



**2012/2013 World Series of Poker Circuit
Season Nine
Horseshoe Hammond (Chicago)
Hammond, IN
Event #10
Main Event Championship
No-Limit Hold'em
Buy-In \$1,500 (+175)
Total Entries: 1,536
Prize Pool: \$2,304,000
October 20-22, 2012**

Marathon Man: Josh Williams Wins Main Event at Horseshoe Casino in Chicago

Indiana Part-Time Poker Player Collects First Gold Ring and \$385,909 Top Prize

Final Day Runs 17 Hours – Ends After All-Nighter

Hammond, IN (October 22, 2012) – In what was just as much a test of mental and physical endurance as poker skill, Josh Williams met every challenge in what was a life-altering breakthrough moment of triumph at the Horseshoe Casino, near Chicago.

As the sun rose up over Lake Michigan, and a cavernous entertainment center was transformed from the shadows of darkness, Williams sat under the illuminating brightness of spotlights and video cameras, beaming after his huge victory. Cheered on by a few weary supporters, the part-time poker player from South Bend, IN placed his hands over his face and then pumped his fists into the air, just as the final hand was completed. It was perhaps the last bastion of strength within Williams' vast reservoir, which had been put to a thorough test over three action-packed days.

Alas, Williams was the last player sitting at a final table that lasted more than 9 hours. But that was merely a postscript to a longer day that had begun some eight hours earlier.

Williams topped a massive field totaling 1,536 players, making this the second-largest Main Event in the nine-year history of the WSOP Circuit. Only last year's championship, held here in Chicago, was bigger.

With the prize pool at \$2.3 million and 171 finishers guaranteed a payout, Williams made his move late n Day Two, when he overcame a sterling run by Claudia Crawford, and managed to sit comfortably among the chip leaders.

By the time the final table rolled around, which came at 10 pm on a Sunday night, the arena had largely dissipated. All that remained was a sizable viewing audience, tuned in around the world, to the live streaming broadcast. Given the finale would have been up against the U.S. Presidential Debate and two major sporting events (Monday Night Football and the National League Championship Series), more viewers may actually have tuned in to the graveyard shift's poker classic.

By 7 am, everyone was wiped out, locked down in a three-man battle that appeared could go much longer. But Williams managed to play the best poker of his life during that final few hours, making a series of calls that left many observers shaking their heads in admiration. One noted commentator remarked, "Where's this guy been all this time? There's no way I could have made that call."

Williams collected nearly four-hundred grand. He also coveted the gold bracelet he was given, which is the ultimate prize presented to all WSOP Circuit champions. Williams will also take an automatic seat into the National Championship gold bracelet event, to be played at season's end in New Orleans (May 2013).

To say this was a good day would be an understatement.

After his victory, Williams posed proudly with the prize money and a few conveniently-placed bottles of Southern Comfort 100 Proof, which is the official sponsor of the WSOP Circuit.

"I was really glad to win the way I did," Williams said. "It was a really tough tournament, especially as we got down to few players, who all played so great. I'm really fortunate to be here and for me, this is a great victory."

Williams is a 33-year-old factory worker from South Bend, IN. He works in shipping and receiving.

His previous poker experience includes two final tables the last few years at the Chicago Poker Classic, which is also held here at Horseshoe Hammond every February. But nothing came close to this victory, either in terms of prestige or prize money.

When informed that he will take a seat into the National Championship later and be granted the opportunity to compete for a gold bracelet, Williams was asked if he's looking forward to the tri to New Orleans.

"I'll be there. You can count on it," he said.

The top-ten finishers were as follows:

1	Joshua Williams	SOUTH BEND	IN	US	\$385,909.00
2	Ryan Riess	East Lansing	MI	US	\$239,063.00
3	Tripp Kirk	ATLANTA	GA	US	\$180,403.00
4	Sean Szurko	DEKALB	IL	US	\$137,088.00

5	Zal Irani	CHICAGO	IL	US	\$104,371.00
6	Bradford Albrinck	CINCINNATI	OH	US	\$80,179.00
7	Shiva Dudani	WEST DESMOINES	IA	US	\$62,438.00
8	Nick Guagenti	WESTERVILLE	OH	US	\$49,075.00
9	Erik Roussakis	BERWYN	IL	US	\$39,168.00
10	Claudia Crawford	BROOKHAVEN	MS	US	\$31,565.00

Tournament Notes

- Day One was divided into two starting sessions. The combined number of entrants amounted to 1,536. There were only 318 who survived the first day. The overall chip leader after Day 1A and 1B was Phillip Liou (Urbana, IL). He ended up finishing in 138th place.
- Day Two began with 318 survivors and played down to 29. The chip leader at the conclusion of Day Two was Claudia Crawford (Biloxi, MS). She ended up finishing in 10th place.
- When the final table began, the chip leader was Tripp Kirk. But Josh Williams and Shiva Dudani were both close behind.
- The top prize, listed at \$385,909 is the largest prize of any WSOP Circuit event played this season, except for the National Championship (perhaps – that even is to be determined).
- This was the second-largest Main Event Championship in the nine-year history of the WSOP Circuit. Only the Main Event held in Chicago last year was larger.
- The top 171 finishers were paid.
- The runner up was Ryan Riess, a 22-year-old poker dealer from East Lansing, MI. This was his biggest cash score ever, at \$239,063.
- Gold bracelet winner Adam Cook (Pasadena, MD) finished 20th.
- Mike Leah's 56th place finish locked up the “Casino Champion” title for Horseshoe Hammond. The Toronto-based poker pro ended with four cashes and two final table appearances.
- Gold bracelet winner Blair Hinkle (Kansas City, MO) finished in 63rd place.

- Gold bracelet winner Kathy Liebert (Las Vegas, NV) finished in 93rd place.
- Two-time gold ring winner from last season David Nicholson (Perkinston, MS) finished in 94th place.
- Ryan Lenaghan (Mobile, AL) who finished 16th in last year's WSOP Main Event took 101st place.
- Eddie Ochana, who won a gold ring in Event 3 here at Horseshoe Hammond, cashed in 106^h place.
- The final table went about ten hours, one the longer finales of the season.
- The final table was broadcast live with commentary on WSOP.com. Many poker players who played in this event served as commentators.
- The final table was played on a Monday night (which ran into Tuesday morning). The broadcast faced stiff competition early from the third U.S. Presidential Debate, Monday Night Football, and Game 7 of the National League Championship Series (baseball).

The winner of the Casino Champions race for Horseshoe Hammond is Mike Leah, from Toronto, Ontario (Canada).

Leah accumulated the most overall points in Horseshoe Hammond's twelve combined gold ring tournaments and receives an automatic entry into the \$1 Million 2012-13 WSOP Circuit National Championship. The qualifier join the winner of the Horseshoe Hammond Main Event – Josh Williams – who also wins an automatic seat.

All players who cash in gold ring events receive points that apply to both the Casino Championship race and the season-long race to claim one of the 60 at-large National Championship bids to be awarded to the top point earners throughout the season. More information on the points system is available on WSOP.com.

The 2012-13 WSOP Circuit at Horseshoe Hammond in Hammond, IN has now concluded.

For more information on the World Series of Poker Circuit, be sure to follow us on Twitter at @WSOP or check us out on WSOP.com.

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