

2016/2017 World Series of Poker Circuit

Season 13

Horseshoe Hammond

Hammond, Indiana

Event #2

No-Limit Hold'em

Buy-In: \$500 (+\$80)

Total Entries: 221

Prize Pool: \$110,500

October 16-17, 2016



Alin Cotolan Gets Redemption, Ring After Near Miss

Five years after finishing in third place, local carpenter breaks through in same event

Hammond, Indiana (October 18, 2016) — Alin Cotolan is the champion of Event #2 at Horseshoe Hammond, defeating a field of 221 players to win his first gold ring. In addition, Cotolan collected the top prize of \$27,627, his second significant score on the WSOP Circuit.

Cotolan is a 40-year-old carpenter from Chicago, Illinois by way of Hateg, Romania. “I’m Romanian like [Daniel] Negreanu,” he said with a smile. “But he was born in Canada.” This final table appearance was the second of Cotolan’s Circuit career, five years removed from a third-place finish in the very same event. He didn’t have to settle for another near miss this time.

The champ finished Day 2 in third place on the leaderboard with 13 players remaining, and just a few hours later, he was three-handed with the chip lead. The rest of the match was a volatile one, though, and Cotolan was the shortest of the three stacks at one point. He eventually found himself heads-up with Jeff Holcomb, though, and a cooler decided the match.

On the final hand, a short-stacked Holcomb flopped top pair with king-eight of hearts on a king-queen-ten flop. He got the rest of his chips in right there, only to see that Cotolan’s jack-nine had flopped a straight. The turn was a blank, and Cotolan sealed the victory one card early.

“It’s unreal,” an exhausted Cotolan said in the moments after his win. “I didn’t expect it.” He seemed truly surprised to have reached his goal, but perhaps these results shouldn’t come as such a shock, as they continue to come with some regularity despite his limited opportunities. When asked if he’s thought about pursuing the game full time, Cotolan nodded pensively. “I definitely want to consider it,” he said. “Believe me, I work a lot, and my back...” he said, trailing off as he stretched in the chair.

Cotolan is now tied for the lead with 50 points on the Casino Champion leaderboard, and he said he intends to return Friday to play the Main Event as the race heats up in Hammond.
