Power Picks

Race Date	5/17/25
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Race-Day Overview

WELCOME TO PREAKNESS DAY! The 150th running of the 2nd jewel in the Triple Crown Series features a field of nine headlined by Derby favorite Journalism. Today, we'll highlight the fantastic All-Graded Stakes Pick 5 that ends in the Preakness, along with an excellent Late P5 at Churchill (Downs After Dark night card) plus usual Late P4 on Sunday at Santa Anita.

We've covered today's races at Pimlico like a glove on our network of shows, so watch this week's Pacific Horseplayers Show (from Wed.) plus Picks & Ponies (Thu.) for more details. My FULL-CARD ABC GRID at Pimlico is listed in today's Picks Tip Sheet. NOTE THE EARLY START TIME OF 10:30AM EST in Baltimore!! Wet weather doubtful, but track might be wet early due to rain yesterday…turf most likely on the good to soft side. Check for SCRATCHES AND CHANGES per usual! Good luck!

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

Overall ROI (since Feb. 2021): $2.12 ($1,798.24 / 848)

YTD: $2.17 ($207.94 / 96)

Racetrack: Pimlico

Howard Kravets' Grid: FULL-CARD GRID (excluding R14, an Arabian race)

1st Post at 10:30am EST

Race	A	B	C	Use in horizontal bets	Caveman Bet	Cost
1	8	5,7	1,3	5,7,8	$0.50 P5	$72
2	7,11	3,9	-	3,7,9,11		
3	1,3	-	4	1,3		
4	6,7	5	3	6,7		
5	3,5	11	7,9	3,5,11		
6	3	5,7	-			
7	7	3,8,9	1,6			
8	3,8	6,9	7,11			
9	2	6	4,5,8	2,6	$0.50 P5	$96
10	1,6,7	9	-	1,6,7		
11	6,7	-	1,3,8	6,7		
12	8,9,13	6,10	1,4,7	1,4,6,7,8,9,10,13		
13	2,8	-	3,6,7,9	2,8		

Power Picks

Pete Visco's Late P5 All-Stakes Grid (except for R4):

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
6	1,3,5,7	-	4	1,3,5,7	-	-
7	2,7	9	1,4	2,7	$0.50 P5	$36
8	8,9	3,6,7	1,4	8,9	-	-
9	2,4,6	8,9	5,7	2,4,6	$0.50 P5	$90
10	6,8	1,2,9	-	6,8,9	-	-
11	7	1,5,6	3	5,7	-	-
12	3,6,8	10,13	4,7,9	3,6,8,10,13	-	-
13	2,8	9	1,3,7	2,8	-	-

Paul Halloran's All-Stakes Grid (except for R4):

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
6	5,7	3	4	3,5,7		
7	2,7	1,9		2,7	$.50 P5	$72
8	8,10	3,6	4,9	3,6,8,10		
9	2,9	5	4,6	2,5,9	$1 P5	$72
10	6,7		1,9	6,7		
11	7	6	3,5	5,6,7		
12	10,13	4,9	6,8,11	4,9,10,13		
13	2,8	1	4,6	2,8		

Late P5 Analysis (R9 - 13): <mark>(Yellow background denotes Plays of the Day!!)</mark>

Preakness Day always has excellent fields, and their undercard fair is really good as well. Today's All-Stakes Late P5 ending in the Preakness has a potential MOTO (Master of the Obvious) horse in the final leg with Journalism. You can single him and spread more elsewhere or simply play a cheaper ticket. From a value perspective, he'll be by far the lowest payout in all exotics. If you don't think he'll lose, you might want to consider trying to hit the Late P5 more than once. If you can beat him though, your payout jumps exponentially. Similar to the Derby Day Late P5 (which ended up being unusually chalky), I don't think this sequence is likely to produce a bunch of big prices, although the penultimate race (R12) is impossible with many win candidates. These big days always produce huge pools…bet aggressively and hope your "good money" is better than many casual bettor's "bad money" in the Pick 5.

The following are today's Price / Spot Plays. AS ALWAYS, I'M LOOKING FOR VALUE AND WON'T USUALLY TIP OUT FAVORITES UNLESS I REALLY LIKE THEM. The "Stars" rating is the usual 1 – 5, with 5 being the MOST CONFIDENT / RECOMMENDED PLAYS.

Power Picks

Full-Card Price/Spot Play(s)

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
1	8	Circle P	9-2	4	$15 WP #8

Notes: We'll start in the opener, and let me say off the bat….IF THE TRACK COMES UP WET for this race, I would DOWNGRADE Circle P, as he's 0-for-5 on wet dirt with only one 2nd place finish. The weather is supposed to clear up Friday night into Saturday, so maybe it'll be fast by then. There were heavy thunderstorms yesterday in the early evening. Circle P is very consistent, gets a comfy outside post, and has every chance to close into the early speed. This track can be speed-favoring at times, so Circle P might be up against it from a track profile perspective. But he's been staked and is the class of the field. August Melody might be tough to run down, so Circle P, on the turn back, needs to be up closer than usual. Bottom line…on the speed figs I use, Circle P is just as fast if not faster than August Melody.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
4	7 / 3	Epic Ride / Celtic Contender	5-1 / 8-1	3	$15 WP #7 $5 Win, $15 Place #3 BIG Exactas: 3,7 / 5,6 Smaller Exactas: 5,6 / 3,7

Notes: The G3 Maryland Sprint is fascinating, and my bets above need some explanation. Here's my overall take: Booth and Concrete Glory are vulnerable today. They both are "need-the-lead" types (more Booth than Concrete Glory), and Epic Ride is very fast early too, plus he breaks outside both of them. I wish there was an inside speed horse to ensure a crazy early pace, so you never know what will happen. Booth regressed last time (although won) when being pushed, and "Concrete" will be forced to go breaking inside Booth, in theory. Epic Ride can stalk a bit if he wants, I trust Flavian here. His last race looks bad, but got a Timeform number that is still competitive. #3 Celtic Contender has the ability to rate a bit from behind and cuts back to 6f, which might work very well in this scenario. Here's my thoughts based on the bets I'm touting: One of the speeds will probably win or finish 2nd, but both of the faves (speeds) finishing 1-2 seems highly unlikely to me. Get value with the #3 or #7 to upset the field or finish 2nd. Maybe a "saver" exacta and box #3 and #7 if you really think they can finish 1-2. For our ROI, I'll go #7 WP and #3 PS.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
8	8	One Nine Hundred	7-2	4	$25 Win #8 Trifectas: 8 / 3,6,9 / 3,6,7,9,11 3,6,9 / 8 / 3,6,7,9,11

Notes: I promise, this is not a biased pick (One Nine Hundred is co-owned by Adelphi Racing Club, and no, I do not have an ownership piece of him unfortunately). This is one fast colt! And, for the first time in his career, he breaks to the outside, so Flavian can break, look left, and make some decisions. I don't know if he can rate a bit and win vs. this field, but as the speed of the speed, he may not need to. His loss to Colloquial looks better now due to Colloquial's huge winning effort in his next start. I wouldn't take too low a price on 1-900, but if he breaks, he has a huge shot. I also want to mention #3 Ancient World. If he breaks better, he'll make a HUGE run late and has an outside chance to be a factor at a

price. He looks slow on Beyers, but is improving and is placed aggressively by Pletcher and Repole. Maybe this is too much too soon, but the talent and breeding is there to be a very good one. I good horse to use underneath in your exacta and trifecta keys for value. Fun race….the break and trip is everything for many of these in a competitive field.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
11	1	Twain (Samuel Clemens would be proud)	20-1	2+	$10 Place $20 Show Trifectas: 6,7 / 3,6,7,8 / 1 Superfecta: 6,7 / 3,6,7,8 / 3,6,7,8 / 1

Notes: In these Price Plays, I'm trying to open up your brain to the idea that not everything is as obvious as it seems. I also think it's important that bettors understand finding "underneath horses" can be as valuable as win candidates. #1 Twain fits that description. When I look for bombs to come into the money, I focus on races without clear standouts and top horses that don't overwhelm the field. That's the case here. Sure the #6 and #7 will probably be tough to beat, but many others don't inspire confidence. Twain won well (albeit a little slow on the Beyer scale) in his debut, and did it VERY professionally with a nice closing kick. He's by Kitten's Joy, so the stretch out should only help, plus the track had some give in it, as it probably will today. If he finishes nicely down the stretch and gets up for 3rd or 4th, I'll be pleased…that's all I ask of him with this bet. I might place small insanity win bets on him as well. I also like the two local works since his debut win and aggressive placing. Here's my point: I believe he'll outrun his odds and he potentially creates value…..that's all I need to make a wager. If he's not good enough, ok, I took a stab at a big number. For our ROI, we'll go $2 Show.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
12	8	Crystal Quest	10-1	4	$15 WP #8 Trifectas: 8 / 6,9,10,13 / 1,4,6,7,9,10,13 6,9,10,13 / 8 / 1,4,6,7,9,10,13 6,9,10,13 / 1,4,6,7,9,10,13 / 8

Notes: The G2 Dinner Party is a really fun, wide-open betting affair. There are several that can win…it's a race very much based on trip and pace. #8 Crystal Quest is taking a step up in class and is very unexposed at this level vs. older. However, he'll be a big price (larger than his ML I predict) as some might think his last race was a bit "fluky." I don't think so. Yes, he got a perfect trip, but the way he strided out late with an impressive turn of foot leads me to believe the Fla-bred is starting to run to his most impressive races. He's only 4yo and has MUCH more upside than most in here. We don't know exactly who he is, while other veterans in the field have already peaked. In addition, he was staked last year, has run well on softer turf, and run well over this Pimlico turf. Lots to like, other than the difficult, big field. For our ROI, we'll $1 WP and hope he continues to improve/runs a big one today.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
13	8	Clever Again	5-1	5	$30 Win #8 BIG Exactas: 2-8 Smaller Exactas: 8-2

Notes: THIS IS MY PLAY OF THE DAY AT PIMLICO!! The 150th Preakness is a case study in "chalk v. fresh faces." All week, we've heard how much Journalism is "much the best", "feels great", and "won't be beat". I have few knocks on him…he's talented, fast, and likeable. But we've seen many runners in this race falter as big faves before after running in the Derby. The most recent that comes to mind is

Power Picks

Epicenter at 6-5. It's not easy to come back from 1 ¼ grueling race in two weeks…these are animals, not machines. That all being said, he could win by 3-4 lengths going away. This game is all about value, and I've been pretty good lately finding that value in big races (McAfee, Sovereignty, Raging Sea, etc…). Sure, I could be very wrong with my top choice #8 Clever Again, but I'm getting the right price. Gotta give credit to NBC/FanDuel analyst and friend Matt Bernier, who first discussed this horse with me months ago before his 2025 debut. We both were taken by his huge effort as a very young 2yo and the incredible breeding (Pharoah out of a Galileo mare). There are questions….he might have to rate, has to get the distance, step up in class, etc…but for me he's as talented as anyone in the field. Can he put it together in the biggest moment? J. Ortiz decided to ride him instead of Sandman…that means a lot to me too. Maybe this is too much too soon…but the time is right to take that stab. Stalk, pounce, and hang on late…that's my vision to get an $10.20 mutual and upset Journalism today. GL if you agree.

Racetrack: Churchill

Late Pick 5; R7 – 11, Post 9:05pm EST

Howard Kravets' Grid:

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

Late P5 Analysis

Tonight's Late P5 at CD is fairly straightforward. I'll be spreading for sure in the first leg, R7, a confounding two turn conditioned claiming event where no one is trustworthy, so have to spread there. I have strong opinions in R8 and R9, so I will be skinny in those legs, as well as R10. The closeout leg is interesting. I wish I could see the board before the P5, obviously I can't. The #11, a $2.5mil Mott horse, is sure to take money. But the fact they're debuting her at 6f is a little curious to me. I have to spread a bit there, even though she could be a monster. I don't think you have to spend gobs of money to hit this, although I hope your bankroll is plentiful after a successful Preakness Day!

Price/Spot Play(s)

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
9	2	**Missed the Cut**	7-2	4	**$20 WP #2** **BIG Exactas: 2 / 3,6,9** **Smaller Exactas: 3,6,9 / 2**

Power Picks

Notes:					

Maybe #2 Missed the Cut is not the same as he used to be, but I don't think that's the case. He came off the layoff and ran credible at GP, but that track does not suit his style. Last time at Keeneland, he disappointed me, but received a wide, uncovered trip the whole way and just didn't fire in the lane vs. many of these. Due to his tactical speed and the lack of it from the rail horse, Missed the Cut is almost certain to receive a ground-saving trip today. This is a more realistic spot for the trainer, and I hope Hernandez does what does best…ride the rail, then find room on the turn / late in the stretch. If he doesn't fire today, I'm off Missed the Cut permanently until he finds his form again.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
10	**6**	**Baddest Good Boy**	**5-2**	**5**	**$30 Win #6**
Notes:					

THIS IS MY PLAY OF THE DAY AT CHURCHILL!! This is a nice allowance race, and although I'm chalking out, I don't think #6 Baddest Good Boy is an obvious single or play here. With the presence of Bullard and others, I think we'll get that ML price. Baddest Good Boy ran well last time, after being in a little tight early and making a nice run late. He's lightly-raced and is likely to continue to improve. I hope he's a bit more forward early and goes by in the lane. Norm Casse has a good one here, literally.

SANTA ANITA - SUNDAY

Howard Kravets' Grid: Late Pick 4

R7 starts at 7:08pm EST

Race	A	B	C	Use in horizontal bets	Caveman Bet	Cost
7	1,8	3,5	2,4,9	1,3,5,8	$0.50 P4	$36
8	8	6,10	1	6,8,10		
9	8	2,9	-	2,8,9		
10	1,9	-	3,4,8	1,9		

Suggested Special Wagers:

$3 Late Pick 3:

Big Budget: 6,8,10 / 2,8,9 / 1,9 ($54)

Small Budget: 6,8,10 / 8 / 1,9 ($18)

$5 Late Double:

Big Budget: 2,8,9 / 1,9   ($30)

Small Budget: 8 / 1,9 ($6)

Key Horse of the Sequence: *Today's key horse is in R9, a $15k claimer going 1 mile on dirt. This is a case in which I trust the trainer / stats. #8 Union Wave is first off the claim for Barocio, who has 5 of his last 12 starts with this feature. In addition, he's 31% in the last 5 years first off the claim. The horse has plenty of back-class / numbers to win today, and I'm expecting a big bounce back effort from his poor showing last time. He has tactical speed to get into the race early, a good place to be at Santa Anita going two turns.*

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