



**2012/2013 World Series of Poker Circuit  
Season Nine  
Harrah's Cherokee  
Cherokee, North Carolina  
Event #8  
No-Limit Hold'em  
Buy-In \$300 (+65)  
Total Entries: 518  
Prize Pool: \$155,400  
April 10-11, 2013**

### **Christie Hightower Wins Eighth Event at Harrah's Cherokee**

### **University Researcher Tops 518-Player Field and Wins First Gold Ring**

**Cherokee, NC (April 11, 2013)** – Christie Hightower won a thrilling victory tonight at the Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort. She topped a 518-player field in the \$365 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em tournament. Her victory was cheered by a crowd of friends and family, which made her first-time victory all the more sweet.

“I really can't believe this,” Hightower said moments after she raised both arms high into the air, taking the victory pose. “I was the short stack and just wanted to survive and now I won it. I'm so happy right now!”

Hightower won a two-day tournament which concluded on the main stage in the special events center. Her victory paid \$33,412.

The latest champion is a 38-year old political and social sciences researcher who works in affiliation with the University of South Carolina and University of Michigan. She is originally from Philadelphia. Her poker resume includes a final table appearance two years ago at the WSOP Circuit event played at Caesars Atlantic City.

“I was the first player out when I made that final table,” Hightower recalled. “But one thing was – I knew I wanted to make it back here again, and now here I am.”

Indeed, Hightower earned a well-deserved victory. She becomes the first female champion on the WSOP Circuit since Nancy Birnbaum won her gold ring at Harrah's Rincon in December 2012.

Jason McMahan finished as the runner up. He is a 42-year-old realtor from Knoxville, TN. The tournament generated a prize pool totaling \$155,400. The top 54 finishers collected prize money. The final table finishers were as follows:

1	Christie Hightower	Philadelphia, PA, US	\$33,412
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2	Jason McMahan	Knoxville, TN, US	\$20,657
3	Jack Rose	Summerville, SC, US	\$15,091
4	Christopher Cutler	Billings, MT, US	\$11,187
5	Michael Sanders	Russelville, AR, US	\$8,413
6	Keith Clonch	Roaring River, NC, US	\$6,418
7	Eva Warren	Buford, GA, US	\$4,965
8	Nemashbhai Patel	Asheville, NC, US	\$3,896
9	Donald Jones	Flowery Branch, GA, US	\$3,100

### Tournament Notes

- This was the eighth gold ring event ever played at Harrah's Cherokee and in the state of North Carolina. This means nearly two-thirds of the 12 gold rings have now been won.
- North Carolina amended its gaming laws last year, which allowed for the addition of live poker tables for the first time. That also enabled the WSOP to stage it's first-ever event in the state.
- This region has never hosted any tournament of this size or stature. Most of the surrounding states do not offer poker – including South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Kentucky, and Virginia. This contributed to a huge opening day turnout.
- The two-day tournament began with 518 players – a strong number for a Wednesday-Thursday feature. After 14 hours of play on Day One, 26 survivors remained.
- There were 26 players that started Day Two. It took about four 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 six hours and ended at 11:30 pm.

Christie Hightower picked up 50 player points for her victory. The top 54 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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