



**2012-2013 World Series of Poker Circuit  
Season Nine  
Harrah's Tunica  
Event #10  
No-Limit Hold'em Main Event  
Buy-In: \$1,675  
Total Entries: 666  
Total Prize Pool: \$999,000  
February 1 – February 4, 2013**

## **Ryan Stevenson Wins Harrah's Tunica WSOP Circuit Main Event**

**Local engineer pockets \$204,795 and a seat to the WSOP National Championship**

**After more than four hours three-handed, Stevenson defeats final opponent in first hand of heads up play.**

**Main Event the largest in Harrah's Tunica history, biggest prize pool since 2008**

TUNICA, MS – Ryan Stevenson, a 26-year-old engineer from Horn Lake, MS won the Harrah's Tunica Main Event shortly after midnight Tuesday to take home first place prize, worth \$204,795 and the WSOP Circuit gold ring.

For Stevenson, whose first major tournament cash came in last year's opening event at Harrah's Tunica and whose previous career earnings totaled just over \$13,000, it was a phenomenal breakout victory.

"I'm dumbfounded right now," said Stevenson after the win. "This is a dream come true, especially for us grinders who put in a lot of work on and off the felt."

666 players entered the WSOP Circuit Main Event, making it the largest Main Event field in the WSOP's eight-year history at Harrah's Tunica. The \$1,675 buy-in championship event generated a \$999,000 prize pool, the largest at Harrah's Tunica since 2008.

Flights A and B yielded 99 survivors who returned for play on Day 2. After the money bubble burst just after two hours into Day 2 play, the rash of eliminations began, including those of notables Ari Engel, Kyle Cartwright, Allen Kessler and David Clark. Other notables who played in this year's Main Event but finished out of the money include John Dolan, Claudia Crawford and WSOP Circuit livestream host, Bernard Lee.

The elimination of Daniel Blakeman in 10<sup>th</sup> place just after 1am Monday set the stage for the final table.

Stevenson began the final table third in chips and would experience a tumultuous 10 hours at the Final Table before finally sealing up the win. Stevenson says his early strategy was to play conservative, but he mixed it up early with the Final Table chip leader, Andrew Rothfolk, who he says he became familiar with during the second day of play.

"I wasn't looking to get fancy, but we had history on Day 2," said Stevenson. "I thought he was light a lot of the time."

Whether he intended to get fancy or not, Stevenson ended up being the aggressor at the final table, having eliminated the final five players. Another opponent with whom Stevenson had gotten acquainted with on day two was Michael Sanders.

Sanders, who finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the WSOP Circuit Main Event at Choctaw last year, was the most accomplished among the final nine and had experience along with a sizable amount of chips to put him at an advantage over his remaining opponents. Rothfolk was undaunted, however, and managed to wrestle away the chip lead from Sanders early into Final Table play.

Sanders ultimately fell short of taking the top prize and finished in fourth place (\$69,121). After his elimination, play slowed to a crawl, with play continuing for over four hours three-handed.

It took over four hours for three-handed play to get down to heads up. At one point during three-handed play, Stevenson had fallen to just eight big blinds, but was able to get a critical double up, build his stack back up and eliminate Rothfolk in 3<sup>rd</sup> place (\$92,947).

Heads up play ended as quickly as it began. One hand into heads up play, Stevenson and Norman McKeldin got it all in after the flop on a [4s][Td][8d] board, Stevenson had flopped top pair with [Tc][7d] while McKeldin turned over [Ad][Kd].

With overcards and a flush draw, McKeldin was still in good shape to take the colossal pot. "I run good," McKeldin said to Stevenson just before the [Kc] fell on the turn. Then in an instant reversal of fortune, the dealer turned over the [7h] on the river to give Stevenson the win and eliminate McKeldin in 2<sup>nd</sup> place [\$126,723]

In addition to his \$204k score and the ring, Stevenson was awarded a seat into the WSOP National Championship, which takes place May 21-23 at Harrah's New Orleans.

The Casino Champion is the player who earns the most points through the 12 events at Harrah's Tunica. This player will earn an automatic seat to the WSOP Circuit National Championship to be held May 21 – May 23 at Harrah's New Orleans. More information about the WSOPC National Championship can be found [here](#). An explanation of the points system can be found [here](#).

2 events are still to come. See the complete Harrah's Tunica Circuit schedule and event results [here](#). The WSOP Circuit Events at Harrah's Tunica runs through February 4<sup>th</sup>. You can find the complete 2012-2013 WSOP Circuit schedule [here](#).

#### **Final table results:**

| <b><u>PLACE</u></b> | <b><u>PLAYER</u></b> | <b><u>CITY / STATE / COUNTRY</u></b> | <b><u>CASH EARNED</u></b> |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1                   | Ryan Stevenson       | HORN LAKE, MS, US                    | \$204,795                 |
| 2                   | Norman Mckeldin      | Chattanooga, TN, US                  | \$126,723                 |
| 3                   | Andrew Rothfolk      | DAYTON, TN, US                       | \$92,947                  |
| 4                   | Michael Sanders      | LAS VEGAS, NV, US                    | \$69,121                  |
| 5                   | Jonathan Cary        | FRANKFORT, KY, US                    | \$52,098                  |
| 6                   | James Watkins        | Guy, AR, US                          | \$39,790                  |
| 7                   | Mark Maletic         | CANTON, MI, US                       | \$30,789                  |
| 8                   | Jerry Barlow         | WESTMINSTER, SC, US                  | \$24,136                  |
| 9                   | David Kruger         | SLATER, MO, US                       | \$19,161                  |

#### **ABOUT HARRAH'S TUNICA**

Harrah's Tunica is located 20 minutes south of Memphis, Tennessee and was originally opened in 1996 as Grand Casino. On May, 23, 2008 Paula Deen cut the official grand opening ribbon at Harrah's Tunica featuring the first of its kind Paula Deen Buffet and an interactive gaming floor that is the largest in the region. Spanning over 2,000 acres Harrah's Tunica features the Links at Cottonwoods championship golf course designed by Hale Irwin, Willows Sporting Clays and Hunting Center, the Mid-South Convention Center offering over 65,000 square feet of indoor meeting space, three elegant hotels totaling 1356 hotel rooms, the 200-space Mid-South RV Resort, Bellissimo Spa and Salon, and a 2,400 seat event center that features headline entertainment.

#### **ABOUT THE WSOP**

The World Series of Poker (WSOP) is the largest, richest and most prestigious gaming event in the world awarding millions of dollars in prize money and the prestigious gold bracelet, globally recognized as the sport's top prize.

Featuring a comprehensive slate of tournaments in every major poker variation, the WSOP is poker's longest running tournament in the world, dating back to 1970. In 2012, the event attracted 74,766 entrants from 101 different countries to the Rio in Las Vegas and awarded over \$222 million in prize money. In addition, the WSOP has formed groundbreaking alliances in broadcasting, digital media and corporate sponsorships, while successfully expanding the brand internationally with the advent in 2007 of the World Series of Poker Europe. The WSOP Circuit Tour is entering its ninth season in 2012-13. For more information on the World Series of Poker, please visit [www.WSOP.com](http://www.WSOP.com).

### **ABOUT SOUTHERN COMFORT**

Southern Comfort®, a fruit, spice, and whiskey flavored liqueur, was created in New Orleans by bartender M.W. Heron in 1874. Today, it is enjoyed by friends in over 100 countries around the world and continues to grow as an icon brand. Please visit us at [SouthernComfort.com](http://SouthernComfort.com) and [facebook.com/southerncomfort](https://facebook.com/southerncomfort).

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