

2015/2016 World Series of Poker Circuit

Season 12

Harrah's Cherokee

Cherokee, N.C.

Event #1

No-Limit Hold'em

Buy-In: \$300 (+\$65)

Total Entries: 461

Prize Pool: \$138,300

April 14-15, 2016



John Mason Captures His First Gold Ring

John Mason wins the opening event of the Harrah's Cherokee series and pockets nearly \$30,000.

Cherokee, N.C. (April 15, 2016) -- John Mason Jr. won his first career gold ring by defeating 461 players in the opening event of the 2016 Harrah's Cherokee April series. Last year Mason came close to getting a ring here. He recorded a 5th place finish in Event #5 - \$365 No-Limit Hold'em for his largest WSOP cash at the time. This time Mason won and earned not only the gold ring, but also a cash prize of \$29,743, which is now his largest ever WSOP cash.

"It's pretty incredible," said Mason about winning his first gold ring. "It's been my goal."

Mason entered the final table fourth in chips. His only focus going in was to win the gold ring. Laddering up the pay jumps was of no concern to him. Mason said that winning the gold ring would offer him vindication that he was good at the game. Mason also admitted that he wasn't the best player at the final table.

"I knew that I was not the best player at the [final] table. There were strong players at the table." said Mason. "All 11 players were good."

Day 2 began with 11 players remaining, but lost five in the first level of play. The first player eliminated on Day 2 was Brandon Newsome. Newsome arguably had the best WSOP resume entering Day 2 with one gold ring and 22 Circuit cashes to his name. He began the day as the second shortest stack and went out on one of the first hands of Day 2.

Mason is a retired HVA installer and foreman. He worked on skyscrapers in Atlanta. According to Mason, one reason he is already retired at the age of 62-years-old is because he is heavily invested in the stock market and has made money there. He compared poker to the stock market by saying that money management is important in both.

"It's about gambling. You have to gamble, but you don't want to be careless. You want to do it based upon the knowledge you have gained," said Mason about comparing poker to the stock market.

Mason has already won a seat to this weekend's \$500k re-entry event from a \$65 satellite that he played in this morning. He will be playing in tomorrow's Flight D, which is the final starting flight of the tournament. He also said he may play in next week's \$1 million guaranteed Main Event.

Event #1 was the first of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at the Harrah's Cherokee series. The \$365 No-Limit Hold'em tournament attracted 461 players generating a \$138,300 prize pool, which more than doubled the \$50,000 guarantee. The top 54 players were paid.

Day 1 began Thursday at 11 a.m. and lasted 21 levels. Day 2 began Friday at 2 p.m. with 11 players remaining. The tournament concluded at about 5:50 p.m. Friday on the last hand of Level 25.

The player who accumulates the most overall points during the Harrah's Cherokee twelve combined gold ring tournaments earns the title Casino Champion and receives automatic entry into the WSOP Global Casino Championship set to take place at the end of the year.

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 Global Casino 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 Harrah's Cherokee series:

EVENT #1: John Mason Jr. defeated 461 players (\$365 NLHE) for \$29,743

With one tournaments wrapped up, 11 more ring events remain at the Harrah's Cherokee series.

All rings at the Harrah's Cherokee series are furnished by Jostens, the official ring supplier of the 2015-2016 WSOP Circuit season.

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