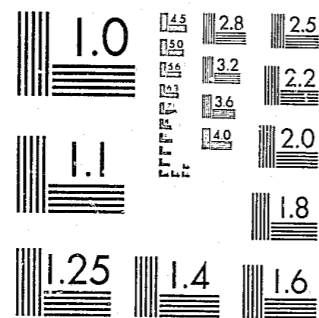


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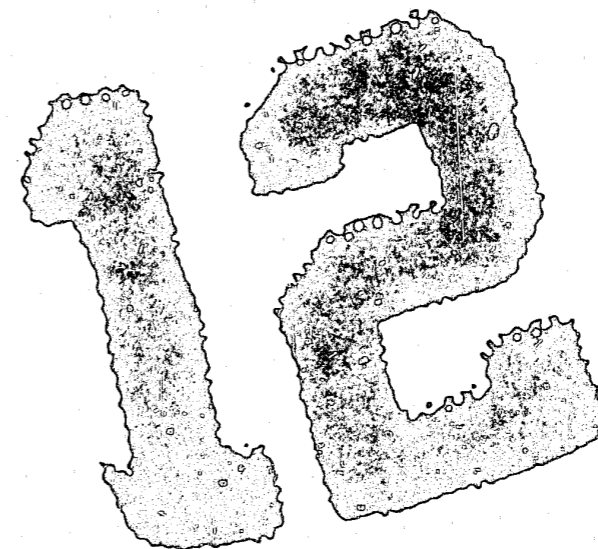
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Crime Problems



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Analyzing Sports Betting Records

By R. PHILLIP HARKER
*Special Agent
Laboratory Division
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington, D.C.*

The success of any bookmaking enterprise is dependent on the bookie's "line" information, his ability to lay off, and the business he receives from his "customers." For without the bettor, the man who pits his "knowledge" of the sport against the organized operation of the bookie, bookmaking would not be the multi-million dollar business that it is today. The following are various types of wagers bettors can make on football and basketball games. Betting on baseball games is quite different and will be considered in a later article.

Straight Bets.

The basic wager is called a "straight" bet, i.e., the bettor picks one team including the point spread and puts up or risks at the rate of \$11 for each \$10 the bookie risks. If the bettor wagers \$600 on a team, he will collect \$600 if the team wins, but will pay out \$660 in case of a loss. This is referred to as 10 percent "vigorish" or "juice"

and results in a long-run expectant profit to the operation of 4.76 percent of the total money wagered on an evenly balanced book.

In some instances, bookmakers require the bettor to put up \$12 for each \$10 the bookie risks (6-5 odds rather than 11-10 odds), resulting in a 9.1 percent long-run profit to the organization. And in many cases, even though the bookie generally uses 11-10 odds, he may require bettors to bet at 6-5 odds for the smaller bets, e.g., those under \$50 or \$100.

There are several variations in recording straight bets. For example:

Denver -6½ 100—a bet of \$110 (or maybe \$120) to win \$100 if Denver wins by more than 6 points.

Seattle +4 110—the amount risked by the bettor, \$110, has actually been stated.

Atlanta P 110/100—the whole bet is written out (\$110 to make \$100). In this case, "P" means pick or even game. Some bookies use "E" for even, although this can be confusing in baseball lines where "pick" and "even" mean different things.

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"The basic wager is called a 'straight' bet . . . the bettor picks one team including the point spread and puts up or risks at the rate of \$11 for each \$10 the bookie risks."

Chicago +12½ 1—the amount of the bet has been disguised since no bookie will take a straight bet of \$1. Usually, this means a bet of \$100, but further analysis is sometimes necessary to prove this.

Washington -5½ 20X—the amount of the wager 20X, also written as 20T, stands for 20 times a specified amount of money—20×100, 20×25, 20×15, or whatever the bookie and his particular bettor predetermine as his basic bet. However, this type of notation usually means 20×5, which is an offshoot of the reasonably common horse betting notation. Thus, 15T or 15X means a bet of \$75 (15×5); however, in each case further study is needed to be sure what the notation means. **Houston +10 100T L550** means the bettor bet \$500 (100×5) and lost \$550, including the 10 percent vigorish.

A bettor can also place a bet by specifying a team's number on the line sheet rather than naming the individual team. In a wager such as **88 +3 100**, a bet of \$100 was placed on a team numbered 88, information which usually comes from the line sheet the bookmaker and bettors possess. A bet of this nature is advantageous to the bookie, since he is able to locate quickly the team and line on the sheet, which often has over 100 listed. The additional advantage is the cryptic nature of the bet, so that further research is necessary to determine the team wagered on, and coupled with the line, will usually show the date when the game was played. Such a determination is critical in proving the betting slip is current or within the period of the criminal charge. To be absolutely certain of many of the above notations, often several bets must be seen to eliminate the coincidence that team 88 may be +3 on other dates or in other

years, unless of course the betting slip bears a date, as some do.

Parlay Bets.

A parlay is a bet on two or more teams, requiring each team to win in order to receive any payoff.

| | | |
|-----------|------|----------|
| Buffalo | +12½ | } 20 par |
| Cleveland | +2 | |

is a parlay bet of \$20 that both Buffalo and Cleveland win, including the handicap. In most operations the bettor only risks \$20, rather than \$22 including the juice. Bettors think this is a bet without juice and that a return of a \$48 net win is excellent. However, since there are four ways two separate games can end (Buffalo wins and Cleveland wins, Buffalo loses and Cleveland wins, Buffalo loses and Cleveland loses), the bettor has only one chance of winning, his probability is one chance in four, making true odds against him of 3 to 1. Therefore, a true nonvigorish payoff would net him \$60, not \$48. Moreover, if the \$20 parlay were at 11-10 odds, the payoff would be about \$53, again not \$48. It can be seen that there is more vigorish, percentage wise, in a parlay that usually pays off at 12-5 odds than if the bettor bet the two games individually at 11-10. The 12-5 payoff approximates parlaying two teams at 6-5 odds, and many operations pay less than 12-5.

A three-team parlay is written similarly:

| | | |
|---------------|-----|------|
| Minnesota | -5½ | } 10 |
| San Francisco | -1 | |
| Philadelphia | +8½ | |

The standard payoff here is 5-1 or \$50 on a \$10 bet. Without counting the ways three teams can be picked, we

know mathematically to multiply the individual probabilities of each game, which is one chance in two (written ½). Therefore, the total ways are ½×½×½ or ⅛, which means the three games can finish eight different ways (excluding ties or "pushes") and the bettor must pick one of them. The odds then are 7-1, or the bettor should get \$70 net, not \$50. Even parlaying three times at 11-10 odds would produce an approximate \$59 payoff.

Parlay bets with a bookmaker seldom exceed three teams, but if they do, the payoffs will be correspondingly poorer.

Round Robins.

Sometimes called "bird cages," "turn arounds," "back to backs," "twists," "trains," "chains," "baseballs," etc., a round robin is a series of all the possible two-team parlays that can be arranged from three or more teams, with each parlay treated separately. For example,

| | | |
|-------------|------|--------|
| New Orleans | +14½ | } 25RR |
| Seattle | +6 | |
| Buffalo | -4½ | |

is a round robin with a total bet of \$75, \$25 on each of the two-team parlays of New Orleans and Seattle, New Orleans and Buffalo, and Seattle and Buffalo. In a straight three-team parlay, each team must win (always considering the line), but it can be seen that some payoff will be available if only two of the three teams win in a round robin. If two of the above teams won on a 12-5 net payoff, the bettor would get \$60 (at 12-5 odds) less the \$50 lost on the other two parlays and have a net profit of \$10. He could get a net profit of \$180 if all three won. But of course, if he had risked the same \$75 on a straight three-team parlay, he would have netted \$375 (5×75). He

"Statistical studies have shown that only 4 or 5 of the 13 professional football games per week result in final scores within 6 points of the line."

gives up a chance at the really big money of a straight parlay to get a maximum of about one-half as much, and if one team loses, still gets a very modest profit (10/75 of the amount risked).

If Bets.

This type of wager, common in horse betting, is not used to a great extent in sports betting. It is a bet on one event, and if that bet is a winning one, a portion of the proceeds is wagered on a second event. For instance,

| | | |
|-----------|-----|--------|
| Detroit | +3½ | 500 |
| NY Giants | +7 | if 200 |

would place a \$200 bet on New York if the Detroit bet of \$500 was a winner. Thus, if both teams win, the bettor collects \$700. If Detroit or Detroit and New York lose, he pays \$550. If Detroit wins and New York loses, the bettor collects \$280 (\$500-\$220).

Over and Under Bets.

Wagers of this nature state whether the final total score of a game will be over or under the line for the total score. **LA O 38 120** is a bet that the total score in the Los Angeles game (including LA's opponent) will be over 38 points. (Note that the wager is for

\$120 to make \$100.) This type of bet is usually at 6-5 odds instead of 11-10. **Kansas City U 36 60** places a bet of \$60 to win \$50 that the final combined scores of Kansas City and its opponent will total under 36 points. Bets of this type are quite popular in some parts of the country, especially on televised games where there is increased interest.

Teaser Bets.

Originally called "doyles," a teaser bet is a type of parlay in which the bettor is given an increased number of points to the regular line in each game wagered in exchange for a decreased payoff, or in a few areas, he may give up points in exchange for an increased payoff.

The following are common teaser propositions compared with corresponding straight parlays without benefit of the points. (See fig. 1.)

It should be noted that these numbers of points and payoffs are only examples and are subject to considerable variation in different areas of the country. They are called teasers because they tease the bettor into think-

ing he could pick any number of games at any payoff rate if he is given enough additional handicap. However, statistical studies have shown that only 4 or 5 of the 13 professional football games per week result in final scores within 6 points of the line. Therefore, on other games, for the bettor to get points in his favor would not help him, but on the other hand, he is giving up substantially in the payoff odds.

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Pittsburgh -2½ | } 50/60 T |
| Miami +3 | |

is a six-point teaser (based on figure 1) of \$50 to win \$60 that both teams will win considering the indicated line. Apparently the straight line was Pittsburgh -8½ and Miami -3.

Half-time Wagers.

On televised games, a new line sometimes is established at the end of the first half, and bets can be placed at this time as if the teams were starting over in the second half. The line used will approximate one-half the original line, but not necessarily so.

Occasionally, other proposition bets are seen, such as bets that a certain player will score over or under his average (as in basketball), or bets on a game if a certain player does or does not play, etc. These, however, are rare for bookmakers due to the lack of an established line and a means for laying off.

The question arises in all of the above types of wagers as to what happens in the event of a tie, including the line. Generally speaking, a tie results in a no bet since neither team won. This is always true in straight bets. A one-game tie in parlays usually results in a no bet on that team; this team is mere-

Figure 1

| Number of Teams | Points given per Team | Teaser Payoff | Parlay Payoff |
|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Two teams | 6 | 6-5 | 12-5 |
| Two teams | 6½ | 11-10 | 12-5 |
| Two teams | 7 | Even | 12-5 |
| Three teams | 8 | 6-5 | 5-1 |
| Three teams | 9 | 11-10 | 5-1 |
| Three teams | 10 | Even | 5-1 |
| Four teams | 12 | 6-5 | 10-1 |

"The best evidence in a gambling case is the recorded wager itself."

ly eliminated from the parlay with the bet riding on the remaining team or teams. Thus, if one of the three teams in a three-team parlay ties, the game is erased in effect and a two-team parlay remains. If one of the two teams in a two-team parlay ties, a straight bet remains on the other. However, in teaser bets, ties usually result in loss of the whole wager.

When examining wager records, the actual amount of the bet most commonly is shown, whether or not the vigorish is included, such as \$1,000, \$500, or \$50. On the other hand, when the bookie and bettor talk on the telephone, various euphemisms or gambling jargon are usually used for the amounts. The following euphemisms are common:

| | |
|---------|---|
| \$25 | Quarter, two bits |
| \$50 | Half dollar, 50 cents (but may mean \$5,000) |
| \$100 | Dollar, buck, bean, banana |
| \$200 | \$2 |
| \$500 | Nickel, 5 cents, sometimes \$5 |
| \$1,000 | Dime, 10 cents, sometimes \$10 |
| \$2,500 | 25 cents (but may mean \$25) |

The tendency is to bet lesser amounts on parlays than on straight bets, so that a \$20 parlay probably means a \$20 bet literally, whereas a \$20 straight

bet might mean \$2,000. In some cases considerable analysis is needed to be sure what the parties mean. For example, if a bettor says, "Give me Washington -13½, \$1, Chicago +3, 50 cents, parlay the two for 25 cents," this probably is a \$100 bet on Washington, \$50 on Chicago, and a \$25 parlay on the two teams. By contrast, "Houston +6½, a dime, Denver -8, a nickel, parlay the two for \$3" probably is a \$1,000 bet on Houston, \$500 on Denver, and a \$300 parlay on the two teams.

Records.

The best evidence in a gambling case is the recorded wager itself. Total amounts wagered, name or code designation of bettors and/or writers, dates, commissions, gross wagering profit, layoff, etc., can be found in this type of record.

Figure 2 is a typical wagering slip. Examination of the slip is necessary to compare the various teams with the prevailing line in order to determine the date of the games on which wagers were placed. The format of the slip indicates that "Shop" is a writer, and "Joe" and "Marge" are bettors of Shop. It might also be determined that on the dates in question, Indiana played Purdue and UCLA was in a contest with California. Thus, Shop

would be turning in conflicting wagers, or wagers on both sides of the games. It is also noted that Joe lost \$120 and Marge lost \$10, for a net loss of \$130 (shown at bottom). However, \$32 was deducted from the \$130, indicating that Shop had been credited with a commission of 25 percent of the bookie's net profit from the bets he turned in. Therefore, Shop is a commissioned writer.

Other information sometimes ascertainable from such wagering records may be seen in figure 3. The first two bets are indicated as incoming bets from "K-5," both of which total for a loss of \$1,100. However, the third bet is shown as "To K-5," a typical method of recording an outgoing layoff by the possessor of the record to K-5. It also shows the amounts of the bets with the vigorish differently, as to whether they are incoming or outgoing, since the bookie making the bets must risk the vigorish (550/500 and 500/550). The outgoing layoff is a winning bet ("W"), but is noted as a debt by K-5 of \$500. This means that the third is an outgoing layoff which our bookie actually won, especially when compared with the first two incoming bets. The result is an additional debt of K-5.

Various types of accounting records may be found, the least indicative showing only the designation for the

account (a name, nickname, initials, or number) followed by the account balance. Depending on whether the designations are sufficiently unique or cryptic, the most that can be said of this type of record is that it relates to gambling. Certainly such net balances do not give any indication of the volume or type of wagering that transpired to make up the balance or "bottom figures."

Other accounting records may be more complete, often showing daily balances and frequently summary notes of the amount of wagers won and lost. If the record is this detailed, the volume of wagering may be determined.

Bottom sheets may also indicate who are street agents and what their commissions are. However, in only the most detailed of records can the net profit of the organization be established, since this usually includes amount won and lost from wagering, commissions, salaries, cost of maintaining the office, and unfortunately, sometimes "protection" payments to authorities or upper echelons of the organization.

It should be noted that winning and losing amounts listed by the bookmaker on either bottom sheets or wagering slips are at most times viewed from the bettor's standpoint. Thus, a figure preceded by a plus sign usually means the bettor is winning, and a minus figure means the bettor owes the bookie.

Another class of related wagering paraphernalia concerns reference material of many sorts. Included in this is the useful line sheet, which lists the teams by number, often shows the

game times at the local time, sometimes scores games between the teams in previous years, and provides space for the handwritten insertion of line information. Some sheets will have one line inserted with several line changes or may show the lines of more than one bookmaker. Frequently, line sheets are used to make general notations of the volume of betting accepted on the games. This charting of bets enables the bookmaker to ascertain quickly his balance on the games should he desire to alter the line or lay off. If this type of notation is made, at least an approximation of the total wagering can be made. Usually the line sheet will show which team won considering the line and the final game score. It is very important for all bookmakers locally and their bettors to operate from the same sheet for common reference. A great deal of time is consumed trying to find one team on a sheet, which lists over 100 different teams, or trying to write down each team name with the line.

Other reference materials include power-rating services, sports record books (including records of teams in comparison to the line, home team advantages, strengths of conferences, as well as general sports magazines), weather information, telephone numbers of sources of scores (as well as of wagering accounts), and handicapping aids. Handicapping aids also include various systems for handicapping and touting services, which are available about the country to suggest good teams to wager on, if a certain point spread can be found. Bettors and bookmakers alike often heavily rely on such services, although even a good service is reasonably satisfied to pick, on the average, 60 percent of the winners with the line.

Of course, these examples are only illustrative of the type of information that may be gleaned from a thorough examination of wagering records, such as examinations regularly conducted by the gambling experts in the FBI Laboratory. FBI

Figure 2

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|-----|-----|------|--|---------------|-----|-----|------|-----|
| SHOP | | | | | | | | | |
| Joe | | | | | Marge | | | | |
| Indiana | +2 | 100 | -110 | | UTEP | -4½ | 100 | -110 | |
| UCLA | -16 | 100 | +100 | | Cal | +16 | 50 | + 50 | |
| NC | -8½ | 100 | -120 | | Pur | -2 | 50 | + 50 | |
| | | | -120 | | | | | - 10 | |
| | | | | | SHOP collects | | | | 120 |
| | | | | | | | | | +10 |
| | | | | | | | | | 130 |
| | | | | | | | | | -32 |
| | | | | | | | | | 98 |

Figure 3

| | | | |
|--------|-----|---------|---------|
| K-5 | | | |
| Minn | -3 | 550/500 | L |
| Tex | +9½ | 550/500 | L -1100 |
| To K-5 | | | |
| Ariz S | -10 | 500/550 | W -500 |
| | | | -1600 |



END