

2015/2016 World Series of Poker Circuit

Season 12

Palm Beach Kennel Club

West Palm Beach, Fla.

The Main Event (Event #10)

No-Limit Hold'em

Buy-In: \$1,600 (+\$175)

Total Entries: 393

Prize Pool: \$589,500

September 25-28, 2015



Peter Vitantonio Wins PBKC Main Event and \$129K

Ohio pro earns first gold ring; Javier Zarco records fourth WSOP-related runner-up finish.

West Palm Beach, Fla. (September 28, 2015) — On Monday, the 2015/16 World Series of Poker Circuit at the Palm Beach Kennel Club wound down toward its conclusion with the final day of the \$1,675 Main Event. Just seven players returned for Day 3 and in the end it was Peter Vitantonio who rose above the competition to win the \$129,685 first-place prize, the gold Circuit ring, and a seat to the season-ending WSOP Global Casino Championship.

Vitantonio came into the day in the second overall chip position. He was merely trailing his eventual heads up opponent, Javier Zarco, who held a commanding chip lead coming into the day.

“I came in second [overall], but kind of just sat there for the first hour and didn’t do much,” reflected Vitantonio after his win. “Then I got aces and doubled. Two hands later I got kings and doubled up and that was pretty much it.”

The hands that Vitantonio was referencing represented the largest shift in momentum at the final table. During four-handed play, Zarco opened with a raise only to have Vitantonio come over the top with a three-bet from the button. Zarco shipped all in and Vitantonio snapped him off for his tournament life with two aces. Zarco meekly tabled ace-jack and was unable to improve. A mere two hands later, Vitantonio checked pocket kings on a jack-high flop against eventual fourth-place finisher Mike Kelleher. Kelleher moved all in for about 53 big blinds and Vitantonio instantly called. Kelleher showed a gutshot straight draw and was unable to improve. From that moment on, Vitantonio seized a massive chip lead that he never relinquished.

This marks Vitantonio’s third final table appearance on the Circuit and his first gold ring win. Vitantonio, a native of Wickliffe, Ohio, considers himself a full time professional player. He has attended the Palm Beach Kennel Club Circuit stop for the last three winters, and plans to move to the area next month. Prior to poker success, Vitantonio attended Kent State and worked at a family restaurant for a year or two.

While Vitantonio boasts the top prize, six other players had successful deep runs in the Main Event. The first casualty of Day 3 came during the third hand of the day when John Palace was unable to win a race against Robert LeBeau. Palace was eliminated in seventh place and

collected \$19,489 for his efforts. Following Palace to the rail was Ellen Lambeth, who also held the title of last woman standing. Lambeth got the last of her money in while holding top pair on the flop against Kelleher. Unfortunately for Lambeth, Kelleher held top pair with top kicker and she was sent packing in sixth place.

A.J. Kelsall and Kelleher were the next two players eliminated, falling in fifth and fourth place, respectively. LeBeau failed to win a race against Vitantonio during a preflop all in, and his elimination sent the final two into heads up play. Vitantonio held a substantial lead over Zarco, who was unable to gain momentum throughout the match. In the end, Vitantonio flopped two pair to clinch the match and the title.

Unfortunately for Zarco, this marks the fourth time he has come close to earning a WSOP title only to fall as the runner-up. Most notably, during the 2014/15 Circuit season, Zarco racked up a breakthrough WSOP cash with a second place finish in the \$1,675 Harrah's St. Louis Main Event. Following that, Zarco was once again denied a title during the 2015 WSOP when he finished runner-up to Adrian Buckley in the \$1,500 Millionaire Maker event. Despite these close calls, today's finish has officially moved Zarco over \$1 million in earnings at the WSOP.

This prestigious PBKC Main Event boasted a grand total of 393 entries over two starting flights. This number bested last year's attendance of this very event with an increase in attendance of nearly 30 percent. Day 1A accounted for 172 of those total entries while Day 1B pulled a total of 221 entries. This led to a total prize pool of \$589,500 and allowed for the top 45 players to make the money.

Some of the notable names to make the money include three-time ring winner John Holley (32nd, \$3,272), ring winners Russ Head (29th, \$3,690) and Neal Harding (20th, \$5,712), Chad Eveslage (19th, \$5,712), bracelet winner David Diaz (18th, \$6,779), and 2010 November Niner John Dolan (15th, \$8,417). Additionally, Steven Duncker (ninth, \$12,272) and Ralph Massey (eight, \$15,351) graced the final table before they went bust.

The Main Event was the 10th of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at the Palm Beach Kennel Club. The \$1,675 no-limit hold'em event attracted 393 entries – nearly 30 percent more than last year's finale. The total prize pool came to \$589,500 and the top 45 finishers were paid.

The tournament featured two starting flights beginning Friday, September 25 and Saturday, September 26 at 12 p.m. Flight A boasted 172 entries and advanced 30 while Flight B drew 221 and advanced 38. Both starting flights logged 15 levels of play.

Day 2 resumed Sunday at noon ET with 68 players remaining. The money bubble burst during extra play in Level 17 (~2:45 p.m.). From there, the tournament narrowed to the nine-handed final during Level 24 (~ 11 p.m.). Day 2 concluded following Level 25 (~ 12:30 a.m.) with seven players remaining.

Day 3 began Monday at noon ET and action concluded during Level 27 (~2 p.m.).

Here's a closer look at the tournament's finale table:

Seat 1: Michael Kelleher – 1,286,000
Seat 2: Ralph Massey – 607,000
Seat 3: Johnny Palace – 1,054,000
Seat 4: Rob LeBeau – 494,000
Seat 5: Javier Zarco – 1,430,000
Seat 6: Ellen Lambeth – 475,000
Seat 7: A.J. Kelsall – 970,000
Seat 8: Peter Vitantonio – 1,200,000
Seat 9: Steve Duncker – 289,000

The final playing session began during Level 24 (10,000/20,000 with a 3,000 ante)

About the final table:

1st: Peter Vitantonio - \$129,685
Hometown: Wickliffe, Ohio
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP earnings: \$34,842
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$45,091

2nd: Javier Zarco - \$80,143
Hometown: Madrid, Spain
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP earnings: \$801,389
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$130,743

3rd: Rob LeBeau - \$58,561
Hometown: Tampa, Fla.
Occupation: Self-employed
WSOP earnings: \$3,018
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$17,184

4th: Michael Kelleher - \$43,482
Hometown: Vero Beach, Fla.
Occupation: Print plant manager
WSOP earnings: \$0
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$0

5th: A.J. Kelsall - \$32,788
Hometown: Tampa, Fla.
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP earnings: \$122,867
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$36,352

6th: Ellen Lambeth - \$25,095
Hometown: Charlotte, N.C.
Occupation: Flight attendant
WSOP earnings: \$0
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$19,747

7th: Johnny Palace - \$19,489
Hometown: Jupiter, Fla.
Occupation: Business owner
WSOP earnings: \$0
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$3,078

8th: Ralph Massey - \$15,351
Hometown: Chicago, Ill.
Occupation: Professional poker play/Entrepreneur
WSOP earnings: \$18,276
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$144,391

9th: Steve Duncker - \$12,262
Hometown: Palm Beach, Fla.
Occupation: Retired
WSOP earnings: \$5,447
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$0

Here is the list of gold ring winners from Horseshoe Council Bluffs:

EVENT #1: Joshua Beckley defeated 317 players (\$365 Monster Stack) for \$22,349
EVENT #2: Matthew Ezrol defeated 57 players (\$365 HORSE) for \$6,412
EVENT #3: Jonathan Ablat defeated 615 entries (\$580 NLH Re-Entry) for \$64,575
EVENT #4: John Vale defeated 98 players (\$365 NLH) for \$8,821
EVENT #5: Cody Pack defeated 107 players (\$365 NLH) for \$9,630
EVENT #6: Mark Smith defeated 91 players (\$365 PLO Hi-Low) for \$8,192
EVENT #7: Robert "Bobby" Hodson defeated 115 players (\$365 NLH Six-Handed) for \$10,351
EVENT #8: Alex Miller defeated 95 players (\$365 NLH) for \$8,551
EVENT #9: John DePersio defeated 100 players (\$1,125 NLH) for \$30,000
EVENT #10: Peter Vitantonio defeated 393 entries (\$1,675 NLH) for \$129,685
EVENT #11: Josh Vizcarra defeated 83 players (\$365 NLH) for \$7,968

The player who accumulates the most overall points during the Palm Beach Kennel Club's 12 combined gold ring tournaments earns the title Casino Champion and receives automatic entry into the WSOP Global Casino Championship. Additionally, all players who cash in ring events earn points that apply toward the season-long race to claim one of 50 expected at-large WSOP Global Casino Championship bids awarded to the top point earners. More information on the season-ending event is available on WSOP.com.

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All rings at the Palm Beach Kennel Club are furnished by Jostens, the official ring supplier of the 2015/2016 WSOP Circuit season.

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