

**2015/2016 World Series of Poker Circuit  
Season 12  
Harrah's Atlantic City  
Atlantic City, NJ  
Event #2  
No-Limit Hold'em  
Buy-In: \$300 (+\$65)  
Total Entries: 180  
Prize Pool: \$54,000  
March 16-17, 2016**



## **John Yanni Wins First Gold Ring and \$14,582**

### **Early retiree takes down Event #2 at Harrah's Atlantic City**

**Atlantic City, NJ (March 17, 2016)** — John Yanni is the champion of Event #2 at Harrah's Atlantic City, defeating a field of 180 players to claim his first gold ring. In addition to the jewelry, Yanni collected \$14,582 in cash and 50 points in the race for Casino Champion at this venue.

The champ is a 34-year-old poker pro originally from Buffalo, New York. He's been playing the game recreationally while juggling a full-time day job since graduating from high school. "I was a glorified gas station attendant," he said. "I fueled planes for a living." After notching a five-figure score in 2014, though, Yanni opted for an early retirement to pursue the game full time. "I felt like that was it. I always wanted to pursue this dream, and I went for it."

So far, so good for the new pro.

Yanni entered the Event #2 final table as the chip leader with just shy of 40 big blinds and Steven Rodriguez nipping at his heels. Five hours later, the two were heads up for the title, with Rodriguez beginning the battle holding a 2:1 chip lead. That lead event swelled to more than 5:1 before Yanni went on a massive rush. Over the course of just a couple orbits, he took over the lead, accumulating his own 5:1 advantage.

On the final hand, Rodriguez moved all in with pocket deuces on the button, and Yanni called with king-five. The sweat lasted all the way to the river before the King of Spades filled out the board to sent the pot and the title to Yanni.

"This means the world to me," he said, fighting to keep control of his emotions after his first live tournament victory. "It means I can keep doing my thing, you know?"

When asked about his plans for the rest of the Circuit season, Yanni had no answer. "I don't know what I'm doing next," he laughed. "I really have no idea. I have to take this all in first."

