



## WSOP CIRCUIT 2018-19 EVENT REPORT

Circuit Stop:	Choctaw Casino & Resort (Durant, Okla.)	Date:	5 January 2019
Event:	No-Limit Hold'em Multi-Flight	Entries:	766
Buy-in:	\$400	Prizepool:	\$252,780

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### DARIN UTLEY BAGS 1<sup>ST</sup> CIRCUIT GOLD RING

*Former boxer raises debut gold ring after outlasting 765 opponents in multi-flight event.*

Darin Utley bagged his first World Series of Poker gold ring Saturday night at the Choctaw Durant Circuit series. The 48-year-old from Cedar Rapids, Iowa outlasted a combined total of 766 entries in Event #3: \$400 No-Limit Hold'em Multi-Flight.

The tournament featured two separate starting flights and took two days to complete. Utley registered for Flight A and did more than endure, he excelled.

"I caught some good cards kind of toward the middle [of Flight A]," said Utley "I just was running good... I flopped a few sets."

By the end of Day 1A, Utley was the player bagging up the largest chip stack. His mark of 264,500 was later passed by a couple players from Flight B, but Utley was still in good shape, nonetheless.

"This was awesome. I felt good coming into Day 2 because I had some chips, but it just didn't go well," Utley stated.

Entering Day 2 with chips to work with, Utley strolled into the money but then began a long stretch of playing from behind. He managed to survive all the way to the unofficial final table but was still short stacked among his competitors.

The former boxer jabbed his way back into contention and rode his momentum all the way to the winner's circle where he got to raise his debut Circuit gold ring. Utley is no stranger to "gold" triumphs. In fact, he lays claim to eight golden glove titles in the world of amateur boxing.

"I started [boxing] when I was eight years old and I did it for like 20 years or so; but I just got inducted into the Iowa Boxing Hall of Fame this summer," Utley revealed. "I think you see a lot of ex-athletes that play poker because you're used to being competitive your whole life," he added when asked to compare boxing with poker.

Poker has also been a longtime facet of Utley's life. He grew up learning about the game from his father and has carried the hobby with him ever since. However, these days it is a bit more than a hobby for Utley.

"I'm kind of playing it for a living now. I've been in the car business for 25 years and six months ago I quit," Utley mentioned. At first, Utley planned on taking a year off but instead decided to take a stab at the card playing career. It is a decision that seems to be working out great so far for the Iowa native.

"I'm mostly a cash game player. I don't really play Hold'em," Utley said. "I play Big O, or they call it Congress down here. It's the only reason I really came here because they have some really good cash games. I figured I'd play a couple of tournaments and I binked one."

Along with the gold ring, Utley took home just over \$50,000 for his triumph. The purse marks Utley's fourth WSOP cash, but first on the Circuit. His total WSOP earnings now stands over \$100,000.

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## MEET THE LATEST WSOP CIRCUIT RING WINNER

Name:	Darin Utley	Age:	48
Nationality:	USA	Occupation:	N/A
Birthplace:	Cedar Rapids, Iowa	WSOP Bracelets:	0
Current Residence:	Cedar Rapids, Iowa	Previous WSOP Circuit Rings:	0

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