



**2011/2012 World Series of Poker Circuit  
Harrah's St. Louis  
Event #1  
No-Limit Hold'em  
Buy-In: \$300 (+55)  
Total Entries: 473  
Total Prize Pool: \$137,643  
April 12-13, 2012**

**Official Results:**

|    |                   |                          |          |
|----|-------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| 1  | Shain Matthews    | Marysville, CA, US       | \$29,306 |
| 2  | Scott Sharpe      | LEAWOOD, KS, US          | \$18,117 |
| 3  | Patrick Fogleman  | SPRINGFIELD, IL, US      | \$13,235 |
| 4  | John Fagg         | TERRE HAUTE, IN, US      | \$9,812  |
| 5  | Michael Souza     | SAN DIEGO, CA, US        | \$7,379  |
| 6  | Nikolas Stone     | Auburndale, WI, US       | \$5,629  |
| 7  | James Beetz       | FRIENDSWOOD, TX, US      | \$4,355  |
| 8  | David Finch       | PEORIA, IL, US           | \$3,417  |
| 9  | Michael Tripplet  | CHARLOTTE, MI, US        | \$2,719  |
| 10 | Patricia Bott     | Independence, MO, US     | \$2,193  |
| 11 | Justin Brown      | BLOOMINGTON, IN, US      | \$2,193  |
| 12 | Randy Ratajczyk   | Du Bois, IL, US          | \$2,193  |
| 13 | Michael Burns     | Oshkosh, WI, US          | \$1,794  |
| 14 | Kevin Wagner      | Ballwin, MO, US          | \$1,794  |
| 15 | John Muren        | Belleville, IL, US       | \$1,794  |
| 16 | Gary Deardorff    | KANSAS CITY, MO, US      | \$1,486  |
| 17 | John Bullard      | Raytown, MO, US          | \$1,486  |
| 18 | John Nguyen       | FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS, IL, US | \$1,486  |
| 19 | Nathaniel Spilker | Overland Park, MO, US    | \$1,247  |
| 20 | Joshua Tucker     | Hillsboro, MO, US        | \$1,247  |
| 21 | Robert Williams   | Mchenry, IL, US          | \$1,247  |
| 22 | Sean Burson       | HVL, CA, US              | \$1,060  |
| 23 | Timothy Palmer    | SPRINGFIELD, IL, US      | \$1,060  |
| 24 | Lloyd Ney         | MOSCOW MILLS, MO, US     | \$1,060  |
| 25 | Paul Fehlig       | SAINT LOUIS, MO, US      | \$913    |
| 26 | Raymond Lantz     | GIBSON CITY, IL, US      | \$913    |
| 27 | Ethan Riddle      | Dexter, MO, US           | \$913    |
| 28 | Chun Law          | LONDON, GB               | \$797    |
| 29 | Zachary Lloyd     | Springfield, IL, US      | \$797    |

|    |                    |                       |       |
|----|--------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| 30 | Richard Cozzie     | Spring Valley, IL, US | \$797 |
| 31 | Henry Brown        | Dallas, TX, US        | \$705 |
| 32 | William Byrnes     | SAINT CHARLES, MO, US | \$705 |
| 33 | Kevin Shimp        | QUINCY, IL, US        | \$705 |
| 34 | Shaun Flamm        | SAINT LOUIS, MO, US   | \$631 |
| 35 | Matthew Rountree   | Myrtle Beach, SC, US  | \$631 |
| 36 | William Brock II   | PELHAM, AL, US        | \$631 |
| 37 | Jason Blazich      | NOKOMIS, IL, US       | \$571 |
| 38 | Donita Fey         | CLINTON, OK, US       | \$571 |
| 39 | Blake Barousse     | LAFAYETTE, LA, US     | \$571 |
| 40 | Jeffrey Schroeder  | ST PETERS, MO, US     | \$571 |
| 41 | James Ross         | CHAMPAIGN, IL, US     | \$571 |
| 42 | Jason Garder       | MOORE, OK, US         | \$571 |
| 43 | Pete Zdazinsky     | CLAYTON, MO, US       | \$571 |
| 44 | Christopher Jones  | Olsdmar, FL, US       | \$571 |
| 45 | Robert Alexander   | CENTRALIA, IL, US     | \$571 |
| 46 | Rafal Les          | DES PLAINES, IL, US   | \$261 |
| 47 | Daniel Lowery      | PETER PENDER, AR, US  | \$261 |
| 48 | Johnathan Dahlberg | SAINT CHARLES, MO, US | \$261 |
| 49 | Jeffery Foust      | BLUE SPRINGS, MO, US  | \$261 |
| 50 | Corey Marsh        | Fremont, NE, US       | \$261 |
| 51 | Connor Steinbrook  | Plano, TX, US         | \$261 |
| 52 | Jeffrey Landherr   | O FALLON, MO, US      | \$261 |
| 53 | Timothy Nimitz     | Caldwell, KS, US      | \$261 |
| 54 | Adam Sporinsky     | CHICAGO, IL, US       | \$261 |

## **Tournament Report:**

**Shain Matthews Wins Opener at Harrah's St. Louis**

**New Champion Dedicates Victory to His Late Father – Ron Matthews**

**WSOP Circuit at Harrah's St. Louis Opens with 473-Player Field**

**Season's Final Midwest WSOP Circuit Continues through April 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**St. Louis, MO (March 12, 2012) –** Its opening day in St. Louis.

On the same day when Major League Baseball's world champion St. Louis Cardinals hosted their home opener, the World Series of Poker Circuit rolled into town with the first of 12 gold ring tournaments. The opener drew a strong turnout of nearly 500 players who turned up at the Harrah's St. Louis Riverboat Resort and Casino in the quest for a gold ring, thousands of dollars in prize money, and ranking points in the National Championship series.

Sticking with the baseball theme, Shain Matthews ended up hitting the game-winning home run. He circled the bases for the first time in a WSOP Circuit event, ultimately sliding across the plate safely with nearly \$30,000 in prize money.

Matthews is a 26-year-old professional poker player from Marysville, CA. He collected \$29,306 in prize money. Matthews was also presented with his first WSOP Circuit gold ring, which is the ultimate achievement for winning on the Circuit. Indeed, just as baseball champions get a World Series gold ring, Matthews now has one of his own for his impressive poker achievement.

Matthews won the tournament in relatively speedy fashion. The two-day event was played in less than 22 (total combined) hours – somewhat unusual given the large field size. Matthews pretty much dominated the final hours of the tournament as the largest stack, ultimately defeating not only three-time gold ring winner Michael Souza, but another fine player named Scott Sharpe in heads-up play. Indeed, Sharpe’s experience was bittersweet, coming in second for nearly \$20,000 in prize money, but also finishing as the runner up for the second time within the past two weeks. He came in second previously in an event at Council Bluffs.

With his victory, Matthews now has four career cashes on the WSOP Circuit, all of which have taken place this season. His best previous showing was a seventh-place finish in a similar event held at Harvey’s Lake Tahoe, last November. This was his biggest tournament payday, to date. Most of his other cashes have taken place in the Reno-Lake Tahoe area.

Meanwhile, the St. Louis Cardinals did not fare as well on this night. The Redbirds fell behind early in their game and ultimately lost to the Chicago Cubs by the score of 9-5. Perhaps had Shain Matthews been in the lineup swinging for the fences, St. Louis would have won their opener.

Following his victory, Matthews wanted to dedicate his moment of glory to his late father – who passed away 18 months ago. Ron Matthews was very supportive of his son and his poker playing. The man described as “my best friend” not only taught Shain the game, he also traveled to and from many tournaments alongside his son. The two often talked about poker strategy together. No doubt, Ron Matthews would be proud today.

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The first of a dozen gold ring tournaments began on Thursday with Event #1 – a \$345 buy-in No-Limit Hold’em competition. The tournament attracted 473 entries. The total prize pool came to \$137,643. The top 54 players were paid. All players who cashed received WSOP Circuit National Championship ranking points.

Among those who were Patricia Bott, who came in tenth. She says one of her “bucket list” goals it to play in and cash in the WSOP Main Event. She appears to be on the right track since this was her first ever WSOP Circuit tournament, resulting in a top-ten finish.

A full list of all players who cashed in Event #1 can be seen at [WSOP.COM](http://WSOP.COM)

The tournament was played over two consecutive days. Only about 5 percent of the starting field -- 28 survivors -- took seats on the second day of action, played on Friday.

Following three additional five hours of play on Day Two, the final table was set. The final table featured only one former WSOP Circuit gold ring winner – three-time champ Michael Souza, from San Diego.

The final playing session began at 8 pm local time. Play finished at midnight making the total duration about four hours. The official order of finish was as follows:

**9<sup>th</sup> Place** – Michael Triplet finished in ninth place. He is a real-life bounty hunter from Charlotte, MI. Prior to working for a bail bond company, he served in the U.S. Marine Corps for

20 years. This was Triplet's seventh time to cash on the WSOP Circuit, and first time to make a final table appearance. He collected a well-deserved \$2,719 in prize money.

**8<sup>th</sup> Place** – David Finch was the eighth-place finisher. He is a district manager from Peoria, IL. This was Finch's deepest run in a major tournament. He also coaches baseball, football, and basketball. Finch collected \$3,417 in prize money.

**7<sup>th</sup> Place** – James Beetz made a strong run and finished in seventh place. He is a 65-year-old retiree from Houston. Beetz has several major cashes on his tournament resume, including a win at the Oklahoma State Poker Championship in 2008. He collected \$4,355 for this showing, which was his fourth WSOP Circuit cash, and first final table appearance.

**6<sup>th</sup> Place** – Nikolas Stone took sixth place. He is a 29-year-old shipping receiving manager from Auburndale, WI. This was his first time to cash on the WSOP Circuit, which paid \$5,629.

**5<sup>th</sup> Place** – Michael R. Souza ended up in fifth place. He is a 39-year-old poker pro from San Diego. Souza currently holds three WSOP Circuit titles. This was his 26<sup>th</sup> time to cash on the Circuit, which ranks in the top-ten all-time. Souza has also cashed in the WSOP Main Event four times. He earned \$7,379 in prize money and earned enough points with this finish to likely qualify for a seat in this year's National Championship.

**4<sup>th</sup> Place** – John Fagg was the fourth-place finisher. He is from Terre Haute, IN. Fagg cashed for the first time in a WSOP-related tournament with this showing, earning \$9,812 in prize money.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place** – Patrick Fogleman took third place. He is a 27-year-old poker pro from Springfield, IL. This was his third time to appear at a WSOP Circuit final table. Prior to playing poker full time, Fogleman worked as a casino dealer. Third place paid \$13,235.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place** – Scott Sharpe was the runner up. He is a 29-year-old realtor from Leawood, KS. Sharpe previously played baseball at the University of Kansas. This was his second time to finish as the runner up in as many weeks. Sharpe took second place last week at a tournament played at the WSOP Circuit stop in Council Bluffs, IA. This time, his consolation prize amounted to \$18,117 in prize money.

The second-place finish was somewhat surprising given Sharpe's absolute dominance of much of the tournament. He was the chip leader during the middle of the first day and onward, all the way until play reached four handed. At one point when play was at 25-players, he had every player at his table covered by greater than a 5 to 1 margin. He seemed to be untouchable. But Matthews caught a bit of good fortune at the perfect time, seized the lead, and prevailed.

When heads-up play began, Matthews had Sharpe covered by about a 2 to 1 margin. The duel lasted nearly two hours. Sharpe drew close to even at one point. But Matthews proved too tough and ultimately won the tournament with a big hand, as Sharpe missed his flush draw. The final hand came about two hours into the duel and proceeded as follows:

Matthews: Kh Ks  
Sharpe: 6h 4h  
Flop: Th 7h 3s  
Turn: Tc  
River: Ad

Sharpe moved all in after the flop, with both a flush draw as well as an inside straight possibility. Unfortunately, he missed both of his draws. Matthews, holding a pair of kings, was declared the new champion.

**1<sup>st</sup> Place** – Shain Matthews, from Marysville, CA became the first WSOP Circuit champion crowned this year at Harrah’s St. Louis. He won his biggest payout ever – totaling \$29,306 for the victory. He was also presented with his first gold ring.

With his victory, Matthews moves into the top spot all alone as the early leader in this WSOP Circuit’s “Best All-Around Player” standings. The (one) player who accumulates the most overall points in Harrah’s St. Louis’ 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 April 21-23).

With the first tournament wrapped up, there are still 11 more gold ring events remaining in what is being billed as a “12 rings in 12 days” poker series. The WSOP Circuit at Harrah’s St. Louis continues through April 23<sup>rd</sup>. 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 poker room

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## **MORE ABOUT THE WSOP CIRCUIT AT HARRAH’S ST. LOUIS**

Harrah’s St. Louis is a casino-resort located in Maryland Heights, MO -- about a 35-minute drive from Downtown St. Louis. The international airport is even closer, just 15-minutes by car or shuttle. In fact, the shuttle bus is free for hotel guests. For poker players residing throughout the Midwest, the casino can be reached easily, which is located right off Interstate-70.

Harrah’s St. Louis is the 15th (of 17) WSOP Circuit host properties. The 2011-2012 season is rapidly winding down, with only three more stops remaining on the schedule. Harrah’s St. Louis is the Midwest’s final destination this season. The other two remaining WSOP Circuit stops are at Harrah’s Chester (Philadelphia) – April 26 to May 7 and Harrah’s New Orleans – May 10 to May 21.

This marks the third straight season that the WSOP Circuit has visited Harrah’s St. Louis. Previous tournaments played here drew large turnouts and generated big prize pools. This year’s series appears to be no different based on heavy registration for the first few events.

Harrah’s St. Louis first opened in 1997 and has been one of gaming’s flagship properties in the Midwest ever since. The hotel offers 455 deluxe rooms and 47 luxury suites. Special hotel rates for players are available. The property also has several fine restaurants at all price levels. See [WSOP.com](http://WSOP.com) for more information.

Harrah’s St. Louis’ “12 Rings in 12 Days” series is taking place April 12-23. All the poker action takes place right on the main casino floor. The final table is stationed right in the center of the floor, a highly-anticipated destination for every poker player.

There’s a lot at stake for poker players who will make their way to Harrah’s St. Louis over the next two weeks. 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 Main Event.

To see the complete Harrah's St. Louis tournament schedule, please visit [WSOP.com](http://WSOP.com).

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

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