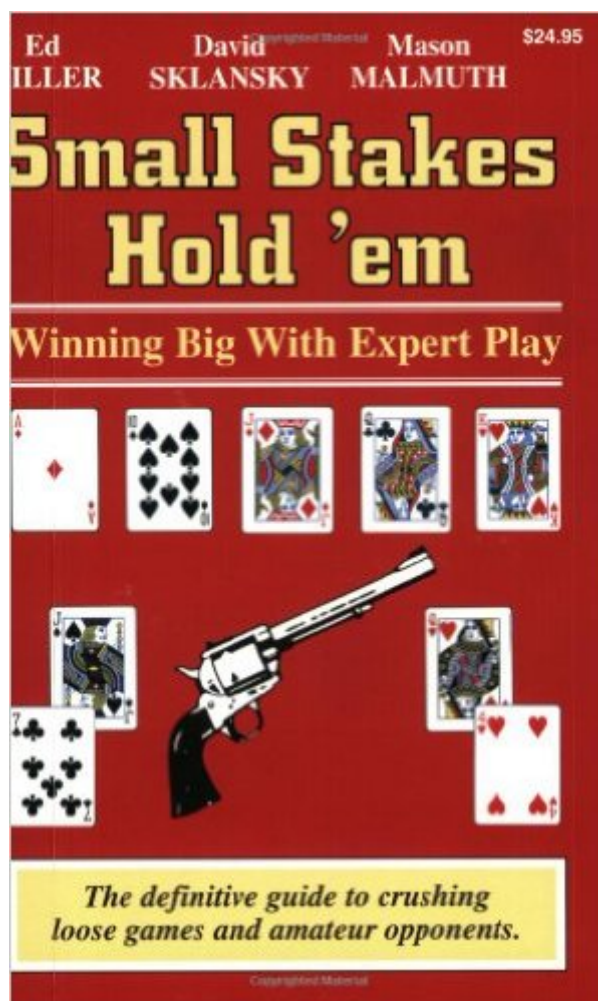


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# Small Stakes Hold 'em: Winning Big With Expert Play



## 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

I've read most of the poker lit and really like the Lee Jones low-limit book. It is accessible and provides pretty good advice on how to play the lower limit tables. Since most of the books out there

assume you are playing good (read tight / aggressive) players, it was an important book for me. If you use the 'good play' paradigm at many loose tables, you play hardly any hands, and get beat too often -- so frustrating. Still profitable, but it always felt like I wasn't winning as much as I should given the (I believed) clear difference in game knowledge and good play practices. I bought and read this book last week and was skeptical about much of its advice. It is not an easy read -- has the typical mathematic slant of a Sklansky book -- not in itself bad, but don't expect to breeze through this is an afternoon if you are not already familiar with calculating odds, etc. In my opinion the book often suggests raising on the assumption someone may be bluffing in a big pot situation and doesn't stress enough about factoring in your table read where you know you are beat (and therefore maybe just call or even fold). It also is short of detailed advice on turn and river play. The quizzes in the back are good, but are light on a theoretical foundation of guiding play other than counting outs and a brief section on how to discount outs that may not really be there (get Ciaffone's Middle-limit Poker for this) I felt it was recommending WAY too loose guidelines and advice around staying in big pots when you KNOW you are beat (KNOW as in 'I've been at the table four hours and that guy only raises when he has the nuts -- I am beat).

There's no question that when it comes to Texas Hold'em, the lowermost limits are extremely bewildering places in which to play. It's a Vietnam full of kids who think that the meaning of poker is to pretend that betting two fours for value means treating them as if they were a straight flush. There's what I call, "All in Disease," where every chance a guy gets, he tries to emulate his highly paid heroes on television and go all in. The only problem is that they usually believe that they can win when they do so. These clowns go after 15 dollars worth of blinds with their entire stake. It's demoralizing when you lose to them. For this reason, I bought this book by Miller and company to see if there were a way in which to improve my game. The first helpful thing the narrative does is to put things in perspective. Any maniac or tomfool can win Hold'em in the short-term, as a player, my job is follow the percentages and maintain discipline. Even if I take a beating during one session, eventually, the numbers will rectify the situation in the end. Somewhat surprisingly, Miller's advice is that if you find yourself amid very loose tablemates, it's okay to lessen your hand selection values as they're calling with practically anything. The idea of, "don't be tricky," definitely benefited me immediately. With so many callers, slowplaying is not a sound idea unless you possess the nuts. They're liable to come back from huge deficits to pummel you on the river. Don't let them linger. Bet them to death. If they want to see your set, make them pay for it--big time. Again, we learn what we already know, that aggressiveness is rewarded again and again in Hold'em, but it remains just as

true in limit as it does in no limit.

The book is very good. It offers a wealth of information, strategy and "how to" for not just small stakes players but for players at almost any level of limit hold'em. The authors note that some of the strategies wouldn't be right for the big limit games, say, the \$100 and \$200, and certainly not right for pot limit or no limit hold'em; but I can tell you that most players up to at least the \$30 and \$60 limits would benefit from reading and studying this excellent book. But a word of caution: the approach here is very aggressive with the authors recommending leading and raising with second pair in many situations, drawing to inside straights and playing drawing hands like they're already made, calling with third pair with backdoor possibilities, and in general playing a bit looser than might seem reasonable. Miller, Sklansky and Malmuth argue--convincingly most of the time--for some surprisingly loose and aggressive play justified by pot odds. Pot odds, current and implied, are one of their most important fundamental ideas along with "pot equity." They also go into depth about hands that are likely to be "dominated," and they introduce the reader to "reverse domination." One problem with this approach is that most booked-up players in even games as small as the \$3 and \$6, especially on the Internet, play a bit tighter than the authors think they play. Miller is the only one of the three who regularly played games that small, and I don't think he was playing anything smaller than the ten and twenty when he wrote this book. This is the book's only real weakness: the authors have, I believe, mistaken the quality of the average small stakes player.

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