



**2012/2013 World Series of Poker Circuit  
Season Nine  
Harrah's Cherokee  
Cherokee, North Carolina  
Event #5  
No-Limit Hold'em  
Buy-In \$300 (+65)  
Total Entries: 542  
Prize Pool: \$162,600  
April 8-9, 2013**

### **Chris Kirkland Wins Fifth Event at Harrah's Cherokee**

### **Former Baseball Pitcher Throws Perfect Game**

### **Another Big Field in North Carolina's First-Ever WSOP Circuit Stop**

**Cherokee, NC (April 10, 2013)** – Christopher S. Kirkland II knows a thing or two about competing in pressure-filled situations. The most recent gold ring winner from Rockford, TN was formally a minor league baseball player. He played for four seasons.

Kirkland may not have actually made it to the major leagues, but he certainly hit a home run in a poker major tonight, collecting his first-ever WSOP Circuit gold ring. He collected \$34,146 in prize money. Best of all, Kirkland was able to share the proud moment with his wife, who sat in the audience and cheered him to sweet victory.

Kirkland played baseball at the University of Memphis. He was offered a contract to join the Seattle Mariners farm system. Kirkland bounced around the minors for multiple seasons, playing in parks in California, Arizona, Iowa, and Washington. He played catcher and was also a pitcher. Although he has some incredible memories, not all of them were fond ones.

“In Iowa, we practiced and played next to a dog food factory,” Kirkland recalled. “That was a tough place to play.”

Kirkland was certainly no underdog in this field. After leaving baseball, he started playing poker online, and eventually became a pro in something other than baseball. He's now playing full-time. Kirkland is so dedicated to the game that he and his wife moved to Canada so he could play. The couple also spent some time in Costa Rica. But the 27-year-old admitted there's nothing quite like the thrill of winning a live tournament.

“This is a great moment,” Kirkland said. “I'm really excited to win one of these. I'd hoped to come here and win the ring.”

Kirkland is indeed multi-talented. In addition to playing baseball and poker well enough to be a professional, he also plays the guitar and sings. One has to wonder if next he'll be performing with a band onstage someday.

No doubt, Kirkland performed quite well on a different stage on this day. He took the mound in this event and threw a perfect game. He hit a home run. He circled the bases, and scored. He can even now claim that he won a "World Series ring."

John Pressas, from Georgia finished as the runner-up. He's a 45-year-old salesman.

The tournament generated a prize pool totaling \$162,600. The top 63 finishers collected prize money. The final table finishers were as follows:

1st	Christopher Kirkland	Rockford, TN, US	\$27,216
2nd	John Pressas	Milledgeville, GA, US	\$16,809
3rd	Eric Thomas	Norcross, GA, US	\$15,444
4th	Ted Woody	Axton, VA, US	\$11,460
5th	William Panzetta	Pelzer, SC, US	\$8,623
6th	Jonathan Moseley	Acworth, GA, US	\$6,577
7th	William Henderson	Charlotte, NC, US	\$5,086
8th	Allan Ibay	Acworth, GA, US	\$3,987
9th	Lionel Roberts	Charlotte, NC, US	\$3,167

### **Tournament Notes**

- This was the fifth gold ring event ever played at Harrah's Cherokee and in the state of North Carolina.
- The two-day tournament began with 542 players – a strong number for a Sunday-Tuesday feature. After 14 hours of play on Day One, 66 survivors remained.
- There were 66 players that started Day Two. It took about six hours to play down to the final table of nine.
- The final table included no gold ring winners, which guaranteed a first-time champion.
- The final table lasted about eight hours and was divided into two days. The first part was played on Monday night and included nine players playing to the final three. Then, the last three players took seats on Tuesday and played to the end, which came at 6 pm.

Chris Kirkland picked up 50 player points for his victory. The top 45 finishers all received points. The player who accumulates the most overall points in Harrah's Cherokee's twelve

combined gold ring tournaments will earn the title Casino Champion and shall receive automatic entry into the \$1 Million 2012-13 WSOP National Championship Presented by Southern Comfort 100 Proof. The qualifier will join the winner of the \$1,675 buy-in Main Event (April 12-15), 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 Harrah's Cherokee gold ring 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 Harrah's Cherokee runs through April 15, 2013.

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