

2016/2017 World Series of Poker Circuit

Season 13

Harrah's New Orleans

New Orleans, La.

Event #10

The Main Event

Buy-In: \$1,500 (+\$175)

Total Entries: 758

Prize Pool: \$1,137,000

May 19-22, 2017



Jason Baldrige Wins Harrah's New Orleans Main Event!

Texas grinder gets bitten by tournament bug, breaks through early on the Circuit

NEW ORLEANS, La. (May 22, 2017) — Jason Baldrige didn't have to wait very long at all for a breakthrough victory. Just a couple months into life as a part-time tournament poker player, Baldrige won the \$1,675 Main Event at Harrah's New Orleans, defeating a field of 758 entries to collect the season's last gold ring. It's just the second result on his tournament record, and it was worth \$227,412 in cash, along with one of the precious seats in the season ending WSOP Global Casino Championship.

Baldrige is a 34-year-old poker player from San Antonio, Texas. Born and raised in the Lone Star State, he graduated from St. Mary's University with a degree in Business Management, and he's been playing the game since. It's more about bankroll management than business management nowadays.

Like so many first-time winners, Baldrige is primarily a cash game player, but he sometimes tags along on his buddies' tournament trips. "I play cash games when I go to tournament spots, usually," he said. "I travel with Jose (Anaya) and I'll play some tournaments, but I never really took them seriously."

Anaya does take them seriously, though, and it was his run in the season-long points race that seems to be the thing that eventually grabbed Baldrige's attention. "Jose started getting points, and I was like, "Oh yeah, I want to do that," he said. "We've been coming to all these stops because Jose needs points."

Baldrige followed Anaya to Choctaw back in January and failed to post a result himself, despite building a big stack on Day 1 of the Main Event. Then it was on to Baltimore this spring where he endured a similar fate in the Main, falling at the end of Day 1. He did, however, make the final table of the Turbo event on the final day, where he finished in sixth place for a \$2,683 payday and a real, live tournament result.

Two weeks later, Baldrige was suddenly sitting at the final table of the Harrah's New Orleans Main Event — entering Day 3 as the chip leader, no less. Anaya was planted on the rail, nervous, along with their mutual poker friend John Alvarez. Baldrige didn't seem nervous at all.

“I’m a dork,” he said of himself in his postgame interviews. “I like to joke around.” Baldrige wore a bright-orange Reese’s hoodie for the duration of the final table, and he produced a furry koala hat from his backpack at one point as he was sifting through it. He’s a drinker and a dart player and he clearly knows how to grow a beard. And he put on a fine poker performance on Day 3, too.

Baldrige picked his way through the final table with a deftness typically exhibited by players with significantly more tournament experience than him. He played back at five-time ring winner Caufman Talley early and often, and he stole a big pot from the dangerous Ryan Leng after standing his ground with pocket sevens on a wet board with three overcards, among a few other highlights.

Baldrige dipped in and out of the chip lead over the course of the final day, but he grabbed it back for good with five players left. Leng limped the cutoff with ace-jack, Baldrige raised the button with ace-queen, and Leng moved all in for about 25 big blinds. When Baldrige called, Leng saw the bad news of his domination, and he could not catch up to stave off a fifth-place elimination.

Talley started to mount a bit of a challenge after eliminating Hal Kizzire in fourth place, but he was dismissed in third by William Tait in a bit of a cooler just a short while later. That left Baldrige heads-up with a big lead against Tait, and the early orbits were dominated by the big stack.

After winning three postflop pots in a row, Baldrige had Tait down under 20 big blinds, and although he doubled up once, Tait could not overcome the deficit. Baldrige has clearly picked up a thing or two from Anaya and Alvarez along the way, and his tournament aptitude was put on display in the final hand of the match.

After check-raising the turn of a ten-eight-five-deuce board, Tait bluffed all in when an ace fell on the river. He was holding nine-seven for a complete miss, needing Baldrige to fold to keep him alive. Baldrige found a call with eight-six, though, and his pair of eights was enough to earn him the final and most important pot of the tournament.

In the moments after his win, Baldrige was surrounded by friend as he posed for a fake-serious set of winner’s photos. Anaya and Alvarez were front and center.

When asked if this title is going to tempt him into playing more tournaments going forward, Baldrige nodded and became briefly and unusually serious. “I have to, you know?”

The Main Event was the 10th of 12 gold ring events on the WSOP Circuit schedule at Harrah's New Orleans. The \$1,675 no-limit hold'em event attracted 758 entries, creating a prizepool worth \$1,137,000. The final 81 players finished in the money.

The tournament began with two starting flights on Friday, May 19 and Saturday, May 20. Day 1A drew 311 entries and advanced 58 players, and Day 1B drew 447 entries and advanced 86 players. Both flights began at 11 a.m. and logged 15 levels of play.

The combined Day 2 restarted with 144 players on Sunday, May 21 at 12 p.m. The money bubble burst during Level 18, and play concluded for the night with 10 players remaining at the end of Level 25. Day 3 began Monday, May 22 at 12 p.m., and the tournament concluded around 8:00 p.m.

Here were the seating assignments, chip counts, and stack sizes in big blinds entering Day 3:

Seat 1: John Cressend	1,200,000	40 bb
Seat 2: Jason Baldrige	2,605,000	87 bb
Seat 3: Hal Kizzire	2,435,000	81 bb
Seat 4: William Tait	1,955,000	65 bb
Seat 5: Jett Schnecker	1,345,000	45 bb
Seat 6: Caufman Talley	1,245,000	42 bb
Seat 7: Ryan Leng	1,185,000	40 bb
Seat 8: Jeff Bromberger	1,810,000	60 bb
Seat 9: Gabriel Andrade	910,000	30 bb
Seat 10: Jeff Turton	560,000	19 bb

Final Table Results

1st place: Jason Baldrige (\$227,412)

Hometown: San Antonio, TX

WSOP earnings: \$0 WSOP Circuit earnings: \$230,095 (1 ring)

2nd place: William Tait (\$140,192)

Hometown: Houston, TX

WSOP earnings: \$0 WSOP Circuit earnings: \$140,192

3rd place: Caufman Talley (\$103,353)

Hometown: New Orleans, LA

WSOP earnings: \$203,268 WSOP Circuit earnings: \$416,646 (5 rings)

4th place: Hal Kizzire (\$77,032)

Hometown: Trussville, AL

WSOP earnings: \$32,803 WSOP Circuit earnings: \$127,790

5th place: Ryan Leng (\$58,180)

Hometown: Wheeling, IL

WSOP earnings: \$171,166 WSOP Circuit earnings: \$69,429

6th place: John Cressend (\$44,514)

Hometown: Metairie, LA

WSOP earnings: \$0 WSOP Circuit earnings: \$52,173

7th place: Jett Schencker (\$34,485)

Hometown: Birmingham, AL

WSOP earnings: \$1,322 WSOP Circuit earnings: \$111,865

8th place: Gabriel Andrade (\$27,049)

Hometown: Houston, TX

WSOP earnings: \$122,679 WSOP Circuit earnings: \$62,271

9th place: Jeffrey Turton (\$21,478)

Hometown: Durham, NC

WSOP earnings: \$0 WSOP Circuit earnings: \$44,008

Ring winners who finished in the money include Loni Harwood (15th place), Nadya Magnus (19th), Jeremy Stein (20th), Vincent Moscati (22nd), Tim Burt (23rd), T.K. Miles (26th), Jonathan Poche (27th), Russ Head (28th), Marshall White (30th), Bob Beck (31st), Doug Carli (34th), Krzysztof Stybaniewicz (35th), BJ McBrayer (38th), Bubba Dukes (39th), Brett Bader (41st), John Richards (42nd), Raymond Walton (45th), Viet Vo (47th), DeJuante Alexander (48th), Curtis Terry (50th), David Aker (56th), Cory Waaland (58th), James Alexander (60th), Rob Georato (62nd), Sean Small (63rd), Kyle Cartwright (66th), and Kevin Sherrill (73rd). Harwood and Cartwright are also WSOP bracelet winners.

Here is the list of gold ring winners from Harrah's New Orleans:

#	Event	Entries	Winner	Earnings
1	\$365 No-Limit Hold'em (30-minute levels)	275	Curtis Terry	\$ 19,803
2	\$365 Pot-Limit Omaha Hi-Lo 8 or Better	85	Brian Grier	\$ 8,161
3	\$365 No-Limit Hold'em (30-minute levels)	322	Scott Adams	\$ 22,705
4	\$365 No-Limit Hold'em Re-Entry	946	Caufman Talley	\$ 53,928
5	\$580 No-Limit Hold'em	204	Marshall White	\$ 26,521
6	\$365 No-Limit Hold'em Six-Max	339	Steve Dees	\$ 25,423
7	\$365 No-Limit Hold'em (30-minute levels)	370	Brandon Fish	\$ 24,414
8	\$365 Monster Stack	750	Brett Bader	\$ 45,000
9	\$2,200 High Roller	197	Michael Lech	\$ 106,377
10	\$1,675 Main Event	758	Jason Baldrige	\$ 227,412
11	\$365 No-Limit Hold'em Turbo	246	Bubba Dukes	\$ 18,083
12	\$365 No-Limit Hold'em	312	Todd Elliott	\$ 21,995

North Carolina pro Marshall White earned the title of Casino Champion at Harrah's New Orleans.

White, 32, won his third gold ring during his trip, arriving midweek just in time to take down Event #5. He finished as the runner-up in Event #7 the very next day, then as the runner-up once again in Event #9 two days after that. White also added a 30th-place finish in the Main Event, bringing him to a total of \$113,303 in earnings and 135 points for the series.

The Casino Champion title is the second of the season for White, who won the honors at Harrah's Cherokee, as well.

All players who cashed in ring events earned points that apply toward the season-long race to claim one of the limited at-large Global Casino Championship bids, awarded to the top point earners throughout the season. More information on the points system is available on WSOP.com.

All rings at Harrah's New Orleans are furnished by Jostens, the official ring supplier of the 2016/2017 WSOP Circuit season.

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