



**2011/2012 World Series of Poker Circuit
Harrah's St. Louis
Event #8
No-Limit Hold'em
Buy-In: \$500 (+65)
Total Entries: 292
Total Prize Pool: \$141,620
April 18-19, 2012**

Official Final Results:

1	Stephen Friedel	VANDALIA, IL, US	\$33,664
2	Michael Sanders	LONDON, AR, US	\$20,805
3	Steven Skowronski	HAMMOND, IN, US	\$15,096
4	Drew Woodke	OMAHA, NE, US	\$11,137
5	Ben Smith	VIOLA, WI, US	\$8,353
6	Jae Chang	Austin, TX, US	\$6,365
7	Dennis Phillips	COTTAGE HILLS, IL, US	\$4,926
8	Christopher Parr	Fort Worth, TX, US	\$3,871
9	William Stone	Auburndale, WI, US	\$3,089
10	William Ellis II	BLUE SPRINGS, MO, US	\$2,501
11	AP Phahurat	ROGERS, AR, US	\$2,501
12	Eddie Foxx	Honolulu, HI, US	\$2,501
13	Ruth Hagen	TROY, IL, US	\$2,055
14	Thomas Conway	PALATINE, IL, US	\$2,055
15	Graham Yohe	STILWELL, KS, US	\$2,055
16	Alex Avdelopoulos	MARKHAM, ON, CA	\$1,713
17	Terry Stuhldreher	ST. CHARLES, MO, US	\$1,713
18	Todd Hoffman	TULSA, OK, US	\$1,713
19	Jonathan Moseley	Acworth, GA, US	\$1,448
20	Justin Gardenhire	PONCA CITY, OK, US	\$1,448
21	Amanda Musumeci	PHILADELPHIA, PA, US	\$1,448
22	Christopher Cronin	Gilbert, AZ, US	\$1,241
23	Michael Kamenjarin	CHICAGO, IL, US	\$1,241
24	Bernard Morrow	GRAND ISLAND, NE, US	\$1,241
25	Daniel Streitmatter	Peoria, IL, US	\$1,079
26	Sean Pramuk	WEST CHESTER, OH, US	\$1,079
27	Frank Alpandinar	BATON ROUGE, LA, US	\$1,079
28	Seneca Easley	FORT WORTH, TX, US	\$951
29	Bethany Tripplet	CHARLOTTE, MI, US	\$951
30	Andrew Nguyen	ALLEN, TX, US	\$951

Tournament Report:

The Final Verdict -- Attorney Stephen Friedel Wins \$33,664 and WSOP Gold Ring

Local Poker Celebrity and Former N9er Dennis Phillips Finishes Seventh

St. Louis, MO (April 19, 2012) – Stephen Friedel made his case today as the best poker player in his court. The criminal prosecutor from Vandalia, IL not only persuaded all who were witnesses, he also swung an impartial jury of 52-cards in his favor, ending up with a final verdict in the amount of \$33,664.

The 41-year-old attorney also ended up with an additional settlement in the form of his first World Series of Poker Circuit gold ring.

The trial took place over a two-day period at the Harrah's St. Louis Riverboat Resort and Casino. There was plenty of evidence in Friedel's favor when it came to earning his first major tournament victory. However, the final verdict was uncertain until the closing final argument, when Friedel managed to win with an ace-high against a very tough defendant named Michael Sanders.

Indeed, Sanders looked like he might prevail at one point. He enjoyed the chip lead during much of the trial's final stages. But his objections to Friedel's motions were repeatedly overruled by the deck, resulting in what some may consider a surprising final verdict.

Another player of note was Drew Woodke, who went on trial at the final table for the second time in three days. He didn't win his case, but did manage to move into serious contention in the "Best All-Around Player" race for the Harrah's St. Louis series.

Also of note was Dennis Phillips' seventh-place finish. The region's most famous poker player broke once the national scene four years ago during his third-place finish in the 2008 WSOP Main Event Championship (he was chip leader during much of the finale). This time, Phillips ended up finishing in seventh place.

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The eighth of a dozen gold ring tournaments began on Wednesday afternoon with Event #8 – a \$565 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em competition. The tournament attracted 292 entries. The total prize pool came to \$140,270. 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 #8 can be seen at WSOP.COM

The tournament was played over two consecutive days. Only 22 survivors took seats on the second day of action, played on Thursday. Three hours after the resumed play, the final ten was set, as follows:

- Seat 1 – Ben Smith with 540,000 in chips
- Seat 2 – Chris Parr with 102,000 in chips
- Seat 3 – Stephen Friedel with 367,000 in chips
- Seat 4 – Drew Woodke with 230,000 in chips

Seat 5 – Ace Ellis with 329,000 in chips
Seat 6 – Will Stone with 291,000 in chips
Seat 7 – Steve Skowronski with 323,000 in chips
Seat 8 – Jae Chang with 486,000 in chips
Seat 9 – Michael Sanders with 624,000 in chips
Seat 10 – Dennis Phillips with 215,000 in chips

The final table featured two former WSOP Circuit gold ring winners. Former “November Niner” and local poker pro Dennis Phillips was clearly the crowd favorite and main attraction (2010 Horseshoe Hammond -- gold ring). Jae Chang was also present (2008 Tunica Grand – gold ring).

The final playing session began at 5 pm local time. Play finished at 11:30 pm making the total duration about 6.5 hours. The official order of finish was as follows:

10th Place – Alex “Ace” Ellis finished in tenth place. He is a 51-year-old business owner from Blue Springs, MO. This was Ellis’ fifth time to cash on the WSOP Circuit, and marked his second final table appearance.

9th Place – Will Stone took ninth place. He is 31-years-old and is self-employed. He resides in Auburndale, WI. Stone hoped to join his brother Nikolas in the winner’s circle, who won a gold ring in the previous tournament. Instead, Stone settled on his first final table appearance on the WSOP Circuit.

8th Place – Chris Parr ended up in eighth place. He is a 40-year-old welder from Fort Worth, TX. Parr just returned from working with the U.S. military in Afghanistan. He arrived back in the U.S. only a week ago, and made it all the way to the final table in only his second WSOP Circuit entry.

7th Place – Dennis Phillips finished in seventh place. He returned to Day Two as one of the lowest stacks but still managed to survive and make it to his second final table this season. Phillips won a gold ring last November at Horseshoe Hammond. He has also cashed in the WSOP Main Event Championship three out of the last four years. His WSOP-related earnings now total more than \$4.7 million.

6th Place – Jae Chang was the sixth-place finisher. He is a restaurant owner from Austin, TX. The Korean-born part-time poker player just missed what would have been his second gold ring victory. Chang now has four career cashes on the WSOP Circuit.

5th Place – Ben Smith came in fifth place. He is a 60-year-old gunsmith from Viola, WI – which means he builds rifles for a living. Smith has three WSOP Circuit cashes this month alone, with this finish being his best showing. Smith is a member of the “Trapshooting Hall of Fame.”

4th Place – Drew Woodke ended as the fourth-place finisher. He is a 30-year-old semi-poker pro and real estate agent. This was Woodke’s 16th time to cash on the WSOP Circuit and sixth final table appearance. It was also his second final table in three days. Woodke finished third in a previous event. With this cash, Woodke now has enough points to likely qualify for a seat in the National Championship.

3rd Place – Steve “StraightNutz” Skowronski came in third place. He is a 27-year-old poker pro from Hammond, IN. This was Skowronski’s first time to cash on the WSOP Circuit. Third place paid \$15,096.

2nd Place – Michael Sanders was the runner up. He is a 27-year-old poker pro from Russellville, AR. Sanders has an astounding record of success, particularly this season. But he

has yet to win a WSOP Circuit title. Sanders' previous cashes include – 2nd, 2nd, 64th, 24th, 3rd, 5th, and 2nd. Certainly, no other active Circuit player has four top three finishes without a win. However, Sanders should still take pride in a fine effort. He collected a \$20,805 consolation prize and now has enough points for a seat in the National Championship.

When heads-up play began, Friedel had his rival Sanders covered by about a 3 to 2 margin. The final hand came about 30 minutes into the duel and proceeded as follows:

Friedel: Ah 7c
Sanders: Qd Td
Flop: 6s 5h 3c
Turn: Kh
River: 2h

Sanders was a slight dog on his final hand. Neither player made a pair, which meant Friedel's ace high played as the winning hand. He was declared the new champion.

1st Place – Stephen Friedel became the eighth WSOP Circuit champion crowned this year at Harrah's St. Louis. He won his biggest payout ever – totaling \$33,664 for the victory. He was also presented with his first gold ring.

With his victory, Friedel moved into contention as one of the leaders in this WSOP Circuit's "Best All-Around Player" race. The current leader is Nik Stone.

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).

Here is the list of gold ring winners at Harrah's St. Louis, so far:

- Event #1 – Shain Matthews (Marysville, CA) won \$29,306 in \$355 NLHE**
- Event #2 – Jerry Ard (Monticello, MS) won \$32,147 in \$565 NLHE**
- Event #3 – Kevin Balsman (St. Louis, MO) won \$11,844 in \$355 PLO**
- Event #4 – Roy Riley (Savoy, IL) won \$57,139 in \$355 NLHE (Re-Entry)**
- Event #5 – William Byrnes (St. Charles, MO) won \$19,025 in \$355 Turbo NLHE**
- Event #6 – Adam Laskey (Fargo, ND) won \$23,449 in \$355 NLHE**
- Event #7 – Nik Stone (Auburndale, WI) won \$21,770 in \$355 6-HANDED NLHE**
- Event #8 – Stephen Friedel (Vandalia, IL) won \$33,664 in \$565 NLHE**

With the first eight tournaments now wrapped up, there are still four 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

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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 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.

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

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