

Poker Pro's Corner: Keep it tight when playing at a loose table

by Max Pescatori

Q: When playing at a very loose table, what is the best strategy?

MAX PESCATORI - Playing professional poker since 1999, Max Pescatori has made quite a name for himself. He has won more than \$1.8 million and plays in the biggest buy-in tournaments all over the world. CNS Photo. - Need Help in Needham, U.K.

A: Tighten up! It's easy - just play tight. They are going to call you no matter what, so you might as well just play tight. That's the best strategy.

Q: I need bankroll help. I rolled up 16k from 50 pounds a year and a half ago. Then after three days I went bust. And then just recently I rolled up 1k from 10 pounds. Again, I went bust. I was playing where I shouldn't have been both times and I know this, but it is hard to fight the urge to play higher. Is there anything I can do to help me build patience? I want to get a bankroll where I can play 10-20 or 15-30 without having to worry.

- Yo-Yo Ma, London

A: You know you aren't supposed to do that, so don't do it. Anyone can make a mistake once or twice, but if you do it all the time, you are an addict. You can't risk 100 percent of your bankroll in two days! You should risk 5 to 10 percent of your bankroll in a couple days - maximum. If you have 10,000 pounds, you should never lose more than 500 or 1,000 in two days. If you do, you are playing too high. Technically, you shouldn't even be risking 5 percent in a single session - you should be lower - but if you have to and you lose it, then go to 5 percent of what you have left.

Q: I have heard pros say they won't show up for the first few levels of a live tournament. Is this a good idea?

- Late for Dinner, Sandwich, England

A: I showed up late to a tournament recently, but generally speaking just do what's best for you. I don't like to show up early because I prefer to be fresh at the end of the night and also because it's boring to play 25-50 when you have 50,000 in chips in front of you. So I prefer to come in late, but it's really up to you. As a general rule, no, don't show up late. Maybe just don't play a hand and study the table early on, but if you come in and you feel like you play to lose, then yes, it's OK to arrive late.

Playing professional poker since 1999, Max Pescatori has made quite a name for himself. He has cashed for more than \$1.8 million and plays in the biggest buy-in tournaments all over the world. His biggest cash (\$682,000) came last year when he captured a WSOP bracelet in the \$2,500 no-limit hold'em event. "The Italian Pirate" beat out a huge field and was able to take home the gold. The Milan native has more than 80 lifetime cashes, and won the Italian Championship this year.

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