Power Picks

Race Date	2/15/25
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Race-Day Overview

Are you getting "Derby Fever" yet? The beginning of the 50-pt. (to the winners) Derby Preps starts today with the Risen Star S. in New Orleans, plus a star-studded card and All-Stakes Late P5! Will East Avenue avenge his poor BC Juvenile performance and punch his ticket to Louisville? Or will someone else step up? Plus, many great undercard races abound…hope the weather cooperates, as there's a chance of thunderstorms late in the card. There will be a LOT of wind…that could play a factor too, so pay attention to the earlier races.

Then at Laurel in Maryland, there are 4 good open-company stake races in their Late P5 as talented sprinters and routers take center stage. Rain is much more likely there than the Fairgrounds, we'll see. As always, CHECK FOR SCRATCHES AND CHANGES!!

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

Overall ROI (since Feb. 2021): $2.10 ($1,651.86 / 788)

2025: $1.68 ($60.30 / 36)

Racetrack: The Fairgrounds - ALL GRIDS / ANALYSIS BELOW ASSUMES RACE STAY ON GRASS!

Howard Kravets' Grid: Late Pick 5

R10 starts at 5:30pm EST

Race	A	B	C	Use in horizontal bets	Caveman Bet	Cost
10	5,8,9	3,6,14	1,4,10,13	3,5,6,8,9,14	$0.50 P5	$90
11	4,7	1	3,5,8	4,7		
12	1,8	2	3,7	1,2,8		
13	2	6	-	2		
14	4	1,3,8,9	5,7,12	1,3,4,8,9		

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Pete Visco's Late P5 Grid:

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
10	5,10,14	2,4	6	2,4,5,10,14	$0.50 P5	$100
11	4,5	7,8	1	4,5	-	-
12	1,3,8	2,4	5	1,2,3,4,8	-	-
13	2,6	-	4	2,6	-	-
14	4,9	3	7,8	4,9	-	-

Paul Halloran's Late P4 Grid:

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
10	4,5	6,14	9	4,5,6,9,14	$1 P5	$90
11	4,7	3,5	1,6	1,3,4,5,6,7		
12	3,8	1,2	5	2,3,8		
13	2	6	1	2		
14	4	9	7,8	4		

Late P5 Analysis (R10 - 14): (Yellow background denotes Plays of the Day!!)

HUGE DAY at the Fairgrounds, and the All-Stakes Late p5 is challenging, with a mix of wide-open races and favorites. As of this writing, there's a small chance of thunderstorms, but it looks as though most of the heavy rain / severe thunderstorm potential will hold off until nighttime. There are two scheduled turf races in the Late P5, so pay attention to see if they stay on grass. The whole key to the sequence, in my opinion (other than the weather) is what you do with likely heavy favorite East Avenue in the Risen Star S. If he runs back to his Keeneland effort, he's a cinch. But it's a big field with plenty of early speed. I'll be trying to beat him while recognizing he's the most likely winner. I'll be spreading in the turf races

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(assuming it stays on turf) and going light in both of the 3yo races for girls (especially) and boys. IF the races stay on turf, I see potential for BIG payouts in the Late p5. If East Avenue loses, it could REALLY explode…but I think he's the goods if he's ready. Good luck!

The following are today's Price / Spot Plays. USUALLY, I TRY TO FIND SOME PRICES, BUT TODAY I'LL BE MORE "CHALKY" IN GENERAL. The "Stars" rating is 1 – 5, with 5 being the MOST CONFIDENT / RECOMMENDED PLAYS.

Full-Card Price/Spot Play(s)

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
11	4	Hall of Fame	4-1	4	$25 Win #4

Notes: The G3 Mineshaft S. has a very nice field of older males, including the comebacking Catching Freedom for Cox. While there are a bunch of horses coming out of last month's Louisiana S. won by Hit Show (who's not here today), I'm going with #4 Hall of Fame. The Gun Runner colt might just be coming into his own, winning VERY impressively, although alone on the lead, in an N2X last time. Asmussen has him going in the right direction, and many thought he was Derby bound after his maiden breaker over the same surface last year. He didn't quite develop, but now was won two in a row in different styles and is ready to win his first stake race. He's been working great, gets a nice post, J. Ortiz rides…all systems go for me. This improving 4yo is one to watch this season!

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
13	2	Good Cheer	6-5	5	$30 Win #2 BIG Exactas: 2 / 6 Smaller Exacta 6 / 2

Notes: THIS IS MY PLAY OF THE DAY AT THE FAIRGROUNDS!! Since her 2nd career start at Churchill, Good Cheer has been my Oaks horse. With the scratch of the #3, she'll be 4-5 or lower unfortunately. She's undefeated, fast, professional, versatile, and under great care with Cox and Saez. There's absolutely nothing to not like about the Medaglia d'Oro filly. She's been training well for her 2025 debut and should be mid-pack in today's stake. I suppose you could worry about two things: 1) She might not be cranked up for this start, and 2) #6 Simply Joking looks loose on the lead and might get away from Good Cheer early. Both are legitimate, but more the second point than the first. Good Cheer needs points for the Oaks, and she only has two shots, today and her next start. There's no time to mess around. It's pretty much a match race in my opinion between those two. Great prep for the Oaks, 2 live contenders for the big one on the first Friday in May running vs. each other.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
14	8	Giocoso	20-1	3	$5 Win, $15 Place and Show #8 Trifectas: 8 / 1,3,4,9 / 1,3,4,5,7,9,12 1,3,4 / 8 / 1,3,4,5,7,9,12 1,3,4 / 1,3,4,5,7,9,12 / 8

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Notes: THIS IS MY LONGSHOT OF THE SEQUENCE AT THE FAIRGROUNDS. He's probably more of an "underneath" play. Now admittedly, last week's big play in the Sam F. Davis, the Puerto Rican horse, didn't work out. It was a speed-favoring track, and the two frontrunners went 1-2 around there, while my horse middle-moved and flattened out like a pancake. Today should be a different story for many reasons. #8 Giocoso is already stakes-proven, finishing 3rd to Jonathan's Way and Owen Almighty in the Iroquois on dirt in September. He's a much better horse now even though the speed figs might not say so. Trainer Deormeaux, who has success on the Derby trail with longshots, has taught the son of Not This Time to rate more comfortably and finish in his most recent starts. He's been working great and got a well-needed rest since his 2024 campaign. IF IT COMES UP WET, UPGRADE HIM! Even though he hasn't run on wet dirt, turf horses can run well on it, and he's bred to love the slop on the sire's side. There's plenty of early speed in here, and other than East Avenue, no one blows me away. Maybe he's not good enough to win, but certainly outrun his odds and be a factor with the right trip. I'LL GO $1, $2 PLACE, AND $1 TO SHOW for our Tip Sheet ROI.

Racetrack: Laurel

Late Pick 5; R9 – 12, Post 4:20pm EST

Howard Kravets' Grid:

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
5	4,5,6	-	2,10	4,5,6	$0.50 P5	$54
6	5	3	6	5		
7	2,3,7	-	5	2,3,7		
8	2,5	3,4	6	2,3,4,5		
9	2	5,7	-	2,5,7		

Late P5 Analysis

Today's Late P5 at Laurel does not have huge fields, but includes 3 competitive stake races and tough-to-find singles. The races in which I'm spreading the most would be R5, R7 and R9 while taking stands in R6 and R8. I'm not sure I have too many creative opinions today, but there are some ML-faves I don't like, so I think we can get paid nicely. I would suggest you go a bit skinny on your tickets and try to "press-up" to win more than one time. Laurel can have some track bias at times, and it's supposed to rain there today, so pay attention to the earlier races…they'll give you an idea of what might transpire. The stretch is super-long at Laurel, but don't be fooled. Early speed can play well and horses that get loose can take their respective fields a long way. Good luck in Maryland!

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Price/Spot Play(s)

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
5	5	**Assume Nothing**	10-1	3	**$10 WP #5** **BIG Exactas: 5 / 4,6** **Smaller Exactas: 4,6 / 5**
Notes:					
#5 Assume Nothing has been off since September, where he ran on a sloppy track for the 2nd consecutive time going 1 1/8miles. But today, he's rested up cutting back to 6f. He's run plenty of figs good enough to win this; the question is the distance. I'm hoping there's enough speed to set up his likely closing kick, and works say he's ready off the layoff. It's a wide-open field, so there's no reason to go with a favorite.					

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
7	7	**Offaly Cool**	8-5	4	**$20 Win #7** **Trifecta: 7 / 2,3 / 2,3,5** **2,3 / 7 / 2,3,5**
Notes:					
THIS IS MY PLAY OF THE DAY AT LAUREL (albeit soft choice)! The John B. Campbell S. has a nice collection of older males going 1 1/8th miles. #7 Offaly Cool (8-5) is coming off a solid but not spectacular win at Parx. He was racing off a LONG layoff, but won anyway closing up the rail in a style that he hadn't shown before. That would be helpful in this field, because there are ones that are quicker early. Has Offaly Cool lost something off the fastball? I assume not…and he should improve now 2nd off the layoff. I'm hoping he sits right off of the fast #3 Speedyness and goes by late. The three horses inside of him are not as fast as Offaly Cool early, so he should be able to tuck in on the first turn to avoid being wide. **I would need a higher price at post time than the morning line to bet him on the win end!**					

SANTA ANITA - SUNDAY (picks assume races stay ON THE GRASS)

Howard Kravets' Grid: Late Pick 4
R7 starts at 6:30pm EST

Race	A	B	C	Use in horizontal bets	Caveman Bet	Cost
7	3	1,2,4	-	1,2,3,4	$0.50 P4	$24
8	6	1,7	5	1,6,7		

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9	5,6	1,2	4	1,2,5,6		
10	4	2,5,6	1	4		

$3 Late Pick 3:

Big Budget: 1,6,7 / 1,2,5,6 / 4,6 ($72)

Small Budget: 1,6,7 / 5,6 / 4 ($18)

$5 Late Double:

Big Budget: 1,2,5,6 / 2,4,5,6   ($80)

Small Budget: 5,6 / 4,6 ($20)

Key Horse of the Sequence: R10....IF the race stay on grass, I like #4 Inner Fury (7-2) quite a bit to end the day. I talked extensively about this horse on our "Great Race Plays" podcast Thursday night, so check it out on our YouTube Channel or listening platforms. I'm not enamored with the race many of these come out of, and believe the upside + connections is too good to pass up on Inner Fury, who's making his stateside debut. If he wins, I'll get the value I want because he's slower on paper speed-figure wise in a competitive field. In D'Amato (he's got three in the race BTW) I trust! Completely ignore this analysis if they're off the turf.

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

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