



**CAESARS**  
ATLANTIC CITY



**2011/2012 World Series of Poker Circuit  
Caesars Atlantic City  
Event #10  
Main Event Championship  
No-Limit Hold'em  
Buy-In: \$1,500 (+100)  
Total Entries: 641  
Total Prize Pool: \$932,655  
March 10-12, 2012**

**Official Final Results:**

|    |                      |                        |           |
|----|----------------------|------------------------|-----------|
| 1  | Ryan Eriqezzo        | DANBURY, CT, US        | \$191,194 |
| 2  | David Zeitlin        | BROOKLYN, NY, US       | \$118,307 |
| 3  | Troy Erickson        | Martinsburg, WV, US    | \$86,774  |
| 4  | Garry Gates          | HENDERSON, NV, US      | \$64,530  |
| 5  | Eugene Fouksman      | MANALAPPAN, NJ, US     | \$48,638  |
| 6  | Roland Israelashvili | FOREST HILLS, NY, US   | \$37,148  |
| 7  | Jeremy Halaska       | North Olmsted, OH, US  | \$28,744  |
| 8  | Ryan Higgins         | DEUX-MONTAGNES, QC, CA | \$22,533  |
| 9  | Tyler Kenney         | LONG BEACH, NY, US     | \$17,888  |
| 10 | Aaron Overton        | PHILADELPHIA, PA, US   | \$14,382  |
| 11 | Cameron Hamilton     | FALLS CHURCH, VA, US   | \$14,382  |
| 12 | Vinny Pahuja         | HICKSVILLE, NY, US     | \$14,382  |
| 13 | Josh Brikis          | Pittsburgh, PA, US     | \$11,705  |
| 14 | David Johnson        | Brigantine, NJ, US     | \$11,705  |
| 15 | Justin Liberto       | Fallston, MD, US       | \$11,705  |
| 16 | Norman Rodriguez     | New York, NY, DO       | \$9,644   |
| 17 | Beznik Ziba          | New York, NY, US       | \$9,644   |
| 18 | Gregory Brletich     | CORAOPOLIS, PA, US     | \$9,644   |
| 19 | Alex Rivera          | Hamburg, NY, US        | \$8,039   |
| 20 | John Andress         | DOYLESTOWN, PA, US     | \$8,039   |
| 21 | Christopher Lovett   | MOORESTOWN, NJ, US     | \$8,039   |
| 22 | Edward Pham          | LANSDALE, PA, US       | \$6,780   |
| 23 | Julian Schulman      | Woodcliff Lake, NJ, US | \$6,780   |
| 24 | Michael Wolf         | Staten Island, NY, US  | \$6,780   |
| 25 | Eddie Carroll        | DAYTON, OH, US         | \$5,792   |
| 26 | John Cernuto         | LAS VEGAS, NV, US      | \$5,792   |
| 27 | James Maltz          | BRIGANTINE, NJ, US     | \$5,792   |
| 28 | Michael Woll         | MANAHAWKIN, NJ, US     | \$4,999   |

|    |                        |                         |         |
|----|------------------------|-------------------------|---------|
| 29 | Jerry Monroe           | COLUMBUS, GA, US        | \$4,999 |
| 30 | Alemu Makonen          | Edmonton, AB, CA        | \$4,999 |
| 31 | James Dunham           | ORLANDO, FL, US         | \$4,365 |
| 32 | Francis Vizza          | DIX HILLS, NY, US       | \$4,365 |
| 33 | Matthew Mazzeo         | EAST WILLISTON, NY, US  | \$4,365 |
| 34 | Travis Greenawalt      | Landisville, PA, US     | \$3,861 |
| 35 | Eric Doerr             | Newark, DE, US          | \$3,861 |
| 36 | Ramana Epparla         | READING, PA, US         | \$3,861 |
| 37 | Mark Wahba             | CLEVELAND, OH, US       | \$3,451 |
| 38 | Nghi Tran              | VAUGHN, ON, CA          | \$3,451 |
| 39 | Paul Greim             | HELMETTA, NJ, US        | \$3,451 |
| 40 | Ralph Deangelus        | Berlin, MD, US          | \$3,451 |
| 41 | David Novak            | Cherry Hill, NJ, US     | \$3,451 |
| 42 | JASON COHEN            | WASHINGTON, DC, US      | \$3,451 |
| 43 | James Anderson         | WOOSTER, OH, US         | \$3,451 |
| 44 | Soheb Porbandarwala    | Stamford, CT, US        | \$3,451 |
| 45 | Ardic Ervin            | Fishersville, VA, US    | \$3,451 |
| 46 | Daniel Bazgon          | Marlton, NJ, US         | \$3,115 |
| 47 | Eswaramoorth Kaliappan | Edina, MN, US           | \$3,115 |
| 48 | James Mitchell         | ATLANTIC CITY, NJ, US   | \$3,115 |
| 49 | Dajuan Whorley         | ACCOKEEK, MD, US        | \$3,115 |
| 50 | Paul Spitzberg         | Tenafly, NJ, US         | \$3,115 |
| 51 | Robert Ervin           | Mount Sidney, VA, US    | \$3,115 |
| 52 | Onofrio Reina          | CARTERET, NJ, US        | \$3,115 |
| 53 | Brian Reinert          | Lawrenceville, GA, US   | \$3,115 |
| 54 | Yan Neiman             | Maple, ON, CA           | \$3,115 |
| 55 | Jack Schroth           | Ewing, NJ, US           | \$2,845 |
| 56 | Cynthia Albert         | GERMANTOWN, PA, US      | \$2,845 |
| 57 | Manh Nguyen            | HOMESTEAD, PA, US       | \$2,845 |
| 58 | Anthony Newman         | BROOKLYN, NY, US        | \$2,845 |
| 59 | Bill Varga             | PARIS, KY, US           | \$2,845 |
| 60 | Leonid Vizirov         | CHALFRONT, VA, US       | \$2,845 |
| 61 | Joseph Palma           | Bensalem, PA, US        | \$2,845 |
| 62 | Oscar Castagna         | NEW YORK, NY, US        | \$2,845 |
| 63 | Alberto Pestana        | Nanuet, NY, US          | \$2,845 |
| 64 | Ron Barak              | DEERFIELD BEACH, FL, US | \$2,611 |
| 65 | Phong Nguyen           | BRISTOW, VA, US         | \$2,611 |
| 66 | Lee Sommers            | Owings Mills, MD, US    | \$2,611 |
| 67 | Salvatore Busacca      | COLTS NECK, NJ, US      | \$2,611 |
| 68 | Orson Young            | OCEANPORT, NJ, US       | \$2,611 |
| 69 | Soung Kim              | Brooklyn, NY, US        | \$2,611 |
| 70 | Matthew Sutton         | RICHLANDS, NC, US       | \$2,611 |
| 71 | Richard Austin         | LANSDALE, PA, US        | \$2,611 |
| 72 | Michael Dentale        | BROOKLYN, NY, US        | \$1,306 |
| 73 | Alok Arora             | Wilmington, DE, US      | \$1,306 |

## Tournament Report:

**Ryan Eriquezzo Wins Caesars Atlantic City's Main Event Championship**

## **27-Year-Old Connecticut-Based Poker Pro Wins Nearly \$200K Top Prize**

### **Caesars Atlantic City Sets New Main Event Record – 641 Entrants**

### **WSOP Circuit at Caesars Atlantic City Concludes Successful Two-Week Run**

**Atlantic City, NJ (March 12, 2012)** – Ryan Eriqezzo has endured nearly a lifetime of ups and downs in poker, all within a relatively short five-year time span. In a very real sense, he embodies the face and persona of the new generation of young poker pros – having accumulated an extensive catalogue of poker experiences that’s way beyond his years.

The 27-year-old professional poker player from Danbury, CT has been playing poker seriously for quite a while. He initially burst upon the consciousness of those who follow the game back at the 2010 World Series of Poker Main Event. He ended up finishing 131<sup>st</sup> – which is pretty impressive when considering there were 7,319 players that year.

Some time later, Eriqezzo won his first gold ring at the WSOP Circuit stop at Harrah’s New Orleans. Thereafter, he began playing in more events, with progressively larger buy-ins. Then, things started to go badly.

Eriqezzo ran very terribly over the next year, enduring the negative side of what the math gurus like to refer to as “variance.” While the swings of tournament poker can be quite severe, the excuse of running badly doesn’t pay the bills. Indeed, running bad is the precursor to forced early retirement from the game and a doorstep to the unemployment line.

But Eriqezzo persistently stuck things out and on a cool Monday evening in March on the Atlantic City Boardwalk, he won the biggest title and cash prize of his life, to date. Eriqezzo topped a record-sized field in the WSOP Circuit Main Event Championship, held at Caesars Atlantic City and became a poker champion, once again.

Eriqezzo earned three things on with his victory. First and foremost the victory paid \$191,194 in prize money. He also won his second WSOP Circuit gold ring. Third – and in some ways, most important – Eriqezzo regained some lost confidence and returned to what he hopes will be an upward trajectory to the top of the game.

“No doubt, this was the biggest win of my life,” a jubilant Eriqezzo said afterward. “This was as tough a table as I’ve played and I could not be happier.”

Eriqezzo’s supreme moment of personal and professional triumph was witnessed by a large gallery of follows who screamed with ecstasy as the final river card of the tournament was dealt out at past midnight, giving the new champion and pair of kings. With victory ensured, Eriqezzo ran over to his rail of supporters and high-fived the crowd, which engulfed him like a fireman running out of a burning house.

After a few minutes when the smoke had cleared and the flames of passion had died down, Eriqezzo quietly posed for the cameras as the WSOP Circuit’s latest poker champion. It seemed a moment of both satisfaction and contemplation.

In his mind must have been the realization that all moments of glory are fleeting. All wins are temporary -- the precursor to bigger challenges ahead. It’s a lesson Eriqezzo knows too well from his past, Which makes him perfectly suited to endure and potentially overcome, again and again.

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Also of note was Roland Israelashvili's sixth-place finish. He won this same event two years ago. Israelashvili has emerged as one of the WSOP Circuit's most successful players over the past three seasons, accumulating 22 in-the-money finishes.

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The Main Event Championship capped a hugely-successful two-week run at Caesars Atlantic City. Among the many highlights were:

**Big Numbers For Most Events** – Atlantic City may be taking a beating when it comes to recent tourism and casino visits, but the poker market is doing just fine. Attendance for the 12 gold ring events averaged 408 players per event, which is up from the previous two years. Three events attracted 600-plus players, including the Main Event Championship. Moreover, the championship was the largest of any Main Event in the seven years the WSOPC has been coming to the New Jersey Shore. Atlantic City is the only destination which includes two WSOP Circuit stops each year. The series held at Harrah's Atlantic City in December also performed very well, averaging nearly 400 players per event.

**Brandon Croft, "Best All-Around" Player** – Winning one gold ring is tough. Winning two gold rings is tougher. Winning two gold rings in three days is nearly unprecedented. Brandon Croft, from Sumter, SC won two events at this poker series – collecting more than \$60,000 in prize money. Croft all but locked up the "Best All-Around Player" honors before the Circuit had even reached the midway point. He became the third player this season to win two gold rings at one WSOP Circuit stop.

**Chris Reslock Enjoys Another Strong Series** – Former taxi-driver Chris Reslock is one of poker's most low-key players. But he has gradually established a well-deserved reputation as one of the region's top tournament players. Reslock, from Atlantic City, is tied for second in career gold ring victories, with four. He nearly won his fifth title in the Omaha High-Low event, but ended up finishing second. Reslock was one of only two players to cash three times at this series – including two final table appearances.

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This marks the seventh consecutive year that the WSOP Circuit has visited Caesars Atlantic City. The list of former Main Event Champions reads as follows:

- 2012 – Ryan Eriquezzo (Danbury, CT)**
- 2011 – Brian Ali (Brooklyn, NY)**
- 2010 – Roland Israelashvili (New York, NY)**
- 2009 – Sam Chartier (Montreal, QB – Canada)**
- 2008 – Eric Haber (Dame De Lorette – France)**
- 2009 – Mehrdad Yousefzadeh (Astoria, NY)**
- 2008 – Jeffrey King (Colchester, CT)**

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This was the tenth of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at Caesars Atlantic City (*Note: Two additional events are still to be completed, at press time*). Officially listed as Event #10 -- the \$1,500 (+100) buy-in No-Limit Hold'em tournament attracted 641 entries. This was the largest Main Event ever held in Atlantic City. In fact, attendance increased by a whopping 45 percent over last year's exact same event, which still drew a fairly respectable 442 players.

The total prize pool came to \$932,655. The top 72 players were paid. All players who cashed received WSOP Circuit National Championship ranking points.

Among those who cashed was “Miami John” Cernuto, who took 28<sup>th</sup> place. He is a two-time WSOP gold bracelet winner. Several other former champions participated in this year’s tournament, but none cashed.

A full list of all players who cashed in the Main Event can be seen at [WSOP.com](http://WSOP.com).

Here’s the final table lineup and chip counts when play began at 3 pm on Monday afternoon.

**Seat 1: Aaron Overton (Philadelphia, PA) – 250,000 in chips**

**Seat 2: Ryan Higgins (Montreal, QB) – 1,190,000 in chips**

**Seat 3: Ryan Eriquizzo (Danbury, CT) – 1,490,000 in chips**

**Seat 4: David Zeitlin (Brooklyn, NY) – 1,560,000 in chips**

**Seat 5: Roland Israelashvili (New York, NY) – 700,000 in chips**

**Seat 6: Tyler Kenney (Long Beach, NY) – 1,425,000 in chips**

**Seat 7: Eugene Fouksman (New York, NY) – 2,130,000 in chips**

**Seat 8: Garry Gates (Las Vegas, NV) – 1,636,000 in chips**

**Seat 9: Jeremy Halaska (Cleveland, OH) – 2.200,000 in chips**

**Seat 10: Troy Erickson (Martinsburg, WV) – 281,000 in chips**

Play ended at 1:40 am and lasted nearly 11 hours – making it one of the longer finales of the season. The official order of finish among the top ten was as follows:

**10<sup>th</sup> Place** – Aaron Overton finished in tenth place. He is a 29-year-old professional poker player from Philadelphia, PA. He is also a graduate of the University of Vermont. Overton final tabled a North American Poker Tour championship a few years ago. This was his first WSOP-related top-ten finish.

**9<sup>th</sup> Place** – Tyler Kenney was the ninth-place finisher. He is a 22-year-old aspiring poker pro from Long Beach, NY. Remarkably, this was Kenney’s first-time to play in a WSOP Circuit tournament, which makes his final table appearance all the more impressive. However, he did previously cash in last year’s WSOP (Las Vegas) as well as an NAPT event. Kenney received \$17,888 in prize money.

**8<sup>th</sup> Place** – Ryan Higgins went out in eighth place. He is 26-years-old and lives in Montreal, Quebec (Canada). Eighth place paid \$22,533.

**7<sup>th</sup> Place** – Jeremy Halaska took seventh place. He is the director of operations for an major events company and lives in Cleveland, OH. Halaska calls himself a cash game “grinder.” He has only recently begun to play tournaments. In fact, he earned his way into this event via a \$165 satellite. Halaska made back his investment more than 160 times over with a very fine showing in this tournament – which paid out \$28,744,

**6<sup>th</sup> Place** – Roland “Speedy” Israelashvili finished in sixth place. He is a 54-year-old poker pro from New York, NY. Israelashvili won this same Main Event championship in 2010, and followed that breakthrough win with another fine performance. This was his 22<sup>nd</sup> time to cash on the WSOP Circuit, placing him in the top-20 all time. Israelashvili collected a payout totaling \$37,148.

**5<sup>th</sup> Place** – Eugene Fouksman ended up in fifth place. He is a Ukrainian-born poker player now living in New York City. Fouksman has an impressive tournament resume – including two previous final table appearances in Atlantic City championship events (third place in 2007 at Caesars and ninth place in 2009 at Harrah’s). He also cashed in the previous Main Event which

took place two weeks ago at the Palm Beach Kennel Club, in Florida. In addition, Fouksman cashed in the 2007 WSOP Main Event, played in Las Vegas. He added another \$48,638 to his poker bankroll.

**4<sup>th</sup> Place** – Garry Gates took fourth place. He is a 30-year-old consultant. Gates is widely-known in the poker industry for his immense contributions as a writer and journalist. He has covered the tournament scene for nearly a decade. Gates, who has traveled all over the world as a tournament reporter, is now making his mark as a player. He went deep in the WSOP Main Event last year and ended up with a strong finish in this event, as well. Gates earned a well-deserved \$64,530 in prize money.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Place** – Troy Erickson finished in third place. He is a 47-year-old nightclub owner from Martinsburg, WV. He is a proud U.S. Navy veteran, as well. Erickson received \$86,774 in prize money.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Place** – David Zeitlin finished as the runner up. He is a 38-year-old attorney from Brooklyn, NY. He has numerous cashes at the WSOP (11) and on the WSOP Circuit (8). However, this was his best finish in five years. Second place paid \$118,307. Zeitlin's most notable previous showing was a second place finish in a WSOP gold bracelet event (2007), which paid nearly \$270,000.

When heads-up play began Ryan Eriquezzo enjoyed a sizable chip lead. But Zeitlin proved to be a stubborn adversary. It took him the victor more than an hour for the final hand to come, which was dealt as follows:

Eriquezzo: Kc Jc

Zeitlin: 2h 2s

Flop: Td 8s 5s

Turn: 6s

River: Kd

Eriquezzo was as light dog to the small pair. The flop turned Zeitlin into a big favorite. His odds increased on the turn, when Eriquezzo was left drawing to just four outs (any spade would give Zeitlin a flush). The perfect card came, which was a king. Eriquezzo's pair of kings bested Zeitlin's pair of deuces.

**1<sup>st</sup> Place** – Ryan Eriquezzo became the tenth WSOP Circuit champion crowned this year at Caesars Atlantic City. He won \$191,194 for the victory. The poker pro from Connecticut was also rewarded with this second career gold ring.

At present, Brandon Croft retains the top spot on the leader board in this WSOP Circuit's "Best All-Around Player" standings. Barring a shocking result in one of the final two events (still undecided), he will win the title.

The player who accumulates the most overall points in Caesar's Atlantic City'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 was the winner of Main Event championship.

Here is the list of gold ring winners from Caesars Atlantic City, so far:

**EVENT #1: Michael McGuinness defeated 667 players (\$345 NLHE) and won \$39,790**

**EVENT #2: Sarah Dygert defeated 887 players (\$345 NLHE) and won \$50,333**

**EVENT #3: Brandon Croft defeated 253 players (\$555 NLHE) and won \$30,062**

- EVENT #4: Ali Navid defeated 495 players (\$345 NLHE) and won \$30,969**
- EVENT #5: Brandon Croft defeated 263 players (\$555 NLHE) and won \$31,250**
- EVENT #6: Keith Binder defeated 369 players (\$345 6-NLHE) and won \$23,623**
- EVENT #7: Abe Araya defeated 286 players (\$555 NLHE) and won \$33,290**
- EVENT #8: David Key defeated 160 players (\$345 OHL) and won \$12,571**
- EVENT #9: Dan Blakeman defeated 145 players (\$1,080 NLHE) and won \$39,382**
- EVENT #10: Ryan Eriquezzo defeated 641 players (\$1,600 NLHE) and won \$191,194**

Coming next, the WSOP Circuit crosses the country to the West Coast, where the 13<sup>th</sup> stop of the season will take place. Harrah's Rincon, located 40 miles north of San Diego will be hosting the next dozen gold ring events, from March 15-26.

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## **MORE ABOUT THE WSOP CIRCUIT AT CAESARS ATLANTIC CITY**

The World Series of Poker Circuit is taking place at Caesars Atlantic City, one of the East Coast's premier gaming and entertainment destinations.

Indeed, this marks the seventh consecutive season that Caesars Atlantic City has hosted a WSOP Circuit stop. The luxurious casino resort has been a flagship of poker action since the first WSOP tournament took place, back in 2008.

This year's "12 Rings in 12 Days" series is taking place March 1-12. As has been the case for all previous major poker events, all action is held inside an expansive grand ballroom located on the second floor, adjacent to the main casino. In past years, the entire ballroom has been packed to capacity with players, as many of Caesars Atlantic City's events have sold out. Attendance for Atlantic City's WSOP tournaments has consistently remained high, despite the spread of poker and tournaments to other venues in nearby states and plenty of healthy competition throughout the Northeast.

This will be the 12th of 17 stops of the 2011-2012 World Series of Poker Circuit season. Just three months ago, Harrah's Atlantic City hosted the first of two New Jersey appearances by the WSOP Circuit and its players. Attendance surpassed what many observers were projecting, which leads one to believe a repeat of a successful tournament series is inevitable.

Aside from great poker tournament action and live games, there's plenty to do on the Jersey Shore during March. The casino-resort is located adjacent to the world most famous Boardwalk on the Atlantic Ocean. While the WSOP is in town, Atlantic City is hosting its famous "Restaurant Week," which is a seven-day celebration of great cuisine. Atlantic City Restaurant Week takes place March 3-10. Many restaurants within a short distance of Caesars Atlantic City are participating in the food and wine festival.

There's a lot at stake for poker players who will make their way to the Jersey Shore. Not only are a dozen gold rings up for grabs, lots of prize money will also be awarded to those who cash. All players who finish in the money will also earn ranking points, which are used to determine finalists for the season-ending WSOP Circuit National Championship.

Since the season began in September, all tournament players have been in the running for 100 guaranteed pre-paid seats in the \$1 million WSOP Circuit National Championship finale – which will be a WSOP gold bracelet event to be played in Las Vegas, around the time of the World Series of Poker.

To see the complete Caesars Atlantic City tournament schedule, please visit [WSOP.com](http://WSOP.com).

Stay tuned to WSOP.com for the latest reports and updates from Caesars Atlantic City. WSOP.com will carry a LIVE VIDEO STREAM of every final table, starting most afternoons.

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

For more information about the World Series of Poker Circuit, please contact:  
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