

2016/2017 World Series of Poker Circuit

Season 13

Palm Beach Kennel Club

West Palm Beach, Fla.

Event #12

No-Limit Hold'em

Buy-In: \$300 (+\$65)

Total Entries: 167

Prize Pool: \$50,100

February 19-20, 2017



Number Nine For Maurice Hawkins

Hawkins wins final event at Palm Beach Kennel Club to tie all-time rings record

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (February 20, 2017) — In the conversation about the greatest players in the WSOP Circuit's 13-year history, it'd be hard to make a good argument against Maurice Hawkins. On Monday afternoon, Hawkins won a ring for the ninth time in his career, tying Alex Masek for the Circuit's all-time record. Hawkins' seven-figure earnings set him apart, though, along with his three Main Event titles — three more than Masek.

There are plenty of other things that set the two apart, as well.

Although Hawkins and Masek share the current record with nine rings apiece, the two could not be more dissimilar. Masek is a quiet, unassuming young L.A. grinder without much interest in the spotlight that comes with playing in some of the world's largest tournaments. Hawkins is far from quiet, and he's most in his element when the lights are on and the cameras are rolling.

Maybe it's his football background, or his disciplined upbringing, or the realities of having a family to support. Whatever it is, Hawkins seems to thrive in the heat of competition, and he's unafraid to put his mouth where his money is. His temperament makes him a polarizing figure at the tables, but he's entirely unconcerned about that.

"I'm a good dude," he said during a candid postgame conversation. "Most people are pompous assholes. And I really don't give a damn if they like me or not. We're from two different places. I'm not taking anything from them, but I've earned everything I've gotten in my life. If they don't like me, they can really kiss my ass. I would rather be under-respected and overpaid than over-respected and underpaid."

Hawkins straddles the confidence/arrogance line with great finesse, and he tempered his words a bit as he continued. "People didn't like (Charles) Barkley on the court. People didn't like Dennis Rodman on the court. I'm not here to be your friend on the felt. Now if I catch you at a bar, it'll be a different scenario, you know?"

The 37-year-old pro is originally from St. Louis, though he now makes his home right here in West Palm Beach. He and his wife, Aprelle, have four children: Maurice Jr. (age 14), Amadee (age 11), Harmony (age 6), and Phoenix (age 4). In talking further with him, it's clear they provide a great deal of motivation for his success. "All I think about is keeping the lights on," he said. "At the end of the day, I'm here to make money. And I like the accolades that come with it. But I just want to be able to eat every day."

With a tournament record that rivals that of anyone else on the Circuit, it's hard to find fault with his line of conversation. In addition to the nine rings, Hawkins has more than \$2.3 million in total career earnings. "Where I'm from, your results speak for themselves," he said. "You don't have to tell me how great you are. All you gotta do is pull up the results and see who wins. You know who's great. Look at who wins."

Hawkins wins more than most.

This most recent victory came in the closing event at the Palm Beach Kennel Club, a \$365-buy-in event with 167 entries. Hawkins ended up heads-up against fellow-Floridian Waller Everitt with a 4:1 chip lead, but the elder Everitt put up a mighty fight with the ring on the line. It took more than three hours to decide the match, with the whole Hawkins family on hand to witness Maurice Sr.'s record-tying win on home turf.

In the midst of the discussion about his family, the many sides of Maurice Hawkins revealed a few soft edges, too. "Poker's tough," he said. "Name one poker player that hasn't been depressed. Because it's tough. You have unreal expectations to win a tournament. You go city to city away from your family... to get a win is *satisfying*. It just makes for that good feeling again, and that's what it's all about."

Event #12 was the last of the 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at the Palm Beach Kennel Club. The \$365 no-limit hold'em event drew a field of 167 entries, generating a prize pool worth \$50,100. The final 18 players finished in the money.

The tournament began on Sunday, February 19 at 3 p.m., and play was suspended with six players remaining at the end of Level 21. Day 2 was held Monday, February 20 beginning at 1 p.m., and the last hand was dealt around 5 p.m.

The player who accumulates the most overall points during the Palm Beach Kennel Club's 12 ring events earns the title of Casino Champion and receives automatic entry into the WSOP Global Casino Championship. Additionally, all players who cash in ring events earn points that apply toward the season-long race to claim one of the limited at-large bids. More information on the points system is available on WSOP.com.

All rings at the Palm Beach Kennel Club are furnished by Jostens, the official ring supplier of the 2016/2017 WSOP Circuit season.

For more information about the WSOP Circuit, follow us on Twitter at [@WSOP](#) or visit [WSOP.com](#).

For additional information, please contact Eric Ramsey (WSOP Media Coordinator) at eric_ramsey@me.com.