



WSOP CIRCUIT 2017-18 MAIN EVENT REPORT

Circuit Stop:	Hard Rock Tulsa	Date:	2 October 2017
Event:	No-Limit Hold'em Main Event	Entries:	904
Buy-in:	\$1,675	Prizepool:	\$1,356,000

JOE GOTLIEB WINS HARD ROCK MAIN!

Recreational grinder plays the role of underdog, upsets stacked final table

Late Monday night, Joe Gotlieb became the WSOP Circuit's newest first-time winner. And he announced his arrival in a big way. Gotlieb won the \$1,675 Main Event at Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood, claiming the gold ring and the top prize of \$257,638. He also earned a free seat to the season-ending Global Casino Championship.

Gotlieb, 52, is a small business owner from Hollywood, Florida. By day, he deals in cell phone parts. By night, he's a poker player. The business has been struggling a bit lately, and Gotlieb decided to explore his options as a full-time grinder.

"I wanted to give it a shot at going pro," he said. "This was it. This was my shot at that."

A Main Event win on the the WSOP Circuit is always something to brag about, but Gotlieb's performance was particularly impressive. He plays a unique style, something that may have helped him outlast a final table that was stacked with danger.

Triple bracelet winner Brian Hastings was among them before dropping out in fourth place, just ahead of Brett Bader and Chad Eveslage, two dangerous pros in their own right. At the end of the long day, Gotlieb found himself heads-up with Asher Conniff, a former WPT World Champion and one of the game's more dangerous young players.

Conniff began the heads-up match with a significant lead, but the duel was entirely lopsided in Gotlieb's favor. Fittingly, it ended in a coin flip for 95 percent of the total chips in play.

Conniff was dealt ace-king, Gotlieb pocket sevens, and the two got it all in preflop. The latter flopped a set to put himself two cards from the win, but Conniff did turn out to a gutshot straight. The river was a miss for him, though, giving the pot and the title to the underdog.

Competitive gaming has been in Gotlieb's blood since childhood. He's a former chess champion and math trophy winner, and he finds poker to be a comparable mental outlet. "Whenever I played games, I was always good at them," he said. "And when I wasn't, I found a way to win anyway.

In the moments after claiming the title, Gotlieb struggled to find the words to capture his emotions. He spent a long while gazing silently at his payout ticket, which showed the details of his big score. It's a career-best by a big margin, and Gotlieb finally found one quiet word to sum up his feelings.

"Wow..."

MEET THE LATEST WSOP CIRCUIT RING WINNER

Name:	Joe Gotlieb	Age:	52
Nationality:	USA	Profession:	Business owner
Birthplace:	North Miami, Fla.	WSOP Bracelets:	0
Current Residence:	Hollywood, Fla.	Previous WSOP Circuit Rings:	0

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