

2012-2013 World Series of Poker Circuit

Season Nine

Horseshoe Casino

Council Bluffs, Iowa

Event #9

No-Limit Hold'em

Buy-In: \$500 (+\$80)

Total Entries: 203

Prize Pool: \$101,500

April 18-19, 2013



Icing on the Cake for Nathan Bjerno

He already had his National Championship seat locked up, but that didn't stop Bjerno from becoming a two-time champion.

Council Bluffs, Iowa (April 19, 2013) — Nathan Bjerno didn't consider himself much of a live player prior to his Casino Championship at the Bicycle Casino four months ago, but he's burst onto the scene in a big way.

Bjerno, who became a two-time winner on the Circuit at Horseshoe Casino Friday night, won his first ring at The Bike in a \$580 event. He parlayed that victory into a Main Event final table berth where he finished a disappointing 8th, but earned enough points for Casino Championship honors.

Fast-forward four months.

With a WSOP National Championship berth already in his pocket, Bjerno began Event 9, another \$580 tournament, in Council Bluffs second-to-last in chips and needing a miracle. That miracle started to materialize as he saw the chip leader and two-time Circuit champion Tripp Kirk hit the rail in fifth following gold bracelet winner Michael Raimon's eighth place elimination.

In no time, Bjerno was heads-up holding a sizable chip advantage and the best hand -- a pair of kings -- against Ting Ho's flush draw. The turn and river brought blanks and in the blink of an eye the 25-year-old from Corona, CA was a multiple winner on the WSOP Circuit.

"I haven't been much of a live player," the two-time champion admitted. "[The Casino Championship at the Bike] really sparked my interest in traveling and I've started following the Circuit a bit more. My motivation has been chasing more scores."

He says his aggressive style, paired with being selective of who he plays against, has helped him experience success on the WSOP Circuit. His strategy, although effective, was difficult to employ in Event 9 as the final table included some of the Circuit's top brass.

"This tournament was extremely tough, actually," Bjerno said. "When we got down to it there was a bunch of notables -- really strong players."

Bjerno admits he didn't expect to win the tournament coming into the final table as one of the short stacks. His mindset was to move up a few pay jumps, but his "run good" took over. He was on the right end of a couple crucial coin flips and picked up a few big hands in key pots. When play reached four handed he held the majority of the chips in play and rode his stack to the winner's circle.

While Bjerno undoubtedly wasn't upset to see Kirk go in 5th, he did feel for the day's chip leader.

"I've been on the side where you come into the final table with the chip lead," he said. "Sometimes it just doesn't work out. I was the short stack here and you never know what's going to happen. Tournament poker is ridiculous."

Bjerno is a two-time champion following his victory in the \$580 No-Limit Hold'em tournament at Horseshoe Casino. His WSOP resume now boasts four cashes including three final tables -- one in a Circuit Main Event -- and almost \$80,000 in career earnings.

He says he plans to take some time off the Circuit prior to the National Championship in New Orleans May 22.

Event 9 was the ninth of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at Horseshoe Council Bluffs. The \$580 No-Limit Hold'em tournament attracted 203 entries. The total prize pool came to \$101,500 and the top 21 players were paid.

Notable in-the-money finishers included Erik Roussakis (18th), National Championship points leader Rex Clinkscales (16th), Mark Fink (12th) and Zal Irani (11th).

Day 1 began Thursday at 12 p.m. and lasted 21 levels. Day 2 began Friday at 2 p.m. with 9 players remaining. The nine-handed final table at 5 p.m. making the total duration of the finale three hours.

Notes on the Event

- Had Kirk won Event 9 he would have been the third three-time champion crowned during the Council Bluff 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.

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

With the ninth tournament wrapped, three more ring events remain at Horseshoe Council Bluffs.

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