



## WSOP CIRCUIT 2017-18 EVENT REPORT

Circuit Stop:	Choctaw Casino and Resort (Durant, OK)	Date:	8 January 2018
Event:	Big O	Entries:	295
Buy-in:	\$365	Prizepool:	\$88,500

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### **JOSH 'PLINKO' CLANTON WINS BIG O RING**

*World Series of Poker dealer proves skills on the felt after winning \$21,238 in the \$365 Big O*

Josh Clanton is a familiar face at World Series of Poker events. Whether it be a Circuit event or the world's biggest poker festival over the summer at the Rio, Clanton can be found at the poker tables.

He's usually dealing, however. Clanton works as a traveling dealer for most of the WSOP events, but on Monday evening, he made his mark on the other side of the felt. Clanton won his first ring and \$21,238 in the \$365 Big O at Choctaw.

The Circuit ring was the cherry on top of what was a perfect Monday for the 33-year-old from Alabama. His Alabama Crimson Tide won the NCAA football National Championship and it was his son's fifth birthday.

"I'm so happy, man," said Clanton. "He turned five today. My kids are in Alabama and I saw them for Christmas and I got to spend three weeks with them. He turned five today and you couldn't write a better story."

Clanton doesn't get to play as many tournaments as he would like because of his work schedule. That doesn't mean he doesn't have any results however. This past summer at the Rio, Clanton came up just shy of a bracelet win in the Casino Employees event. He finished third for \$29,372.

He has no plans to play cards full-time instead of pitching them, however. That was evident by his actions after his score over the summer.

“I played the employees event and the very next day, I was dealing the final table of the 21-game mix,” said Clanton. “I made a prop bet with someone and they bet me \$50 that I wouldn’t even show up for work after final tabling the employees event and making \$30k or whatever. I am leaving here on the 16<sup>th</sup> and I’m going to catch a flight to Memphis and I’m going to deal in Tunica.”

Clanton picked up 50 points for the win, which puts him in the mix for the Casino Champion title and an outside chance to qualify for the Global Casino Championship by moving into the top 50 points earners for the season.

Qualifying for that bracelet event, however, would create a problem for the 33-year-old.

“It’s a catch 22,” said Clanton. “Because I was planning on dealing in August at Cherokee for the [GCC], but if I deal, I can’t play. If I qualify, and I have a free \$10,000 buy-in, I might deal until the Championship and then turn the [gaming] badge in.”

Clanton didn’t have an easy road to his first win. He bested a final table that already consisted of 11 rings. All of those Circuit titles came from Mark Fink, Jessie Bryant and WSOP’s all-time leader in number of cashes, Douglas Carli.

Carli lasted the longest of the three multi-ring winners, finishing in third and leaving Clanton heads-up with Rob Jackson. Jackson was a lesser known player to the general public, but Clanton had nothing but praise for his heads-up opponent.

“Rob is a great player,” said Clanton. “He has one cash and it was in July and he finished first in a Big O tournament. It’s literally his only cash. All he does is win Congress events. Start to finish, he played great.”

Besides winning a nice chunk of change, Clanton had an opportunity to breach the dealer-player relationship that he has with many of the players at the table. According to Clanton, he dealt one of Bryant’s ring victories, but he didn’t feel any awkwardness about trying to take chips from the players that he normally deals to.

“I feel like I’ve formed a good enough relationship with the players that when I’m dealing to them, they know I’m working and when I’m playing, they know I’m putting the money up just like they are and I’m out to win,” said Clanton. “This is a weird game because you can be friends with everybody that you’re playing against, but you are opponents all the time. I don’t think it’s awkward at all, but you’d have to ask them.”

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## MEET THE LATEST WSOP CIRCUIT RING WINNER

Name: Josh Clanton  
Nationality: American  
Birthplace: Russellville, AL

Current Residence: Charlotte, NC  
Age: 33  
Profession: Poker Dealer

WSOP Bracelets: 0

Previous WSOP Circuit Rings: 0

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