

Chapter 14 — Tracking & After-Action Reports

Purpose: A complete tracking system that works even where HUDs and auto-import trackers don't. Every session produces a log row and an After-Action Report. The logs feed the weekly review; the weekly review feeds the study plan; the study plan fixes the leaks the AARs found. That loop is the entire improvement engine.

14.1 Why Manual Tracking

Sweepstakes platforms generally do not hand out hand histories or allow HUD overlays the way regulated sites do — assume your tracker software cannot see your games, and verify per platform (Chapter 12). That removes the crutch, not the requirement. Manual tracking is slower but forces the one thing HUD users skip: actually thinking about what happened.

When regulated online poker arrives, the same log schema imports cleanly into PokerTracker-style workflows. Nothing built here is throwaway.

14.2 The Session Log

One row per session, no exceptions. Use the CSV template (Templates/Session_Log_2026.csv) in Numbers or Google Sheets.

Field	What goes in it
Date / Site / Format	e.g. 2026-09-02 · WPT Gold · 6-max cash
Stakes	In SC blinds (e.g. SC 0.05/0.10)
Tables / Minutes	Table count and actual played time
Hands (est.)	Tables × minutes ÷ 60 × hands-per-hour (use 75/table/hr until you've measured your sites' real pace)
Buy-in / Cash-out	Total in, total out, net
bb/100 (est.)	Net in big blinds ÷ hands × 100
Execution score	1–10, from the AAR — grade decisions, not results
Max tilt stage	0–4 per the Chapter 10 spectrum
Focus goal + met?	The one thing this session was practicing
Stop-loss respected?	Y/N — the firewall metric

Estimating hands feels imprecise. It's fine. Consistent estimates trend correctly, and the trend is what matters.

14.3 The After-Action Report

Ten minutes, immediately after the session while it's hot. Template: Templates/AAR_Template.md — duplicate it, fill it, file it in AARs/ by date.

The five blocks:

1. Planned vs Actual — scheduled stakes/tables/time vs what actually happened. Any drift is finding #1.
2. What happened — three bullets max. Not a bad-beat story; the session's shape.
3. Sustain / Improve — three things executed well (keep doing), three things that leaked (fix). Pull from the Four Laws and the session's focus goal.
4. Flagged hands — 3–5 hands logged during play (see 14.6): position, board family, the decision, what the chart says, what you did, verdict.
5. One lesson, one focus — a single sentence lesson, and the focus goal it sets for the next session.

An AAR that says "played fine, ran bad" is a skipped AAR. There is always a Sustain/Improve list; execution is never 10/10.

14.4 The Weekly Review (30–45 min, Sundays)

1. Total the week's log rows: hands, net, bb/100, execution average, adherence percentages.
2. Read the week's AARs in one sitting. The leak that appears twice is the Leak of the Week.
3. Assign next week's study blocks to that leak: the matching binder chapter + a chart drill + (optional) GTO Wizard drill on that exact spot.
4. Set next week's schedule and table-count stage (13.4 ladder — promote, hold, or demote).
5. Update the bankroll milestone tracker (13.7 phases).

14.5 The Monthly Leak Audit

Roll the four weekly reviews into the Monthly Business Review (13.9). The audit question: what are the three most expensive recurring mistakes, and what is the evidence? Every leak claim must cite AAR entries. "I think I'm bad at river calls" is a feeling; "seven AARs flagged big-pair-can't-fold on paired boards" is a study plan.

14.6 Flagging Hands Without Hand Histories

The workflow that replaces a tracker's hand replayer:

- Keep a flag pad (paper or a notes file) beside the tables. During play, one shorthand line per confusing/high-impact hand: BTN vs BB 3bet, K76tt, called down 2 streets, ?
- Screenshot big pots at showdown when the site allows it — the screenshot is your hand history.
- At AAR time, reconstruct only the flagged hands. Check them against the binder charts first, then (study block, not session time) run the close ones through Equilab/GTO Wizard.
- Cap: 5 flags per session. Flagging everything reviews nothing.

14.7 Tool Stack — Reality Check

The October software bundle (GTO Wizard, PokerTracker 4, Equilab, Flopzilla Pro, OBS) sorted by when it actually earns its cost:

- Now (sweeps grind): spreadsheet session log (free), AAR templates (free), Equilab (free) for equity checks, GTO Wizard free tier for preflop drills. OBS only if you want session video review — powerful, but only after the AAR habit is solid.
- Later (worth paying for once volume is real): GTO Wizard paid tier for postflop drilling on your actual leak spots.
- Regulated era: PokerTracker 4 / Hold'em Manager — buy when a site actually provides hand histories. Buying it for sweeps play is paying for a HUD with no game to watch.
- Skip: anything promising live win-rate overlays on sweeps sites — ToS risk on the account you're building a bankroll on (verify current platform rules in Chapter 12).