

BEGINNERS GUIDE TO HORSE RACING

PREFACE

This information sheet is a gathering of some of the basic elements of horse racing. Please use it as an aid to help you understand racing and keep it to use as a reference. Whether you are a \$2 bettor or a \$200 bettor, this sheet is designed to help you WIN. If you're a smart bettor, before you invest your hard-earned cash, you'll do your homework by learning everything you can about the horse, the rider, the trainer, the competition, and even the surface the horse will be running on. In horse racing (pari-mutuel wagering), your competition is all the other wagering patrons at the racetrack. When you learn and observe you will increase the frequency of your return trips to the mutuel window to cash winning tickets. Remember, *Knowledge Is Power*.

HANDICAPPING TOOLS

Official Program, Past Performances

Buying an official program is the wisest investment you'll ever make at the racetrack. In addition to the list of horses in each race, the program also provides the official betting number of the horse and lists the owner, trainer and jockey. Be sure to refer to the current trainer and jockey standings that are listed in the program.

Perhaps the most important consideration in evaluating or "handicapping" a race is the current form or physical fitness of each horse. The best way to assess the status of a horse is by reading its past performance.

Most programs carry at least an abbreviated past performance history for every horse in the race.

The most comprehensive review of past performances is found in the *Daily Racing Form*. The serious handicapper has mastered the use of reading the past performances, racing stories and columns found within "The Form." The aspiring handicapper will make an effort to comprehend the valuable information it offers. Each *Daily Racing Form* has a How To Read The Form page dedicated to educate the novice fan.

HORSES

Appearance, Sweating

The appearance of the horse is very important. Every race the horses will pass in front of the grandstand in the post parade. This is a good opportunity to evaluate the field and select your horse. A horse can communicate to you with body language. Generally, you should look for a horse which appears muscled, well-groomed and has a shiny coat. A horse should make an easy transition from the walk, to the trot, and to the canter when in the post parade. It should have a lively step, but not a random or choppy gait. Look for a horse that moves effortlessly or seems to have a bounce in its stride. Continue to observe the horses as they canter away from the grandstand.

Excess sweating can be a sign of nervousness or discomfort. Watch for signs of "washing out" in the neck and chest area. This does not mean a horse can not win under these circumstances, but it is generally not a positive sign. Keep in mind that horses should sweat on hot days and some are brought to the paddock drenched in water. The negative sign is a pronounced white lather.

JOCKEYS

Generally speaking, the better horses get the services of the better riders. A capable jockey can help an ordinary horse, but an ordinary jockey may hinder a capable horse. Be sure to check the current standings. The seasoned handicapper will learn which jockey and trainer combinations are most successful. Riding a 1,200 pound horse at speeds up to 40 mph is an extremely difficult and very dangerous job. Unfortunately, jockeys tend to be blamed for much more than what they are actually responsible. Remember, the narrow-minded bettor never prospers.

TRAINERS

Trainers who consistently win races tend to attract the best racing stock. The responsible trainers usually have their horses looking good when they are brought to the races and don't run their horses against far superior competition. Not all of the capable trainers are at the top of the standings. Look for their win and in-the-money percentages listed in the program.

TYPES OF RACES

Stakes, Handicap, Allowance, Claiming, Maiden

Stakes - These races offer the largest purse money and generally attract the highest quality horses.

Handicap - The Racing Secretary assigns a weight to each horse in order to equalize the winning chances of all the runners. The highweight is usually considered the best horse in the race. The assigned weight includes the weight of the jockey and any additional lead pads that may need to be added to the saddle to fulfill the weight assignment. **Allowance** - A non-claiming race usually designed for lightly-raced or above average horses.

Claiming - The most common of all races. Each horse is entered at a specific price and may be purchased, or "claimed" by any licensed owner. The claiming price serves to balance the competition within that particular race. A horse valued at \$25,000 isn't likely to run in a \$5,000 claiming race as it will probably be claimed for far less than its value. A \$5,000 horse isn't likely to run against \$25,000 claimers as it would be overmatched or out-classed. **Maiden** - Races for horses which have never won. Maiden Special Weight races lure the best of the non-winners with greater purses than Maiden Claiming races.

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THE RACE

Pace, Speed, Stalkers, Late-Runners, Post Position, Track Condition, Distance

Pace - One of the oldest expressions in racing is, "pace makes the race." The expression is actually a reality and a very simple one to explain. The rate of speed of the front-runners (the pace) in the first half of the race has a direct effect on the second half of the race. A fast pace usually tires the speed horses and helps the late-runners catch the pacesetters; but a slow pace allows a speed horse to conserve energy for the run to the wire.

Speed Horses - The type of horse that prefers to move directly to the front after breaking from the gate. They get the early advantage but may not run well if they are part of an intense pace, or don't make the lead.

Stalkers - Are usually rated just off the pace by their jockey and are very versatile. They can be on, or near the lead if the pace is slow, or they can be lengths behind if the pace is fast.

Late-Runners - Perhaps the most exciting to watch, but they must rely on a fast or genuine pace. This type of horse is uncomfortable on the lead and prefers to settle into stride while dropping back. They can make a dramatic rush from the back and catch tiring speed horses, or they may not make any impression at all if the leaders gain an easy lead without a contested pace.

Post Position - The stall in the starting gate from where the horse will start. A horse which draws an outside post will be at a disadvantage if the jockey does not move the horse near the rail after the start to save ground on the turns. Generally, a speed horse benefits from an inside post. An unfavorable post position may compromise a jockey's riding tactics to win.

Track Condition - The racing surface is extremely important. The ideal track condition for most horses is a dry or "fast" track. Rain will change the track condition depending on the intensity of precipitation. A "sloppy" track is one that has received a downpour and still has puddles of water. A track is "muddy" if the water has drained off the top but is still rain-soaked. A "good" track is one

that has dried from being muddy but the race times suggest it hasn't dried completely. A track is said to be "off" if it is anything other than fast. Some horses run better over an off track due to their bloodlines or the type of horseshoe they are wearing.

Distance - Like the variety of athletes and races in the sport of Track & Field, in horse racing there are also sprinters and long-distance runners. Some horses perform best at sprint distances, which are races at seven furlongs or less. Others have more stamina and do their best in route races, which are races at one mile or longer. Most tracks have the circumference of one mile. One furlong equals one-eighth of a mile, or 220 yards.

WAGERING

Morning Line, Straight Wagers, Exotic Wagers

Morning Line - The track handicapper's estimation of what the final odds will be for the horses at post time. This is not a prediction on the outcome of the race, it is only an educated guess as to how the betting public will wager.

Straight Wagers - The three basic wagers are win, place and show.

-Win - the horse you wager on must finish first for you to collect.

-Place - the horse you wager on must finish first or second for you to collect.

-Show - the horse you wager on must finish first, second or third for you to collect.

Exotic Wagers - These are wagers that involve multiple horses and/or multiple races in one wager. The payoffs are greater than straight wagers, however the odds of winning are also greater.

Double - (Daily or Late) Select the winners of two consecutive races (usually the first-two or the last-two races).

Exacta Select the first-place and second-place finishers of a race in exact order.

Quinella - Select the first-place and second-place finishers of a race in any order.

Trifecta - Select the first-place, second-place and third-place finishers of a race in exact order.

Wheeling - In a wheel wager you may select one horse with ALL of the others. Or, you may choose a Partial Wheel by matching one horse with selected runners of a race.

Boxing - In a box you select multiple horses. i.e., if the official order of finish of a race was: 7-1-4, and your *trifecta box* was: 1, 4 & 7, you win. But, if you bet a *straight trifecta*: 1, 4, & 7 without boxing, you lose. Boxing covers all the winning possibilities of your chosen numbers, but naturally costs far more than a straight wager because of all of the possible combinations.

IN CONCLUSION

This guide is only the start, there is more to learn in order to be a successful handicapper. But even if you consider yourself a modest bettor, winning is a much more enjoyable feeling than losing and taking the time to learn what you can about the sport really makes sense. Don't be afraid to ask the other patrons questions while you are at the track, it's a great way to learn handicapping skills and test new theories. There are also several useful books and videos on the market designed to help you pick more winners. Most importantly, remember that unlike other forms of gaming, with horse racing you are not betting against "the house." When you place a wager at the track, you are betting against all the other patrons. The racetrack simply provides the means for you to make your wager with the betting public. Racetrack management wants you to win and does everything in its power to ensure safe and fair racing for everyone.

Thank you for coming. Good Luck!

How to Read the Program

Horse Information

1 8-5	A	CHARISMATIC (L)	B	99	C	\$75,000	Own: Robert & Beverly Lewis	1999	5	4	0	1	\$2,170,980	Track	3	1	1	0	\$45,240
		B.c.3 Summer Squall - Bali Babe by Drone, KY	D		F		Trn: D. Wayne Lukas' Current Meet (18-4-3-2)	1998	6	2	1	1	\$85,005	Off(Dirt)	0	0	0	0	\$0
	E	Green, Yellow Hoops, Yellow Sleeves			G	PAT DAY	Current Meet: (71-18-12-5)	Life	11	6	1	2	\$2,255,985	Distance	3	1	0	0	\$36,445
														Turf	0	0	0	0	\$0
														126					I

A - Program Number (1) & Morning Line Odds (8-5)

B - Name of the Horse (Charismatic) & Medication Used (L)

C - Class Rating for this Horse (99) & Claiming Price (\$75,000)

D - Breed Line for this Horse (Color. Sex. Age Sire-Dam by Grandsire, State Bred)

E - Owner's Silks (Green, Yellow Hoops, Yellow Sleeves)

F - Trainer of this Horse (D. Wayne Lukas), their statistics (Current Meet (18-4-3-2) & Owner of the Horse (Robert & Beverly Lewis)

G - Jockey riding this horse (Pat Day) & their Statistics (Current Meet: (71-18-12-5)

H - Weight Carried by this Horse, in pounds (126)

I - Horse Statistics

Past Performance Information

15May99	Pim10	13/16	ft	47 ⁸⁰	112 ⁴⁶	227 ⁰	3	PreaknessG1-1000K	8	7	10 ⁶	10 ^{71/2}	8 ⁴	1 ³	1 ^{11/2}	Day,P	126	L	8.40	98	Charismatic ^{11/2}	Menifee ^{nk}	Badge ^{1/2}	drft 3/16, driving	10
01May99	CDB	1 1/4	ft	47 ⁸⁰	137 ³⁶	203 ¹⁹	3	KYDerbyG1-1000K	16	14	7 ^{4 1/2}	7 ^{1 1/2}	3 ¹	2 ²	1 ^{hd}	Day,P	126	L	31.30	101	Charismatic ^{11/2}	Menifee ^{3/4}	CatThief ^{11/4}	5wd trip, driving	20
	1	2	3	4	5	6					7				8	9	10	11	12	13				14	
Workout(s)	04May99	CD	4f	ft	48.2b	3/25		21Apr99	Kee	4f	ft	47.3bg	1/45												
	15																								

1 - Date of Past Performance

2 - Track Abbreviation & Race Number

3 - Distance of Race

4 - Track Condition

5 - Fractional Times of Race

6 - Age/Sex Restrictions & Conditions of Race

7 - Running Positions of this Horse

15 - Morning Workouts (b=breezing, h=handily, g=gate)

8 - Jockey that rode this Horse

9 - Weight carried by this Horse

10 - Medication & Equipment Used by this Horse

11 - Mutuel Odds at Post Time (*=favorite, e=part of entry)

12 - Speed Figure earned by this Horse

13 - First Three Finishers in the race & Margins Involved

14 - Chartcaller comments for this Horse & # of Starters

Course Conditions

ft - Fast	fz - Frozen
wf - Wef Fast	fm - Firm
gd - Good	sf - Soft
my - Muddy	yl - Yielding
sy - Sloppy	sl - Slow

Equipment

b - Blinkers	j - Alum. Pad
c - Mud Caulks	f - Front Bandages
n - No Whip	a - Alum Pads
r - Bar Shoe	y - No Shoes
l - Bar Shoes	

Types of Races

Msw	Maidens (Non-Winners)
Mcl	Maiden Claiming
C1m	Claiming
Alw	Allowance
Hcp	Handicap
Shp	Starter Handicap
Stk	Stakes
Hst	Handicap Stakes
Str	Starter Allowance
Ocl	Optional Claiming

Race Codes

N2L	Non-Winners of Two Races
N2X	Non-Winners of Two Races Other Than Maiden or Claiming
N\$	Non-Winners of Specified Purse Money
G1	Grade 1 Stakes Race
G2	Grade 2 Stakes Race
G3	Grade 3 Stakes Race
\$650K	Stakes Purse (in Thousands of Dollars)

Trouble Symbols

dh	Dead Heat	DNF	Did Not Finish
p3	Placed Third	dq3	Disqualified and Placed Third