



WSOP CIRCUIT 2017-18 EVENT REPORT

Circuit Stop:	Choctaw Casino and Resort	Date:	13 November 2017
(Durant, OK)		Entries:	623
Event:	No-Limit Hold'em	Prizepool:	\$186,900
Buy-in:	\$365		

VIRGIL MCVICKER WINS FINAL RING OF CHOCTAW SERIES

Father of poker pro, Jesse McVicker, wins \$39,225 and first ring in one of his first recorded cashes.

When the poker world thinks of a poker player with the last name McVicker, they tend to think of Jesse, a poker pro from Lawton, Oklahoma. On Monday night, Jesse's father Virgil, showed that his son isn't the only one with skills on the felt.

With Jesse on his rail throughout the entire final table, smiling ear-to-ear the entire time, Virgil McVicker defeated 623 entries to win his first World Series of Poker Circuit ring in the \$365 no-limit hold'em. It was a special moment for the father-son duo with the win meaning more than just money and a piece of WSOP jewelry. When the final card hit the felt, you heard Jesse over the rest of the crowd.

"My dad has a ring!" he shouted from the rail as he ran around the tournament area celebrating.

Virgil, who was the man who introduced Jesse to the game of poker, spent his career in the military. During a big chunk of Jesse's childhood, Virgil was off in a foreign land fighting for his country. He spent 31 years in the military and served multiple tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan as a Chief Warrant Officer 4 in the Army.

He hopes that the win can bring the two closer together and feels guilty that he wasn't around more often while Jesse was growing up. He wants to help his son shy away from the pitfalls of life in a casino.

“Let me put it like this,” said Virgil. “You always want the best for your children and I feel like I let him down because I had to do my job. It’s tough to see him because he has so much talent where he is now, but I still protect him. I still show up and I will tell you something. I was down on my knees praying at four or five this morning praying, just so that I could share this with him.”

According to Jesse, his father only came to Choctaw to pick him up. Having partied a little too hard, he was unable to drive home. Virgil made the drive from Lawton to Durant with the intention of helping his son stay safe. He arrived in Durant and saw that there was one last flight to enter in the event and bagged 38,000 from his 10,000-chip starting stack without ever having to re-enter.

He came back on Day 2 and battled with his short stack. He spun it up and made his way to the final table as one of the bigger stacks. His time spent in combat gave him the never give up attitude that helped him persevere through the swings.

“I just believe that you can move mountains,” said the elder McVicker. “I’ve been in combat and I never worried about dying. And people surrounded themselves around me because I thought that. They felt safe.”

Whether Virgil was talking about his time in the military or his time spent at the poker table over the last two days, he always centered it around one thing – his son.

“I gave 31 years to this country of my life. It’s taken its toll. I guarantee you. That’s what made me so stubborn. I milked 8,500 in chips. The buy-in, you get 10,000 and I milked that stack for like three or four hours. I continued to do it. I just kept praying and there was a purpose behind it. To try and teach that young man right there something, you know? We are all going to leave this world eventually and all you are going to have is what you left behind and who you are.”

While Virgil was en route to victory in his first WSOP-related cash, Jesse was bragging to anybody that would listen about how good of a poker player his father was. Virgil learned how to play the game when he was a young kid playing penny ante five-card and seven-card stud with his uncles and grandfather.

Virgil passed that on to Jesse and he couldn’t be a prouder father when it comes to Jesse’s ability on the felt.

“He’s a wizard in math,” said Virgil about Jesse. “He was very smart. Everybody knew Jesse was smart and talented. Then, I maybe messed up and started teaching poker. He could calculate those odds that they are showing on TV. He could look at the pot and he could calculate whether the risk to win that pot if it was enough to risk it. He started teaching me, I swear.”

During another tournament Jesse was playing at another casino in the state, Virgil watched his son square off with some of the best in the game. He watched one of the all-time legends

of the game, Scotty Nguyen, steer clear of his son. It was a proud moment for him as a father.

“I was watching him play with Scotty Nguyen over at the other room, in the main event,” recounts Virgil. “He would stay away from Jesse every time, I’m telling you. He knew how good he was. I know him. I know Jesse. After this, if he could just get right, he’s capable of winning four or five World Series bracelets. That’s how good he is.”

Getting Jesse right is all that Virgil wants to come out of his win. It’s not about the money or the accomplishments. He wants to try and make things right with his son for missing out on so much of his childhood. He wants to teach him to have some balance in his life.

“It’s too late for me to try and fight with him,” said the 55-year-old. “I got to have some sort of a relationship with him. I got to show him that there is a life. That you can be a professional gambler, you can be a poker player, but you can have a life outside of all this stuff. You know what I mean?”

At the end of the day, however, Virgil is the first of the McVicker family to win a ring. He’s not going to let his son live that down.

“I can’t wait to rub it in his face on the way home tomorrow.”

MEET THE LATEST WSOP CIRCUIT RING WINNER

Name: Virgil T. McVicker
Nationality: American
Birthplace: Bellevue, WA
Current Residence: Lawton, OK

Age: 55
Profession: Retired Army CW4
WSOP Bracelets: 0
Previous WSOP Circuit Rings: 0

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