



CAESARS
ATLANTIC CITY



**2011/2012 World Series of Poker Circuit
Caesars Atlantic City
Event #5
No-Limit Hold'em
Buy-In: \$500 (+55)
Total Entries: 263
Total Prize Pool: \$127,555
March 6-7, 2012**

Official Final Results:

1	Brandon Croft	Sumter, SC, US	\$31,251
2	Thomas Ross	BROOKLYN, NY, US	\$19,309
3	Timothy Little	Cheverly, MD, US	\$13,951
4	Stephen Scales	Red Bank, NJ, US	\$10,267
5	Benjamin Carli	ALLIANCE, OH, US	\$7,692
6	Jesse Mercado	Brooklyn, NY, US	\$5,861
7	Michael O'Dea	Mt. Airy, MD, US	\$4,540
8	Wesley Ismay	TEMPE, AZ, US	\$3,575
9	Heather Sue Mercer	NEW YORK, NY, US	\$2,859
10	Adir Davidov	Jamaica, NY, US	\$2,323
11	Matthew Gunter	BEL AIR, MD, US	\$2,323
12	John Lovejoy	LA VISTA, NE, US	\$2,323
13	James Sloat	FORT MEADE, MD, US	\$1,916
14	William Buckmaster	Atlanta, GA, US	\$1,916
15	Steven Rodriguez	STATEN ISLAND, NY, US	\$1,916
16	Robert Brown	Milford, NH, US	\$1,605
17	Jeffrey McRuster	Corpus Christi, TX, US	\$1,605
18	Michael Lapadula	MASSAPEQUA PK, NY, US	\$1,605
19	Anthony Maio	New Hope, PA, US	\$1,365
20	Robert Taylor	KERILWORTH, NJ, US	\$1,365
21	Richard White	GERMANTOWN, MD, US	\$1,365
22	Mikhail Siler	Brooklyn, NY, US	\$1,177
23	Eugen Cirneci	RIDGEWOOD, NY, US	\$1,177
24	Christian Farley	W DEPTFORD, NJ, US	\$1,177
25	Daniel Blakeman	Houston, TX, US	\$1,631
26	Jeffrey Gurfinkel	BROOKLYN, NY, US	\$1,031
27	Russell Hunter	New Bern, NC, US	\$1,031

Tournament Report:

Brandon Croft – Ring Raider

South Carolina Man Wins Second WSOP Circuit Title in Three Days

Poker Action at Caesars Atlantic City Approaching Midway Point -- Runs through March 12th

Atlantic City, NJ (March 7, 2012) – Every now and then, one fortunate poker player bursts upon the tournament scene and goes on a monster roll.

It happened last season when Sam Barnhart won a Main Event in Tunica, followed by the WSOP Circuit National Championship, followed by a deep run in the WSOP Main Event Championship.

It happened at last year's WSOP in Las Vegas when Ben Lamb won the "Player of the Year" Race.

It happened earlier this season when Michael Rosenbach won two WSOP Circuit gold rings at Harvey's Lake Tahoe, encored by another win at the Bicycle Casino in Los Angeles.

Well, it's happening again.

This time, Brandon Croft is riding the wave of a lifetime. He just won the most recent WSOP Circuit event, held at Caesars Atlantic City. This was his second gold ring victory within the past three nights.

The 31-year-old part-time recreational poker player from Sumter, SC outlasted a tough field of 263 players. This time, he collected \$31,251 to go along with this previous win which amounted to \$30,062. Hence, Croft pocketed a cool \$61,313 for a few days of poker playing.

Croft is the manager of a strip club, Platinum Plus, which is located in Greenville, SC. The victory amounted to an encore performance.

No doubt, one of the storylines from this point forward will be Croft and how he performs the rest of the way. With six more tournaments open and undecided, he has the opportunity to become the first-ever three-ring winner at one WSOP Circuit stop. Many players have won two. But Croft is arguably in the best position of any player to seize a third victory, given that his two wins have come relatively early in the series.

Moreover, Croft's point total in the WSOP Circuit National Championship race is almost certainly high enough to qualify for a seat. He currently stands alone far head of the pack in the "Best All-Around Player" race for Atlantic City. More than likely, in order to catch Croft -- one of the other previous winners will have to also win another event or make multiple deep runs.

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This was the fifth of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at Caesars Atlantic City. Officially listed as Event #5 -- the \$555 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em tournament attracted 263 entries. The total prize pool came to \$127,555. The top 27 players were paid. All players who cashed received WSOP Circuit National Championship ranking points.

A full list of all players who cashed in Event #5 can be seen at WSOP.COM

The tournament was played over two consecutive days, starting on Tuesday. Only 20 survivors took seats on the second day of action, played on Wednesday.

Following the first two hours of play on Day Two, the final table was set. The ten finalists and their starting chip counts were as follows:

SEAT 1: Heather Sue Mercer (Las Vegas, NV) – 320,000 in chips
SEAT 2: Benjamin Carli (Alliance, OH) – 243,000 in chips
SEAT 3: Adir Davidov (Jamaica Estates, NY) – 60,000 in chips
SEAT 4: Jesse Mercado (Brooklyn, NY) – 523,000 in chips
SEAT 5: Steve Scales (Red Bank, NJ) – 320,000 in chips
SEAT 6: Wesley Ismay (Tempe, AZ) – 309,000 in chips
SEAT 7: Brandon Croft (Sumter, SC) – 303,000 in chips
SEAT 8: Mike O'Dea (Mt. Airy, MD) – 260,000 in chips
SEAT 9: Tommy Ross (Brooklyn, NY) – 320,000 in chips
SEAT 10: Timothy Little (Cheverly, MD) – 480,000 in chips

The final table featured only one former WSOP Circuit gold ring winner, Brandon Croft, fresh off his victory two days earlier.

The two early chip leaders were Jesse Mercado and Timothy Little, who were neck to neck in first place. However, the wide disparity of chips made the finale a wide-open contest.

The final playing session began at 6:30 pm local time. Play finished at midnight making the total duration about six hours, minus a one-hour dinner break. The official order of finish was as follows:

10th Place – Adir Davidov was the first player to bust out. He arrived with the shortest attack and was eliminated about 20 minutes into play. Davidov is a 21-year-old part-time poker player from Jamaica Estates, NY. This was his first time to cash in a WSOP-related tournament.

9th Place – Heather Sue Mercer went out next, ending up in ninth place. She is a baker who is originally from New York and now resides in Las Vegas. She specializes in making chocolate chip cookies. Mercer has previously cashed three times at the WSOP in Las Vegas – including a 15th-place finish two years ago in the \$25,000 buy-in Six-Handed NLHE championship (arguably, the toughest field of any NLHE tournament in the world).

8th Place – Wesley Ismay busted out shortly after the dinner break and ended up in eighth place. He is a 25-year-old part-time poker player from South Dakota. Ismay finished 88th in the 2009 WSOP Main Event championship, which paid just shy of 60-grand.

7th Place – Michael O'Dea went out in seventh place. He is a 44-year-old recreational poker player from Mt. Airy, MD. O'Dea finished fourth place in this same event, held in 2007.

6th Place – Jesse Mercado took sixth place. He is a 23-year-old poker pro from Brooklyn, NY. He has a number of previous tournament cashes.

5th Place – Benjamin Carli ended up in fifth place. He is a 25-year-old poker player from Alliance, OH. This was Carli's third final table appearance in a WSOP Circuit event (3rd, 5th, and 7th). He is the cousin of Doug "Rico" Carli – who owns the record as the player with the most cashes in WSOP Circuit history.

4th Place – Stephen Scales was the fourth-place finisher. He is a 24-year-old poker pro from Red Bank, NJ. Scales' performance in this event was overshadowed by the victor. However, he now has two final table appearances here at Caesars Atlantic City. Scales took 6th place in Event #2, which drew 887 players.

3rd Place – Timothy Little came in third. He is 49-years-old and resides in Cheverly, MD. This was his second time to cash at this series.

2nd Place – Tommy Ross was the runner up. He is 41-years-old and resides in Brooklyn, NY. Ross. Ross has nearly a quarter-million in live tournament winnings after pocketing \$19,309 for this showing. He took fifth place in an event at last year's WSOP in Las Vegas.

1st Place – Brandon Croft became the fifth WSOP Circuit champion crowned this year at Caesars Atlantic City – and a two-time winner. He earned \$31,250 for the victory.

With his victory, Croft moves into the top spot as the clear leader in this WSOP Circuit's "Best All-Around Player" standings. The player who accumulates the most overall points in Caesar's Atlantic City's twelve combined gold ring tournaments receives a pre-paid entry into the \$1 million 2011-2012 WSOP Circuit National Championship. At least two players from this tournament series will qualify for the WSOP Circuit National Championship, which is classified as a WSOP gold bracelet event. The other automatic qualifier will be the winner of Main Event championship (to be held March 10-12).

Here is the list of gold ring winners from Caesars Atlantic City, so far:

- EVENT #1: Michael McGuinness defeated 667 players (\$345 NLHE) and won \$39,790**
- EVENT #2: Sarah Dygert defeated 887 players (\$345 NLHE) and won \$50,333**
- EVENT #3: Brandon Croft defeated 253 players (\$555 NLHE) and won \$30,062**
- EVENT #4: Ali Navid defeated 495 players (\$345 NLHE) and won \$30,969**
- EVENT #5: Brandon Croft defeated 263 players (\$555 NLHE) and won \$31,250**

With the fifth tournament now wrapped up, there are still seven more gold ring events remaining in what is being billed as a "12 rings in 12 days" poker series. The WSOP Circuit at Caesars Atlantic City continues through March 12th. This year's schedule includes not only all the gold ring events, but multiple second-chance tournaments, single table and mega satellites, plus cash games going around the clock inside the action-packed poker room

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MORE ABOUT THE WSOP CIRCUIT AT CAESARS ATLANTIC CITY

The World Series of Poker Circuit is taking place at Caesars Atlantic City, one of the East Coast's premier gaming and entertainment destinations.

Indeed, this marks the seventh consecutive season that Caesars Atlantic City has hosted a WSOP Circuit stop. The luxurious casino resort has been a flagship of poker action since the first WSOP tournament took place, back in 2006.

This year's "12 Rings in 12 Days" series is taking place March 1-12. As has been the case for all previous major poker events, all action is held inside an expansive grand ballroom located on

the second floor, adjacent to the main casino. In past years, the entire ballroom has been packed to capacity with players, as many of Caesars Atlantic City's events have sold out. Attendance for Atlantic City's WSOP tournaments has consistently remained high, despite the spread of poker and tournaments to other venues in nearby states and plenty of healthy competition throughout the Northeast.

This will be the 12th of 17 stops of the 2011-2012 World Series of Poker Circuit season. Just three months ago, Harrah's Atlantic City hosted the first of two New Jersey appearances by the WSOP Circuit and its players. Attendance surpassed what many observers were projecting, which leads one to believe a repeat of a successful tournament series is inevitable.

Aside from great poker tournament action and live games, there's plenty to do on the Jersey Shore during March. The casino-resort is located adjacent to the world most famous Boardwalk on the Atlantic Ocean. While the WSOP is in town, Atlantic City is hosting its famous "Restaurant Week," which is a seven-day celebration of great cuisine. Atlantic City Restaurant Week takes place March 3-10. Many restaurants within a short distance of Caesars Atlantic City are participating in the food and wine festival.

There's a lot at stake for poker players who will make their way to the Jersey Shore. Not only are a dozen gold rings up for grabs, lots of prize money will also be awarded to those who cash. All players who finish in the money will also earn ranking points, which are used to determine finalists for the season-ending WSOP Circuit National Championship.

Since the season began in September, all tournament players have been in the running for 100 guaranteed pre-paid seats in the \$1 million WSOP Circuit National Championship finale – which will be a WSOP gold bracelet event to be played in Las Vegas, around the time of the World Series of Poker.

To see the complete Caesars Atlantic City tournament schedule, please visit WSOP.com.

Stay tuned to WSOP.com for the latest reports and updates from Caesars Atlantic City. WSOP.com will carry a LIVE VIDEO STREAM of every final table, starting most afternoons.

Note: Be sure and follow all WSOP news and updates on Twitter @wsop

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