Q1: What is the core strategy discussed for improving live poker win rates?

The core strategy revolves around going "all-in" a significant amount, both for value and as a bluff, by adjusting bet sizing based on the opponent's perceived range on the river. The key insight is that against human opponents, being "balanced" (as a solver might suggest) is often not optimal. Instead, the strategy emphasizes exploiting predictable human tendencies to call or fold.

Q2: How does an opponent's "capped" or "uncapped" range influence play on the turn?

On the turn, assessing whether an opponent's range is "capped" or "uncapped" is crucial. An "uncapped" range means they can still have very strong hands, like flushes, that they might have played passively on earlier streets. In such situations, the recommended approach is to bet small with both bluffs and value hands. This small bet incentivizes the opponent to raise with their strong hands (like a completed flush) and to call with weaker holdings. When holding a bluff, this allows for a potential river fold of those weaker hands. When holding value, it captures another street of value from weaker holdings while still getting action from strong hands. Conversely, a "capped" range implies the opponent likely doesn't hold the very strongest hands, often because they would have raised with them earlier.

Q3: How do you determine an opponent's range on the river without a solver?

To determine an opponent's range on the river without a solver, you can broadly categorize their holdings into three main types, provided each comprises more than 10% of their range:

1. **Mostly Strong Stuff and Missed Draws:** This implies their range contains a lot of strong hands (e.g., overpairs, top pair top kicker) and some draws that missed.
2. **Mostly Weak Stuff and Missed Draws:** This suggests their range primarily consists of weak pairs, underpairs, or draws that didn't hit.
3. **Some Strong Stuff, Some Weak Stuff, and Some Missed Draws:** This is a mixed range where they have a significant portion of both strong and weak holdings, alongside missed draws.

This categorization helps in deciding the optimal bet size.

Q4: When should you go big for value and small as a bluff?

When an opponent's range on the river is **mostly strong stuff and missed draws**, the strategy is to go **very big for value** and **small as a bluff**. Going big for value aims to get called by the strong hands in their range, even if they are "capped," as human players often struggle to fold strong holdings. Going small as a bluff aims to fold out their missed draws (which are a smaller portion of their range in this scenario) at a good price.

Q5: When should you go small for value and big as a bluff?

Conversely, when an opponent's range on the river is **mostly weak stuff and missed draws**, the strategy shifts to going **small with value** and **big with bluffs**. Going small with value encourages calls from their weaker holdings, as they are less likely to call larger bets. Going big with bluffs aims to fold out a large portion of their range, which is comprised of weak hands and missed draws, leveraging the fact that they can't withstand significant pressure.

Q6: What sizing strategy is recommended when an opponent's range is mixed (some strong, some weak, some missed draws)?

When an opponent's range is a mix of **some strong stuff, some weak stuff, and some missed draws**, the sizing strategy becomes more nuanced:

* **For Value:** You can choose to go either **very big** (to get called by the strongest hands, like two pair or top pair top kicker) or **very small** (to get called by weaker holdings when you have the "super nuts" or are betting thinly for value).
* **For Bluffs:** The recommended approach is to use a **medium size**. This medium bet is large enough to fold out most of their weak stuff and missed draws, while not risking too much against the top of their range.

Q7: Why is it often sub-optimal to be "balanced" against human opponents in live poker?

Being "balanced" is often sub-optimal against human opponents because humans do not play poker like solvers. Solvers aim for equilibrium, but humans have predictable tendencies and biases. For example, humans are generally reluctant to fold strong hands, even when the board texture might suggest a fold is optimal. They also struggle to call with weaker holdings, especially against large bets. By understanding and exploiting these human tendencies, players can deviate from a perfectly balanced strategy to increase their win rate, such as by over-bluffing weak ranges or over-betting strong ranges when appropriate.

Q8: How does the strategy adapt to different pre-flop actions influencing the river range?

The pre-flop action significantly impacts the opponent's range on the river, dictating the appropriate bet sizing strategy. For example, if an opponent isolates over a limp and then calls a 3-bet, their range is likely to be much stronger (containing overpairs and strong top pairs) compared to an opponent who simply limp-calls a raise. A stronger pre-flop range typically leads to a river range that is "mostly strong stuff and missed draws," warranting large value bets and small bluffs. Conversely, a weaker pre-flop action, like an over-limp call, results in a river range that is "mostly weak stuff and missed draws," favoring small value bets and large bluffs. The core principle remains: assess the opponent's likely river range based on their prior actions, and then apply the corresponding sizing strategy.