

2014/2015 World Series of Poker Circuit

Season 11

IP Casino Resort and Spa

Biloxi, Miss.

Event #5

No-Limit Hold'em

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

Total Entries: 151

Prize Pool: \$45,300

September 8-9, 2014



Valentin Vornicu Wins Fifth Career Circuit Ring

Romanian-born math whizz joins Mark Smith, Kyle Cartwright and Kurt Jewell as a five-time winner; trails all-time leader Alex Masek by three.

Biloxi, Miss. (September 9, 2014) — Valentin Vornicu etched his name further into the poker record books Tuesday at IP Casino Resort and Spa in Biloxi, Miss. The 31-year-old math tutor broke through for his fifth career Circuit win in Event 5, a \$365 no-limit hold'em tournament, joining the likes of Mark Smith, Kyle Cartwright and Kurt Jewell as the tour's only five-time champions.

In addition to the ring and a \$12,231 score, the win moves Vornicu within shouting distance of the all-time ring leader Alex Masek who tops the record books with eight.

"[Each ring] is the same amount of excitement," Vornicu said. "Every time is really exciting. I'm super stoked right now."

Vornicu's Circuit career started out hot, breaking through for a win in his first-ever cash at Horseshoe Hammond in 2011. He followed it up with another at Harrah's Rincon in 2012 and then took a hiatus until 2014. While this is his first win of the season, impressively it's his third of the calendar year. He carded wins at both the Bike and the Lodge toward the end of last season and continued his winning ways in Mississippi Tuesday night.

"I put a lot of hours in," Vornicu said of his solid play. "I have good friends I talk hands with. I have my math background. [Poker] is just basically problem solving where you don't have all the variables sometimes. It's essentially a game of strategy – a game of skill. I'm to the point where I've got that skill and I'm using it now."

The math background Vornicu mentioned comes from the fact he holds a masters degree in the subject and represented his home country of Romania at the International Math Olympiad earning a bronze medal. He even turned his math skill into a profession by helping start a tutoring site, artofproblemsolving.com. A San Diego-based company purchased the site about eight year ago and Vornicu left Romania to make a life in the States. He continues to tutor for the site and runs his own math summer cap for gifted children.

Surely someone as mathematically sharp as Vornicu knows he wasn't the odds-on favorite the entire tournament Tuesday at IP Biloxi. He began Day 2 with the chip lead, but slipped and

