

**2015/2016 World Series of Poker Circuit  
Season 12  
Bicycle Casino and Hotel  
Los Angeles, CA  
Event #11  
No-Limit Hold'em  
Buy-In: \$1,500 (+\$175)  
Total Entries: 38  
Prize Pool: \$961,500  
December 12-15, 2015**



## **Valentin Vornicu Wins Bicycle Casino Main Event**

**Vornicu wins \$197,110 for his seventh career bracelet, which ties him with Ari Engel and Chris Reslock for second on the all-time rings list.**

**Los Angeles, CA. (December 15, 2015)** — As 2015 wraps up for the World Series of Poker Circuit, Valentin Vornicu is making his mark on the season and ending the year on high note. Vornicu won the Main Event at the Bicycle Casino, earning \$197,110 and his seventh career WSOP Circuit ring.

“I’m speechless,” an emotional Vornicu said after taking a few moments to compose himself. “This is my first Main Event ring. I’ve been chasing the Main Event. It’s my second ring at the Bike. This is the first casino I’ve won two rings at.”

Vornicu’s seven rings ties him for second place on the all-time list. (Ari Engel and Chris Reslock also have seven.) The only player with more rings is Alex Masek, who [recently won his ninth](#) in one of the preliminary events here at the Bicycle Casino. Vornicu and Masek are good friends, and they have a bit of a rivalry on the felt, and on the all-time rings list. In fact, two years ago, [Masek earned one his rings by defeating Vornicu heads-up](#). Vornicu mentioned with a smile that if he’d won that tournament, the two of them would be tied right now. Despite that minor setback in their ongoing competition, Vornicu plans to continue chasing his friend after the holidays.

In addition to the ring and the prize money, Vornicu also earns a free entry into the 2016 Global Casino Championship (formerly known as the National Champion). Each year, 100 players earn free entries, either by winning a Circuit Main Event, earning Casino Champion honors at a Circuit stop, or by ending the season in the top 50 of the year-long [leaderboard](#). The Global Casino Championship has a prize pool with \$1,000,000 in added money, and this is now the fourth consecutive year Vornicu has qualified. The player who’s qualified the most consecutive years is Charles “Woody” Moore, who’s made it five years running and is well on his way to a sixth. This is yet another record Vornicu is chasing.

The final day of the Main Event began Tuesday at 1 p.m. with eleven players remaining. Zelman led the way with 2,585,000 in chips. Vornicu was close on his heels with 2,520,000. They both held a big lead over the third-place player, bracelet winner Josh Pollock (1,410,000). Early in the second level of the day, two players had been eliminated, and they were down to the official nine-handed final table.

After two more players had been eliminated, Vornicu got involved in one of the [key hands that helped propel him to victory](#). He got into an all-in preflop confrontation with bracelet winner Josh Pollock. Vornicu held pocket jacks, and Pollock had Ace-King. The jacks won, Vornicu doubled up, and Pollock was crippled. They had been nearly even in chips at the time, and Vornicu took a big chip lead. “Josh was one of the players I was most afraid of,” Vornicu said, adding that he wasn’t happy to have Pollock on his left after the redraw to the final table. “It was a tough final table. Two bracelet winners (Pollock and Shawn Busse). Lots of good players.”

The Main Event attracted a total of 641 entries over two starting days. Day 1A (Saturday) had 235, and another 394 entered on Day 1B (Sunday). Late registration was officially open until the start of Day 2 on Monday, and 12 players took advantage of that by registering Monday morning before the start of play. In total 130 players began Day 2. Roland Israelashvili was the chip leader heading into Day 2, having bagged 252,000 on Day 1B.

The 641 entries generated a prize pool of \$961,500, and the top 72 places were paid. The bubble burst early on Day 2 with [two concurrent bustouts](#). Players who busted in the money include Neil Scott (65<sup>th</sup> place, \$2,690), Scott Stewart (51<sup>st</sup>, \$3,210), Tuan Le (36<sup>th</sup>, \$3,980), Ben Keeline (14<sup>th</sup>, \$12,065), Craig Varnell (13<sup>th</sup>, \$12,065), and Roland Israelashvili (12<sup>th</sup>, \$14,825). Players who entered but failed to cash include Matt Salsberg, Cord Garcia, actor Bill Fagerbakke, and Nipun Java, who won the Main Event here in March 2014.

With the conclusion of the Main Event, the WSOP Circuit is on hiatus until January. The next stop is at the [Choctaw Durant casino, beginning January 6<sup>th</sup>](#).

Vornicu doesn’t earn any points for his win on Tuesday evening, because he won a Circuit main event, which automatically qualifies him for the Global Casino Championship. Wendy Freedman won the title of Casino Champion with 102.5 points. At every stop, the winner of that title, along with the winner of the main event earns an automatic bid into the Global Casino Championship (previously called the National Championship).

This is the 11<sup>th</sup> of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at the Bicycle Casino. The \$1,675 No Limit Hold’em main event attracted 641 players. The total prize pool came to \$961,500. The top 72 finishers were paid.

The tournament began on Saturday, December 12 at noon for Day 1A. Day 1B kicked off on Sunday, December 13 at noon. The survivors of each starting day combined for Day 2 on Monday, December 14 and at the end of the day, the final 11 were remaining. They came back to the Bike on Tuesday, December 15 at 1 p.m. to play down to a winner. The final table was reached at about 2:30 p.m. The final card was dealt at about 7:00 p.m., making the total duration of the finale table four and a half hours.

Complete results for this event can be found on [WSOP.com](#).

Here is the list of gold ring winners from the Bicycle Casino:

EVENT #1: Dave Banerjee defeated 368 players (\$365 NLH Monster Stack) for \$24,265  
EVENT #2: Alan Myerson defeated 140 players (\$365 NLH Bounty) for \$7,830  
EVENT #3: Stuart Pfeifer defeated 1,000 players (\$365 NLH Re-Entry) for \$55,110  
EVENT #4: Dale Beaudoin defeated 153 players (\$365 NLH) for \$12,395  
EVENT #5: Nadim Shabou defeated 115 players (\$580 NLH) for \$17,255

EVENT #6: Phillip Penn defeated 124 players (\$365 Omaha 8 or Better) for \$10,400  
EVENT #7: Alex Masek defeated 143 players (\$365 NLH) for \$12,000  
EVENT #8: Erkut Yilmaz defeated 81 players (\$1,125 NLH) for \$25,915  
EVENT #9: Steven Curran defeated 120 players (\$365 Turbo NLH) for \$10,810  
EVENT #10: Mark Peckham defeated 357 players (\$365 NLH Monster Stack) for \$24,625  
EVENT #11: Valentin Vornicu defeated 641 players (\$1,675 NLH Main Event) for \$197,110  
EVENT #12: Craig Chait defeated 38 players (\$3,250 High Roller NLH) for \$51,300

The player who accumulates the most overall points during Bicycle Casino's 12 combined gold ring tournaments earns the title of Casino Champion and receives automatic entry into the WSOP Global Casino Championship. Additionally, all players who cash in ring events earn points that apply toward the season-long race to claim one of 60 expected at-large Global Casino Championship bids awarded to the top point earners throughout the season. More information on the points system is available on [WSOP.com](http://WSOP.com).

For more information about the WSOP Circuit, be sure to follow us on Twitter at [@WSOP](https://twitter.com/WSOP) or check out [WSOP.com](http://WSOP.com).

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