



**2012/2013 World Series of Poker Circuit
Season Nine
The Bicycle Casino
Bell Gardens, CA
Event #2
No-Limit Hold'em
Buy-In \$500 (+80)
Total Entries: 167
Prize Pool: \$83,500
January 4-5, 2013**

Wendy Freedman Wins First Gold Ring

Former Teacher Turned Las Vegas Poker Pro Wins Epic Heads-Up Match, Defeats Three Previous Gold Ring Winners in Dramatic Finale

Former Champ Tom Masinter Finishes as Runner Up

2011 WSOP National Champion Sam Barnhart Finishes Fourth

Bell Gardens, CA (January 5, 2013) – Wendy Freedman won her first World Series of Poker Circuit gold ring victory tonight, at The Bicycle Casino in Los Angeles.

Freedman dominated the later stages of the most recent tournament, and then managed to defeat a formidable previous gold ring winner in heads-up play, en route to a crowd-pleasing victory. Cheered on by several fellow poker players, she topped the \$580 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em tournament, overcoming a field of 167 entrants. In the end, Freedman collected \$22,545 in prize money, plus one of the most prized jewelry items in poker – the gold ring.

Immediately following her victory, Freedman was almost speechless.

“This feels so great to win,” she said. “I really thought this was a tough final table and to be sitting here now it’s thrilling for me.”

Indeed, this final table was much tougher than most finales, which is perhaps to be expected given the higher-than-normal buy-in (\$580). A third of the finalists were previous gold ring winners – including Matt Weber (2 wins), Sam Barnhart (1 win), and Tom Masinter (1 win).

But in the end, Freedman got the gold ring. The victory was made all the sweeter following a brutally difficult 3.5 hour heads-up match against Tom Masinter, the eventual runner up.

Even more impressive, was Freedman's two previous second-place finishes this season in gold ring events. She finished as runner up in the \$580 event played at Horseshoe Hammond in November, and then did the same last month in a \$365 buy-in event at Harrah's Atlantic City. For those who are counting, that gives her a first, and two second-places finishes as the current season approaches the midway point.

Wendy Freedman attended Boston College. She earned a Masters Degree in English. Freedman taught for a while, which means both of the first two gold ring winners here at The Bike have teaching backgrounds (Note: Clark Harney, winner of Event 1 is a math teacher). However, Freedman moved to Las Vegas about 18 months ago to give poker a try. She's made the adjustment well, and now has some serious bragging rights.

Freedman seemed comfortable as the chip leader during most of the later half of the tournament. She came into the second day with the advantage, and never lost her lead nor her confidence.

“I know I played really well,” she said. “It just feels to good to finally win this, especially after playing so long heads up.”

Also of note was 2011 WSOP National Champion Sam Branhart's fourth-place finish. The gold ring and gold bracelet winner came into the final table ranked second in chips, but never seriously threatened Freedman for the lead.

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The top-nine (final table) finishers were as follows:

1	Wendy Freedman	SAN FRANCISCO	CA	\$22,545.00
2	Tom Masinter	DUBLIN	CA	\$13,935.00
3	William Steffin	LOS ANGELES	CA	\$10,030.00

4	Sam Barnhart	LITTLE ROCK	AR	\$7,350.00
5	Mark Yamamoto	MONTEREY PARK	CA	\$5,485.00
6	Michael Noori	TARZANA	CA	\$4,160.00
7	Matthew Weber	SACRAMENTO	CA	\$3,210.00
8	Savino Nunez	FIREBAUGH	CA	\$2,520.00
9	Ryan Riess	EAST LANSING	MI	\$2,010.00

Tournament Notes

- This was the second event of this year's WSOP Circuit being held at The Bicycle Casino.
- Day One began with 167 starters for the noon start. By the end of 14 hours of play at 2 am, only ten remained. The survivors returned for Day Two and played another half-hour before the final table session began.
- The runner up was Tom Masinter, who won his gold ring previously at Harvey's Lake Tahoe.
- The final table included three previous gold ring winners – including Matt Weber, Sam Barnhart, and Tom Masinter.
- Two-time gold ring winner Matt Weber finished ninth.
- WSOP gold bracelet winner and WSOPC gold ring winner Sam Barnhart finished fourth.
- The final table went about six hours, which is about the average time span of play for WSOP Circuit events.

As the second gold ring winner for 2013, Freedman is now tied for the lead in the Casino Champion race for The Bicycle Casino series. She accumulated 50 points. The player who accumulates the most overall points in The Bike's twelve combined gold ring tournaments will earn the title "Casino Champion" and shall receive automatic entry into the \$1 Million 2012-13 WSOP Circuit National Championship. The qualifier will join the winner of the \$1,675 buy-in Main Event (January 12-14), who also wins an automatic seat.

All players who cash in gold ring events receive points that apply to both the Casino Championship race (good for The Bike events only) 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 The Bicycle Casino runs through January 14th, 2013.

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