



2010-2011 World Series of Poker Circuit

Horseshoe Council Bluffs

August 20-21

Ring Event # 1

No-Limit Hold'em

Buy-In: \$300 + \$45

Number of Entries: 300

Total Prize Money: \$85,050

Final Results:

1. Jeffrey Epstein	Omaha, NE	\$20,411
2. Anthony Bower	Ankeny, IA	\$12,615
3. Robert Georato	Naples, FL	\$9,153
4. Daniel Drake	Omaha, NE	\$6,753
5. Scott Clark	O'Fallon, IL	\$5,065
6. Daniel Walker	Omaha, NE	\$3,860
7. Phil Mader	Grand Island, NE	\$2,987
8. Jason Curlless	Overland Park, KS	\$2,347
9. Adam Hartle	Sioux Falls, SD	\$1,873
10. Wayne Sahl	Denison, LA	\$1,516
11. Douglas Codner	Wood River, NE	\$1,516
12. Darrel Lottes	York, NE	\$1,516
16. Bryan Barnell	Lincoln, NE	\$1,038
17. Matthew Wells	Rochester, MN	\$1,038
18. Kristopher Wilcox	Concordia, KS	\$1,038
19. Shaun McBride	Kansas City, MO	\$878
20. Nathan Nielsen	Exira, IA	\$878
21. Andrew Raddeman	Neillsville, WI	\$878
22. Christopher Hill	La Vista, NE	\$753
23. James Haivala	Spearfish, SD	\$753
24. Douglas Krause	Wood River, NE	\$753
25. Ryan Forry	Firth, NE	\$654
26. Richard Pressler	Shawnee, KS	\$654
27. Michael Stovall	Oxford, NC	\$654
28. John Beane	Omaha, NE	\$577
29. Craig Spencer	Sedalia, CO	\$577
30. Minh Diep	Sioux City, IA	\$289

Sports Center Owner Jeff Epstein Wins First Ring Event in 6-Hour Final Table

He Misses Royal Flush Draw on Final Hand, but Settles for Winning Straight

Council Bluffs, IA—The seventh season of the WSOP Circuit tour, revamped, improved, and pumped up with new and attractive added features, made its eagerly awaited first-stop debut here at Horseshoe Council Bluffs. And with the schedule moved up from February to August, even the weather was much better. This stop will be offering 33 events, including H.O.R.S.E. and Omaha tourneys.

Winner of the first ring event, after a six-hour final table, was Jeff Epstein of Omaha, who owns the Omaha Sports Academy, a youth basketball center. He's won numerous small tournaments online, but this is his first live cash. On the final hand he flopped a draw to a royal flush, missed, but settled for a straight. The win brought him \$20,411, along with a diamond-encrusted gold trophy ring. Epstein, who with his father also operates a paper recycling plant, began playing online five years ago.

Epstein, describing himself as a tight-aggressive player, said the final table was tough, with constant raising. "I just tried to keep my wits about me, played patiently and tried to get my money in at the right time," he said. He also paid tribute to the "great staff and great tournament."

Major changes in the Circuit tour include:

- Standardized structures and payouts for all events, with the Main Event buy-in lowered from \$5,000 to a more affordable \$1,500. (However, four of the 12 or more regional Circuit championships will have \$10,000 buy-ins along with national TV coverage.)

- A cumulative ranking system throughout the season, with points awarded for each open ring event.

- A season-ending National Championship tournament for 100 players who automatically qualify via cumulative rankings or performance-based criteria. This tournament will be at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas prior to the WSOP and will have a \$1 million prize pool with a WSOP gold bracelet for the winner. The "Casino Champion" points leader and championship event winner for each Circuit event earn seats. The other two ways to qualify are by making the final table at any of the four regional championships and by accumulating enough points at all the Circuit stops to be in the top 36.

This event drew 300 players who generated a prize pool of \$85,050. Day one of this event ended with 27 players still left, and they returned the next day to play down to the final table. Leading in chips with 880,000 was Danny Walker.

Here were the starting chip counts:

Seat

1. Jeff Epstein	377,000
2. Scott Clark	249,000
3. Adam Hartle	71,000
4. Dan Drake	294,000
5. Jason Curless	171,000
6. Danny Walker	880,000
7. Rob Georato	507,000
8. Phil Mader	193,000
9. Tony Bower	238,000

Action began with blinds of 3,000-6,000 and 2,000 antes, playing hour levels. After 45 minutes, there were three all-in survivals with everyone still around. The players then took a short break, returning to blinds of 8,000-16,000 and 3,000 antes.

Ninth Place: A half hour later we lost our first player. Adam Hartle was all in from the big blind with [Ah] [2h]. He paired his deuce on a flop of 10-2-3, but he couldn't catch Walker's pocket 6s and went out ninth, which paid \$1,873. Hartle, 27, is from Sioux Falls, South Dakota and is employed as a server at the Olive Garden restaurant. He started playing with friends six years ago and this is his poker highlight.

Eighth Place: Walker quickly knocked out a second player when his pocket kings held up against Jason Curless' [Ac] [Kc]. With a board of 9-5-10-Q, Curless needed an ace or an inside-straight jack to survive, but a river trey ended his chances. Eighth paid \$2,347. Curless is 36 and a data analyst hailing from Overland Park, Kansas. He started playing 15 years ago.

Seventh Place: Soon after, with blinds now at 10,000-20,000 and 3,000 antes, a short-chipped Phil Mader was all in with A-2, dominated by Scott "Scotty" Clark's A-K. Mader was drawing dead when the board showed 5-J-9-K, pairing Clark's king. Going out seventh, Mader took home \$2,987. Mader is 48, a farmer from Grand Island, Nebraska, who's played 30 years. He has a cash in the 2009 WSOP Main Event.

Sixth Place: Walker, starting as chip leader, had been losing pots since his first two knock-outs, and was now down to 150,000. After Epstein pushed in, he called with A-Q, only to see Epstein turn up A-K. In a replay of the hand that busted Mader, Walker was also drawing dead after the board showed 2-2-6-K, and settled for \$3,860 for sixth. Walker, the most credentialed player at the table, is a 25-year-old pro from Omaha who learned the game from a book 18 years ago. He has a win in a \$500 No Limit Circuit event here and a second in a \$300 No Limit tournament, along with a cash in a WSOP razz event, and a Bellagio victory. His biggest cash-out was \$94,810 for a win at Commerce Casino's L.A. Poker Classic.

Fifth Place: With two minutes left at this level, Clark was all in from the big blind with [Ah] [7d], up against Tony Bower's suited A-K. Amazingly, for the third time in a row, A-K did the trick when each time a king left a player drawing dead after it paired his opponent! This time the board showed 8-8-K-4, with a meaningless river 5. Clark, 45, is an "unemployable" full-time player, formerly in construction, who also does poker writing. He's from O'Fallon, Illinois and has played for 25 years. Fifth paid him \$5,065.

Players now went on dinner break. At this point, Bower held the lead with about 950,000, followed by Epstein with just over 900,000, and trailed by Dan Drake with around 600,000 and Rob Georato with 540,000. Blinds now were 12,000-24,000 with 4,000 antes. Action tightened and all four were still in action when blinds went to 15,000-30,000 with 4,000 antes.

Fourth Place: Half-way through the level, we finally lost another player. Drake raised from the button to 75,000, Georato made it 180,000 to go from the small blind, and Drake moved in for 220,000 more. Georato had A-J, Drake had K-10, and he departed in fourth place after the board came all rags with 7-7-3-8-6. Drake, nicknamed “Dapperdanl,” is a 54-year-old purchasing agent from Omaha with 36 years of poker experience, starting in family games.

Third Place: With blinds at 20,000-40,000 with 5,000 antes, the pot of the night came down. Epstein and Georato went head-to-head, each pushing in about 1.2 million in chips, Epstein slightly more. Epstein had pocket 10s, Georato [Ad] [Qd]. A flop of 7-9-7 with two diamonds gave Georato a nut flush draw. Then an offsuit 10 and jack were dealt. Georato missed his flush and went out third while Epstein raked in a huge pot with a set of 10s. Third place paid \$9,153. Georato, 41, is a teacher from Naples, Florida who began playing as a teenager. He has a half-dozen WSOP cashes, the largest being \$38,600 for finishing 195th in the 2008 Main Event. He also enjoys travel.

Second Place: Heads-up, Epstein enjoyed close to a 6-1 chip lead over his final opponent. On the last hand, Epstein held [Kc] [Jc] to [Kh] [10h] for Bower. A flop of [Ks] [Tc] [Qc] gave Epstein a paired king and a draw to a royal flush. He bet 80,000 and Bower moved in with kings and 10s. Then Epstein pulled ahead when a [9h] on the turn gave him a straight. Bower could still win by making a full house or split if a jack gave him the same straight, but a [6d] ended the evening. For second, Bower took home \$12,615. Bower is a 29-year-old engineer from Des Moines, Iowa who started playing in home games nine years ago. He has a Prairie Meadows win to his credit.