

CRUSH LIVE POKER

The Hero Call that Really Wasn't

August 27, 2026

Chapter 1 Housekeeping: survivor pool, vacation and the schedule

 0:00 ·  3 min

MAIN CONCEPT

Scheduling and the survivor pool, with the Monday call-in show dark for one week.

Bart opens with the week's admin. The NFL survivor pool is live: \$200 an entry, up to three entries this year, standard rules where you pick one team a week and may use each team only once all season. He has run it for ten to twelve years, missing only the Covid year; last year's prize pool cleared \$20,000, and the only cost beyond the buy-in is roughly \$1.25 an entry charged by the site. He holds the money and the field can deal at the end. The link is in the notes and there is a dedicated Discord channel for it.

He is away the following week in Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, so there is no Monday call-in show on the 31st. A live stream was recorded Thursday night at 8:30 and the audio of that call-in show still goes out on Monday; the live stream link will be in Discord and the notes. The call-in show returns on Labor Day.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Survivor pool: \$200 per entry, up to three entries, link in the notes and a Discord channel for it.
- No Monday call-in show on the 31st; the audio recorded Thursday still publishes Monday.
- The call-in show returns on Labor Day.

Chapter 2 Garrett's book and where Bart now stands on the jack-four hand

 3:02 ·  4 min

MAIN CONCEPT

Bart now leans towards fluke rather than cheating, on the grounds that no evidence has surfaced in the years since.

Bart expects Garrett's book, *Beneath the Cards: A High Stakes, High Anxiety Poker Journey*, to land on September 1st, in the middle of his vacation. He has pre-ordered the Kindle edition (\$16, or \$20 in paperback). From a review he has read, most of the book covers Garrett's life and rise in poker, with the jack-four hand confined to a chapter at the end. He is interested in what evidence is actually offered, and says he will comment if there is anything substantial, possibly filming from the cottage.

His own position has moved. At the time he thought it was cheating, purely on the hand itself; with no evidence emerging since, he now leans towards a fluke. He grounds that in having commentated the hand and in having lived through the Mike Postle scandal, which he treats as the comparison that matters: there were far more suspect hands there, and Postle was never seen calling drawing dead the way this player was. He also notes a YouTube dynamic behind the coverage — being fourth or fifth to post on a poker scandal costs you most of the views, so he often does not bother.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *Beneath the Cards* is due September 1st; most of it is memoir, with the jack-four hand in a closing chapter.
- His view shifted from 'cheating for sure' to 'probably a fluke' as no further evidence appeared.
- The Postle case is his yardstick: many more suspect hands, and no equivalent calling-drawing-dead pattern here.
- He will only cover the book if it contains something genuinely new.

Chapter 3 Why he may not recognize you at the table



7:10 · 3 min

MAIN CONCEPT

Not being recognised at the table is a function of volume and context, not indifference.

A short aside about being approached in casinos. People say hello at the table, often mid-hand, and their faces frequently do not click for him — enough that someone once active in the

community reportedly took offense at the World Series when Bart did not recognize him.

His defence is a story from the session he is about to discuss. His best friend from high school, someone he sees constantly and whose family he knows well, walked up to his table at Encore, brushed against him while he was in a hand, and it took Bart several seconds to place him. If that can happen with his closest friend, it is not personal when it happens to anyone else. Recognition works differently outside a gambling venue, where context does more of the work.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Bart is approached constantly in casinos and often cannot place faces, especially mid-hand.
- He failed to recognise his own best friend at Encore for several seconds.
- Recognition is easier away from a casino, where the context helps.

Chapter 4 The session at Encore Boston Harbor



10:04 · 1 min

MAIN CONCEPT

A modest winning session whose profit came almost entirely from one hand.

The session is Wednesday at Encore Boston Harbor, a late start around noon through about 6pm. He wanted to mix in PLO but mistimed the list: at 4pm he put himself up for the \$5/\$5 game and it never moved, which is the usual problem with a good game — you get in at the start or not at all. Some days he will step away to PLO and come back to the \$2/\$5, but the timing did not work out.

He finished up modestly, six or seven hundred dollars, and almost all of it came from a single hand. He flags three of the session's hands as the important ones: they are marked in blue in the notes, and capitalised in the podcast chapter list so you can tell them apart from the rest.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Roughly six hours of play for a modest win, nearly all of it from one pot.
- Good games are hard to enter late; the list for a running game may never move.
- Three hands are marked as the important ones, in blue in the notes and in capitals in the chapter list.

Chapter 5 HAND 1: King-five on 9-9-5, and the full house he did not bet

🕒 11:22 · ⌚ 14 min · ⭐ Highlighted by Bart

MAIN CONCEPT

A strong-looking hand is only worth betting if more worse hands call than better hands beat you.

Before the hand, two details of game texture. You can read whether a pot was straddled from Bart's own open size — \$20 unstraddled, \$30 with the \$10 straddle — and this pot is unstraddled. More unusually, two or three \$5/\$10 regulars in the game refused to move to a straight \$5/\$10 table, because with everyone straddling they make more against weaker players than they would against better ones.

Bart opens the cutoff to \$20 with king-five of spades, about the bottom of his range there. The small blind and the big blind — an older recreational player, roughly 60 to 65, loose but trying — both call. The flop is nine of clubs, nine of spades, five of clubs. Checked to him, he bets \$25 into \$60; the small blind folds and the older player calls. The turn is the deuce of hearts, a brick. He bets \$60 into \$110 and is called. The river is the case nine, giving him nines full of fives.

He checks behind, and the reasoning is the point. The hands that would call are pocket threes, pocket fours and the occasional deuce of clubs. The hands that beat him — sixes, sevens and eights — are six combinations each and were never three-bet from the big blind, while a deuce needs one specific suited holding. More combinations beat him than call worse, and a five never folds, so betting would be value-owning himself. With an overpair he would bet, and bet large.

The opponent shook his head, said he missed, and showed ten-seven of clubs.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Open sizes tell you the structure: \$20 unstraddled, \$30 with the \$10 straddle.
- Count combinations before betting: 66/77/88 are six combos each, a specific deuce of clubs is one.
- A five never folds, so there is no protection or fold equity to buy on the river.
- The same board with an overpair is a large bet, because it beats the top of the calling range.
- In position you can simply check behind to see a hand; it breaks no etiquette.

Chapter 6 Hand 2: ace-ten on ace-king-five, a button-clicking call

 25:07 ·  10 min

MAIN CONCEPT

Price can justify a call even when the bluff combinations have mostly paired away.

Six-handed, a \$5/\$10 regular in his mid-60s opens under the gun to \$20 and Bart calls on the button with ace-ten offsuit — a close spot he would not take full ring, and one he could equally three-bet or fold. The same older recreational player calls in the big blind. The flop is ace of diamonds, king of hearts, five of spades, rainbow, and it is checked to Bart. He nearly checks back, because this opener does have a check-raising range as the preflop raiser and Bart's own button range is missing aces, kings and ace-king to three-bets. He bets \$25 anyway, sized to keep the recreational player in with a king or a gutshot. The big blind calls; the opener folds.

The turn is the queen of diamonds and Bart checks back, which he now dislikes: against a loose passive opponent he should have bet \$50 or \$60 and charged king-jack and king-ten. The river is the deuce of hearts and the big blind leads \$65 into \$110.

Two things decide the call. He is getting close to 3 to 1 and needs to be good one time in four. And the draws that missed — queen-jack and queen-ten — paired on the turn, which is the small stakes exploit that says over-fold when draws pair, and which here removes most of the bluffs. He calls anyway as a button-clicking price call. The opponent says he has a king; ace-ten is good.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Nearly 3 to 1 means being right one time in four, which is a low bar against a player making an odd bet.
- When the missed draws pair, over-fold: queen-jack and queen-ten stopped being bluffs on the turn.
- Checking back the turn with a gutshot and showdown value cost value against a loose passive caller.
- Flop sizing was chosen for the recreational player in the middle, not the regular who folded.

Chapter 7 HAND 3: jack-ten of diamonds, the hero call that really wasn't

 34:43 ·  13 min ·  Highlighted by Bart

MAIN CONCEPT

When your equity is symmetric — 80% when ahead, 20% when behind — the call reduces to how heavily the range is weighted to value.

The title hand, and the one that carried the session. At \$2/\$5 with a \$10 straddle, Bart opens the cutoff to \$30 with jack-ten of diamonds and an older opponent three-bets to \$160 from the small blind, over five times the raise. Effective stacks are about \$1,135. He calls. The flop is ten of spades, eight of spades, five of clubs — top pair — and the opponent leads \$175. He calls, making the pot \$680. The turn is the queen of diamonds and the opponent moves all in for \$800 without hesitation.

Bart works the price out at the table. Calling \$800 into a final pot of \$2,280 needs about 35% equity. The symmetry is what makes it easy: against ace-king he has nine outs and roughly 80% equity; against aces, kings or ace-queen he has nine outs — jack, ten and the gutshot nine — and roughly 20%. So if the ranges were even, his equity would be the average, 50%, against a 35% requirement.

Then the combinations. Aces, kings and ace-queen are 24 combinations; ace-king is 16. Even weighting value 2 to 1 leaves him at 40%; the break-even point is value weighted 3 to 1, and he does not believe this opponent jams every overpair this way on a disconnected board. He calls. The opponent has naked ace-king, no spade, and the deuce of spades on the river is a blank.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Price first: \$800 into \$2,280 is 35%, just over a pot-sized bet.
- Nine outs either way makes the average trivial to compute in your head.
- Combinations decide it: 24 that beat him against 16 ace-king, and he needs value weighted 3 to 1 to fold.
- The gutshot matters enormously: nine-ten suited would be about 12% when behind, and the call disappears.
- It looks like a hero call and is not one; it is a pot-odds calculation done at the table.

Chapter 8 HAND 4: pocket jacks check-called down by king-king

 48:10 ·  7 min ·  Highlighted by Bart

MAIN CONCEPT

A recreational player who value-bets a depolarised river range is far harder to read than one who only bets polarised.

The last hand, and one Bart lost. At \$2/\$5 with the straddle and about \$1,200 effective, the lojack opens \$20 and Bart three-bets to \$65 from the hijack with pocket jacks — the second time in a row he has three-bet this opponent. A recreational player on the button cold-calls and the lojack calls, making it a three-way three-bet pot of \$200.

The flop is ace of clubs, deuce of spades, three of hearts, rainbow. Bart checks — heads-up he would bet a third of the pot, but three-handed he judges it too thin — and the button checks behind. The turn is the ten of hearts. Bart bets \$85, reasoning that the button's check on the flop and the opener's second check leave him likely best. The button calls, the opener folds. On the eight-of-spades river he checks again: in a three-bet pot he cannot expect two streets of value from worse, and the backdoor hearts missed.

The button bets \$200 and Bart calls, largely because the line makes no sense to him. Cold-calling a three-bet discounts the weak aces that would bet here, an overpair would usually bet the flop, and he did not expect a second check-through. The button turns over king-king: flatted preflop rather than four-betting, checked back the flop, called the turn and found a thin value bet on the river. Bart gives him the credit — a depolarized river value range is exactly what makes an opponent hard to bluff-catch against, and it is rare among recreational players.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Cold-calling a three-bet removes most weak aces from the river betting range, which is why the line looked wrong.
- Checking the river with jacks was right; the pot was already large and worse hands were not calling twice.
- Flat-calling kings preflop and checking back the flop disguised the hand completely.
- Give credit where an opponent depolarizes: it is the hardest range to play against and it is uncommon at these stakes.