

Rise or Fall DFS Strategy Guide

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RISE OR FALL

DEFINING MOMENTS

DFS 101

Daily Fantasy Sports (DFS) are tough. Don't let anybody tell you differently. If someone says they have cracked the code, they know how to win nightly, or never lose doing "X Y Z", they are snake oil salesmen. If this were true, they wouldn't be marketing it at all and they'd just be winning millions and on a beach somewhere.

I've often described DFS as an ever-shifting landscape. There are general guidelines to each sport and each slate, but not really a set of rules. If it were a set of successful rules to abide by, we'd all just be using the same set and winning nightly. A lot of professional players also win using their *own* guidelines. There are many ways to win in DFS.

First, you have to acknowledge the fact that every sport has its own unique hurdles and difficulties. Once you can do that, I believe you can start to learn and grow as a player. We all have something to learn. Including yours' truly.

DFS isn't all about research either, it's not all about statistics, or knowledge of a sport, or the ability to identify trends and opportunities. Those things are all pieces of a puzzle that we need to gather for each slate and hopefully put together in the right order.

Goal of the Guide

In this short book, we will look at each DFS offering in its own unique and complex way, all the while trying to identify the puzzle pieces needed to successful play and hopefully win.

The ultimate goal of this strategy guide is to give you the basic information that will allow you to stand on your own two feet should you decide to try out a new DFS offering. While you'll want to discuss more in-depth strategy and fire off inquiries in our LEGENDS Chat in Discord, you'll at least have what you need to set off down the right path.

RISE OR FALL
DEFINING MOMENTS

Bankroll Management and Contest Selection

<https://youtu.be/NZlcgBOFUic>

There are so many companies out there that break down bankroll management (BRM) into crazy calculations. They tell you to use 80% of your daily investment in cash games and 20% into tournaments. Virtually all of them take it one step further and tell you to then take 50% of your cash game investment and throw them into H2H's and to allocate the other 50% for different perceived safe games. Tournaments are no different as that percentage is broken down into multiple categories.

I am here to shred that all to pieces. What a waste of time. It is a way that some companies try to make you feel like you need them. You don't. You do not need me or Rise or Fall either. I want to build a community where you *want* to be a part of it because of our sheets, projections, content, and Discord family. That means more to me than creating a sense of necessity and securing your monthly subscription. **Forget that.** I would rather be kind, honest, supportive, provide you with the tools and content to succeed, and let the chips fall where they may.

How Much Should I Play?

In my opinion, BRM can be boiled down to one thing for me. How much are you okay losing on this slate and will it rock you mentally? If what you invest in the slate is going to send you tilting to the moon, then you played too much this time around. If you can invest the money that night under the assumption that you are going to potentially lose it all and it won't TKO your mental fortitude, then you are likely doing a pretty good job not overextending yourself.

Play what you are comfortable with losing. And if you win, celebrate the fruits of your labor. Always celebrate. Always. You must revel in success no matter how big or small, every single time. Or else, the losing streaks will send you into a tizzy.

Contest Selection

Now this is what separates people from being long term winners and long-term losers. All the projections, content, accuracy, coaching, models, and sheets in the world cannot make you a long-term winner if your contest selection does not align with your goal.

Goal Setting

This is the first thing you need to decipher. Are you playing nightly to grow your bankroll or to get some screen shots to impress people and go for glory?

The fact of the matter is that both routes are totally fine. DFS should be fun and a big part of having fun is being able to successfully accomplish your goal. Figure out what your goal is and be sure to enter the proper contests to maximize your returns.

Glory Hunting

Okay, you have decided you want to take down a large field guaranteed prize pool (GPP) and you are going to win at all costs. That is fair. As long as you can hunt for this within the confines of what was discussed in BRM.

There are massive contests worth entering for the screen shot life. They are top heavy and do not pay out much money outside the Top-10 spots where you will often find 35-40% of the entire tournament prize money won. If you don't hit scream up the standings before the end of the tournament, you're best case scenario is likely just treading water and trying not to drowned.

Again, if you are okay with these losses, you're financially sound, and you want to chase a victory – then that is your prerogative. I am only trying to guide you should you choose to make this decision on your own.

When trying to take down a tournament, Fortune Favors the Bold. You need to get uncomfortable with your entries and lineups. Take the crummy defense against a high-owned NFL QB and hope they ruin his day and the coinciding ownership of the QB. Use a 5-2 stack in MLB with a team facing an elite pitcher and hope they go bonkers and score 15-runs that game.

If MME'ing and trying to take down a tournament, I don't hedge very much and I personally don't like to cap exposure. If my 90% player/stack goes nuclear, I have an excellent shot at winning some big money.

Bankroll Building

If you have decided to build your bankroll and you are playing safer, no problem. I started here, too. It took me three years before I could bump up into the glory hunting style.

When building your bankroll, you need to choose the smaller size contests. I like to enter a \$12 contest with 49 people and a pay out of \$100 to first place because I think I have a shot at beating 48 people.

Conversely, a \$12 SE tournament that people assume is a good entry might have 1,700 entries. And when you look at the payout structure, 5th place earns \$100. Yikes. That means you have to beat 1,696 lineups to earn the same \$100 you can have won by just beating 48 people. While you do forgo the opportunity of winning \$250-1,250 for 4th, 3rd, 2nd, and 1st place – your odds of placing that high are just so low compared to only needing to beat 48 people.

This concept can be found on virtually every DFS site and at almost every single entry fee. Make sure you compare contests, know what you are entering, and align your contest selection with your bankroll management and goals.

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NASCAR

Track History

When I first start researching a NASCAR slate, I look for how well each driver has done on the specific track they are racing on. I often am looking at the driver rating for the track, their finishing position each race, laps led total, and fastest lap total.

Recent History

I do care about how well a driver has been driving lately. If someone has been absolutely lights out and placing in the Top-10, Top-5, or winning lately AND they have tremendous track history, then they are immediately vaulting up my list of targets. Sometimes you can identify a really good driver with poor recent form and then look into the issue. If they recently are complaining about their car but switched things up for this race – you better believe I might invest in that driver as I expect them to buck their recent trends. Hopefully the field misses this information. Always dig. Always look deeper than the surface level stats and try to find out what went into the results you are seeing.

Vegas Odds

It's something you should always look at in each and every sport offered. Vegas is a good way to identify potential upside in a market that is incredibly sharp. If Vegas has set solid odds on a driver you aren't currently targeting, it doesn't mean you made a mistake or anything. It just means you need to research why and look for how to leverage that. Whether that means to add said driver to your pool or to continue to fade, only time will tell. But first you need to be able to spot the difference.

Qualifying Position

This is likely the most important thing to look at when you begin to build your lineups. Depending on the scoring format of a website, a really good driver starting at a lower position will have a shot at racking up a lot of DFS points based on their positional differential. If they start 30th and finish 12th, you're going to rack up a ton of points.

Salary

This is the last piece of the puzzle. I often try to avoid paying attention to salaries until I have deciphered exactly who the best drivers are for the particular track. I want to ensure that I am not influenced by a price point before I decide who is in the best spot to succeed.

But once I have that all figured out, salary carries heavy weight in the decision making. If I have two similar drivers checking off a ton of the same boxes and one of them is cheap and one is really expensive, decisions need to be made as to what to do with both drivers.

If I find that a really good driver who has had a salary drop also happens to have excellent track history, they are vaulting up my rankings. Conversely, pay attention to price increases on a driver that doesn't check many boxes for the specific track they are on. Drivers like that might carry a huge name but make for a nice fade in your player pool.

MMA

Vegas Lines

This is the last thing I try to look at each fight card. I want to have already researched each fighter, formulated my own opinion, and have decided on who I think will win the fight. When I look at Vegas after I have done this, I want it to only help bolster my position, or to alert me to the fact that I might have missed something and need to research more.

If I find that a favored fight by Vegas is not checking off the boxes I want checked off, then I know I have found a potential upset based on my own factors. This is where you can make serious money in DFS and Sports Betting in general. Blindly trusting Vegas in such a volatile sport can be a huge mistake. Time and time again we see a card get absolutely detonated by multiple upsets. Be aware of the Vegas lines, but only to the extent of using them to research potential nuggets you've missed.

Lineup Building

For both cash games and GPP's, I approach them very similarly. I try to pick six winners each and every time. The only slight difference for cash games is that I won't worry about their potential ceiling and I will lean on Vegas odds a bit more.

Other than that, I approach lineup building the same exact way every single time. You need to have all six fighters correctly picked in your lineup to have a *shot* at taking down a tournament. The main DFS sites have really made it tough to do this over the years. No matter how many fighters you are selecting for that site (I chose six for DraftKings as an example), pricing is usually all the popular fighters priced really high, a handful of touch decisions in the middle, and the big under dogs are super cheap.

The mid-tier is where you win tournaments. It's not eating chalk at the top and it is not needing to pick some terrible fighter against Amanda Nunes. It's the mid-tier where nobody knows what to do with them and you can get exposure to a fighter who might be owned in the single-digits but whom also has fantastic upside.

Talent and Pedigree

Fight statistics are great and certainly helpful when identifying what each fighter leans on using skill set wise. But it doesn't always show the big picture. Looking at what type of pedigree they have as a fighter, how they performed against upper-tier talent, and how they have game planned against similar types of fighters can show you so much more information than general statistics.

When you are looking at the stats, be sure to dive deeper into the aforementioned categories. They'll uncover some stuff that you potentially might not see from the easy to find information.

ITD Props

While this does fall under the Vegas category, these are nice indicators on their own right that can show the potential talent of an underdog. Basically, Inside the Distance props highlight the chance a fighter has of winning without needing to win by decision.

That means that while a fighter might have a -200 line to win, the underdog could have an ITD of +190 and be a fantastic GPP option. Vegas is saying they expect the favorite to win but that the underdog is going to take it to the score card and leave it up to the judges.

If the same favorite is a -200 and the underdog has a +550 ITD prop, there is a good chance that the favorite finishes the underdog off before the judges ever have a chance to sniff the score card. This also identifies fighters that have stoppage upside. Which can lead to huge scoring upside.



RISE OR FALL

DEFINING MOMENTS

League of Legends

E-Sports are exploding and rightfully so. They are fun, entertaining, and full of their own interesting intricacies. Each e-sport has its own set of guidelines to follow and they don't really translate the same way other major sports at times carry similar correlations. Let's take a look.

Leans

What I mean by this is that when you are building your lineup, whether by hand or MME'ing, you need to select players based on not just who you think will win the match but how many rounds they will go. You cannot simply just have projections for a player in generalities, it needs to be round specific. The more rounds the play, the likelihood of having more fantasy points increases.

This means, if you had Player A projected for 50.0 points in a 2-0 projected win, there needs to be a different projection in a 2-1 win, or a 1-2 loss. When you build out your lineup, you try to decipher the likeliest outcome and use that projection. Rise or Fall takes that to the next-level and offers round-by-round projections.

Leverage

This is virtually everything in League of Legends. The slates are smaller, often only two to three matches per slate. Often, there is a team that is heavily favored and thus their players become the chalk. Sometimes you'll have two teams with massive – 1,000 or greater odds in Sports betting.

Leverage this. Always leverage this in large field tournaments. This means you'd enter a large stack of the underdog and pair them with either another underdog smaller sized stack, or you can pair them with a favored team with multiple players.

This allows you to have very unique lineups and separate from the field so that you do not tie with hundreds of people with the same lineup which inevitably happens when you eat the chalk on a two-gamer.

Captain Spot

This is really the last piece of the puzzle. I suggest to be bold in this spot. If you use a chalkier team stack, then be unique with the captain spot and grab the third or fourth projected scoring player rather than their team studs. This can allow you to be 1-player different and hopefully unique enough in a team stack that potentially can separate from the field of lineups moving together in one big chalky herd!

PGA

Volatility is to Be Expected

PGA DFS is very difficult but also incredibly fun. Being able to set your lineups for Thursday morning and sweat the contests over the course of four days can be riveting. It gives you something to follow for several days in a row without having to invest daily if you do not want to.

For those that want daily PGA, they have showdown contests as well. We have a multitude of killer DFS players in our LEGENDS chat that will certainly be discussion this as well.

Exposures

Embrace the volatility but do so with an exposure cap. But Mitch, I thought you said never cap exposures? I am a huge believer in guidelines for DFS, not rules. For PGA, exposures should be capped at a low range and I would often not go much higher than 40-50% in large field MME tournaments.

You need six out of six golfers to advance to the third round in order to have a *chance* to win a tournament. Extremely talented golfers will get in their own way, weather will impact them, and even the type of grass will hinder one's abilities. It's a wild sport.

Pool of Players

It's also the sport I roll out the deepest player pool with. In a sport such as NBA, I will have 15-18 players in my pool and likely not many more no matter how big the slate is. For PGA, I am casting a wide net. There are plenty of high-upside golfers on any given slate. Be loose here and flexible when creating this pool.

Statistics

We track a handful of the most important statistics of golf. They are posted on the far right of our cheat sheets. Each stat is important in its own way, but often are weighted differently based on the course they are playing on. Sometimes Bogey Avoidance is the most important stat to track for a course and other times it might way less important. Following guidance to identify what you should pay attention to on any given week is ideal.

Course History

This matters big time. Some golfers just plain stink on certain courses. Whether it's due to the size, layout, or a myriad of other factors – sometimes they routinely success or fail at specific courses. Use our course history to identify trends.

Current Form

Likely the second most important thing to track is just how poorly or how well a golfer has been playing recently. It's a mental sport with a rhythm to it. When they are in the zone, it'll show in the standings. Again, identify the trends. If they are in good form, have great course history, and priced well – often you already just found a very strong option for the event.

MLB

Baseball is an extremely volatile sport with a ton of statistics and advanced analytics that are involved. I will also say that because of this, people overthink things and the result is paralysis by analysis. It's complex, yes. But it doesn't need to be daunting. In fact, once you find ways to make your process efficient, MLB DFS can be a very profitable endeavor.

Stacking

This is the name of the game. Without stacking in tournaments, you are likely to lose every penny that you invest. The larger the stack the more volatile your results will be, however, you play tournaments to win them. If you are trying to 2x ROI your contests in a tournament, just go play double ups!

Big stacks are kind. On DraftKings, this means in each lineup you want to have 5-man stacks or at least 4-man stacks on the large side of the stack. The other side is debatable as to the size but generally the consensus stacks for DK are as follows:

5-2-1 (5 players from one team, 2 players from another team, 1 player from a third team)

5-3 (5 players from one team, 3 players from another team)

On FanDuel, due to roster restrictions, most people generally stack as follows:

4-3-1 (4 players from one team, 3 from another, 1 off from a third team)

4-4 (4 players from one team, 4 players from another)

By doing these large stacks, you are ensuring that if an offense pops off for 12 runs that you have a ton of RBI's and Runs scored as well as plenty of hits and home run potential. The closer the players are in the batting order the better. Preferably, top of the order to middle of the order stacks are most optimal.

I also want to add that Vegas can be helpful to pinpoint the potential upside or downside of stacks. More on this throughout the season as we use this to leverage the fields' ownership on stacks!

Pitching

There is no hard and fast rule for pitching in MLB DFS. Generally, I make my decisions on pitching and stacking as follows.

What has higher upside on the individual slate, the stacks or the pitchers? If the stacks have higher upside and the pitching options are weak, I'll target the expensive stacks without a second thought. If the pitchers have elite ceilings and it is a front end rotation type slate, then often I'll have plenty of exposure to the elite pitchers with massive scoring ceilings and built in scoring floors, while targeting the middle of the road or cheaper stacks.

Cash Games

These are a different beast entirely on their own. Most people will do two things:

- A. They will pay up for an ace with a high scoring floor and win potential (or strikeout potential on DK)
- B. They will get as many great one-off hitters as they can, including any cheap lead-off or clean-up type hitters. Avoid stacking in cash games because we want little to no correlation.

In cash games, I will also use Vegas quite a bit. Is the pitcher a heavy favorite to win? Does the opposing team have a low implied run total? These are factors that can help you identify potential cash game targets.

- C. Avoid correlation as much as possible
 - a. This means try not to stack in your lineup
 - b. If you end on a mini two-man stack organically, then so be it. But just don't force stacks
- D. Try to play hitters at the top or in the heart of the order
- E. Try to play hitters from really good offenses that will potentially be scoring a lot that day
- F. On DraftKings, try to pay for pitchers with K potential and are favored to win
- G. On FanDuel, try to pay for pitchers that can go deeper into the game and are favored to win (K's still nice of course)



RISE OR FALL
DEFINING MOMENTS

NBA

It's long been a popular opinion that this is the most winnable sport. I tend to agree and this is where I've made the most significant financial gain in DFS over the years. A lot of that is due to the fact that we know exactly what we are getting from each player as far as a few of the following categories.

Minutes

Minutes = Opportunity = Points. Truthfully, it's that simple. Is a player going to play a lot of minutes? Okay, he has an opportunity to score fantasy points. All minutes are not created equal though, but it is a good place to start when creating your player pool for the night to identify who will play a lot of minutes.

Opportunity

What type of opportunity will a player have with those minutes? Some players play a ton of empty minutes as far as DFS is concerned. This means they play a ton, rebound, play defense, and maybe shoot a corner three or two over the course of 30+ minutes on the court. We want a player with an opportunity to have the basketball in their hands. This is where the usage statistic comes into play. The higher the usage, the more opportunity the player has to score or get assists.

Vegas

We can target games where there are high totals and close spreads. You can also see the implied team total for let's say the Chicago Bulls at 112.5 points, and then compare that to their seasonal average of 99.5 points scored. This would tell you that the Bulls are projected to see a hefty 12% increase in points scored, which can be used to identify certain Bulls players that might benefit from the increased scoring opportunity.

Pace

You can often find very fast-paced games (another stat we track is pace) that result in Vegas having a very high scoring total for the game. The more points projected to be scored often means the more opportunity for fantasy points. It's that simple.

A faster paced game will provide a team that normally plays slower with more potential possessions. That means they'll have a few more opportunities to rack up statistics on the offensive end. Conversely, because the game is faster paced and the opposing team has more possessions, too, the team also has a chance at racking up defensive rebounds and statistics as well.

Targeting these normally slower paced teams when they are in a pace-up environment can be a fruitful endeavor as they are often mispriced in relation to the newfound upside.