

# Retaining Recreational Players

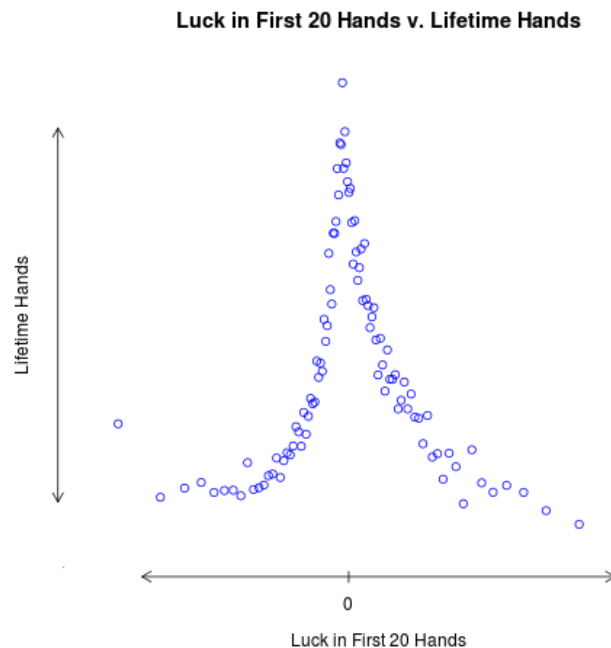
Recreational players are crucial to the poker ecosystem. Their deposits tend to stay in the poker economy, and their presence at the tables attracts high-raking regulars.

In recent years, the online poker industry has demonstrated an appreciation for their importance through a variety of protective measures. To name a few: beginner tables, anonymous tables, forced player segregation, reduced maximum buy-ins, a war on both Heads-Up Displays and bumhunting tools, and a reduction in the incentive packages provided to regulars.

*While we at Skill in Games LLC (SiG) believe these measures are helpful, we also believe they treat the symptom rather than the disease.*

To date, our analyses support the position of thoughtful industry critics: the primary cause for a recreational player's decision to stop playing is not the loss of his/her money - it's disillusionment with poker. Losing to regulars is one such source of disillusionment. But our data suggest that the biggest source is improperly set expectations about luck and skill.

In the following graph, built using over one million players, you see that initial bad luck *and* initial good luck are both associated with shorter lifetimes.



In this report, we introduce our proprietary luck and skill measurements, examine and explain the relationships between players' initial experiences with luck and skill - over time, across tables sizes, and across stakes - and those players' ultimate longevity, and make recommendations about how to increase recreational player retention.

