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| Circuit Stop: | Choctaw Durant | Date: | July 29, 2024 |
| Event: | Main Event | Entries: | 1,017 |
| Buy-in: | \$1,700 | Prizepool: | \$1,540,755 |

Justin Lapka Wins Choctaw Main Event

First live WSOP win adds to four online titles

Justin Lapka wasn't even supposed to be at Choctaw this week. Like many poker players after seven long weeks at poker's summer camp in Las Vegas, he had planned to just chill out and recharge.

"I wasn't even planning on coming to Choctaw. A week ago, I was just planning to take time away from poker after the (World Series of Poker) long grind and then just come to Minnesota."

Lapka was supposed to have checked into a cabin in his home state this morning, but after coming to Choctaw and then making Day 3 of the WSOP Circuit Main Event, those plans certainly changed.

He entered the final table fifth among the final 12 players but put on an outstanding performance, quickly building up to the second-biggest stack as the final table began, behind only start-of-day chip leader Kalyan Chivukula.

He then chopped down Chivukula's stack himself before eventually eliminating him amidst a dominant final table run to his third WSOP Circuit ring, to go along with entry into the 2025 WSOP Tournament of Champions and the \$252,258 first prize, the largest of his career.

The win is especially satisfying for Lapka who's success has primarily come in the online streets with both Circuit rings and a pair of WSOP bracelets all coming in those fields.

"Live's been really frustrating for me. In my ten-year career, my biggest score was like the Main Event for \$70k or something, and there have been times that I just wanted to give up playing live. There's always been the bigger buy-ins and then I lose, lose, lose, come home play online, and build it back up with smaller buy-ins, so coming here and winning this Main Event just kind of means the world."

Getting the live tournament monkey off his back also prompted Lapka to impart some words of encouragement to fellow tourney grinders who may be getting frustrated with their experiences.

“Honestly, I think the lesson here for myself or other people is just don’t give up. Keep putting the volume in, keep traveling, enjoy your experience when you’re traveling. That might be the most important thing, because the wins are just going to be so few and far between.”

Choctaw Main Event Final Table Results

- 1st place: Justin Lapka - \$252,282
- 2nd place: Gregg Merkow - \$168,169
- 3rd place: Zak Baron - \$118,278
- 4th place: Mack Khan - \$84,475
- 5th place: Kalyan Chivukula - \$61,281
- 6th place: Nicolas Splawn - \$45,165
- 7th place: Derek Normand - \$33,828
- 8th place: Tim Faro - \$25,754
- 9th place: Kaleb Harwell - \$19,936

MEET THE LATEST WSOP CIRCUIT RING WINNER

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|---------------------------|--------------|------------------------|-----------|
| Name: | Justin Lapka | Age: | 34 |
| Nationality: | USA | Profession: | Poker Pro |
| Birthplace: | Brainerd, MN | WSOP Bracelets: | 2 |
| Current Residence: | Brainerd, MN | Previous Rings: | 2 |

News and Links

- [FULL RESULTS](#)
- [JUSTIN LAPKA'S OFFICIAL WSOP PLAYER PROFILE](#)
- [OFFICIAL WINNER PHOTO](#)

