



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**GREG MADDUX, RANDY JOHNSON, DERYK ENGELLAND, AJ COLE AND MORE  
RAISE OVER \$500K FOR CANCER WARRIORS DURING BALLER DREAM  
CELEBRITY POKER TOURNAMENT AT CIRCA RESORT & CASINO**

*Eddie Nieves Wins First Place in Poker Tournament*

**LAS VEGAS** – All in on fighting cancer. This weekend, legendary pitcher **Greg Maddux** hosted the second annual **Baller Dream Celebrity Poker Tournament** at [Circa Resort & Casino](#) in Las Vegas. Alongside names such as Randy Johnson, Deryk Engelland, AJ Cole and many more, the tournament raised more than \$500,000 for [Baller Dream Foundation](#). The non-profit organization provides financial and emotional support to brave young warriors and their families impacted by cancer.

“We are thrilled at the outcome of year two of the Baller Dream Celebrity Poker Tournament,” said host Greg Maddux. “This year, the celebrities and attendees went above our wildest dreams to create a lasting impact on young cancer warriors’ lives. We are so appreciative of the time they spent to support this cause with us, along with Circa on providing a stunning space for the event.”

Click for [photos](#) and [video](#) from the weekend’s events.

Eddie Nieves won the poker tournament taking home the first-place prize of \$50,000. Out of the winners, \$34,000 was donated back to the Baller Dream Foundation. All net proceeds raised will stay local to Las Vegas and help Baller Dream Foundation provide financial support, dream gifts, hospital activities and community events where cancer warriors feel supported and celebrated. A full list of celebrity participants at the weekend events included:

- **Host Greg Maddux**, baseball
- **AJ Cole**, football
- **Blake Gillikin**, football
- **Brian O’Neill**, football
- **Deryk Engelland**, hockey
- **Evan Mathis**, football
- **Garrett Bradbury**, football
- **Goose Gossage**, baseball
- **Jim McMahon**, football
- **Randy Johnson**, baseball
- **Rollie Fingers**, baseball
- **Terrell Davis**, football
- **Tito Ortiz**, mixed martial arts
- **Tommy Armour III**, golf
- **Wally Joyner**, baseball

The tournament weekend kicked off with a celebrity game show in Circa's Galaxy Ballroom where two teams went head-to-head to guess responses to survey questions. The teams consisted of AJ Cole, Garrett Bradbury, Blake Gillikin and Brian O'Neill for team football versus Greg Maddux, Goose Gossage, Wally Joyner and Rick Sutcliffe on team baseball. Team baseball won the competition. Along with the opportunity to dine with celebrities and cheer them on during the game show, guests were treated to a plated dinner, open bar and silent auction featuring more than 100 items including exclusive, autographed memorabilia, international vacations and more. The silent auction raised north of \$65,000 for the Foundation.

The following day, guests attended the headlining event of the weekend, where the Baller Dream Celebrity Poker Tournament took place at Circa's rooftop cocktail lounge, Legacy Club. The event boasted a cocktail reception with striking wraparound views of the city and had 100 players competing to take home a \$50,000 first place prize. Prizes for first through fifth place totaled \$100,000.

Baller Dream Foundation was founded by Frank DeBlasi, who was diagnosed with testicular cancer at the age of 29. He was fortunate to have a wonderful support network of family, friends and co-workers and he promised himself that if he survived, he would build a foundation for young people battling cancer. Now cancer-free, Frank kept his promise and created Baller Dream Foundation, which recognizes the critical need for emotional and daily living support that is not available to all young warriors battling cancer. Baller Dream works closely with children's hospitals across the country and provides in-hospital, volunteer-led activities to help ease the minds of warriors and support their families.

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#### **About Circa Resort & Casino**

Get ready for the time of your life at Circa Resort & Casino, an adults-only casino-resort concept in the heart of downtown Las Vegas. The AAA Four Diamond Circa pays homage to Vegas' Golden Era through vintage design, old-school hospitality and nods to the city's history while introducing high-tech advancements and innovative amenities. The resort features upscale rooms and suites; the world's largest sportsbook; Stadium Swim, a year-round pool aqua theater; a two-story casino; Garage Mahal, a high-tech transportation hub; the luxe Legacy Club rooftop lounge; an expansive local art collection; 35,000 sq. ft of meetings and conventions space and more. Guests can indulge at original restaurant concepts including premium steaks and seafood at Barry's Downtown Prime from Chef Barry S. Dakake and Make It Happen Hospitality; Pan-Asian fare at 8 East from Chef Dan Coughlin; deli classics at Saginaw's Delicatessen from restaurateur Paul Saginaw; authentic Carolina barbecue at Project BBQ; and all-star menus at Victory Burger & Wings Co. from the founding family of American Coney Island. Visit [circularasvegas.com](http://circularasvegas.com) or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram at [@circularasvegas](https://www.instagram.com/circularasvegas) to stay up to date.

#### **About Baller Dream Foundation**

Baller Dream Foundation supports pediatric and young adult cancer warriors, ages 0-29, through treatment, remission, and beyond. The young people served by Baller Dream Foundation (BDF) are not called patients but instead "Ballers" Baller is a modern-day term used to describe someone incredibly resilient, courageous, and at the top of their game. Baller Dream develops lasting relationships to create an environment where kids feel supported, families feel connected, and communities feel inspired. As a nonprofit organization, we rely on donations to keep our programs running. Children and young adults battling cancer are facing tremendous adversity that begins with the initial diagnosis and often continues for years after that. Baller Dream Foundation aims to support these brave young warriors when and where they need it most. Our intention is for each family to realize they are not alone in their fight against cancer. Giving hope to children and families is our goal so families can lean on us at all stages of their journey. 84% of families with a child battling cancer will experience financial hardship. Baller Dream Foundation provides various levels of support to alleviate these stressors that families often encounter throughout their cancer journey. Through generous donations, Baller Dream Foundation also curates personalized "Dream Experiences" for qualifying recipients. These major gift experiences range from dream vacations, celebrity meet-and-greets, VIP access at sporting events, and many other once-in-a-lifetime adventures thanks to our partnerships. Baller Dream assists families experiencing extreme financial hardship due to their child's illnesses. We help with medical expenses, clothing, utilities, and other essentials. Funds are carefully allocated after a complete evaluation of the family's needs on a case-by-case basis. A cancer diagnosis's social and emotional side effects can often generate feelings of isolation. Through Baller Dream's community programming, they aim to create an environment where our ballers feel a sense of belonging and their families feel supported by the community. Ensuring the safety of these children and young adults is fundamental to the mission of Baller Dream. We rely on the expertise of our partnering

children's hospitals, child life specialists, social workers, and oncology nurses to identify the cancer warriors who are in need of a special lift.

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Brooke Sanchez  
Circa Resort & Casino  
[Brooke.sanchez@circalasvegas.com](mailto:Brooke.sanchez@circalasvegas.com)

Paige Maddux  
Baller Dream Foundation  
[paige@ballerdream.org](mailto:paige@ballerdream.org)

Hannah Hurlburt / Ana Hansen  
Kirvin Doak Communications  
[hhurlburt@kirvindoak.com](mailto:hhurlburt@kirvindoak.com) / [ahansen@kirvindoak.com](mailto:ahansen@kirvindoak.com)