Twitter Thread by Rufus

Rufus
@RufusPeabody

Lots of discussion on media coverage of BIG BETS this week. They're click-bait-y. Novel. Maybe there's some envy or schadenfreude at play. But that's not the real issue. The problem is how operators control media coverage.

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I don't find big bets nearly as problematic as, say, coverage of someone hitting a 12-leg parlay, but the reason we are inundated with this type of coverage is the same: the operators are deciding what is newsworthy and what isn't.

The issue is pretty fundamental. Most sports betting media entities exist only because of operators. They are literally paid by operators. That's how the affiliate model works. Would we be ok if a newspaper covering the Trump White House were funded by the administration?

We'd expect some bias, wouldn't we? As a result, the sports betting media is mainly a marketing arm for operators right now. Journalists have relationships with operators, who feed them information they want published. Operators understand the accessibility bias & exploit it.

Back to that 12-leg parlay. Operators *love* the 12-leg parlay because their theoretical hold multiplies as the number of legs on the parlay increases. Do operators want to see parlay success stories covered? YES!

How often do you see stories in the newspaper about people winning the lottery? Not often. And when you do, it's more likely than not about the calamities that have befallen said lottery winner since their big score.

State lotteries would love to see media coverage of someone winning $20,000 from a $5 scratch-off ticket at their local 7-Eleven. But media outlets don't get a referral fee when Joe Reader plays the lottery.

I don't think every sports betting writer is a lapdog for operators. This is a bigger issue. It's systemic. It's structural. It's a problem of incentives & power. And I don't know the solution. But I would encourage sports betting media to try a different angle & see what sticks

There is an appetite for something different. The popularity of @capjack2000's parlay math tweet thread is strong evidence of that. Give us, the consumers, the chance to read something that doesn't make us feel used.