



**2011-2012 World Series of Poker Circuit  
Season Eight  
Harrah's Tunica  
Event #11  
No-Limit Hold'em Main Event  
Buy-In: \$1,600  
Total Entries: 647  
Total Prize Pool: \$941,385  
February 11-13, 2012**

## **Final Results:**

<u>Place</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Hometown</u>	<u>Prize</u>
1	Kurt Jewell	Frankfort, KY	\$192,984
2	Christopher Thompson	Fayetteville, TN	\$119,415
3	Daniel Blakeman	Houston, TX	\$87,586
4	Jacob Bazeley	Cincinnati, OH	\$65,134
5	Dustin Gardner	Sikeston, MO	\$49,093
6	Steve McCluskey	Oxford, MS	\$37,495
7	Michael Cooper	Fort Worth, TX	\$29,013
8	Todd Chew	Indianola, IL	\$22,744
9	Ray Weaver	Greensboro, GA	\$18,056
10	Houston White	Madison, TN	\$14,516
11	John Cecil	Marion, AR	\$14,516
12	Jae-Chul Chang	Round Rock, TX	\$14,516
13	Douglas Carli	Alliance, OH	\$11,814
14	Frank Mull	Pocahontas, AR	\$11,814
15	Kyle Hamlin	Huntsville, AL	\$11,814
16	Michael Schneider	Covington, GA	\$9,734
17	Jerry Monroe	Columbus, GA	\$9,734
18	Clinton Baker	Denton, TX	\$9,734
19	Christopher Cornell	Clarksville, TN	\$8,115
20	Stuart McMahan	Shreveport, LA	\$8,115
21	James Kirk	Hoschton, GA	\$8,115
22	Levi Phillips	Mount Vernon, IL	\$6,844
23	Marco Palacios	Austin, TX	\$6,844
24	Steven Blunt	Blacklick, OH	\$6,844
25	Kristen Deardorff	Murfreesboro, TN	\$5,846
26	Thomas Luce	Sharpsville, IN	\$5,846
27	Chad Bradbury	Austin, TX	\$5,846
28	Terry Presley	Huntsville, AR	\$5,046
29	Danny Nelson	Batesville, AR	\$5,046
30	Lee Chandley	Erwin, TN	\$5,046
31	Kenneth Milam	La Place, LA	\$4,406
32	Mohammad Khan	Bossier City, LA	\$4,406
33	Rory Monahan	Carbondale, IL	\$4,406
34	Casey Harper	Nashville, TN	\$3,897
35	David Nicholson	Perkinston, MS	\$3,897
36	Dantonio Brown	Jonesboro, GA	\$3,897
37	Richard Robb	Seneca, SC	\$3,483
38	Peter Clive	Saint Charles, MO	\$3,483
39	Gilbert George	Dallas, TX	\$3,483
40	Kenny Smith	Roark, KY	\$3,483
41	Matthew Grabiak	Alpharetta, GA	\$3,483

42	John Lee	Irvine, CA	\$3,483
43	Galen Kester	Biloxi, MS	\$3,483
44	Steven Gurney-Goldman	New York, NY	\$3,483
45	Benjamin Clayborn	Arlington, TN	\$3,483
46	Bronson Tucker	Austin, TX	\$3,144
47	Faraj Rafiei	Austin, TX	\$3,144
48	David Robbins	Columbus, GA	\$3,144
49	Samuel Barnhart	Little Rock, AR	\$3,144
50	William Brock li	Pelham, AL	\$3,144
51	Loi Hoang	Memphis, TN	\$3,144
52	Chun Law	Cordova, TN	\$3,144
53	Uri Bublil	Telaviv, Israel	\$3,144
54	Joseph Jozwiak	Inverness, IL	\$3,144
55	John Utley	Morganfield, KY	\$2,871
56	Jeffrey Epstein	Omaha, NE	\$2,871
57	John Therrell	Collierville, TN	\$2,871
58	Debra Hamlin	Huntsville, AL	\$2,871
59	Katherine Bowen	Gladewater, TX	\$2,871
60	Bruce Sturgeon	Bedford, IN	\$2,871
61	Charles Swatsenberg	Southaven, MS	\$2,871
62	Aaron Massey	Chicago, IL	\$2,871
63	Oran Haynes	Shreveport, LA	\$2,871
64	Michael Sanders	London, AR	\$2,636
65	Jay Friedman	Cordova, TN	\$2,636
66	Jason Gwinn	Nashville, TN	\$2,636
67	Joseph Phelps	Diamondhead, MS	\$2,636
68	Charles Gossett	Newnan, GA	\$2,636
69	Roland Bell	Palm Bay, FL	\$2,636
70	John Evans	Granbury, TX	\$2,636
71	Margaret Ivie	St. Louis, MO	\$2,636
72	Kyle Cartwright	Bartlett, TN	\$2,636

## **A Gem of a Repeat - Kurt Jewell Wins Second WSOP Circuit Main Event Championship**

### **Outlasts Largest Main Event Field in Harrah's Tunica History to Take Home \$192,984 and the WSOP Circuit Gold Ring**

TUNICA, MS. – Kurt Jewell has done it again.

Jewell, a 26-year-old poker pro from Frankfurt, KY was crowned victorious after a masterful three-day performance at the 2011/2012 Harrah's Tunica World Series of Poker Circuit Main Event championship.

For the win, Jewell was awarded first-place prize, worth \$192,984 and his second WSOP Circuit Main Event gold ring.

This year's WSOP Circuit Main Event at Harrah's Tunica drew 647 entries, the most in the stop's seven-year history. The year's WSOP Circuit Main Event generated a \$941,385 prize pool.

[Since winning the 2010 Horseshoe Hammond WSOPC Main Event](#), Kurt Jewell has seen his star rise on the WSOP Circuit. In 2011, [he picked up his second gold ring at the Harrah's St. Louis WSOP Circuit](#) and with his win here tonight in the Harrah's Tunica WSOP Circuit Main Event, now has \$485,423 in WSOP Circuit tournament earnings.

Jewell is a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University and holds a degree in sports management. In an interview shortly after his Hammond Main Event win with WSOP Media Director and noted poker historian, Nolan Dalla, Jewell said that he hoped to work in sports at some point "when the right opportunity comes along."

According to Jewell, none of those opportunities have yet come along, at least not one that has matched those that he has created for himself on the World Series of Poker Circuit tournament trail.

“Well, the right opportunity hasn’t come along yet,” said Jewell with a smile. “Unless there is something huge out there for me, I guess I’m just going to continue to play poker.”

Since winning the Horseshoe Hammond Main Event, Jewell said that he’s been riding the highs and lows of poker.

“It’s been an up and down year for me, but I’ve been having fun all the way and that’s what’s important.”

The field was stacked with regional players from Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana and Georgia, however, players from as far away as Israel (Uri Bubil, Tel Aviv 53<sup>rd</sup> place - \$3,144) made their way down to the Magnolia State to take their shot at WSOP Circuit glory.

With a deep structure and generally cautious play throughout day one of the Main Event, more than half of the starting field bagged and tagged their chips when the tournament clock reached its final seconds.

18 additional players entered the Main Event as registration ended at the start of play on day two to join the 316 day one survivors. Day two saw players drop one after another in short order.

Doug ‘Rico’ Carli had an impressive performance in the Main Event here at Harrah’s Tunica, employing his ‘old-school’ style of conservative play to finish in 13<sup>th</sup> place, worth \$11,814. Incredibly, the former stockbroker from Alliance, OH stayed below 40 big blinds from midway through day two, but was able to survive through a volatile field down to the final two tables. With his cash in the Main Event, Carli extends his WSOP record of most Circuit Cashes to 59.

In stark contrast, the end of day one chip leader, Dantonio Brown, saw his massive stack obliterated late into a tumultuous second day that left him on the short end of a number of heads-up showdowns. The Atlanta native finished in 36<sup>th</sup> place, taking back home \$3,897.

With play down to the final nine, it was déjà vu for Jewell, [who incredibly enough, made it to the Main Event final table here at last year’s WSOP Circuit Main Event at Harrah’s Tunica](#). Although he was second in chips, Jewell suffered through a few missteps, resulting in a disappointing eighth place finish.

This year however, his primary weapon would not be an overwhelming stack of chips, but instead a mountain of experience, which would prove to serve him much better at the relatively unknown Main Event final table.

Name	Hometown	Seat	Chip Count
Todd Chew	Nowhere, IL	1	514,000
Jacob Bazeley	Cincinnati, OH	2	2,200,000
Daniel Blakeman	Houston, TX	3	1,930,000
Ray Weaver	Greensboro, GA	4	924,000
Dustin Gardner	Sikeston, MO	5	1,129,000
Michael “MJ the Great” Cooper	Fort Worth, TX	6	763,000
Steve McCluskey	Oxford, MS	7	1,200,000
Kurt Jewell	Frankfort, KY	8	1,275,000
Chris Thompson	Fayetteville, TN	9	3,400,000

### 9th Place

About an hour into final table play, after a board of [Ah][7h][Jc][Kc], Ray Weaver check-called his remaining stack all-in holding [Ad][Qc] vs. Steve McCluskey, who turned over [Ac][Js]. McCluskey’s two-pair held after a rag fell on the flop, resulting in Weaver’s early exit from the final table stage. Weaver is a 79-year-old retired GM worker from Greensboro, GA. He collected \$18,056.

### 8th Place

Todd Chew, an entrepreneur from Nowhere, IL got it all in on the river on a board showing J-7-9-5-10 holding J-10. Chris Thompson made the eventual call and tabled 9-8 for the straight, eliminating Chew in eighth place. [Chew’s most notable poker accomplishment is a ring victory in Event #7 of the 2010/2011 Caesars Palace WSOP Circuit](#). His three-day effort here at Harrah’s Tunica earned him \$22,744.

### 7th Place

Nicknames are a dime a dozen in poker, many of which are unearned, self-given monikers which hold little credence. However you can mark Michael “MJ the Great” Cooper in the “earned nickname” category after his impressive run here at the Harrah’s Tunica Circuit Main Event.

Cooper, a 30-year-old poker pro from Fort Worth, TX made his eighth cash and third final table appearance tonight since first making the money at last year’s Harrah’s New Orleans WSOP Circuit. Having proven himself to be truly

“Great” in this eighth WSOPC season, Cooper added \$29,013 to his impressive first-year WSOPC resume for seventh place.

#### **6<sup>th</sup> Place**

The sixth place finisher was Steve McCluskey. After running his K-J all-in into Jacob Bazeley’s pocket aces, the two players saw a queen-high board, ending McCluskey’s tournament run. McCluskey is a 54-year-old entrepreneur from Oxford, MS. He pocketed \$37,495 for sixth.

#### **5th Place**

Dustin Gardner made his third-ever major tournament cash finish with a deep run in the Harrah’s Tunica Main Event. All-in, Gardner held top pair on a [6c]-[Ts]-[Jc] flop vs. Jewell, who was drawing to both an open-ended straight and a flush draw with [Kc][Qc]. Gardner was able to fade Jewell’s 20 outs after the [7h] hit the turn, but ran out of luck when the [Ah] hit the river. Gardner is 35 years old from Sikeston, MO. He took home \$49,093 for fifth place.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Place**

Jewell’s run good continued with four players remaining after flopping quad fours on a spread of 4-9-4. With A-9 in the hole, Bazeley three-bet Jewell all-in, only to see his opponent snap call before tabling the two remaining fours in the deck. Drawing dead, the 28-year-old poker player from Cincinnati, OH could only watch as the board ran out before making his exit to the payout table to collect \$65,134 in fourth place prize money

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Place**

With the chip lead, Jewell continued his run after Daniel Blakeman got it all in with A-6 vs. Jewell’s pocket jacks. Blakeman, a 33-year-old poker player from Houston, TX was unable to catch any helpful cards after a ten-high board and his tournament day was over. Blakeman has two previous WSOPC cashes, with his third at Harrah’s Tunica earning him a handsome \$87,586 payout.

Heads up, Kurt Jewell had 7.2 million in chips to Thompson’s 5.6 million, Thompson was able to take an early heads up pot to put him at a 2-1 lead. Jewell fought back, however, to narrow the margin and eventually retake the lead before the final hand of the night saw Thompson move all-in with pocket tens. After some deliberation, Jewell made the call and tabled [Qs][Js] and the two saw the final flop of the night come down [Kc][7d][Jh].

Jewell’s excitement turned into a short bout of anguish after a ten fell on the turn, to which Thompson yelled “Yes!” However, emotions instantly exchanged hands after the [9h] fell on the river to give Jewell the straight and the win.

For his runner-up finish, Thompson, a 41-year-old professional gambler from Fayetteville, TN came away with a six-figure payout, worth \$119,415.

For the win, Jewell was awarded his second WSOP Circuit Main Event Championship ring and third WSOPC ring victory. Jewell joins Chris Ferguson and Peter Feldman as the only multiple WSOP Circuit Main Event Ring winners in history. Ferguson still holds the record for most WSOP Circuit Main Event championships at three.

Upon the conclusion of the Harrah’s Tunica Main Event, Steven Melton, a 50-year-old poker player from Noble, OK was declared the Harrah’s Tunica Casino champion with earlier 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place finishes along with a 19<sup>th</sup> place finish here in the Main Event. His Main Event finish put him at 87.5 points, just ahead of the previous Casino Champion point leader, Matthew Weber, who finished with 80.

The Casino Champion is the player who earns the most points through the 12 events at Harrah’s Tunica. This player will earn an automatic seat to the \$1 million WSOP Circuit National Championship to be held in late May. More information about the WSOPC National Championship can be found [here](#). An explanation of the points system can be found [here](#).

Still to come are eight stops on this year’s WSOP Circuit schedule [with the next stop taking place at the Palm Beach Kennel Club in Palm Beach Florida](#). This year’s opening event at PBKC features a \$555 buy-in \$1 million-dollar guarantee No-Limit Hold’em opening event.

#### **Media Contacts:**

Patrick Collins

Harrah’s Tunica

662-357-6924

[pcollins1@caesars.com](mailto:pcollins1@caesars.com)

Alan Fowler

WSOP/Caesars Interactive Entertainment

702.498.7532

[afowler@caesars.com](mailto:afowler@caesars.com)

#### **About the WSOP**

The World Series of Poker (WSOP) is the largest, richest and most prestigious gaming event in the world awarding millions of dollars in prize money and the prestigious gold bracelet, globally recognized as the sport's top prize. Featuring a comprehensive slate of tournaments in every major poker variation, the WSOP is poker's longest running tournament in the world, dating back to 1970. In 2010, the event attracted 72,966 entrants from 117 different countries to the Rio in Las Vegas and awarded over \$187 million in prize money. In addition, the WSOP has formed groundbreaking alliances in broadcasting, digital media and corporate sponsorships, while successfully expanding the brand internationally with the advent in 2007 of the World Series of Poker Europe. The WSOP Circuit Tour is entering its seventh season in 2010-11, and will feature 12 stops throughout the U.S., plus for the first ever, a stop in South Africa. For more information on the World Series of Poker, please visit [www.wsop.com](http://www.wsop.com).

#### **About Harrah's Tunica**

Harrah's Tunica is located 20 minutes south of Memphis, Tennessee and was originally opened in 1996 as Grand Casino. On May, 23, 2008 Paula Deen cut the official grand opening ribbon at Harrah's Tunica featuring the first of its kind Paula Deen Buffet and an interactive gaming floor that is the largest in the region. Spanning over 2,000 acres Harrah's Tunica features the Links at Cottonwoods championship golf course designed by Hale Irwin, Willows Sporting Clays and Hunting Center, the Mid-South Convention Center offering over 65,000 square feet of indoor meeting space, three elegant hotels totaling 1356 hotel rooms, the 200-space Mid-South RV Resort, Bellissimo Spa and Salon, and a 2,400 seat event center that features headline entertainment

#### **About Caesars Entertainment:**

Caesars Entertainment Corporation is the world's largest casino entertainment company. Since its beginning in Reno, Nevada, more than 70 years ago, Caesars has grown through development of new resorts, expansions and acquisitions, and now operates casinos on four continents. The company's resorts operate primarily under the Harrah's®, Caesars® and Horseshoe® brand names. Caesars also owns the World Series of Poker® and the London Clubs International family of casinos. Caesars Entertainment is focused on building loyalty and value with its guests through a unique combination of great service, excellent products, unsurpassed distribution, operational excellence and technology leadership. Caesars is committed to environmental sustainability and energy conservation and recognizes the importance of being a responsible steward of the environment. For more information, please visit [www.caesars.com](http://www.caesars.com).