

Power Picks

Race Date	2/14/26
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Race-Day Overview

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!! Let's see if we can spread some horse racing love to all of you with some good information / opinions across the country today!

We'll start at the Fairgrounds in New Orleans, where the feature card of the day occurs for Risen Star S. Day! The All-Stakes Late P5 is a doozy, highlighted by the first 50pt. Derby Prep of the season. The winner of the race is virtually guaranteed a spot in the starting gate for the Derby, while the 2nd place finisher receives 25 points and will only need a few more to qualify for the Run for the Roses.

Then, we'll travel to Laurel Park in Maryland (home of the Preakness S. this year), as they'll present a great card with 4 stakes, including the well-regarded General George S. and Barbara Fritchie S, two dirt races with nice fields. AS ALWAYS, CHECK FOR SCRATCHES AND CHANGES!!

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

Overall ROI (since Feb. 2021): **\$2.04** (\$2,098.34 / 1027)

2026: **\$2.13** (\$72.50 / 34)

2026 Plays of the Day: **\$2.73** (\$24.60 / 9)

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.

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Racetrack: The Fairgrounds

Howard Kravets' Late P5 ABC GRID - R8 starts at 4:30pm EDT

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
8	1,2	4,8	-	1,2,8	\$0.50 LP5	\$67.50
9	2,6	5	4,7	2,4,5,6,7	-	-
10	6,7	2	5,8,9	2,6,7	-	-
11	3	1,5	-	1,3,5	-	-
12	4	2,7	-	4	-	-

Paul Halloran's Late P5 ABC Grid:

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
8	2,4	3	1	1,2,3,4	\$1 LP5	\$96
9	2,5		6	2,5	-	-
10	2,7	6	5,9	2,6,7,9	-	-
11	3		1,5	3	-	-
12	4	1,7	2,8	1,4,7	-	-

Pete Visco's Late P5 ABC Grid:

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
8	1,4	2,7	8	1,2,4	\$0.50 LP5	\$72
9	2,6	1,5	3,7	1,2,5,6	-	-
10	6,7	2,5	8,9	5,6,7	-	-
11	1,3	5,6,7	-	1,3	-	-
12	4,7	2	5	4,7	-	-

Howard's Late P5 Analysis - Races 8-12

As you can see by my ABC Grid, I'm going pretty skinny today in general. In many races, it just feels to me like the top contenders will be tough if they run their races, and I won't get cute with throwing in horses that I don't believe have much of a chance to win. I think the main singles could be in either one of the last two races, but I'm partial to my Future Derby horse Paladin. There is other speed in the race, but he's proven he can rate a bit off the speed, and until he doesn't win / throw in a bad effort, I'll ride him all the way to the Derby Winner's Circle, I hope. His main rival last year, Renegade, came back and won impressively at Tampa Bay last Saturday. It's worth mentioning there is possible rain in the forecast, more specifically later in the afternoon / evening, so let's hope it holds off until after the races. I'm not sure we'll see big prices in this sequence today, so maybe you want to "press-up" your opinions and try to hit the Pick 5 more than once. But sometimes when I think that, chaos reigns. We shall see!

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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	6	Montador	6-1	5	\$20 WP #6 BIG Exactas: 6 / 2,7 Smaller Exactas: 2,7 / 6

Notes:

I'm going to start right away with my **PLAY OF THE DAY AT THE FAIRGROUNDS in #6 Montador**. Trained by personal favorite Stidham, this lightly raced 4yo is getting better and better, and I think the extra distance of 1 1/8mi. will hit him right between the eyes. This talented Godolphined-owned horse easily beat a fairly weak field of 3yo's last time, but did it so well you'd have to take notice. By my figures, he's probably 2-3 lengths slower than the top horses in here, but they have questions to answer at this distance, plus must overcome layoff lines and second-itis. I'm hoping Montador is midpack or even up closer than that early, and puts in his patented late kick to get the job done. He might be overbet, but I'm hoping to get at least 4-1. He's been training great....now's the time to strike while we get a decent price vs. a beatable field.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
11	3	Bella Ballerina	2-1	4	\$15 Win #3 Trifectas: 3 / 1,5 / all 1,5 / 3 / all

Notes:

The G2 Rachel Alexandra for the 3yo girls is an Oaks Prep with points on the line. Many of these faced off in the Golden Rod S. in November at Churchill, and I thought Bella Ballerina was VERY impressive that day, especially since she was only coming off a sprint maiden score. She broke great, showed tactical speed, took over the lead into the stretch with strong sectionals, and beat the closers who did not get by on the gallop out either. That was her first time going two turns, and now she has rest and that experience. There are some horses stretching out that could show early gas, but I see no reason why Bella can't rate a bit again if necessary. She's one more good trip away from finding the Winner's Circle again and stamping herself as a real Oaks contender....although there's a Pletcher monster filly that is a handful right now named "Zany" in the division.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
12	7	Courting	6-1	3	\$10 Win, \$25 Place BIG Exactas: 4/2,7 Smaller Exactas: 2,7 / 4

Notes:

I'm sure most of you expected me tout #4 Paladin here, and he is the horse to beat. But there's no value in betting him at around 7-5, so let me tip out another nice horse who could begin to live up to his lofty potential, **#7 Courting**. For our ROI, I'll go \$1 WP as he's mainly underneath for me. The full brother to Clairaire went for a whopping \$5million at the sales, and he has lived in the 70's Beyer-wise up until now. Pletcher has given him time to develop, and puts blinkers on also. I thought he ran better than it looked in the Remsen, when he didn't get a great break and was wide and a bit goofy. His works indicate the lightbulb has turned on, and this is a very aggressive spot for Pletcher knowing full well Paladin would be here. I also think he's a more long-winded type and he'll love the stretch at the FG much more than he would Gulfstream for example. He obviously needs to run faster, but Pletcher is

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really heating up with his 2yo's and my gut tells me Courting is going to run very well today while stalking the speed on the outside in the clear. Full disclosure, I bet him in Pool 2 of the KDFW as my "saveer" and main "backup" to my Paladin Future bet. Let's see if he's progressed since last year. I'd love to see a Paladin - Courting finish today in the Risen Star! The other way around wouldn't be so bad either!

Racetrack: Laurel

Howard Kravets' Late P5 ABC GRID - Race 7 starts at 2:23pm EDT

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
6	1,6,7	3	2,4,5	1,3,6,7	\$0.50 LP5	\$36
7	2,6	5	-	2,5,6	-	-
8	1,4	-	7,8	1,4	-	-
9	4,5,7	-	1,2	4,5,7	-	-
10	9	-	2,6	9	-	-

Howard's Late P5 Analysis - Races 6-10

*The ABC Grid above tells the story....this is about as "skinny" I go for a Pick 5 sequence. Although the field sizes are decent, I'm not sure the depth is there for many of them. The whole key, as you'll see by my Spot Plays below, is the last. I just don't see the #9 losing realistically and will single him to lower the cost of the ticket. I found it hard to find a single in any of the 4 legs. My biggest spread race would be the first leg, R6, and possibly R9. ***Warning....I'm going a little chalky in my Spot Plays today at Laurel, but it was hard for me to find creative picks to tout.*

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	4	Takethemoneyhoney	9-5	3	\$20 WP #4

Notes:

Very little NOT to like about **#4 Takethemoneyhoney** in today's Barbara Fritchie S. The mare is 8-for-8 1st or 2nd in her career, is versatile, consistent, and draws well. This is probably one of her toughest races of her career up to this point, but jockey Ruiz knows her and she seems to fire every single time. Let the price be your guide in terms of a win bet. If she performs as she should, then go to the betting windows after the race and "takethemoneyhoney"!!

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
9	4	Quint's Brew	9-5	4	\$15 Win #4 BIG Exactas: 4 / 5,7 Smaller Exactas: 5,7 / 4

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Notes:
 The General George S. pits some nice males going against each other at a distance of 7f. #4 Quint's Brew is running in his 3rd start of the current form cycle, which could produce a big Beyer top. He was in graded stakes last year, and after two solid starts this year, he's ready to take another step forward, not that he really needs to. Jockey Hazlewood was nominated as top apprentice and is one of the rising stars in the N. American jockey colony. Therefore, a good ride/trip should be incoming for Quint's Brew, who shouldn't be too far back of the leaders. He needs to break a little better to be in the right position, but after that, look for him to be closing down the lane from a few lengths off.

Race #	Horse #	Horse Name	Odds	Stars	Bet(s)
10	9	Run Tzu	6-5	5	\$25 Win 9

Notes:
THIS IS MY PLAY OF THE DAY AT LAUREL!! With all that stake talent, you'd think my play of the day would be in one of those races. But for me, the most reliable winner (low price however?) is in the last, a maiden \$12.5k claimer. #9 Run Tzu, for leading jockey Hazlewood and new trainer Ness, should roll. I know, he's lost his first two starts by a combined 34 lengths, which doesn't exactly exude confidence. But this is a MASSIVE DROP, and if he can run at all on dirt, he should win. With all due respect to the other horses and connections, these are the worst horses on the grounds at Laurel. Just let the #7 go, stalk outside of him confidently, go by that one easily on the turn, and hold off the #2 if that one can even run on dirt. Would I be shocked if Run Tzu lost? No, it's horse racing. Then again, I almost think 6-5 would be value...."Free Square" to end the card today at Laurel IMO.

Coast-to-Coast (CTC) Pick 5 Preview

Sponsored by Santa Anita / 1st Racing

1/ST	SANTANA ANITA PARK	GULFSTREAM PARK	SATURDAY/FEB 14
COAST-TO-COAST	PICK 5		RACE 9 - 4:19 ET
EVERY FRI/SAT/SUN	RETAIL ONLY		RACE 3 - 4:36 ET
			RACE 4 - 5:07 ET
			RACE 5 - 5:37 ET
			RACE 12 - 5:50 ET

TODAY'S ANALYSIS/OPINIONS ARE WRITTEN BY PHP HOST AND DEL-MAR POWER PICKS TIP SHEET AUTHOR (AND INTERN AT THOROUGHBRED DAILY NEWS MIGHT I ADD!) NOAH MEAGHER.

Below is my (actually Noah's) 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).

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First leg starts at approx. 4:20pm EDT

Race	A	B	C	Caveman Picks	Caveman Bet	Caveman Cost
GP9	1,4,9	-	2,5,6,8	1,4,9	\$1	\$36
SA3	2	1,4,6	3,5,8	1,2,4,6		
SA4	3	2	-	3		
SA5	8	1,2,9	3,4	8		
GP12	3,5	9	2,4	3,5,9		

Overall opinion: The first two legs of this Coast to Coast Pick 5 (GP 9 and SA 3) are definitely the races that you're going to want the most coverage in. Synthetic sprints with big fields are admittedly not a specialty of mine, and neither are 6 furlong grass races at the Great Race Place, so I'm hoping to be alive following the conclusion of those one-turn affairs. With the nature of the short field in SA4, I would expect many players to find their single here. Along with that same idea, I'll also be playing the double into SA 5. Overall, I think the idea is to try and catch a few prices early on, then narrow down on some of the more formidable races that conclude Saturday's sequence. Good luck!

YouTube preview...."Wire to Wire Ep. #7": <https://youtube.com/live/cm5bADZI4HE?feature=share>

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

