The Cbet Flop Checkback Turn Bluff Catch River Line: A Study Guide

Quiz

1. **What is the "Cbet Flop checkback turn Bluff catch river line"?** This poker strategy involves three-betting pre-flop, c-betting the flop in position, checking back the turn with showdown value, and then bluff-catching or value-betting on the river based on the opponent's action. It's considered highly profitable in live poker due to common player tendencies.
2. **Why does the author advocate for a "range bet" on the flop in a three-bet pot when in position?** Range betting, especially with a smaller size (30-40% pot), is effective because live players tend to call too widely with weak hands and raise too much with strong hands on the flop. This makes them predictable and allows the hero to play profitably.
3. **What is the rationale behind checking back the turn with a showdown value hand like Ace-9 of hearts in this scenario?** Checking back the turn with showdown value hands is profitable because it allows the player to lose less to stronger hands (which would bet big on the river) and win more from busted draws and air (which would bet small/medium on the river, leading to two streets of value). Barreling with thin value often gets called by superior hands.
4. **How do live players typically react to a small c-bet on a wet, dynamic flop in a three-bet pot, according to the author?** Live players tend to raise off too much of their strong hands when faced with a small c-bet on a wet, dynamic board. They also call too wide with weaker hands and draws, leading to an uncapped and often weak range on later streets.
5. **Explain the concept of "node locking" as used in the source material.** Node locking is a feature in poker solvers that allows a user to fix or "lock" certain strategic decisions or frequencies of an opponent at specific points in the game tree. This helps in analyzing how deviations from equilibrium play affect profitability against a specific opponent profile.
6. **What is the primary difference in profitability for bluff-catching with Ace-9 when the villain bets half-pot versus full-pot on the river, and why?** When the villain bets half-pot, Ace-9 is highly profitable because live players tend to over-bluff with smaller sizes. When they bet full-pot, Ace-9 becomes unprofitable (or even a losing call) because live players generally under-bluff with larger sizes, meaning their big bets are value-heavy.
7. **According to the author, what is a common mistake live players make when choosing bet sizing on the river?** Live players often choose smaller bet sizes (e.g., half-pot) when they have a lot of busted draws or air, essentially over-bluffing. Conversely, they tend to use larger bet sizes (e.g., full-pot) primarily with strong value hands, under-bluffing relative to what equilibrium suggests.
8. **When the villain checks the river in this line, how should the hero with a hand like Ace-9 of hearts generally respond, and why?** When the villain checks the river, the hero should value-bet thinly (e.g., 2/3 pot) with hands like Ace-9 of hearts. This is because live players who check on the river in this spot are unlikely to have strong hands (which they would have bet for value), making them susceptible to thin value bets.
9. **Identify two common mistakes players make in this strategy related to turn play.** Two common mistakes are:
10. Continuing to barrel on the turn with showdown value hands (like Ace-9), which often leads to being "value-owned" by stronger hands.
11. Checking back the turn with hands that *don't* have showdown value (like Queen-Ten high or other air), when these hands should continue barreling to put pressure on the opponent's capped and weak range.
12. **How does the author summarize the optimal river strategy based on villain's action, assuming the turn went check-check?** If the villain bets half-pot on the river, the hero should essentially call with their entire range (as they should only have showdown value hands left). If the villain bets pot on the river, the hero should essentially fold their entire range. If the villain checks the river, the hero should value bet thinly with impunity.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the psychological factors ("fear and greed") that the author claims influence live poker players' decisions, particularly concerning bet sizing on the river. How do these factors deviate from GTO (Game Theory Optimal) play, and how can a skilled opponent exploit these tendencies?
2. Discuss the strategic advantages and disadvantages of a "simplified strategy executed well" versus a "more complex strategy" in live poker, as mentioned in the context of range betting. Provide examples from the text to support your argument.
3. Compare and contrast the hero's river strategy when the villain bets half-pot versus when they bet full-pot. Explain the reasoning behind the different approaches, specifically addressing the concept of live players under-bluffing or over-bluffing with certain bet sizes.
4. The source highlights several common mistakes players make. Choose two of these mistakes (e.g., checking back the flop with showdown value, barreling the turn with showdown value, or calling river pot bets) and elaborate on why each mistake is detrimental to profitability in this specific poker line.
5. Beyond the specific hand example (Ace-9 of hearts), explain how the principles of the "Cbet Flop checkback turn Bluff catch river line" can be generalized and applied to other poker scenarios. What fundamental concepts (e.g., range advantage, exploitative play, bet sizing) underpin this strategy?

Glossary of Key Terms

* **Three-bet (3-bet):** The third bet in a betting sequence. After a pre-flop raise, a three-bet is a re-raise.
* **C-bet (Continuation Bet):** A bet made on the flop by the player who initiated the pre-flop raise.
* **In position (IP):** When a player acts last on a given street (flop, turn, or river), giving them the advantage of knowing what their opponents have done before making their decision.
* **Range Bet:** Betting with nearly 100% of one's hands (their entire range) in a specific spot, regardless of hand strength, often with a small sizing.
* **Showdown Value (SDV):** A hand that is not strong enough to bet for value multiple streets but has a reasonable chance of winning at showdown if checked through.
* **Bluff Catch:** Calling a bet with a hand that can only win if the opponent is bluffing, and would lose to any value hand.
* **Value Bet:** Betting with a hand that is strong enough to expect to be called by weaker hands.
* **Equilibrium (in poker):** A state in game theory where no player can improve their expected outcome by unilaterally changing their strategy, assuming other players also play optimally. Often referred to as GTO (Game Theory Optimal).
* **Node Lock:** A feature in poker analysis software (like solvers) that allows a user to force an opponent's strategy or action frequency at a specific "node" (decision point) in the game tree, deviating from the GTO solution to study exploitative play.
* **Wet Board:** A flop (or later board) that contains many connected cards or cards of the same suit, creating many potential draws (straights, flushes, combo draws).
* **Dynamic Board:** A board where the strength of hands can change significantly with the turn and river cards, often due to many draws.
* **Floats:** Calling a bet on an earlier street with a relatively weak hand, intending to bluff later or win at showdown if the opponent checks.
* **Bricked (a draw):** When a draw (e.g., a flush draw or straight draw) does not complete on a later street.
* **Under-bluffing:** When a player makes a bet in a situation where they have fewer bluffs in their range than an optimal (equilibrium) strategy would suggest for that bet size.
* **Over-bluffing:** When a player makes a bet in a situation where they have more bluffs in their range than an optimal (equilibrium) strategy would suggest for that bet size.
* **Thin Value Bet:** A value bet made with a hand that is only marginally better than hands an opponent might call with, often hoping to extract value from weaker-than-average calling hands.
* **Capped Range:** A player's range of hands that does not include the strongest possible hands in a given situation, often due to a passive action (e.g., checking or calling when strong hands would bet or raise).
* **Value-Owned:** Losing money by betting for value with a hand that is ultimately beaten by a stronger hand that called.