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**Parlay Your Parlay**

**By Sebastien Veilleux**

Many sports bettors play parlay cards. And many play higher parlays than they should. Why? It's

mainly a lotto type thing. Many people just can't get excited about winning \$60 for a \$10 bet. Therefore, rather than betting the three-team parlay card, they add more teams and try to hit a home run by loading up on teams. There's no rule saying you can't pick a lot of winners, but doing so on the same day can be rough. Why not split up your card and make more money?

Yes, you heard me right. Bet fewer selections and space your wager out over multiple playing week—in football for example—to make more money. Here's the thing. Every weekend during the football season there's a ton of action. How hard is it to find 4 winners? How about 8? Yes, finding 8 isn't too hard given the number of games, but the probability of you getting 1-2 wrong is high. Finding just 4 solid plays is far easier. Perhaps the 11-1 payout on most parlay cards isn't enough for you?

If you want to turn a few bucks into a cash stash, try parlaying your parlay. Here's how it works. I'll use college football as my example. Rather than trying to pick 8 winners on one day or betting more on a lower parlay, try this method. Find yourself four solid games and parlay them for \$10. When you win, you will be paid \$110 plus your \$10 back. Take your \$10 and put it back in your pocket. Next, start looking towards next week.

When next week comes, find four solid winners again. This time play the \$110 in winnings on a four-team parlay card. If you win, that's \$1,320 in your pocket—total profit. Your \$10 initial bet just netted you 132-1 profit. Think about how often you hit your small parlays—if you bet them that is. Want to play it safer? Double parlay a three team card. A \$10 wager will end up netting you \$420 in profit, which is 42-1!

In betting, there's more than one way to skin a cat. You could even go down two double parlaying two-team cards. I would not try this tactic with anything over a four team card, because 1) your chances of winning are drastically reduced and 2) smaller players might have trouble laying all that cash on the table for the second leg of the parlay. Another tactic is to take 50% of the money on the first win and pocket it. Either way, parlaying a parlay win is one way to boom profits.

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### **Playing The Parlay -- Gauging Risks And Potential Gains**

**By Paul Mroczka**

Probably the most familiar type of wager in sports betting is the straight or side bet. The term "straight" is a good way to describe it—winning is determined by one basic factor and the payoff is clearly stated. If a bettor puts money on a team and they win or beat the spread, if a spread is involved, the person placing the wager collects on that one bet.

In your trips to your favorite online sportsbook, you may have noticed that you could opt to play a parlay. It may have intrigued you, but you were unsure of exactly what it entailed and what risk factors were involved.

Note that some bettors won't go near the parlay, due to the risk factors inherent in this type of wager. With a parlay, which in England is known as an accumulator, you make a series of bets all of which you must win in order to collect. If you lose any of the wagers, you lose the entire bet.

If this sounds risky, it is. One incorrect wager means you've lost the entire bet. What attracts bettors to the parlay is the payoff. The standard Vegas two-bet parlay pays 2.6 to 1. Put down \$100 and if your parlay comes in you realize \$260. A parlay with three wagers pays 6 to 1, which translates into a \$600 payoff on a \$100 wager.

Let's say you wagered on a 3-game football parlay and won \$600. How much would you win on three individual bets where you put \$110 on each team? You'd realize \$100 per wager. Because you're placing money on three separate teams, the straight bets cost \$330, whereas a three-team parlay would involve only \$100. In a best case scenario with the straight wagers, \$300 will get you an additional \$330. The parlay results in a \$500 net on \$100 wagered. That's the benefit; you get a much better return on your money from the parlay.

The greater risk in our parlay example comes from the fact that you must win all three wagers to make any money—it is all or nothing. Here are some tips on lowering your risk if you're new to the parlay and want to try it.

#### **One Sport**

Many online sportsbooks will offer parlay tickets that feature numerous combinations of sports. You may see a ticket with four football games, three baseball games, and three hockey games. Stay away

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from that type of ticket, or if you play it bet on only one sport. Why?

Although mixing sports can be attractive, it's tough to do for the beginner. Football, baseball and hockey are all very different animals and unless you're an expert handicapper in each, which is rare, stay with the sport you know best.

Also, you'll see greater benefit from learning even more about football, if that's your strong suit, than trying to figure out hockey.

Once you have some experience betting your favorite sport in a parlay situation, start testing the water of the multi-sport parlay.

### Limit the Number of Teams

Wow, that six-team parlay looks so attractive with its 40 to 1 payout! Wow, that six-team parlay is so much tougher to hit than that three-team parlay that pays 6 to 1! Of course a six is more unlikely to payoff—it is 40 to 1 after all.

Limit parlays to no more than three bets. This gives you a greater chance of winning (add another team and your risk goes up) while providing an attractive return. Would I like to put down \$100 and get back \$4,000 on a six-team parlay? Sure.

However, hitting that number of teams on one ticket is extremely difficult. Is it impossible? No, it's not. But you have a much better chance with a three-team wager.

### Other Limits

Along with combining different sports, you can often mix various types of wagers, including point spreads, win/loss, over/unders, money lines, and more. Once again, simplify your process and play your strength as a handicapper and the strength of the teams on which you're wagering.

If you're more adept at predicting the over/under than you are at playing the spread, go with the over/under and vice versa. Look at it logically and realistically. How many times have you been right about the over/under and the win/loss in the same game? The answer is probably not very often.

Better yet, try a few mock parlays. Scan the latest offerings and put together some parlay tickets you might bet, mixing up the types of wagers. Be sure to do this over numerous betting sequences, for football at least three weeks or with baseball, basketball or hockey a week or two of games.

Remember—it doesn't matter in the parlay if you only lost one game, or you didn't know a particular player would change the outcome by performing poorly or a team won on a freak play. If you were incorrect on even one wager, no matter what the circumstances, you lost that parlay.

There are no Mulligans in sports betting and parlays are especially unforgiving. Play to your strength after you've done your research. Hunches are normally bad bets anyway; they are anathema in the

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parlay.

### The Strongest Selection

One way to increase your chances of winning involves betting on numerous parlay tickets and including the same strong selection on each ticket, while varying the other teams.

As an example, the Chicago Bears are playing the Arizona Cardinals at home. Chicago looks very good in this contest, an almost sure thing if there were one in the world of handicapping. You decide you'd like to play 4 separate three-team parlays at \$25 each (you're still risking \$100). In this scenario, you'd include Chicago on each ticket and then a combination of different teams on each of the four.

One parlay might be Chicago over Arizona, Dallas over San Francisco and Pittsburgh over Atlanta. The next parlay would still include Chicago over Arizona, while picking the New York Giants over Philadelphia and Seattle over Oakland. The third parlay continues with Chicago over Arizona but now has New England over Buffalo and Denver over St. Louis. Your fourth ticket would be Chicago over

Arizona and could include Pittsburgh over Atlanta and Seattle over Oakland—a combination of teams from two of your other parlay tickets.

TICKET 1: Chicago over Arizona, Dallas over San Francisco and Pittsburgh over Atlanta.

TICKET 2: Chicago over Arizona, the New York Giants over Philadelphia and Seattle over Oakland.

TICKET 3: Chicago over Arizona, New England over Buffalo and Denver over St. Louis.

TICKET 4: Chicago over Arizona, Pittsburgh over Atlanta and Seattle over Oakland.

Theoretically, all of these games could end in your favor. If that happened, you'd be kicking yourself because you missed a 7-team parlay that would have paid 75 to 1 or \$7,500 on a one hundred dollar bet. Making each a 3-team parlay with \$25 on each ticket would result in a return of \$600 at the standard 6 to 1 odds if all teams won. But chances are that won't happen.

More likely than not you may hit one or, perhaps even two of these parlays. One winning ticket would result in a total return of \$125, while 2 would get you \$250. Either way, you're ahead.

The important thing to remember about playing parlays, as it is with any form of wagering, is that trying to win big by taking high risks rarely results in success. You're looking to win 55 to 60% of your wagers, which is what most experts do over the course of time. In the world of gambling, quick, high-risk bets can be exciting and occasionally lucrative, but wagers with a bit more certainty that are spread out tend to provide better results in the long run.

As with any form of wagering to which you're new, be sure to do your homework, start slowly, and consider sound betting strategies when playing a parlay. You'll still have a chance of winning more than you would with a straight bet, while staying in the game longer.

This article was written by Paul Mroczka for

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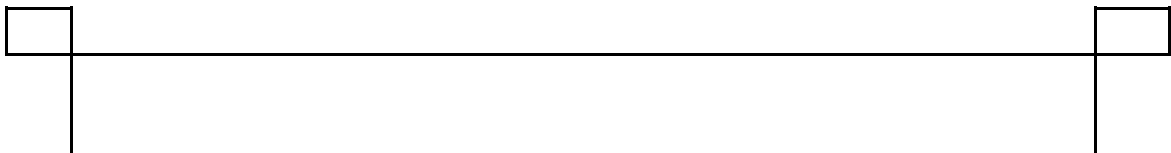
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