



## WSOP CIRCUIT 2017-18 MAIN EVENT REPORT

Circuit Stop:	Bicycle Hotel and Casino	Date:	12 December 2018
Event:	No-Limit Hold'em Main Event	Entries:	547
Buy-in:	\$1,700	Prizepool:	\$828,705

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### STEVEN SPUNT WINS BIKE MAIN EVENT

*Southern California entrepreneur earns biggest score of his poker career and his first open-event ring.*

Steven Spunt is a recreational poker player, but recently his game is starting to make gigantic strides. Last week, the entrepreneur from Southern California headed to Las Vegas to play some prelim events at another major series. He played four tournaments and finished fifth in both of them. Then he came back home and played in the Circuit main event at the Bike.

The 58-year-old put up the \$1,700 buy-in and navigated his way through the 547-entry field to earn \$174,055 and his first Circuit ring in an open-event. He does have a Circuit ring from the 2016 seniors event at Ballys, but the \$13,535 he won for that event is peanuts compared to his main event score on Wednesday evening.

After his deep runs in Vegas and his victory at the Bike, Spunt made a blunt realization about his tournament career.

“Even when I finish fifth, I’m not happy,” said Spunt with a laugh. “I play these for fun and I realized that most of the time, I’m just not going to be happy. Except now. Now, I’m very happy.”

The main event continued the trend of the 13-event series at the Bike. You’re going to have to beat some very good players to take down a tournament at the Los Angeles casino. The final day featured several top pros and some very talented tournament players.

Coming into the final day, he had to deal with bracelet winners Sandeep Pulusani and Craig Varnell, seven-time ring winner Vincent Moscati, 2016 WSOP.com Nevada online Player of the Year Ian Steinman and tournament grinder Brett Apter.

Pulusani was the first player to hit the rail and Apter bubbled the final table, all while Spunt was chipping up and he took the chip lead into the final table. When they moved to the Live at the Bike livestreamed final table, nothing changed. His stack continued to trend upward, while Steinman was eliminated in eighth, Moscati in seventh, and Varnell in sixth.

Jason Bral busted in fourth and with three players remaining, Spunt had about half the chips in play. When Steven Forman doubled through Spunt and then busted to David Lambard in third, the final two players started their heads-up battle about even in chips.

For the first time, things didn't go Spunt's way. Lambard opened up a 2-to-1 chip lead before Spunt scored a double up when he check-raised all in with second pair and a gutshot straight draw against Lambard's top pair. Spunt drilled a straight on the turn to regain the chip lead for good and finish it shortly after.

"I had a real good run to start," said Spunt. "I had a bad beat, but then I had a real big run. I chipped up really well. I had limited experience heads-up. He's a tough player, so I needed some luck and I got some luck."

Spunt's two victories and two final tables are no accidents. They are the product of some hard work and a recent focus on improvement.

"I started working on my game a little bit," said Spunt. "I study a little bit. Not a lot because I don't have time because I'm still working."

He owns car washes in both Southern and Northern California, which keeps Spunt busy for most of the year and away from the poker table. He tries to play a few tournaments a month and generally gets to play between 20 and 30 tournaments a year.

When he retires, which he hopes will be soon, he will be playing much more.

"I play for fun. I really enjoy the game," said Spunt. "Part of my retirement plan is to play more just because I like it. It's something to do. Hopefully I'll semi-retire and play a lot more tournaments."

Poker is a little bit of a family affair in the Spunt household. Both of his kids are grown and out of the house, but one of his kids is looking to take up the game and he has been able to use their shared love of spending time on the felt as a way to spend time together.

"My son wants to learn poker," he said. "I don't know how to teach him exactly. We played a little tournament in Vegas and he did good. He just needs to see more hands like the rest of us."

The 547 entries in the field paid out the top 63 spots. The field made the money early on Day 2 before finishing with 13 players. Those final 13 came back on Wednesday to play down to a winner.

Final Table Results:

1<sup>st</sup>: Steven Spunt - \$174,055

2<sup>nd</sup>: David Lambard - \$107,640

3<sup>rd</sup>: Steven Forman - \$78,710

4<sup>th</sup>: Jason Bral - \$58,405

5<sup>th</sup>: Marcos Exterkotter - \$43,495

6<sup>th</sup>: Craig Varnell - \$33,520  
7<sup>th</sup>: Vincent Moscati - \$25,920  
8<sup>th</sup>: Ian Steinman - \$20,320  
9<sup>th</sup>: Jorge Leiva - \$16,145

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## MEET THE LATEST WSOP CIRCUIT RING WINNER

Name: Steven Spunt	Age: 58
Nationality: American	Profession: Entrepreneur
Birthplace: Trabuco Canyon, CA	WSOP Bracelets: 0
Current Residence: Trabuco Canyon, CA	Previous WSOP Circuit Rings: 0

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## DIRECT LINKS

[ARTICLE ON SPUNT'S VICTORY](#)  
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