

**2013/2014 World Series of Poker Circuit
Season 10
Lodge Casino
Black Hawk, CO
Event #5
No-Limit Hold'em
Buy-In: \$300 (+\$65)
Total Entries: 165
Prize Pool: \$49,500
April 28-29**



Thondup Wins Gold

Santa Fe, NM amateur survives two hour heads up battle to win Event 5 and capture his first WSOP Circuit gold ring.

Black Hawk, CO (April 29, 2014) - Thupten “TJ” Thondup almost missed out on his first WSOP Circuit gold ring by oversleeping. Thondup said he registered with just minutes remaining for Event 5 because he overslept. Well the extra sleep must have paid off because he was able to win Event 5 and really dominate as the tournament went late into Monday night.

Thondup entered the final table sharing the chip lead with the player to his right, Chase Bianchi. The two had about 60% of the chips in play and had a stronghold over the rest of the table.

“I was pumped, especially because I had position on him [Chase][Bianchi],” said Thondup about coming into the final table with a chip lead. “It made things so much easier.”

Bianchi eventually finished third which left Thondup heads up against Karl Pirkopf playing for the gold ring. The two battled heads up for an hour and half Monday night. This is when Thondup really turned up the heat. Thondup went from being at a small chip disadvantage to a 2:1 chip leader without hardly showing down a hand. The two returned today to finish the tournament and in a half hour time Thondup had finally claimed all the chips.

The 30-year-old owns a non-profit gift shop with money going to help Tibetans through the Free Tibet movement. Thondup was born and raised here in the States but both of his parents are from Tibet.

Thondup says he will play as many tournaments as he can here at the WSOP Circuit Lodge Casino stop in pursuit of the Casino Champion title. This is Thondup’s first WSOP final table.

Event 5 was the fifth of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at the Lodge Casino in Black Hawk, CO. The \$365 No-Limit Hold'em tournament attracted 165 entries generating a \$49,500 prize pool. The top 18 players were paid.

Day 1 began Monday at 11 a.m. and last 22 levels. Day 2 began Tuesday at 2 p.m with two players remaining. The tournament concluded at 2:30 p.m. in the middle of level 23.

Notes on the event:

- Thondup goes by the name TJ
- All 5 winners have been ages 30 or 31. All winners have had the chip lead or been second in chips heading to Day 2.

The player who accumulates the most overall points during the Lodge Casino twelve combined gold ring tournaments earns the title Casino Champion and receives automatic entry into the WSOP National Championship set to take place at Bally's Atlantic City May 22-24, 2014.

All players who cash in ring events receive points that apply toward the Casino Championship race and the season-long race to claim one of 50 at-large National Championship bids awarded to the top point earners throughout the season. More information on the points system is available on WSOP.com.

Here is the list of gold ring winners from the Lodge Casino

EVENT #1: Chad Donnelly defeated 269 players (\$365 NLH) for \$19,773

EVENT #2: Valentin Vornicu defeated 145 players (\$580 NLH) for \$20,299

EVENT #3: Greg Eyster defeated 770 players (\$365 NLH Re-Entry) for \$46,205

EVENT #4: Tim Campbell defeated 212 players (\$365 NLH) for \$15,900

EVENT #5: TJ Thondup defeated 165 players (\$365 NLH) for \$13,364

With the fifth tournament wrapped up, seven more ring events remain at the Lodge Casino.

For more information about the World Series of Poker Circuit, be sure to follow us on Twitter @WSOP or check out WSOP.com.

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