



WSOP CIRCUIT 2017-18 MAIN EVENT REPORT

Circuit Stop:	Choctaw Casino and Resort	Date:	12 November 2018
Event:	No-Limit Hold'em Main Event	Entries:	893
Buy-in:	\$1,700	Prizepool:	\$1,352,895

MAX YOUNG WINS CHOCTAW MAIN EVENT

Oregon poker pro earns fifth Circuit ring and largest career cash with \$263,815 first-place money.

Max Young set a goal for 2018. Make more money than he did in 2017. He accomplished that with about six weeks to spare thanks to his performance on Monday evening in Oklahoma.

The 33-year-old poker pro from Oregon defeated 893 entrants in the \$1,700 no-limit hold'em main event at Choctaw to earn his fifth career World Series of Poker Circuit ring and \$263,815. The biggest score of his career was the cash he needed to make 2018 a more successful year on the felt than 2017.

"I can't believe it," said Young. "I had set really high goals for myself this year and I'd gotten about halfway there. I didn't think I had a chance, but I'm always going to try and I just reached all of them."

Young is ending heading into the holiday season and the end of 2018 on a high note. The victory in Choctaw is his fifth career ring, but his second in the last two weeks. He started off the month by winning his fourth ring in Lake Tahoe just a couple weeks after a major tournament victory in San Diego for a five-figure score.

Despite bursting onto the Circuit two years ago and immediately racking up accolades. Five rings later he's still constantly questioning his play and continuing to improve. He came to Choctaw after leaving Lake Tahoe and bagged two Day 1 chip leads in prelim events. Neither of them resulted in anything better than a seventh-place finish in a \$400 no-limit hold'em and with a career-best score on the line, he took his focus to another level.

"The first one I made like three mistakes," said Young of his first prelim chip lead. "I mislicked once. I should've four-bet jammed once and then I limp-jammed with a bad hand against a guy that was a little too aggressive. I was just not taking the best lines. I knew better, but I was getting maybe a little impatient or something. But in this tournament, I just decided I wasn't going to make any mistakes."

As far as actual strategies are concerned, Young has been putting in work to play more of a game theory optimal style of play. Instead of working off of game flow and live reads, he's looking more into the math of the game and making sound decisions based off of the numbers.

"I mean, it's hard to know what to study at this point, but when I come across somebody that knows more, I just try to learn what I can from them," said Young. "I've been staying with a really good GTO-style player and GTO isn't really my specialty, but I've been learning a lot from him."

Young met Heinz Schluter at a tournament in Houston and they've been rooming together on the road since then. Schluter's knowledge of game theory optimal play has only helped Young turn into an even better player.

He needed every bit of the skill he's developed at the final table in Choctaw. He defeated Jared Hemingway heads-up to take down the title and best a final table that featured Jonathan Bloyen, who is a high-stakes regular in Texas and Oklahoma, as well as Charles Johnson, who won the main event at Harrah's Cherokee last December.

Hemingway started heads-up play with a slight chip lead and just as much momentum as Young, having had an incredible two-week stretch at Choctaw during the entire series. He finished second in the first event of the series, won the \$400 no-limit hold'em six-max, cashed in a one-day event, and dominated most of the final day.

At one point during three-handed play, Hemingway held more than half of the chips in play. Young busted Bloyen in third with trip nines against Bloyen's straight draw and was still a 3-to-2 dog in chips against Hemingway.

Young bided his time and picked his spots carefully for most of the final table before really turning up the aggression heads-up. Despite starting heads-up play about 100 big blinds deep for each player, the chips were flying and there were several all ins. Heads-up play only lasted for about 45 minutes.

However, when it was time to change gears, Young did just that. He limped the button with ace-six and picked off a three-barrel bluff with king-high from Hemingway. It moved him over 20 million of the nearly 27 million chips play and put him in a great spot to win the tournament.

"I know he's aggressive and I was actually getting some good hands," said Young. "I knew he was going to put in a lot of chips. The one big hand when I limped ace-six was pretty awesome because I was already calling him down with ace-high and then the ace turned. But because I limped the button and he'd seen me opening a bunch, he probably thought I couldn't have an ace, so he barreled off and it was easy to call."

Hemingway actually evened out the match with two double ups after that hand, but they played a massive flip with Hemingway's pocket deuces against Young's ace-nine. Young flopped trip nines and that was all she wrote.

Now that he accomplished his goal for 2018, the only thing left for him is to finish the year strong and look ahead to 2019. He's already got his goal in mind.

"Have another year that's better than the last," said Young. "Every year I've played it's been better than the one before. So that's kind of always my goal."

Final Table Results:

1st: Max Young - \$263,815
2nd: Jared Hemingway - \$163,024
3rd: Jonathan Bloyen - \$120,083
4th: Rolando Lozano - \$89,616
5th: Robert DeLeon - \$67,753
6th: Nivedan Nasina - \$51,884
7th: Terry Presley - \$40,235
8th: Wayne Lovell - \$31,590
9th: Charles Johnson - \$25,110

MEET THE LATEST WSOP CIRCUIT RING WINNER

Name: Max Young
Nationality: American
Birthplace: Connecticut
Current Residence: Seaside, OR

Age: 33
Profession: Professional Poker Player
WSOP Bracelets: 0
Previous WSOP Circuit Rings: 4

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