

## Unpaired Rainbow (6.34% of hands)

**Category 1: Connected A-high Broadway, rainbow. AKQJ-AJT7, 0.11% of hands.**

*HC/C/S/Power Rating/PR%: 23/18/0/41/48%. Polarity/Nuttiness: 37/38. 3-bet 44/63%. Tier 4*

*Air/Weak/Medium/Good/Strong/Monster/Good+: 40%/35%/14%/7%/3%/1%/11%*

Like a lot of rainbow hands, hands in this category are weaker than they appear at first. The problem is that with the exception of the rare full house, their best case scenarios are nut straights without much redraw<sup>30</sup> and top two pair. There are two different catch-22s. Although the nut straight possibilities are best-suited to multi-way pots, the lack of redraws is a handicap that is more costly in multi-way pots. Conversely, top pair and top two pair have more value in heads-up pots and shallower SPR scenarios (e.g. 3-bet pots). But the lack of suits means that we will too often have dry one pair and two pair hands, whereas the goal in three-bet pots is to have strong pair + draw and strong combo draws. We essentially get taxed right off the top on all the two-tone flops, will be in more coin flip or worse scenarios on our "good" flops, and will less often dominate our opponents, either with our nut straights or our top pair+ hands.

That said, Category 1 hands are still playable in some circumstances. They are better opens in EP and defends from the blinds than a lot of Tier 2-4 hands because they are fairly polarized and nutty. Although the lack of suits will often get us in trouble when out of position on later streets, we still hit our good flops reasonably hard and benefit from the fact that people usually play straightforwardly on Broadway flops. Only open UTG at soft tables, fold in MP with tough CO/BN, open otherwise. We should fold to 3-bets OOP except against bad players with wide 3-betting ranges and fold to 3-bets in position when opponent only 3-bets AA\*\* or plays a strong, balanced three-betting range well.

*General recommendations: UTG – raise/fold 25/75, MP raise/fold 75/25, CO/BN – raise. Facing raise IP – call/fold 40/60. Facing raise OOP – call/fold 40/60. Facing 3-bet OOP – call/fold 20/80. Facing 3-bet IP – call/fold 60/40*

**Category 2: Very connected K/Q-high Broadway, rainbow. KQJT-QT98, 0.12% of hands.**

*HC/C/S/Power Rating/PR%: 21/23/0/44/32%. Polarity/Nuttiness: 32/42. 3-bet 49/48%. Tier 3*

*Air/Weak/Medium/Good/Strong/Monster/Good+: 39%/34%/14%/8%/4%/2%/14%*

These hands compensate for the lack of suits a bit better than Category 1 hands because they are more connected, but most of the negatives still apply. Without an ace they have a bit less top pair strength. Combine this with the extra (nutty) connectedness and they are clear pulling hands and stronger for an EP raise than their power rating indicates. They play a bit better in 3-bet pots than Category 1, because they are better off against AA (though not as much as lower rundowns due to proximity) and will dominate some light-3-betting hands on rainbow flops.

*General recommendations: UTG raise/fold 70/30. MP-BN – raise. Facing raise IP – call/fold 80/20. Facing raise OOP – call/fold 80/20. Facing 3-bet OOP – call/fold 60/40. Facing 3-bet IP – call.*

**Category 3: Very connected mid-high, rainbow. JT98-T876, 0.08% of hands**

*HC/C/S/Power Rating/PR%: 18/25/0/43/38%. Polarity/Nuttiness: 34/36. 3-bet 45/59%. Tier 4*

*Air/Weak/Medium/Good/Strong/Monster/Good+: 45%/29%/13%/7%/4%/2%/13%*

These hands are very similar to Category 2. The main difference is the lower high-card strength, which reduces slightly their postflop domination chances. It also increases the value of maintaining maneuverability in position because we'll have a few more marginal flops, such as middle pair + moderate draw on a flush draw board, where we have more

---

<sup>30</sup>On rainbow boards there are some valuable overwrap and two pair redraws, such as AKQJ on JT9 (NS+4) and QJT (invulnerable nut straight + two pair). But the lack of a suit severely diminishes redraw chances, and in {nuts + overwrap} versus {nuts + flush draw} redraw wars, the flush draw always wins.