

2015/2016 World Series of Poker Circuit

Season 12

Horseshoe Casino

Hammond, Ind.

The Main Event – Event #9

No-Limit Hold'em

Buy-In: \$1,600 (+\$175)

Total Entries: 1,376

Prize Pool: \$2,064,000

October 23-26, 2015



Krzysztof Stybaniewicz Wins Hammond Main Event and \$356K

Denver amateur earns first gold ring in 2015's largest Circuit finale.

Hammond, Ind. (October 27, 2015) — The largest Circuit Main Event of 2015 concluded early Tuesday morning at the Horseshoe Casino in Hammond, Ind. The \$1,675 finale boasted a field of 1,376 entries besting last year's mark and generating a prize pool of \$2,064,000. Following four days and more than 48 hours of play, Denver's Krzysztof Stybaniewicz laid claim to the tournament's title. Stybaniewicz, a semi-pro, earned \$356,043 in addition to his first Circuit gold ring and a berth in the season-ending WSOP Global Casino Championship.

"This means everything to me," Stybaniewicz said. "I have a lot of friends that have had a lot of success. These guys are constantly making final tables and I'm kind of on the sidelines. It was nice to have the roles be reversed for once [...] Everything went right and all the spots worked out. I kept the gas pedal to the floor and brought it home."

Stybaniewicz, 26, graduated college in 2011 with a degree in finance and immediately took to poker. He played for about three years fulltime and experienced modest success. Then, about a year ago, he hit a wall. The game wasn't fulfilling like it had been and he decided to take some time away from the felt. He took nine months to clear his, then got back into it. In the days and weeks since then, he's logged five WSOP-related cashes including four this summer.

Stybaniewicz's most recent standout performance came at the hands of a difficult field. Day 3 alone included the likes of this year's WSOP Main Event 29th-place finisher Kelly Minkin, bracelet winner Aaron Steury, this season's Palm Beach Kennel Club Main Event champion Peter Vitantonio and Chicago pro Kevin Saul. The third and final day of play began with 25 players. Less than five hours later, Minkin ran her [Ac,Qh] into the [Kc,Kh] of Stybaniewicz. She busted 10th earning \$28,483 and gave Stybaniewicz the chip lead heading into the nine-handed finale.

Next to go in ninth was Vitantonio when Robert Kuhn spiked a three-outer against his [Ad,Jd]. From there Hao Sun finished eighth. Saul, who along with Minkin was one of the most active players during the middle stages of Day 3, didn't get anything going at the final table. He was caught bluffing early and eventually met his demise seventh courtesy of Kuhn. Kuhn followed him to the rail next finishing sixth.

Five-handed play then lasted the better part of two hours before Stybaniewicz claimed another victim in Ben Beever. Next to go was Chicago tactical police officer Mike Younan. He got his last 2,750,000 in in a race against Stybaniewicz and couldn't catch up. For Younan, the deep run marked his second final table of the series and earned him \$123,035. Stybaniewicz kept up his steamrolling ways busting Lytle Allen third and leaving himself holding a two-to-one chip lead against decorated pro Joe Kuether.

After about an hour of heads-up play, Kuether opened the button and Stybaniewicz defended his big blind. Both players checked the [Js,8d,2h] flop, and Stybaniewicz followed suit on the [3h] turn. Kuether bet 800,000 and Stybaniewicz jammed. After some time in the tank, Kuether called and flipped over [Ts,Tc]. He was behind the [Jh,9s] of Stybaniewicz as they headed to the river. The [Ad] improved neither player and Kuether busted second earning \$220,848.

“To beat Joe heads up is even more special because of the run he’s been on in the last year and a half,” Stybaniewicz said of his heads-up competitor. “He’s obviously one of the best live tournament players in the world.”

Others to finish in the money but short of the final table include Steury (12th), Tom Koral (16th), Kenny Nguyen (25th), Daniel Weinman (44th), Harrison Gimbel (48th), Mo Nuwwarah (59th) Doug Carli (65th), Nicholas Pupillo (85th), Aaron Massey (118th) and Blake Bohn (119th).

“I was pleasantly surprised with the competition,” Stybaniewicz said. “People were not going to sit down and let themselves get pushed around. They were all extremely aggressive and very good players. It was an extremely tough grind.”

For Stybaniewicz, the victory marked his 25th WSOP-related cash and pushed him past the \$450,000 mark in career earnings. He’s part of a traveling group of tournament pros that includes Ben Keeline and Alexander Greenblatt. Together, they call themselves the BPIGs. Stybaniewicz credits their friendship and mentoring for some of his success.

With the conclusion of the Main Event comes the end of the Hammond series. Gold ring events began Thursday, October 15. Including the Main Event, three players from the 12-day festival earned six-figure prizes – the re-entry winner, the High Roller winner and Stybaniewicz.

The Main Event was the ninth of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at the Horseshoe. The \$1,675 no-limit hold'em tournament attracted 1,376 entries. The total prize pool came to \$2,064,000 and the top 153 finishers were paid.

The tournament featured two starting flights beginning Friday, October 23 and Saturday, October 24 at noon CT. Flight A boasted 589 entries and advanced 116, while Flight B drew 787 and advanced 165. Both starting flights logged 15 levels (about 12 hours) of play.

Day 2 resumed Sunday at noon with 281 players remaining. The money bubble burst during Level 19 (at about 3:30 p.m.). Day 2 concluded following Level 25 (at about 12:00 a.m.) with 25 players remaining.

Day 3 began Monday at noon ET. Play narrowed to the final table during Level 30 (at about 4:45 p.m.) and action wrapped during Level 36 (at about 1 a.m.).

Here's a closer look at the tournament's finale table:

Seat 1: Lytle Allen – 2,145,000
Seat 2: Michael Younan – 2,420,000
Seat 3: Peter Vitantonio – 835,000
Seat 4: Kevin Saul – 3,190,000
Seat 5: Ben Beever – 1,200,000
Seat 6: Hao Sun – 3,770,000
Seat 7: Robert Kuhn – 3,375,000
Seat 8: Joe Kuether – 3,120,000
Seat 9: Krzysztof Stybaniewicz – 7,545,000

The final playing session began during Level 30 (40,000/80,000 with a 10,000 ante)

About the final table:

1st: Krzysztof Stybaniewicz - \$356,043
Hometown: Denver, Colo.
Occupation: Semi professional poker player
WSOP earnings: \$26,827
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$71,036

2nd: Joe Kuether - \$220,848
Hometown: Elm Grove, Wisc.
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP earnings: \$671,392
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$289,329

3rd: Lytle Allen - \$161,838
Hometown: Nashville, Tenn.
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP earnings: \$0
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$18,053

4th: Michael Younan - \$123,035
Hometown: Chicago, Ill.
Occupation: Tactical police officer
WSOP earnings: \$0
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$63,824

5th: Ben Beever - \$93,664
Hometown: Macomb, Mich.
Occupation: Construction
WSOP earnings: \$0
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$0

6th: Robert Kuhn - \$72,137
Hometown: Barnesville, Ohio

Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP earnings: \$49,588
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$2,397

7th: Kevin Saul - \$56,203
Hometown: Warrenville, Ill.
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP earnings: \$396,601
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$229,851

8th: Hao C. Sun - \$44,293
Hometown: Milwaukee, Wisc.
Occupation: CPA
WSOP earnings: \$0
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$0

9th: Peter Vitantonio - \$35,315
Hometown: Wickliffe, Ohio
Occupation: Professional poker player
WSOP earnings: \$34,842
WSOP Circuit earnings: \$174,776

Here is the list of gold ring winners from the Horseshoe:

EVENT #1: Amanda Heidbrick defeated 2,211 entries (\$365 NLH Re-Entry) for \$101,190
EVENT #2: Kevin Falls defeated 203 players (\$580 NLH) for \$26,390
EVENT #3: Kennii Nguyen defeated 106 players (\$580 PLO) for \$15,902
EVENT #4: Cory Waaland defeated 613 players (\$365 Monster Stack) for \$38,623
EVENT #5: Jim Juvancic defeated 101 players (\$580 HORSE) for \$15,149
EVENT #6: Bradley Rhodes defeated 213 players (\$580 NLH Six-Max) for \$28,758
EVENT #7: Cord Garcia defeated 142 players (\$1,125 NLH) for \$38,759
EVENT #8: Jeff Shea defeated 168 players (\$365 O8) for \$13,609
The Main Event: Krzysztof Stybaniewicz defeated 1,376 entries (\$1,675 NLH) for \$356,043
EVENT #10: Michael Koh defeated 194 players (\$580 NLH) for \$25,220
EVENT #11: Zachery Schneider defeated 54 players (\$5,300 High Roller) for \$101,250
EVENT #12: Josh Reichard defeated 216 players (\$365 Turbo) for \$16,201

Wisconsin pro and four-time ring winner Josh Reichard earned Casino Champion honors following first-, second- and third-place finishes totaling 117.5 points. He lapped the field in the race to the title and earned a berth in the first-ever, WSOP Global Championship. All players who cashed in ring events earned points that apply toward the season-long race to claim one of 50 expected at-large bids awarded to the top point earners. More information on the season-ending event is available on WSOP.com.

All rings at the Horseshoe are furnished by Jostens, the official ring supplier of the 2015/2016 WSOP Circuit season.

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