

ROGERS & STETTIN TALK CLASS

TURF RAILS: WHAT'S THE TRUTH??

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MARCH 2016

IT'S **KEENELAND SEASON!**

PREVIEW

THE SPRING MEET

Track Phantom's
Derby Contenders & SLEEPERS!

CHARLIE DAVIS
LOOKS BACK AT NHC 17

PENELOPE MILLER/AMERICA'S BEST RACING



In this issue:

Previewing Keeneland – Page 2
Track Phantom's Top Five Derby Sleepers - Page 3
Truth on Temporary Turf Rails - Page 5
Why Post Drags Are Bad – Page 7
Stettin & Rogers on Class – Pages 10 & 23
Phantom's Top 10 Derby Contenders – Page 11
Charlie Davis Looks Back at NHC17 – Page 14
Ten Old School Handicapping Angles – Page 17

The Horseplayer Monthly March 2016 Issue

Greetings from the Desk

Welcome to the March issue of Horseplayer Monthly!!!

Here are a few items that caught our eye this past month in Horseplayer land.....

What Bias Do You Have? Is it Costing You Money?

Ed DeRosa posted a link to a story on "cognitive bias" on Twitter recently. The article, [published at Business Insider](#), listed 20 biases we all might (likely?) have with everyday situations. A few of them (maybe most) pertain to us as horse racing bettors and fans.

For example, number one, anchoring bias, which means we're over-reliant on the first piece of information we see. This is kind of like that horse we saw break his or her maiden with a big number that we fell in love with. Sometimes that works, but most time, ah, not so much. The third one in the linked article is about groupthink, and we see that quite often come Derby time. I have jumped off a few horses because the masses said "this horse is too good to lose!"

Confirmation bias means we listen more to people or arguments that solidify our own beliefs. The 'speed figures are great' versus the 'speed figures are terrible' crowds are evidence of that. There's a lot of entrenched thinking with those two groups.

Number 11 is outcome bias. This is when we let the outcome or the result dictate whether the decision we made was smart or not so smart.

Number 11 really resonated with me because I get bit by that one a lot.

I remember handicapping a card recently where I had zero winners. Three horses that I backed big were 8-1, 15-1 and 30-1. The 8-1 shot came second after a wide trip and totally outraced his odds, but I could not hook up the exotics. The 15-1 horse came fourth after almost getting knocked into the infield, and raced amazingly well. The 30-1 came third after closing from second last into a glacial pace. I might've - with some luck - took down five figures making it a tremendous day but instead I lost tons of money. If I look at it without bias, my handicapping was fantastic and that should be the takeaway, but "results bias" makes me feel like I was somehow inept.

Which bias are you? If we eliminate some of them we are sure to be better horseplayers.

Horseplayer Joe from Brooklyn > Albert Einstein?

Recently [posted on the US Trotting website](#): "In an

effort to analyze the relationship between thought process, expertise of harness racing and general intelligence, Stephen J. Ceci from Cornell University and Jeffrey K. Liker from the University of Michigan studied 30 middle-aged and older men that were selected for their factual knowledge of harness racing, long-term interest in the sport and the fact they had attended the track often for several years."

The study focused on the random predictive ability in handicapping based on IQ. Read the study to see how the 80 IQ testers did against the higher IQ ones.

The Annual Horseplayers Association Track Ratings Are Almost Here!

It's that time of the year again. Our next issue is jam-packed with stats, and interviews with 60+ Thoroughbred racetracks rated in terms of betting value. We're in the process of adding a few wrinkles to our spreadsheet that we post on the website each year, for everyone to use as a resource.

Will anyone knock Kentucky Downs off the number one pedestal? [Sign up here](#) to be sure Horseplayer Monthly is delivered right into your inbox!

Raceday360.com launches the "Tout Wire"

Early in February Raceday 360 launched a new version of their longstanding aggregation platform dedicated to providing reading with the latest picks, previews, tips and touts from multiple sources across the web. The content ranges from daily picks for U.S. tracks to previews and tips for international races.

"The Wire has always been dedicated to aggregating commentary about racing, but every once and while the sites we pull include a race preview or a picks post, and those never fail to get traffic," said publisher Dana Byerly. "With the notable uptick in posts dedicated to picks and previews we wanted to make it easy for people find them. At Tout Wire you'll also find links to the official Picks sections for North American tracks where available and links to other free and paid picks that were not available for syndication."

(continued on next page)

Byerly went on to point out, "We've also enhanced the content for the original Wire. Now, in addition to the steady flow of commentary and observations about the state of the industry, we have more sources on subjects such as breeding, history, international racing and harness racing as well as replays and links to podcasts." You can visit Tout Wire [right here](#).

Best and Worst Moments at the Track?

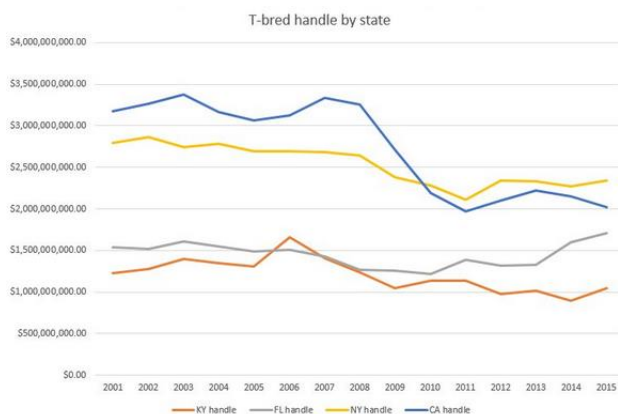
Paceadvantage.com [had a great thread recently that asked for racetrack memories](#).

One made us smile, from Zico20, "I have two very memorable experiences that changed my life. The first was when I was 19. I was leaving Fairmount at 11:30 at night. I was the last one out of the track. I was the only one left on the parking lot except one other car. I noticed that the guy was having trouble starting his car. I had around 1200 bucks on me. I debated for 5 minutes to help the guy or not. I was afraid I was going to get robbed. I decided to help him. We could not get his car started. I wind up driving him eight miles to the nearest hotel. Saw him a week later and we hit it off handicapping. 28 years later and we still go to the track together, one of the best decisions I have ever made at the track."

One made us sad, from Randall, "It's 1990, I'm sitting in a nice booth, with 6 of my best friends in Vegas, at the Old Barbary Coast. Muggsy Muniz comes by to make sure we're being taken care of. We're all having a great time betting the Breeders' Cup from Belmont Park, the joint is packed and louder than I've ever heard it. There's a great race going on, the Distaff, and down the stretch they come!.....it's Bayakoa, neck and neck with.....Go For Wand.....I still get choked-up talking about it, a scar that will never fade from my horseplayer's heart..."

The NYRA Takeover

We saw this graph a few weeks ago. Thoroughbred handle, by state, by year.



It's been the case for a few years now, but the tracks of the New York Racing Association (and Finger Lakes) drive more handle than any other state. A lot of the readers of this magazine will bet a decent claimer at the Big A this time of year in big numbers. You guys and gals are not alone.

Keeneland - It's Almost Here



By Art Parker for [BetPTC.com](#)

In just a few weeks the coolness will taper off. Some flowers will actually show signs of life and leaves will reappear on the trees. When there is no sign of precipitation and no clouds in the sky, the feeling will begin to strike you. You breathe the amazing fresh air and know that changes are coming. You think you will hear a gradual drum roll in the distance, perhaps a half-mile away.

It will not be a drum roll but the sound of hooves striking the ground in a rhythm that lets you know it is something living that makes the noise. The amazing sky, perhaps only disfigured by the contrails of a high flying distant jet plane, leaves you convinced that some days are truly perfect. The perfect day is upon you as your mind dashes into the future, just a few days, and you see that creature with four thin legs, exploding with energy in the glorious surroundings and providing you with every reason to believe that the horse can actually run a hole in the wind. The sounds from others like you pierce the air while hearts pound faster, and even though there are winners and losers on this day, nothing can replace the fact that you are there and a part of those wonderful proceedings we call Thoroughbred racing.

Yes, it is almost springtime, a time when horse racing is rejuvenated after cold months of moderate and often dull activity. It is the time when nothing can hold this great sport in check because it is made for the time of year when people want their thrills handed to them, not inside a structure of bricks, but outside, where more than the racing can be enjoyed. There is nothing like it, this time of year, and it will soon be here.

That perfect day reminds me of some opening days at a place called Keeneland, nestled in the heart of Thoroughbred country. Even though there are tracks that
(continued on next page)

run in the winter, that first day of racing in Lexington, Kentucky, should be declared the official opening of racing season everywhere. My favorite way to describe Keeneland is the track "on loan from Heaven."

Keeneland will open April 8 and run until April 29. The big features will be on April 9 with the running of the Grade One Blue Grass and the Grade One Ashland. What a wonderful place filled with great racing and superb, intelligent racing fans.

I just can't wait.

Below is an excerpt of Parker's Keeneland Trainers book, available for instant download at AGameofSkill.com.

Kenneally, Eddie – 28 wins at Keeneland

Winning Patterns: 1st Race after Layoff of at least 45 days (8), Second career race (6), First career race (4), Turf-to-Main surface switch (4)

The 49-year-old was born in Ireland into a family that was involved with horses. His father, uncle and brother have been in the horse business. Kenneally came to the US in 1987. He was an exercise rider and assistant trainer before he started his own stable.

Kenneally does well with horses in their run after a layoff and also first time starters. About 29 percent of his winners are runners coming off a layoff and 3/4 of those are dropping in class. When it comes to debut runners Kenneally strikes at a 14-percent rate while at Keeneland and his second time starters, all of which that have won were ridden by Corey Lanerie, do even better providing Kenneally with 22-percent of his winners. Together, Kenneally does unusually well with either first or second starters, which is definitely a pattern to look for; but keep in mind that he does not turn a rookie horse around very quick.

His winning second time starters usually come back to the track after being idle for 4-5 weeks. Keeping with his first layoff horses dropping in class, Kenneally does not strike often with horses moving up in class, in fact less than 10 percent of his winners fall into that category. Kenneally can get you a price as close to 35 percent of his winners paid in double digit. As far as riders go, Kenneally's main man is Corey Lanerie, who rode half of his winners and Julien Leparoux who piloted 36 percent of his winners. The Lally Stable has been Kenneally's top client and cashed in on 19 percent of the trainer's Keeneland wins.



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About the author - Art Parker is a regular contributor to both AGameofSkill.com and BetPTCBlog.com. He is the author of the one-of-a-kind handicapping guide, *Keeneland Winning Trainer Patterns*.

Track Phantom's Top 5 Derby Sleepers

You can check out TrackPhantom.com for more information and analysis from Track Phantom. Odds listed are from Betfair as of 3-15-16.

1. WHITMORE (50-1)

Only poor race he has run thus far was in the very muddy running of the Delta Jackpot when he pressed the pace and faded out. His run in the G3 Southwest Stakes is even better than it may appear on paper. He was steadied on the backside, swung wide with a long, sustained move around the turn and for the entire stretch and was a solid second to the late running winner. Quite a bit of upside as he moves forward to the Ark Derby.

2. MALIBU SUNSET (66-1)

This colt was moved to Bob Baffert following an amazing debut where he broke awkwardly, rushed up and extended the lead with every stride. He earned a 91 Beyer in that race. He was clearly geared down in the optional claiming win last time out and never really asked to run. Baffert known for late blooming 3YO's. Congaree won an allowance on March 17, 2001, before winning the Wood Memorial in his first stakes try (3rd in the '01 Derby).

3. DISCREETNESS (66-1)

He looked great winning a couple of mile preps at Remington and Oaklawn before splitting the field in the Southwest. Can't look too harshly on the effort in the Southwest. He drew the 14 post and was at least eight wide for much of the running. He did beat Suddenbreakingnews in the Springboard Mile at Remington. Might have a bit of a middle distance pedigree but he does have a nose for the wire. Worth a look in the Rebel if he shows up there.

4. CONQUEST WINDYCITY (80-1)

Thought his win at a mile in mid-February at Oaklawn Park was very solid. He beat a talented runner in R Rated Superstar and those two were well clear of the rest. Was the 2-1 favorite in the Iroquois but had a lot of traffic in that race and had to settle for 4th. He was an \$800,000 purchase last March. His dam is a half to Jump Start, runner-up in the G1 Champagne. This is a colt on the verge of a breakout race. Tab where he preps next for Casse.

5. DOCTOR MOUNTY (100-1)

It may be hard to make a case for a two-time maiden loser but he really caught the eye with his long run to finish second to a nice Pletcher prospect, Mo Power. Trainer McGaughey won this race with Orb in 2013. The sire won the BC Juvenile and the Kentucky Derby. Long distance runner, Royal Assault (third in the '04 Belmont) is in the female tree. Eight-time route stakes winner (and millionaire) Fit For a Queen is deeper in the female family.



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The Truth about Temporary Turf Rails



By Lenny Moon, Equinometry.com

If you say something enough and others say the same thing it eventually becomes truth or at least that's what people believe. This happens in horse racing just as it does the rest of the world.

Remember the saying "the turns are tight at Pimlico so the Preakness favors speed horses?" That was disproved by laying a satellite image of Churchill Downs over a satellite image of Pimlico. Churchill Downs, in fact has tighter turns and the Preakness nor Pimlico favors front runners more than any other track.

In a similar vein I have heard over and over that the position of the temporary turf rail impacts the chances of specific running styles and post positions. I finally decided to prove/disprove this belief. I looked at every turf race run at Gulfstream Park from January 1, 2015 to February 28, 2016. The sample size is over 1,000 races and since Gulfstream Park has more rail settings than any other track (12 in all) it provides the ideal data set to determine if the rail setting impacts the chances of each running style and post position.



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Slicing Up the Data

The first step is deciding how to divide the data into meaningful groups. I decided to look at sprints and routes and omit races beyond 1 3/16 miles because there were so few and they are three turn races rather than two. The sprint group consists solely of five furlong races. The route group consists of races from 7 1/2 furlongs to 1 3/16 miles.

Before you ask I put the 7 1/2 furlong races in the route category because they are two turn races and with the run up many times are very close to one mile in distance.

The data set consists of 247 sprint races and 849 route races.

Each group of data is further divided into 15 subgroups, one for each of the 12 rail settings, one for the overall total and one for the inner six and outer six rail settings.

Even though Gulfstream Park does not have an official inner and outer turf course the rail settings can be divided in half to mirror what they would look like if they did.

Run Styles and Post Positions

There are three running styles:

- E – Early or front runner (on lead or less than 1 length behind the leader at the first call)
- P – Presser or stalker (between 1 and 3 lengths behind the leader at the first call)
- S – Sustained or closer (more than 3 lengths behind the leader at the first call)

The first call is 1/4 mile in sprints and 1/2 mile in routes.

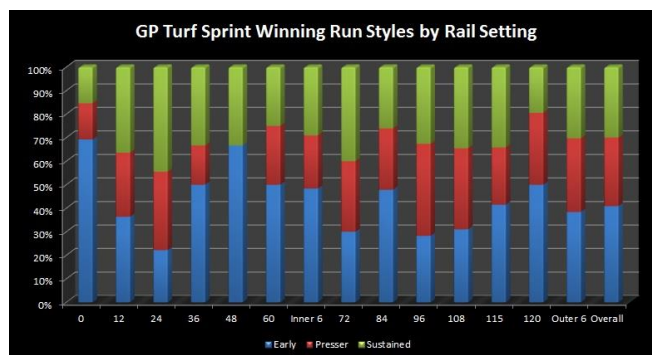
Gulfstream Park allows up to 14 runners in a race but rather than look at each individual post position I grouped them into four subgroups:

- Inner posts 1-3
- Middle posts 4-7
- Middle posts 8-11
- Outer posts 12-14

How to Interpret the Charts

The charts to follow are 100% stacked column charts, that is they show what percentage each part of the column is responsible for. The last column is the overall total and looks at all the races in the group (sprint or route) and is the baseline to compare each of the other columns against.

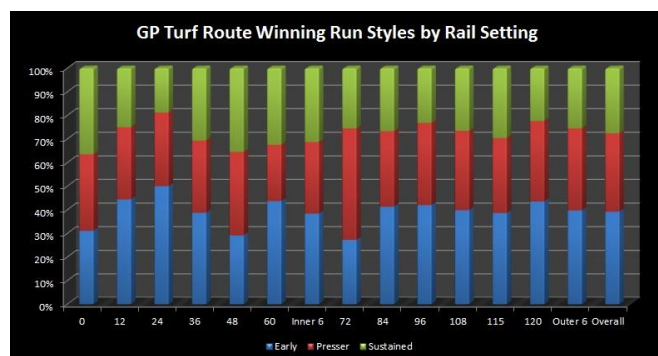
Winning Run Style by Rail Setting



The winning run style in turf sprints overall is 41% E, 29% P and 30% S. My initial impression is I expected more races to be won by E types and far less by S types. Looking at the individual rail settings reveals no discernible pattern.

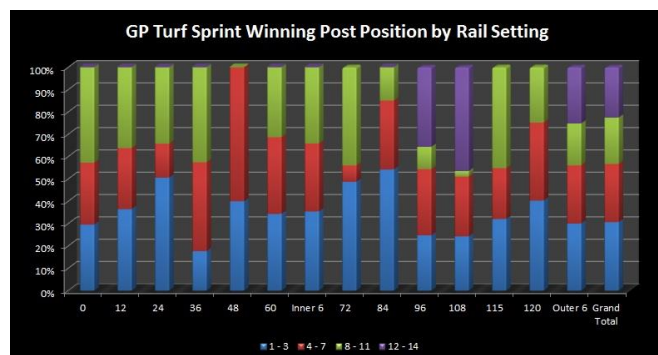
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The zero rail setting had the highest percentage of E type winners (69%) and the 24 foot rail setting had the lowest (22%). The inner six had had more E types (48%) than the outer six (38%) but they had nearly identical S type winners (29% vs. 30%).

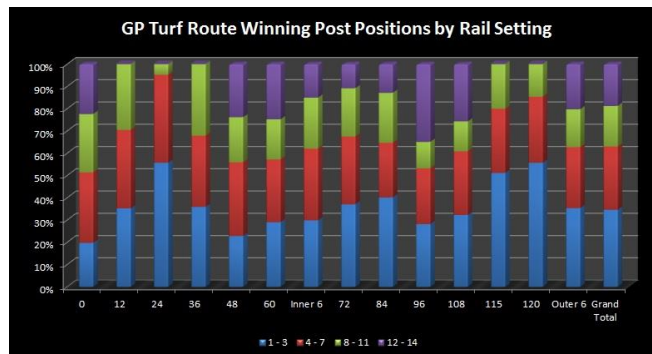


Turf routes overall have the following run style winners: 39% E, 33% P and 28% S. The outer six are more consistent than the inner six with five of the six having nearly identical run style ratios. Sustained (or closers) run style horses have a better chance if the rail is at 60 feet or less but like the main track speed is king in turf routes with 9 of the 12 rail settings favoring the E run style. Looking at the charts above there is no evidence that the position of the temporary rail correlates to the winning run style. Ideally you would like to see a gradual increase or decrease in each specific winning run style but that is not the case.

Winning Post Position by Rail Setting



The outer post positions (12-14) are very unfriendly for turf sprints at the inner six rail settings going 0-18 but each of the other three groups are nearly equal in terms of producing the winner. The inside is the place to be in turf sprints with 72 and 84 foot rail settings with the inside three posts accounting for nearly half the winners. The outside is okay in the four outermost rail settings (and it must be noted that there were no races with 13 or 14 horses in the 115 and 120 foot rail setting turf sprints). This data is counter-intuitive in my opinion because the logical assumption is that the outside post positions should be detrimental the further the rail moves out but the opposite is the case (at least with this data set).



Turf routes are much more friendly in general than turf sprints to outside post positions (again there were no races with 13 or 14 horses at the outermost two rail settings). The glaring stat in the above chart is the inside three post positions are a major advantage in races with 115 and 120 foot rail settings, accounting for half the winners. Other than that there doesn't seem to be any strong correlation. Like turf sprints I was expecting the outside posts to struggle as the rail moved out but that was only the case at the two most outer rail settings.

Does the Turf Rail Setting Matter?

I believe the sample size here is large enough to say that at least at Gulfstream Park the rail setting has far less impact on the winning running style than many believe. Speed wins at roughly the same rate in both sprints and routes at almost every distance.

As for post position outside posts were worse at the inner rail settings than the outer rail settings in turf sprints, which is surprising but were not dramatically impacted in turf routes no matter the rail setting. I think we can conclude that the rail setting doesn't significantly impact the outcome of most turf races, whether sprint or route. There is no strong correlation with the rail setting and winning running styles or winning post positions.

The next time you hear an off the cuff comment about the rail setting you can quickly assess the competence of that person. Most likely they are basing their opinion on a preconceived notion that has no bearing and you have the advantage of knowing the truth.

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About the author- Lenny Moon is the founder of Wagerlogged.com, a site designed to take the pain out of record keeping and help horseplayers become more profitable at the betting windows. He is also the founder of Equinometry.com, a sited dedicated to educating horseplayers of all levels about handicapping, betting and handicapping contest strategy.

Ditch the Drag

Racing's Short-Term Post-Drag Thinking is Long-Term Deadly

Horse racing as a whole - and this isn't a surprise to anyone - possesses some short-term thinking when it comes to business strategy. We've seen it countless times, whether it be a short-term bump with takeout hikes chosen over the longer term gain of market share, slot deals written where almost all the revenue is transferred to track owners and purses, where a short-term bump in asset prices rules the day. It's just the way the industry thinks, and has for some time. This isn't anything new.

Unfortunately, the thinking permeates much deeper than that. When businesses (in this case, tracks, especially smaller ones) are in a state of decline, desperation plays a role.

Harvard Business Review:

"Perhaps the worst kind of waning-industry environment occurs when one or more weakened companies with significant corporate resources are committed to stay in the business. Their weakness forces them to use desperate actions..... their staying power forces other companies to respond likewise."

Strategies are tried that weaken the industry as a whole, exacerbating everyone's decline. There are many examples of the above in the macro that occurs in racing, but let's look at one little slice of the micro for an example: Post dragging.

Post dragging occurs because a track, somewhere, someplace, realized that flashing a "0" on their screens hoodwinked people to think that time is running out to bet, so get your bet down now. The longer you flash the zero, the more eyeballs see the zero and the more people run to the windows. It's silly, yes, but it works. A track that flashes that zero for a half hour will have, on balance, more handle than a track who flashes zero for five minutes.

The problem with the above, as the Harvard Business Review article notes, is that these desperate tracks "force others to respond likewise". Soon, several tracks all flash zeroes in a strange competition of 'fool your customer'.

The pitfalls of this strategy are obvious:

i) You are simply rearranging the deck chairs. There is no value driven from this strategy because it does not grow the pie. Bettors bankrolls are not going up, urging them to bet more, they are just betting your track at X plus and another at X, or X minus. Handle doesn't go up and neither does revenue. With 90% of money bet off track, the host venue doesn't care what track you're betting, for the most part.

ii) It eliminates the possibility of scheduled post times. One of the biggest bettor and industry complaints has always been tracks running on top of each other. With draggers, it's almost impossible to even know when they are going to post (Hawthorne's Jim Miller - someone who tries his hardest not to run on top of other signals - shows his frustration with this on twitter often).

iii) It eliminates promotion of the signal. We have TVG who wants to show live racing at regular intervals to maximize *total reach* - according to Thalheimer, the number of races have an elasticity of -0.6 and are important to racing as a whole - and they can't. We have people wanting to create a live racing harness racing channel to make racing seamless at three or four tracks in an evening as a brand builder. We have NHC contests and Derby Wars, all trying to schedule proper games at proper intervals. This inhibits the whole ecosystem.

iv) Negative branding. Post drags inconvenience customers. I'll type it again, post drags inconvenience customers. It makes giving tracks your money an exercise in frustration.

v) Things reach a tipping point. NFL games can gain more revenue tomorrow by making games five hours long. It would work for awhile, and then comes the tipping point. People get frustrated with the product, leave, find something else to do, and long-term revenue is hurt. Bettors are even worse. When a horse gambler leaves, he or she gets out of the habit and are increasingly hard to get back as customers.



Last, and most importantly, it does almost nothing positive, even for your track. The money gained on a post drag is priced at 3% or 4% for most very small tracks. A \$5,000 handle bump at a small track for a flashing zero for five minutes gains tiny revenue. The sad part is that some of these tracks have millions for purses and profits from slot machines. This revenue is a drop in the bucket.

Racing as a whole needs to look deeply into this issue, because when it allows tracks (especially smaller ones) to exacerbate industry wide problems as an act of desperation, the entire business - in the long term - will lose. This business has been on the losing end too much this past decade married to short-sighted, short-term policy. There's no need to make it worse.

Spectator or Fan?

By Neal Benoit, [Getting Out Of The Gate](#)

Old Proverb:

"Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime."

Translation into Horse Racing:

"Give a man your picks and you have a spectator for a day. Teach a man to handicap, and you have a fan for a lifetime."

This has always been my philosophy when introducing horse racing to my family and friends. And it all started with my wife more than thirty years ago. But, let me first confess ... it began for selfish reasons.

In the early days (pre-wife), I frequented Saratoga racetrack with a group of high school friends. Most of the time it was just us guys, but on occasion my friends would bring their girlfriends with them to the track. I noticed how different their experience was on the days they came alone versus with their girlfriends.

When alone, their conversations were about changes in class, cutbacks, who was going to the lead, who was going to come off pace, what trainer scored with longshots, who looks good in the paddock, and how many minutes to post. When their girlfriends came along, the majority of time was spent discussing the dance on Saturday night, where we're going to dinner, followed by whines like "It's too long between races!" Then with two minutes to post, the same barrage of questions repeated before every race.

- "Who do you like?"
- "Which horse should I bet on?"
- "Would you bet this for me?"

After watching this for two consecutive summers, I decided this was NOT going to happen to me. When I started bringing my future wife, Deb, to the race track I made three strategic decisions that have paid off handsomely ever since:

1. *I bought two copies of the racing form; one for me, and one for Deb.*
2. *I taught her how to read the racing form, and then how to handicap.*
3. *I made sure Deb had her own money to use for betting. No playing on my ticket.*

Fast forward 30 years, and I'll summarize our typical joint visit to the race track. I download the PDF version of the Racing Form to my iPad and print a paper copy for Deb. We head to the track with PPs, lawn chairs, and cooler in hand. At the track, we purchase two betting vouchers; one for her and one for me. For the remainder of the day we

make our own selections and wagers. Now we might compare notes on a couple of horses during the day, but we almost never know what the other person bet until after a race is over. At the end of the day we put our tickets together and cash out. Sometimes she covers me, sometimes I cover her.

When Deb first started handicapping she would ask me, "Who do you like?" But now, not only doesn't she ask me who I like; I don't think she cares anymore. She has developed her own style and doesn't want her choices to be clouded by my opinion. Mission accomplished. The goal of every good teacher should be to become obsolete to the student.

For the same reasons, I rarely (if ever) listen to another handicapper's picks on an upcoming race. To be honest, I'd rather lose with my own selections than win with someone else's picks. You could call it a matter of personal pride. This is not to say I will block out the input of people who might know something that I do not. For example, [Maggie Wolfendale's](#) comments about the physical attributes of a horse pre-race in the paddock.

The same approach I took with Deb I repeated with my son. I was teaching him how to handicap horse races about the same time his friends were taking batting practice at Little League. My son has taken a unique path of his own. He uses an entirely different approach to handicapping modeled on a spreadsheet "formula" that I taught him years ago. Michael is a fan.

I taught my daughter the basics of horse racing, but she wasn't interested in learning how to handicap. She likes going to the races with us on occasion, but is higher maintenance than my son. I find that a \$20 betting voucher, lemonade, popcorn, and an occasional "tip" from Dad will usually keep her happy. And in the end ... the proof is in the pudding. Out of the four of us, she attends the races the least. She's happy being given a fish for the day. She is a spectator.

I guess it's true, you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make her drink!

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About the author-Neal Benoit grew up and still resides in the Saratoga area and became a fan of horse racing during in 1977 when watching Affirmed and Alydar square off as 2-year-olds.

Neal doesn't consider himself a "professional gambler." He says on his website, "I don't really consider myself a true "gambler." I don't go to casinos, I've never bought a lottery ticket, and I'm not very fond of losing money. I'm a fan of horse racing and I'm a horseplayer. I see each race as a riddle. And for me, the thrill is in solving it."

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Handle Climbs in February

When compared to February 2015, handle and purses were up while race days and starts dipped slightly.

According to the Paulick Report, "Wagering in the U.S. was up 6.43% in 2016 as compared with the same month last year. Year-to-date figures were also up, 4.26%.

To view the comparisons of the other indicators, please click [here](#).

Hawthorne & DerbyWars Team Up

It was announced on March 11 that Hawthorne Racecourse and DerbyWars have entered into an agreement that will see DerbyWars contribute revenue to Hawthorne and the horsemen in exchange for DerbyWars being allowed to show video and obtain data.

"Horse racing contests continue to be a very bright spot for horse racing, and as contests grow the next logical step is to partner with racetracks," said Mark Midland, CEO of DerbyWars. "We are excited to lead the way in this area and look forward to announcing additional track agreements in the near future."

For more details on this story, click [here](#).

Rainbow 6 Continues to Surge; Mandatory Payout Looms

Gulfstream Park's Rainbow 6 wager has not been hit since January 13, so going into Wednesday, March 22nd's card, the carryover jackpot for the bet stands at over \$4 million.

If the Rainbow 6 remains unsolved Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, there will be a mandatory payout of it on the Saturday, March 26 card.

Additional details are available [here](#).

Matties Wins NHC

The 17th annual National Handicapping Championship was held shortly after the publication of the January/February edition of Horseplayer Monthly, and Paul Matties emerged with the victory over 628 other entrants.

Roger Cettina was second, followed by Charlie Davis and

Paul Matties's brother Duke.

"Horseplayers always think they're smarter and better than everybody else so to beat all the smartest people in the world, what an honor," cracked Matties.

For full standings and other comments from the winner, please click [here](#).

Positive Press for Tampa Bay Downs

Tampa Bay Downs, which sat sixth in last year's HANA track ratings, was praised recently by Charles Hayward in *Thoroughbred Racing Commentary*.

Hayward says that he firmly believes that "the only way to attract and educate new customers is through the live racing experience, and no racetrack does that better than Tampa Bay Downs."

It was also announced that Tampa Bay Downs set their record one-day handle of over \$12.2 million on Tampa Bay Derby Day (March 12).

"Thoroughbred racing is a sport where everyone has their own opinion, but we heard a lot of fans in all age groups say Saturday was the greatest day in track history," Tampa Bay vice president and general manager Peter Berube said.

For more on the Hayward story, click [here](#), and for more on the Tampa Bay Derby handle story, click [here](#).



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Milkowski Finds Issues with Gulfstream Race

Regular Horseplayer Monthly contributor Craig Milkowski discovered timing problems in last month's Ladies' Turf Sprint at Gulfstream Park, won by Lady Shipman.

Milkowski, the chief figure maker for TimeformUS, discovered that the starting gate was not in the proper position for a five furlong event at Gulfstream Park, which made the race between 48 and 60 feet shorter than it should have been.

For more details, click [here](#).

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Class Tells

By [Jonathan Stettin, *pastthewire.com*](#)

We have all heard the saying, class tells. It's true in many aspects of life, not just horse racing. Today we will talk about it in terms of horse racing. Along with the run up and turf rail distance, class is, in my opinion, one of the most overlooked and underrated aspects of handicapping. Sure we throw terms around like too cheap, and class of the race, but what does it really mean and how does it affect a race?

In our ever-changing and evolving game, how we identify and recognize class must change as well. It all starts with the condition book when it comes to handicapping. Many handicappers have never seen or read a condition book. My suggestion is, if you have never seen one, that you download one online from one of the many tracks that offer them, or you stop in the racing secretary's office and pick one up next time you are at the races. There is a reason the conditions of a race are the first thing listed in most past performances and so many handicappers never bother to read them or look at them as an afterthought. They are the first thing I read.

Most of us have heard it said one way or another, a good trainer or jockey agent has to be a master at reading the condition book. Frankly, I've never found it that difficult. When I took the jockey agent exam years ago at Belmont, I had little difficulty with the condition book questions, which made up a large part of the exam. The conditions of a race tell us what types of horses are eligible, or, for that matter ineligible, to run in that specific race. It will also tell you how much weight a horse has to carry. Pretty important to know and not just for horseman, but handicappers alike. Further, once you master it, you will find angles on horses who are classier than others, but sneakily fit into the conditions of a race. An edge! Sometimes it can be a matter of time as in not winning a race since a specified date, or at a specified level. Class is one of those things in racing that we see, and recognize, but is so interesting to explore. Sort of like breeding, and how speed horses will produce speed horses, closers will produce closers; turf horses will produce turf horses etc. Where it gets really interesting is when we still see it, but no longer have genetically acceptable explanations. For example, when horses who loved Saratoga produce horses who love Saratoga. I love breeding and have a good memory, and do my homework with the help of Formulator. Rest assured I've cashed my share of tickets on horses first time over Saratoga, because I knew there were Spa lovers in the family.

I remember first learning about class in racehorses. One of my favorite examples is the fast \$12,500 ultra-consistent claimer, against the blue blooded graded stakes

horse. The claimer runs six furlongs or three quarters of a mile in 1:10 and change almost every time he goes to the gate. He runs against the stakes horse and time wise and maybe even figure wise he may look competitive, but they run the race in 12 and change and the stake horse wins. Class tells. It used to be much easier to use this example, but as we know, the game has changed. Widespread liberal Lasix use on non or mild questionable bleeders amongst other things have factored their way into this once high percentage example. In the long run though, class still tells and there are ways to use it in everyday handicapping.

Horses, for racing purposes, get broken down to different classes or levels. Back in the day there were not nearly as many conditions as we see today. Racing secretaries have had to become extremely creative in order to fill races. To their credit they have created unique conditions which create more opportunities for horses to run, and to the better of the astute bettor, more opportunities to find hidden class edges.



Back in the day, we had straight Maidens, or Maiden Special Weight races where the only differentiating factors were age, sex, and weight carried. Bear in mind those differentiating factors come into play in most conditions and should be looked at. You want to know if a 4-year-old maiden is running against 3-year-olds. Then we had our Maiden Claimers, Allowance or Conditioned races, as in 3-year-olds which have never won a race other than maiden, claiming, or starter. Those progressed to what was referred to as non-winners of two other than and three other than and rarely but sometimes even four other than. The Maiden Special Weight horses were where most stakes horses began their careers and that remains true today. This created the angle which still often holds true, the biggest drop in racing is from Maiden Special Weight races to Maiden Claimers. You don't know what type of horse you can face in a Maiden Special Weight race. Then we had our regular Claimers which were differentiated by not only age, sex, and weight, but by
(continued on next page)

claiming price. That was easy; a \$25k claimer was running against tougher or “classier” horses than a \$10k claimer. Then we had our Starter Handicaps, for horses who have won for or raced for a designated claiming price, but were no longer eligible to be claimed while in a Starter race. We moved on to listed Stakes, and Graded Stakes with Grade 1 being the creme de la creme.

It was easy to differentiate class, and horses moving up or down in class jumped off the page. It is no longer that way and for the bettor, as well as owners and trainers, this has proven to be a good evolution. There are more races to run in and more hidden opportunities in all these newer innovative conditions.

Let's start with an easy example. A race for 3-year-olds and upward (older) with a 16k claiming price is open to any 3 year old or older horse whose connections are willing to risk losing their horse for that price. It doesn't matter how many previous races the horse won, or technically if the horse ever won, as a maiden can run against winners. Obviously you can catch horses who have won multiple races, are dropping down in class and have run against better, or even horses older and more seasoned than perhaps yours. Yours can mean for betting or even as an owner. This race can come up pretty salty. Now change the conditions to 3-year-olds and upward, which have never won two races in their lifetime, with the same 16k claiming price. Now take one horse coming out of the former conditions and one coming out of the latter, and assume both are entered in an open \$16k claimer. By open, we refer to the former conditions, less restrictions on eligibility. On the surface it appears both horses are coming out of \$16k Claimers and similar races. If you don't know your symbols like “N2L” or read the conditions, you may not realize one horse is taking what many would call a significant class drop.

Things get complicated from there. There are so many different conditions used to fill races. For example, take the \$25K optional claimer where there can be horses who have never won a race other than maiden, claiming, or starter (also known as non-winners of a race other than) entered with no claiming price but meeting those other conditions, and horses who are running with a \$25k tag. These horses can be tough, multiple race winners, but I give the edge or class advantage to horses who ran in straight non winners of a race where no claiming horses are present. That's a subjective matter of opinion and mine may be somewhat old school, but in the long run I am comfortable with it.

Things really get complex in trying to identify class edges when you start adding things like “for horses who haven't won at a mile since June 1st 2015”. This is where you can find horses who sometimes sneak in by a matter of days. None of this is a shortcut for handicapping and doing your homework but class tells, and you should know how to recognize it. It starts with reading and understanding the conditions of a race.

Track Phantom's Top 10 Derby Contenders

You can check out TrackPhantom.com for more information and analysis from Track Phantom. Odds listed are from Betfair as of 3-15-16.

1. DANZING CANDY (16-1)

He won three straight since he had a very troubled trip in his debut. He has controlled the pace in all three wins and was really never challenged in any of them. He held off a very strong field in the San Felipe. His speed figures have improved in every start and his 100 Beyer in the San Felipe puts him at the head of the class. Has to prove he can rate, which he has been training to do. Dam is half to \$4.5M turfer, Better Talk Now.

2. MO TOM (33-1)

Deep closer has yet to run a bad race. He was really flying in the G2 Risen Star before he was checked sharply by a fading foe, bounced inside off the rail, swung back outside and finished best of all. He ran third in the strongest 2-year-old prep race, the G2 Kentucky Jockey Club. He was a \$150,000 purchase in 2014 and his sibling, Beautician, won \$636k and was second in the '09 BC Juv Fillies and fourth in the '10 Kentucky Oaks.

3. MOR SPIRIT (16-1)

Bob Baffert runner was superb when running second to Danzing Candy in the San Felipe. Rider Gary Stevens had to wait a bit to move, was steadied slightly and finished strong once free. It was a perfect prep for the Santa Anita Derby. Reminiscent of 1997 Baffert/Stevens Derby winner, Silver Charm, who lost the San Felipe and Santa Anita Derby to Free House. \$650,000 purchase is certainly in the right hands.



4. MOHAYMEN (4-1)

\$2.2M Keeneland purchase has lived up to the hype. He is undefeated in five starts and he put distance between himself and the rest of the field in the lane. Has a perfect running style for the Derby as 21 of the last 24 Derby winners were either first or second at the head of the lane. His running style is very similar to California Chrome's going into the '14 Derby. Sibling to '13 Breeders' Cup Juvenile Champ, New Year's Day.

(continued on next page)

5. NYQUIST (10-1)

Undefeated Juvenile winner looked very strong winning the San Vicente which was clearly a prep. Profile is similar to Favorite Trick, the '97 2YO Champ who finished his 2YO year winning the BC Juv and started his 3YO year winning the 7F Swale. He was undefeated 9 for 9 into the Ark Derby, which he lost by a neck. He then ran eighth in the Kentucky Derby. Bachelor Beau (won the '86 Blue Grass) is in the female family tree.



Breeders' Cup Juvenile champion Nyquist checks in the fifth spot on Track Phantom's Top Ten list of Derby contenders – photo by [Penelope P. Miller/America's Best Racing](#)

6. WHITMORE (50-1)

Only poor race he has run thus far was in the very muddy running of the Delta Jackpot when he pressed the pace and faded out. Before his second-place finish in the G2 Rebel his run in the G3 Southwest Stakes is even better than it may appear on paper. He was steadied on the backside, swung wide with a long, sustained move around the turn and for the entire stretch and was a solid second to the late-running winner. Quite a bit of upside as he moves forward to the Ark Derby.

7. SUDDENBREAKINGNEWS (33-1)

Before the Rebel he was a neck and a nose away from crossing the finish line first in every start. The question was whether he had been facing strong enough company. He roared down the lane in an amazing run to win the G3 Southwest. That was a strange race on a wet track and the pace appeared to fall apart. Mineshaft is an excellent long distance influence. Dam is a half to '03 SA Oaks winner, and '02 BC Juv Fillies runner-up, Composure.

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8. GUN RUNNER (33-1)

Only defeat came in the loaded running of the Kentucky Jockey Club at Churchill Downs back in late November. He made a big move to get to the lead in that race but tired slightly in the lane but certainly wasn't disgraced. He came off the layoff to take the Risen Star and looked awfully good tracking the early pace and having something left in the lane. The dam is a half to \$4.4M winner (and '04 Breeders' Cup Classic victor), Saint Liam.

9. MALIBU SUNSET (66-1)

This colt was moved to Bob Baffert following an amazing debut where he broke awkwardly, rushed up and extended the lead with every stride. He earned a 91 Beyer in that race. He was clearly geared down in the optional claiming win last time out and never really asked to run. Baffert known for late blooming 3-year-olds. Congaree won an allowance on March 17, 2001, before winning the Wood Memorial in his first stakes try (third in the '01 Derby).

10. MATT KING COAL (50-1)

Sharp-looking winner of an optional claiming race in early March over a strong field. This \$250,000 colt has won two of three on the dirt and was nosed out in the other by Gift Box, who returned to run third in the G2 Remsen, 3 lengths behind Mohaymen. Beyer players will take a long here as he has three consecutive 93+ figures. Best runner in the female tree was 16x winner (13 routes), Biogio's Rose (G3 winner in New York).

A Moment of Levity...

Chase Mullins
@DChaseMullins

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2016 NATIONAL HANDICAPPING CHAMPIONSHIP WINNER PAUL MATTIES IS FAN OF AMWAGER.

3 of the top 5 finishers in the NHC tournament are AmWager members.

"When betting the races, use AmWager," said Matties, who is the Eclipse Award for Horseplayer of the Year. "This unique wager pad, with its fluid interface, has every feature you need to bet like a pro and cash tickets. How do I know? Because I helped design it."



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Charlie Davis Talks NHC17



Horseplayers Association of North America board member Charlie Davis finished third in this year's National Handicapping Championship (NHC) and penned the following column about his experience and answered some questions about his preparation, handicapping and strategy that he has received since the event ended.

This past weekend I came in third in the 17th NHC tournament. I had a blast, made some new friends, saw a bunch of old friends, and even made some money. Huge congratulations to Paul Matties, the champion, who is an incredible handicapper and contest player.

I want to mention the handicapping programs I use as they're all invaluable. I use JCapper (a database program which helps me to automate my opinions and quickly look at a race), TimeformUS PP's (which are by far my favorite PP's that I've ever worked with), and OptixEQ (trip notes and other tools). One of my strengths is that I know, and acknowledge, my weaknesses. I know I'm not great at trip notes, and don't have the time to go through and make my own trip notes, so I'm pleased to work with the great team at OptixEQ who make standardized trip notes across the major circuits.

I also want to thank my family for putting up with the long hours and the travel involved in horse racing, and finally John Doyle who's been a great friend and mentor.

I've had a lot of questions about why I picked certain horses, what my thought process was, how I prepare, etc. I figured I'd knock them all out here in one fell swoop.

Preparation:

I know many people who prep for big tournaments different than they do on a normal day. That doesn't work for me as I try to stick as close to a normal weekend as possible. The night before I run through the cards, identify weak favorites, note races with big fields, and exclude races with short fields, dominant favorites, etc. I make sure to get a good rest, I don't have more than a couple of drinks, and I eat well.

The real work starts in the morning where before scratches I take a look at weather and further refine the races I'm interested in. Then, once scratches come out, I start choosing my races and horses to play. At this point I take a final look at the OptixEQ trip notes, take another look at the pace to make sure I'm confident in it, and then write down the horse(s) I'm interested in each race.

Before I go down to the contest room, I already have a

list of the races I'm likely to play, spreadsheets built so that I know how many races are available, and it's down to watching the odds and some final decision making in the 10-15 prior to each race.



Goals/Confidence:

I start by having a goal, and understanding my strengths and weaknesses. I have daily and overall goals and they allow me to set targets. My daily goal was at least \$100 a day, with \$150 being my stretch target, and I wanted to be in first going into the final day. My overall goal was to be in first prior to the final table, and be first prior to the Santa Anita races at the final table. I know I'm not very good at Santa Anita, and knowing that, I knew I needed to be in front going into those races.

I also am a big believer in the power of positive thinking. The title of the document where I kept my notes for the weekend is "NHC Champion Interview Notes." I've seen many good horseplayers lose due to negativity and a lack of belief. Everyone I corresponded with prior to the tournament knows that I said I was going to win. I didn't, but it helped keep me confident. It's not arrogance or a lack of respect for the other players. Hell, I know a lot of those guys are better handicappers than I am. I had dinner with a good friend (and respected handicapper, who bet on Paul by the way) on Wednesday who said that Paul is the best handicapper he knows. It's simply that fact that if you don't believe in yourself then your chances are slim.

A lot of people think these contests are just about handicapping. They're not. You have to be able to handicap of course, but you also have to understand value, and not be afraid to have a poor score if the percentages don't work in your favor. Many of the best contest players out there either win or end up with really low scores. Many big names didn't make the top 10% this weekend and that doesn't mean they aren't any good. This is a game of percentages and you have to pick horses that offer value, have confidence in that pick, hope the percentages work out in your favor, and don't second-guess when they do.

Dealing with Adversity:

I had two things that happened that could've put me on tilt. On tilt in horse racing is different than in poker, but it
(continued on next page)

basically results in a lack of confidence. Lack of confidence means you're questioning your picks, changing things, etc.

On day one, in the last race at Aqueduct there was a cap horse that I liked quite a bit. Thunderbums was the name, and the horse had a bit of an excuse in his last, plus the price was great. I played him on my backup ticket, but not on my primary since there were a few others I liked better later in the day. I still had four or five optional plays to make, as well as at least four mandatory plays to make at this point. I could've been upset and looked at what my score could've been, but that's a great way to lose your confidence. I doubt anyone even knows that I had that horse since I didn't mention it. As soon as you start talking about what-ifs, it's impossible to recover.

The second item was a bit harder to recover from. I had a horse that I was waiting for all day. It was Two Ten in the finale at Santa Anita. John Doyle brought this horse up to me first thing in the morning, and the OptixEQ Trip Notes for it were great. I knew all day long that this was going to be my final optional play as long as my position allowed it. Well, coming into the final race I was behind first by around \$4. The horse finished second (unfortunate at the time), but the \$5.80 place price was enough to put me in first. Goal accomplished, I was in first going into the final day. Then I saw the scores and heard that I'm not in first, and I realize I never entered the play. I had it in my spreadsheet but never entered it into the contest. \$5.80 might not sound like a lot, but it matters, trust me. You'll see how much it matters in the next section.

This one wasn't as easy to brush off because it was a really stupid mistake. It could have been a very costly, stupid mistake. Once I found out I wasn't disqualified, I went and had a big glass of scotch, removed the \$5.80 from my spreadsheet, and after about an hour, didn't mention it again. Thanks to Eric Wing for helping me keep positive.

I've seen so many players lose the plot once they make a mistake or switch horses or anything like that and it's important to me to keep that negativity out and stay positive. When it's a big one, scotch always helps!

Final Table:

I started out with \$10.40 to place on my first race, and then went blanks on the next four races. I was going for the win and was playing horses with a lower probability of winning, but I was passed by two other players during those races. I was now left with the eighth and ninth at Santa Anita, a track I'm admittedly weak at.

In the eighth, I was between two horses, the #8 and the #1. I didn't like any cap horses and only liked those two horses. Both horses had OptixEQ trip notes which led me to believe they'd improve. The #8 was 9-1 and the #1 was 3-1. I absolutely loved the #1 but was leaning towards the #8 due to the price. This is where strategy comes in. I figured others would be playing the #8 and other price horses to move up on Paul. I knew that I couldn't make up

ground playing the same horses, and there wasn't a whole lot of downside if I did drop another few spots. The difference between fifth (where I was), and third was \$50K. The difference between fifth and seventh was \$16K. I played the #1, who narrowly won the race over the #8, and those \$13 put me not only in third, but within a \$64 cap horse of the leader. Not a huge score, but it made it so that the \$5.80 from the night before didn't hurt me!

In the ninth I loved the #7, but the odds wouldn't help me move up. The choice was between protecting with that #7 horse so that the folks behind me couldn't catch me, or playing a big price in hopes of catching Paul.

I know Dave Gutfreund well and know that he's extremely cognizant of value. I also know that the amount of money at stake probably (hopefully) wasn't enough for him to play for position. I assumed he would be going for a price, but as soon as the gates opened I asked right away! I was most concerned about him.

I've met Duke Matties several times and sat with him at a tournament, but I don't know him as well. I do know that he's aggressive in contests. I again assumed he'd go for the win, especially since I assumed his brother would be playing pretty chalky.

The way I handicapped the players in the last race was as follows:

Paul Matties: Horse he thinks is most likely to win.

Roger Cettina: Probably a mid-price horse of which there were many.

Duke Matties: Price horse.

Dave Gutfreund: Price horse.

Because of this, I went with my second favorite price horse, Soi Phet. I thought others might go with Image of Joplin in hopes of lone speed, so went with the one I thought would be least used. All of that was for nothing when Soi Phet didn't figure in the slightest, and Roger in second used him as well, but I accurately handicapped those in fourth and fifth, so was able to retain third.



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Conclusion:

I made \$50K on a 3-1 shot, had a great time, and learned a lot about myself in the process. It was a great tournament, and I have no regrets about any horse I played the entire tournament. I'm honored to have been at the final table with such a great group of handicappers, and feel no shame in losing to Paul. I guess my only regret is that my backers in the futures bet lost their money!

Market the Heck out of the Trifecta!

Courtesy of the [Cangamble blog](#)

For once and for all, new potential horseplayers and fans are not staying away from horse racing because the gambling aspect of it is too hard to understand, or because of drugs, and certainly not because of racetrack jargon.



I think I was four years old when I figured out win place and show, maybe I was an exceptionally smart four year old, but you get my drift. I could also read past performances when I was eight; it isn't rocket science. I also don't think that there is a wager easier to understand than win place or show other than coin flipping or roulette, which I think is just as easy to understand. I'd even state that slots is harder to figure out than a show bet. Understanding a horse race bet is even less complicated than betting against a point spread or playing craps. One doesn't even need a **Trump U** diploma to figure out how to an exotics wager works either. It is a matter of wanting to figure find out what a superfecta is, not how a superfecta works, and we'll get to this difference shortly.

When it comes to drugs, I don't believe it stops anyone other than animal cruelty warriors, and they would stay away even if horse racing was drug free **because unfortunately there will always be horses breaking their legs. The perception of drugging horses as well as potential rigging has always been there, even at the height of racing's popularity (1930-1970). In recent years, other sports have had their fixing and drug scandals, but popularity for most of these sports have become much stronger as the years go on.**

And then there is jargon. Jargon doesn't keep anyone out. All sports have words unique to them, and even a lifelong sports fan and sometime participant like me still has trouble figuring out exactly when a balk in baseball or when a zone defense technical in basketball should be called. I'll leave figuring out that stuff up to the umps and refs and still enjoy the game, of course, I'll enjoy the game much more if I have at least one fantasy player participating. As for keeping newbies from getting

involved, not knowing what a bug boy is like not knowing what a sophomore pro is. Does not understanding what a sophomore is keeping any newbie away from football or basketball?

Nah, what keeps new participants away from horse racing is that even if they are drawn to looking these days, they have no interest in learning more. The simple reason is that there is no buzz when it comes to long term winning gamblers. Yes, there is a learning curve, but it isn't **any more** difficult than the learning curve for playing fantasy sports. Today's millennials are gambling. They also like skill games. They'd be perfect for horse racing except one thing, they need the right motivation to learn about horse racing, and that motivation would exist if horse racing was perceived as beatable in the long term. **The collective average takeout of 21% is about twice as high as it should be in order to grab substantial new players.**

Until the industry wakes up and revamps takeout, there are a few band aid solutions that might keep the ship from completely sinking. One is to go after established horse players aren't playing because they don't have access. It is mind boggling that residents of Texas, Georgia, Mississippi, Hawaii, the list goes, cannot bet on horses over the internet. Horse racing needs a lobby group that tackles this specific issue. Handle could rise another 33% if these dry states allowed their adult populations to gamble if that is the adult's desire. It makes no sense that someone in Dallas can own an assault rifle but can't bet \$2 to show on California Chrome on the internet.

The second suggestion is to get more eyes on the product (though, as stated above, even with more eyes on horse racing, it is near impossible to get the eyes to stick due to pricing). Besides another Triple Crown winner, horse racing should try to take advantage of the word trifecta, a word that has made it big time in the mainstream. Trifecta originated in 1974 when it was strictly a horse racing term (simply and evolved variation of perfecta). **Today, a day can't go by without either hearing the word on TV or reading it in the news.** Check out the [Google News Search of "trifecta."](#)

[Now check these seven "trifecta" quotes out](#), none have anything to do with horse racing:

So what should horse racing do? Promote the heck out of the trifecta. Focus on the bigger payouts. House handicappers should focus on the tris. Lower the takeout on trifectas, make it the bet for the millennials. And to Woodbine and all the rest of the Canadian tracks, change the name from triactor to trifecta. Triactor is strictly a horse racing term, and it means a wager with a takeout of **25-30%**. Not very attractive, not a great sell.

Early use of the word trifecta outside of horse racing:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S449KdjPKrY>

Old School Handicapping Angles

By [Rich Halvey](#), [Halvey on Horse Racing](#)

Although history often gives one person all the credit for some thought or invention (have you ever heard of Antonio Meucci, the man who if he could have afforded to pay a \$10 patent caveat might have kept Alexander Graham Bell from getting credit for inventing the telephone?) it's mostly the case that there are almost no uniquely original ideas – someone else out there independently has the same thought.

When I was cutting my handicapping teeth, information in the *Daily Racing Form* (and *The Morning Telegraph* in the eastern broadsheet edition) was far more limited than it is now. Given the paucity of specialized information – the current form has statistics it took me months of research to assemble every year – there was a much heavier reliance on “angles,” some of which are still in fashion. Speed dropping in class, turf to dirt or vice versa, straight maiden to maiden claimers, blinkers on or off, front wraps on, earnings per start and others are regularly considered in the selection process. The difference, of course, is that in the absence of Byers Figures or Tomlinson ratings or Jockey/Trainer statistics, the use of an angle years ago might often have been most of the reason for betting a horse.

Here are 10 lesser used angles that still have applicability today and generally stand on their own.

Two-year-old, fastest half

Horses, much like humans, develop at different rates. Some 2-year olds look practically full grown, with advanced athleticism and coordination. Still, it takes a race or two for horses to learn their racing lessons (as the comment “raced greenly” indicates) and more often than not young horses want to revert to instinct and race as fast as they can as far as they can. In the wild, the fastest, strongest horses escape the predators (closers do notoriously bad against mountain lions). Given that young horses will almost always race as maidens in four to six furlong sprints, the fastest half mile is a good indicator of development and talent, and having a learning experience gives the horse a substantial advantage. One caveat – be sure to make adjustments for track conditions.

Low percentage trainer, high percentage jockey

Not every trainer has the advantages afforded to Todd Pletcher or Bob Baffert. Their third string horses are good enough to capture graded stakes, and they inevitably have a top three rider on their horse. Granted there are low percentage trainers who are simply bad horsemen, but there are also lower percentage trainers who are knowledgeable but relegated to managing horses from lesser stables. These trainers can wind up with horses of

reasonable health and talent, and when they have a horse ready to pop they want to engage the best rider possible. In the same respect, riders at the top of the meet standings will often have their pick of runners, so when you see a top-jock contract to ride a lower level trainer's horse, assume it is because the jockey believes it has a high probability of winning.

Lone speed

I'm not sure I've ever heard a foolproof explanation, but it is a fact that horses able to establish an unpressured lead will run farther than speed runners that are challenged. The strange thing is that a front runner can actually run slower fractions while being pressured and still fold like an accordion. The key is to look for races where one horse not only likes running to the front, but where none of the other horses have an interest in challenging the leader. Let's look at the first race from Del Mar on September 2, 2012, a \$12,500 claimer for 3-year-old fillies at six furlongs. The table below shows the running style (E=early speed, P=pace presser, S=sustained/closer) along with a speed rating (0 through 8, with 0 indicating no speed and 8 indicating high speed) for each horse.

Horse	PP	RS
1 Vegas Rules	1	EP5
2 Here Comes Bonnie	2	PS0
3 Warren's Samantha	3	PS0
4 Dynamic Diva	4	PS1
5 Star Vesta	5	EP1
6 Unusual Jewel	6	PS0
7 Hidden Passion	7	EP5
8 Pumpkin Pie	8	EP2
9 Babyneedsnewshoes	9	P5

Two horses in the race had the style to be front-runners – the 1, Vegas Rules and the 7, Hidden Passion, with the 7 clearly the superior runner once race figures were taken into account. The 9, Babyneedsnewshoes looked like a good prospect to be sitting just behind the leaders. Of the remaining six runners, only the 5, Star Vesta had ever shown any early foot in a sprint, but Star Vesta's last four races, although at a higher class, had been turf routes. No reason to expect Star Vesta to prompt the pace. Every other horse preferred the closing trip. In an act of what must have been divine intervention, on race day, the 7 and 9 scratched, leaving Vegas Rules as the total lone speed, and totally changing my betting strategy. Vegas Rules broke right on top, held a four length lead in a sensible :45¹, and won easily in sharp 1:10, paying \$18.40 in the process.

(continued on next page)

Debuting 3-year old has higher 2-year old figure

This angle works best early in the year when horses are coming back from a winter break. Look for horses with 2-year-old figures higher (or almost as high) as the other three-year olds that already have been racing. One thing to consider is the class level of the returnee. Horses with straight maiden races as 2-year olds returning as lower level maiden claimers, or allowance runners coming back in a cheaper claiming race might indicate a desire on the part of the trainer to move the horse out of his stable. It can signal a 2-year old that didn't develop much over the winter, so be wary of these horses. Look for horses coming back at a level where it appears the trainer has future plans for the horse.

Double class jump (either first off the claim or after a strong performance)

Back in the ancient days of racing, horses that were claimed had to spend 30 days in "claiming jail," meaning they had to race for a price higher than the claiming price if they were entered within that timeframe. Trainers looking for a quick return on investment would often race them up one level before the 30 days expired, but jumping a horse two or more levels up was usually a sign that the trainer expected a big effort. Today, when horses no longer have to serve the 30-day sentence, the move is even more powerful. Similarly, when a trainer double jumps a horse that wins or runs strongly, take it as a sign the horse is well intentioned.



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The big hit in the win pool

Ever see a horse listed at 5-1 on the morning line open up at 8-5, only to see him drift up to close to the morning line odds and win? Often when a horse gets hit early the money is coming from the owner, the trainer, or a betting whale, and it can usually be taken as a sign someone knowledgeable thinks highly of the animal. Seeing a horse drift up or down gradually is usually more of an indication of crowd action. Why would you bet a large sum early instead of feeding it in a little at a time? Simple. The opening low odds will often induce the value bettors to look elsewhere for action, allowing the horse to finish at a

more expected price. Similarly, when a horse gets one substantial injection of win money during the countdown to the post (especially when the injection comes after the horses step onto the track for the post parade) it is indicative of the same thing – someone is taken with the horse's winning chances – and there may already be enough money in the pool to keep many in the crowd from noticing the large bet.

Unusual action in the exotic pools

Serious handicappers prefer doing their own work and making their own selections, but many in the crowd have neither the skill nor the time to effectively handicap a full card. Some people buy tip sheets, but I actually knew people who "charted" daily doubles and exactas – letting the so-called "smart money" do the work for them – and made money. Charting is simply the process of finding horses receiving heavier action in the combination pools than their odds would merit. Betting into the combination pools makes it easier for large bettors to muffle their action, and they have the potential of much higher return on their investment. After all, it's a lot of effort (not to mention monotony) to watch the exacta payoffs rotate for 10 minutes, so there is a low expectation that many people would pay that close attention to prices. Some people I knew would bring stacks of printed matrices so they could enter every price for every daily double or exacta combination. Others would just focus on the first two or three favorites and look for the unexpectedly low payoffs, the "live" horses so to speak. This simple matrix for a hypothetical exacta illustrates the point. The row across the top would represent the odds of the winner, the column on the left the odds of the second place finisher, and the amounts in the boxes the payoffs.

First Horse

	2-1	4-1	6-1	8-1
Second Horse				
2-1		28	36	37
4-1	21		60	60
6-1	27	50		80
8-1	27	55	75	

This abbreviated table shows that the horse with 8-1 tote board odds is paying the same as a horse with 6-1 odds under the 2-1 favorite, and far less than we would expect on top of the 2-1 favorite. We can certainly speculate that the 8-1 horse is well intentioned today.

(continued on next page)

Horses for courses

It's a well-known fact that certain horses become super horses on race tracks that they favor. Most readers will remember Fourstardave, the "Sultan of Saratoga." From 1987 to 1994 – eight straight years – Dave won a race at Saratoga, including five straight years where he won stakes races. On the other hand, he was something like 0-20 at Aqueduct. I'm not sure anyone has an explanation for why Dave favored Saratoga, but it didn't take long for the crowd to embrace him as one of their all-time favorites, and for the track to name a stakes race after him. Saratoga still has a reputation as being a track where previous success is often a harbinger of future success. The same is true for many other tracks. Some horses revel in Belmont's sandy surface, while others despise it. Aqueduct's inner dirt track is so different that I'll usually discount horses that have not shown a liking for it, and similarly discount horses with good form on the inner dirt moving to the main track. I recently spent a few days at Del Mar, and it seemed there were a few race winners each day that ran new tops. Churchill Downs is famous for bringing out either the best or worst in a horse. Plus, trainers are very aware of which horses in their care favor a particular track and will often point them toward that meet. Whatever track you play, consider any horse that has shown partiality to that track, even if it might not appear to be prime physical condition, and vice versa – deeply discount horses that are proven to dislike a track.



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Competent trainer from smaller circuit ships in

It is often the case that horses with good connections get overbet and horses with unfamiliar connections are ignored. But the fact that the connections may not be fixtures on a particular circuit does not mean they should be overlooked. On the contrary, trainers who are highly competent and respected on their home circuits can return big dividends, especially if you can find evidence of trainers who have a history of success when shipping from the smaller track to the larger one. Molly Pearson has been training for 30 years, mostly at secondary tracks like Turf Paradise, Arapahoe Park, and the California Fairs, and has consistently posted winning percentages between 20 and 25. In her career she's had multiple graded stakes placings. In her element, she's a highly competent and successful trainer. She ventures occasionally into the larger California tracks, including Hollywood Park and Del Mar, and when she does it is often with a horse that deserves a second look. Pack Your Bags ran in the sixth race at Del

Mar, a \$20,000 claimer on September 1, 2012, going off at odds of 20-1.

Yes, Pack Your Bags had the Molly Pearson angle and that may have been enough to back the horse, but I'd be remiss if I didn't point out two other things reinforced the horse's potential. First, Pack Your Bags had historical success on synthetic tracks; moreover, he had a win and a second from four starts at Del Mar. Second, his last race at Del Mar might be better than it looked. After leading to the stretch, the jockey lost his whip, and yet the horse only lost 2 1/2 lengths in the last eighth of a mile. So we have a competent trainer bringing in a horse that favors the track and sitting on what may be his best race in a while. Pack Your Bags pressed the pace, took the lead in deep stretch and held off the place horse by the slimmest of margins.



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Scratch the stronger part of an entry

This is a very simple angle to play. When a trainer has an entry (neither horse can be on the also eligible list) and he scratches what looks to be the stronger half of the entry, assume the remaining entrant is live. The concept is positive trainer intention. He wouldn't scratch the stronger horse if he wasn't confident the weaker looking horse had a good chance of putting in a top effort. And, by scratching the stronger entrant, he is sure to bring the odds up. The exception, of course, is if the veterinarian or the stewards scratch the horse.



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Carryover Conundrum

Harness Racing Has Been Delivering on Some Carryovers, But More Work is Needed

By Dean Towers

At last month's USTA Annual Meeting a number of items were tabled and voted on. Next year I hope one more item is added to the mix: an industry betting carryover program.

You've probably heard about carryovers, even if you don't bet the races each day. The phenomenon occurs when no one hits a bet – say a pick 4 – and money is added to the next pick 4 pool. The injection in capital helps alleviate the effects of high takeout on a bettor, making the pool a more attractive wager. This is especially embraced by every day players, with big bankrolls, because they are extremely price sensitive. This is the main reason you see such a jump in handles for these bets on the last flash.

Along with a takeout reduction – something we see far too few of nowadays – a carryover also attacks a major issue in harness racing, pool size. Again, this is mainly a math problem. Let's say you like a pick three with three longshots and the pool size is \$4,000, or \$3,000 after takeout. The parlay for three 20-1 shots for a \$1 bet is \$9,261, or 300% higher than your expected win (if you're the only person to have it). Low pool sizes are deadly for exotic wagering and carryovers help.

Maybe the above explanations don't resonate with you, but they do with your customers. Carryovers work.



Mike Welsch
@DRFWelsch



Following

Over \$500K in Super HI-5 pool for 2nd race. Incredible.

RETWEET
1



4:08 PM - 17 Feb 2016

A \$50,000 carryover last week resulted in \$572,000 in wagers at off time for a bet that averages under \$10,000 in a non-carryover pool.

There's also something very interesting about carryovers that are under-reported and highly misunderstood. For players who concentrate on them, no matter where they are, or what size they are, how they're promoted, they will find them. Case in point, Pompano Park's small carryover, where bettors only had a few minutes to i) find out there

was a carryover and ii) lay down some bets.



Gabe Prewitt
@gabe_prewitt



Following

My mind is still blown on how a \$5k carryover can generate \$46k new money with a 10 minute notice on a Wed night at 10:40 p.m.

RETWEETS
2

LIKES
5



2:22 AM - 18 Feb 2016

Pompano is a track that we'd expect \$460,000 on an entire card (they have done better than that the past year or two). With no notice and a small carryover, \$46,000, or about 10% of an entire evening's handle was bet with virtually no notice.

There have been a lot of inventions that changed the world that were created by serendipity. For example, a scientist who was working on radar during World War II accidentally left a candy bar in a magnetron tube and saw his snack melted quickly. That was the world's first microwave oven and the rest is history. Carryovers were no one's idea, they just happened, and today's customers are hitting you right over the head with a stick; they're telling you this is a huge opportunity for the sport.

It's easy to hope for carryovers to happen, or sometimes create bets like jackpots so they are guaranteed to happen (a short-sighted idea, for another column) but this industry needs more than hit and hope. It needs more than jackpot hoodwink. It needs a proper business plan.

In that vein I propose the industry creates and funds a carryover department. The team will be headed by a manager with strong betting and gambling experience (think Michael Antoniadis or Gabe Prewitt). He or she will be in charge of a few main items:

- i) Manage the distribution, betting materials and marketing of all carryovers
- ii) Run the content for a carryover website and assorted push notification mediums. Work in tandem with member track, ADW, USTA properties and the Converseon social media and email marketing pipeline.
- iii) Study the carryover concept – what works, what doesn't, what bets are more effective, what marketing works, etc. Develop SOP's, best practices, reporting, relay results to tracks.
- iv) Work hand in hand with member tracks to continuously improve the concept in a ["Good to Great"](#) way.

Let's say 25 member tracks fund the initiative with the amount of the average purse for one race. This way – in homage to Bernie Sanders – tracks with bigger purses (likely with slots) who will get the most benefit, foot a little
(continued on next page)

more of the bill. If the average purse is \$15,000, about \$300,000 is raised per year. That should take care of salaries and advertising, and support from the existing USTA staff. Done, easy; one race, one purse, Bob's your uncle, you're funded.

This big benefit of this initiative, however, is that it pays you back. This can bring in hard revenue from day one. If, say, Yonkers has a carryover like they had last week of \$9,000, and \$20,000 of new money is added, but in year one of this initiative that number pops to \$40,000, that's \$20,000 in new handle. Some of this money will be bet on-track, but the bulk at the Big M and other venues, as well as ADW. This is problematic in estimating margin, but for arguments sake let's say 10% of the additional \$20,000 - \$2,000 - is added Yonkers revenue. If a carryover happens once a month and we see those same results, that's \$24,000 in revenue per year, or \$4,000 more than Yonkers invested.

In the broader sense, if you multiply that performance by 20 or 25 racetracks, it can result in millions and millions in additional handle and incremental betting revenue. In a year this concept could be close to self-funding. How many initiatives in this sport are self-funded by handle? Obvious spin-off effects can occur, as well. Because this department is promoting harness betting to other audiences – Thoroughbred bettors, other gamblers who are looking for value – it promotes the sport as a whole. More eyeballs mean more potential longer term bettors, fans and potential horse owners. A recent study into California racing, done by Jeff Platt of the Horseplayer Association of North America, showed handle on the races in all pools during a heavily promoted bet (in this case the 14% pick 5), rose, too; another added benefit.



Gabe Prewitt
@gabe_prewitt



Following

We appreciate the support in tonight's Hi-5:

\$3,060 Carryover

\$33,000 new money wagered

Over \$36,000 in total pool!!

RETWEETS
2

LIKES
5



11:54 PM - 12 Sep 2015

Harness racing invests in the sport, with slot money or other revenue. People buy horses, and trucks and hay. Vets, farriers, tack shops all benefit and are a part of the supply-based ecosystem. The people inside the sport have done their job from that end, and that's all the sport can ask of them. What the sport needs is similar investment on the demand side. Your customers are telling you what they want, and it's up to racing's brain trust to deliver it to them. The above is one way how, and I hope it, and concepts like it, are discussed at industry meetings as deeply as you'll see with other issues today. They can bring in new revenue and new markets that this sport sorely needs.

Record Donation Pool for HANA Contest

Jay Hochstetler kicked off the start of the 2016 Hambletonian Society Grand Circuit Handicapping Challenge sponsored by DRF Harness, Green Acquisition Corporation, The Hambletonian Society, Hoosier Park Racing and Casino, Meadowlands Racing and Entertainment, Northfield Park, The Raceway at Western Fair District, Red Shores Charlottetown Driving Park, Tioga Downs, and Vernon Downs aided by his selection of Mach It Par (\$81.00) in Friday night's Blue Chip Matchmaker Series opener. After the first two evenings, Hochstetler has a total of 164.90 points, 86.20 points over his nearest rival.

With the addition of another Silver Sponsor, Dr. Adam Friedland, the total prize fund for the HANA Harness-sponsored event to be donated to the lucky Standardbred rescues stands at an all-time record of \$6,000.

As is the tradition of this contest, each handicapper chooses a rescue of their choosing. A full list of the rescues and their handicappers [may be found here](#).

On Friday evening, while Sally Hinckley and Dennis O'Hara earned points in all three divisions of the Matchmaker earning 26.60 points, their results were overshadowed by Hochstetler who 111.40 points, of which 107.80 points came from Mach It A Par.

HarnessTripNotes.com

an almost new approach to handicapping

Saturday evening there was a quintet of handicappers (Friedland – 48.80 points; Hochstetler – 53.50; Bryan Owen – 54.20; Matt Rose – 58.30; Gordon Waterstone – 46.95) who scored three winners in the George Morton Memorial Series opener. While trailing in the number of winners, Mark Deutsch with two winners, earned points in all six divisions of the Levy totaling 50.93 points allowing him to keep pace with the top scorers for the evening.

The 2016 Hambletonian Society Grand Circuit Handicapping Challenge continues with the second round of the Matchmaker and Levy Memorial series at Yonkers Raceway on Friday (3/25) and Saturday (3/26). For further information regarding the contest and full standings, you may visit <http://hanaharnesscontest.blogspot.com>.

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The Back Page

We turned the Back Page over to the very talented Vin Rogers again this month.

The Amorphous "Class"

Anyone remember the now-defunct TV show, "Horseplayers"? Contest winning handicapping pros discussed winning and losing – and hinted – only *hinted* – at their favorite methods or angles – e.g.; a winning handicapper is asked how he picked a 15-1 shot in a key contest race. We eagerly await his wisdom, pen in hand.

"Class on the grass" he replies.

But what does he mean by "class"?

He doesn't elaborate; no one did on that show, as I remember it. (Perhaps that's why the network cancelled it only after five or six airings.)

What *did* he mean – what do we mean when we refer to a horse's "class"?

A BBC soccer announcer during a championship tournament, commented that "Form is fickle; class is permanent". Simply stated, some horses are born with the physical ability to compete at a higher level than others.

Fair enough – but as we shall see, not the whole story.

Readers of this magazine will be of course familiar with thoroughbred racing's four basic classifications, i.e. Maiden, Claiming, Allowance, and Stakes. But it is often the differences within those basic classifications that matter when analyzing class.

Those who watch the races on TVG are probably familiar with handicapper-announcer Rich Perloff. Rich usually handles Monday and Tuesdays' sparse racing fare, filling the time responding to fans' often insightful emails, and – more importantly – dissecting the conditions for a given race. For example: a one-mile, \$5,000 claimer run this February at Laurel is "restricted to four-year-olds and up which have not won a race since August 8th, or which have never won four races". Rich would start his analysis by reminding his viewers that all \$5,000 claimers are not the same. In this case, which horses have won a race before August 8th? And which horses have won three races? What was the quality of the three wins?

For many handicappers, this race is simply a \$5,000 claimer. Perloff specializes in condition analysis which is, of course, a form of class analysis.

Brisnet's Ultimate Past Performances include numerical race and class ratings. Thus the handicapper may ignore the "conditions" so dear to Perloff's heart. These computer-based ratings compare the quality of horses competing in a given race – which horses they have beaten, which horses have beaten them.

Bris's Race Ratings quantify the quality of a given field

,e.g., a race with a "race rating" of 115 is a tougher bunch than a field rated 112 – regardless of stated conditions. Thus, two \$25,000 claiming races with similar internal conditions might differ significantly in terms of the ability of the horses competing in those races.

Similarly, Brisnet's class rating identifies the quality of a given horse's actual performance. Thus Horse X's last race might have a race rating of 112, while its performance in that race might be 115. Another horse in the same field might also have a 112 race rating, while its class or performance rating was a dismal 110. (Brisnet race and class ratings are calculated daily for every race run in North America. However, unlike Brisnet's powerful Prime Power ratings, there is, at this writing, no objective data to support the accuracy of these ratings.)

As far as I know, Brisnet is the only handicapping source that has attempted to quantify class; indeed, the first to suggest a radically different definition of class.



Let me suggest an alternate view of the concept that neither negates nor supports the views previously expressed – but was hinted at in my recent piece, "The Theory of Everything" (*Horseplayer*, October 2015).

I'm enjoying a lovely August afternoon at Saratoga. A race is in progress. The horses round the clubhouse turn and head for the back stretch. Suddenly, a rider is unseated. His horse (let's call him Mike) was racing two or three wide, within three lengths of the leader – clearly in contention – but, once the rider is thrown, Mike leisurely drifts toward the outside rail, and essentially, packs it in.

But occasionally – admittedly rarely – I've seen a remarkably different scenario. Another horse – we'll call him Jim – has the same experience, but Jim continues on, passes one, two, three horses, gets the lead and stays there. I have no idea what race or class rating, speed figure, etc., that Jim might have earned for that race, but it really doesn't matter – that was a classy performance.

Think of Zenyatta sizing up the field some twenty lengths behind as the other horses approach the stretch. Field size, pace, running position, (usually dead last) none matter. She'd start that incredible stretch run until she poked her head in front, race after race after race; class to burn!

(continued on next page)

Some horses will stumble or be bumped at the break and quit; others pull themselves together, ignore the trouble and run their race. A classless horse on the lead – often with superior speed figures – quits when challenged while a classy animal perseveres. Horses rounding the far turn in a race on grass are often involved in a rugby-like scrum with a half-dozen others; the classy ones ignore the rough stuff and carry on; others pack it in. (This may also apply to some jockeys!)



So - for me – a significant dimension of any notion of class must include the qualities of versatility, competitiveness, courage, stamina, and spirit; the will to win – qualities that separate the champion from the also-rans, both equine and human.

Handicapper's dilemma?

There ain't no way to quantify this notion of class.

But astute handicappers are doing what researchers would call "qualitative analysis" on a daily basis. I'm referring of course to *trip* handicappers; those who diligently study live races or replays to see how a race is run.

If one is focusing on New York racing i.e., Belmont, Aqueduct, and Saratoga – the readily available charts for those races are thorough, detailed, descriptions of how a race is run, written by experts who make their livings watching and describing races. I read them regularly and bow to their observational expertise; I cannot see what their experienced eyes see when they chart a race; the charts are my alternative to actually watching and analyzing races, either live or readily available replays.

(My experience with charts from other tracks, however, has been largely negative – minimal information – like comparing Tolstoy to Dan Brown.)

If trips and charts are too much for you, try paying close attention to the cleverly abbreviated, space-saving "comments" that appear at the end of a horse's running line in virtually all past performances.

Consider these examples:

6-7 w. upper; willingly
fell to face st. game
stk. btwn; resilient
bulled way out 4 w. upper
4 wide 3/8: never gave up
bid between: determinedly

Willingly, game, resilient – are synonyms for "class"! Conversely, "empty" and "no match" suggest either serious form defects or a horse which badly needs class relief.

I should add that significant trip or chart observations quickly find their way into my efficient Brisnet "Stable Alert" site. So easy – no excuse not to use!

One last and very important source of qualitative data is available in the DRF's "Closer Look" commentary, e.g. – "Sweet Laurel had a start since some of the others last raced and in that one this gal was stuck on the fence and then battled hard..."

These observations by experienced, perceptive pros are welcome additions to the handicappers arsenal.

One more suggestion: the astute "horse whisperers" who make paddock observations at some tracks – I think immediately of Caton Bredar at Gulfstream and Maggie Wolfendale at Saratoga – might consider adding some degree of personality or temperament commentary to their helpful but mostly physical analyses.

In the meanwhile, digest those conditions, experiment with Brisnet's race and class ratings, and, if you're really stuck, resort to the completely undocumented, unscientific and incredibly simplistic Vin Rogers alternate method of class analysis, PURSE SIZE: the larger the purse, the tougher the field – Money Talks!

Good luck!

