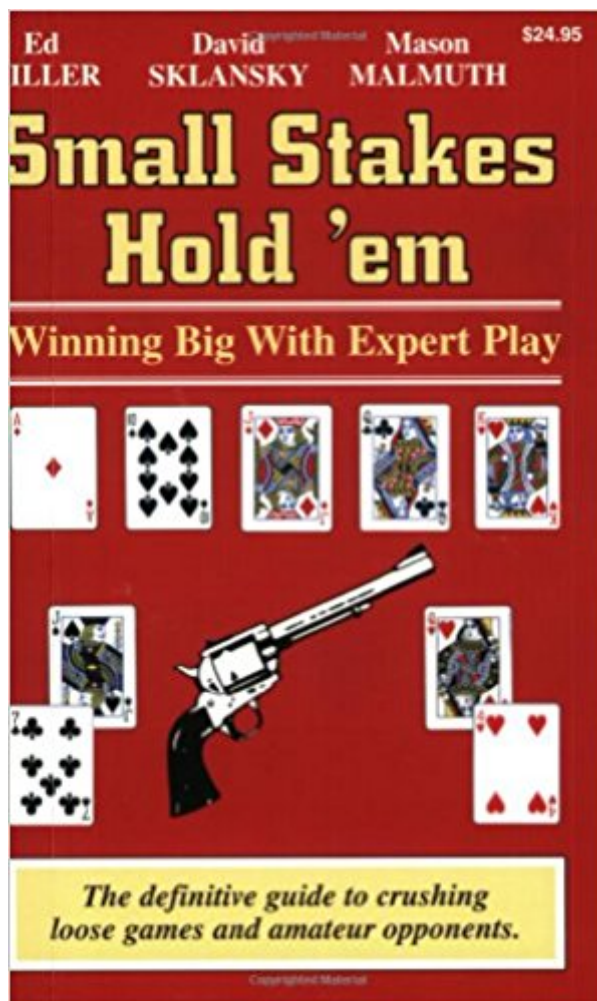


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Small Stakes Hold 'em: Winning Big With Expert Play



Synopsis

For today's poker players, Texas hold 'em is the game. Every day, tens of thousands of small stakes hold 'em games are played all over the world in homes, card rooms, and on the Internet. These games can be very profitable -- if you play well. But most people don't play well and end up leaving their money on the table. *Small Stakes Hold 'em: Winning Big with Expert Play* explains everything you need to be a big winner. Unlike many other books about small stakes games, it teaches the aggressive and attacking style used by all professional players. However, it does not simply tell you to play aggressively; it shows you exactly how to make expert decisions through numerous clear and detailed examples. *Small Stakes Hold 'em* teaches you to think like a professional player. Topics include implied odds, pot equity, speculative hands, position, the importance of being suited, hand categories, counting outs, evaluating the flop, large pots versus small pots, protecting your hand, betting for value on the river, and playing overcards. In addition, after you learn the winning concepts, test your skills with over fifty hand quizzes that present you with common and critical hold 'em decisions. Choose your action, then compare it to the authors' play and reasoning. This text presents cutting-edge ideas in straightforward language. It is the most thorough and accurate discussion of small stakes hold 'em available. Your opponents will read this book; make sure you do, too!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ed Miller grew up in New Orleans, Louisiana. He received an S.B. in Physics and another in Computer Science and Electrical Engineering from MIT in 2000. After a year teaching, he moved to

Redmond, Washington to work as a software developer for Microsoft. Looking for a new hobby, he deposited a couple hundred dollars in November 2001 to play \$1-\$2 and \$2-\$4 hold'em online. After losing his initial stake, he sought to improve his game, and he found the books and website of Two Plus Two Publishing LLC. He participated in discussions on the forums, and after a few months he turned his losses into wins in a \$4-\$8 game at a local card room. By January 2003, he had moved up to \$10-\$20 and \$20-\$40, and in March he left his job to play poker full-time. By then he had swapped roles on the online discussion forums from beginning player seeking advice to expert player giving it. After six more successful months playing in the Seattle area, he moved to Las Vegas, where he currently resides. Also in 2003, Dr. Alan Schoonmaker, the author of *The Psychology of Poker*, introduced Ed to David Sklansky and Mason Malmuth, and a partnership soon was born with this book being its first result. Today Ed usually plays between \$10-\$20 and \$30-\$60, but he can occasionally still be found in the \$2-\$4 to \$6-\$12 games around Las Vegas.

Quite simply, this book is correct, and can be used as a "memorize it and go take people's money" cookbook for beating lower stakes limit holdem games. Sure, if you run across a table of tight, aggressive, talented players, playing below the stakes they should be playing, and you don't recognize it, you'll likely lose. But trust me, that is so rare at low limits in big-poker-room casinos that it's not a concern. Besides, if you can't tell the difference between having 3 people seeing each flop and 7 people seeing each flop, you indeed deserve to lose your money. Beating the rake at a \$2/\$4 game is frustratingly difficult no matter how bad the players are, so this book is best applied to a game like \$4/\$8 until you build up enough confidence to test it at other limits. Do not use this book at most \$10/\$20 games, or even the \$5/\$10 kill game at Foxwoods. It's OK to sort of use the opening standards of this book at those games, tightened up a bit based on how tight a particular table is. But on later streets, use the Ciaffone book for guidance, even if that book is slightly too tight on later streets.

I own several poker books and this is the one that I reference most often. Sklansky might be the best poker author of all time and his *Theory of Poker* is a must read for any serious player. Limit, and particularly low limit poker, is an entirely different game from No-Limit and the techniques that work well in no-limit often fail miserably in Limit. Don't buy the claim that you'll ever be able to earn a substantial income playing low limit, but diligently applying the concepts presented should result in + play. Low limit is a chase game for many and you need to have a rather thick skin to endure the many bad beats that you'll endure by playing correctly. Many players seem to have no clue that a

three-flush after the flop should usually be thrown away if the only plausible out is to connect suited runner-runner. You'll want to chew on the table when your flopped 2 pairs gets caught on the river by the runner-runner chaser, but you need to endure! If you think that you'll be a successful player in low limit by using the bluff as your principal technique, think again. Bluffing works on occasion, when timed correctly, but you can't depend on your opposition to make rational folds. A recent example from one of my hands that pays off for the opposition: I was playing 3-6 limit with a kill pot. I was dealt pocket aces and raised. There was a raise and re-raise capped making the bet \$24 pre-flop. Incredibly, 5 players stayed in. The flop came Ace - 5 - 8 rainbow, giving me a monster set of aces. An early position player bet, there was a raise and I re-raised. 4 players were still in the bloody pot! The turn card was a 9. More raising and the field was now down to 3, the pot was huge, but I didn't see how my pocket aces could lose. The river comes up a 7. You guessed it, I lost to a straight. The bozo called pre-flop with J-6 offsuit all the way up to a \$24 bet, calls raises to the river and hits runner-gutshot runner and he wins a \$240 pot! There's no justice in low-limit hold 'em. You may as well learn to live with it!

You can't expect to become a consistent winner by reading a book; you need to go to a casino and play against other people - a lot. After you have learnt the basics, further reading is about memorizing scenarios that come up rarely. You can sit for hours waiting for one of them to come up. And keep in mind that with each passing year the average skill of opponents improves noticeably. As an occasional player with good book knowledge you may beat other players, but still lose overall, because rake plus tips costs about \$9 per hour. Ed Miller does much much better, because his experience from long hours at the table gives him a huge edge that he cannot describe in words for our benefit. For example, on the turn and river he will throw his cards away much more often than we will and he'll know to make calls that we wouldn't, in part because he is reading opponents subconsciously. That said, after reading this book a couple of times, and really focusing on its core messages, I learnt more from it than from all the other beginner books.

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