



WSOP CIRCUIT 2017-18 MAIN EVENT REPORT

Circuit Stop:	Bicycle Hotel and Casino	Date:	13 December 2017
Event:	No-Limit Hold'em Main Event	Entries:	687
Buy-in:	\$1,675	Prizepool:	\$1,024,000

JARED JAFFEE WINS BIKE MAIN EVENT

Thanks to his lucky card protector, the professional poker player finishes the year strong with his first Circuit ring and \$211,220.

Jared Jaffee won his first Circuit ring on Tuesday evening. He defeated a field of 687 entries to win the WSOP Circuit Bicycle Casino main event. He defeated a field of 687 entries to win \$211,220, his first Circuit ring and a seat into the 2018 Global Casino Championship.

Jaffee, 36, already has a WSOP bracelet to his name as well as other major titles and several million in live tournament earnings. He's got more poker talent than most people will ever hope for, but he is giving most of the credit to an inanimate object that sat on his cards the whole tournament.

"My friend Sam Panzica just went to Asia," said the New York native that now lives in Las Vegas. "I told him that while he was out there, he either had to get me a lucky souvenir or I was going to make him give me a bitcoin. And I told him that I wasn't going to tell him more than once, so if he forgot, he was beat."

Panzica, a four-time ring winner himself, didn't want to have to give up the highly valued digital currency and brought back a small statue of Buddha for Jaffee to put on his cards. He gave it to him during a recent tournament series in Las Vegas and Jaffee's luck immediately turned around.

"I was registering the six-max at Five Diamond and he gave me this lucky Buddha card protector," said Jaffee. "Then I won the six-max and then I went pretty deep in the main and then I came here and won this. I would say that it's probably not me. It's the luck from the Sam Panzica Asian souvenir experience."

With two wins in the last several weeks, Jaffee is turning things around on what has been a rough year for him. About a year ago, he left his hometown of New York and moved to Las Vegas. Adjusting to life in Sin City was tough for him, which led to a subpar year on the felt.

“I had kind of been thinking about doing it for a while and I love Vegas, but the year has actually been kind of stressful,” said Jaffee. “This has actually been my worst year of poker in like the last seven or eight years. So, it’s been frustrating knowing how much fun I could be having living there, but yet I wasn’t putting the financial part of my life in the right spot. So, I had a bunch of losing months in a row and it turned into a losing year.”

Finishing the year on a strong note, the former lawyer is looking forward to continuing his recent success after the calendar changes to a new year.

“That made it tough, but this helps, and it feels like the momentum is shifting and I’m looking forward to 2018,” said Jaffee.

He was arguably the most experienced player at the final table, having played on poker’s biggest stages, but it was a rocky ride for Jaffee en route to his win. While he did pick up steam and dominate the final table, most of the time spent leading up to the 10-handed redraw was a grind for Jaffee.

“I came in like 10 of 14 with like under 20 blinds or something like that,” said Jaffee about his chips at the start of the final day with 14 players remaining. “Then, I got really short and down to like 300K early. I was really just looking for the best and most optimal shove spot and try to not get it in too light.”

Jaffee was able to stay afloat long enough for the cards to break his way. After he doubled through Chahn Jung with the nut flush against Jung’s smaller flush, Jaffee took the chip lead and never really looked back.

“I got fortunate that I picked up a couple hands and had people dominated and somehow laddered up to the final table, but I was still pretty short. Then, once I got here, I had one big hand where I coolered one of the other players flush over flush. Once that happened, I had the chip lead and it was pretty smooth sailing from there.”

He took the chip lead all the way to head-up play against Brendan Baksh. Baksh doubled through Jaffee twice to basically even out the chips in play, taking a slight chip lead, but Jaffee didn’t waste much time in taking the chip lead back.

They got all in preflop for nearly all the chips in play with Jaffee’s ace-queen dominating Baksh’s ace-eight. Jaffee’s hand held up and he finished off the local player just a few hands later. Baksh earned \$130,720 for his runner-up finish.

Jaffee held claim to the longest resume of anybody at the final table, but he still had to deal with one other top pro – Kelly Minkin, who finished third for \$95,880.

“She wins like every third tournament she plays,” joked Jaffee while Minkin was still within an ear shot away. “She didn’t play her best, so that left the door open for me. It worked out well.”

The two have become friends over the last few years playing tournaments together and Jaffee enjoyed having a close friend run deep in a tournament with him.

“It makes things easier. It makes it a lot less stressful,” said Jaffee about playing with a friend at the table. “We’ve known each other for a few years now and we are always busting each other’s balls and having a good time. Having somebody that, you know, you can mess around with and lighten the mood a little bit is great, especially at a final table.”

It wasn't all sunshine and roses for the two friends, however. They played a lot together during Day 2 and sometimes, the cards dictated that they had to mix it up. Minkin, at the time, came out on top.

"We sat together a bunch yesterday," said Jaffee. "And she actually kind of crippled me. She took a bunch of my chips and I was down to kind of crumbs because of her. It was nice that I was able to rebuild and get to the final table with her, but it was close, and you don't usually get to go that deep with someone you are friends with. So, I'm thankful for that. It was a lot of fun."

Final Table Results:

1st: Jared Jaffee - \$211,220
2nd: Brendan Baksch - \$130,270
3rd: Kelly Minkin - \$95,880
4th: Aaron Frei - \$71,300
5th: Edward Liu - \$53,740
6th: Mike Eskandari - \$41,045
7th: Chahn Jung - \$31,760
8th: Brian Small - \$24,895
9th: Tuan Phan - \$19,765

MEET THE LATEST WSOP CIRCUIT RING WINNER

Name: Jared Jaffee	Age: 36
Nationality: American	Profession: Poker Player
Birthplace: Staten Island, NY	WSOP Bracelets: 1
Current Residence: Las Vegas, NV	Previous WSOP Circuit Rings: 0

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