

When I can both players in front of me calling the initial bettor (as well as one left behind me to act who checked the flop) my worst fears about this hand are realized and I am left with no choice but to fold. This is just one of those hands where there is nothing else you can do. If I was playing NLH, I might be able to make a raise to test the waters and see if my Aces were good, but in this case, all I can do is throw good money after bad. As great as this hand looks, the flop killed it and there is nothing I can do except to move on and wait for the next opportunity.

You will see this often in Omaha H/L as well: great hands end up being junk. Certainly, I had the best starting hand prior to the flop, but the player with the best hand will often times change more than once from the beginning to the end in Omaha. Get used to it and don't fight it, you will just leak chips if you do.

Also of note on this hand: don't get carried away with pocket Aces. Aces do not have the same cache or potential in Omaha as they do in NLH. This is a mistake that amateurs make over and over again. Just because you see those pretty Aces in your hand, don't fall in love with them. They will seldom hold up. In fact, I have sat at tables where I have seen players showdown with A-A-A-x in their hands. I guess they were just so enamored with those Aces that they couldn't lay them down even though they were holding 3 of them!

Anyway, pocket Aces are only a high pair in this game and unless you can isolate against just one other player and then have them brick out, a pair is seldom going to win a hand in Omaha H/L.

One of the next hands that I would like to highlight is a hand I was dealt in the SB of 4c-4h-3d-8h.

As you can see, nothing real special about this hand and about 70% of the time I wouldn't bother to play it at all. However, with the limp brigade that has been taking place at this table I can get in for  $\frac{1}{2}$  price being in the Small Blind. It's just so tempting for me, so I complete the SB and it's on to the flop.

Flop 2s-Qs-6d.

I really don't have anything to get excited about here at all. I have a shot at some sort of a low, which could be the nut low if I happen to draw an Ace. I really have nothing for a high hand with the flush draw on the board. Heck, I am beaten with a pair of Q's at this point. Nevertheless, if I can see the Turn for only 1 bet, I shall press on. Of course, that is what happens.

Turn is Ac.

This is getting a little better. I now actually have a low hand of 6-4-3-2-Ace that I can feel confident with. As long as I don't get counterfeited on the River with a 3 or 4 hitting, my low hand is good. Making a straight would be swell because I would like to have a shot at scooping the pot here, but the flush draw still makes me think that it's a long shot for me. I call a single bet, yet again, and proceed to the river.

River is 5h, which is as good as it gets. Not only do I make my wheel confirming my wining low hand, I avoided the flush draw and it seems my 6-5-4-3-2 straight is going to

make the pot a scoop for me. Obviously, I bet out, everyone calls and once they turn over their hands, I scoop the pot, its not even close. I love hands like these.

There are a couple of morals to the story in this hand. First of all, I did not have a hand here that I was real thrilled to play before the flop. I decided to see the flop for basically 2 reasons: I have 2 cards of a wheel, and I was in for 1/2 price being the SB. If I had been in early or middle position, I probably wouldn't have played this hand. Also, the other players at this table continually limping in allowed me to play it. If I had been up against guys raising and it would have cost me 3-4 bets pre-flop, I never would have stayed in the hand. We have not discussed when to raise a lot yet, but we will and limping allowed me to be in this hand.

The next thing to take away from this hand is that once I connected with the flop for a potential low, I was probably going to ride the hand out unless I got up against a ton of raising. It would have been hard to get rid of me after that point. However, I did not start raising even after I hit the low on the turn. The reason for this is that I did not want to raise and contribute more chips to a pot that I might end up quartered in. Let me explain this to make sure you understand: It's not a great idea to make raises strictly based on having the low hand because if another player has the same low, you will end up with 25% of the pot. So, you have conceivably been putting in 1/3 of a pot to take 25% in the end. You don't need to be a mathematician to know that those numbers don't work.

Other than that, this hand pretty much played itself. I got lucky and not only made my low, but made my straight and won the high hand on the river. I put myself in the position to get lucky. Remember that. Slow and steady will usually win the race in Omaha H/L, but I needed to make sure I was in the hand in the first place to take this pot down. If I had folded pre-flop.....

Another point of note is that this turned out to be a big hand for me. I increased my chip stack by nearly 40% on this one hand and it put me in a position to eventually make the final table at this event. You have got to have a few of these big hands when you are playing an Omaha tournament to get anywhere in the tournament. I am more likely to gamble a little bit when I am in a pot that is being built by so many players than I would be if I was simply heads up against another player. There is a lot more in the pot and a potential for a lot more to be put into the pot on later streets in hands like these.

Also, the flush draw worked in my favor here. It didn't hit and that is what gave me the low. There were a couple of guys who showed that they were on flush draws in this hand and that made me money when it didn't hit. Omaha H/L is the same as NLH in that guys will always draw to flushes. Even when they shouldn't, you will find players who will draw to any flush. It's a strange phenomenon and I don't pretend to be able to explain it, but you can count on it. If the flush would have hit in this example, I would not have won the high. However, I had the low, so it was well worth the chance and it turned out to be best case scenario for me.