

2012-2013 World Series of Poker Circuit

Season Nine

Horseshoe Casino

Council Bluffs, Iowa

Event #8

No-Limit Hold'em

Buy-In: \$300 (+\$65)

Total Entries: 221

Prize Pool: \$66,300

April 17-18, 2013



Jonathan Hilton Begins a Rise to Stardom

Up-and-coming pro earns a ring to go with a \$400K score from this summer.

Council Bluffs, Iowa (April 18, 2013) — “Anyone who says they won a tournament without running good is lying,” Jonathan Hilton said as he raked in yet another pot at the Event 8 final table at Horseshoe Casino Thursday.

Hilton, who possessed upwards of 50 percent of the chips in play at that time, steamrolled his way through the finale. He outlasted gold ring champions Jeff Heiberg (8th), Patrick Olsen (5th), Robert Panitch (4th) and 2011 Horseshoe Hammond Main Event champion Robert Chow (3rd) to win his first live tournament, \$16,576 and 50 points toward the WSOP National Championship Presented by Southern Comfort 100 Proof.

The score pales in comparison to one he cashed in at the WSOP this past summer in Event 59. The \$1,000 No-Limit Hold'em event drew 4,620 entrants -- the second largest event of the series -- and Hilton finished runner-up for \$405,156.

“It helped me a lot with experience in live poker,” Hilton said of Event 59. “When you get to the final table online you’re all good. You can just click buttons and laugh with your boys. When you’re playing live, you’ve got to sit there and keep a straight face.”

He went on to admit experience wasn’t the only thing that got him through Thursday’s finale.

“I pray a lot at the table,” Hilton said. “I don’t do anything without Christ. I can do all things through Him. I’ve always known that. Right before the \$400,000 that I won is really when I started giving my life to Christ the most. I’m not saying He’s the only reason why I win money, I just stay positive. I’m very blessed.”

The \$400,000 score, which was Hilton’s first WSOP cash, opened the floodgates for the young pro. He proceeded to start traveling the Circuit and recorded 5th, 6th and 7th-place finishes in each of his next three cashes. He then went through a dry spell, “only” finishing 30th in The Lodge Casino Main Event and recording two min-cashes at Harrah’s Cherokee before coming to Council Bluffs.

While his Event 8 championship didn't come near matching the \$400,000 score from this summer, it did give Hilton something more than money and even something more than the gold ring trophy.

"I finally got it off my back that I can close a tournament, man... I finally got bragging rights over a couple friends that have rings and I don't. It was getting annoying," Hilton said with a laugh.

Hilton is a 23-year-old professional poker player from Chattanooga, TN. He and his girlfriend have a 14-month-old daughter together.

"I have a really supportive family. Probably the best family out of everybody in this room," Hilton said. "They are crazy. They call me for updates like their life depends on it. I love them to death."

The victory, along with continued support from his family, gives Hilton all the confidence he needs heading into the Horseshoe Casino Main Event which begins Saturday with the first of two starting flights at 12 p.m.

This was the eighth of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at Horseshoe Council Bluffs. The \$365 No-Limit Hold'em tournament attracted 221 entries. The total prize pool came to \$66,300 and the top 24 players were paid.

Day 1 began Wednesday at 12 p.m. and lasted 21 levels. Day 2 began Thursday at 3 p.m. with 12 players remaining. The nine-handed final table was reached at 4 p.m. and play concluded at 7:30 p.m. making the total duration of the finale three and a half hours.

Notes on the Event

- Mark Fink (10th) could have taken over the Casino Championship lead with a victory. Event 8 marked his third cash of the 2012-2013 Council Bluffs series.

The player who accumulates the most overall points during Horseshoe Council Bluffs' 12 combined gold ring tournaments will earn the title Casino Champion and receive automatic entry into the WSOP National Championship Presented by Southern Comfort 100 Proof.

All players who cash in ring events receive 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 Council Bluffs:

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.

With the eighth tournament wrapped, four more ring events remain at Horseshoe Council Bluffs. 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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