Premo Niyati Earns Gold in Council Bluffs' Final Ring Event

All-time Circuit ring leader Alexandru Masek finishes 7th.

Council Bluffs, Iowa (April 22, 2013) — Pejman "Premo" Niyati won the 12th and final ring event Monday night at Horseshoe Casino in Council Bluffs. Event 12, a $365 No-Limit Hold'em tournament, played out in the shadow of the Main Event, a tournament Niyati finished 8th in last year. He was, of course, just a spectator of the Main Event this year, but he had a good seat – Seat 2 at table 26.

The Event 12 finale began with Alexandru Masek in the spotlight. The 28-year-old pro is the winningest player in WSOP Circuit history with a total of six gold rings and was within reach of number seven Monday, beginning the final table third in chips.

"Eventually you're going to be the Bill Russell of poker. You're not getting your 11th ring tonight," Niyati joked to Masek.

As the cards would have it, Niyati was right. Masek never made much of a run at ring number seven and eventually got his last few big blinds holding a useless 10-high. The disappointment was obvious on the face of the six-time champion as he exited the tournament 7th, well short of a record-extending title.

"He's a solid player and a really good kid," Niyati said of Masek. "I just have a lot of respect for his game and I think he'll do real big things one day in some bigger tournaments. Hopefully I'll be there to be some competition for him."

Monday belonged to Niyati, as he outlasted gold ring champion Sean Burson heads-up in a duel that extended more than two hours. The victory earned Niyati $10,752 and 50 points toward the WSOP National Championship Presented by Southern Comfort 100 Proof.

Niyati previously won a ring in a preliminary event and gave that trophy to his father. He says ring number two, though, will stay in his possession.

"I see other guys on the tour wearing theirs, but I'll probably hold on to mine. Maybe throw it in a lock box or something," Niyati said.

Niyati, Burson and Masek were joined in the money by Bradley Cundall (15th), Travis Northrope (14th) and LouAnn Merwick (11th).

The victory marks Niyati's first cash of the 2012-2013 WSOP Circuit.

"It feels great to come out here and play a couple tournaments and not really get there, then register the very last one and play my butt off," he said.

Event 12 was the last of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at Horseshoe Council Bluffs. Its conclusion comes on the heels of a tremendously successful series that saw an overall attendance increase highlighted by a 26 percent increase in the Main Event.

The $365 No-Limit Hold'em tournament attracted 128 entries. The total prize pool came to $38,400 and the top 15 players were paid.

Day 1 began Sunday at 2 p.m. and lasted 18 levels. Day 2 began Monday at 3 p.m. with 14 players remaining. The nine-handed final table was reached at 4:15 p.m. and play concluded at 8:45 p.m. making the total duration of the finale four and a half hours.

Notes on the Event

- Event 12 was the last of 12 gold ring events to take place at Horseshoe Casino.
- The $365 No-Limit Hold'em tournament began during Day 2 of the $1,675 Main Event Sunday and the final tables played out alongside each other.
- Niyati's last WSOP Circuit cash came at this same venue more than one year ago when he finished 8th in the Main Event.

Mark Bonsack donned Casino Champion honors 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: TBD
EVENT #12: Pejman Niyati defeated 128 players ($365 NLH for) $10,752.

With the conclusion of Event 12 the 2012-2013 WSOP Circuit series at Horseshoe Casino is over. WSOP Circuit Action starts up again at Harrah's Philadelphia April 25.

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