

**2016/2017 World Series of Poker Circuit
Season 13
Horseshoe Tunica
Tunica, Mississippi
Event #12
No-Limit Hold'em Main Event
Buy-In: \$1,500 (+\$175)
Total Entries: 610
Prize Pool: \$915,000
January 27, 2017**



Neil Patel Claims Main Event Championship

Debut gold ring and six-figure payday achieved by Neil Patel in the Horseshoe Tunica Main Event.

Tunica, Mississippi (January 30, 2017) – The World Series of Poker Circuit series at Horseshoe Tunica has crowned a Main Event Champion. It was Neil Patel reaping the spoils of victory when all was said and done. Patel outlasted a field of 610 entrants in Event #11: \$1,675 No-Limit Hold'em Main Event to win his first career gold ring and pocket \$192,152. The signature, WSOP tournament finished around 3:30 pm Monday afternoon in the Bluesville Music Hall.

Patel's road to the top began with some bumps, prior to the Main Event even beginning, but in the end turned into an epic story for the books.

"I busted out of the Monster and the \$580 twice. So, I had 150 bucks left and then gas to get back. I bought into the Nightly and I got third, which is 1,700 bucks," Patel explained. He was a little upset that he did not win the Nightly tournament, which would have granted him a seat in the Main, but he did bank enough money. "So, I just bought into the Main Friday and bagged 239,000. And then I said 'I'm winning this,' I told myself."

Riding a wave of confidence, Patel moved on to Day 2 of the tournament where he stuck to his game and waited for opportune moments to strike. The strategy allowed him to come across some big pots, propelling him to Day 3 along with some very tough competition.

An official final table of nine players made it to the third and final day of the Main Event. The table was stacked with experience, to say the least. Patel was up against the likes of six-time gold ring winner, Robert Hankins, four-time gold ring winner, Scott Stewart, and three-time gold ring winner, Martin Ryan.

"I was prepared because I knew there were some World Series ring winners at the table. You always keep that in the back of your head cause these guys are pros. They do this for a living... You can tell how they play," said Patel "It was fun to play with them and I think that was a good experience for me."

The 35-year-old held strong during Day 3 and eventually beat Cory Smith in heads-up play after waking up with pocket kings the same hand Smith found himself holding ace-king suited.

Poker is just one of Patel's many hobbies. He has been very involved with the night club scene in recent years, stemming from his passion for music. He has a black belt in Karate. Needless to say, Patel is a man of many talents. He found poker in college, playing coin games with friends. He slowly started scaling to larger games and is now eager to progress.

"I'd like to play more. I have a job and that's my first priority right now," Patel claimed. The St. Louis resident is currently an IT Engineer for Nestle Purina who enjoys his job and the people he works with. However, Patel does aspire to continue with his poker career. "I love the game. So, I'd like to keep playing and hopefully I can make it somewhere."

Beyond the competitive drive of Patel, there is another motive behind his poker ambition. "A lot of people label poker – gambling. I want to prove, also to a lot of people that poker is not just gambling it actually does take skill. I want to open up a lot of people's eyes including people in my family," explained Patel.

No matter the desire behind it all, the triumph at Horseshoe Tunica was a momentous milestone for Patel. He secured a massive score, sweet relief, and an early birthday present.

"It feels amazing... I turn 36 tomorrow. This is my birthday right here," said Patel.

Event #12 was the twelfth of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at the Horseshoe Tunica series. The \$1,675 No-Limit Hold'em Turbo Re-Entry tournament attracted 610 players generating a \$915,000 prizepool. The top 63 players were paid.

The player who accumulates the most overall points during the Circuits twelve combined gold ring events earns the title of Casino Champion and receives automatic entry into the WSOP Global Casino Championship set to take place at the end of the season.

All players who cash in ring events receive points that apply toward the Casino Championship race and the season-long race to claim one of 50 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.

Here is the list of gold ring winners from the Horseshoe Tunica series:

EVENT #1: Jeffrey Noblecourt defeated 218 players (\$365 NLHE One Re-Entry) for \$16,350
EVENT #2: Juan Rodriguez defeated 119 players (\$365 PLO Re-Entry) for \$10,709
EVENT #3: Alex Burney defeated 1,253 players (\$365 NLHE Re-Entry) for \$66,723
EVENT #4: David Knuckles defeated 240 players (\$365 NLHE Turbo Re-Entry) for \$17,997
EVENT #5: Jeter Brock defeated 181 players (\$365 NLHE) for \$14,118
EVENT #6: Brian Peery defeated 249 players (\$365 NLHE Six Max One Re-Entry) for \$19,793
EVENT #7: John Holley defeated 193 players (\$365 NLHE Re-Entry) for \$15,056
EVENT #8: Russell Sullivan defeated 278 players (\$365 NLHE 30 Minute Levels) for \$20,018
EVENT #9: Steve Dill defeated 592 players (\$365 NLHE Monster Stack) for \$37,290
EVENT #10: David Collins defeated 276 players (\$580 NLHE One Re-Entry) for \$33,118

EVENT #11: Neil Patel defeated 610 players (\$1,675 NLHE Main Event) for \$192,152
EVENT #12: Johnny Landreth defeated 225 players (\$365 NLHE Turbo Re-Entry) for \$16,877

This was the twelfth gold ring handed out at the Horseshoe Tunica series. All twelve Circuit titles have now been claimed.

All rings at the Horseshoe Tunica series are furnished by [Jostens](#), the official ring supplier of the 2016-2017 WSOP Circuit season.

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