

Power Picks

Race Date	5/2/26
Edition #	Vol. 6, No. 19

Race-Day Overview - KENTUCKY DERBY DAY

Welcome to Kentucky Derby Day! Today's card at Churchill Downs is filled with stakes, big fields, and tremendous betting opportunities. Budget accordingly, and make sure you bet your strongest opinions! The card starts at 11 a.m. EST and will end around 8:35 p.m. Today is a marathon, not a sprint. The weather is forecasted to be sunny and cool... conditions will be fast on the main dirt track, probably "good" / firm on the turf. Louisville had some heavy rain / thunderstorms earlier in the week, but the inside part of the turf course was only used yesterday, so ground should still be relatively fresh.

CHECK FOR SCRATCHES AND CHANGES....these might alter throughout the day, so pay attention to the tote board. This is a TREMENDOUS CARD, and DIFFICULT! Pick your spots wisely...you don't have to play every race just because it's DERBY DAY. We wish you much success today...based on the big, competitive fields, you can score huge if you're lucky....CRUSH YOUR BETS!!

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

Overall ROI (since Feb. 2021): **\$2.12** (\$2,293.68 / 1083)

2026: **\$2.98** (\$268.10 / 90)

2026 Plays of the Day: **\$3.40** (\$102.12 / 30)

Join us for "WEEKEND WARRIORS" on YouTube from 10:45am EDT through Race 3, as host Host Howard Kravets and Co-Host Kyle Roscoe will discuss the early part of the Derby Day card IN REAL TIME LIVE from the 3rd level media-only seating area at Churchill Downs! Plus, thoughts on the track conditions, scratches, and the big races later in the day.



Today's Picks

** For those of you not familiar with the "ABC" method of betting, go to our website, 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.

Racetrack: Churchill Downs

Howard Kravets' ALL-STAKES_LP5 ABC Grid - R8 starts at 3:23pm EDT

Race	A	B	C
8	6	1,4	-
9	4	5,12	2,6,7,8,13,14
10	6,7	2	1,4,5,8,10
11	3,6	-	4,7,9,10
12	1,6,12,20	7,9,15,18	8

Paul Halloran's LP5 All-Stakes ABC Grid:

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
8	1,6		2,4,7,8	1,6	\$0.50 P5	\$112
9	12,14	4,10	1,8,9	4,10,12,14	-	-
10	6	1,2	7,9,11	1,6	-	-
11	6,9	3,10	4,5,7	6,9	-	-
12	12,15,18	1,6,9	11,14,19,20	1,6,11,12,15,18,19	-	-

Pete Visco's LP5 All-Stakes ABC Grid:

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
8	1,6	8,9	4,10	1,6	\$0.50 P5	\$128
9	4,12	7,8,9	6,14	4,12	-	-
10	1,6	2,7	5,10,11	1,2,6,7	-	-
11	6,9	3,4,7	1,5,10	6,9	-	-
12	1,12,18	6,9,15,19,20	7,8,11	1,6,9,12,15,18,19,20	-	-



Howard's Late P5 Analysis - Races 8-12

Every year, The All-Grade 1 Stakes Late Pick 5 that ends in the Derby is an amazing bet that is a **MUST PLAY** due to the massive pool size / equity it generates (\$5mil +?). Depending on your opinion of the Derby, you don't necessarily have to play a big ticket, but it sure does help. It kicks off in R8, the Pat Day Mile, which is usually a big spread race, but not for me on Saturday. I do like a bomb however to spice up the potential chalky selection on top. R9 could be considered a wide-open affair, but there's a horse I like quite a bit in there too, but it's a very big field on the turf, so anything can happen. R10 is an **AWESOME** race full of talent, similar to last year, but I don't foresee big prices winning there either. Same goes for the Turf Classic, a race I usually spread quite a bit. That leaves us with the Ky. Derby. I counted 8-10 horses that **COULD** win, but narrowed down to about 5 or 6 realistic shots. My goal in today's Pick 5 is to be alive on a pretty narrow ticket until the Derby, then spread big-time in hopes of catching a big price. Good luck!!

Howard's All-Graded Stakes Pick 5 Tickets (R8 - 12)

BIG BUDGET: \$216

#1: 1,4,6 / 4,5,12 / 2,6,7 / 3,6 / 1,6,7,9,12,15,18,20

SMALL BUDGET: (\$36)

#1: 6 / 4,5,12 / 2,6,7 / 3,6 / 1,6,12,20

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	6 / 4	Crude Velocity / Secured Freedom	5-2 / 20-1	5 / 3	\$50 Win #6 Trifectas: 1,6 / 4 / 1,2,5,7,8,9 1,6 / 1,2,5,7,8,9 / 4

Notes

I don't usually do two Spot Plays in one race, so allow me to explain. I believe **#6 Crude Velocity** is a VERY SERIOUS animal. He would be my "most likely winner of the day" if I had to give one out. And that's saying something considering #1 Englishman is also VERY, VERY GOOD and can absolutely win here. There's no way Crude Velocity is 5-2 at post time. Anything above 7-5 is a gift in my mind. Those two will be a 7-5 / 9-5 situation in some order, I predict. However, they both have to prove themselves at the distance. My complete bomb for the day is **#4 Secured Freedom**. His best race was his maiden breaker sprinting, and I don't think he's a two-turn animal. He's working well for this, and should get a good trip from further back. Maybe he's not talented enough to win, but his speed figure in the maiden win was VERY good....some were thinking Derby horse after that. If he gets a good trip, I think

Power Picks

he could surprise and get into the frame. He'll need a red-hot pace....this race has produced some strange results since its inception.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
9	4	Stark Contrast	4-1	4+	\$30 Win #4 BIG Exactas: 4 / 5,12 Smaller Exactas: 5,12 / 4

Notes

The G1 American Turf is now a \$1mil race, lots on the line here!! It is wide-open by some people's opinion, but not me. Sure, it's a big field and anything can happen. The winner will have to receive a good ride and trip. But one of the best decisions made by any trainer this season has to be in this race by the trainer of **#4 Stark Contrast**, Michael McCarthy, who is not getting greedy and running in the Derby despite the fact the horse has the points to qualify. Stark Contrast is a turf horse, and a VERY good at that. If you watch last year's BC Juvenile Turf won by Europe's Gstaad carefully, you'd see that Stark Contrast ran as well as the winner. The last race will toughen him up for this, and I think Fulleffort is an interesting win candidate in the Derby. If Stark Contrast gets a decent trip, he will prove best in this race and take home a healthy prize. I think we'll see post-time odds around 5-2.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
10	7	Imagination	6-1	3+	\$10 Win, \$30 Place #7 BIG Exactas: 6 / 7 Smaller Exactas: 7 / 6

Notes

This race, the G1 Churchill Downs S., is quickly turning into my favorite race on the card outside the Derby. Last year's running was amazing, and this year is almost as good. I can't hide my enthusiasm for **#7 Imagination**, my Spot Play in last year's BC Sprint and a horse I've touted out with success before on these tip sheets. #6 Knightsbridge will probably win based on his completely ridiculous speed figs and ease in which he's blown out fields lately. But don't underestimate Imagination. His best distance is 7f to 1mile, and he'll be able to stalk the speed and pounce when asked. He's been given time to prepare after his trip to the Middle East, and he showed his class in last year's BC Sprint vs. Bentornado. He tends to hang on his left lead at times (deep-dive horseplayers understand), but if he runs straight and gives his best, he can threaten Knightsbridge and win. Can't wait to see what happens today in the Churchill Downs S.!!

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
11	3	Asbury Park	8-1	4	\$20 WP #3

Notes

I rarely say this, but I'm pretty disappointed overall with the field assembled for the \$1.5mil Turf Classic. There are no superstars in the race...in fact, I'm not sure there are any plain ole' stars either, unless you consider #6 Rhetorical in that high regard. There is one interloper from the Euro / Middle

Power Picks

East taking a shot, but I'm surprised no one else "across the pond" is here. This race is ripe for a fresh face / newcomer, and I think that one is #3 Asbury Park for Chad Brown. In the 2024 edition of this race, a Chad horse scored at 4-1 and gave me and Patrick Kuenzel, co-host of Bettin N Boozin, a nice score. That horse was #4 Program Trading, the other Chad who has a better profile / career to this point than Asbury Park, by far. One of the main reasons I like #3 Asbury Park is due to the presence of Flavian Prat. He's been the regular rider of Program Trading and now goes to the much less-heralded Asbury Park, hmmm. According to my speed figures, Asbury Park has to improve a solid 4-5 lengths to beat Rhetorical, but I'm not sure Rhetorical wants this distance, as he's been kept at 1 mile in the big races. He's classy enough to win obviously, but we'll see. Asbury Park had an issue after his 2yo season and had to be rested up. He finished his 3yo season with a solid but not spectacular G2 win. I love the way he's worked in the a.m. in Florida for this. It's a VERY aggressive placing for Chad. I'm expecting a massive effort. In Chad and Flavian I trust at around 5-1. His PP's say no chance, I say, "yes"!

The Kentucky Derby (opinion by Howard Kravets):

The 152nd running of the Kentucky Derby is a wide-open affair, although I do think the Top 5-6 horses stand out just a bit from the rest. Last year on the podcast and this Tip Sheet, I touted a Journalism victory over Sovereignty. Right idea, wrong order. **In all honesty, I don't feel NEARLY AS CONFIDENT THIS YEAR.** I've lauded the praises of **#12 Chief Wallabee** since his debut, and I would have had a Future bet on him, but his price was too low and I was already "all-in" on Paladin...damn shame for me, but that's horse racing. I'm not worried about the blinkers added, he has as good a shot as anyone, and a great post. **#6 Commandment** has done nothing wrong and is a major threat...I have nothing negative to say about him at all. My longshot of the race (and a popular one at that on the podcast), **#20 Fulleffort**, was scratched unfortunately. I'm deferring to **#7 Danon Bourbon** as my longshot, a talented Japanese horse who has settled into Churchill nicely...a real wildcard. I really like the talents of **#1 Renegade** and **#18 Further Ado**, but I have some questions about each one. Would I be surprised if either of them won? Heck no, but you can't pick every horse. For "underneath" types to fill out trifectas and supers, include, **#9 The Puma, #15 Emerging Market, and #19 Golden Tempo**...I'm not a **#8 So Happy** guy, we'll see. If one of those horses wins, that wouldn't shock me either. Anyone else is pretty much a "toss" for me as a WIN candidate. CRUSH YOUR BETS in this year's Kentucky Derby!!

Here are my final public selections: 12-6-18-1....GOOD LUCK!!

Matt Miller's "Smash It" Play of the Day:

If you know me at all, you know that my "Smash It" play of the day will be in a spot where I feel the highest degree of confidence, not the highest amount of hope. Sorry - no Derby selection here.

As tough as it might be to stomach, my biggest bets on the day will run through Ways and Means - gulp - in just the fourth race. A loss would take a huge amount of fun out of the day. That said, I think this is a very good

Power Picks

spot for a horse that, in my view, towers over this field if she's fully cranked and ready.

As much as I recognize there is potential that she isn't fully cranked and ready off the layoff, I generally don't subscribe to theories like that unless there is clear basis for them based on a trainer's prior actions and record. That doesn't seem to be the case here at all. I think Chad has put this terrific mare in a great spot to kick off this year's campaign. A similar effort to the one put forth this weekend last year should land this horse in the winner's circle.

I see no glory in waiting until the Kentucky Derby to risk one's bankroll on Derby day or, even worse, slowly depleting that bankroll over the course of the day to maximize your fun/action. I think this horse deserves serious consideration for at least a decent chunk of one's bankroll (or in my case based on my style of play, what will likely be my life in the KDBC).

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

