

Sunday, March 25 – FINAL 8

2 Star Best Bet

****Kansas (-1) over North Carolina**

North Carolina was in a great situation in their last game but I passed on it because I thought the absence of injured point guard Kendall Marshall was not being properly adjusted for. After barely beating Ohio, who forced the Marshall-less Tarheels in 24 turnovers, the odds makers are now adjusting for Marshall's absence more than they did on Friday. Despite the line adjustment I still think going against North Carolina is the way to go here. Kansas applies to a very good 19-2 ATS Elite 8 situation and the Jayhawks ability to defend the interior (they allow just 39.5% on 2-point attempts, which is the best in the nation) will make it tough on the Tarheels, who aren't likely to be as efficient in their offense without Marshall's 9-plus assists per game. North Carolina isn't a good enough 3-point shooting team (34.1%) to take full advantage of the Jayhawks' mediocre 3-point defense and they're going to run less without Marshall – which will mean they'll have to try to score against a great Kansas half-court defense. This is simply a bad match up for the Tarheels and the situation favors Kansas. My ratings favor Kansas by 3 points (with a total of 141 points) and the situation favors the Jayhawks.

I'll take Kansas in a 2-Star Best Bet at -1

Opinion

Kentucky (-8) vs Baylor

Baylor played 5 games against elite teams this season, 2 against Kansas and 3 against Missouri, and the Bears were just 1-4 ATS in those games with an average game rating that is 6 ½ points worse than their overall rating. That's not a big enough sample size to conclude that Baylor isn't relatively as good against better teams, but the Bears don't have the advantage in height and athleticism that they normally have. My ratings favor Kentucky by 8 points with a total of 146 points and I have VERY SMALL opinion on this game.