

March Madness Bracket Buster 12 seed over 5 seed

Contributed by Steve Hastings
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Given the success #12 seeds have had over #5 seeds in recent years, it is surprising that the "betting public" at Sportsbook.com is backing the higher seed in three of the four match-ups.

In the 28 games between the #5 & #12 teams over the last seven years, the lower seed won outright almost 40% of the time. Plenty of bettors have capitalized off this trend over the years, blindly backing the #12 seed. This is why it is surprising that the only #12 seed getting the majority of the betting action is Temple, as 59% of the early bettors don't think Michigan State can cover the 6.5 points they are laying to the Owls. Bettors are obviously pleased with how the Owls performed this season going 21-10 ATS; including 14-5 ATS versus teams with a winning record. MSU also has some impressive covering trends as they were 6-0 ATS in neutral court games and 8-2 ATS in non-conference games this season.

Despite their magical run a couple years back, only 40% of the early bettors see value in George Mason (+6.5) as they take on Notre Dame. Then again, GMU are just 2-5-1 ATS in their last eight. Their key to keeping this one close will be to slow down the 3-point barrage of Notre Dame. Led by sharpshooter Kyle McAlarney (44.5% from 3) the Fighting Irish, as a team, shot 41% from beyond the arc. Luckily for GMU bettors, the Patriots allowed their opponents to shoot just 32.8% from downtown.

The #5 seed in which Sportsbook.com members have the least amount of confidence in are the Western Kentucky Hilltoppers as they take on the Drake Bulldogs. Only 31% of the early bettors believe the Hilltoppers are good value at +4. After looking at some key trends, this lopsided betting isn't surprising; after all, Drake was very generous to bettors this season churning out a 20-7 record ATS. Additionally, versus teams with a winning record, the Bulldogs are a money making 15-2 ATS. However, it should be noted that Western Kentucky is almost as profitable going 11-3 ATS against teams above .500.

Clemson is coming off an impressive ACC Tournament and Villanova did just enough to earn a bid last Sunday. After looking at the "Betting Trends" at Sportsbook.com, one can conclude that the bettors are very divisive on which team will cover the 6 point. 51% of the early action is on the favored Tigers. "Favored" could be the key word as Clemson was 15-8 ATS this season in games where they were laying points. Jay Wright's Wildcats had a rocky regular season but brought it together down the stretch to earn possibly the final "at large" bid of the tournament. During their late season run, the Wildcats were 7-3 ATS over their last 10 games. Much of their late season run can be attributed to the emergence of forward Dwayne Anderson. Unfortunately for Nova, the reports out of Philly are that the athletic forward banged his ankle up a bit in practice earlier this week.

Be sure to log onto Sportsbook.com to see all of the odds and props for March Madness. Celebrating their 11th year in the business, Sportsbook.com will give \$11,000,000 to anyone that has the expertise to fill out a perfect March Madness Bracket. If no one can obtain perfection, Sportsbook.com will still award a \$10,000 GUARANTEED prize pool to those who come closest.