

Poker Pro's Corner: Don't be caught short-stacked

by Dan Harrington

Q: What should my strategy be when I get short-stacked and the blinds and antes are high?

- Newbie, Atlanta

DAN HARRINGTON - A former backgammon champ, chess master and lawyer, 1995 WSOP Main Event champ Dan Harrington made final tables in 2003 and 2004 and has made \$4.5 million in lifetime tourney winnings. Known for his tight play, 'Action Dan' is also the author of the well-respected 'Harrington on Hold'em' books. CNS Photo courtesy of Mike Stotts. A: If my chip stack relative to the blinds is small, I would be waiting for any kind of situation, like a reasonable ace, a pair, two good connecting cards like K-Q or J-10 suited. I would just try to get involved in the pot and double my chips up.

Q: I read that I shouldn't talk during a hand. Is that true?

- Motormouth, Detroit

A: When you talk during a hand, you do it to disseminate incorrect information or to acquire information from your opponents. You have to be a very strong player when you talk in order not to give out more than you receive. My general advice is not to talk during the play of the hand. A very sharp player could pick up something from your conversation.

Q: In what kinds of situations should I be limping in with aces?

- Billy B., Dallas

A: Especially at an aggressive table that does a lot of raising, I would limp with aces and just have someone else raise and drive a lot of players back into me and then I can reraise and hopefully win a big pot.

Q: When do you slow down with aces?

- Tired of Losing, Las Vegas

A: When the flop is dangerous, especially when I think it has fallen near what my opponent is playing with. If I have aces and the flop comes J-10-9 with two of a suit, well, that's a real dangerous flop. A lot of the hands that my opponent could have been playing with could have hit that flop. You have to play carefully there.

Q: If I raise with A-K from the big blind and I get called and I miss the flop, should I bet first there to continue the bet?

- Flop-Happy, Memphis

A: I would continue because you showed strength to begin with. It does depend on the flop, though. If the flop came innocuous like J-4-2, I would definitely put out a continuation bet. If the flop came dangerously, though, like J-10-9 or Q-J-10, you have to be careful there because there is a good chance that flop hit your opponent because it is easy for a lot of cards to fit into that flop, so you really have to look at the texture of the flop to decide whether you should continue betting or not.

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