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Evolution of the 75/50/40 Rule

In my 6 Max 3B Pot book, I created a rule for constructing ranges when facing a bet at SPR=4 that I referred to as the 75/50/40 rule. The idea was as follows:

When we have greater than 75% equity against a betting range, we should mostly slowplay. When we have between 75% equity and 50% equity against the betting range, we should often shove for value. When we have between 50% and 40% equity, we should mostly peel. Below 40% equity, we should mostly fold.

Essentially, the structure of our value-raising range is identical to IP's shoving range at SPR=1. We slow play the very best hands, shove a linear range where our bluffs are just our worst value hands, and call the hands too weak to shove. We do this because hands below 50% equity have the option to simply call.¹ In order to shove, the EV of raising needs to be higher than the EV of calling and calling is a perfectly reasonable option when we are close to flipping against a betting range.

40% equity is also a significant threshold that should be memorized. While many players assume that they need 33% equity to call a pot-sized bet or 25% equity to call a half-pot-sized bet, this is only true on the river. Earlier in the hand, raw equity and equity realization are not analogous since we will often fold to another bet on the next street, improve to second best hands that get "coolered," and just generally face more extremely low EV spots on future streets.

As always, there are five important exceptions that will enhance our understanding of this concept:

- When IP, we can call slightly wider. Our equity realization is always superior with a positional advantage as we can control the pot size on future streets more easily and value bet appropriately.
- On the turn, we can often peel slightly below this threshold as well. That's because there is only one street left to play so our chances of realizing all of our equity (in or out of position) are slightly better.
- Hand Character is another important consideration. Hands that are primarily made hands (have few or non-nutted draw components) and non-nut draws cannot call as often as hands with nutted draws. This is because pure made hands or weaker draws have very few extremely high EV turns and rivers to compensate for all the time when they turn or river a marginal hand which will be pushed to indifference by a betting range. As a result, nutted draws can virtually always call below the 40% threshold while bare made hands will often fold even above the 40% equity threshold.
- As the board becomes drier, more polarity will creep in at lower SPRs. Essentially, the shallower SPRs will play "deeper."
- Very shallow stacks also allow us to peel slightly wider, as you will see shortly.

¹ Just like hands below 50% have the option to check back at SPR=1 when IP

Based on the review of numerous strategy graphs for each stack size, here is the evolution of the 75/50/40 rule. Remember, the top number is the equity number above which we elect to slowplay, and the region between the first two numbers constitutes our pure value range:

- SPR=2.83 (20bb SRP or 60bb 3B Pot): 75/46/38
- SPR=4 (30bb SRP or 80bb 3B Pot): 75/50/40
- SPR=6.2 (40bb SRP or 120bb 3B Pot): 78/57/40
- SPR=11 (70bb SRP or 190bb 3B Pot): 85/66/40
- SPR=16.2 (100bb SRP): *85*/68/40

I greyed out the upper bound on the deeper SPRs because there ceases to be an upper slow playing bound at these depths. Rather we should select our slowplays based on interference blockers (QQ4 on Q42) or those combos that have the lowest equity and therefore the least to gain by x/r. As stated above, at shorter stacks OOP can realize slightly more equity so the calling threshold drops slightly.

Evolution Based on SPR

The figure below is a visual representation of the changes in the raising ranges. Think of this diagram in the same way as the graphs we've used previously. The orange regions represent raises and the calling regions have been omitted to make it easy for us to focus in on the raising region.



Let's walk through the progression of the raising ranges as the SPR increases:

• At SPR = 3, our raising range will be entirely linear, meaning our weakest value hands are essentially our bluffs. We will slow play our best hands because we have little fear of failing to get the money in. We are also not really concerned about being coolered by the nuts when we have a strong, but non-nut value hand. The pot is just too large relative to the stack.



• At SPR = 6, our value range shifts slightly towards the left and narrows slightly. We can't go for as thin of value and we have more incentive to fast play some of our better hands. We can begin to introduce a few polar bluffs that intend to fold to a shove.



At SPR = 9, the leftward progression of our value range continues with our thinner value bets continuing to get stronger. We have even less incentive to slow play our strongest hands now as we would like to build a pot and are concerned about future runouts. We add more semi weak bluffs that are intending to fold to a three-bet on the flop. These hands help us have bluffs on future runouts, have blockers to the current value range of our opponent, and cover various runouts that we struggle to cover with the rest of our range. In the middle of the diagram are our super high equity semi-bluffs. These hands were also raising in the previous two diagrams, however the pure hands immediately above these semi-bluffs in the diagram are now too weak to raise. Once we've removed those hands, the high equity nut making semi-bluffs remain.



At SPR = 13+, we now want to mostly fast play our nutted hands. We need to build a pot as 4 bets in total are required to get the stacks in and we're also concerned that our opponent will check back second best hands on the turn. From the subgroup "QQ," we'll want to select the best versions of that hand – such as QQ with any draw, a flush draw blocker, or a backdoor flush draw – and slow play the worst versions of QQ, namely those blocking lower sets. Our ability to thin value bet has once again been reduced and our need to cover every possible runout with both value and bluffs has increased due to the deeper turn SPR. This results in us drawing x/raises from all across our range similarly to how we structure our cbetting range at this stack depth.



These structures will be relevant on every board that does not contain a straight, a flush, or is paired or tripped. Occasionally, when ranges are extremely narrow, an A-high board can also be

classified in the same manner as these other locked down boards. This will primarily occur at very low stack sizes or in 4B pots.

One interesting point is that the structure of our raising range at various SPRs will be quite similar whether we are in or out of position with only three subtle differences.

When we are in position, we have slightly more incentive to flat call since the EV of Call is always higher in position. For the same reason, we can bluff slightly more often with low equity bluffs that have quality blockers. We can also opt for smaller raise sizes. OOP will want to x/r pot until he reaches quite deep stacks when he will shift to ¾ pot. IP will mostly prefer slightly smaller bets such as ¾ pot or 2/3 pot which will force OOP to defend wider and allow IP more room to maneuver on the turn. As a general rule though, sizing will have a very small impact on the EV of our whole strategy. In these cases, I pick the sizing that makes my life the easiest and my opponent's life the hardest.

The favorability of the texture itself is the final element that can impact our strategy. While the structure of the raising ranges will always match the diagrams above, the raising percentages will increase and decrease based on the how favorable the board is for us. You can think of the raising range as a balloon that inflates or deflates. The overall shape remains the same; the size and frequency will just change.