

1125-I5-2025 **Franklin H. J. Kenter*** (kenter@usna.edu). *How To Win Your March Madness Pool with Jensen's Inequality and The Law of Large Numbers.*

Every year during March Madness, articles appear informing people they are silly by selecting unlikely upsets in their brackets thereby decreasing their expected score.

In this talk, we show that, in fact, these articles are incorrect. Indeed, for a winner-take-all NCAA March Madness pool, participants should not select a bracket by only choosing the favored teams to win. Rather, participants should “mimic” the appearance of an actual bracket by selecting a reasonable number of upsets.

More generally, we determine the optimal strategy for a winners-take-all betting pool with sufficiently many participants using only elementary tools. (Received September 19, 2016)