

## **2016/2017 World Series of Poker Circuit**

**Season 13**

**Bicycle Hotel and Casino**

**Bell Gardens, Ca.**

**Event #11**

**The Main Event**

**Buy-In: \$1,500 (+\$175)**

**Total Entries: 842**

**Prize Pool: \$1,263,000**

**December 10-13, 2016**



## **Nikhil Gera Wins Bike Circuit Main Event**

**Local grinder and full-time Psychiatrist wins \$246,295 for his win in Los Angeles.**

**Bell Gardens, Ca (December 13, 2016)** – The final table of the \$1,675, no-limit hold'em main event at the Bicycle Casino was filled with top poker talent with players combining for several millions in career tournament earnings, but it was lesser known local grinder Nikhil Gera who came out on top to win his first Circuit ring and \$246,295.

Gera navigated through a final table that featured Bracelet winner Ankush Mandavia, Eddy Sabat, Harry Arutyunyan, and two-time Bracelet winner Tuan Le to get to heads-up play against fellow Los Angeles local Paul Nguyen. The two local players played heads-up for a few hours in front of a rowdy rail before Gera had amassed all the chips and officially topped the 842-entry field.

“It feels great,” said Gera after the win. “I’ve been playing a lot recently and have a lot of good friends here who give me advice on hands, and on life and stuff. This one is for them too.”

Gera was greeted by his rowdy rail as soon as the final card was dealt. His rail included Nipun Java, Craig Chait, Sean Yu, and lots of other poker talent. His mother was also on hand to watch him take down the title. She is also a poker enthusiast.

“These are like the best guys in L.A.,” said the 39-year-old physician of his supporters. “And they are the best players in too. A lot of noise was made by these guys.”

Gera doesn’t play professionally, but his job allows him a lot of free time to play. After growing up in the Los Angeles suburbs and going to medical school in New York, Gera came back to the Los Angeles area and has been working in an emergency room as a Psychiatrist.

He does shift work, which basically has him putting in very long hours two days a week, but has plenty of time to play. His network of poker friends he has around has helped him get to a point in his ability to take down a Circuit title.

“All these guys have different strengths,” said Gera. “I feel like we are kind of a team and we feed off of each other. You pick up different things from different people for sure.”

Gera had a deep and loud group of supporters, but so did his heads-up opponent. The atmosphere was one closer to a football game, rather than a poker match. But that made it more enjoyable for Gera in the win.

“It made it kind of fun,” said Gera. “It’s fun that I’m an L.A. regular and this tournament being here and having the rail and stuff. It was a lot of fun.”

The final table was filled with poker talent, but the field as a whole was also one of the tougher events the Circuit has seen in recent history. Gera’s experience with tough players helped him throughout the final table en route to his first victory of his career.

“It actually was cool because it makes you focus a little bit harder when you know that the people you are playing with are at the top of this game,” said Gera. “I actually had a really tough Day 1 table with a lot of good pros. Playing with them definitely got me in the right mindset to play against good players.”

In addition to the ring and the prize money, Gera wins a free entry into the 2017 WSOP Global Casino Championship. Every Main Event winner and Casino Champion on the Circuit during the 2016-2017 season receives a free entry worth \$10,000, and event will have a minimum prize pool of \$1,000,000. The Global Casino Championship will be held next summer and full details are expected to be released in the spring.

The tournament began Saturday with Day 1A, which attracted 365 entries. Day 1B saw an additional 453 entries. There were 24 players who exercised their option to buy-in to Day 2 directly and the 842-entry field generated a prize pool of \$1,263,000. In-the-money finishers include Sean Jazayeri (15<sup>th</sup> - \$15,345), Mohsin Charania (17<sup>th</sup> - \$12,645), Phil Laak (18<sup>th</sup> - \$12,645), Barry Hutter (24<sup>th</sup> - \$8,880), Jared Jaffee (31<sup>st</sup> - \$5,685), Darren Rabinowitz (32<sup>nd</sup> - \$5,685), Nipun Java (39<sup>th</sup> - \$4,470), Marco Johnson (52<sup>nd</sup> - \$4,030), Matt Salsberg (58<sup>th</sup> - \$3,665), Scott Clements (67<sup>th</sup> - \$3,370), and Cord Garcia (82<sup>nd</sup> - \$2,855). Among those who entered but didn’t make the money are David “ODB” Baker, Frank Kassela, Ronnie Bardah, Gordon Vayo, Dan Heimiller, and Mike Leah.

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The Main Event was the 11th of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at the Bicycle Hotel and Casino. The \$1,675 no-limit hold’em event attracted 842 entries. The total prize pool came to \$1,263,000 and the top 90 players were paid.

The tournament featured two starting flights beginning Saturday, December 10 and Sunday, December 11 at 12 p.m. Flight A boasted 365 entries and advanced 71 while Flight B drew 453 and advanced 81. Both starting flights logged 15 levels of play.

There were 24 Day 2 buy-ins, which got underway on Monday at noon with 176 players remaining. The money bubble burst at the start of Level 18 (~2:15 p.m.) and play wrapped toward the end of Level 25 with 16 players remaining (~12 a.m.).

Day 3 restarted Monday at 1 p.m. and the final table was reached in the middle of level 27 (~2:45 p.m.). Play wrapped up in the middle of level 32 (~8:50 p.m.) making the total duration of the final just over six hours.

Final table seating assignments and chip counts:

Action began with 40 minutes left in the 20,000/40,000 with a 5,000 ante level (Level 27)

Seat 1: Nikhil Gera – 1,250,000 (31 BBs)  
Seat 2: Eddy Sabat – 925,000 (23 BBs)  
Seat 3: Ankush Mandavia – 2,400,000 (60 BBs)  
Seat 4: Harry Arutyunyan – 3,900,000 (97 BBs)\*  
Seat 5: TK Miles – 620,000 (15 BBs)  
Seat 6: Paul Nguyen – 3,400,000 (85 BBs)  
Seat 7: Mark Hamilton – 1,300,000 (32 BBs)  
Seat 8: Alex Massman – 1,400,000 (35 BBs)  
Seat 9: David Mendelson – 675,000 (16 BBs)  
Seat 10: Tuan Le – 660,000 (16 BBs)

*\*Chip leader*

**About the final table:**

1st: Nikhil Gera - \$246,295  
Hometown: Diamond Bar, Ca.  
Occupation: Physician  
WSOP earnings: \$7,242  
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$2,575

2nd: Paul Nguyen - \$152,190  
Hometown: Chicago, Il  
WSOP earnings: \$0  
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$0

3rd: Eddy Sabat - \$112,105  
Hometown: Los Angeles, Ca.  
WSOP earnings: \$1,084,083  
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$111,918

4th: Alex Massman - \$83,660  
Hometown: Calabassas, Ca.  
WSOP earnings: \$29,678  
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$25,956

5th: Ankush Mandavia - \$63,250  
Hometown: Kennesaw, Ga.  
WSOP earnings: \$799,510  
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$0

6th: Harry Arutyunyan - \$48,435  
Hometown: Glendale, Ca.  
WSOP earnings: \$15,320  
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$11,230

7th: Mark Hamilton - \$37,560

Hometown: Northridge, Ca.  
WSOP earnings: \$0  
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$4,510

8th: Tuan Le - \$29,490  
Hometown: Los Angeles, Ca.  
Occupation: Professional Poker Player  
WSOP earnings: \$841,076  
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$7,055

9th: David Mendelson - \$23,440  
Hometown: Beverly Hills, Ca.  
WSOP earnings: \$0  
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$0

Here is the list of gold ring winners from the Bicycle Hotel and Casino:

EVENT #1: Alex Massman defeated 242 players (\$365 NLH) for \$17,795  
EVENT #2: Jerry Rojas defeated 171 players (\$365 NLH Bounty) for \$9,230  
EVENT #3: TJ Thondup defeated 1,245 players (\$365 NLH Monster Stack) for \$77,300  
EVENT #4: Greg Sanchez defeated 122 players (\$365 NLH) for \$10,245  
EVENT #5: Sohale Khalili defeated 109 players (\$580 NLH) for \$16,345  
EVENT #6: Eugene Ji defated 101 players (\$365 Omaha Hi-Lo) for \$9,080  
EVENT #7: Maxwell Lineberger defeated 169 players (\$365 NLH) for \$13,675  
EVENT #8: Martin Ryan defeated 115 players (\$1,125 NLH) for \$34,510  
EVENT #9: Robert Zarzycki defated 217 players (\$365 NLH Turbo) for \$16,280  
EVENT #10: Chris Burleson defeated 214 players (\$365 NLH) for \$16,050  
EVENT #11: Nikhil Gera defeated 842 players (\$1,675 NLH Main Event) for \$246,295  
EVENT #12: Jesse Yaginuma defeated 129 players (\$3,250 NLH High Roller) for \$108,345

Alex Massman of Calabassas, Ca. earned Casino Champion honors of the Bicycle Hotel and Casino series following a win in a preliminary event and a fourth-place finish in the Main Event. In all, Massman earned 90 points toward the 12-tournament race, besting second place James Hoepfner by 17.5. The performance punches Massman's ticket to the 2017 Global Casino Championship where he'll compete alongside the Bicycle Hotel and Casino Main Event champion, Nikhil Gera, for a piece of an up-to \$2 million prize pool and a gold bracelet.

All players who cashed in ring events earned points that apply toward the season-long race to claim one of 56 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](http://WSOP.com).

For more information about the WSOP Circuit, be sure to follow us on Twitter at [@WSOP](https://twitter.com/WSOP) or check out [WSOP.com](http://WSOP.com).

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