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# Preface

## By Rolf 'Ace' Slotboom

In the spring of 2005 I was approached by someone I had never met: Dew Mason. Dew had sent me a manuscript for a book he was planning to publish. He wanted not just my take on it, but also wondered if maybe I would be interested in collaborating with him on this project. Now, even though I get sent manuscripts rather frequently, they are hardly ever really interesting, truly good, or – probably most important – easily marketable. But Dew's work had all of these characteristics. It was well written and insightful, though not an easy read by any means – but in my view clearly a welcome addition to the current poker literature. So, I gave Dew my word that I would try to do everything in my power to: a) help improve those few small things in the piece that still needed improvement, and b) use my contacts to maybe get his (our) work to print.

But then, before I had even started lobbying, an opportunity presented itself. I was approached by D&B Publishing, publisher of many decent, good and even some excellent poker books. They had seen a couple of ratings and reviews of D&B books that I had done on my site, and asked if I was interested in writing a book for them myself.

Now, with all the things I had recently taken upon myself for

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websites, magazines and TV, I replied that taking on a project like this would simply be too much for me. Knowing that I either like to do things 100% or not at all, it was clear that I would be unable to take on this task, to come up with a quality work all by myself in the time frame they had in mind. That was the bad news for them. The good news was that right at the moment that they contacted me, all the changes and additions we had done in Dew's work were just ready, and that thus we had an excellent piece of work ready for them – one we had completed just a few moments ago! Now, when I proposed *Hold'em on the Come* to them, I was not actually that certain they would appreciate it as much as we did. But once they had seen the manuscript, they had no doubts whatsoever: they loved it immediately.

Now, I hope of course that you guys will love it too. Both Dew and I have devoted a lot of time to come up with a work that will help you in just one specific area of play, in a manner that no other book before this one has done – or at least, not to the same degree. What you will see is an excellent and insightful analysis on the proper way to play drawing hands after the flop, an area of play where even decent to good players often fail miserably. We will give lots of concrete advice and easy-to-implement strategies that will not just help you play according to the odds, but that more in general will try to make you think on a deeper level than most of your opponents. The presentation of this somewhat new line of thinking is taken care of by Dew, and even though we have collaborated on all chapters it should be clear that the complete text of the book most of all represents *his* views. In addition to that, all chapters on counting outs, including the use of 'table action charts' specifically created for this book – all of this is more than anything his line of reasoning. Having said that, I of course endorse fully everything in this book, and in the very few situations where we actually had some disagreements on the correctness of what we were recommending, the text has been modified so that we now stand in 100% agreement. And of course there are quite a few personal comments and short stories by me, written from the perspective that I am known for: the perspective

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of someone who doesn't take everything for granted, and who is not afraid to go against common wisdom. I hope you will find these contributions to be both entertaining and helpful.

All in all, both Dew and I are convinced that the strategies we present here will have a serious impact on the play and the results of anyone who is serious about playing good poker, and we think they are especially useful for the average player who is trying to lift his game to a higher level. I would say this: Don't just enjoy this book, or just glance at a few things we have written, but study it in depth. If you do this, I am certain you will find it to be well worth the time and the effort.

*Questions or comments regarding this book can be addressed directly to Rolf through the 'Ask Ace' section on his site, [www.rolfslotboom.com](http://www.rolfslotboom.com).*

### By Dew Mason

Whereas Rolf is well-known by most all serious poker players for his accurate and articulate decision-making, Dew Mason isn't quite yet a household name. I'm a middle-limit hold'em player who makes his living by knowing and playing the odds. Drawing hands are my forte. But the fact is, there is no excuse for *anyone* playing middle-limit or higher not knowing how to make educated decisions with these hands. That's how the idea for this book evolved.

This is not a book for beginners. Not that the subject matter is too advanced, nor that the presentation is too difficult, but that the topics presented will be appreciated more if you've first read a couple of other books on poker strategy, and played a couple of thousand live hands, with real money on the table. You should have a feel for the game before reading this book. And I assume that you have a basic knowledge of poker theory and terminology, although I'll give you an overview of some common poker terms. We're here to plug some holes in your game, by rebuilding your foundation. You will be surprised by some of the things you learn. Let me say it again for emphasis:

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You will be surprised.

Nor is this a book for the casual reader. It may, indeed, be more intense than some of you prefer. Never has so much been written about drawing hands. Instead of dealing with generalities and unproven rules, you will be shown *exactly* how to play each type of hand, with plenty of charts and examples for study.

This is not a reference book, either. You'll need to read the book from beginning to end. It's a journey; the chapters build to a climax as they do in a novel, and by the time we pull it all together at the end of the book, I absolutely *guarantee* you will have learned more about proper poker play, regardless of your level of play. This book presents a foundation of good, solid decision-making in a way that helps you *understand* the choices you are making... rather than just teaching you to memorise and follow rules.

Poker was never meant to be a dry, unimaginative game. It was meant to be a game about people, not about cards. And it certainly is a much more enjoyable game when you reach the point where you are playing your opponents more than your cards. But this is, after all, limit poker, where odds rule the day. Only by fully comprehending the odds and the correct play in each situation can you really *know* when it is profitable to deviate from mainstream play.

The presentation of ideas in this book is rather original. This usually means one of two things: Either you will love the book, or you will hate it. If you are looking for a study guide to reinforce ideas about playing hold'em that you have already learned, by rehashing the same old topics, then you'll be disappointed! If you are looking for a way to truly *understand* the rules you should be playing by, teaching you to think but freeing up precious decision-making time for you to study your opponents, to really *play poker*, then this is the book for you.

Unfortunately, to take your game to the next level, you *will* have to deal with a few numbers and a little memorisation. It's unavoidable. I'll try to make it as painless as possible.

Writing an original book also means it will be open to closer

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scrutiny and criticism. I think this is very good for the game in general, stimulating conversation with ideas that haven't yet been put in print.

I had fun working with Rolf on this book, and as always, putting the ideas on paper means making a serious commitment to accuracy. I learned a few things doing the research for this book, and I hope we can pass on our winning ideas to you.