

Germany's Thomas Bihl Captures First-Ever WSOP Bracelet Won Outside U.S. at World Series of Poker(R) Europe

London (PRNewswire) – The first round in the new battle for global poker bragging rights goes to Europe, thanks to Thomas „Buzzer“ Bihl who made poker history today at the inaugural World Series of Poker Europe Presented by Betfair.

Bihl, a native of Frankfurt, Germany, who started playing poker just four years ago, won 70,875 pounds Sterling and the first-ever WSOP bracelet awarded outside the United States. Bihl outlasted a field of the world's top poker pros in one of the most challenging of all poker games, the 2,500 pounds Sterling HORSE championship that kicked off the inaugural WSOP Europe.

„Thomas Bihl has earned a place in poker history with this incredible win,“ said WSOP Commissioner Jeffrey Pollack. „The fact that he is a Betfair player, when Betfair is our presenting sponsor, makes this even sweeter.“

Two-time World Series of Poker winner and Nevada native Jennifer Harman finished a disappointing second after relinquishing a two-to-one chip lead to Bihl, who played a quiet waiting game for most of the 13-hour final table. Harman had hoped to add a third WSOP bracelet to her total today at the 2007 WSOP Europe.

Bihl emerged victorious in the three-day HORSE event – a tournament featuring five variations of poker – at 4:15 a.m. GMT at The Casino at The Empire in London, capturing the

70,875 pounds Sterling first-place prize and a coveted WSOP gold bracelet made by luxury Swiss watchmaker CORUM.

Up to today's event, the 32-year-old Bihl had won USD 132,226 in official prize money in his four-year career. The event was the eighth major-tournament final table for Harman, whose official career winnings totaled USD 1,557,372 leading up to this competition. She has won millions more in the world's biggest cash games in the course of a professional poker career that began two decades ago in her hometown of Reno, Nevada.

WSOP bracelet winner Kirk Morrison finished third, winning 28,250 pounds Sterling. Five-time World Series of Poker bracelet winner Chris Ferguson finished fourth, adding 21,656 pounds Sterling, or more than USD 42,000, to his career earnings of USD 5,551,650. Russian phenom Alex Kravchenko collected 17,714 pounds Sterling for fifth place, while Yuval Bronshtein won 14,438 pounds Sterling for sixth, Joe Beevers 11,812 pounds Sterling for seventh and Gary Jones 9,118 for eighth. In all, the top 16 of the 105 entrants won 262,500 pounds Sterling in prize money.

An hour before the HORSE final table began, 156 of the world's top players anted up 5,000 pounds Sterling to play in the WSOP Europe Pot-Limit Omaha championship. The WSOP Europe HORSE and Pot-Limit Omaha tournaments established record prize pools.

The World Series of Poker Europe presented by Betfair debuted in London September 6 and runs through September 16. The tournament is hosted at three casinos operated by London Clubs International – Fifty on St. James Street, The Casino at the Empire on Leicester Square and The Sportsman at Marble Arch.

The World Series of Poker Europe consists of three events. The largest of these is the Main Event, a 10,000 pounds Sterling buy-in, 750-player, six-day tournament spread over three

casinos with an expected prize pool of roughly 7.5 pounds Sterling million. The winner could take home more than 1.5 million pounds Sterling in cash, depending on the number of entrants, as well as a WSOP gold-bracelet, the most coveted prize in poker.