

## Hand 13

---

### Lightning can strike twice

♣ – ♥ – ♦ – ♠ – ♣ – ♥ – ♦ – ♠

#### INTRODUCTION

This hand took place at the Horseshoe in Las Vegas during the World Series of Poker a few years back. One reason for travelling is to play against different players. In this case all of my opponents were well known to me, although some I have only ever met in the States. The blinds were \$50-\$100. I held  $9♥-9♠-3♥-2♥$  and Sammy had called ahead of me.

#### THE PLAY

**Question 1.** Should I: (a) pass (b) call \$100 (c) raise \$100 (d) raise the maximum \$400? (In Vegas, for the purpose of raising before the flop, the small blind of \$50 is treated as if already made up to \$100.)

(a)  (b)  (c)  (d)  Points: .....

**Action:** I called and Russ Hamilton, a past winner of the main World Series of Poker championship event, also called. Paul made up his small blind to \$100. The big blind just checked. Thus the pot held \$500.

**Flop:**  $9♣-8♥-4♥$ . I held  $9♥-9♠-3♥-2♥$ . Well, that is pretty miraculous! However, holding such a hand I could expect little action.

**Hypothetical Action:** If everyone checked to me...

**Question 2.** Should I: (a) check (b) bet \$100 (c) bet \$500?

(a)  (b)  (c)  Points: .....

### Hand 13

Back to the actual hand...

**Action:** Paul bet \$500, having about \$3000 left. Sammy, a fiery player, raised \$1500. The pot stood at \$3000 and I faced a bet of \$2000.

**Question 3.** Should I: (a) pass (b) call (c) raise \$2000 (d) raise the maximum of \$5000?

|                              |                              |                              |                              |               |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| (a) <input type="checkbox"/> | (b) <input type="checkbox"/> | (c) <input type="checkbox"/> | (d) <input type="checkbox"/> | Points: ..... |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|

**Action:** I raised \$5000. To my astonishment, Russ now pushed the rest of his stack into the middle. He had first to call \$7000 and then raise what proved to be his remaining \$12,000.

As expected, Paul called for \$3000. Disappointingly Sammy passed.

**Question 4.** Should I: (a) pass (b) call?

|                              |                              |               |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| (a) <input type="checkbox"/> | (b) <input type="checkbox"/> | Points: ..... |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|

**Action:** I called and the dealer sorted out the pots. The main pot held \$13,000 and the side pot \$31,000.

Meanwhile Russ spread his hand and asked, 'What do you want to do?' His holding was  $J♥-10♠-7♥-6♣$ . To remind you, the flop was  $9♣-8♥-4♥$ . I held  $9♥-9♠-3♥-2♥$ .

**Question 5.** What should your reply have been? (a) 'Nothing, just play out the hand.' (b) 'Deal the pot out twice.' (c) 'Let's save the last bet.'

|                              |                              |                              |               |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| (a) <input type="checkbox"/> | (b) <input type="checkbox"/> | (c) <input type="checkbox"/> | Points: ..... |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|

**Action:** Paul reluctantly agreed to come in for dealing the pot out twice. He revealed his hand, which proved to be the absolutely awful  $J♣-J♦-10♦-7♠$ . He could only split the pot with Russ provided that he made one of the straights without a heart or open pair appearing. He needed to hit the  $J♠$  even to have a remote chance of scooping with a full house.

**Turn and River (dealt twice):**  $9♣-8♥-4♥-Q♥-6♥$  and  $9♣-8♥-4♥-5♥-K♥$ . I held  $9♥-9♠-3♥-2♥$ , Russ  $J♥-10♠-7♥-6♣$  and Paul  $J♣-J♦-10♦-7♠$ . Russ scooped the lot. Note, that after the  $5♥$  in the

## How Good is Your Pot-Limit Omaha?

second deal, I can win the second pot, not only with an open pair, but also A♥ (the 6♥ went the first time around). Russ hit his flush card four times over, despite the A♥ never appearing. Thus I went home a loser for the whole trip, a wiser but poorer man.

**Question 6.** What did Sammy hold: (a) were it not for the fact he told me, we would never know (b) 8-8 and two other cards?

|                              |                              |               |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| (a) <input type="checkbox"/> | (b) <input type="checkbox"/> | Points: ..... |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|

**Question 7.** Ignoring Sammy, what does your gut feeling tell you the percentage each of the three of us would gain of the main pot: (a) me 40%, Russ 50%, Paul 10% (b) me 47%, Russ 39%, Paul 14% (c) me 52%, Russ 36%, Paul 12%?

|                              |                              |                              |               |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| (a) <input type="checkbox"/> | (b) <input type="checkbox"/> | (c) <input type="checkbox"/> | Points: ..... |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|

**Question 8.** How about the side pot between Russ and I: (a) me 45%, Russ 55% (b) me 48%, Russ 52% (c) me 50%, Russ 50%?

|                              |                              |                              |                     |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|
| (a) <input type="checkbox"/> | (b) <input type="checkbox"/> | (c) <input type="checkbox"/> | Points: .....       |
|                              |                              |                              | <b>Total:</b> ..... |

## SCORECHART

**80** I don't believe you.

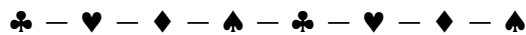
**70-79** You presumably passed from the off. How sensible! Danny scored 70.

**50-69** I scored 65. You probably scored low on the percentages. I did not get it 100% correct, because I underestimated my hand. David scored 64.

**40-49** Are you sure that you didn't just skip some of the questions?

**25-39** Pretty bad.

**0-25** This is Omaha you know.



## ANSWERS AND ANALYSIS

**Holding:** 9♥-9♠-3♥-2♥.

**Answer 1:** (a) 10 (b) 2 (c) 0 (d) 0.

This is a pretty awful collection. It is true that it is only \$100 to go in a hand where I probably had \$20,000 on the table, but this attitude is incorrect. There were players after me who might raise, and the chance of my hitting a good hand was remote. A pair of nines or tens offers the best chance of action, but it is likely to be up against a strong drawing hand.

**Flop:** 9♣-8♥-4♥.

**Answer 2:** (a) 2 (b) 0 (c) 10.

I can slowplay the hand, but many straights are possible, and also higher flushes and higher pairs are lurking.

**Answer 3:** (a) -2 (b) 4 (c) 0 (d) 10.

Paul would not have bet unless he were prepared to go all-in for his bit of scratch. You may think that \$3000 is not small change, but this was a big game. Sammy would never pass a hand such as the nut flush draw. It is unlikely that anyone else will be interested in the pot, so there is no need to disguise the quality of my hand.

**Answer 4:** (a) -2 (b) 10

Well, this isn't exactly rocket science! I am winning at the moment and should be favourite to win the pot.

**Answer 5:** (a) 4 (b) 6 (c) 10.

You may not want to come to arrangements and may not even be used to it elsewhere than in Las Vegas. Certainly it slows down the game, but this is less important than in Europe where the table charges are much higher.

It was obvious to me that I must have the best of it for the main pot. Paul's hand must surely include some of the cards that Russ was seeking. In the excitement I overlooked the fact that the side pot was the much more important consideration. There Russ had the best of it, irrespective of what Paul and Sammy held. The correct response was to sue for damage limitation. Russ and I are always prepared to deal out the hand twice. The following night over dinner, Russ said that he would not have agreed to an even money split. I wonder about that, but we will never know.

## How Good is Your Pot-Limit Omaha?

**Answer 6:** (a) 2 (b) 10.

I have already said that knowing Sammy, he would never have passed A♥-10♥ (the only remaining two hearts). Thus he must have had trip eights, which naturally diminished my hand. A few moments after the conclusion of play, he confirmed my suspicions.

**Answer 7:** (a) 2 (b) 10 (c) 6.

I cheated by putting the problem on Dr Mahmood Mahmood's computer simulation. The correct figures are: 47.3%, 39.4%, 13.3%.

**Answer 8:** (a) 0 (b) 10 (c) 7.

I cannot get a lower percentage in the side pot than in the main one. However, I can get a higher one. 0.9% of the time Paul will make a full house jacks. The correct figures are me 48.2%, Russ 51.8%. I have little doubt that Russ had a higher opinion of his hand than was justified.

The only reason for my not having virtually as good a hand as Russ was that Sammy held 8-8. This significantly reduced my chance of making a full house and meant that there were two extra passed cards that would not have helped Russ. It is interesting that both he and I overestimated his hand at the table.