

## **Its all useless without a betting structure**

We finally learned to count but now what do we do with all of it? To become a proficient counter you must have a financial plan of attack that considers risk of ruin, betting amounts and bankroll considerations. This chapter is going to be the real cash and chip part of our journey. To choose a proper betting structure you need to consider two extremely important factors, overall bankroll versus your EV per hour. One of the problems with this is that they are directly related. The more cautious you are with one the more you will sacrifice the other. The tighter you bet will provide a lower risk of ruin but you will in turn be giving up some EV per hour. On the other hand the more aggressive your betting structure the higher your risk of ruin will become.

Well we first must find a balance between an acceptable risk of ruin and our EV. For an example lets make up two characters. We can call them Bill and Eileen. Lets assume they both have a \$5,000 bankroll and a 2% positive expectation.. Bill decides he is going to bet \$100 a hand and Eileen is going to bet \$10 a hand. Who is going to be more likely to double their bankroll in a few days and who is going to be more likely to loose it? Our answer here is quite obvious, Bill is going to win in both situations. A positive variance is going to make Bill a happy man whereas tiny bit of negative variance will send him back on the highway with no money left for dinner. Bill has decided to risk his money for a higher potential of winning with a much higher ROR.

I as well as most, hopefully all, advantage players are not playing this game to simply gamble but are but in it to make a good chunk of change. Due to this reason an advantage player prefers a small ROR, an acceptable ROR being between 2-5%. Meaning on average our bankroll of \$5,000 will turn into some amount greater an average of 19 out of 20 times... the down side is that that one time you may as well have thrown that 5k out the window down I-15 on your way to the Vegas Strip.

For starters you must know, for every +1 in the true count you will gain about a 0.5% advantage. What this means is that around a TC of +2 the advantage will turn from the casino to your pocket. This is a good thing! To take advantage in this situation we must spread our betting to take advantage of our advantage and do so proportionately according to the true count in order gain an optimal edge. What is our optimal edge? Somewhere around 2%. Now I know your thinking 2%?!?! Why waste my time! From day one this is all I've heard, from friends to online message boards. This is what I tell them.... lets think of 2% in a couple different ways:

The casinos are making millions off of blackjack and they only have a .75% edge on average.

A 2% edge is good money! Lets think of this on very simple rounded terms, we can get into exact figures later on. At a 2% edge, for every \$100 you bet you will make \$2 in the long run. Not much, but on an average of 100 hands per hour a \$10 flat bettor would be betting \$1,000 and making \$20 an hour. \$20 an hour is nothing to quit your job over but there is a plus. This plus is that we can increase that amount by making sure we bet very large during our time of advantage. That \$10 bet may become \$150 (1-15 Unit spread) and for every \$150 bet you would receive \$3 over time. To make figures a little more exciting imagine working your bankroll up to the point

where you can play at a \$50 min table. With that same 1-15 spread you would be betting \$50-\$750. So for every max bet you make you would be profiting \$15. An hour worth of combined max bets equals out to \$1,500... Not a bad deal if you ask me.

Finally 2% is more than -0.75%.... So really don't complain...

A word about the first point (the casino only having a -.75% HE)... of course we have to consider that the casinos have more action in a day we hope for in a year. This allows the casino to have a very low N-Zero or for our sake N0. The N0 is a mathematical term that reflects the number of hands required to be played before the player is ahead by at least one standard deviation or for a more encouraging term reaching the long run where the sky's open and there is peace on earth. This is every counters goal. If the long run is our goal how can we reach this sooner? By playing through those losing streaks and not setting stop wins or losses. Just play to a goal of hours not cash. The reason these methods work is because YOU have the advantage. Who cares if you hit a bit of negative variance (bad luck). If you have the advantage why play as long as you possibly can. Math will catch up eventually the system is proven 100%, your no exception. Also try to find a game where you are heads up<sup>1</sup> with the dealer and can get the highest number of hands in per hour. This will not reduce your N0 but will increase your hands from that possible 100/hour to 150/hour.

## Picking Our Betting Structure

This figure illustrates the relationship between the true count and advantage the player has at any given TC. This graph when viewed in detail shows how we can get the most bang for our buck. This is called our optimal bet. We must bet in relation to our optimum level and no more to maintain our pre determined ROR.

As you can see there will be times when we are at a great disadvantage. There is one great way to eliminate those times of disadvantage and significantly increase our win rate. Say hello to wonging. Wonging is a term in reference to the famous 70's counter Stanford Wong, considered one of the greatest players of all time we will attempt to follow in his footsteps. Wonging is the act of back counting<sup>2</sup> until the player is at the advantage point as well as removing yourself from the game at that point of -EV. The effects of wonging and back counting is devastating to the casino. Your expected EV per hour skyrockets as well as your ROR significantly decreasing. Later we will find why back counting can even prolong the life of your game as well as be used in team play.

The following tables will demonstrate an acceptable betting structure that keeps the player within the 5% ROR range for basic multiple deck shoe games. The charts final bet in the dollar amount but in units. The units will correspond to the calculated true

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<sup>1</sup> Where it is just you playing against the dealer

<sup>2</sup> To count cards while standing beside or behind a table but not actually playing. This technique is particularly useful because the counter can wait for a favorable count before wagering any money.

count to provide the optimum edge. It is important to see the chips as units instead of dollars for a number of reasons.

- You must lose some attachment to your chips- You know that you have the edge, you know what you must bet to make money so why not do it?
- It will be much easier to decide on the perfect bet on the spot. Why confuse yourself trying to decide and memorize if a bet should be \$25, \$20 or some other number it should simply be 1,2,3... units.
- Your chips are not real cash until you make your way to the cage. They are just crafted pieces of clay, lets stick to the strategy and make some units!

#### Betting with a \$2,000 Bankroll

This is the minimum amount required to start a structured attack on the casino. At this level you will be betting \$5 units. At A TC of 2 but greater than -2 bet the table minimum. At a TC less than -2 wong out of the game. The middle column displays the best possible bet for the count. Realistically you will not be betting amounts that are not equal to your unit so the third column will display the proper bet to make while playing