

LAS VEGAS SUN – SPORTS SECTION

With justified swagger, Jerry's Nugget offers best parlay bets

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Veterans of Las Vegas sports betting know the same wager can yield varying, sometimes significantly different, payouts depending on where it's placed.

That's certainly the case in football parlays, the popular form of wagering in which gamblers choose two or more games from the board and combine them into a single bet. All (or both) of the picks in the parlay must win against the point spread for the parlay to be successful.

If you're a parlay player in Las Vegas, it's important to your bankroll that you bet at a sports book that offers strong payout odds.

In the current football parlay sweepstakes, Jerry's Nugget emerges as the clear winner, offering bettors excellent odds across the board.

On two-team parlays, Jerry's Nugget pays 13 1/2-5, exceeding the standard odds of 13-5 at other Las Vegas properties.

On three-teamers, Jerry's Nugget pays 6 1/2-1, beating the industry standard of 6-1.

On four-teamers, Jerry's Nugget pays 13-1, also tops in Las Vegas. The Stratosphere/Arizona Charlie's properties and Poker Palace come close at 12-1 on four-teamers.

It's regrettable, however, that a dismal price of 10-1 remains the most common payout in Las Vegas on four-team parlays. A four-team parlay paying off at 10-1 affords the house, or casino, an estimated edge of 31 percent, making it one of the worst wagers in the realm of legal, regulated gambling. (Usually when the house advantage is that massive, it's on a long-shot prop that carries the promise of a "big score.")

Jerry's Nugget also offers the best five-team parlays in Las Vegas, paying out at 26-1.

Promotional material issued by Jerry's Nugget accurately spotlights the big difference in the bottom line its parlay odds can mean for bettors. Using a five-teamer as an example, it states: "If you placed a \$100 bet on a 5-team parlay at Jerry's Nugget and your bet was a winner you would take home up to \$600 more cash than you would get anywhere else."

Including the original stake of \$100, the total payout on a five-teamer at 26-1 is \$2,700 at Jerry's Nugget. That compares with a payout of \$2,200 at Station Casinos properties (odds of 21-1) or \$2,100 at Boyd/Coast or Harrah's joints (odds of 20-1) according to the Jerry's Nugget promo, which calls out those competitors by name.

Indeed, those 20-1 odds on five-teamers are the worst in town, but unfortunately the most common. You can do a little better than that at the Stratosphere/Arizona Charlie's properties (24-1) or Poker Palace (23-1).

Odds of 47-1 on six-team parlays are available at Cal-Neva joints as well as Jerry's Nugget. A price of 40-1 on six-teamers (ugh) is the worst in town, but again also the most widespread number. The Stratosphere properties and Poker Palace check in at 45-1, with Leroy's at 44-1.

Jerry's Nugget and Cal-Neva are also the best bets for seven-team parlays (92-1) and eight-team parlays (180-1). Leroy's comes close at 88-1 on seven-teamers and 175-1 on eight-teamers. Avoid the 140-1 on eight-teamers available at several joints. At 140-1, an eight-team parlay affords the house an estimated edge of 45 percent. Also avoid the 125-1 on eight-teamers at the Palms (estimated house edge: 50.8 percent). Go ahead and shoot for the big score, but be sure to play at one of the books paying 180-1.

As the promo for Jerry's Nugget correctly points out, again picking on a specific competitor: "Coast Casinos doesn't even offer 7- or 8-teamers!" (In fairness, several other casino properties don't offer them either.)

I applaud the competitive nature of this message from Jerry's. It contains an implicit challenge to rivals to improve the parlay odds and the sports betting options they offer to customers. It shows a willingness to shake up the Las Vegas sports betting scene, a business that too often feels behind the times, lacking in innovative spirit and marked by ennui.

Oh, and the exclamation point is a nice touch.