

THE AMATEUR'S MIND

PLAYERS YOU WANT AT YOUR TABLE

BY MICHAEL ROME

1. Players Who Have Favorite Starting Hands:

Why is their favorite hand usually something dreadful like K-J or Q-10? All we can do is be thankful and hope we get them at our table. If they are at your table, you are going to be able to use this information for specific situations that arise. It is probably also an indicator of their general comprehension of the game. (*My favorite starting hand is pocket aces...even though they will be busted a minority of the time.*)

2. Players Who Have Starting Hands They Hate:

Ironically, these are usually strong hands like J-J, A-Q, or even A-A. If you have these players at your table, watch for sudden over- or under-betting. It may indicate that they are holding one of the hands they hate. This "hate" is really just disguised fear of misplaying the hand, so they overcompensate to one extreme or the other.

3. Players Who Believe Skill Should Always Triumph Over Luck:

These players are very easy to put on tilt. Play some connectors and small pairs until you hit something on the board... then watch them spin out of control.

4. Players Who Are Human Calculators:

Their strength of understanding the math down to the decimal point is also their weakness. Just make a bet large enough to destroy all of their pot odds and, unless they are holding aces or kings, you are golden.

5. Players Who Feel That Opponents Who Raise Often Are "Bullies":

These players believe that you should wait for proper cards to play at the appropriate time. They probably do very well in Limit Hold'em. You can usually tell who they are in a no-limit game because you have gotten most of their chips through numerous small pots.

6. Players Who Frequently Tell Bad Beat Stories:

These players are part of the group that feel skill should always overcome luck – again, very easy to put on tilt. Give them another story to tell.

7. Players Who Are Condescending:

They are convinced that they are superior to all others in poker ability, and are outraged that you would call them with that hand, blah, blah, blah... The key to these players is that they are extremely insecure. They fear opponents who are confident in themselves and cannot be pushed around. I often think of the quote from the movie *Gladiator* when Russell Crowe's character says to the emperor, "The time of honoring yourself is soon coming to an end." ■

[The Bullie]