Observations from last night’s play

• Pre-flop play much better!
  • Almost no open limping
  • Remember, don’t open limp, but okay to limp behind (avalanche)
  • More of you are raising 3x the previous raise
  • Game has gotten tougher almost overnight!

• Wrong Daniel

• Open limping is a much worse play in tournaments
  • There is actually value in taking down the blinds

• Many have tightened their pre-flop range
  • Which is good!

• More are playing in position
  • Which is fantastic!
Observations from last night’s play

• Some more advice on bet sizing
  • Why have I been raising more than 300?
    • 300 isn’t doing the job
    • Getting 5 callers
    • So I started raising 500 or 600
  • Also, if multiple limpers already in, need to raise more
    • 100 for each limper plus 300
    • So if 4 limpers in, make it 700 instead of 300
    • Goal is to get some folds – otherwise 300 is the new limp
  • If you 3-bet a $300 raise, you want to actually raise the pot
    • So, if only one person is in for $300, that’s $900
    • But, if $300 raise followed by 3 calls, you should raise to $1,500
      • $300 call + $1,200 bet which is approx. the pot
      • You want to be heads up
Bet Types
(continued)
Bet Types - review

• Value Bet
  • Make a worse hand call

• Bluff
  • Make a better hand fold

• Semi-Bluff
  • Bet with a drawing hand that is currently behind
  • Fold equity can give you an edge

• Every bet should have a purpose
  • If you can’t articulate why you are betting/raising, don’t do it
  • Practice describing to yourself the reason for your bet
    • You may find yourself changing your bet size or checking
The probe bet

• Usually when you don’t know where you stand
  • Do you have the best hand? Possibly, but possibly not

• Usually smaller than a value bet
  • But don’t give away too much with your bet sizing

• Goal is to gain information and control pot size

• Probe bets can accomplish
  • Winning the pot (unexpected, but nice)
  • Establishing control, taking the lead, and maybe getting a future free card
  • Preventing opponent from making a bigger bet (pot control)
  • Narrowing the field – getting weak hands in a multi-way pot to fold
    • Prevents silly suck outs when they draw to a ridiculous hand (e.g. 26 hitting two pair)
The Continuation Bet

• You raised pre-flop and were called
• Flop comes out
• You bet the flop no matter what
  • Called a C-bet
• Heads up, 70% of the time, opponent missed the flop with two unpaired cards.
• If you bet, he might fold

• Caution: Most opponents today expect a continuation bet
  • 70% of the time, you miss the flop
Continuation bet (continued)

• More effective in position
  • Opponents less likely to float out of position
  • You get to see them check first

• Less likely to work multi-way
  • 3 opponents or more – one of them likely to hit something on the flop

• If you C-bet a lot, you get called more often when you do hit the flop
The Donk Bet

• You are out of position
• Your opponent raised pre-flop & you called
• The flop is dealt
• You are first to act
• You bet – this is called a “Donk bet”
  • Named after the animal that is apparently the worst at poker
• This is an unusual way to play
  • If you have a strong hand
    • More likely to check and let opponent continuation bet
    • If you have a weak hand, no point in putting money in
• Thus, often interpreted as a weak play
  • But advance players know this
    • Sometime will donk bet strong hands to appear weak to a thinking player
    • Some more advanced players will donk bet weak hands to look like a strong hand trying to look weak
    • Etc.
The blind bet

• Some players will bet before a card comes
  • Must be first to act
  • E.g. pre-flop betting is over, player checks “in the dark”
  • E.g. player goes all in before the turn card is turned over (usually short stacked)

• Betting in the dark
  • makes poker easier
  • Takes away your decisions
  • Can compensate for bad position

• I don’t like it
  • You are making a decision with less information than you can get by waiting
The Check

• Goals of checking
  • You have a small value hand
    • No better hand is likely to fold
    • No worse hand is likely to call
  • Eliminate a betting street and keep the pot smaller for a small-pot hand
  • Trapping
    • Represent weakness with a strong hand to induce betting from a weak opponent
    • If you think your opponent might be strong, don’t trap!
    • One of the most over-used and abused play
      • In general, bet your strength
The check-raise

• You check with the intention of raising if someone bets
• A way to get an extra bet out of an aggressive opponent
• You have to believe someone will raise
• Represents a lot of strength
• Sometimes used as a bluff: Check-Raise-Bluff (advanced move)

• When you get check-raised, proceed with caution
• If opponent is known to check-raise a lot, forces you to check back sometimes
• If you are known to check-raise often, you might get free cards
Leveling
Understanding levels

• Level Zero
  • Thinking about your hole cards
  • Very shallow thinking
  • Making all decisions based on your cards alone

• Level zero thinking out loud
  • Hmm, I have AQ. This is great! I’m going to bet. Hmm, he just raised me. Well, I have AQ. That’s a good hand. I will call. Looks like a Q on the flop. I made a pair! Yippee! I am willing to lose all my money on this hand because I have AQ and there is a Q on the flop. Oh, wait, what happened? How did I lose? Why do I suck at poker?!?
Level One

• Level one thinking:
  • I know my cards
  • Based on my opponent’s actions, what do I think he has?

• At level one, you are thinking about your cards and your opponent’s cards.

• Level one thinking out loud
  • I have AJs, that’s pretty good. I raised pre-flop. My opponent raised me. My hand is too good to fold, but I know he has something. Oh great, a J high flop. I will bet. Oh no, he just re-raised me big. I know he’s a tight player and never does this without 2 pair or better. As much as I like my hand, this is a good time for me to fold.
Level two

- Most average recreational players don’t get past level two
- Thinking about:
  - My hole cards
  - What my opponent is holding
  - What my opponent thinks I am holding
- Level two thinking out loud
  - I have 67o. I have played tight for a while now, and I saw a raise and a call behind me. If I raise now, they are going to think I’m strong. Okay, I got one victim to call me. Let’s see. The flop came with an A. I can represent that A because I raised pre-flop, and I have a tight table image. So, I will bet it strong. Yup, I bet, and he folded and showed me an A. I guess he didn’t like his kicker. I had nothing, but I knew he thought I had a strong A.
Level 3

• Thinking about
  • My hole cards
  • My opponent’s holdings
  • What my opponent thinks I am holding
  • What my opponent thinks I think he thinks I am holding

• Level 3 thinking out loud
  • I have an example, but if I read it to you, your head would explode.
Leveling

- Top pros are said to play at level 7
  - I know what he thinks I think he thinks I think he has, but since he thinks I think he thinks I’m strong, I’ll play weak, which will make him think that I think he thinks I’m weak.

- Leveling can get you in trouble
  - What if you play him like a level 2, but he’s really at level 1?

- An important skill to develop
  - Try to figure out what level your opponents are playing
  - Against level 0 players, forget about your image
    - They are not watching you nor paying attention
  - Don’t underestimate good players’ ability to level you
Leveling example

• You make a big bet on the river
• Your opponent thinks and thinks and thinks
• Finally, he says “Will you show me if I fold?”
• Typical idea:
  • If you say “yes” it means you want him to fold
  • So, if you say “yes” he snap calls you
• But if he knows that you know this
  • Then he will think that a “yes” means you want a call
• But if you know that he knows this as well
  • You will say “yes” because you want a fold and you think he will think you want a call
    because he knows that you know that he knows that you know this.
Leveling in a Hollywood movie
With deadly consequences
Post-flop play
Flop is major milestone in the hand

• On the flop, hand has shaped up
• You know 5 of your 7 possible cards
  • Hand is over 70% defined
• You have seen:
  • Pre flop action
  • Flop action of earlier positions
• This street will probably determine
  • How big the pot will be
  • # of players that will battle
• Many hands end on the flop
• If you get past the flop, you will often see the river
Considerations on the flop

- How many players remain in the hand
  - And types of players
- Your position relative to other players
- Who was the pre-flop aggressor
- Pot size and remaining effective stacks
- Dry or wet flop
- How well pre-flop action/ranges connects with the flop
  - Flop more likely to hit you or your opponent(s) based on pre-flop action
Your hand strength – heads up on the flop

- After the flop, you can have:
  - Monster: E.g. Full House
    - No cards left for opponent to hit anything
  - Very strong hand: E.g. set of two pair
    - Want to build a pot – usually bet
  - Overpairs & top pair
    - Usually bet
    - Not looking to build a huge pot
    - On dry board, can check for pot control
    - On wet board, should usually bet for protection
  - Pairs below top pair
    - Check-calling hands
    - You might still be good, don’t give up right away
  - Drawing hand
    - Can play for deception
    - Play when implied odds are good
  - Nothing hands
    - Might beat opponent when he also has nothing
Assessing opponent’s hand heads up on flop

• Consider pre-flop action
• Consider opponent type
  • Tight, aggressive, loose, passive, maniac, etc
• Consider opponent’s pre-flop hand range
  • E.g. High cards, pairs, suited connectors above 67, etc
• How well does this flop connect with that range?
• Consider how opponent thinks of your range pre-flop
  • Their image of you, their assessment of your range
• Ask:
  • Am I probably ahead or probably behind?
  • If I’m ahead, how likely is opponent to be drawing to beat me?
  • If I’m behind, how many outs might I have?
  • If I’m behind, can I still win without risking too much?

Always take position into account!
Continuation bet

• Most players will C-bet most of the time
• It is very important to assess how players respond to C-bets
• Some players NEVER believe a continuation bet
  • You actually do hit the flop 30% of the time!
• If you are the preflop raiser
  • You have to decide if you will continuation bet
    • If you hit the flop, and if you miss the flop
• Considerations:
  • C-bet more often in position
    • Opponent already showed weakness by checking to you
      • Watch out for players who love to check-raise
    • Especially on continuation bets
  • Do not C-bet as often into multiple players
  • Continuation bet more often on dry boards than wet boards
Continuation bet

• If your opponent was pre-flop raiser
  • You have to decide what to do if they C-bet

• Considerations
  • Who has position?
  • How often do they C-Bet?
    • If more than 30% then some of them are bluffs
  • Will they call a raise if they are bluffing?
    • If they C-bet too much, then you can take away the pot
  • Who do you think is ahead?
Post flop strategy

• Primary source: Harrington Cash Games
• Harrington likes to mix up play with percentages
  • E.G. Check 70%, Bet 30%
  • Use second hand on watch to randomize
• There are many ways to play
  • Not all are correct or incorrect
  • None are always absolutely right
  • But some are always wrong
• It is a mostly TAG strategy
Four different situation

• Assume deep stacks, effective 150 BB
• Two key factors:
  • Position
  • Who was the aggressor pre-flop
• Each of these situations is so different, that we will take them one at a time with hand examples
  • You were aggressor pre-flop, and you are out of position
  • You were the aggressor pre-flop, and you are now in position
  • Your opponent was the aggressor, and you are out of position
  • Your opponent was the aggressor, and you are in position
You were aggressor pre-flop, and you are out of position
Assumptions

• You raised 3 BB from 3rd position and were called only by an opponent on the button
  • So, you were the aggressor (first bettor) and are out of position for the whole hand

• Consider his button calling range
  • Should be pretty wide
Your hand: \[\text{King, King,}\]

- Flop: \[A, 10, 4, Ace, Club, Spade, Diamond, Club, Diamond]\n
- Strategy: Bet 20% of the time, check 80%

- Analyses
  - Dreaded A came on the flop
  - Hard to make money when you’re ahead – he will fear the A
  - He will think he’s ahead if he has an A.
Your hand: 

- **Flop:**
  - A♣️ 10♦️ 4♠️

- **Variation #1, we bet & he calls**
  - You want to keep pot small
  - Occasionally make a bet on the turn
  - Done trying to extract value, hope to get to showdown cheap

- **Variation #2, we bet & he raises**
  - Fold!
  - Unless you have some kind of strong read on opponent

- **Variation #3, we check and he bets**
  - Call – can’t just fold to just one bet
  - On the turn, check again, and if he best, probably have to fold
Your hand: ♦KA, ♣KH

• Flop: ♦A, ♣10, ♢4, ♦4

• Variation #4, we check & he checks
  • Very unlikely he has an A
  • Most players would bet due to the flush draw & straight draw
  • On the turn, bet 50% of the time, check 50% of the time
  • Very little reason to bet unless he will call with a worse hand
    • Unlikely with A on the board
    • Rare time it’s okay to play passively
Your hand: ✧ K♦️ K♣️ ✧

- Flop: ♥️10♠️ ⚡️9♦️ ♣️8♠️

- Strategy: bet 60% of the time, check 40% of the time

- Analysis:
  - Lots of hands that would call pre-flop are crushing you
    - 2 pair, sets, straights
  - Lots of drawing hands on this flop will continue
  - Many hands like JT have a straight draw and a pair

- Recommendation:
  - Make a larger than usual bet to charge the draws
  - 7.5 BB on the flop, so bet around 6 or 7 bigs
Your hand: 

- **Flop:**

- **Variation #1:** We bet and he calls
  - We’re mostly done here – no need to bet more in this hand
  - Pot is 21.5 BB if we bet 7 BB on the flop
  - We are out of position

- **Variation #2:** We check and he bets
  - Call 70% of the time, and fold 30% of the time
  - Hard to fold an overpair, but mixing in some folds prepares us to let go
  - Lots of scary turn and river cards, so not the worst to cut our losses
Your hand: 

- **Flop:**

- **Strategy:** bet 70% of the time, check 30%
  - Always keeping play balanced to not become predictable
  - Most players always bet here, but need to mix in some checks
  - It’s very different if there are more players in the hand – in which case always bet

- **Analysis:**
  - Straightforward situation
  - Good enough to bet
  - Not strong enough to trap (e.g. check-raise)
  - Still just one pair
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Variation #1 : We bet and he raises 
  • Against a known tight player, have to consider folding 
  • Against anyone else, call, but proceed with caution 
  • Never re-raise 

• Variation #2 : We bet and he calls 
  • Now we need to start thinking “small hand – small pot” 
  • Should check a future street 
  • Although against a calling station, can bet down to river
Your hand: 

- **Flop:**

  - **Variation #3:** We check and he bets
    - Only play is to call
    - Not strong enough to raise
    - Too strong to fold
    - I would also check-call a blank turn

  - **Variation #4:** We check and he checks
    - Bet turn 90% of the time, check 10% to trap
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Strategy: 
  • Similar to last hand, bet 70%, check 30%

• Analysis: 
  • Excellent flop! 
  • Bet might look like a continuation bet with nothing 
  • Only checking to balance range 
  • We have best kicker
Your hand:  

• Flop:  

• Variation #1: We bet & he raises  
  • Unless he’s a maniac, not too many hands we are beating  
  • His range when he’s ahead: QQ, JJ, 77, QJ  
  • AA, KK beating you, but would have raised pre-flop  
  • Possible raising hand that you beat: KQ  
  • He could also have AQ too  
  • He could be semi-bluffing with AK or T9  
  • The raising hands that beat you fit the pre-flop action  
  • Think about the player, your table image and how likely he is to stone cold bluff you with nothing  
  • With no information on player, fold 30%, call 70% and be careful on turn  
    • Can’t fold too often and be bullied off such a strong hand
Your hand: 

- **Flop:** 

- **Variation #2: We bet, and he calls**
  - Lots of calling hands we can beat
  - If blank turn, bet 90%, check 10% (to trap)
  - If K on the turn, just check – KQ & KJ are now ahead (2 most likely holdings)

- **Variation #3: We check and he bets**
  - Call. Raise builds too big a pot with one pair. Never folding.
  - Any card below a 9 on the turn, we bet
  - If J on the turn, we check and proceed with caution – scary card for us
    - So many of his pre-flop calling hands that bet the flop could have a J
Your hand: 

- Flop: 

- Variation #4: We check, and he checks
  - Almost definitely we’re ahead
  - Bet any turn for value
2010 WSOP Main Event
Final Table Hand
Your hand:  

- Flop: 

- Strategy: Bet 80% of the time, check 20%
- Analysis:
  - Losing if opponent has an A, otherwise probably ahead
  - Common saying on a flop like this: “First in the pot wins”
  - Many overcards to your TT can come on the turn
    - So 80% is a large percentage of the time to bet
  - Bet on the larger side – you want to end this now
    - You will get a lot of information from a bigger bet
Your hand: 10♠ 10♣  

• Flop:  
  
• Variation #1: You bet and he raises  
  • Fold!

• Variation #2: You bet, and he calls  
  • He’s representing an A with possibly a weak kicker or a middle pair  
  • There are no draws on this flop  
  • On the turn, bet 30%, check 70% for pot control
Your hand: 

- Flop: 

- Strategy: Bet 70% of the time, check 30%

- Analysis:
  - We hope he has an A
  - We bet a high percentage because of the straight draws and likelihood of getting called and winning a big pot
  - Since we frequently C-bet when we miss, we balance by also frequently betting when we crush it
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Variation #1: We bet, and he raises
  • 20% re-raise – gives away strength of hand, but gives us cover for occasional bluff-re-raise.
  • 80% call
  • Re-raising post-flop is rare. If our hand is so strong, we want to keep opponent in and make more money on turn & river
  • More often re-raise when board is draw heavy, especially with combo draws
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Variation #2: We bet. He calls.
  • Most likely he has a A or some kind of straight draw
  • Very unlikely he has a naked 9 or T – that would be a very loose call, given the action
  • If a straight card comes on the turn (K, Q, J, 8) we must bet to charge those draws
  • Blank turn, bet 50%, check 50% to balance ranges. Bet about half pot to keep him around with a weak A or any hand he likes

• Variation #3: We check, he bets
  • Raise 40% of the time, call 60%
  • If he calls my raise, lead out on the turn 70% and check 30%
Your hand: 10 10

• Flop: A 10 9

• Variation #4: We check and he checks
  • Bet on the turn and hope he has something or thinks you’re bluffing
  • Not likely to win much in this hand
WSOP Day 1B, 2017
Memorable hand

(people still talking about it)
The key players in this hand

Vanessa Selbst
- 3 WSOP bracelets
  - First and only female to do this
- $11.8 million in live earnings
- BA, JD from Yale, Fulbright scholar

Gaelle Bowmann
- 14 WSOP cashes
- Live WSOP earnings: $691,927
- Two masters degrees
Setup

• First day of Main Event, $10,000 buy-in
• One hour into an 8 day event
  • Halfway through first 2-hour level
• Selbst is a favorite to go deep
  • She’s a huge poker celebrity, with good reason
• A couple of other top pros at the table
You were the aggressor pre-flop, and you are now in position
Assumptions

- You raised 3 BB from the cutoff
  - Only Big Blind calls
- You will act last on every street after this
  - Huge benefit of position, as we will see
- You can put him on a wider than usual range of hands
  - Most players “defend” their big blind
    - Better pot odds
    - Discourage future blind stealing against you
    - But this is really more of a tournament thing than a cash game thing.
- He can put you on a wide range
  - You opened in late position
Your hand:  

- Flop:  

- He bets 3 blinds  
- (Try not to look too excited)  
- Call (Harrington recommends raise 10% of the time)  
- Board has no draw, you have the nuts right now  
- How to maximize return  
- Opponent is representing an A. We want to give him more chances to try to steal  
- And if he really has an A, we will get some chips!
Your hand: 

- Flop: 

- He checks

- Bet 25%, check 75%
  - Too strong to bet.
  - No draws to worry about
  - Hope he catches something on the turn
  - Big hand – big pot breaks down when there’s little he can have
  - Middle set tends to make more money than top set
    - Because he can have top pair more often
Your hand:  

• Flop:  

• Variation #1: He checks, you bet, he calls  
  • Turn plan:  
    • Raise if he bets  
    • Bet if he checks  
  • His call indicates he has something, so find out how much you can get form him  
    • Best case, he has 88 or 55  
  • No slow play. If he has it, you get paid, if not, you never were going to
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Variation #2: He checks and you check
  • Plan for turn is 70% bet, 30% check
  • Reasons to bet turn
    • Value
    • Avoid a “freezer card” that stops the action
  • Reasons to check turn
    • Deception, so opponent knows that you can have a monster even if you check to the river
Your hand:  
  
  • Flop:  
  • Action: He bets 3 big blinds  
  • Strategy: Raise 10%, call 90%  
  • Analysis:  
    • Difficult flop  
    • Board is full of draws  
    • He might have 2 pair already  
    • If you hit an A, there are 4 to a straight  
    • You have a draw too if a T hits (but you won’t get paid)
Your hand: 

- Flop: 

- Action: He checks 

- Strategy: Bet 80%, check 20% 

- Analysis: 
  - Bet for value, but proceed with caution 
  - Bet larger than usual – want to take it down now and charge draws 
    - Maybe 80% to 100% of the pot
Your hand: 

- Flop: 

- Variation #1: He checks, we bet, he raises
  - Call 30%, fold 70%
  - Can’t always fold to a raise, but probably beat
  - Position lets us call 30%

- Variation #2: He checks, we bet, he calls
  - We hope for a blank on the turn (e.g. 2 of diamonds)
  - We want to check it down if possible
Your hand:  

• Flop:  

• Variation #3: He checks and we check  
  • An A on the turn makes life difficult  
  • Worst card on the turn is a 9  
    • Gives him possible straight we can’t match  
  • Most turns, bet 75% of the time if he checks  
    • Need to get value from AA if we have the best hand
Your hand:  

- Flop:  

- Action: He bets 3 big blinds
- Strategy: Raise 40%, call 60%
- Analysis:
  - This is a good flop and a good result
  - Some straight draws
  - Most likely he has a weaker Q or J (worse kicker)
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Variation #1: He bets. We Raise. He re-raises
  • Need to take player type into account
  • Against a good, tight player, fold
  • Against a weak player, you can call
    • Weak player could have KQ, QT, KT
  • Against a wild maniac, you probably call
    • He might get all your money, but most often you’ll get his
    • Hi variance to play against maniacs, but this is the result you want against them
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Variation #2: He checks

• Strategy: 
  • Bet 70%, check 30%

• Analysis: 
  • Standard value bet with what’s probably the best hand
  • Check for deception and to mix up your game 
    • Be less predictable
    • Harder for him to put you on a hand now
    • Harder for him to assume you don’t have anything when you check later
Your hand:  

- Flop: 

- Variation #3: He checks, you bet, he raises

- Analysis:
  - Usually represents great strength
  - His story is that he can beat one pair
  - Many players also do this with TK here
  - Would be less scary if 7 were diamond or club
    - Because he could have even more draws

- Strategy
  - Call 40%, Fold 60%
  - Fold more often against tighter players
Your hand: 

- Flop: 
- Action: He bets 3 big blinds
  - A donk bet
- Strategy: Raise 20%, call 60%, fold 20%
- Analysis:
  - Great flop for bluffing
  - Unlikely to have an 8
  - A good player will know you also missed
  - If he had an 8, wouldn’t he let you continuation bet?
Your hand:  

- Flop:  

- Variation #1: He bets, you raise, he re-raises  
  - You have to fold  
  - You have A high, and he’s representing something stronger  
  - Don’t want to lose your stack with not even a pair  

- Variation #2: He checks  
  - Bet 60%, check 40%  
  - Check for pot control with A high hand that’s probably good  
  - Not much value in betting  

- Variation #3: He checks, you bet, he raises  
  - 50% fold, 40% call, 10% re-raise  
  - You have to mix up your play and keep him honest sometimes
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Variation #4: He checks, you bet, he calls 
  • Most likely he just has 2 high cards 
  • If a high card that misses you comes on turn 
    • Mostly fold to his bet 
  • Keep the pot small
An interesting hand
Daniel Negreanu vs Alec Torelli
Your opponent was the aggressor, and you are out of position
Assumptions

- Opponent was aggressor pre-flop
- You are out of position after the flop
- He raised 3 BB from cutoff
- You called in the big blind
- Our betting and calling percentages should be lower
  - Since we’ll be out of position

- Consider opponent’s opening range from the cutoff
  - Much wider than UTG
Your hand: 

• Flop:  

• Action: Bet 30% of the time, check 70%  

• Analysis  
  • Strong flop for you  
  • Some concern about straight draws  
  • You hope he has a A  
  • Check more often because he was aggressor pre-flop  
  • You expect him to continuation bet and represent the A even if he missed  
  • You have a monster, unless a Q or K comes on the turn
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Variation #1: We bet, he raises
  • His most likely range: AK, AQ, AT, TT
  • We are a huge favorite
  • Reraise 40%, call 60%
    • Balance the play and build a pot

• Variation #2: We bet, he calls
  • On the turn, we should bet again

• Variation #3: We check, he bets
  • Raise 80%, call 20%

• Variation #4: We check, he checks
  • Bet the turn 80%, check turn 20% (to induce bluffs and balance our play)
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Strategy: Bet 20%, check 80%
  • Don’t like donk betting
  • This is a difficult flop to play against an aggressor out of position
  • He often has an A
  • But you don’t want to fold the best hand if he doesn’t

• Variation #1: You bet, he raises
  • You fold
  • Note that if you hit two pair, that could give him a straight

• Variation #2: You check, he bets
  • Call 90%, raise 10%
  • You don’t fold second pair to one bet
  • Raising occasionally as a bluff on such a coordinated board
    • Might get him to fold an A, especially a weaker A
Your opponent was the aggressor, and you are in position
Assumptions

• Opponent was aggressor pre-flop
• You are in position after the flop
• He raised 3 BB from third position
• You called on the button
• You act after him on the flop

• Consider opponent’s UTG opening range throughout the hands
  • Tighter than cutoff range
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Action: He bets 3 big blinds

• Strategy: Raise 40%, call 60%

• Analysis:
  • You have an overpair and are probably good
  • Lots of turn cards can come that you won’t like
  • Your main worry would be a higher pair
Your hand:  

- **Flop:**  
  - Variation #1: He bets. You raise. He calls  
    - If a blank comes on the turn and he bets  
      - Seriously consider that he has a bigger pair  
      - Call 30%, Fold 70% on that turn  
    - If he checks turn, you should check behind  
      - Very few hands worse than your will call a bet  
      - Not many hands better than yours will fold  
  
- **Variation #2:** he checks  
  - Bet 80%, check 20%  
  - Most people would never check here  
    - Which is why you should do it for deception, occasionally  
    - Also, pot control with a small hand
Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Variation #3: He checks, you bet, he raises
  • Getting check-raised is scary here
  • You have to use your read on the opponent
  • Fold 80% of the time
  • Call more against wild maniacs
    • Have to keep wild bluffers honest
  • Never re-raise here
    • No value, and doesn’t work as a bluff
Summary post flop lessons

• Considering who is Pre-flop aggressor is important
• Position is important
• Use these 2 factors to help with ranges
• Important to mix up play
  • But most often take the standard play
• Critical lessons:
  • Don’t bet if there is
    • no value (worse hand won’t call) and
    • no bluff possibility (better hand won’t fold)
Post-flop is much more complicated

• We only looked at heads up – 2 players to the flop
  • Multi-way pots are very different
  • You have to put multiple players on ranges
  • Different players can have different stack sizes
  • More types of players in the hand – exponentially complicated
    • They are all leveling each other

• We only looked at very simple action pre-flop
  • Bet and a call
    • It’s more complicated with 3 bets pre-flop

• We only looked at 150BB stacks
  • In practice some short stacks, some deep stacks at table
Hand Exercises

Post-flop strategy
• Your hand: Q♣ Q♦
• Player F is steaming after
  • Some bad beats
  • Losing half his stack
• Action: Players A & B fold
• Do you check or Raise?
• Your hand: 

• Action: Players A & B fold

• Do you check or Raise?

• Considerations:
  • QQ is a very strong hand
  • You don’t want raggedy aces or kings, e.g K7 to get in cheap
  • Raise on the higher end to eliminate riff raff
  • You are in early position
    • Will probably be out of position for the hand
  • Proceed with caution on flop if A or K comes
• Your hand:  

• You raise to $35
• Players D & E fold
• Player F calls
• Player G & the blinds fold
• You are heads up, out of position, pot is $85
• Flop:  

• After you do a little dance in your head (don’t show it outwardly)
  • What do you do? Bet or check?
• Your hand: 
  ![Hearts K-Q]  
  ![Diams A-Q]

• Flop: 
  ![Hearts 8-6-3]  

• Pot: $85

• Considerations:
  • Hope he has a K or Q
  • General rules:
    • Don’t slow play flops with lots of draws
    • Don’t slow play flops where you are likely to get action
    • Slow play more often against weak players
    • Don’t slow play steamers

Blinds: $5/$10
Pot: $15

Steaming
• Your hand: 
• Flop: 
• Pot: $85
• You bet $45
• Player F raises to $150
• What do you do?
- Your hand: 
- Flop: 
- Pot: $85
- You bet $45
- Player F raises to $150
- Considerations:
  - After the bet, he has $465 left and there is $280 in the pot
  - Your choice is to raise all in or call
  - If he has anything, he’ll call your bet because he’s steaming
  - If he has nothing, he might fire again on the turn or river
    - However, turn & river might bring in draws
    - Those could either complete his hand or scare him
    - And you are out of position
  - Best chance of getting money in good is to just shove here
    - If I had position, I might just call
• Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Pot: $85
• You bet $45
• Player F raises to $150

• You shove all in, and he calls and turns over:

• Turn:  

• River:  

• And you win his whole stack
• Your hand: 
  
• Board: 
  
• Breaking it down (his view)
  • He started hand with 65 BB
    • And lost his whole stack
  • His pre-flop call – ok
  • His raise on the flop – pretty standard
    • Is a better hand folding – never
    • Is a worse hand calling that raise – only really AK
    • Main reason for raising is to price out or chase away the draws
    • Or give them wrong pot odds
  • His call on your shove?
    • Difficult, but standard
  • Ultimately he was coolered
• Your hand: 
  
- Board: 

- His hand: 

• What happens if he just calls the flop?
• On this runout he still goes broke
  - You bet turn & shove river & he calls all the way
• But what if ten of hearts comes on the turn?
  - You might slow down
  - And he doesn’t go broke
Another hand

Post-flop strategy
• Your hand: 

• Player A folds
• Player B calls $6
• Player C folds
• Player D calls $6
• Players E, F, G fold
• Small blind calls $3
• $24 in the pot
• Do you check or raise?
• Your hand: 

• Considerations:
  • 2 early position limpers
  • SB got a good price
  • AT is good but not great
  • You will be out of position
  • Your A is medium strength
  • Nice implied odds hand
    • Based on Straights or flushes
  • Better play is probably to check
    • Your hand strength may be disguised if you hit
    • Not looking to build a pot with medium strength
  • Many beginners overvalue this hand and will raise
• Your hand: \\
• More considerations:
  • A raise might chase out
    • Riff raff (good)
    • Weaker aces (bad)
  • You will be out of position
    • So a raise can end it here
    • Raise means fewer players
      • On the flop
• Neither play is wrong
  • I like to check more often here, maybe 70% check 30% raise
• Your hand: 
• You raise to $40
• Player B folds
• Player D calls $34
• Small blind folds
• Pot is $92
• You act first after the flop
• Your hand: 
  
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A♠</td>
<td>10♣</td>
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• Flop: 
  
| 10♥ | 8♦ | 7♣ |

• What do you do? 
  • Check or Bet?

Blinds: $3/$6  
Pot: $9
• Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Consideration
  • What is his range?
  • Let’s consider possibilities
  • Group 1: High pairs
    • Unlikely, because he limped
    • And did not re-raise preflop
  • Group 2: Medium to low pairs
    • Very consistent. Limped to see a cheap flop, then called your raise
  • Group 3: Two high cards
    • Not consistent for a tight player
    • Most likely would fold to our raise
    • Possibility exists if he’s a loose player or if he didn’t notice that I was tight
      • Can’t always assume they are paying attention
      • Good skill is to notice if they are paying attention
• Your hand:  
  
• Flop:  

• Consideration
  • What is his range?
  • Let’s consider possibilities

• Group 4 : suited connector, type hands
  • Mostly would not call raise
  • But can’t rule them out
• Your hand: 

• Flop: 

• Consideration
  • Flop is draw heavy
    • Two hearts, straight draws
  • We have top pair top kicker
  • His most likely holding
    • Small to medium pair
  • If he has a set we are crushed
  • We have a good hand now
  • Unlikely we will improve
    • Many overcards can come
  • We are out of position
• Your hand: 
• Flop: 

• You bet $70
• Player D folds
• You win
• Thoughts:
  • When you flop TPTK OOP
    • (top pair top kicker out of position)
  • Not looking to build a big pot
    • It’s a good idea to check a street or two  (assuming deep stacks)
  • But board texture matters
    • Wet board, lots of draws, you should bet more often
    • Dry board, check more often
  • Position matters
    • Out of position, bet more often
    • In position, check back more often if he checks
      • Which he often will if you were the aggressor pre-flop