



DUKE'S PICKS

Duke's *Playbook*

The three fundamentals behind thirty years in the game.

DUKE MATTIES

30 years in the game · 19× NHC qualifier · Most all-time NHC cashes

Anyone can hand you a horse.

What decides whether you're still in this game next year is everything around the horse.

I've been at this for thirty years. The players I've watched last are not the ones with the hottest opinions. They are the ones who keep their head, protect their money, and build tickets that pay them properly when they're right.

That's what this playbook is. Three fundamentals. They're simple, and they're the first things people forget the moment a race gets away from them.

01 · MINDSET

The five minute rule, and staying in the zone.

02 · BANKROLL

The number that keeps you in the game long enough for your opinion to pay.

03 · TICKET STRUCTURE

Ranking your horses A, B and C, and building tickets that hit more than once.

01

FUNDAMENTAL ONE

Mindset

Your mind is the first thing to work on. Mine too, some days.

You get five minutes. Complain, throw a tantrum, whatever you want. When the five minutes are up, it's over, and you go to the next race.

THE FIVE MINUTE RULE

- **There's always another race.** This is long term. Not daily, not even weekly. Losing a few in a row is part of it, so don't chase and don't rush.
- **Get in the zone.** When your head is right you read the form faster and more accurately, and you see races you'd miss if you were angry.
- **Pick a track you know.** Every track has tendencies: distances, surfaces, speed, inside or outside. Know them before you play.
- **Keep it simple.** Win bets, exactas, daily doubles. Stay away from 50 cent trifectas, 10 cent supers and jackpot pools for now.
- **If you don't like the race, pass.** Never play a name you like or a horse because he's grey. Play what you see, analyze and value.

02

FUNDAMENTAL TWO

Bankroll

Bankroll management is the key to horse racing. Stay in control, and never let a result change the size of your bets too much either way.

Bet a percentage, not a feeling

Say your bankroll is \$1,000.

B or C play, or a longshot

3% · \$30

A play, one you really like

up to 5% · \$50

- **Move with the bankroll.** Hit one and it grows, so the 3% grows with it. Lose a few and it shrinks: at \$800, that longshot play is \$24.
- **Key, don't box.** Put your horse where you think he finishes. I only box when all three are longshots.
- **Passing is bankroll management.** Only play races where you see value. No impulse bets. No wasted money.

HOW I'D SPEND \$30 ON A 20-1 SHOT

About \$12 to win. \$1 exactas with him on top of my three others, and the reverse under them. A small trifecta with him in the middle, pressed with him third. Win, second or third, the ticket pays.

03

FUNDAMENTAL THREE

Ticket structure

Rank your horses, then build tickets that pay you more than once when you're right.

Rank every horse you use: A, B or C

A daily double, \$30 to spend (3% of \$1,000):

	LEG 1	LEG 2
A	3	2
B	1, 4	5, 6

When there's a short price in there, I don't play every combination. I play two tickets that both run through my A's:

\$5 1,3,4 with 2
\$5 3 with 2,5,6

If both A's win, I have it twice. If an A and a B come in, I still have it once. Only when everything in there is a price do I play the whole thing, pressed on the A's.

Several small tickets beat one big one

In multi race bets I play all the horses I like across one ticket, then narrow some legs on others. When I'm right, I'm right more than once.

A LATE PICK 5 AT CHURCHILL DOWNS

3,9 / 5,7,9 / 6,8,10 / 6,7 / 2,12

2 × 3 × 3 × 2 × 2 horses. A \$36 ticket. I faded one horse in the last leg on his workouts and used him only on a backup ticket. That \$36 ticket came back around \$1,200. It won't happen every time. The design is what gave it the chance.

The rule under all of it

- **Never spread a ticket full of favorites.** If the horses you like are all short prices, pass, or play the longest of them to win.
- **Don't play a ticket that can hit and still lose money** or break even. I want a chance at five times my money or more.
- **Passing is a play.** The races you sit out protect the ones you play.

NOW WATCH IT DONE LIVE

This is how I think. Come sit with me on race day.

As a VIP member you're in the room with me all day, on every race.

My analysis of the card, every horse I like and the reason, written out line by line.

Trip notes and horses to watch next time out.

Ask me anything, any race. I answer.

Live Zoom sessions where we work through the races as a group.

Tools and my full course library, for everyday horseplayers.

TAKE YOUR SEAT

Want me to walk you through each fundamental on video? The lessons are on the same page.