

Poker Pro's Corner: Pay attention to stack size

by Jared Hamby

Q: I am confused when I get to be big stack in a sit-n-go or final table. What is the best way to play a big stack?

Clueless

JARED HAMBY - After bursting onto the poker scene late last year, Jared Hamby has been a very successful online pro with cashes of more than \$500,000 in tournaments. CNS Photo. Sheboygan, Wis.

A: A lot of people like to go crazy when they have a big stack, but that's not how I do it. I would say be aggressive in late position, don't flat-call anyone's raises, reraise people instead of just calling people and try to hit flops. So, just raise or fold and be really active in late position. Make sure you know which hands to call off with when the short stacks go all in on you. The thing about playing a big stack is you really have to pay attention to stack sizes behind you and make sure you aren't priced in if they go all in. You don't want to raise up and the guy behind you moves all in and you are priced in to call. You have to pay attention to stack sizes. If the table is letting you put pressure on, keep pounding it, and if they are playing back at you, you have to slow down. Just make sure to stay active in late position and just don't start calling raises if you have chips. Reraise or fold and constantly put pressure on the blinds.

Q: I am a short stacker and have to go all in within a few hands. What are the best hands to go all in with (assuming I'm not going to get a premium hand): ace-rag, king-rag or a hand like 9-7?

Raggedy Ace,

Bell Gardens, Calif.

A: This is a good question. If you have, let's say, around seven to 12 times the blind, which I call a short stack, you are in push all-in mode. A hand like 10-9 or 9-7 suited plays much better than ace-rag or king-rag because of the ranges of hands that are calling you. Let's say it folds around to you in position and you have 3,500 chips and the blinds are 200-400. You have about nine times the blind. I would not shove A-3, but I would shove 10-9. Most of the time if you are getting called there, you are getting called by A-J, A-Q, A-K and you are going to be dominated instead of having live cards. I would much rather shove with suited-connected middle cards than ace-rag or king-rag on a short stack.

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After bursting onto the poker scene late last year, Jared Hamby has been a very successful online pro with cashes of more than \$500,000 in tournaments. "TheWacoKidd" stunned seasoned pros when he won two preliminary events this spring at the WPT Championship at Bellagio, and then made it deep in the \$25,000 championship event. A month later he won an early event at the Mirage Poker Showdown, then made the final table of WPT Mandalay Bay, finally finishing second for \$459,000. In seven months, he had eight live cashes for more than \$1 million.

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