

2016-17 World Series of Poker Circuit

Season 13

Rio Hotel and Casino

Las Vegas, Nev.

Event #11

No-Limit Hold'em Main Event

Buy-In: \$1,675

Total Entries: 945

Prize Pool: \$1,417,500

February 25-28, 2017



Ryan Jones Wins Second WSOP Circuit Main Event Ring at the Rio

Jones outlasted 945 entries to earn nearly \$270,000.

Las Vegas, Nev. (1 March, 2017) — “You can’t win a poker tournament without a little luck,” winners will often say, humbly refusing to credit the victory to skill, practice, training, and patience. And sometimes that adage is appropriate, as a lucky winner will fail to accomplish anything more, eventually fading into obscurity. But if one victory can be attributed largely to luck, a repeat performance surely shows it wasn’t a fluke. And Ryan Jones of Burlington, North Carolina, has proven his success is no fluke.

For the second time in two years, Jones won a World Series of Poker Circuit Main Event. He first entered the winner’s circle in 2015 at Harrah’s Cherokee, virtually in his backyard in North Carolina. And then Tuesday night, he won the Main Event at the Rio Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, earning his second Circuit ring and \$269,327.

Jones walked a difficult path to his second ring. He started the final day of the tournament in the middle of the pack. There were 19 players remaining – out of a starting field of 945 entries – and Jones was in ninth place. But he quickly dropped to the cellar. “I didn’t play any hands early,” he recalled. “I just didn’t have any good spots. Then I lost a weird hand I played where I made a questionable river call. It was a straight versus the nut straight, but there was a possible flush on board. I could’ve gotten away from it, and I beat myself up pretty bad about that.”

Despite the error and the harsh self-criticism, Jones held strong and kept his tournament hopes alive. He was still near the bottom of the leaderboard when the tournament was down to 10 players and they combined to the final table. But then he gained momentum, and within about half an hour he was the chip leader.

He almost never looked back. Over six hours later, there were only two players left: Jones and Muruz Yohannes. Jones had a big chip lead, almost 3-1. But Yohannes wouldn’t just roll over, and Jones once again hit a major obstacle. Yohannes won seemingly every hand, and soon he had taken over the lead. In spite of the setback, Jones never let his confidence waver. “I knew I was a better player than him. I knew I just had to grind him down.” He went on to explain how he lost his chips, and why he felt he’d get them back. “For a lot of hands I found myself on the river with the bottom of my range where I had to bluff. And he always had a hand to call. So I

missed a couple draws and had to bluff the river. I'm not the type to just check if I don't have anything. He held over me for a little at the beginning. But I know I'm never out."

His strategy worked. Just as quickly as he'd lost the chip lead, he pulled even, and then pulled ahead. Pretty soon it was over. Jones had his second WSOP Circuit ring, and Yohannes had to settle for second place and a \$166,585 payout.

In the big picture, the obstacles Jones faced from Yohannes were pretty small. "I've been going through some rough times," he said about life away from the poker table. While he understandably preferred not to go into detail about private family matters, he made sure the situation didn't distract him. "People who are close to me have been telling, 'Don't let it affect how you play.' But when I sit down at the poker table, I just zone in. I love the game. That's all I think about when I'm playing poker. I'm just focused."

Jones now joins the club of multiple Circuit ring winners. A few on his competitors on Tuesday are already members: Cody Pack (9th place) has four Circuit rings. Christopher Staats (19th) has two. And Ari Engel (14th), has eight, one shy of the all-time record.

The tournament started on Saturday, February 25th with 945 entries. There were two starting flights, Friday (408 entries) and Saturday (537). A total of 188 players advanced to Day 2 on Monday, and 99 of them finished in the money. Only 19 survived to Day 3, and the last hand was dealt at roughly 2:15 a.m. after a 12-hour final day.

For additional information:

- [Full Results](#)
- [Live Updates from the event](#)
- [Photos from the tournament](#)

After this event, James Alexander holds the lead in the Casino Champion race. The player who accumulates the most overall points during the 12 ring events at the Rio earns the title of 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 the limited at-large bids. Alexander has 82.5 points from four cashes. More information on the points system is available on WSOP.com.

Here are the winners so far at the Rio:

EVENT #1: \$365 No-Limit Hold'em Re-entry – Nate Bandy bested a field of 1,498 players for \$75,364.

EVENT #2: \$365 No-Limit Hold'em – James Alexander bested a field of 255 players for \$18,744.

EVENT #3: \$365 Mixed No-Limit Hold'em / Pot-Limit Omaha – Mordechai Kirschenbaum bested a field of 180 players for \$15,124.

EVENT #5: \$365 No-Limit Hold'em Turbo – Adam Ross bested a field of 300 players for \$21,595.
EVENT #6: \$365 No-Limit Hold'em – Kenny Nguyen bested a field of 329 players for \$23,196.
EVENT #7: \$365 Pot-Limit Omaha – Seth Foster bested a field of 151 players for \$12,231.
EVENT #8: \$365 No-Limit Hold'em – Christopher Leong bested a field of 376 players for \$24,812.
EVENT #9: \$365 HORSE – Kyle Loman bested a field of 213 entries for \$16,617.
EVENT #10: \$365 No-Limit Hold'em Monster Stack – Eric Blair bested a field of 780 players for \$46,803.
EVENT #11: \$1,675 No-Limit Hold'em MAIN EVENT – Ryan Jones bested a field of 945 entries for \$269,327.
EVENT #12: \$365 No-Limit Hold'em (1-Day) – Daniel Pearlman bested a field of 228 players for \$17,103.
EVENT #13: \$2,200 No-Limit Hold'em High Roller – Brandon Wittmeyer bested a field of 139 entries for \$77,840.

All rings at the Rio are furnished by [Jostens](#), the official ring supplier of the 2016-17 WSOP Circuit season.

For more information about the WSOP Circuit, follow us on Twitter at [@WSOP](#) or visit [WSOP.com](#).

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