Official Final Results:

2. William Criego  PRIOR LAKE, MN, US  $25,012
4. Paul Sokoloff  TORONTO, ON, CA  $13,266
5. Blake Idle  West Palm Beach, FL, US  $9,918
7. Jovan Sudar  OMAHA, NE, US  $5,829
8. Katherine Bowen  Judson, TX, US  $4,579
10. Jonathan Tomayo  Humble, TX, US  $2,963
11. Benjamin MIntz  New Orleans, LA, US  $2,963
12. Aaron Massey  CHICAGO, IL, US  $2,963
13. Christy Pham  LAKE MARY, FL, US  $2,440
15. Michael Palumbo  FORT MYERS, FL, US  $2,440

Tournament Report:

What a Comeback!

Joseph Patalano Overcomes 16 to 1 Chip Disadvantage Heads Up and Wins WSOP Circuit Title

William “the Rock” Criego Gets Cracked by Patalano in Final Showdown

Main Event Championship Underway With Big Field
West Palm Beach, FL (February 25 2012) – The World Series of Poker Circuit at the Palm Beach Kennel Club is now entering the homestretch.

The record-breaking tournament series, now in its second consecutive year in West Palm Beach, is fast approaching the final weekend of what has been an action-packed two weeks filled with many exciting moments.

The latest thrill came on late Saturday afternoon when Joseph Patalano, from Wellington, FL overcome a monstrous chip disadvantage when playing heads up and ultimately came back to win his first WSOP Circuit title.

Patalano was down by a gargantuan 16 to 1 margin when playing against a formidable opponent named William “the Rock” Criego, from Minnesota. Unshaken by his plight, Patalano patiently waited for optimal situations and slowly accumulated chips with each passing hand. About an hour into the duel, Patalano had reversed the chip count on his opponent and went on to claim victory.

Patalano collected $40,467 in prize money. For his victory, Patalano was presented with the coveted gold ring, which is the ultimate token of achievement for winning a WSOP Circuit tournament.

The champion is a 44-year-old investigator who works in the railroad industry. He is originally from New York and now resides in Florida. Patalano, who goes by “JP” to his friends, has been playing poker recreationally for about 15 years. Some of his friends suggested he give up the game at one point. He will now proudly wave his gold rig at them, and show them that all things are possible with perseverance.

Amazingly, Patalano’s feat at the final table was an encore performance of the first day of play. At one point early in the tournament, Patalano was down to his last 2,800 in chips when the average stack size was 50,000, or so. He had only a few blinds but was able to make a spectacular comeback and make the final table. Then, magic happened a second time.

Patalano is happily married and has “two great sons.”

Officially listed as Event #9 -- the $1,000 buy-in No-Limit Hold‘em tournament attracted 149 entries – a nice field size considering this was double the highest buy-in amount up until this point. The total prize pool came to $144,530. The top 15 players were paid. All players who cashed received WSOP Circuit National Championship ranking points.

A full list of all players that cashed in Event #9 can be seen at WSOP.COM

The first day’s action resulted in the elimination of everyone short of the final table. The finalists were eliminated as follows:

9th Place – Justin “Juicey” Oliver finished in ninth place. He is the self-described “trophy boyfriend” of a “trophy girlfriend.” The jokester lives in Toronto, Ontario (Canada).

8th Place – Kat Bowen, who is self-employed and lives in Union Grove, TX finished in eighth place.

7th Place – Jovan Sudar, a 29-year-old poker pro from Omaha, NE finished in seventh place.
**6th Place** – Lee Childs, a longtime professional poker player and instructor from Reston, VA ended up as the sixth-place finisher. He has numerous poker accomplishments – most notably a seventh-place finish in the 2007 WSOP Main Event Championship. He also won a WSOP Circuit gold ring at Harrah’s Atlantic City in 2009.

**5th Place** – Blake Idle, who works in sales and resides in North Palm Beach, FL finished in fifth place.

**4th Place** – Paul “Bicycle” Sokoloff, a 42-year-old self-employed business owner from Toronto, Ontario (Canada) finished in fourth place. He has previously won major events in Tunica and Biloxi (Mississippi).

**3rd Place** – Julian Sacks, a 20-year-old student from Ridgewood, NJ took third place. He is a junior in college at the moment. Sacks hopes to eventually work in finance, on Wall Street. Sacks previously cashed at a few other major tournaments, including the Heartland Poker Tour.

**2nd Place** – William “the Rock” Criego finished as the runner up. He is a 53-year-old business owner from Prior Lake, MN. This was his second WSOP Circuit final table appearance and third in-the-money finish. He’s also cashed at the WSOP in Las Vegas, and at other major tournaments around the country. Second place paid $25,012.

**1st Place** – Joseph “JP” Patalano earned a breakthrough victory and earned a well-deserved $40,467 in prize money for his victory. This marked Patalano’s first win in a major poker tournament.

With his victory, Patalano moves near the top of the leaderboard in this WSOP Circuit stop’s “Best All-Around Player” standings – with 1st and 12th place finishes here at this stop. The current leader is Charles Flett, who currently has two deep runs -- second and seventh place finishes – good for the highest point total. Here are all the gold ring winners, so far:

**EVENT #1** – Anh Lu defeated 2,607 players in NLHE and won $183,750
**EVENT #2** – Loni Harwood defeated 500 players in NLHE and won $30,994
**EVENT #3** – Jason Reep defeated 247 players in HORSE and won $17,270
**EVENT #4** – Adam Cook defeated 413 players in NLHE and won $26,142
**EVENT #5** – Jake Schindler defeated 391 players in 6-HANDED NLHE and won $24,736
**EVENT #6** – Joseph Casella defeated 353 players and won $23,315
**EVENT #7** – James Henson defeated 290 players and won $33,432
**EVENT #8** – Brian O’Donoghue defeated 279 players and won $19,487
**EVENT #9** – Joseph Patalano defeated 149 players and won $40,467

The player who accumulates the most overall points in the PBKC’s twelve combined gold ring tournaments receives a pre-paid entry into the $1 million 2011-2012 WSOP Circuit National Championship. At least two players from this tournament series will qualify for the WSOP Circuit National Championship, which is classified as a WSOP gold bracelet event. The other automatic qualifier will be the winner of Main Event championship (to be held Jan. Feb. 25-27).

With the first nine tournaments wrapped up, there are still three more gold ring events remaining in what is being billed as a “12 rings in 12 days” poker series. The WSOP Circuit at the Palm Beach Kennel Club continues through February 27th. This year’s schedule includes not only all the gold ring events, but multiple second-chance tournaments, single table and mega satellites, plus cash games going around the clock inside the action-packed poker room.
MORE ABOUT THE WSOP CIRCUIT AT PALM BEACH KENNEL CLUB

This marks the second consecutive season that the Palm Beach Kennel Club (PBKC) has hosted a WSOP Circuit stop. Last year’s attendance and prize pool figures were so strong, that the decision to return once again to sunny South Florida once again was inevitable.

Indeed, PBKC continues to distance itself from the other dogs in Florida’s highly-competitive poker race. This year, PBKC will be hosting 12 WSOP Circuit gold ring poker tournaments over a two-week period. Tournaments officially began on Thursday, February 16th with Event #1 – which included a one-million dollar guarantee. This marked the first time in history that any tournament of that size ($500 buy-in) offered a guaranteed million-dollar payout.

The following 12 days are sure to be packed with multiple tournaments and around-the-clock cash-game action. The poker festival concludes on February 28th with the final table of the $1,600 buy-in Main Event Championship.

“Florida poker has officially arrived and partnering with the World Series of Poker is as special as it gets,” said Noah Carbonne, Director of Poker Operations for the Palm Beach Kennel Club. "We’re thrilled to be involved with the Rolls Royce of poker – which is the WSOP. For all of us here at the Palm Beach Kennel Club, the State of Florida, and most importantly the thousands of poker players here in the southeast as well as those attending from around the country, we are ready to make history – especially with our million-dollar guarantee, which has never been offered before for an event of its size."

Gold ring tournaments are only a fraction of what’s on the poker menu at the Palm Beach Kennel Club. Second-chance No-Limit Hold’em tournaments will be running from day one. The deep-stack tournaments will cost $235 to enter and begin nightly at 7 pm. Satellites for all gold ring tournaments will also be going regularly inside the poker room. Several mega-satellites for the Main Event Championship will also be offered.

The PBKC initially opened in 1932, making it one of the oldest pari-mutual racetracks in the country. Owned and operated by the famous Rooney Family (which also owns the NFL’s Pittsburgh Steelers), the track has been a popular attraction and a leisurely way to spend an afternoon for locals and visitors alike. Known for its live greyhound racing and simulcasts from numerous racetracks all over the country, PBKC jettisoned into a new era last year when it expanded its poker facility, which is now one of the largest poker rooms in Florida.

About a year ago, PBKC expanded its poker operations to include 64 tournament tables. PBKC is the first dog track to ever host a WSOP-related tournament. Each final table takes place in a premium location near the main grandstand, which enables everyone close to the poker action to cheer on the greyhounds, as well. Naturally, betting windows will be close by for those who want to mix in some racing action with poker playing. Dog races take place most days starting at 1 pm. There are also dog races nightly on weekends.

PBKC is conveniently located just steps away from the West Palm Beach international Airport, which offers direct flights from all over the country. Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport is also close by. Several hotels are situated near the dog track and poker facility, to accommodate all budgets. The cardroom offers regular shuttle service to and from at least three nearby hotels. Special hotel rate packages for poker players are available.

It’s not too late to be part of the biggest poker event in Florida history. West Palm Beach is well-known for its sandy white beaches, luxury hotels, fine restaurants, great shopping, and plenty of sunshine. And now, there will be great poker action around the clock at the PBKC. The complete schedule and structure sheets for all events can be viewed at WSOP.COM
PBKC is the 11th of 17 WSOP Circuit stops this season. All players over age 21 are eligible to compete for a seat in the $1 million freeroll event which crowns the WSOP Circuit National Championship point race. This season's top 100 players who qualify will compete in the first-ever nationally-televised championship, which will take place in Las Vegas, in May 2012. The winner of that extraordinary event will receive the most coveted prize in all of poker, a WSOP gold bracelet.

Note: Be sure and follow all WSOP news and updates on Twitter @wsop

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