

**2012-2013 World Series of Poker Circuit
Season Nine
Horseshoe Casino
Council Bluffs, Iowa
The Main Event (Event #11)
No-Limit Hold'em
Buy-In: \$1,500 (+\$175)
Total Entries: 367
Prize Pool: \$550,800
April 20-22, 2013**



Blair Hinkle Wins Second Council Bluffs Championship

27-year-old poker pro becomes first player to win the same WSOP Circuit Main Event twice.

Council Bluffs, Iowa (April 23, 2013) — Blair Hinkle did it again Monday night at Horseshoe Casino by besting 367 entrants in the \$1,675 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event in Council Bluffs. Emotions were difficult to hide as the young pro sat behind his riches draped by some of his closest friends and family smiling for the camera.

Blair, who's also a gold bracelet winner, pocketed \$121,177, his second WSOP gold ring and automatic entry in the WSOP National Championship Presented by Southern Comfort 100 Proof. On top of these accolades he earned the prestige of becoming the first player in WSOP Circuit history to win the same Main Event twice (he previously won it in 2010).

"Coming into the final table, my mom mentioned storylines for the reporters. I thought this would be a good one so I tried to make it happen," Hinkle jokingly said of his feat.

Being the last player standing in an event as difficult as this truly is reason to hold your head high. He bested a field that most notably included his older brother and WSOP gold bracelet champion, Grant. Late in Day 2, Grant and Blair couldn't get away from each other. Every table change, every re-draw; there they were.

"It sucked," Hinkle said of having to face his brother. "Obviously we don't want to play against other good players let alone each other, because we don't soft play each other. We got into some pretty big hands. It was frustrating, really."

If it was frustrating for Blair one can imagine it was even more frustrating for Grant, who exited the tournament 11th. The Main Event is just the most recent of instances where the brothers enjoyed success together and the pair can take pride in their mutual triumphs. In 2008 they became the first siblings to record WSOP gold bracelet victories in the same year -- Grant winning Event 2 and Blair following suit in Event 28.

Grant wasn't the only obstacle Blair had to get through, though. The final table included the likes of two-time gold ring champion Mark Bonsack as well as Circuit champions Sterling Savill and Lance "Cord" Garcia. The eventual runner-up, Brendan Waite, began Day 3 as the chip leader.

“I have to be honest, going into the final table I wasn’t exactly sure I was going to make it too far. It looked like a tough final table. I was glad to continue moving forward and then win,” Hinkle said.

It took a three-hour heads-up battle, but Hinkle eventually got the best of Brendan, and with it, his second Main Event title in Iowa.

“Maybe it’s that my brother lives in Iowa?” Hinkle speculated on his continued success in the state. “My girlfriend went to Iowa State [University]. Maybe just Iowa and me click? I don’t know what it is.”

In addition to riches and trophies, Hinkle’s most recent victory awarded him a seat in the National Championship. This honor is often reserved for the Circuit’s most battle-tested grinders. The \$1 million season-ending freeroll is one of the most prestigious events on the WSOP schedule; an exclusive tournament set aside for those players who have experienced continued success at each of the Circuit’s nearly 20 stops. Admittedly, Blair is selective of what events he plays and that description doesn’t fit him.

“I do feel bad because, with 20 left people, they were all talking about how many points they were going to get and how many they needed, and I understand that completely,” he said. “I just told them, ‘Well, I have to win to get in.’ That was my goal with the rest of them, to make it to the National Championship, and I have now.”

Indeed he has and it’s well deserved. The 27-year-old professional poker player from Kansas City, Missouri has amassed two gold rings, a WSOP gold bracelet and more than \$1.2 million in career earnings at the WSOP in the last five years.

Blair says his newest trophy will go in the safe next to his gold bracelet and his other ring. While that should be fine for now, if the past any indication of the future, it might be time to get a bigger safe.

The Main Event was the 11th of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at Horseshoe Casino. The \$1,675 No-Limit Hold’em tournament attracted 367 entries -- 26 percent more than 2012. The total prize pool came to \$550,800 and the top 45 players were paid.

The tournament featured two starting flights. Flight A began Saturday at 12 p.m. with 234 entrants and bagged 89. Flight B began Saturday at 5 p.m. with 128 entrants and bagged 44. An additional five entrants registered between the end of Flight B and the beginning of Day 2, which started at 12 p.m. Sunday with 138 remaining.

After 13 Day 2 levels, just 10 remained. Cards were in the air for Day 3 at 12 p.m. and the nine-handed final table was up and running 30 minutes later. Action concluded at about 10:45 p.m. making the duration of the finale 10 hours and 15 minutes including a one-hour dinner break.

(NOTE: final table blinds and antes began at 10,000/20,000 with a 3,000 ante)

Seat 1: Brendan Waite – 1,400,000
Seat 2: Sean Small – 1,860,000
Seat 3: Blair Hinkle – 938,000
Seat 4: Mark Bonsack – 446,000

Seat 5: Ben Smith – 309,000
Seat 6: Trevor Deeter – 565,000
Seat 7: Cord Garcia – 388,000
Seat 8: Tim Hughes – 760,000
Seat 9: Sterling Savill – 551,000

About the final table:

1st: Blair Hinkle - \$121,177
Hometown: Kansas City, MO
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP Circuit gold rings: 1
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$174,871

2nd: Brendan Waite - \$74,881
Hometown: North Platte, NE
WSOP Circuit rings: 1
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$23,798

3rd: Sean Small - \$54,716
Hometown: Douglasville, GA
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$66,152

4th: Mark Bonsack - \$40,627
Hometown: Cle Elum, WA
Occupation: Semi-professional poker player and contractor
WSOP Circuit rings: 2
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$168,328

5th: Lance “Cord” Garcia - \$30,635
Hometown: Katy, TX
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP Circuit rings: 1
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$34,148

6th: Trevor Deeter - \$23,448
Hometown: Langhorne, PA
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP Circuit rings: 1
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$75,247

7th: Sterling Savill - \$18,209
Hometown: Tampa, FL
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$54,634

8th: Ben Smith - \$14,343
Hometown: Viola, WI
Occupation: Gunsmith

WSOP Circuit earnings: \$10,293

9th: Timothy Hughes - \$11,457

Hometown: Fort Pierre, SD

Occupation: Business Owner

WSOP Circuit earnings: \$0

Notes on the event:

- In 2008, Grant and Blair Hinkle became the first sibling duo to each win gold bracelets in the same year -- Grant winning Event 2 and Blair Event 23.
- Savill and Bonsack both made their third final table appearance of the 2012-2013 Council Bluffs series.
- By making the official final table of nine, Bonsack was assured a seat in the National Championship either 1) by winning the Casino Championship or 2) by winning the Main Event championship. He finished 4th, earning 40 points and Casino Champion honors.
- The 2013 Main Event enjoyed a 26 percent attendance increase over 2012's finale.

Mark Bonsack earned the Casino Champion title following 1st, 2nd and 4th-place finishes totaling 127.5 points. Bonsack is now a two-time National Championship qualifier and heads to New Orleans next month with hopes of improving on his 12th-place finish in last year's event.

All players who cashed in ring events received points that apply toward the Casino Champion's race and the season-long race to claim one of the 60 at-large National Championship bids awarded to the top point earners throughout the season. More information on the points system is available on WSOP.com.

Here is the list of gold ring winners from Horseshoe Casino:

EVENT #1: Nick Jivkov defeated 260 players (\$365 NLH) for \$19,110.

EVENT #2: Jovan Sudar defeated 148 players (\$365 NLH Turbo) for \$12,434.

EVENT #3: Zach Smith defeated 562 players (\$365 NLH Re-Entry) for \$35,397.

EVENT #4: Jason Mayfield defeated 186 players (\$365 NLH) for \$14,505.

EVENT #5: Ryan Krauss defeated 186 players (\$365 NLH) for \$14,505.

EVENT #6: Mark Bonsack defeated 134 players (\$365 Limit O8) for \$11,254.

EVENT #7: Matthew Weber defeated 184 players (\$365 NLH Six-Handed) for \$15,179.

EVENT #8: Jonathan Hilton defeated 221 players (\$365 NLH) for \$16,576.

EVENT #9: Nathan Bjerno defeated 203 players (\$580 NLH) for \$26,390.

EVENT #10: Mark Fink defeated 203 players (\$365 NLH Turbo) for \$15,835.

MAIN EVENT: Blair Hinkle defeated 367 players (\$1,675 NLH) for \$121,177.

EVENT #12: Pejman "Premo" Niyati defeated 128 players (\$365 NLH for) \$10,752.

With the conclusion of the Main Event the 2012-2013 WSOP Circuit series at Horseshoe Casino is over. WSOP Circuit Action starts up again at Harrah's Philadelphia April 25.

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

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