



Autistic teen 48 for 48 in NCAA tourney bracket

Chicago boy defies 13 million-to-1 odds in being perfect through two rounds

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An autistic teenager from the Chicago area has done something almost impossible.

Nearly 48 games into an upset-filled NCAA tournament, 17-year-old Alex Hermann is perfect.

"It's amazing," he says. Truly.

The teenager predicted that Northern Iowa would beat the Kansas Jayhawks. He picked Ohio to knock off Georgetown. And Cornell to knock off Wisconsin.

In fact, he picked every game through the first two rounds correctly. The odds of anybody doing that? One in 13,460,000, according to BookofOdds.com. It's easier to win the lottery. Twice.

"I'm good at math," Alex, a Glenbrook South High School student, said. "I'm kind of good at math and at stats I see on TV during the game."

Alex entered the bracket on CBSsports.com's bracket challenge. His 24-year-old brother Andrew, who helped him enter his picks into CBS' bracket manager, also entered the contest — and ranks behind 500,000 other people.

"My bracket is totally shot," his 24-year-old brother Andrew said. "So is everyone else I know."

ESPN estimates around 4.78 million played in their bracket challenge, but no one picked all the games correctly. The leader at ESPN's bracket has already missed four games.

But Alex Hermann's miraculous bracket is still a picture of perfection.

Andrew is still shocked — after looking it over for the umpteenth time, he told his mother to alert the media.

"I checked his bracket and it was off the chart," Andrew said. "I thought it was a big deal."

Alex doesn't get anything for perfection. He entered one of three bracket games offered by CBS -- the only one without a prize attached.

Alex's basketball knowledge could have been worth a fortune. One of the other CBS games offers a prize of \$5,000 per round. Other sites offer even more money -- Yahoo offers \$1 million for a perfect bracket; SportsBook.com offers \$13 million.

"If he would have won any money he would have just saved it," his mother Diane said. "He's a big saver."

CBSSports.com can not confirm Alex's entry -- the company doesn't track entries to their Bracket Manager program. Unlike CBSSports.com's Bracket Challenge, which ranks players nationally and locks entries once the tournament begins, Bracket Challenge does allow changes after play starts.

The Hermanns insist, however, that they filled out their brackets as a family before the tournament started,

and haven't touched the picks since. When asked whether the bracket was altered after the tourney began, Alex's mother said, simply, "no."

And then there's this: Alex picked Purdue to win the whole thing. Probably not going to happen.

And that just happens to be his brother's alma mater.

"They're his favorite for that reason," Diane said. Or maybe he knows something no one else does.

And there are still four rounds remaining, so it could fall apart.

The odds of a perfect wire to wire bracket? As high as 1 in 1,000,000,000,000.

Editor's note: This story has been updated to make clear the difference between CBSSports.com's tournament bracket options, and now includes information from a CBSSports.com spokesperson.

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