



**2011/2012 World Series of Poker Circuit
Harrah's St. Louis
Event #9
No-Limit Hold'em
Buy-In: \$300 (+55)
Total Entries: 425
Total Prize Pool: \$123,675
April 19-20, 2012**

Official Final Results:

1	Edward Smurzynski	MIDLOTHIAN, IL, US	\$27,212
2	Michael Smith	Magnolia, MS, US	\$16,814
3	Stewart Yancik	BLUE SPRINGS, MO, US	\$12,286
4	Gary Castens	SAINT LOUIS, MO, US	\$9,122
5	Jason Ratcliff	Wright City, MO, US	\$6,879
6	Ahmad Raghebi	ST. LOUIS, MO, US	\$5,265
7	Ryan Gentry	LA JOLLA, CA, US	\$4,089
8	Scot Brady	EVANSVILLE, IN, US	\$3,220
9	William Corvaia	Keokuk, IA, US	\$2,572
10	Larry Gurney	KINGSTON, TN, US	\$2,083
11	Patrick Heneghan	CHICAGO, IL, US	\$2,083
12	Tom Franklin	GULFPORT, MS, US	\$2,083
13	George Ward	Mount Juliet, TN, US	\$1,709
14	Rodney Clanton	MARYLAND HTS, MO, US	\$1,709
15	Christopher Mcfarlane	Waterford, MI, US	\$1,709
16	Brian Combs	BELLEVILLE, IL, US	\$1,422
17	John Obermaier	Elk Grove Village, IL, US	\$1,422
18	Jerome Faulkner	CHATHAM, IL, US	\$1,422
19	George Miro	Royal Palm Beach, FL, US	\$1,198
20	Christopher Kaltenbach	Newtonville, MA, US	\$1,198
21	Dawn Albery	CHARLOTTESVLE, VA, US	\$1,198
22	Roy Egeditch	WOOD RIVER, IL, US	\$1,023
23	Michael Budde	Williamsburg, MO, US	\$1,023
24	Antonio Torpoco	MEMPHIS, TN, US	\$1,023
25	Christopher Conrad	TAMPA, FL, US	\$884
26	Kent Woolsey	Vandalia, IL, US	\$884
27	Joshua Turner	Saint Louis, MO, US	\$884
28	Benjamin Kramer	TERRE HAUTE, IN, US	\$774
29	Jonathan Cunningham	Quincy, IL, US	\$774
30	Sterling Savill	Dover, FL, US	\$774

31	Neal Evertz	HONOLULU, HI, US	\$686
32	Jonathan Wynne Jones	Chicago, IL, US	\$686
33	La Sengphet	CARROLLTON, TX, US	\$686
34	Trent Goertz	BASTROP, TX, US	\$616
35	Justin Brown	Bloomington, IN, US	\$616
36	Kenneth Piel	ROBINSONVILLE, MS, US	\$616
37	Yong Yi	San Francisco, CA, US	\$559
38	Robert Kalous	Pocahontas, IL, US	\$559
39	Douglas Crowe	Peoria, IL, US	\$559
40	Seneca Easley	Fort Worth, TX, US	\$559
41	Ping Liu	Chicago, IL, US	\$559
42	Richard Lanfersieck	WILDWOOD, MO, US	\$559
43	Larry Conners	CLAYTON, MO, US	\$559
44	Scott Davies	LAS VEGAS, NV, US	\$559
45	John Evans	GRANBURY, TX, US	330.00
46	Scott Mauer	Chattanooga, TN, US	330.00

Tournament Report:

Last to First: Eddie Smurzynski Makes Stunning Final Table Comeback

26-Year-Old Poker Player from Illinois Wins Gold Ring at Harrah's St. Louis

St. Louis, MO (April 20, 2012) – The latest World Series of Poker Circuit final table included the most surprising conclusion of any event played so far at Harrah's St. Louis.

When the final ten players took seats at the final table, the two lowest-stacked players were Eddie Smurzynski and Michael E. Smith. No one could have conceived that these same two players would end up playing for the coveted gold ring and bragging rights as the latest WSOP Circuit champion, some seven hours later.

But that's exactly what happened.

Smurzynski staged what was undoubtedly the most surprising comeback of any player thus far at this year's Harrah's St. Louis series. He began final table play down by more than 5 to 1 versus the chip leader. But Smurzynski never panicked. He played a steady game and gradually built up his stack to the point where he was in contention.

By the time play was three-handed, Smurzynski was still behind in third place. But he had proven his ability to survive disadvantages and when the cards began to turn his way, Smurzynski was in the perfect position to be the beneficiary.

Smurzynski ended up with this first WSOP Circuit title and a gold ring, which is the token of achievement awarded to all winner's of events on the national tournament series. He was also presented with a nice payout totaling \$27,212 in prizes money.

Smurzynski is a 26-year-old poker player. He lives in Midlothian, IL.

Smith didn't do too badly as the runner up. The player ranked ninth in chips at the start staged his own comeback of sorts, although his noble effort was overshadowed by the eventual champion. Nevertheless, Smith could still take pride in his best WSOP Circuit finish.

Several notable players also cashed in this event, including:

12th Place – “Captain Tom” Franklin (Gulfport, MS), who owns two WSOP Gold bracelets and has in excess of \$3 million in tournament winnings over the course of his career came in 12th.

33rd Place -- La Senghet (Dallas, TX) who is the current all-time female wins leader in WSOP Circuit history, with three gold ring victories busted out at the end of Day One.

40th Place – Seneca Easley (Fort Worth, TX), who won the “Best All-Around Player” title last year at Harrah’s Rincon also busted near the end of Day One.

44th Place – Scott Davies (Las Vegas, NV), cashed for the 13th time this season – more than any other player at this point.

A full list of all players who cashed in Event #9 can be seen at WSOP.COM

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The ninth of a dozen gold ring tournaments began on Thursday afternoon with Event #9 – a \$355 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em competition. The tournament attracted 425 entries. The total prize pool came to \$123,675. The top 45 players were paid. All players who cashed received WSOP Circuit National Championship ranking points.

A full list of all players who cashed in Event #9 can be seen at WSOP.COM

The tournament was played over two consecutive days. Only 27 survivors took seats on the second day of action, played on Friday.

The final table featured no former WSOP Circuit gold ring winners. Hence, a first-time champion was guaranteed. A few of the players were experienced professionals who had enjoyed previous tournament success. But virtually all of the nine finalists were searching for their first live major tournament win.

The final ten players were as follows:

- Seat 1 – Ryan Gentry with 404,000 in chips
- Seat 2 – Gary Castens with 881,000 in chips
- Seat 3 – Stu Yancik with 1,000,000 in chips
- Seat 4 – Larry Gurney with 270,000 in chips
- Seat 5 – Michael E. Smith with 212,000 in chips
- Seat 6 – Ahmad Raghebi with 379,000 in chips
- Seat 7 – Edward Smurzynski with 190,000 in chips
- Seat 8 – Scot Brady with 330,000 in chips
- Seat 9 – William Corvaia with 218,000 in chips
- Seat 10 – Jason Ratcliff with 408,000 in chips

The final playing session began at 5:30 pm local time. Play finished at 12:30 making the total duration about seven hours. The official order of finish was as follows:

10th Place – Larry Gurney finished in tenth place. He is 51-years-old and lives in Kingston, TN. Gurney is the owner of a health club. This was his fifth time to cash on the WSOP Circuit and marked his third top-ten finish.

9th Place – William Corvaia was the ninth-place finisher. He is a 65-year-old self-employed man from Keokuk, IA.

8th Place – Scot Brady ended up in eighth place. He is a 27-year-old self-described “jack of all trades” from Evansville, IN. He took fifth place a few years ago in a WSOP Circuit event played at Horseshoe Southern Indiana, which makes this his second final table appearance.

7th Place – Ryan Gentry was the seventh-place finisher. He is a 34-year-old poker pro from San Diego, CA. This was Gentry’s tenth time to cash on the WSOP Circuit. It was also his second final table appearance here at Harrah’s St. Louis after finishing eighth in the Pot-Limit Omaha tournament.

6th Place – Ahmad Raghebi came in sixth place. He is a 60-year-old retiree from St. Louis. Raghebi is originally from Iran. This was his second final table appearance after coming in second at last year’s stop at Southern Indiana.

5th Place – Jason Ratcliff took the fifth place spot. He is a 30-year-old retail manager from Moscow Mills, MO. Ratcliff is a former music teacher and part-time poker player. This was his first time to cash in a WSOP-related tournament.

4th Place – Gary Castens was the fourth-place finisher. He is a 65-year-old retiree from St. Louis. The former U.S. Marine went out during the fifth hour of play. He earned \$9,122 in prize money.

3rd Place – Stu Yancik finished third. He took a brutal beat late in the tournament holding pocket nines, which lost a race against K-Q. That essentially put the 26-year-old poker pro from Blue Springs, MI on the rail. Third place paid \$12,286.

2nd Place – Michael E. Smith was the runner up. He is a 47-year-old retired auto body man from Magnolia, MS. Second place paid \$16,814.

When heads-up play began, Smith had Smurzynski covered by about a 3 to 1 margin. But the shorter stack seized the chip lead about 30 minutes into the duel when he made a straight. That put Smith at a disadvantage. The final hand came about 45 minutes into the duel.

1st Place – Smurzynski became the ninth WSOP Circuit champion crowned this year at Harrah’s St. Louis. He won his biggest payout ever – totaling \$27,212 for the victory. He was also presented with his first gold ring.

With his victory, Smurzynski moved into contention as one of the leaders in this WSOP Circuit’s “Best All-Around Player” race. The current leader remains Nik Stone, who finished 1st and 6th in two events played so far.

Going into Event #9, here is the leaderboard for the “Best All-Around Player” race:

Nikolas Stone	72.5 pts	1	2	\$27,399
Jerry Ard	60 pts	1	2	\$33,363
Drew Woodke	57.5 pts	0	2	\$21,713
Shain Matthews	52.5 pts	1	2	\$29,874
William Byrnes	52.5 pts	1	2	\$19,730
Roy Riley	50 pts	1	1	\$57,139

Stephen Friedel	50 pts	1	1	\$33,664
Adam Laskey	50 pts	1	1	\$23,449
Kevin Balsman	50 pts	1	1	\$11,844

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**
- Event #9 – Eddie Smurzynski (Midlothian, IL) won \$27,212 in \$355 NLHE**

With the first nine tournaments now wrapped up, there are only three 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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