



WSOP CIRCUIT 2017-18 EVENT REPORT

Circuit Stop:	Harrah's New Orleans (New Orleans, LA)	Date:	21 May 2018
Event:	Double Stack No-Limit Hold'em	Entries:	385
Buy-in:	\$365	Prizepool:	\$115,500

MIKE HORCHOFF WINS FINAL EVENT OF '17-'18 SEASON

Local pro from Louisiana wins his first ring in the final event of the series and the Circuit season after several runner-up finishes in the past.

Mike Horchoff's hard work paid off in spades on the final day of the 2017-2018 World Series of Poker Circuit season. Horchoff, who was putting in a lot of work into his tournament game, broke through for his first ring on Monday night in New Orleans.

The local pro defeated 385 entries and won \$24,515 in \$365 double stack no-limit hold'em event. After three second-place finishes in previous Circuit events, Horchoff broke through to get his first win in what he considers his home casino.

"It feels good. There were a lot of close calls," said Horchoff. "It's just a little bit of relief. A little bit of confirmation for all the hard work I've been putting in."

Horchoff began his professional poker career in 2012 and had some immediate success with some deep runs in a few different major tournaments. But over the next several years, he wasn't seeing the same results and he buckled down and began studying the game to plug some leaks.

"I've spent a lot of time specifically on tournaments in the last two years," said Horchoff. "Putting in a lot of volume online, trying to understand the game, learn the game. I had some success in 2013. I thought I was really good. It just goes to show that variance is ridiculous in live tournaments because I really wasn't good. It took me a while to understand that."

With the countless hours of studying and hard work, Horchoff didn't fear another runner-up finish. For him, it is all part of the process. If he kept working hard, he knew variance would eventually swing in his direction.

"It was something about being here over and over again," said Horchoff. "I just understand that there is a ton of variance in these things... There was no pressure, really. I think if you put too much pressure on yourself, you end up making too many mistakes."

It's not just an overhaul of his tournament strategy that got him on the right path. It was a complete mindset change. He's focused on being positive and even began meditating. He's gotten rid of some of the more toxic people in his life and surrounded himself with a better group of friends.

"I used to hang out with a bunch of people that might not have been the best influence on me," said Horchoff. "I started surrounding myself with more positive people. Some better people... I think that's made the biggest difference in my life is that my outlook on everything is so much brighter. I think that's why I didn't feel that much pressure is because of that mindset. It's pretty cool."

He was surrounded by those new friends and some family immediately after he won. Being in his hometown of New Orleans, his friends were there for most of his final table run. As far as friends and family is concerned, he credited his wife as a big reason for his success.

"I constantly have conversations with people and they say 'Wow, you must be incredibly lucky that you have someone that is willing to put up with it.' And they are right," said Horchoff. "This is not a normal profession by any means and it takes someone special to support that and stand by."

With the Circuit season finished up, the poker world's attention shifts to the Rio for the World Series of Poker this summer, as does Horchoff's. With a win under his belt heading into the world's biggest poker series, he's never been more confident in his chances.

"Momentum is huge. 2018, for me, has probably been my best year thus far as a professional," said Horchoff. "Plenty of deep runs. Momentum is a real thing in poker, confidence is an even bigger thing. Just trusting in my strategies and what I've been working on all this time. Just trusting they are going to work."

MEET THE LATEST WSOP CIRCUIT RING WINNER

Name: Mike Horchoff
Nationality: American
Birthplace: River Ridge, LA
Current Residence: River Ridge, LA

Age: 29
Profession: Professional Poker Player
WSOP Bracelets: 0
Previous WSOP Circuit Rings: 0

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