



**2011/2012 World Series of Poker Circuit
Harrah's St. Louis
Event #2
No-Limit Hold'em
Buy-In: \$500 (+65)
Total Entries: 279
Total Prize Pool: \$135,315
April 12-13, 2012**

Official Final Results:

1	Jerry Ard	Monticello, MS, US	\$32,147
2	Tommy Arnold	TEUTOPOLIS, IL, US	\$19,870
3	Ruth Hagen	TROY, IL, US	\$14,417
4	Royce Cohen	BENSALEM, PA, US	\$10,637
5	Dylan Thomassie	CHAMPAIGN, IL, US	\$7,978
6	Kevin Azzariti	Antioch, TN, US	\$6,079
7	James Choquette	Austin, TX, US	\$4,705
8	Richard Hash	MARYVILLE, TN, US	\$3,697
9	Gerald Paskert	CASEYVILLE, IL, US	\$2,950
10	Garrett Riley	Quincy, IL, US	\$2,389
11	Daniel Blakeman	Houston, TX, US	\$2,389
12	Sonny Nicewaner	VALLEY PARK, MO, US	\$2,389
13	Daniel Lowery	PETER PENDER, AR, US	\$1,963
14	Bruce Schlichting	ROCKFORD, IL, US	\$1,963
15	Bryan White	BELLEVILLE, IL, US	\$1,963
16	Eric Seiler	SAINT LOUIS, MO, US	\$1,636
17	Alexander Hoff	WENTZVILLE, MO, US	\$1,636
18	Jeffrey Derickson	CHESTER, IL, US	\$1,636
19	Benjamin Smith	FT WAYNE, IN, US	\$1,383
20	Samuel Gillespie	Evansville, IN, US	\$1,383
21	James Manning	WACO, TX, US	\$1,383
22	Danny Nelson	BATESVILLE, AR, US	\$1,186
23	William Phillips	Ozark, MO, US	\$1,186
24	Paul Harris	ALEXANDRIA, VA, US	\$1,186
25	Larry Smith	QUINCY, IL, US	\$1,030
26	Robert Oxford	ROSEDALE, IN, US	\$1,030
27	David Schwartz	FORISTELL, MO, US	\$1,030
28	Robert Bachelder	Ashland, OH, US	\$908
29	Peter Clive	ST. CHARLES, MO, US	\$908
30	Brian Nguyen	O FALLON, MO, US	\$908

Tournament Report:

Jerry Ard Wins First Gold Ring

Mississippi Man Finally Has the Cards Go His Way

WSOP Circuit at Harrah's St. Louis Continues with Record-Setting Weekend

Final Midwest WSOP Circuit Continues through April 23rd

St. Louis, MO (March 14, 2012) – The World Series of Poker Circuit at Harrah's St. Louis continued today with the conclusion of the second of a dozen gold ring poker tournaments.

Jerry Ard, from Monticello, MS won the latest poker competition. To say he had this victory coming would be an understatement.

"I have been playing seriously for about six years," Ard said moments after achieving his first major tournament victory. "I've played in more events than I can count."

Indeed, Ard has very much paid his dues as an amateur poker player who aspires to play more tournaments poker and eventually join the ranks of the game's elite.

He began playing major events in 2006 and spent the next three years traveling throughout the South and Midwest hoping for a breakthrough score. But the cards back home were unkind to Ard, who discovered that his wife had a serious illness in 2009. He quit playing altogether to be with her.

It took a few years for Ard's wife to finally recover and when she did, that seemed to energize his drive to compete and win. Two months ago, Ard finally achieved what he considered to be a breakthrough, coming in third place in the WSOP Circuit's Million Dollar Guarantee event held the Palm Beach Kennel Club, in Florida. That achievement paid \$86,611. It seemed that Ard was rewarded for the sacrifices he made and for the commitment he demonstrated to his family above everything else.

But that was just the start. Ard made two more final tables (finishing eighth and third) and then arrived in St. Louis where he entered the \$565 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em. He ultimately won the tournament and collected \$32,147 in prize money. He was also presented with his first WSOP Circuit gold ring.

Ard was emotional following his victory.

"I have struggled in my life and this money really means something," said Ard, who estimates he has won about \$200,000 this season playing tournament poker. "You really find out who your friends are in this business and I am lucky to have some really good friends."

But in a very real sense, Ard was already a winner and a true champion.

"My wife is much better now," Ard stated. "And that's much more important than anything that happens here."

.....

The second of a dozen gold ring tournaments began on Friday with Event #2 – a \$565 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em competition. The tournament attracted 279 entries. The total prize pool came to \$135,315. The top 30 players were paid. All players who cashed received WSOP Circuit National Championship ranking points.

A full list of all players who cashed in Event #2 can be seen at WSOP.COM

The tournament was played over two consecutive days. Less than ten percent of the starting field – just 22 survivors -- took seats on the second day of action, played on Saturday.

Following four hours of play on Day Two, the final table was set. Two strong players – Royce Cohen and Dylan Thomassie – appeared to be in the most dominant chip positions. They had most of their rivals covered by greater than a 2 to 1 margin and held nearly half of the total chips in play. In fact, the ultimate winner (Jerry Ard) came to the finale ranked in seventh place.

The final table featured no former WSOP Circuit gold ring winners. Hence, a first-time champion was guaranteed. In fact, virtually all of the finalists were searching for their first live major tournament win.

The final playing session began at 4:30 pm local time. The ten finalists were as follows:

- Seat 1: James Choquette – 340,000 in chips
- Seat 2: Jerry Paskert – 135,000 in chips
- Seat 3: Richard Hash – 96,000 in chips
- Seat 4: Kevin Azzariti – 258,000 in chips
- Seat 5: Jerry Ard – 197,000 in chips
- Seat 6: Royce Cohen – 738,000 in chips
- Seat 7: Ruth Hagen – 407,000 in chips
- Seat 8: Dylan Thomassie – 733,000 in chips
- Seat 9: Garrett Riley – 62,000 in chips
- Seat 10: Tommy Arnold – 340,000 in chips

Play finished at 8:15 pm making the total duration nearly four hours. The official order of finish was as follows:

Garrett Riley, from Quincy, IL finished in tenth place.

9th Place – Gerald Paskert was the first player to bust out of the official final table. He is a 44-year-old sales representative from Fairview Heights, IL. Paskert now has more than \$50,000 worth of tournament cashes, including an in-the-money showing in last year's WSOP Main Event Championship.

8th Place – Richard Hash went out in eighth place. He is a 70-year-old pilot and attorney from Maryville, TN. Hash is a former U.S. Navy officer. He is also a commercial flight instructor. Hash has participated in many tournaments, with a fourth-place showing at Harrah's Tunica as his best performance in a WSOP-related event. However, Hash has several other impressive cashes in major events played elsewhere.

7th Place – James Choquette was eliminated in seventh place. He is from Austin, TX. This marked his first time to cash in a WSOP-related tournament.

6th Place – Kevin Azzariti finished in sixth place. He is a 27-year-old sales professional from Nashville, TN. This was Azzariti's first time to enter a WSOP Circuit event and he performed admirably by making it all the way to the final table in his debut effort.

5th Place – Dylan Thomassie ended up in fifth place. He is a 26-year-old poker pro from Champaign, IL. This was Thomassie's best showing in a live tournament, after achieving considerable success as an online player. He collected \$7,978 in prize money.

4th Place – Royce Cohen came in fourth. He is a 22-year-old student at the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. Cohen has quite a track record for someone of a young age. He enjoyed two cashes at the WSOP Circuit events held in Atlantic City. His best showing was a second-place finish in one event played at Caesars Atlantic City. This time, Cohen had to settle for fourth place, worth \$10,637 in prize money. *An interesting side note is that Cohen will be working for Major League Baseball following his graduation. He has attended games at all 30 major league stadiums around the country.*

3rd Place – Ruth Hagen took third place. She is a human resources professional at Washington University at St. Louis. She resides in Troy, IL. This was the second WSOP Circuit cash for Hagen, who also finished in the money at the \$500,000 Guarantee held earlier this season at Horseshoe Hammond (Chicago). But this was her biggest cash to date, which paid \$14,417.

2nd Place – Tommy Arnold (a.k.a. William Arnold) was the runner up. He is a 27-year-old full-time poker pro from Teutopolis, IL. Arnold collected \$19,870 in prize money.

1st Place – Jerry Ard became the second WSOP Circuit champion crowned this year at Harrah's St. Louis. He won his second biggest payout ever – totaling \$32,147 for the victory. He was also presented with his first gold ring after playing in numerous major events over the past six years.

With his victory, Ard moves into the top spot alongside Shain Matthews (Event #1) as the early leaders in this WSOP Circuit's "Best All-Around Player" standings. The 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 second tournament wrapped up, there are still ten 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 23rd. 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

.....

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 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.

WSOP Circuit Tournament Director: Bill Bruce

Harrah's St. Louis Poker Room Manager: Denise Taykowski

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

For more information about the World Series of Poker Circuit, please contact:

Nolan Dalla (WSOP Media Director) at (702) 358-4642

E-mail: nolandalla@aol.com

Or visit official website: www.wsop.com

For more information about Harrah's St. Louis, please contact:

Jessy Winkler (Promotions and Special Events Lead)

Harrah's St. Louis

777 Casino Center Drive

Maryland Heights, MO 63043

Phone: (314) 770-8228

e-mail: jwinkler@caesars.com

Or visit official website: www.harrahsstlouis.com