Dominik Nitsche, who just missed out on what would have been his fourth career win. Nitsche finished 3rd.

Finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> was Pierre Milan, from Paris, who was hoping to become the year's first gold bracelet winner from France. Milan, who captured his first win last year in the \$2,500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em event, added another \$350,994 to his poker bankroll. His WSOP career earnings now total in excess of \$1 million. The payout was bittersweet for Milan, who could have won with just a break or two at the right moment.

Meanwhile, this marked the fifth career cash for Tomlinson, who previously posted min-cashes in 2008, 2010, 2011, and 2013 – but nothing close to the magnitude of this victory. His victory came on a hand where not only his pocket aces held up, they ended

up making a full house. The huge hand was poker's equivalent of spiking the ball and then running it in for a two-point conversion.

Tomlinson was humble afterwards, knowing he'd been the underdog throughout, only to play the best poker of his life on the way to a huge milestone victory. "I was up against some really tough players who were staring me down," Tomlinson said. "But I had a four-day run where everything just went well [...] that's what's so great about poker – anyone can come here and win."

This was the 25th event on the 2015 WSOP schedule, which drew 493 players. The sizable turnout produced a prize pool totaling \$2,317,100.

As for what Tomlinson expects to do with \$567,724, his share of the prize money, he said he'll celebrate with his family back in Florida.

"I also have three daughters, all in college," Tomlinson said. "One is at Florida State, the other is attending Florida Atlantic University. Then, I have one more at 'Nova (Villanova). That should take care of part of it."

"I had so many friends who were watching and sending me good wishes. My football team is like my family, I'm sure they'll be ecstatic when they hear about this. This is a dream come true."

Following Tomlinson atop of the final standings, the official order of finish at the final table (2-8) was as follows:

**Second Place:** Pierre Milan, a 26-year-old poker pro from Paris came up just short in his bid for a second WSOP victory in two years. He had the chip lead a majority of time during the four-hour heads-up match. But he couldn't close out the win. Milan had the chance to be France's first player ever to win two gold bracelets, although double winner Tuan Le (now American) was born in Paris.

**Third Place:** Dominick Nitsche, from Minden, Germany has been on a huge roll at the WSOP since he won his first title four years ago. Nitsche won two gold bracelets last year, and was primed to get to the big stage again, were it not for Milan and Tomlinson who stubbornly wouldn't move aside. The German pro settled for a \$220,657 payout.

**Fourth Place:** Jonathan Jaffe, from Longmeadow, MA, cashed for the 17<sup>th</sup> time at the series. He's made it into the money at least once every year since 2008. Jaffe collected \$158,373 for 4<sup>th</sup> place.

**Fifth Place:** Andrius Bielskis, from Lithuania, enjoyed a breakthrough moment of sorts with his 5<sup>th</sup> place showing, the best he's posted in three cashes. Bielskis pocketed \$115,507.

**Sixth Place:** Jonathan Little arrived at the final table as the chip leader, and went out in disappointing fashion, finishing 6<sup>th</sup>. This was Little's 27<sup>th</sup> career cash. His \$85,616 payout here put him in excess of \$600,000 in career WSOP winnings.

**Seventh Place:** Anthony Zinno, from Boston, MA is a 33-year-old poker pro and a 3-time World Poker Tour champion. He was also the WPT Player of the Year. Zinno added \$64,484 to his poker bankroll for this 7<sup>th</sup>-place finish, which was his ninth time to cash at the WSOP. Zinno has now made two final tables at this series, following his 6<sup>th</sup>-place finish in the Omaha High-Low Split championship.

**Eighth Place:** Dan O'Brien, the popular poker personality and pro player from Las Vegas was the first player to exit the final table. The former Wall Street investor originally from Mt. Simi, NY pocketed \$49,331. He cashed 7 times last year. This was his 2<sup>nd</sup> cash at the 2015 series.

#### **OTHER IN-THE-MONEY FINISHERS:**

Aside from the top eight-finishers, some other notable gold bracelet winners who reached the money included – Shaun Deeb (22<sup>nd</sup>), Paul Volpe (36<sup>th</sup>) and Konstantin Puchkov (51<sup>st</sup>).

Paul Volpe cashed again, his fourth for this year's series. Volpe, a gold bracelet winner last year, now has two second-place finishes, a 12th, and a 36th-place showing in this event, making him a serious contender in the WSOP Player of the Year race.

Ismael Bojang (37<sup>th</sup>) continues to distance himself from the competition when it comes to being a cashing machine. The Vienna (Austria)-based poker pro posted his fourth cash of the year and 24th since the start of the 2013 WSOP. In that span, this is the most cashes by any player at the WSOP. He also established the record for most cashes in a single year during 2014, with 13.

#### **FUN FACTS:**

Gender breakdown: There were 477 males who entered this event, compared with just 16 females.

The average age of participants was 34.5 years – about the WSOP average for all events.

#### **EVENT DIRECT LINKS:**

For this event's results, visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/results.asp?grid=1136&tid=14225>

For Jeffrey Tomlinson's official player profile page, visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/players/playerprofile.asp?playerID=45434>

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

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/updates.asp?grid=1136&tid=14225>

For photos from this event, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/tournaments/photos.asp?grid=1136&tid=14225>

For official winner photo, please visit:

<http://www.wsop.com/pdfs/reports/14225-winner-photo.jpg>

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

<http://www.wsop.com/videos/?vcat=25>

*(Note: Will appear 48 hours after event concludes)*

*Written by Nolan Dalla (WSOP Media Staff)*