

2016/2017 World Series of Poker Circuit

Season 13

Palm Beach Kennel Club

West Palm Beach, Fla.

Event #7

Eight-Max No-Limit Hold'em

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

Total Entries: 107

Prize Pool: \$32,100

February 13, 2017



Stephen Smith Wins the Ring in Event #7

New South Florida pro making a splash to start the new year

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (February 15, 2017) — Stephen Smith is the newest first-time winner on the World Series of Poker Circuit. Smith outlasted a field of 107 entries in the \$365 Eight-Max, winning his first ring and \$9,630 in cash.

Smith is a 47-year-old professional poker player, who recently moved to Juno Beach, Florida from Alabama. He's been playing the game for about 15 years, but he only recently decided to pursue poker a bit more seriously after leaving the Army. "Back in March 2016, I decided to start playing... not as a professional," he started. "But as much as I traveled doing it, it turned into a profession."

So far, the new career is going rather well. Smith has earned close to \$100,000 in the past year, and he's having a particularly hot start to the young 2017 campaign. The key to his success? "Work hard," he said. "Study every day. Exercise every day. Do the grind every day."

The late stages of this event were a grind Smith was well prepared for, and he entered the final table tied for the chip lead with Josh Sidman. A couple hours later, the two were heads up for the ring, very deep and still dead even in chips.

Sidman won the early stages of the match, wearing Smith down to about 160,000 of the 1,070,000 chips in play. Smith fought back valiantly though, and the duel teetered back and forth for more than two hours. Finally, with the two once again even in chips, the final hand played out with a fitting flip of the coin.

It began with Sidman opening the button and Smith three-betting the big blind. Sidman moved all in for 509,000 — just less than half the total chips — with queen-ten of hearts, and Smith called with pocket eights to flip for the ring. Sidman turned a flush draw but could not improve on the river, giving Smith the pot with a pair of eights. When the stacks were verified, Smith's was indeed larger, and he was suddenly a WSOP Circuit winner.

