

# Power Picks

Race Date	1/3/26
Edition #	Vol. 6, No. 1

## Race-Day Overview

*Welcome to 2026!! Our first tip sheet of the year brings you great racing at Oaklawn, Gulfstream, and of course the Coast to Coast (CTC) Pick 5 sponsored by Santa Anita.*

*Oaklawn begins their Road to the Derby with the Smarty Jones S. and a great late P5, while Gulfstream has one stake and some nice allowance races in their Late P5 sequence. The Coast to Coast is a little up in the air, as rainy weather is forecasted for SA today....CHECK FOR SCRATCHES AND CHANGES, and watch our CTC show LIVE this morning (Sat.) at 10:30pm EDT.*

## Spot / Price Plays (National Avg. ROI is \$1.60):

Overall ROI (since Feb. 2021): **\$2.05** (\$2,030.84 / 993)

In 2025: **\$1.83** (\$444.43 / 243)

**\*\* For 2026, I will try to find those “diamonds in the rough” and not tout short prices...again, that might lower my ROI, but give you a chance to hit big exactas and trifectas as well. Every tip sheet, however, will have at least one lower-priced horse that I would smash on the win end!**

## Today's Picks

*\*\* For those of you not familiar with the “ABC” method of betting, go to our website, [hhhracingpodcast.com](http://hhhracingpodcast.com), and click on the “Power Picks” tab on the top of the page for more information on how to read an “ABC” Grid and place bets using the “ABC” Method.*

# Power Picks

## Racetrack: Oaklawn

### Howard Kravets' LP5 ABC Grid – R5 starts at 3:55pm EDT

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
7	5	11,12	4	5,11,12	-	\$90
8	3,6	-	5,9	3,6		
9	2,3	1,6,7	5,10	1,2,3,6,7		
10	1	4,5,7,9	3	1,5,9		
11	6,11	1,7,9	3	6,11		

### Paul Halloran's Late P5 Grid:

No grid this week

### Pete Visco's Late P5 Grid:

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
7	5,11	4,12	2,10	4,5,11,12	\$0.50 P5	\$96
8	3,6	4,8	5,9	6	-	-
9	1,2,5	3,6	10,11	1,2,3,5	-	-
10	1,3,9	5	4	1,3,5,9	-	-
11	6,7,11	1	4	6,7,11	-	-

### Howard's Late P5 Analysis - Races 7-11

*Oaklawn, as usual, has a challenging Late P5 with big fields and two stake races, including the Smarty Jones S. with Derby points on the line. There are a few places where you could single, including the first leg, R7, with #5. Other potential singles include #3 Echo Again in R9 and perhaps taking a stand in R8 with either the #3 or #6. But, there are no guarantees here, and I would definitely spread in R10 and R11. For a bomb, take a look at the #9 in R8 that could blow up the toteboard....or finish last. IF that one gets loose on the lead and can find his back #'s, look out.*

### Price/Spot Play(s)

(Reminder, "stars" are rated from 1 – 5, with 5 being the most confident of plays)

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
10	4	Silent Tactic	12-1	3	\$5 Win, \$15 Place/Show #4 Trifectas: 1,5,9 / 4 / 1,3,5,7,9 1,5,9 / 1,3,5,7,9 / 4

#### Notes:

The Smarty Jones S. brings together a hopeful group of newly-turned 3yo males trying to make a name for themselves on the Road to the Derby. I have found much success using horses underneath and reverse-tri keying them in 2nd and 3rd especially. **#4 Silent Tactic**, purely an underneath play, fits that

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bill. Casse has two in here, and reaches out to local jockey Torres on this one, while Castellano stays on the #7 from Florida. Remember, Casse campaigned the popular Sandman at Oaklawn last year, so I assume his best 3yo males are at OP this winter/spring. Silent Tactic was solid at Woodbine on the Tapeta in his first two, running professionally, if not spectacularly, in both starts. I LOVE that he's got two local works over the surface, and looks like he can run all day. There should be a bunch of early speed here. I expect the jock to take back and make one big run. For this tip sheet, I'll go \$1 Place and \$3 Show. All I need is a Top 3 finish and I'll probably hit a nice trifecta...insanity win bet incoming also, although I don't expect him to cross the finish line first, but wouldn't mind that either!

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
11	9	Map to the Stars	12-1	5	\$10 Win, \$15 Place/Show #9 BIG EXACTAS: 1,6,7,11 / 9 Small Exactas: 9 / 1,6,7,11

## Notes:

**THIS IS MY PLAY OF THE DAY AT OAKLAWN!!** Frankly, I found it difficult to find a horse I really loved in this sequence, but #9 **Map to the Stars** really perks my interest. Trainer Hernandez is a ridiculous 33% first off the claim, and 62% in the money. There's a ton of early speed on paper here, and Map to the Stars doesn't need the lead...he's more a midpack type. He was just claimed for \$80k, so the connections feel he's worth the money. Jockey Esquivel can win with big-priced horses, and Map is consistent. Don't know if he's good enough to win, but again, I'd use in all exotics...like him more than the other Spot Play at Oaklawn. He has two local works and should get a nice stalking trip from his post. For our ROI, we'll go \$1 WP.

## Racetrack: Gulfstream

### Howard Kravets' ABC Grid – R7 starts at 3:18pm EDT

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
7	1,3	4	5,8	1,3	\$0.50 P5	\$100
8	5,9	1,7,8	2,3,6,10	1,5,7,8,9		
9	1,5	-	6,7	1,5		
10	1	3	-	1,3		
11	2,5,9	4,7	3	2,4,5,7,9		

### Howard's Late Pick 5 Analysis – Races 7 - 11

*Today's Late P5 at Gulfstream has a combination of "easy" races to find the winner and difficult puzzles. R7, 9, and 10 don't seem too deep to me, while R8 and R11 are very going to spready for me. My main single will be in the Mucho Macho Man S., R10, where the talented Commandment from the rail will be tough with any reasonable trip for Brad Cox....it's not creative, he's 7-5 ML. Sometimes small fields and the rail can be tricky....I trust this one today. If you're brave, you could go very skinny on this ticket and try to hit it multiple times.*



## Price/Spot Play(s)

(Reminder, "stars" are rated from 1 – 5, with 5 being the most confident of plays)

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
8	9	Our Souper Hero	5-1	4	\$20 WP #9

**Notes:**

Rails are out to 72 ft. today, so early speed should play well on the turf as it did the last two days. This horse reminds a bit of winner Modarosa that I tipped out last week in the last race at GP. He looks a little slow on paper, but should be on the lead and is improving for Casse. There are no superstars here, and I assume the Chad Brown trainee, who is the one to beat, will take a ton of money and be overbet. Our Souper Hero needs to run a big race, but I think he will...hopefully be on the lead before the first turn and slow it down in the middle quarter. He cost \$650k at the Fastig-Tipton Saratoga sale, so this expensive Fla-bred has been well-meant from the beginning...he's starting to reach his potential.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
11	2	Pass the Hat	4-1	5	\$25 WP #2 BIG EXACTAS: 2 / 4,5,7,9 Smaller Exactas: 5,9 / 2

**Notes:**

**THIS IS MY PLAY OF THE DAY AT GULFSTREAM!!** #2 Pass the Hat has only one lifetime start on turf, but it was really good, receiving his best Beyer speed figure, an 86. Do I really need to laud the praises of Mott and Alvarado? They've come through for me so many times in 2025, and I see no reason why this one can't continue that trend in 2026. This is clearly NOT a dirt horse...a son of Collected, his other good race was on the slop, another indication of turf promise. He has tactical speed, which bodes well when the rails are out. Junior needs to work out a mid-pack trip from the inside, but if he can do that, he's got a big shot at around 3-1.

## Coast-to-Coast (CTC) Pick 5 Preview

Sponsored by Santa Anita / 1st Racing

Below is my ABC Grid for the CTC Pick 5 today at GP and SA. It's a low takeout (15%), \$1 base bet with no CAW's allowed (retail only).

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
GP8	5,9	1,7,8	2,3,6,10	5,9	\$1	\$96
SA3	5,6,(13)	4,9	10	5,6,9,13		
SA5	3,4	7	6,10,11	3,4		
GP11	2,5,9	4,7	3	2,5,9		
SA7	6,10	1,2,3, (13),(14)	4,9	6,10		

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1/ST	
SANTA ANITA PARK	GULFSTREAM PARK
COAST-TO-COAST	
<b>PICK 5</b>	
<b>SPECIAL THURSDAY</b>	
<b>RETAIL ONLY</b>	
SATURDAY/JAN 3	
RACE 8 - 12:48 PT	
RACE 3 - 1:05 PT	
RACE 5 - 2:11 PT	
RACE 11 - 2:18 PT	
RACE 7 - 3:15 PT	

*Overall opinion: First of all, there's rain in the forecast today in S. Cal, so it's hard to know if their turf races will hold together. That would obviously change my opinions on the ABC Grid above. Assuming they're on the turf at SA, these are wide-open races. At GP, I could not find a single I trust, making this a difficult sequence. Chad Brown's horses will be overbet as usual, and can win, but Brown does not traditionally have good stats at GP. I'd spread the most in SA3 and GP11, while take some stands in the other legs.*

*Dirt upgrades at SA:*

*R3: #10*

*R5: #7, #10*

*R7: #4,6,7,10,13*

*Wire to Wire Ep. #2: <https://youtube.com/live/gNBN6Ra9RZA?feature=share>*

**Good luck with all of your wagers....CRUSH YOUR BETS!!!**

