



**2012/2013 World Series of Poker Circuit
Season Nine
Palm Beach Kennel Club
Palm Beach, Florida
Event #11
Main Event Championship
No-Limit Hold'em
Buy-In \$1,500 (+175)
Total Entries: 670
Prize Pool: \$1,005,000
February 22, 2013**

Jonathan Tamayo Wins Main Event Championship

Two-Time Gold Ring Winner Pockets \$206,020

WSOP Circuit at Palm Beach Kennel Club Concludes With a Bang

West Palm Beach, FL (February 25, 2013) – Jonathan Tamayo won the WSOP Circuit Main Event Championship, which just concluded at the Palm Beach Kennel Club.

The 27-year-old poker pro from Humble, TX pocketed \$206,020 in prize money. He also earned his second career WSOP Circuit gold ring following a previous win three years ago at Harrah's New Orleans. With this victory, Tamayo has nearly \$900,000 in WSOP-related earnings.

“I feel a great sense of relief,” Tamayo confided afterward to ESPN's Bernard Lee, who conducted the post-tournament interview on a live broadcast. “We've been playing for like 14 hours, so my mind is frazzled right now. I don't know what to think.”

Indeed, Tamayo really earned this victory. Following two long previous sessions, he came into the final table ranked third in chips. But as the night wore on and it became obvious this was not going to be a cakewalk for anyone, Tamayo began to display the depths of his major tournament experience that have earned him the respect of virtually everyone in the game.

“It helps having been through this before. When I made my deep run (in the WSOP Main Event) a few years ago, I learned a lot of stuff from that,” Tamayo said. “I basically learned that it's very much a process. If you keep in mind that it's a process, everything will take care of itself.”

No doubt, Tamayo was referring to his 21st place finish in the WSOP Main Event back in 2009, which had been the landmark achievement on his poker resume, until tonight. Now, he considers this win and even bigger accomplishment.

“Anytime you are the last one standing, it supersedes any deep run,” Tamayo stated. “Second is disappointing. Third is disappointing. Winning is the goal.”

Tamayo defeated a tough opponent named Clint Tolbert in heads-up play. The Moore, OK resident and poker pro had the upper hand on what turned out to be the final hand of the tournament. Tolbert had pocket fives, versus Tamayo's ace-jack. But an ace on the turn all but ended Tolbert's shot at making a comeback and earning what would have been his first gold ring victory. Nonetheless, Tolbert could take pride in a strong finish and a consolation prize worth \$127,484.

Tamayo has been playing poker full time for about five years. He graduated from Cornell University. His aspirations include playing Magic the Gathering as a semi-pro. That game has spawned a great many successful poker player and gold bracelet winners. No doubt, Tamayo's prospects in whatever he chooses to do appears to be very bright, indeed.

This year's championship event attracted 670 players. That pushed the prize pool to more than \$1 million. The top 72 players collected prize money.

This marked the third year that the WSOP Circuit has come to Palm Beach. At least one new record was set, which was the largest single tournament turnout of the entire 2012-2013 season. A whopping 2,539 players entered the opening event, smashing the advertised \$1 million prize money guarantee.

The other big news here at Palm Beach was Ari Engel's fifth gold ring victory. This triumph in Event 7 places him into a three-way tie for second place for most career WSOP Circuit wins.

Casino Champion honors went to Sam Panzica (Saline, MI), who racked up 80 total points. That was enough to edge out a log-jam of players within a deep run of overtaking the 20-year-old poker pro. Panzica made two final tables – finishing 2nd and 4th. He also finished 21st in the Main Event Championship. An interesting note is that although Panzica is age 20 now (hence, ineligible to compete in the WSOP National Championship if it were held today), by the time the tourney rolls around in late May, he will have turned 21.

The final table finishers were as follows:

9th Place – Nancy Birnbaum is a 47-year-old professional poker player from Las Vegas, NV. She's a two-time WSOP gold ring winner (New Orleans 2009 and Rincon 2012). She also won a Ladies Championship at a WSOP Circuit stop earlier this season. Birnbaum previously sold BMWs before deciding to travel on the WSOP Circuit. This was her best showing in a Main Event, to date.

8th Place – Tom Gleason is a 22-year-old poker player and employee in his family business. He lives in Blackwood, NJ. Gleason thanked his friends and family for supporting him before taking his first seat at a WSOP final table. This was Gleason's third cash at this series. He ended up with an 8th, and 15th, and a 15th.

7th Place – This was the first-ever WSOP cash for David Grandieri – a 33-year-old poker pro from Danbury, CT. He previously worked in telecommunications. However, Grandieri has multiple wins at the Foxwoods Classic and Mohegan Sun. He was the chip leader entering the final day and went out in a respectable seventh place.

6th Place – Luke Graham is a 41-year-old trader from West Palm Beach, FL. He was born in England. Graham enjoys extreme skiing. This marks the third straight year Graham has made a deep run in an event here at Palm Beach. He took 12th in 2011, 11th in 2012, and now 6th in 2013.

5th Place – Chris Hyden is also known as “Big Bird.” He is a 24-year-old poker pro from St. Petersburg, FL. Hyden is another player who enjoyed lots of online success, once taking second for \$200K in a major online poker tournament. Hyden wanted to thank his girlfriend and close friends for all the support he’s received here and in his poker career. This was his second cash here at this series and best WSOP-related finish ever.

4th Place – William Looper enjoyed his best WSOP showing by finishing fourth. Looper is a self-described “good old Southern boy” from Greenville, SC. He is 27-years-old and now plays poker full time. He previously worked as a salesman for a cell phone company. Previously, Looper had finished in-the-money three times at the WSOP.

3rd Place – Mark Rose is a poker pro from Orlando, FL. He has more than \$800K in tournament winnings. He won the Gulf Coast Poker Championship in 2010, as well as the WPT Hollywood preliminary event last year. Rose played tough and went out about 4 am.

2nd Place – Clint Tolbert is a 31-year old professional poker player from Moore, OK. He’s been playing full time since 2009. Tolbert was previously in medical sales. He is engaged. Tolbert’s poker accomplishments are many — including a \$186K win in an online tournament, a \$115K cash at the PCA, and another \$100K score at the Winstar in Oklahoma. Tolbert is a graduate of the University of Oklahoma. He hosts a talk show called “Three Streets of Value.” This was yet another six-figure score, worth \$127,484.

Winner – Jonathan Tamayo won his second WSOP Circuit gold ring. He was perhaps the most accomplished WSOP player among the final nine – and show why – with a gold ring, a second-place showing in a WSOP gold bracelet event, and a 21st-place finish in the 2009 Main Event Championship played in Las Vegas. Tamayo is a 27-year-old professional poker player from Houston. First place paid \$206,020, the gold ring, and an entry into the WSOP National Championship.

Once again, here's the official order of finish:

1	Jonathan Tamayo	HUMBLE, TX	\$206,020
2	Clint Tolbert	NORMAN, OK	\$127,484
3	Mark Rose	ORLANDO, FL	\$93,505
4	William Looper	GREER, SC	\$69,536
5	Christopher Hyden	ST PETERSBURG, FL	\$52,411
6	Luke Graham	PORT ST. LUCIE, FL	\$40,029
7	David Grandieri	DANBURY, CT	\$30,974
8	Thomas Gleason	BLACKWOOD, NJ,	\$24,281
9	Nancy Birnbaum	ATLANTA, GA	\$19,276

Tournament Notes

- This was the eleventh gold ring event of this year's WSOP Circuit being played at the Palm Beach Kennel Club. It actually finished last.
- The three-day tournament began with 670 players. After two opening sessions on Day One which went a combined 14 hours there were 370 survivors who enlisted in play on

Day Two. After another 12 hours day, there were 30 players remaining. Day Three resumed at 2 pm and the final table was set at 7 pm.

- The final table included two gold ring winners – Jonathan Tamayo and Nancy Birnbaum.
- The final table included no gold bracelet winners. However, Mark Rose did final table the WSOP Main Event Championship back in 1985.
- The final table went about seven hours.

As the Main Event champion, Jonathan Tamayo wins an automatic seat into the WSOP National Championship.

Meanwhile, Sam Panzica accumulated the most overall points in the Palm Beach Kennel Club's twelve combined gold ring tournaments. Accordingly, he earned the title Casino Champion and also receives an automatic entry into the \$1 Million 2012-13 WSOP National Championship Presented by Southern Comfort 100 Proof.

All players who cash in gold ring events receive points that apply to both the Casino Championship race and the season-long race to claim one of the 60 at-large National Championship bids to be awarded to the top point earners throughout the season. More information on the points system is available on WSOP.com.

The 2012-13 WSOP Circuit at the Palm Beach Kennel Club has now concluded.

Coming next, the WSOP Circuit shifts north to Atlantic City. The next tournament series runs February 27 through March 12.

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