

WHO LET THE DOGS OUT?

MOUNTAINEER TIPS & TRICKS

EQUIPMENT CHANGES ON MAIDENS, WHAT'S THE STORY?

HORSE *PLAYER*

MONTHLY

BROUGHT TO YOU BY HORSEPLAYERS ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA

MARCH 2014

**ESQUIRE'S
HORSEPLAYERS:**

**THEY'RE
ONE OF US !**

**In-Depth *With*
Larry Collmus**

TWINSPIRES
Goes After New Bettors

A COOL Derby Dozen

A Lesson from Fifth Grade

By Barry Meadow

After a 9-1 shot wins, what comments do you usually hear in the grandstand?

"They really put one over. What a bunch of thieves."

"What did I miss? Let me study those past performances again."

"How could the crowd have let him get away at that price? What idiots!"

These comments typify the wrong-headed thinking that dooms so many players to losing.

The first guy figures the whole thing is rigged. Everyone on the inside is simply laughing at him. Now, if only he could get that good inside information for himself.

The second guy assumes that since the horse won at 9-1, some clue must have escaped him. If only he were a better handicapper, he could have collected that \$20 mutuel.

The third guy, the one who actually cashed the ticket, believes he's the smartest fellow on earth because he hit a longshot. Now he's ready to parlay his big score, or maybe quit his job and turn pro.

Let us return to fifth grade for a moment to see the most probable reason that the 9-1 shot won the race. And it has nothing to do with fixed races, or bad handicapping, or brilliant handicapping.

The teacher puts 10 socks in a paper bag: four black, three white, two red, and one blue.

She has each kid reach into the bag and pull out a sock; record the color, then put the sock back in the bag for the next kid to try. After all 30 kids get a turn, the teacher asks for a show of hands - how many picked a black sock, how many a red, etc. Thus we learn the heart of probability theory: Every sock has some chance to be picked, but the black socks will be picked more often than the blue sock.

Due to the classification system at the racetrack--\$16,000 claimers face \$16,000 claimers and horses with Beyers around 70-80 generally face other horses with Beyers hovering around the same numbers - in every race; most entrants have at least some chance to win. Maybe not a big chance, but some chance nonetheless. The question then becomes not *who is going to win the race* - since in a hundred scenarios, many different winners may emerge - but *what should the odds be for each horse?*

In other words, which is the black sock and which is the

blue sock?

When we dip into the bag and pull out the blue sock--the 9-1 shot - it usually doesn't mean that the bag was rigged, nor did we fail to understand all the socks, nor are we incredibly gifted sock-pickers. No, something that figured to happen one time in ten did happen. There may be no lesson to be learned at all, other than that sometimes you reach into a bag and pull out a blue sock.

Sometimes you pull the blue sock out twice in a row, occasionally even three times, but not very often. And sometimes you fail to pull the black sock out 15 straight times but not very often.

If you bet that your next grab will be a blue sock, sometimes you can go an awfully long while before this happens. It doesn't mean you suddenly forgot how to handicap. It's just math. Sometimes, losing streaks on long-priced horses can be long indeed.

The quest for us as handicappers is to find horses that are overlays - going off at better odds than they should be according to a professional handicapping analysis. All our work should be geared towards trying to estimate what the true odds should be. If we can do that with some accuracy, all we need do is wait until that blue sock is not offered at its true odds of 9-1, but 15-1. Or maybe till that black sock is not the 3-2 odds it really should be, but 2-1 or 5-2.

If we can do that, and we can wait, we can win.

A complication is this: You think a horse should be 3-1 while your buddy thinks he should be 8-1. By keeping records of how your estimates actually do, you'll get a handle on how accurate you are at assessing races. Then you'll need to record how your supposed overlays actually did. For instance, if half the horses you gave a 50% winning chance to actually won 50%, that's good - but if most of those winners went off at 3-5, while the 50 percenters that went off at 8-5 won only 20%, that's not so good. You get better with practice, although this is a lifetime struggle, and puzzle.

There are several ways to help determine if your horse is worth betting. If you make a line, wait for horses that are a certain percentage above this line (e.g., a horse you make 5-1 who goes off at 6-1 is marginal, but if he goes off at 8-1 you may have an overlay). If you rank horses in order, if you make a horse the second choice but the public makes him the fourth or fifth choice, you may have an overlay. If your most-likely-to-win horse isn't favored, you may have an overlay.

Generally, if a horse is an overlay to win, he's probably also an overlay in the double, exacta, trifecta, and other

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pools as well--and if he's an underlay to win, he's probably underlaid in the other pools, too. Checking the board for those bets that display the probable odds (such as doubles and exactas) will usually verify this.

Understanding the socks analogy can help keep you on an even emotional keel. This is a lifelong story, and there will be periods where everything goes right, or everything goes wrong. When things go right, it doesn't necessarily mean you've mastered the game. And when things go wrong, it doesn't necessarily mean you won't turn things around the next day--or the next race.

About the author - [Barry Meadow](#) has spent more than 40 years in the gambling world. His first book, *Success at the Harness Races*, was published in 1967. Later he worked as a handicapper and racing-magazine editor, contributing articles to publications ranging from *American Turf Monthly* (where he currently has a monthly column) to *Sports Illustrated*, where he wrote an article on mule racing. For five years in the 1980s, he gambled full-time on the harness races in California before authoring *Professional Harness Betting*.

In 1988, he wrote his best-known book, *Money Secrets at the Racetrack*, which is generally acknowledged as the definitive guide to money management at the track. For more than 20 years, until he retired in 2011, he played the thoroughbreds daily, betting major dollars everywhere--racetracks, satellite facilities, racebooks, betting exchanges, and rebate houses.

For seven years during that time, he also published *Meadow's Racing Monthly*, which featured large computer studies of handicapping factors and systems, as well as investigative pieces; the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* called Meadow the "Ralph Nader of the handicapping business." He also found time to write *Blackjack Autumn: A True Tale of Life, Death, and Splitting 10s in Winnemucca*, a witty and insightful account of his two-month trip playing blackjack in every casino in Nevada.



First-Time Starters: Blinkers on or Off?

There was a discussion on Paceadvantage.com this month about equipment and first time starters. Does blinkers on mean the horse is ready to roll and a good bet? Does blinkers off mean the trainer is using the race for education? Opinions varied. HANA's President Jeff Platt scoured his database and looked at the last 13 months of maiden races with first time starters only.

ALL FTS BROKEN OUT BY BLINKERS TRUE/FALSE:

Value	P/L	Amt Wagered	Roi	Wins	Plays	Pct	Impact	Descr
FALSE	-5240.30	26680.00	0.8036	1375	13340	.1031	1.0435	NO BLINKERS
TRUE	-3688.60	12444.00	0.7036	558	6222	.0897	0.9079	WORE BLINKERS
TOTALS	-8928.90	39124.00	0.7718	1933	19562	.0988	1.0000	ALL FTS

For more well bet horses, i.e. horses under 10-1 and under, the gap narrows.

BY BLINKERS TRUE/FALSE:

Value	P/L	Amt Wagered	Roi	Wins	Plays	Pct	Impact	Descr
FALSE	-1051.60	7198.00	0.8539	799	3599	.2220	1.0128	NO BLINKERS
TRUE	-470.60	2964.00	0.8412	315	1482	.2126	0.9699	WORE BLINKERS
TOTALS	-1522.20	10162.00	0.8502	1114	5081	.2192	1.0000	ENTIRE SAMPLE

As with any angle, it pays to subset trainers and their philosophies to try and gain an edge. However, overall, blinkers on tends to be a negative, whereas if well bet, it looks like a wash.

Please check the "back page" section at the end of the Horseplayer Monthly for unique stats by equipment by trainer.

Notes from the HANA Desk

Derby Time.....

With the Derby only about ten weeks away, we needed something you might not see in some of racing's big publications, so we went a little off the grid. **The Wireplayers Derby Dozen**, featured this month, is always entertaining. It's a list created by a few guys and gals whom if you call them horse betting degenerates, they will smile and shake your hand. In addition, when we asked **J.J. Hysell** if we could feature her to five and she said yes, we were thrilled. Thanks!

Hello Larry & Congratulations.....

Our goal in the e-magazine is to shed light on interviews, or handicapping angles, or good stories that might not get as much play in the mainstream press, and we were happy to add the voice of **Neal Benoit** this month. His website, Gettingoutofthegate.com, is excellent. His interview with **Larry Collmus** is top-notch and we're happy to carry it here.

Low Down on the Mountain.....

If you see **Mark Patterson at Mountaineer** sometime and ask him a question, expect to get an answer. Our eight question segment with Mark this month about playing the smaller tracks - particularly night time signal stalwart Mountaineer - turned into the handicapping equivalent of *War and Peace*. The handicapping information Mark gives out in the piece is second to none, and completely interesting. Thank you, Mark. Your passion for the game is infectious.

Quick Notes

Thanks to **Jeremy Clemons** from Twinspires for his interview this month; he's a player, a lot like we are. A hearty thank you to our regulars for some excellent writing; Jarod, Bruno, Barry, Garnet, and a new addition from **Premier Turf Club**. Thanks to our friends **Derby Wars** for a neat interview on the success of bigger games and of course, we appreciate our sponsors. Please visit them by clicking directly on any of their posted links, or ads.

Next Month....

Get ready for the sixth annual 2014 HANA Racetrack Ratings Issue. The results of our work – data tabulation on field size, takeout rates, signal fee grades, pool size and types of bets - will be exclusively released in Horseplayer Monthly. If you have never seen the ratings, please visit last year's sortable spreadsheet [here](#).

Thanks for reading, sharing, and offering suggestions. Remember, if you'd like the magazine delivered to your inbox each month, [please click here](#). You can join HANA at that link as well. Both are 100% free. Good luck at the windows this month from everyone at Horseplayer Monthly.

Our cover: A huge thanks to Candice Curtis. We're horseplayers. Desktop publishing is above the pay grade.

Handicapping and the Dogs

By [Bruno De Julio](#)

Bruno is a bloodstock agent, horse owner-breeder, owns Racingwithbruno.com and races with partner Galen Ho'o and other partners in New York, Canada, Kentucky, Florida, etc.

The Dogs (d) out designation on a set of PPs is an often overlooked handicapping factor in determining a workout's quality on any surface—dirt, synthetic, or turf—as handicappers have to play Sherlock Holmes to make sure they have to have accurate data and details to form a proper opinion.

Dogs out simply means a temporary rail or cones were placed a distance off the inner rail to preserve a fresh strip of grass or dirt for afternoon racing, or to allow some of the grass to get a respite from daily pounding.

Dogs are primarily used on turf courses, but can be also be placed on a muddy or drying out main track in an effort to save the inside part of the track from being chewed up during morning training hours.

Dogs out is universal notation in your workout lines listed as (d), however, the (d) does not tell you how far the dogs were out from the rail.



In California, the inner rail may have already been placed 36 feet out, then the dogs may be another 24 to 36 feet away from the inner rail; making the final distance about 72 feet from the actual rail.

Palm Meadows (PMM)—the very popular training center for south Florida racing—has grass training five to six days a week, on any given day the (d) can be placed from 6 feet to 120 feet out.

For handicappers to accurately assess grass works around the dogs, they need to know how far the dogs are out. Obviously, if a horse is traveling around the dogs set at 120 feet he would return a far slower time than a horse

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traveling around the dogs set at six feet. That's elementary, my dear Watson.

Horse #1 worked on the turf over a period of four weeks; training on a turf course with dogs up:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Dogs out in feet</u>
:51.70	(d) 56
1:03.30	(d) 108
1:03.00	(d) 72
:48.30	(d) 12
1:02.00	(d) 25

Horse #2 worked at similar distances over a 4 week training period, also on a turf course with dogs up:

<u>Time</u>	<u>Dogs out in feet</u>
:37.55	(d) 12
:49.55	(d) 12
:54.75	(d) 120
:54.45	(d) 120
:48.35	(d) 48

If you looked only at naked times you would be missing a key ingredient to the works. Horse #2 twice worked around the dogs at 120 feet and you can see how slow the times were.

I know the first question that comes to your mind, why can't you adjust? Simply put: you can't!

Trainers instruct riders to move at different speeds through the turn depending on the distance dogs are set; horses also differ in how they travel through a turn at different dogs' placement and expend different amounts of energy. Adjusting times cannot be done with any kind of accuracy. Also, time doesn't mean everything on turf -- it's a how they accomplish the move that's important.

Horses running with the dogs set at more than 25 feet go exponentially slower through the turn, as much as 3-plus seconds or 30-32 lengths slower. Traveling at the top of the turn, more than 100 feet out from the inner rail can be a very taxing experience whereas traveling around the dogs set at 25 feet or less allows horses to use centripetal force to their advantage and accelerate through the turn, thus having faster times.

The work of horse #1, running 1:03.30 at with the dogs out at 108 feet was quite an achievement. Handling the extra distance and the torque of running so high on the crown of the banked turn still put together a very respectable time for the distance.

What if horse #1 faced a horse in the same field that showed a 5f work in 58.60(d) on the grass? The popular assessment would be that the :58.60 work on the grass was better than 1:03.30 of horse # 1; but what if you knew that the 1:03.30 was achieved with dogs out at 120 feet, and the :58.60 work was around the dogs set at 6 feet? Big difference in distance covered and most likely price on the board.

Palm Meadows is one of the few training centers in America that offers training on grass for all levels of horses: 4

maidens, allowance, claiming, etc. If it has four legs and is stabled at Palm Meadows, it can work on grass. Payson Park and Fair Hill most likely are the same. However, none of them publish how far the dogs are out.

At Gulfstream, the situation is a little different, as only stakes horses are allowed to train on the grass. Grass works are allowed only at the top outer ring of the turf course, approximately 72-108 feet out from inner rail and may also have dogs out from that highest rail setting to make it even a more daunting task, but that's not all:

Jan 22, 2012 GP 5f 1:02.90(d) Work Comment: ~ **On our watch: 55.3 from the half-mile pole to the wire** in one of the easiest turf moves we've ever seen with the **rails out 108 feet and further outside the cones**. Making this work essentially on the outside fence; he was having fun with the rider by switching leads every few strides because he wanted to do much more than he was allowed. His ears were flicking back and forth and he just loped along easily to the wire, then galloped out all the way to the 3f pole. Phenomenal.

Jan 15, 2012 GP 5f 1:00.45(d) Work Comment: ~**from the 5f pole with the rails out 108 feet and further outside the cones in 26.4, 45.3, and to the wire in 1:08.1**. Came home for the final in 22.3, galloping out **easily 6f on the outside fence in 1:24.3**. Very nice.

These two works took place at Gulfstream Park. Note we highlighted how far the cones were out and what was on our watch. The January 22 work we timed in 55.3 for a half mile. Note the final time given.

Again, look at January 15 work and note our time from the pole: 26.4, 45.3 for a half and 1:08.1 for five furlongs and out 6 furlongs in 1:24.3. We loved the work and how the horse did it visually. Then, look at the official final time in one-hundredths!

The works belonged to a developing young turf horse in 2012 for Dale Romans named Little Mike, who won the Sunshine Millions Turf on January 28, 2012.



Little Mike winning the 2012 Breeders' Cup Turf at Santa Anita Park - photo by [Penelope P. Miller](#), [America's Best Racing](#)

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About these works on the Gulfstream Park Turf:

Feb 19, 2012 GP 5f: 59.7b (d) Work Comment: ~ last to work over the lawn (**about 108 feet out between the rails and the dogs**): walked to the front stretch and stood his ground (almost refusing) for several minutes before the outrider came over and served as a tow-truck. Once he did break off from the **5f pole**, it was nothing more than a leg stretching maintenance move - as the trainer intended - on our watch in **14.1, 27, to the wire in 1:07.3, galloping out in 1:26.1**.

Jan 8, 2012 GP 6f: 1:11b (d) **worked five furlongs in 1:06 flat around the dogs plus rails at 72 feet**. Worked well and we were sitting with the connections. Rajiv Maragh was on board and he loved him.

The above horse referenced was UptownCharlybrown for trainer Eddie Coletti.

Gulfstream has a policy to adjust times using a standard formula for grass works. A 106 five furlong work was adjusted to 1:11 flat on January 8. The February 19 work was a 1:07.3 for five furlongs adjusted to 59.7.

Now, understand, because of the slow times with horses running so far off the inside, the works may not fit the criteria in the Equibase Workout Database; and may not be publishable. The system won't accept a 6f work in 1:24.3; but on the other hand adjusted times can be grossly misleading to a horseplayer.



Here are grass tabs from Gulfstream and Palm Meadows

Gulfstream, Sunday January 26

Gulfstream, Sunday January 26

Four Furlongs Surface: Turf (dogs out 96 feet plus dogs) Track: Firm

Kingston Bay (KY) Orseno, J. 46.68 b

Partyllnightlong (NJ) Broome, E. 47.09 b

Five Furlongs Surface: Turf (dogs out 96 feet plus dogs)

A P Elvis (MD) Campitelli, J. 1:00.56 b

Dashing David (IRE) xxxx 1:06.46 b

Six Furlongs Surface: Turf (dogs out 96 feet plus dogs)

Mystic Love (MD) Campitelli, J. 1:12.44 b

Pretty Fast times at Gulfstream Park on the grass. I don't know if the time for Dashing David from Ireland, 1:06.46 around the dogs, is adjusted or not. I find the reported times a bit confusing.

PALM MEADOWS TRAINING CENTER January 29th, 2014

Three Furlongs Surface: Turf (dogs out 72 feet) Track: Firm

Great Cross (KY) Contessa, G. 40.05 b

Four Furlongs Surface: Turf (dogs out 72 feet) Track: Firm

Bird Tap (KY) Wilkes, I :53.00 b

Coexist (KY) Tagg, B :49.95 b

Dukati (KY) Penna, A. :54.00 b

H Town Brown (KY) Kenneally, E. :51.40 b

Pink Nightie (FL) Kenneally, E :51.25 b

Sayaad (KY) McLaughlin, K., :51.90 b

Theros (KY) McLaughlin, K. :51.90 b

Thomas Hill (KY) Contessa, G. :53.25 b

Tie Dye (KY) Kimmel, J. :49.95 b

Five Furlongs Surface: Turf (dogs out 72 feet) Track: Firm

Aussieaussieaussie (KY) xxx 1:04.05 b

Cantintero (PA) Ward, W. 1:04.05 b

Cuppa Joe (KY) Lynch, B. 1:02.30 b

Dido (KY) Motion, G. 1:06.05 b

Ellie's Prince (KY) Lynch, B. 1:02.30 b

Hobson's Choice (NY) Toner, J. 1:03.25 b

In His Kiss (PA) Motion, G. 1:06.05

Interpol (ON) 1:03.90 b

Queenie's Song (KY) Motion, G. 1:03.90 b

Spring Again (KY) Ward, W. 1:04.05 b

That's a Kitten (KY) xxxx 1:04.20 b

Tiz Sardonic Joe (KY) Kenneally, E. 1:03.40 b

Unhedged (FL) Bush, T. 1:04.05 b

When comparing naked times of these horses when handicapping, the first gut instinct would be to pay close attention to the Gulfstream Park turf works. Some of those GP horses worked fast, and on paper it looked like they love the surface. How is one supposed to like a horse going 1:04.05 on the turf at Palm Meadows?

If you don't know that one horse has an adjusted time and the other was working around the dogs at 72 feet, a naked time with no adjustments, you would make the wrong assumption and decision

I am not saying that Gulfstream is wrong and Palm Meadows does right; all I am saying is that because dogs/cones distance from the rail is not disclosed publicly for every work, and turf times at Gulfstream not announced as adjusted, it gives the false impression to players that Palm Meadows turf course is deep and lush while Gulfstream is fast and hard.

In reality, that couldn't be more wrong. Palm Meadows is

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as firm as any turf course I have seen. The difference is the placement of the dogs.

The same can be said about times on the Oklahoma turf course at Saratoga. Horseplayers must have access to dogs out each and every day of turf works. Some horses at both Palm Meadows and Oklahoma turf at Saratoga work inside the cones on the rail on the same day that horses are working outside at 48 feet on a given day.



Saratoga – photo by [Penelope P. Miller, America's Best Racing](#)

So, you could have one work in 58.4b on the turf and the rest would be in 1:04 range. The crews at Saratoga's Oklahoma track and at Palm Meadows are excellent at giving you the (d) up on the ones around the dogs. So, the horse inside the dogs gets a 58.4b only, the one outside the dogs receives a 1:04b(d).

One fallacy of this practice is that the horse inside the dogs will get a bullet as the workout rankings do not differentiate between dogs or no dogs; again, a misleading piece of information.

Again, this is no knock on anyone, Gulfstream's works on the turf are computer program friendly for the distance, thus, an adjustment is made, but if taken at face value can be damaging to a horseplayer's decision making process. One thing, I don't understand, since I am not privy to the formula is how some people can rattle off splits, like 12.3, 23.4, and 34.4 on a work on an adjusted time. Maybe I am not that smart.

Turf works can be a big mystery to some but if you get your magnifying glass out and find the right place you can get how far the dogs were out on a given day, you too, can say it's elementary my Dear Watson.

Note: BrunoWiththeWorks and Racingwithbruno publish every turf work with approximate distance dogs are out per each and every turf work.

Q & A With...

[Jeremy Clemons](#) – Vice President of [TwinSpires.com](#)



Q: What is your background in gambling? Do you like to play the horses, poker, casino games?

A: I was introduced to horse racing at an early age by my father. My best memory of that time was on my second trip to Churchill Downs when I used the past performances to uncover an exacta that paid over \$100. I was 11 years old and didn't really care about the money but it was very cool to treat the both of us to a steak dinner. It was the experience of using information and knowledge to help win the game that shaped my gambling foundation. I only play pari-mutuel games of skill like horse racing and poker as opposed to house-banked games of chance found at a casino. Like most horseplayers, I enjoy big event days with competitive racing. I also enjoy the strategic nature of poker and would consider myself a serious recreational player. I have cashed in a World Series of Poker event and played in the Main Event of the WSOP.

In addition to my experience as a player, I do have a graduate degree in Equine Business from the University of Louisville. My favorite class in the program was taught by economist Dr. Richard Thalheimer and explored the supply, demand and pricing behind all forms of gaming including several lively debates about the optimal takeout rate in horse racing.

Q: Horse racing continues to want - like many other businesses - new customers. What are a few tactics TwinSpires uses to try and land them?

A: With [TwinSpires.com](#) we have tested many different
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ways and different times of the year to cultivate interest in horse racing outside of the core audience. What we have learned over the years is the Kentucky Derby is far and away the number one entry to the game. It is much easier to introduce new players to the game around the Kentucky Derby than any other time of the year.



*The Kentucky Derby - photo by [Penelope P. Miller](#),
[America's Best Racing](#)*

We wish there were other events throughout the year, including the Breeders' Cup, that registered more with the non-core audience. Given this learning, we concentrate most of our new fan initiatives on leveraging the Kentucky Derby and [TwinSpires.com's](#) status as the Official Online Wagering Site of the Kentucky Derby. During the run up to the Derby we ramp up our marketing and media spending in non-core channels which is both good for [TwinSpires.com](#) and good for racing. The Derby attracts 16 million viewers on NBC and we view it as our job to get as many of those viewers as possible to have a bet on the race.

One interesting data point on this subject comes from our new member survey. On an annual basis, 30% of our new customers tell us they are new to wagering on horse racing. This data point drives home to me that we are doing our part to grow the pie and not just shifting existing players from the tracks and OTBs to online wagering.

Q: Where and how are you promoting the \$1M showdown?

A: One of the ways we attempt to leverage the Kentucky Derby is through the [TwinSpires.com](#) \$1,000,000 Kentucky Derby Showdown. The Showdown started Saturday, February 8th with the Robert B. Lewis Stakes from Santa Anita Park and follows the official Road to the Kentucky Derby point series. If any of our players can manage to make a winning show bet in the 19 prep races plus the Kentucky Derby, they will win or share the \$1,000,000 grand prize. This is the third year of the Showdown and the first year we had a player hit 17 races in a row so we definitely feel like this can be done. There is also a \$10,000

Guaranteed cash prize pool as well as the opportunity to win tickets to the Kentucky Derby.

Q: Do gambling advertising laws constrict what you can do to go after newbies?

A: Online gaming is still in its infancy in the United States and unfortunately a legal, licensed and regulated company like [TwinSpires.com](#) can still face significant advertising, marketing and operational restrictions. Many marketing channels and ad networks will lump us in with illegal offshore operators because they have a general policy to not accept gambling ads. Some of the major television networks will allow an ADW to buy advertising as long as the creative doesn't encourage someone to bet. Imagine the back and forth between my team and the network on that.

The most damaging example of this is with credit card transactions. New players prefer to use credit cards more so than core players who have the confidence to trust our EZ Money (Electronic Check) deposit and withdrawal options. Visa still has a very restrictive policy regarding approving online gaming transactions.

Q: Online poker had a grassroots underground user base long before movies like *Rounders*, or having a regular Joe or Jane win a World Series of Poker. However, those mainstream avenues were instrumental in moving the game to new heights. What's online horse wagering's "Rounders" or WSOP?

A: The poker explosion was really organic with several factors contributing to the boom including the invention of the hole card cam, wide television distribution through ESPN and Travel Channel as well as the ability for viewers to immediately go play online. The story of Chris Moneymaker (what a name for his role in poker history) where an everyman accountant parlayed a \$39 online satellite into the WSOP Championship and \$2.5 Million pay day provided the fuel to the fire. Not sure you can manufacture that type of inertia but racing should be willing to embrace new opportunities as they come up. One example is the *Horseplayers* show on the Esquire Network. While I don't expect the impact to be as significant to racing and [TwinSpires.com](#) as the televised poker boom, I do think similar mechanics are in place. Television reaches a broad audience and generates awareness about dynamic personalities competing in high stakes tournaments for the opportunity to win life-changing amounts of cash. Viewers can [immediately go online to participate in similar tournaments](#), hone their skills, and ultimately qualify for the very same tournament they see on TV and maybe be the next star of the show. We practice what we preach in this regard as [TwinSpires.com](#) developed a specific marketing plan for the show which included product placement and commercial

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spots during the show. The commercial spots were tailor made for the opportunity featuring one of the cast members, Michael Beychok, letting viewers of the show know how they could be like him and parlay a TwinSpires.com qualifying tournament into a Million Dollar prize. We also created a dedicated landing page, www.beychokstory.com, which includes a two minute documentary about Beychok's journey and encourages new fans to get involved in TwinSpires.com tournaments.



Michael Beychok – Beychokracing.com photo

Q: We often hear at the Horseplayers Association of North America, that new players can be very intimidated learning how to bet the sport of horse racing. They can't start on a 10 cent/20 cent table and get better. We all know the game is complex and it's sink or swim. What can be done to entice them to stick with it as they learn?

A: That's definitely a good question. One thing I have seen fail is freeplay sites that simulate normal pari-mutuel wagering. It is often misunderstood that PokerStars and Full Tilt were mining the freeplay version of FullTilt.net and PokerStars.net for real money players after they worked up their confidence and knowledge of the game. The freeplay .net sites were primarily set up to allow mainstream advertising and the actual conversion rates were low. Similarly when we analyzed the data at Youbet.net's freeplay site, we didn't see much conversion.

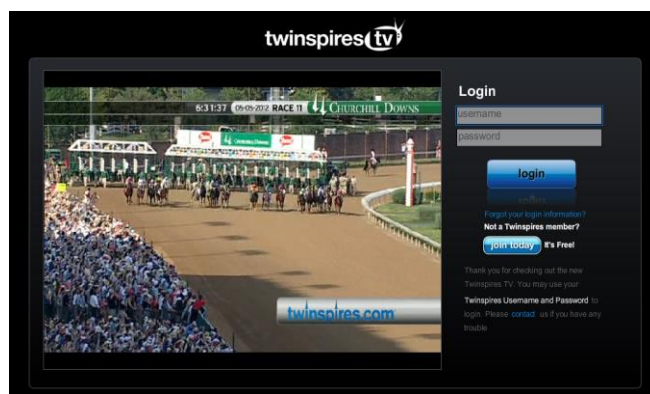
One thing I am optimistic about for new players is low buy-in tournaments. For example, we have a \$10 tournament every Wednesday at TwinSpires.com and for that \$10 investment players get to compete in eight different races. The objective in the contest is simply to pick the one horse the player thinks will finish the best in the race. This is a simple concept for a new player to learn. They are not inundated with all of the complex pari-mutuel wagering options right off the bat. Tournaments are growing in popularity and offering ever-increasing prize pools so I am optimistic on-boarding players through horse racing tournaments can be a simple and effective way for new players to learn the basics and then grow into the pari-

mutuel pools.

Another strategy is to teach new players a specified wager set that focuses on a high probability of cashing tickets. The last thing we need is a new player depositing \$20 and taking a shot at 10 cent supers or chasing a mega payoff with extremely small Pick 6 tickets. Focusing on the WPS pools and exacta boxes as a starting point makes much more sense.

Q: ADW wagering has been a hot topic and online betting - just like online shopping, or fantasy sports - has been growing in leaps and bounds. What are a few things that you offer the new horseplayer when they sign up that they can't get at the racetrack?

A: For new players we definitely break down barriers that exist when thinking about a visit to the track or OTB. We don't charge for parking, admission and even our Brisnet Ultimate Past Performances and Insider Picks and Power Plays tip sheets are free. Our TwinSpiresTV product is preferred by new players because it is a visual interface that allows players to handicap, bet and watch the races all in one experience.



TwinspiresTV Login Page

The other factor that is important is the added convenience of mobile and tablet wagering. As an industry we need to understand that our customers' lives are busier and more complicated than they have ever been and we can't expect them to rearrange their life to make every day of a live race meet. Products like TwinSpires Mobile allows players the opportunity to bet and watch races they otherwise would have missed thus helping them stay engaged in the game.



Cover Story

Horseplayers: We Do What They Do



By [Jerod Dinkin](#)

The new reality television program “Horseplayers” (Tuesdays – 10PM – Esquire Network) has created a lot of buzz in the horse playing community. Oft completely overlooked, the betting customer is getting some long awaited media coverage. Through commentary in blogs, Twitter, forums, and countless other sources, opinions abound about the new show.

By now, most of you have either seen the program or read something about it, so the purpose here is not to reintroduce the show, the premise, and its characters, but to delve into the major sources of discussion in the Twitterverse / blogosphere / racing media. I’m a little surprised by the volume of criticism leveled at the show.

The two major gripes seem to be as follows:

Criticism #1: “Certain cast members don’t have the handicapping chops to be representing horseplayers”

This is a) untrue and b) nonsensical. The point is not to find the best handicappers in the world and follow them doing 12 hours of work a day compiling data, studying past performances, creating figures, and quietly waiting for the right races to play to be profitable, this is about entertainment to a general audience. The cast members selected for the most camera time include two NHC winners (John Conte and Michael Beychok), a group of contest veterans (Peter Rotondo Sr. & Jr. with Lee Davis), and a handicapper that has managed to finish second twice in the Breeders’ Cup Betting Challenge in Christian Hellmers. This group has the pedigree. The most important single aspect of this show is to find good handicappers that can hold the attention of the audience. Mission accomplished.



Christian Hellmers – Breeders’ Cup Photo

Criticism#2: “There are too many inaccuracies with the show”

Inaccuracies and/or embellishments are a complete non-issue. If you think other reality programs aren’t completely full of the same playbook tricks, then you’re missing the point. Yes, it may offend our horseplayer senses that the show listed Groupie Doll as 20:1 in the Cigar Mile to create more drama, but so what? The lay audience doesn’t know the difference and those of us that do should take it with a grain of salt.



Groupie Doll - photo by [Penelope P. Miller](#), [America's Best Racing](#)

For horseplayers to get any exposure whatsoever in a mainstream type of production is a positive, regardless of what the individual day-to-day handicapper may like or dislike about it. The show is intended to appeal to a broad audience, and in doing so, follows colorful characters in a general way as not to alienate a wider potential draw. It's a "reality" show with the primary intent to entertain and it's accomplishing that goal. Heck, the show even managed to garner a *somewhat* positive review in the New York Times. Yes, the very publication that actually wrote in a November 24th, 2007 editorial that the OTB in the city is, “a system that encourages people to squander the rent money or, worse, their lives.” This is the same publication that employs sportswriter and serial opportunist /alarmist / self-promoter William Rhoden. Yes, that William Rhoden, the guy that called horse racing a “blood sport” and showed up on NBC’s Preakness coverage in the wake of Eight Belles breakdown to liken it to “bull fighting”.

The Human Side

“Horseplayers” has moments that exemplify how much the typical handicapper loves the equine athletes and this is an important element to convey to the audience. One of the most misunderstood notions about us is that the horse is nothing more than a means to an end, a number on a Racing Form. After all, we’re just degenerates, right? I’ve been around some hardened gamblers and seen them cry when a horse breaks down – it means something to most

(continued on next page)

horseplayers. In one of the episodes, Peter Rotondo Sr. is practically moved to tears recalling having seen Secretariat live at Belmont Park in 1973. This is a big part of why we love the game and this shouldn't be forgotten. We all have a goose bump moment like that; my first was Inside Information winning the Distaff in 1995. Every so often I watch Rachel Alexandra's Kentucky Oaks and can feel the hairs stand up on my neck.

Level Setting Expectations

I had a conversation with a friend of mine from college that is a true part time horse racing fan. He plays the Derby and Breeders' Cup and might make a trip to Saratoga every other year, but that's it. His ADW account remains unfunded for the balance of the year. I received a text from him last week that read, "Have you seen Horseplayers? I'm pretty energized by it. I think it's time to do some handicapping". Therein promises some tremendous potential value – giving part time players the impetus to come off the sidelines and jump in the game.

This time around, we need to avoid the hyperbole and unfair expectations that have been associated with past mainstream media endeavors revolving around horse racing. Instead of treating a movie (Seabiscuit), a television show (Luck), or a potential Triple Crown winner as helpful ways of boosting popularity, all three were framed as potential saviors to an industry. This is a misleading narrative. True change will come with bold institutional level action, not from 90 seconds of coverage on SportsCenter or a hit movie. Let's take "Horseplayers" for what it is; an entertaining program that may boost tournament popularity and land some additional customers.

I really enjoy the show "Horseplayers," and I'm not just saying it because since my back appeared in the program for a millisecond. I've been to the NHC and HPWS several times, and I constantly have to explain to co-workers and friends what these events are, how they work, and what they are all about. Now, perhaps I can say, "it's what those guys on Horseplayers are doing" and just maybe for once, the lay public can finally relate.

About the author - Jerod Dinkin is a 36-year-old proud father of two who has spent 12 years as a Director of Real Estate, expanding two Fortune 300 retail chains. The 2006 Canterbury Park Handicapper of the Year is a seven-time HPWS qualifier, a three time NHC qualifier, and a HANA Board Member. You can follow Jerod on Twitter [@J Dinks](#).



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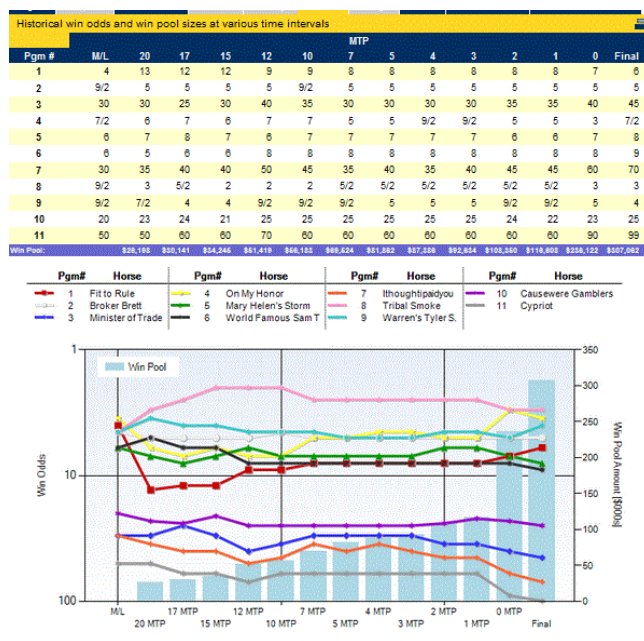
Quick Hits on the NHC

Since our last issue, the 2014 edition of the National Handicapping Championship (NHC) was held, and it was [won by Jose Arias](#), who took the lead on the opening day of the competition and never relinquished it on his way to claiming the \$750,000 top prize.



Jose Arias – @SurfsideOTB photo

Following Arias' victory, there was a great deal of discussion on social media and chat boards about what happened in the last race of the competition. In that race, which was the final event on the January 26 program at Santa Anita Park, eventual winner Fit to Rule went off at odds of 6-1 after being 8-1 at one minute to post and 7-1 at zero minutes to post. You can see the by-minute odds for the horse at the picture below.



Odds photo – courtesy of @Pullthepocket

The late change in odds prompted talk that Arias (or somebody in his camp) had "hedged," knocking Fit to Rule's odds low enough to where none of Arias' rivals could catch him if they played the horse (eventual runner-up Tony Brice had selected Fit to Rule).

Michael Beychok, a former National Handicapping Championship winner, addressed the "hedging" talk and other topics in his NHC "pre-recap," and that is available by [clicking here](#). A few days later, Beychok posted a full recap of the NHC, and you can access that by [clicking here](#).

In the end, Peter Fornatale [interviewed](#) Arias, and not only was there nothing untoward in his huge win, he didn't even hedge. HANA and horseplayers everywhere would like to offer their congratulations to Jose Arias on a well-fought and tremendous victory.

Lenny Moon also examined the NHC in a three-part series on his [Equinometry blog](#).

Part one, titled "Show Me the Money," discusses the history of the NHC, looks at the prize pool for the contest, and talks about the total takeout of the entire competition, which Lenny calculated to be 36.47%. That piece is available by clicking [here](#).

Part two, "NHC Qualifiers: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly," is Lenny's look at the various ways to qualify for the National Handicapping Championship, and what they are doing right and what they are doing wrong. You can read part two by clicking [here](#).

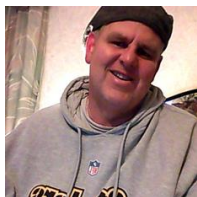
Lenny concluded with part three, "The NHC Tour: Not an Equal Opportunity Organization." That piece looks at the overall National Handicapping Championship Tour, which as Lenny details was and is, "marketed as an incentive for players to participate in more NHC qualifying events throughout the year with the goal of growing the NHC prize pool." You can read that by clicking [here](#).

One should note, as Lenny wrote in concluding his final blog piece, "Over the course of this three part series you may have gotten the impression that I have a very negative opinion of the NHC and those that run it. That is not the case at all. The NHC is not a charity for horseplayers and never will be. The NHC is far from perfect but it is by no means completely flawed."

After reading Lenny's take, Tom LaMarra of *The Blood-Horse* interviewed Keith Chamblin, an executive with the National Thoroughbred Racing Association who deals with running the NHC. In that interview Chamblin says, "They're passionate about it. "We're passionate about it. We want to be transparent. We can't structure the event properly without input and participation from horseplayers. We're doing a pretty good job at growing the event. I'd like it to be \$5 million or \$10 million someday. I think it can be...We've got to do a couple of things differently. The prize pool for instance – we don't have it right yet. By no means is it perfect. We continue to tweak it every year."

To read LaMarra's interview with Chamblin in its entirety, please click [here](#).

Mountaineer Insider With...



Mark Patterson – Simulcast Feed Co-Host at Mountaineer Casino Racetrack & Resort. The meet begins March 1st.

Q: Mountaineer has been a night-time staple for Thoroughbred horseplayers for years now. How does a small track, with small purses in West Virginia, command a decent handle all these years? What do you think you're doing right?

A: We may be vanilla- our cards are basic, inexpensively constructed and unpretentious - but people like good vanilla, and we're a familiar brand. We've been racing since 1951, and despite amped up competition from neighboring states, we're not going away anytime soon.

Serious commitment is required to master any track, and hardcore players consider us worth the effort. For one reason, we offer the fullest fields possible given our expansive ten-month schedule and the horse shortage felt nationwide. For another, our smorgasbord of precise conditions tends to create parity in those fields. Plus, our signal is widely distributed, well presented, and pitched somewhat to advanced bettors. The kind with no wagering curfew, so racing nights, specifically certain weeknights - taking the road less traveled - has positioned us to earn a fan base much bigger than our purse structure might warrant. And it's a zealous fan base. Check out the forums, check out the buzz. You can't FIND a more talked about track than Mountaineer.

And beyond that, the mountain just has an undeniable mystique, a certain cool, if you will. We've been called a cult-track, and that's hard to define, but decent sized pools - it's business as usual here for a card to handle 11 or 12 times its purse payout - combined with the perception, at least, that we're far enough from the beaten path to require rugged and individualist handicapping, makes us a unique challenge.

Q: It's not a stretch to say Mountaineer's track can change, providing a bias. Any tips on when and where we'll see a bias at the Mountain? Any tips on how to handle it? How long do they last?

A: For baseline comparison, Mountaineer's main track plays particularly in favor of speed at sprint distances, while pacesetters win routes at a rate merely close to the

national norm. That's important to realize, since early leaders can rule one-turn events on a given card, yet the distance races be swept by late-runners.

It's interesting that you bring up bias, since Mountaineer has an anti-rail reputation among many players I've talked with. Apparently, our riders are onboard, too, since they rarely scrape paint, unless that's the only option. Thus, any lane-bias must extend out two or three paths to even be detectable. Subjective notes posted to the website indicate some degree of dead-rail on about one-fifth of all cards, so the perception seems warranted.



"The Mountain"

There's a signature trend I've termed the "bid-lane bias," and it embodies both Mountaineer's dead-rail tendency and speed-favoring nature. The term applies because, while kickers spin their wheels, and quick speeds that clear and cross-over fade, aggressive pressers buffered out from the rail gain winning traction on the far-turn.

Moisture content factors into how the track behaves. Deep closers do sometimes have the best of it, and that tends to happen when we're in a drought, or bitter cold which gives the Mountain main track that distinctive clumpy texture. The strip more often caters to speed, but just occasionally to inside trips, with those biases characterized by enough water to bind the cushion. On evenings when speed just can't win, an anti-rail trend is usually the culprit.

Extreme biases should dictate betting style. When speed or the rail is dead, the normal flow of racing is disrupted, and it's impossible to cash consistently. That's the time to stab for big scores. A final piece of advice: watch the far turn in sprint races to detect possible path bias. Fields race more bunched and horses more often abreast in sprints, and mid-turn is where runners begin to tire and are asked to accelerate.

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Q: Small tracks tend to have a set of good jockeys and a set of, let's say not so good jockeys, unlike the big time tracks. How important do you factor in jockey switches?

A: Mountaineer has a deep colony, meaning that a list of untouchables would be short. I could expound on the strengths and weaknesses of our top riders: T.D. Houghton's aggression decides lots of races, but he can be had in deep stretch; Luis Rivera is great from the gate and impossible to out-finish, but prefers wide posts and a spotless trip, etc. etc., but those views have been put out there on the show and too widely disseminated to offer much value.

The key is to understand why jocks draw certain assignments. It's an agent's game at Mountaineer. Billy Johnson, Tim Freking, and Gary Patterson come to mind as power brokers who tie up the lion's share of live barns. Each is well-connected, has a sharp eye for talent, and can sharply increase a jockey's income. Thus the best agents attract the best riders and vice versa. It's a vicious, self-perpetuating cycle wherein loyalty and even long-term ties are routinely cast aside. Check the online condition book to see who hustles what book, or simply watch the show because, believe me, Nancy and I take pride in putting their business on the street- shifting allegiances, spats with trainers, everything.



Trainer intent can be gauged by familiarizing yourself with a barn's depth chart. Ranked riders often turn down sore mounts, and trainers operate on the sometimes misguided assumption that hungrier jocks will risk asking an ugly-mover for its utmost, so when a Loren Cox, for instance, resorts to a Renzo Diaz, rather than an available Luis Rivera, you can fade the horse without hesitation, no matter how impressive its form. At Mountaineer, the psychology of riding assignments can point to scores.

Q: Do you have any favorite riders at the Mountain that might be under the radar? Who do you like, for example,

taking over on a speed horse?

A: With the top agents in cahoots and hoarding mounts like a game of keep away, it's hard for maverick riders to make headway. Even so, Augustin Bracho, Luis Quinones, and a still-formidable Jason Lumpkins sometimes rattle the status quo. And before getting sidelined by personal issues, Clayan Millwood caught my eye with some late-running longshot winners. Those guys are journeymen, but this place has been starving for a good apprentice. Domingo Chacaltana might fill that void. He's patient, nervy, and retains the bug for most of this year.

Q: Can you speak a little bit about shippers? Do you have any rules of thumb for shippers, say out of a 4.5 furlong sprint, or two turn sprint at Charles Town, or from Tapeta at Presque Isle?

A: I once did an extensive piece on small-track shippers for *Horseplayer Magazine* that might be illuminating. I'll send a copy to anyone who contacts me in care of the racing office or at 304-387-8378. And I've just completed research on Mountaineer's feeder tracks for an upcoming blog entry on our official website (www.moreatmountaineer.com).

In our seasonal rotation of feeder tracks, fit horses from Turfway Park have the advantage when we first open in March, Midwestern runners start filtering in around May, and Presque Isle invaders pour in after our sister track goes dark in September. The latter dominate, but chalky odds result in a low ROI. I'm no fan of synthetics, but contenders switching from Tapeta seem to always fire and find boundless reserves of stamina. Shippers from Thistledown outnumber those from any feeder track and were a great bet in 2013, winning 30% more than their statistical share and - counting an extreme longshot or two - generating a 22% flat bet profit. That's a marked change from an oval considered a class-rung below us, but with Ohio purses now bolstered by slots, the balance of power could continue to shift more dramatically than players adjust for. How Charlestown horses perform here depends largely on distance and running-style. Since short races are a staple there, but less common at Mountaineer, dash specialists shipped from Charlestown to run five furlongs encounter the quickest we have and are often out-footed early. Sent just a sixteenth farther here, however, Charlestown front-runners find pace relief at a workable journey. Two-turn sprinters from Charlestown likewise do well at 5 ½ panels, in this case by mustering stronger kicks on the cutback.

The success of new shooters also varies according to race-type. Invaders tend to fare best here in lower, more restrictive conditions-races that in some cases aren't written where they ship from. "Open" races, on the other hand, are full of sharp local runners with an established liking for the surface. That's a tough nut for intruders to crack. Eventually, though, broad tendencies become
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broadly known and get worked into the odds, so the real test is evaluating shippers on a case- by- case basis. At a track Mountaineer's size, that can be tricky, since not everything is what it seems. I recommend working from lifetime past performances because arriving runners from larger tracks have sometimes declined to the point where true running- style and distance preference have fallen off traditional 10-line form cuts. And with aging runners, especially, it's enlightening to investigate their histories. Bankrolls earned in restricted races, for instance, can give a false impression of class, and win totals run up long ago may be irrelevant. I've seen invaders that hadn't scored for four or five years get pounded below even-money here.

Keep in mind, though, that what an invader has done at its best, or even recently, is NEVER the primary issue. It's all about what an animal brings to the table tonight, and that begs the classic question: what's the horse doing here? Has it been sold to a local outfit? Or brought here by out of town connections? Have they shipped in for just this race, or been allotted stalls? Also, lots of dead money goes to invaders performing suspiciously well at bigger tracks. It's often a trap to take those forms at face value. It may seem counterintuitive, but my top prerequisite for backing a shipper from a bigger track is that the horse MUST NOT HAVE BEEN FINISHING IN THE MONEY. That way, I at least understand the motive for seeking softer competition.



Q: Plenty of big name trainers ship to the Mountain and are heavily well bet. Are these sucker plays, or do these barns click at such a huge rate you can key them and make some headway at the windows?

A: There's no policy that fits all cases, but the success rate of invading trainers, both prominent and obscure, varies wildly and often differs from how they perform elsewhere. Some horsemen habitually wait one race too long to send a horse here. They underestimate the quality of our fields and mistakenly think damaged goods can win at the Mountain. Others bring sharp horses ready to peak. It may sound obvious, but the best indicator of how an invading barn will perform is how they've done here in the past. In general, the higher profile horsemen you asked about have more success in non- claiming races. They might be clueless

on how to steal a cheap purse without getting the horse claimed, but recognize maiden special weight or non-life allowance races as easy paydays for slumping, but physically- sound big-league prospects. It's less explainable when low percentage trainers from smaller or similar tracks bring mediocre stock here and can't lose. This doesn't endear me to horsemen or fellow officials, but I think these human form reversals stem from non-standardized medication rules. Look, I'm not saying anybody sets out to cheat. But, either drug regulations vary too much from state to state, or certain trainers exploit blind-spots in certain jurisdictions. I know this ruffles feathers, and talking heads aren't supposed to go there, but count me skeptical of overachieving trainers and inexplicable strike-rates. And I'm talking nationwide, not specifically about the Mountain.



Q: Anything else you might think enlightening or interesting for players about the Mountain?

A: Yes. There are repetitive tote-patterns at Mountaineer that can be exploited. Gamesmanship in the win-pool and the counter-moves that result make the tote volatile and necessitate a knack for predicting final odds. There's a small-scale whale out there somewhere - not Moby Dick, think Baby Shamu - who bets only obvious favorites and bets them early to make the price seem unacceptably low. In many cases, the strategy works, and the second likeliest winner becomes the true underlay by post time. The best wagering opportunities come when you think BOTH chalks are beatable.

Since West Virginia is the only state that still pays a minimum \$2.20, we get bridge jumpers. And they've blown a fortune on Mountaineer. My impression is that our biggest show bettors handicap in some systematic way that does recognize an innately superior horse, but lacks the finesse to vet forms and situations for potential landmines.

I'd like to inform your readers that we resume racing March 1 and have dropped Fridays in favor of Wednesdays this year. And please check out my blog, entitled "Patterson's Perspective," that includes archived editions covering a wide range of topics. Mountaineer's website also has bias notes posted by Nancy McMichael, my co-host on Mountaineer's handicapping show.

Big Participation in a Weekly \$50K Game



Q&A with Mark Midland of [Derby Wars](#)

Q: Although you have regular decent sized games with a larger than average buy-in, this was really your first bigger money game with a big buy in. Were you surprised at how many people spent over \$800 to enter?

A: The \$50,000 level is a great game which really gets players excited. The February 8th contest had a terrific response with over 50 players qualifying in and about 10 buy-ins. By keeping the field limited to 67-entries, it really makes the entry special - whether you qualify or buy-in. The point is you've got a real shot - and with a \$20,000 first prize it makes for a heck of an exciting afternoon.

Q: How important were the satellite contests in filling the field? What were the terms on the satellite contests (buy-in etc.), and did you find many of your smaller than average players taking a shot to get into the field?



A: We had two-round satellites starting as low as \$18 for 11 players, where the winner moved on to a second round with good odds (3 of 17). The regular satellites ran everywhere from \$47 to \$115 per entry. Yes, satellites are great in that everyone can participate. The winner,

Connie Hoetger, won exactly this way. For \$18, he won a second- round entry, then qualified for his \$50K entry. So he literally turned \$18 into \$20,000!

"I played the round one \$18 qualifier and five days later I cashed for \$20,000! Where else could you do that? Derby Wars ROCKS!" - Connie Hoetger, \$50,000 Game Winner

The other thing for the better players to keep in mind, is that qualifiers really open up the entries to beginners and smaller players. So I believe there's an inherent advantage for seasoned contest players.

True, NHC winners Michael Beychok and Richard Goodall were in the field as well as NHC Tour winner Brent Sumja, but even some of the direct buy-in players were somewhat inexperienced tournament players, just jumping in for the excitement.

Q: Does this tell you there is a market for larger players on the contest circuit, outside the NHC, and as a regular weekend game?



Defending Big 'Cap Champion Game on Dude - photo by [Penelope P. Miller](#), [America's Best Racing](#)

A: Yes, we definitely think so. We've already added two more \$50,000 games. The next one is set for March 8th, Big 'Cap Day!

Follow HANA on Twitter or Like HANA on Facebook!



J.J. Hysell's Derby Top Five

J.J. Hysell has covered the Triple Crown trail and horse racing since 1997. Hysell founded a website dedicated to covering the pursuit of the Triple Crown in Spanish and English that received interest worldwide.

As a handicapper, Hysell has a proven record when it comes to the Triple Crown trail, with the Kentucky Derby winner ranked in the top two for the past five years. Hysell pegged the Derby trifecta in 2011 and gave out the exacta and the winning five-horse superfecta box for *The Courier-Journal* in 2013.

You can follow here on twitter [here](#), or read her excellent blog [here](#).

1. Conquest Titan

The runner-up effort in the Holy Bull was a bit taxing for the lightweight colt, but he's back on the work tab and ready for the Florida Derby. As I mentioned prior to the Fountain of Youth, it was an astute move by trainer Mark Casse to await the 1 1/8-mile race and skip last Saturday's test; not only does the longer distance work in his favor, Saturday's track appeared to favor speed, and this son of Birdstone is the definition of a late closer.



Mark Casse – Norm Files Photo

He's in need of points, but if he can get there, he has a true affinity for the Churchill Downs surface. If there's an abundance of pace in the Derby – and it looks like it is setting up that way – this colt will be right in his element.

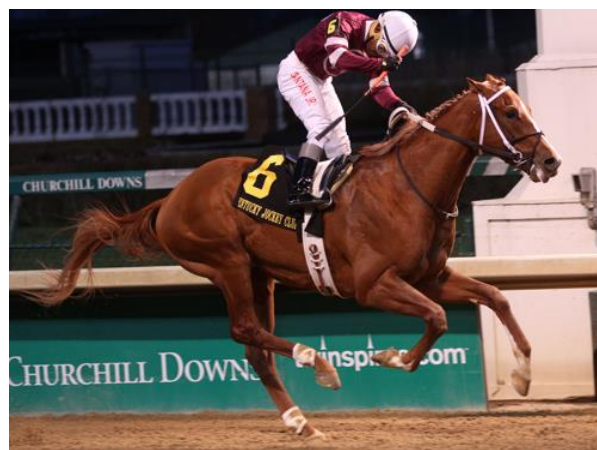
2. Top Billing

I tabbed him as Shug McGaughey's best Derby prospect after his debut romp in the slop in December. He proved he's worthy after his sharp closing effort for third on Saturday's speedy Gulfstream track in the Fountain of Youth. He appeared lost at the start when he broke last from the wide post, but once he got his momentum, he passed horses with an eye-catching acceleration. He's one

who won't have an issue with a 20-horse field, the 1 1/4-mile distance or general Derby adversity, as McGaughey has often noted his good mind and demeanor. He's a son of Curlin, and so far, Curlin's progeny have only gotten better in their three-year-old seasons as they develop.

3. Tapiture

Unlike some of the other Tapit progeny on the trail, this colt boasts a pedigree with multiple stamina influences on the dam side.



Tapiture - [America's Best Racing](#) Photo

He was a bit green in the stretch of the Southwest Stakes, but he appeared to shy from the whip as opposed to being leg-weary. This is a colt who is continuing to develop and it's likely we haven't seen the best of him yet. Another plus? Like Conquest Titan, he is proven on the Churchill Downs surface.

4. Indianapolis

This Bob Baffert trainee is a wild card. He missed the San Vicente because of a cough and that delay could be a problem scheduling-wise, but there's still time for this son of Medaglia d'Oro to rack up the points. He's shown nothing but potential and was uniquely professional in his two wins. His pedigree suggests he'll take to routing, but it's unclear if 1 1/4-miles is in his scope. There's a lot of catching up to do, but he's one to keep an eye on.

5. Constitution

Like Indianapolis, he's lightly-raced with two starts and has yet to try stakes company, but that Gulfstream allowance group he beat Saturday was a mighty promising group. He did not start his career until January, so he'll face the "Curse of Apollo" if he makes the gate, but this colt has a pedigree tailor-made for Churchill Downs. He didn't have it easy in his debut when he had a troubled start, yet he overcame that issue with aplomb and won going away – he's not one-dimensional. The Todd Pletcher trainee has a powerful stride and I really like how he digs in and maintains his speed in the stretch. The second-place finisher from his allowance win, Tonalist, is also one to watch if he remains on the trail.

A Profitable Idea for Trips & Trainers



By Art Parker

Now is the time of year to pay attention to maidens, particularly what we all call the First Time Starter (FTS). It doesn't mean you bet on them, necessarily. It is a great time to observe them especially when they become Second Time Starters (STS). The majority of unraced horses are no longer two years old. Those two year olds remind me of human teenagers; young, stupid and unpredictable. The bottom line is that more unraced horses now have enough maturity to start racing and a poor performance is not totally attributable to youth.

The overwhelming majority of those in the FTS category fall into the STS category because only a limited number of horses can win, obviously. But those that move into the STS category often have excuses due to a bad trip in their first race. If you in any way depend upon trip handicapping or believe that horses can have excuses, then these races are the ones where you have pad and pencil ready. For the next few months there will be tons of maiden races that will yield great trip information that is invaluable.

A long time ago a coach told my football team not to underestimate our opponent in the second week of the season. "Most improvement in competitors comes between their first and second games," he said. I believe it is true in horse racing, or at least the opportunity for the most improvement is between the first and second races of a runner's career.

If you accept the premise that the second race may demonstrate the best improvement and a horse had a rough trip in his/her first race, then you are well on your way to cashing a ticket. Maybe.

After you made the trip notes and you feel sure that a horse is going to improve then you must look in the other notes to find the icing for the cake. The other notes tell you if the trainer is good with those we call STS, and if they are, what is their normal plan of attack?

Last week I decided to rummage through all of my Keeneland files looking for those trainers good with the STS. The following very recognizable and successful names have enjoyed multiple winners with STS at Keeneland over the last few years: Rusty Arnold, Wayne Catalano, Al Stall, Jr., Eddie Kenneally, Ken McPeck, Graham Motion, Todd Pletcher, Dale Romans, Tom Proctor and Mike

Stidham. I would be proud to have any of these guys train for me. But most important is understanding how these guys they do it. What are the patterns to their winning second time starters?



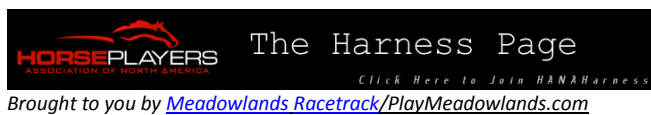
All but two wins from all of these trainers with STS at Keeneland came after the horse was off for at least 25 days. Many of these did not run after their debut effort for at least 35-40 days. In other words, they did not rush their horses back to the track. I couldn't help but jump in to my Woodbine file to check out the trainer, who in my opinion, is the best STS trainer in the business-Reade Baker. I noticed the same patience is exercised by Baker.

While each horse may be different, the best trainers regardless of their record with FTS, must obviously take the time to analyze, plan and determine the very best course of action with great patience for STS. An awful lot can be learned from a horse in its first race even if the trip is a clean one.

Now let's put it all together. A FTS has a difficult trip and you have it noted, waiting for a possible play when he/she comes back. You know it is worth the note because the trainer has a good record with STS. Also, the trainer does not rush his horses. When the day comes you make sure it all adds up. And if it does, well then you have the makings of a good spot play.

And when you cash a ticket after all of this, you realize that the practice of handicapping can be worthwhile...and is a skill-based game.

About the author - Art Parker is the author of "Keeneland Winning Trainer Patterns," which will be released next month for the upcoming spring meet. He blogs regularly for BetPTC.com.



A "Trident" of Handicapping



By [Garnet Barnsdale](#)

A number of different topics have been swirling around the grey matter upstairs for a while as I search for a pertinent topic for this month's column. What to choose, what to choose I keep thinking finally narrowing it down to three possible ideas: "Bad morning line? Good for you," "solving the class mystery," and "What to look for when singling a horse." Strangely enough, I came across one – that's right one! – race at Woodbine the past weekend that I thought somewhat fit all three topics. So you, faithful readers, get three for the price of one this month.

Let me explain. Recently I joined the fledgling website [HarnessRacingAmerica.com](#) as a resident handicapper and have started out by handicapping Woodbine's Saturday night cards which are posted on the [harnessracingamerica.com](#) website and all the pertinent social media sites. While analyzing Woodbine's eighth race last Saturday night, I came across a horse that I thought had been wildly underestimated in the morning line.

That horse was Lucky Terror, and he had been rated at 7/1, which was second longest in a field of seven. The first thing I noticed was that Lucky Terror, who last season was a win machine, getting his picture taken 12 times in 33 tries, had beaten that night's morning line favorite Frankies Dragon (5/2) three starts back. Both had since moved up in class and failed, thus the reason for the drop back down, which we will discuss in more detail later. The fact that Lucky Terror had beaten the morning line chalk the last time they raced in a class where they both looked competitive was surely a valuable piece of handicapping info.

Digging a little deeper, the manner in which Lucky Terror won also hit home for me. He was aggressively driven first-over and survived a 27.1 third quarter to prevail by a nose over millionaire pacer Mystician while Frankies Dragon rode the rail and finished fourth. Perhaps because the Dragon didn't have room to race to his best effectiveness the superiority of one horse over the other was still inconclusive. That being said – it didn't take a wagering veteran of several decades to see that this

morning line was at least a little out of whack.

Taking a look at some of the others, the second choice in the morning line, Classic Gent, was narrowly beaten late the week before by ultra-sharp Cougar Hall, which was a good effort following a win a couple of classes lower the previous week. Still, he was picked off after leading through a soft 57 flat half, so, there were chinks in his armor as well.

What does all this mean and how does the apparently "bad" morning line help us as bettors? This is just theory, but I think there are enough bettors out there that believe the morning line is a sort of talent assessment of the field that they would as a result wager on Frankies Dragon and Classic Gent over Lucky Terror, thus contributing to an overlay, in this case a very generous \$9.10 mutuel. What they should know, of course, is that the morning line is a prediction of how punters will bet a race; no more, no less. Still there are those bettors out there that don't understand the difference. I imagine if Lucky Terror had been 2/1 in the morning line instead of 7/1 he would have paid closer to \$6, meaning to me that the 7/1 quote contributed to a 50% premium (\$9 vs. \$6) at the cashier window.

Let's discuss how the "class" factor came into play in this race. As noted, Lucky Terror three starts back won, beating Frankies Dragon. That forced Lucky Terror to step into the top Preferred class for two consecutive starts, which meant racing against the white hot Apprentice Hanover who hasn't lost a race for a couple of months. Two consecutive sixth-place finishes, most recently off a failed first-over trip, which is another of my favorite angles, allowed him to drop into a *lower* conditioned class than he raced for in his winning start three back.

Since the WEG circuit greatly reduced the number of claiming classes and races there are several conditioned levels that horses bounce back and forth between and it's important to keep a keen eye on where, how and when horses are spotted. The fact that this horse was able to effectively drop below the level where he last won only 28 days previous is significant. The sixth-place finishes in the top class were not a negative to me; Lucky Terror stayed sharp facing superior stock and by finishing out of the top five was able to take this plunge.

Supporting evidence from the winning race which showed him beating not only tonight's morning line favorite, but also classy millionaire Mystician, showed he more than fit in this class. There are many cases where horse win, are moved up, fail and drop back into the class where they won or even a class lower as in this case. Quite often they go off as overlays as this one did. I haven't done a physical study, but I do know based on my own successful wagers that this is a potent current angle on the WEG circuit.

This race and horse also fits into the final topic of the discussion which I saw posted as a question in a Facebook group I frequent. "What makes a good single?" I suppose

(continued on next page)

each bettor might have a different answer to this question.

When I look for a single, though, I try to identify a horse, just like Lucky Terror, that stands an excellent chance of winning but is undervalued in the morning line and likely to be underused in horizontal wagers. This works even better if the horse appears in a latter race in the sequence and the "money" can't be seen in advance by the betting public. In this case, Lucky Terror took action and was obviously used in pick 3 and 4 wagers, still, an overlaid 7/2 shot kicking off the ticket isn't the worst way to go, is it?

In this case, Lucky Terror, followed by a couple of 11/1 shots and an 8/5 winner in the finale, produced a \$3350 pick 4 payout – a score we'd all be happy to go collect.



Lucky Terror – New Image Media Photo

I hope you enjoyed this three-pronged topic approach...until next month...may all your wagers be sound and your luck mostly good.

About the author - Garnet has been an avid fan, handicapper and bettor of harness racing for almost four decades. He is an honors graduate from the Humber College School of Journalism (1988) and contributes to various print, broadcast and web media with feature articles, columns and selections. Garnet is a co-host of North American Harness Update which airs every Friday night (9 p.m. Eastern) [here](#) and his Woodbine/Mohawk selections can be found [here](#). Garnet was also selected by Standardbred Canada as the 2014 "I Love Canadian Harness Racing Fan Club" Ambassador.

WhatWins.com - The End of Redboarding?

What Wins, the unique harness handicapping software, based on years of research by Dave Vicary, is taking on social betting. If you are the type who likes to play the races on social media, sign up at Whatwins.com, click play, handicap, and then choose to tweet out your choice. The software fills in the race, horse and track right in your tweet screen for you.

Dave believes it may help the sport of harness racing grow, but even if not, at least it could begin a system that puts an end to redboarding. Phew!

Nash to Play for Standardbred Rescue

Meadowlands Racetrack offers spot in prestigious World Harness Handicapping Championship to help raise money and awareness

When the world's top horseplayers convene at Meadowlands Racing & Entertainment in East Rutherford, NJ on April 19 to compete in the World Harness Handicapping Championship, an estimated prize pool of more than \$50,000 will be up for grabs.

But one prominent player won't be playing for himself; he'll be playing for the health and care of retired racehorses.

Rusty Nash, recently the runner-up in the Horseplayers Association of North America (HANA) harness handicapping tournament, was given a seat in the WHHC by the Meadowlands (\$800 value) in exchange for agreeing to donate any winnings in the event to a Standardbred rescue organization. The first place prize in the WHHC is \$20,000.

"Rusty Nash has been a valued player in previous Meadowlands contests and we are happy that he received the \$800 charity buy-in to the WHHC Final, said Rachel Ryan, WHHC Contest Director. "The Meadowlands and HANA have enjoyed a strong partnership and have worked together to promote racing and wagering at the Meadowlands as well as supporting horse retirement and rescue charities. This event is the premier betting contest for Harness players in North America and we hope this sparks further interest in the World Harness Handicapping Championship."

"The HANA Harness Handicapping Contest has raised - through its sponsors - over \$7,000 for retired racehorses the past two years. The Meadowlands' stepping up to the plate to give one of its top handicappers the chance to earn even more for the horses is truly appreciated. We wish Rusty, as well as all the participants in the World Harness Handicapping Championship, good luck" said HANA Harness Director Allan Schott.

The WHHC is a one-day tournament, with a welcome reception the evening prior.

Players may earn a seat in the WHHC through a qualifying event at a partner wagering outlet or through direct \$800 buy-in. The WHHC contest format requires players to bet 10 races: their choice of seven Meadowlands races, plus three designated mandatory races from partner tracks. Players keep all pari-mutuel winnings. Prize payouts are to the Top 10, with an estimated prize pool of \$50,000.

Registration deadline is 10 p.m. on Thursday, April 17. For the contest entry form and complete rules visit www.PlayMeadowlands.com.

(Meadowlands Racetrack Release)

WORLD HARNESS HANDICAPPING



SATURDAY

APRIL 19

CHALLENGE FORMAT

\$50,000

estimated prize pool based on 100 entries

\$800 TOTAL FEE:

\$500 entry fee + \$300 bankroll

**Player's choice of 7 Meadowlands
Races plus 3 designated
mandatory races**

\$30 MIN BET PER RACE; \$100 MAXIMUM.

**For a complete list of WHHC
Qualifier dates and Final rules visit**

PLAYMEADOWLANDS.COM

1 Racetrack Drive • East Rutherford, NJ 07073

Management reserves the right to modify/cancel contest at any time.



MEADOWLANDS
RACING & ENTERTAINMENT

Chatting with Collmus

We would like to thank Neal Benoit from Getting Out of the Gate for letting us run his two-part interview with track announcer Larry Collmus.



Please visit Neal's website, which includes interviews with other racing personalities such as Maggie Wolfendale, by clicking [here](#), or to learn more about Neal, please click [here](#).

Q: What's your preparation for an individual race?

A: It varies quite a bit. On an average day (like today) I won't do a lot of pre-preparation because it's not that hectic during the day. On the weekend I will do a little more, like going over the names of the horses the day before to make sure I can pronounce their names. A day like this (Thursday) I'll take it race to race. The major part of the preparation comes when they come onto the track. That's when I memorize all of the horse's names by the color the jockeys wear (their silks).

There are exceptions. Like when I call the Triple Crown races for NBC. I start preparations for the Kentucky Derby in February. I watch all of the top three-year old races around the country to get a feel for the different horses. A couple of weeks before the Derby I start studying the silks, because I'm going to have to call 20 horses. You need to prepare because anything can happen in a race like that. And, at the Kentucky Derby this year we had a muddy racetrack. Wet tracks can be a bit of challenge, because all of the silks turn brown. I tell people, when they turned for home and Orb made his winning move and I gave him the big call, I was 80% sure it was him. There were four horses with red and white and through a process of elimination I figured that's probably him.

After telling this story, the horses for the next race started to come onto the track. Larry proceeded to memorize the names by saying them out loud and repeating their names multiple times. Then he says, "I like to look at them when they're right in front of me so I can get a good view of them, but I also want to look at them when they are out of order. Because ok, so you know who they are ... but do you really know who they are? You know 1 through 7, but do you know 1,4,2,6, etc.?"

Q: Do you use the numbers on the saddlecloths at all?

A: No, because you can't always see the numbers. For example, if there are three horses across the track together, you can't see the numbers. Also, as long as that horse is owned by the same guy, the silks are going to be the same every time he runs. So, I become familiar with that horse having seen the colors before and I associate those colors with that horse.

The most preparation I've ever had to do was for the Breeders' Cup this past year. For that I was making flash cards with the cutout of the silks (with the actual colors) on one side and the horse's name and information on the other. For days I was going through and memorizing them.

A moment later, Larry put the headset back on, and proceeded to call the race. His transition from speaking to me to being the track announcer was seamless. It was impressive to listen to Larry call the race in person, especially knowing that he learned all the horse's names and silks in a span of about ten minutes ... while talking with me. At the conclusion of the race he read the payouts, information about a claim made in the race, and some details about the upcoming races. He turned off the microphone, and we continued. Talk about multi-tasking!

Q: Is there anything unusual about Gulfstream Park, when compared to other tracks?

A: This place has some quirks. The one mile races start on the other side of those new barns they've built, and I can't see the start of those races. So I have to look at the TV like everybody else for the first 1/8 of a mile. And they're coming straight at you on the video. I'd prefer to look through my binoculars. And anytime they run a mile and sixteenth on the main track, they end the race there (he points to a different finish line further up the track). So I have to call the end of that race off that TV because there's no way to tell who's in front from this angle (in the booth).

Q: How did you get interested in this line of work?

A: I grew up in Maryland and my father put in the sound system at Timonium Race Track. He operated the sound for the track and the Maryland State Fair. He would leave me at the racetrack in the summer and if anything went wrong I'd get hold of him. I ended up hanging out in the press box where the announcer was, and I thought the horse racing end of things was really cool. I was going to high school at the time, and I was watching highlight shows of the top races around the country. I'd listen to all of these different race callers, with their own styles. I thought this is kind of neat, something I'd like to try to do. So, I'd be in the press box and I'd mimic the calls I heard

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from these different announcers and people suggested I think about becoming a race caller. They found a room for me, and on the weekends I'd practice calling races. I got a pair of binoculars and a tape recorder, and I'd practice. One day I was at Pimlico and the general manager heard me, and he asked me if I want to be the backup when they go over to Bowie in the summer and call one race a day over the microphone.



Pimlico - photo by [Penelope P. Miller](#), [America's Best Racing](#)

That's how I first did it. I was only 18 when I called my first race there. I called one race a day for their summer meet.

Q: Do you ever look at the Daily Racing Form Past Performances (PPs)?

A: Yes, in fact let me bring them up for the next race.

Q: What if you notice in the PPs that a horse is usually on the lead, but today is languishing at the back of the pack, do you mention that in your call?

A: Yea, that's news. It's a story – especially if it's an obviously different thing, like a pronounced frontrunner who breaks poorly. I remember calling the Breeders' Cup Classic two years ago, and saying "Game on Dude, who we thought would be in front, is not, he's sixth right now." That's part of the story.

Also, when I'm doing the NBC races, I'm only calling for TV and that's a subtle difference. You're calling for a different audience, and you're also part of a television broadcast in which they show all of these features and story lines. You should incorporate those story lines into your race call. For example in the Kentucky Derby, you might mention Kevin Krigger because they did a story about him earlier in the show. Or Rosie Napravnik has so-and-so in fifth, and where's Calvin Borel ... he's won the Kentucky Derby all these years. I watch every one of those features they show. I'm in all of the

production meetings and watching the features and all of this stuff gets in your head, so let's get that into the race call somehow. You're still calling a race, but you're also reporting on the storylines within the call. I think it's fun, I love it. I always enjoy doing TV calls.

Q: Where are you located when doing these TV calls?

A: It varies. In the Preakness I was out on the roof in the elements, and it rained and was cold has heck last year. When the weather is good it's great, when it's bad it's terrible.

Q: Do you ever use replays in your preparation?

A: Yes. I like to use that if I can't come up with a horse's pronunciation. First I try Google, to see what a word means, or if it's a foreign word. But, sometimes I still can't come up with it. So if the horse has run before I'll listen to what the announcer called it in a previous race. But, if they've never run and I'm completely baffled I'll try to track down the trainer. Sometimes they'll say, "I don't know."

Last year we had a very nice turf horse, Rydilluc that won a stakes race. First time he ran I pronounced it "Ri-dill-ick" and it turns out it's named after the owner's three kids, Ryan, Dylan, and Luke and is supposed to be pronounced "Rye-Dill-Luke". There's also a website "Forvo" that helps with pronunciation of foreign words if it's an actual foreign word. It will say it back to you, how to pronounce it.

Q: Do you have any catch phrases?

A: The only thing I consistently do is "and they're into the stretch" when they turn for home. Also, when a horse is running away I sometimes say they are "running up the score."



Q: How about playing off a horse's name?

A: I had that one race at Monmouth with the [wives](#). I try and have fun with it if they come up.

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Q: When calling a race, what actions do you look for from horses or jockeys?

A: You tend to watch their hands. Some of the guys ride differently than others. Paco Lopez will have a horse in hand (Larry shows his hands held down low, as if on a horse's neck) when they turn for home even when there are horses around him, saving him to take off for home. Some riders are more conservative and others make their move later. Another thing I look at is a horse's ears; when they are up (pricked) they're usually not full out. When they get pinned back, they are all in. Zenyatta would let her ears flop around, but then when she made the front she'd turn them around.

Q: Do you have any favorite horses?

A: Holy Bull was a favorite. He won the Haskell my first year at Monmouth. Cigar, I called him when I was at Suffolk. Animal Kingdom won the first Kentucky Derby that I called. He was one of the best Derby winners in recent years. Zenyatta and Rachel Alexandra were also personal favorites.

There used to be a horse that ran at Suffolk and Monmouth, named Hogan's Goat. He actually ran in the Mass Handicap against Cigar when he was going for his 15th straight win. That was a high, intense moment for me. I was a lot younger and it was a big deal to call Cigar. I was very nervous when they were going into the gate and Hogan's Goat was in there. You know how they say horsemen use goats (around the stables) to keep horses calm, well he was my goat when he walked into the gate. I thought, "It's ok; it can't be that big of a deal, Hogan's Goat is here." He calmed me down a little bit. The next year he won five in a row at Monmouth, and I'd always give him the big call, and everybody knew I was a big Hogan's Goat fan.

And Formal Gold was another favorite. He broke his maiden in spectacular fashion, with something like a 110 figure. He might be the best I ever called on sheer talent. Bill Perry was his trainer and the same guy who trained Hogan's Goat. I was in the backstretch at Monmouth one time and his assistant said to me, "You're just in time – we're changing the Goat's shoes." I said, "I want those." Bill Perry was there and he said, "I've got a couple of Formal Gold's shoes too. Do you want them?" And, I joked, "What the heck would I want them for?" He laughed, and said "You're sick."

Q: So, you're at Monmouth and Gulfstream, and you're announcing the Triple Crown and the Breeders' Cup. It seems that you're living a dream here.

A: It's great just to be at those two tracks, but when that phone rang from NBC, I couldn't believe it. I

thought they were playing a joke on me. No one knew Tom Durkin was stepping down. NBC called and said they wanted to talk to me about calling the Kentucky Derby. And I thought; who is messing with me? I said that I thought Tom Durkin was doing it. They said, we can't get into the details, but he's not doing it anymore and we want to talk with you about calling the race. I still couldn't believe it.

So they bring me up to 30 Rock in Manhattan. I was in the Producer's office. I already had my interview with all these people. They're making arrangements to get me back to Florida, when Dick Ebersol (head of NBC Sports) walks in. They start talking about the upcoming schedule for football games, and he's saying this game is going to be great, and this game, etc. The producer says, "Oh, this is Larry and we're talking to him about replacing Durkin for the Triple Crown." Ebersol, says, "Oh, nice to meet you." And he goes back to talking about football for a minute. Then he starts to walk out, and turns around and says, "Hey Larry, do you believe us now?" The whole thing was a set up when he came in there. He actually came in to see me.

It all came out of nowhere. You know you go for some of these jobs ... I'd been turned down twice for being the announcer at Churchill Downs. Then, all of a sudden this falls into my lap. I just never saw it coming.



Q: When are you the most nervous doing your job?

A: When they're going into the gate at the Kentucky Derby you better be nervous. The whole week is a lead up to nervous. Tom (Durkin) would say that he'd start getting nervous in January. But, it's a fun nervous. We kid about it, Mark Johnson (announcer at Churchill Downs) and I do. The Woodford Reserve is the race that precedes the Derby, and then its 90 minutes before the Derby. Mark and I refer to it as the longest 90 minutes in sports. You know when I was a kid and they'd play "My Old Kentucky Home," you'd get these chills you know. I always
(continued on next page)

get so keyed up when I hear that song. And I thought, "Oh my God, I've got to call the Derby this year." I can't listen to it. 2010 was the last time I heard "My Old Kentucky Home." I'll take my headset off so I don't hear it. I'll work on going over the names one last time, and wait for the roar to come up from the crowd. Then I know the song is over, and I put my headset back on. There is just something about that song. I don't know what it is. I can do "Maryland, My Maryland" or "New York, New York," but not "My Old Kentucky Home."

Q: How do you deal with things when something bad happens on the track?

A: Once you're in the heat of the moment it sort of takes care of itself. It does take away from the excitement of the call if something bad has happened, and it should. Like with Tom Durkin, you can hear his tone will soften for the rest of the race when something has happened. I agree that's the way to do it. You give the winner his due, but that's it. It's kind of a natural reaction, you don't think about it.

In the first Breeders' Cup race this year, Secret Compass broke down. And then we had this exciting finish and then a disqualification. You're calling it, but if you're listening to it, it's still toned down compared to the other ones. You have this jockey and horse down. It's something you always hate to see, but you have to handle it professionally.



Q: Lastly, what is one of your favorite race calls by another track announcer?

A: One of the great all time [calls](#) was in the Travers Stakes when Holy Bull won, and Tom Durkin said "there's cause for Concern." That was really a good (play on names). And, then at the end he said "Holy Bull wins ... what a hero." I was already a big fan of Holy Bull, so that became one of my favorite calls.

Following the [announcement](#) on February 13 that Collmus would be the new track announcer at Churchill Downs, HANA asked Larry the following, which he was kind enough to take time out of his busy schedule to answer.

Q: A lot of horseplayers and fans will miss you at Monmouth Park. Can you share a fond memory you have at the Shore? And also, can you share your feelings regarding getting to be the track announcer at such a historical track like Churchill Downs?

A: I have had 20 years of fantastic memories of Monmouth Park. There are so many it's hard to just name a few.



Racing at Monmouth Park – Photo from [Flickr](#)

I think the best memories are of all the great people I've had the pleasure of working with over the years.

One of those people is the one and only Brad Thomas. In my opinion, he is the best handicapper I've seen. I've never met anyone who puts in the work Brad does and the results certainly show. Behind those now famous sunglasses is one of the great guys in our business, and I'm honored to have worked with him.

Getting the Churchill Downs job is terrific. I'm excited about going there and being a part of the most famous track in America.

There have been very few announcers to have had the privilege of calling the Derby both on track and for the network and I'm pleased to be one of them.

I also look forward to being a part of the Churchill team throughout its three meets. Louisville is a great city and the folks there love racing.

It's going to be lots of fun.

Track Bias in Quarterhorse Racing... Really?

By [Doug McPherson](#)

This article originally appeared on Doug's [blog](#), Four-Forty.

An important part of Thoroughbred handicapping is the track bias, finding whether or not the track is favoring inside speed or if the rail is dead, etc. Even in harness racing, there are apparent biases. However, track bias is frequently overlooked in Quarter Horse handicapping. It isn't just novice Quarter Horse handicappers who aren't aware of bias, many regular players fail to take it into account as well.



Quarter Horse Racing at Ontario's Ajax Downs

In Quarter Horse handicapping, there are two bias angles that most players use that don't do much for your value. In 870 yard 'around the hook' races where the gate is located very close to the turn, inside posts are at an incredible advantage, especially on mile racetracks. Horses coming from the three inside posts win over 50% of 870 yard races. In straightaway races, the common belief is that the extreme outside post is the best post to have. This is because the horse has more open space and may not feel the intimidation of being between other horses or being down on the rail.

While these both tend to be solid angles, there are times where the racetrack itself comes into play and thwarts their usefulness. For example, let's take a look at the Sawgrass Stakes at Hialeah Park last Sunday (February 2). This was a 440 yard race where the three betting favorites came from the outside. 3-2 choice Dash Master Jess had the six-hole in the eight horse field and was exiting a victory in the \$227,260 Hialeah Derby. Joltin Jess came from post seven and was coming off of a pair of impressive victories in the Crystal River and the Moonstone. Finally, Sure Shot B last raced in the

City of Hialeah Stakes where he rallied for the win. He had the far outside post. This trio was a classy bunch and deserved the money they took, which was a combined 63.7% of the win pool.

Where did they finish?

Joltin Jess finished 2nd by a 1/2 length. Dash Master Jess was 3rd, a neck behind Joltin Jess. Sure Shot B finished an even 5th by a 1 1/2 lengths. None of them got into any trouble, so why did they lose, even as the best horses in the race?

The winner was Dashin Beduino, a horse who was 3-for-14 prior to the Sawgrass and was exiting a win against non winners of three Allowance company. It was an impressive win visually but this was a serious jump in class. Breaking from post two, he won by a 1/2 length at 7-1 odds.

Was he just the best horse? Or was there a bias at play that helped him out?

Out of nine races on the card, there was one winner from post six, three from post five, and the other five came from the inside three posts. All the races were conducted down the straight. 55.5% of the race winners came from posts one, two or three. That is a bias. To back it up, the day before, five of nine winners came from the three inside posts with one winner from post four. Looking at this, I think it is safe to say the horses running on the inside part of the track were at an advantage. Dashin Beduino may not have been the most talented horse in the field, but he had an advantage and it paid off for bettors who picked up on it.

The moral of the story is that even while watching Quarter Horse races, look out for biases. Observing the way the straightaway plays can lead to some profitable results.



About the author – Doug is an 18-year-old high school student from Ontario. He was born into a racing family and has been going to the races at Woodbine & Fort Erie for as long as he can remember.

He started a Twitter handle and a [blog](#) to discuss racing. His main interests are Canadian Thoroughbred racing & Quarter Horse racing.

WirePlayers Derby Dozen

As of February 5, 2014

1. Cairo Prince (Pioneer of the Nile/Luis Saez/Kiaran McLaughlin)



Cairo Prince (#9) Racing in the Remsen Stakes (finished 2nd) - photo by [Penelope P. Miller](#), [America's Best Racing](#)

"After his facile victory over a large group of challengers in the Holy Bull no one should be in denial(!) about this colt's ability." – [Melissa Nolan](#)

"Hung like a chandelier in the Remsen, but his Holy Bull was top notch." – [Andrew Magnini](#)

2. Shared Belief (Candy Ride/Corey Nakatani/Jerry Hollendorfer)

"Hollendorfer is more secretive about his issues than Tarantino was with the contents of the briefcase in 'Pulp Fiction'." – [Brian Zipse \(Horse Racing Nation\)](#)

"I like the CashCall winner; rest in peace Hollywood." – [The Turk](#)

3. Top Billing (Curlin/Joel Rosario/Shug McGaughey)

"Probably will win the Belmont instead of the Derby just to spite me." – [Tencentcielo - Giving My Ten Cents](#)

"With Mr Speaker's loss, he moves from being the Cindy to the Jan of Shug's Brady Bunch." – [Derek Brown](#)

4. Strong Mandate (Tiznow/Joel Rosario/D. Wayne Lukas)

"Enigmatic horse put in two memorable efforts last year in winning the Hopeful and running 3rd in BC Juvenile. If Lukas can manage him right, he should make his presence known throughout the Triple Crown season." – Nolan

"Solid juvenile foundation, by a dual BC Classic winner out of a G.1 dam, he's a perfect candidate to re-emphasize the "program" of Hall of Famer and Triple Crown race guru D. Wayne Lukas." – [Rob - Amateurcapper](#)

5. Honor Code (A.P. Indy/Javier Castellano/Shug McGaughey)

"Shug's horses seem to have one really good race per year in them. Feel like this one's is gonna be the Derby." – Brown

"A hiccup in training usually doesn't bode well with compressed Derby timeline." – [Tony Bada Bing - A Leg Up](#)

6. Midnight Hawk (Midnight Lute/Mike Smith/Bob Baffert)

"I'm guessing he'll face more than four horses in his next race." – The Turk

"Midnight Lute's proved last year they can get the classic distance." – [Gene Kershner of EquiSpace](#)

7. Conquest Titan (Birdstone/Shawn Bridgmohan/Mark Casse)

"With his pedigree, ten furlongs may be a little too short." – Zipse

"He runs well at Churchill. That's all I need at this point." – Brown

An advertisement for 'Derby Wars' featuring three circular callouts for cash prizes on specific Derby prep races. The top callout is red and says 'MARCH 8 \$50K BIG CAP'. The middle callout is blue and says 'APRIL 12 \$50K ARKANSAS DERBY'. The bottom callout is green and says 'MARCH 29 \$50K FLORIDA DERBY'. Below these callouts is the 'DERBY WARS' logo with two horses. At the very bottom, it says '\$10,000 GAMES MARCH 1, APRIL 5, AND APRIL 29'.

8. Commissioner (A.P. Indy/Jose Lezcano/Todd Pletcher)

"If he gets in trouble in the stretch, will the jock throw up the 'Todd Signal'?" – Tencentcielo

"Took down top Derby prospect Top Billing in last and is just 1 of 42 Todd Pletcher nominees." – Tony Bada Bing
(continued on next page)

9. Havana (Dunkirk/Gary Stevens/Todd Pletcher)



Todd Pletcher – Norm Files Photo

"Smoked 'em in the one-turn Champagne but flickered in the Juvenile around two turns." – Rob/Amateurcapper

"To gain an edge over other handicappers I now time races in Femtoseconds; and by that measure Havana ran his final 8th of a mile in the BC Juvenile in 526 million light years." – [Steve Munday](#)

10. Vicar's In Trouble (Into Mischief/Rosie Napravnik/Mike Maker)

"Not even Ken Ramsey's boasting and shilling can get this one to the Derby he seeks." – [Paul Mazur](#)

"Clearly the 2nd best Ky Derby nominee with the phrase "In Trouble" in his name." - Munday

11. Tapiture (Tapit/Ricardo Santana Jr./Steve Asmussen)

"Stevie A. may have a diamond in the rough here." – Kershner

"Tapiture isn't anywhere on my list of Ky Derby contenders, but taking a cue from the 'cappers on 'Horseplayers' if he wins I'll claim to have had him all along." - Munday

12. Samraat (Noble Causeway/Irad Ortiz/Richard Violette)

"Four for four and just posted a solid Beyer." – Mangini

"Yawn, a forward placed horse keeps his undefeated record by beating a field of cupcakes on a speed favoring inner track at Aqueduct." – Mazur

-Re-posted with permission from [WirePlayers.com](#).

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EXACTA/ODDS BASED WAGERING

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More Quick Hits

Gulfstream Park DQ Dominates Headlines

In the final race of Sunday, February 23's card at Gulfstream Park there was a disqualification of Collinito for coming out in the stretch against a rival. While that doesn't sound like big news, it takes a different tone after one finds out that disqualification took away a \$1 million plus score for a horseplayer in Gulfstream Park's Rainbow 6 wager.

As one would expect following such a monumentally "bad beat," the discussion on social media and chat boards quickly exploded. Looking at HANA's Twitter feed, a clearly majority thought that the call was incorrect, but a few, including NYRA's Andy Serling, thought that the correct decision was made by the Gulfstream Park stewards.

Whether the call was right or wrong, stewards' calls, their perception among horseplayers, and transparency while stewards' inquiries are going on became a hot-button topic, especially given that on some advance deposit wagering services, the head-on replay of the race, which was the main look at what transpired to cause the disqualification, was not available. HANA President Jeff Platt put out a statement expressing this, and that can be read [here](#). HANA's blog also had "Four Things We Learned" from the incident, and that can be read [here](#).

Finally, John Pricci from Horse Racing Insider interviewed Gulfstream Park President and CEO Tim Ritvo about the incident and about being more transparent when the stewards have to make a decision. That piece can be read by clicking [here](#).

Women Handicappers Get Their Due

"I love being a 'degenerate'. It's a badge of honor." That's a quote from HANA's Treasurer Theresia Muller in an excellent article on women handicappers by Teresa Genaro. To read the piece, which also includes quotes from Gabby Gaudet and Dylan Smith, please click [here](#).

Wagering on Power Boat Racing? Who Knew?

There's a chance you already knew that horse racing [handles](#) two times more in Japan than it does in North America, but did you know wagering on Japanese power boat racing (called Kyōtei) nearly handles as much as North American horse racing as well?

Frequent Horseplayer Monthly contributor Cangamble writes, "It boggles the mind that they still do \$9 billion in handle (which is way off the high) per year. First, the takeout is 25%, and second, the field size is limited to six starters. It absolutely flies in the face of know-it-alls like myself who believe that in order for horse racing handle to grow significantly, you need a much lower takeout

and larger field size.

[But there are explanations](#), besides culture and lack of competition. Only 7% of the typical speed boat betting crowd is university educated, and this type of gambling is mostly about post position and luck. In other words, it has no learning curve. That being stated, unlike slots, it seems to attract mostly a male audience of gamblers. But when you think of it, it might not be any different than the dummy crowd that used to make up a good chunk of racetrack attendees in the 60's and 70's who didn't buy racing forms, but made their decisions based on program odds, tips, and intuition. Unfortunately, the loss of these players has made it so that today's North American racing pools consist of the monies of intelligent handicappers who are betting against fellow intelligent handicappers, at a ridiculously high 21% average takeout.

To attract a significant amount new players, to a game with a high learning curve, there needs to be the idea that the game is beatable by at least a few."

To read Cangamble's piece in full, please click [here](#).

Take The Money And Run

Politicians wanting to shift money from horse racing's coffers into things that will score them political points seems to be picking up more and more steam every year. In late January, it came out that a Pennsylvania State Representative would like to shift \$250 million from horse racing to education. While that didn't make it into the Governor's budget, it should (but will it?) serve as another wake-up call to Pennsylvania. To read about the proposed legislation, click [here](#).

The same thing is also being discussed in West Virginia and in Florida. In West Virginia, there is discussion in their State House and Finance Committees about shifting 15% of VLT and table games revenue from horse racing to other programs. To read about that, [click here](#).

In Florida, a group opposed to Greyhound racing is seeking to end the requirement that casino licenses only go to facilities with racetracks. If successful, the impact on Florida horse racing is readily apparent. Without the requirement to host live racing to maintain casino gaming, it could easily spell the end, or certainly a major decline, in horse racing opportunities. To read more about the Florida issue, [click here](#).

TimeFormUS Makes Some Tweaks

TimeFormUS, which has been featured before in the Horseplayer Monthly, has updated their Pace Projector to reflect the use of blinkers and to reflect horses' experience level. To read about the changes, click [here](#).

Taking A Newbie To The Track

Jay Cronley wrote an article for ESPN.com about taking a first-timer to the racetrack. The article concludes, "After a day at the horse races, here's what an intelligent person new to the game thought. Winning money on a scratch-off lottery card was easier." To read why, please click [here](#).

The Back Page

First Timers, Second Timers, By Trainer, By Equipment

 FIRST TIME STARTERS, BLINKERS WORN: YES
 ALL NORTH AMERICAN THOROUGHBRED TRACKS 365 DAYS SPANNING FEB 20 2013 THROUGH FEB 19 2014
 BY TRAINER - MIN NUMBER OF WINS: 2
 SORTED BY NUMBER OF WINS

TRAINER	PLAYS	WINS	WIN PCT	WIN IMPACT	WIN ROI	PLACES	PLACE PCT	PLACE ROI
BAFFERT BOB	71	18	0.2535	2.8435	0.8423	24	0.338	0.6563
WARD WESLEY A	59	17	0.2881	3.2316	0.7746	24	0.4068	0.8492
MILLER PETER	42	9	0.2143	2.4038	0.9024	12	0.2857	0.6905
RICHARD CHRIS	18	9	0.5	5.6084	1.7556	9	0.5	1.0944
ZIADIE KIRK	15	8	0.5333	5.9819	1.7867	11	0.7333	1.54
FINCHER TODD W	36	7	0.1944	2.1805	0.8889	15	0.4167	0.9222
GELNER SCOTT	20	6	0.3	3.365	3.3	6	0.3	1.26
HOLLENDORFER JERRY	11	6	0.5455	6.1188	2.6	9	0.8182	1.9545
DOLLASE CRAIG	11	6	0.5455	6.1188	2.3273	6	0.5455	1.1636
BAKER READE	28	5	0.1786	2.0033	0.8446	10	0.3571	0.7589
TRACY GREG	22	5	0.2273	2.5496	0.8341	7	0.3182	0.6182
MAKER MICHAEL J	19	4	0.2105	2.3611	1	7	0.3684	0.9632
WRIGHT BLAINE D	12	4	0.3333	3.7386	1.675	5	0.4167	1.0167
PINO MICHAEL V	14	4	0.2857	3.2046	1.2643	6	0.4286	0.9571
AZPURUA JR LEO	6	4	0.6667	7.4782	2.8167	4	0.6667	1.55
CALHOUN W BRET	13	4	0.3077	3.4514	1.0077	5	0.3846	0.8846
TILLER ROBERT P	10	4	0.4	4.4867	1.785	5	0.5	1.17
RIVELLI LARRY	12	3	0.25	2.8042	0.95	6	0.5	1.2083
CHLEBORAD LYNN	5	3	0.6	6.7301	1.1	3	0.6	0.92
DOMINGUEZ HENRY	17	3	0.1765	1.9798	0.9353	3	0.1765	0.3412
MULLINS JEFF	17	3	0.1765	1.9798	0.6412	4	0.2353	0.5235
LUCARELLI FRANK	10	3	0.3	3.365	1.62	4	0.4	0.98
PENNEY JIM	15	3	0.2	2.2434	0.84	7	0.4667	1.2133
DIODORO ROBERTINO	13	3	0.2308	2.5888	0.4769	4	0.3077	0.4385
JACQUOT GENE	4	3	0.75	8.4126	2.775	3	0.75	1.45
LOZA JR EFREN	5	3	0.6	6.7301	4.54	5	1	3.1
TAYLOR TROY	14	3	0.2143	2.4038	1.1893	5	0.3571	0.7857
MARTIN WESTON	7	3	0.4286	4.8075	1.0857	4	0.5714	0.9
GORHAM ROBERT M	11	3	0.2727	3.0588	0.9091	2	0.1818	0.3636
OCONNELL KATHLEEN	33	3	0.0909	1.0196	0.397	11	0.3333	0.9909
SADLER JOHN W	17	3	0.1765	1.9798	0.9529	5	0.2941	0.9294
AUTREY CODY	2	2	1	11.2168	3.1	2	1	1.8
EDWARDS ELAINE	3	2	0.6667	7.4782	1.5	2	0.6667	1.0333
COWANS WILLIAM D	5	2	0.4	4.4867	0.66	3	0.6	0.8
BECKER SCOTT	7	2	0.2857	3.2046	0.7429	3	0.4286	1.1
LAWRENCE ROBERT L	6	2	0.3333	3.7386	0.6333	3	0.5	0.8333
MARTIN JOHN F	12	2	0.1667	1.8698	0.4833	3	0.25	0.5333
WHITE WILLIAM P	6	2	0.3333	3.7386	1.1	4	0.6667	1.4667
DUNN HENRY RAY	4	2	0.5	5.6084	2.75	2	0.5	1.225
CLOUTIER TONI	4	2	0.5	5.6084	1.75	2	0.5	1.075
DORAN CARL	6	2	0.3333	3.7386	5.0333	2	0.3333	1.7
MOUTON PATRICK	6	2	0.3333	3.7386	1.25	2	0.3333	0.7
RUNCO JEFF C	18	2	0.1111	1.2462	1.5333	5	0.2778	0.7389
MOREY JR WILLIAM J	6	2	0.3333	3.7386	1.75	2	0.3333	0.9
CAPUANO DALE	3	2	0.6667	7.4782	4.0333	2	0.6667	1.7333
RHONE BERNELL B	6	2	0.3333	3.7386	2.95	3	0.5	1.9667
TORTORA EMANUEL	6	2	0.3333	3.7386	2.5333	2	0.3333	1.3
YAKTEEN TIM	6	2	0.3333	3.7386	1.7833	2	0.3333	0.7667
FERGASON JIM	7	2	0.2857	3.2046	2.2714	2	0.2857	0.9143
MEYER JOSEPH A	2	2	1	11.2168	7.7	2	1	4.5
NICKS RALPH E	6	2	0.3333	3.7386	1.25	3	0.5	1.4667
BENNETT GERALD S	4	2	0.5	5.6084	3.05	2	0.5	1.625
KLANFER ALAN	10	2	0.2	2.2434	1.26	4	0.4	2.07
FAWKES DAVID	30	2	0.0667	0.7482	0.2667	7	0.2333	0.53
LOZANO MARTIN	9	2	0.2222	2.4924	0.9444	3	0.3333	0.8444
CARROLL JOSIE	7	2	0.2857	3.2046	1.6857	3	0.4286	1.0714
AVERETT RONNIE	17	2	0.1176	1.3191	0.8294	3	0.1765	0.6471
PRECIADO GUADALUPE	4	2	0.5	5.6084	3.7	3	0.75	1.775

 SECOND LIFETIME START, BLINKERS WORN: YES
 ALL NORTH AMERICAN THOROUGHBRED TRACKS 365 DAYS SPANNING FEB 20 2013 THROUGH FEB 19 2014
 BY TRAINER - MIN NUMBER OF WINS: 2
 SORTED BY NUMBER OF WINS

TRAINER	PLAYS	WINS	WIN PCT	WIN IMPACT	WIN ROI	PLACES	PLACE PCT	PLACE ROI
BAFFERT BOB	59	18	0.3051	2.9779	1.0915	23	0.3898	0.7356
WARD WESLEY A	45	12	0.2667	2.6031	0.8756	21	0.4667	0.8922
FAWKES DAVID	25	7	0.28	2.7329	1.108	7	0.28	0.624
DUTROW ANTHONY W	13	6	0.4615	4.5044	2.8885	7	0.5385	1.8154
RIVELLI LARRY	13	6	0.4615	4.5044	1.2462	6	0.4615	0.6615
BAKER READE	30	6	0.2	1.9521	1.6567	10	0.3333	1.3483
FINCHER TODD W	31	6	0.1935	1.8886	0.9194	11	0.3548	0.7774
MILLER PETER	34	6	0.1765	1.7227	0.6559	13	0.3824	0.9265
JAMES GREG C	14	5	0.3571	3.4854	1.7143	8	0.5714	1.4429
MOTT WILLIAM I	21	5	0.2381	2.3239	1.0476	8	0.381	1.1
MARR JOEL H	12	5	0.4167	4.0671	1.1167	5	0.4167	0.7
MAKER MICHAEL J	27	5	0.1852	1.8076	0.7481	11	0.4074	0.8296
RICE LINDA	10	5	0.5	4.8802	1.945	5	0.5	1.125
RUNCO JEFF C	18	5	0.2778	2.7114	1.4333	6	0.3333	0.7778
HOUGHTON T BERNARD	21	5	0.2381	2.3239	0.9762	10	0.4762	1.0429
OCONNELL KATHLEEN	36	5	0.1389	1.3557	0.35	10	0.2778	0.5736
ZERPA GILBERTO	8	4	0.5	4.8802	3.4	5	0.625	2.3125
GELNER SCOTT	21	4	0.1905	1.8593	1.6238	6	0.2857	0.981
BONDE JEFF	17	4	0.2353	2.2966	0.9353	7	0.4118	0.9529
HOLLENDORFER JERRY	21	4	0.1905	1.8593	0.481	8	0.381	1.0524
LARA JORGE	20	4	0.2	1.9521	0.77	7	0.35	1.275
MARTIN TIMOTHY E	15	4	0.2667	2.6031	1.94	6	0.4	0.8933
HARWOOD DORIS	12	4	0.3333	3.2531	0.9083	6	0.5	0.7917
DIODORO ROBERTINO	14	4	0.2857	2.7885	1.0107	7	0.5	1.1571
BROBERG KARL	11	4	0.3636	3.5489	1.4364	6	0.5455	1.0909
CALHOUN W BRET	15	4	0.2667	2.6031	0.7533	6	0.4	0.62
RICHARD CHRIS	16	4	0.25	2.4401	0.5187	6	0.375	0.575
HUSHION MICHAEL E	6	3	0.5	4.8802	2.1167	4	0.6667	1.4
BENNETT DALE	7	3	0.4286	4.1833	2.2429	4	0.5714	1.1143
PINO MICHAEL V	15	3	0.2	1.9521	1.6933	5	0.3333	0.9933
BIAMONTE RALPH J	12	3	0.25	2.4401	0.7	4	0.3333	0.5083
ONEILL DOUG F	27	3	0.1111	1.0844	0.7407	8	0.2963	0.963
KLANFER ALAN	10	3	0.3	2.9281	1.2	3	0.3	0.68
CATALANO WAYNE M	11	3	0.2727	2.6616	1.1727	4	0.3636	0.7636
ALONZO HOWARD	3	3	1	9.7603	4.1333	3	1	1.9
ATWOOD DANIEL	5	3	0.6	5.8562	2.48	3	0.6	1.46
HAYNES ERNEST M	4	3	0.75	7.3203	2.2	3	0.75	1.25
TRACY JR RAY E	13	3	0.2308	2.2527	2.4769	6	0.4615	2.0154
GONZALEZ NICHOLAS	11	3	0.2727	2.6616	1.3909	4	0.3636	0.8227
CARROLL JOSIE	8	3	0.375	3.6601	0.875	2	0.25	0.375
FIGGINS III OLLIE L	8	3	0.375	3.6601	1.2375	3	0.375	0.65
TRACY GREG	20	3	0.15	1.4641	0.3425	4	0.2	0.4325
DOMINGUEZ HENRY	13	3	0.2308	2.2527	1.9077	3	0.2308	0.9615
SERVIS JOHN C	9	3	0.3333	3.2531	1.6778	4	0.4444	1.1556
WHITE WILLIAM P	12	3	0.25	2.4401	0.7417	3	0.25	0.35
TAYLOR TROY	12	3	0.25	2.4401	0.6042	6	0.5	0.8167
GLYSHAW TIM	8	3	0.375	3.6601	6.1	3	0.375	2.1625
LANDRY BLAKE	7	3	0.4286	4.1833	3.2429	3	0.4286	1.5
BEATTIE TODD M	6	3	0.5	4.8802	2.6	3	0.5	1.3
ZIADIE KIRK	13	3	0.2308	2.2527	0.5923	6	0.4615	0.8154
BECKER SCOTT	15	3	0.2	1.9521	0.6533	4	0.2667	0.5267
DANLEY FRED I	12	3	0.25	2.4401	2.3083	4	0.3333	1.5417
PLETCHER TODD A	17	3	0.1765	1.7227	0.7765	8	0.4706	0.9529
STARKEY JAMES H	2	2	1	9.7603	7.75	2	1	3.85
MITCHELL ANDREW	2	2	1	9.7603	4.6	2	1	2.65
RADOSEVICH JEFFREY A5	2	2	0.4	3.9041	2.86	3	0.6	1.6
BROWN RONNEY W	7	2	0.2857	2.7885	1.2571	2	0.2857	0.6429
DIVITO JAMES P	11	2	0.1818	1.7744	0.2818	3	0.2727	0.4545
SILVA MIGUEL ANGEL	8	2	0.25	2.4401	1.075	3	0.375	0.875
AZPURUA MANUEL J	6	2	0.3333	3.2531	3.15	2	0.3333	1.15
GRISHAM CHRISTIE	2	2	1	9.7603	8.6	2	1	4.45
RHONE BERNELL B	6	2	0.3333	3.2531	1.35	2	0.3333	0.5667
PARENTE PAT	4	2	0.5	4.8802	3.8	2	0.5	1.775
ROBERTSON HUGH H	8	2	0.25	2.4401	2.5625	2	0.25	1.3
INMAN RONALD P	5	2	0.4	3.9041	1.12	3	0.6	1.9
STIDHAM MICHAEL	12	2	0.1667	1.627	1.0083	6	0.5	1.125

THE HORSEPLAYER MONTHLY, BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE HORSEPLAYERS ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA

 FIRST TIME STARTERS, BLINKERS WORN: NO
 ALL NORTH AMERICAN THOROUGHBRED TRACKS 365 DAYS SPANNING FEB 20 2013 THROUGH FEB 19 2014
 BY TRAINER - MIN NUMBER OF WINS: 2
 SORTED BY NUMBER OF WINS

TRAINER	PLAYS	WINS	WIN PCT	WIN IMPACT	WIN ROI	PLACES	PLACE PCT	PLACE ROI
*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****
PLETCHER TODD A	162	37	0.2284	2.2041	0.6719	68	0.4198	0.8719
ASMUSSEN STEVEN M	131	21	0.1603	1.5469	0.6107	36	0.2748	0.6626
BROWN CHAD C	84	17	0.2024	1.9532	1.0905	28	0.3333	0.8821
CALHOUN W BRET	71	17	0.2394	2.3102	0.8211	26	0.3662	0.8092
HOLLENDORFER JERRY	57	14	0.2456	2.3701	0.9456	17	0.2982	0.6404
CLEMENT CHRISTOPHE	73	13	0.1781	1.7187	1.1705	24	0.3288	1.0589
PLESA JR EDWARD	57	13	0.2281	2.2012	0.8772	21	0.3684	1.007
MCLAUGHLIN KIARAN P	62	12	0.1935	1.8673	1.4597	20	0.3226	0.9855
MOTION H GRAHAM	80	11	0.1375	1.3269	0.6863	21	0.2625	0.66
BONDE JEFF	43	11	0.2558	2.4685	0.9	17	0.3953	0.9105
CASSE MARK E	76	10	0.1316	1.27	0.4954	19	0.25	0.7
PISH DANNY	47	9	0.1915	1.848	0.8106	14	0.2979	0.7681
PROCTOR THOMAS F	53	9	0.1698	1.6386	1.2943	16	0.3019	1.0075
CATALANO WAYNE M	43	9	0.2093	2.0198	0.6535	15	0.3488	0.9628
AMOSS THOMAS M	48	8	0.1667	1.6087	0.4458	16	0.3333	0.6458
MAKER MICHAEL J	28	8	0.2857	2.757	1.4929	13	0.4643	1.3643
KOBISKIE DANE	23	8	0.3478	3.3563	0.9	11	0.4783	0.7826
SADLER JOHN W	26	8	0.3077	2.9694	2.7154	12	0.4615	1.45
KENNEALLY EDDIE	48	8	0.1667	1.6087	0.7219	15	0.3125	0.8135
MOTT WILLIAM I	91	7	0.0769	0.7421	1.0626	20	0.2198	0.8973
TILLER ROBERT P	24	7	0.2917	2.815	0.9083	13	0.5417	1.3604
MOREY WILLIAM E	19	7	0.3684	3.5551	2.0579	8	0.4211	1.1579
ROMANS DALE L	69	7	0.1014	0.9785	0.3942	14	0.2029	0.7261
GRIFFITH RICKY	20	6	0.3	2.895	3.055	11	0.55	1.785
GORDER KELLYN	32	6	0.1875	1.8094	1.575	11	0.3438	1.3562
ONEILL DOUG F	58	6	0.1034	0.9978	0.5466	9	0.1552	0.3966
STALL JR ALBERT M	34	6	0.1765	1.7033	0.9588	7	0.2059	0.5765
STIDHAM MICHAEL	33	6	0.1818	1.7544	0.7636	12	0.3636	0.9364
BREEN KELLY J	19	6	0.3158	3.0475	2.0105	8	0.4211	1.3316
THOMAS LEE	21	5	0.2381	2.2977	4.9	6	0.2857	2.2857
LYNCH CATHAL A	17	5	0.2941	2.8381	1.5294	8	0.4706	1.0765
MCPEEK KENNETH G	48	5	0.1042	1.0055	1.8396	9	0.1875	1.0854
REED ERIC R	37	5	0.1351	1.3037	0.6	7	0.1892	0.377
BARTON DALLAS J	20	5	0.25	2.4125	1.38	6	0.3	0.81
VASHCHENKO PAVEL	26	5	0.1923	1.8557	4.2962	9	0.3462	2.0346
STENSLIE CHRIS	22	5	0.2273	2.1935	0.8818	7	0.3182	0.65
DUTROW ANTHONY W	41	5	0.122	1.1773	0.5927	12	0.2927	0.6098
VON HEMEL DONNIE K	30	5	0.1667	1.6087	1.0967	10	0.3333	0.9967
BAFFERT BOB	16	5	0.3125	3.0157	0.85	6	0.375	0.6687
VON HEMEL KELLY R	24	5	0.2083	2.0101	1.2875	6	0.25	0.6833
NICKS RALPH E	16	4	0.25	2.4125	2.5375	7	0.4375	1.7531
CONNELL KATHLEEN	17	4	0.2353	2.2707	0.6765	5	0.2941	0.8412
WEAVER GEORGE	27	4	0.1481	1.4292	0.7019	4	0.1481	0.4241
PINO MICHAEL V	7	4	0.5714	5.5141	3.4714	5	0.7143	2.0143
BROBERG KARL	16	4	0.25	2.4125	1.1875	6	0.375	1.5
HAMM TIMOTHY E	32	4	0.125	1.2063	0.4469	10	0.3125	0.6594
SHERMAN STEVE M	20	4	0.2	1.93	0.56	8	0.4	0.76
TROMBETTA MICHAEL J	60	4	0.0667	0.6437	0.5717	14	0.2333	0.7883
HARTMAN CHRIS A	29	4	0.1379	1.3308	0.4793	9	0.3103	0.7793
ALBERTRANI THOMAS	47	4	0.0851	0.8212	0.8383	6	0.1277	0.5011
GONZALEZ NICHOLAS	24	4	0.1667	1.6087	1.7208	7	0.2917	1.2687
MCCANNA TIM	23	4	0.1739	1.6782	1.2087	6	0.2609	0.7043
HARWOOD DORIS	8	4	0.5	4.8251	4.625	4	0.5	1.9875
ROBERTSON MCLEAN	21	4	0.1905	1.8384	1.1571	8	0.381	1
DIODORO ROBERTINO	15	4	0.2667	2.5737	0.72	7	0.4667	1.04
JONES J LARRY	19	4	0.2105	2.0314	1.1579	4	0.2105	0.6684
SHIRREFFS JOHN A	19	4	0.2105	2.0314	1.5947	5	0.2632	1.9342
DELACOUR ARNAUD	16	4	0.25	2.4125	0.9875	8	0.5	1.45
GAINES CARLA	12	4	0.3333	3.2164	4.5	5	0.4167	1.8
BEATTIE TODD M	10	4	0.4	3.8601	1.345	5	0.5	1.03
MCGAUGHEY III CLAUDE	35	4	0.1143	1.103	0.7643	13	0.3714	1.3786
KRULJAC J ERIC	57	4	0.0702	0.6774	0.8158	11	0.193	0.7561
GALLUSCIO DOMINIC G	17	3	0.1765	1.7033	1.1588	3	0.1765	0.55
PARENTE PAT	8	3	0.375	3.6188	1.4	5	0.625	1.4375
RICE LINDA	16	3	0.1875	1.8094	1.25	6	0.375	1.0906
ENGLEHART JEREMIAH	C13	3	0.2308	2.2273	3.2308	5	0.3846	1.6423

 SECOND LIFETIME START, BLINKERS WORN: NO
 ALL NORTH AMERICAN THOROUGHBRED TRACKS 365 DAYS SPANNING FEB 20 2013 THROUGH FEB 19 2014
 BY TRAINER - MIN NUMBER OF WINS: 2
 SORTED BY NUMBER OF WINS

TRAINER	PLAYS	WINS	WIN PCT	WIN IMPACT	WIN ROI	PLACES	PLACE PCT	PLACE ROI
*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****	*****
PLETCHER TODD A	114	44	0.386	3.0529	1.0592	63	0.5526	0.9842
ASMUSSEN STEVEN M	116	28	0.2414	1.9092	1.1418	37	0.319	0.7612
CASSE MARK E	73	18	0.2466	1.9504	1.2418	34	0.4658	1.1788
AMOSS THOMAS M	39	17	0.4359	3.4475	0.9231	23	0.5897	0.8859
MCLAUGHLIN KIARAN P	61	17	0.2787	2.2042	1.2607	25	0.4098	1.1008
BROWN CHAD C	67	14	0.209	1.653	0.6187	29	0.4328	0.7485
CALHOUN W BRET	57	13	0.2281	1.804	0.6263	27	0.4737	0.8395
PROCTOR THOMAS F	53	13	0.2453	1.9401	1.1377	17	0.3208	0.7245
HAMM TIMOTHY E	32	12	0.375	2.9659	0.9281	18	0.5625	1.0437
MOTT WILLIAM I	74	12	0.1622	1.2828	0.7905	23	0.3108	0.7155
PLESA JR EDWARD	49	12	0.2449	1.9369	1.1469	17	0.3469	0.8245
KENNEALLY EDDIE	40	10	0.25	1.9773	1.065	15	0.375	0.87
MOTION H GRAHAM	66	10	0.1515	1.1982	0.5424	21	0.3182	0.6371
PISH DANNY	37	9	0.2432	1.9235	0.8324	14	0.3784	0.7486
HOLLENDORFER JERRY	47	8	0.1702	1.3461	0.3532	18	0.383	0.6638
ROMANS DALE L	64	7	0.1094	0.8652	1.143	15	0.2344	0.9664
BAFFERT BOB	19	7	0.3684	2.9137	0.5789	8	0.4211	0.4974
BROBERG KARL	17	7	0.4118	3.2569	1.1824	9	0.5294	0.8824
CLEMENT CHRISTOPHE	45	7	0.1556	1.2306	0.7222	16	0.3556	0.82
SHEPPARD JONATHAN E	36	7	0.1944	1.5375	0.9611	12	0.3333	0.9597
REED ERIC R	33	7	0.2121	1.6775	0.4697	9	0.2727	0.4455
STALL JR ALBERT M	32	7	0.2188	1.7305	0.5422	10	0.3125	0.5359
BRUNER JACK A	12	6	0.5	3.9545	1.5083	8	0.6667	1.2167
DUTROW ANTHONY W	30	6	0.2	1.5818	0.475	13	0.4333	0.8233
VON HEMEL DONNIE K	31	6	0.1935	1.5304	0.5839	10	0.3226	0.6323
MARR JOEL H	17	6	0.3529	2.7911	1.2706	11	0.6471	1.5
CATALANO WAYNE M	42	6	0.1429	1.1302	0.3762	13	0.3095	0.5036
BONDE JEFF	29	6	0.2069	1.6364	0.6034	13	0.4483	0.8207
RICE LINDA	15	6	0.4	3.1636	1.3367	7	0.4667	0.84
CARROLL JOSIE	12	6	0.5	3.9545	3.1792	8	0.6667	1.7958
ROBB JOHN J	8	6	0.75	5.9318	3.4125	8	1	2.225
TILLER ROBERT P	14	5	0.3571	2.8243	0.7179	6	0.4286	0.6143
HARTMAN CHRIS A	26	5	0.1923	1.5209	0.5731	8	0.3077	0.5346
CRADDOCK KARI	17	5	0.2941	2.326	1.3882	10	0.5882	1.3882
ROBERTSON MCLEAN	23	5	0.2174	1.7194	0.6522	7	0.3043	0.663
SERVIS JOHN C	19	5	0.2632	2.0817	1.6474	7	0.3684	0.9579
MOREY WILLIAM E	19	5	0.2632	2.0817	1.4211	10	0.5263	1.3895
TROMBETTA MICHAEL J	43	5	0.1163	0.9198	0.3512	17	0.3953	1.0151
VIOLETTE JR RICHARD	21	5	0.2381	1.8831	0.7643	8	0.381	0.7048
RICHARD CHRIS	14	5	0.3571	2.8243	0.8929	8	0.5714	0.9071
KRULJAC J ERIC	31	5	0.1613	1.2757	1.0806	9	0.2903	1.4774
HUSHION MICHAEL E	10	5	0.5	3.9545	1.31	7	0.7	1.25
WILKES IAN R	23	4	0.1739	1.3754	0.7565	7	0.3043	0.7717
GORDER KELLYN	22	4	0.1818	1.4379	1.3636	5	0.2273	0.6591
BRNJAS ASHLEE	14	4	0.2857	2.2596	0.9464	5	0.3571	0.8964
BARTON DALLAS J	15	4	0.2667	2.1093	1.18	6	0.4	0.82
MARGOLIS STEVE	15	4	0.2667	2.1093	1.4267	5	0.3333	0.84
HOUGHTON T BERNARD	14	4	0.2857	2.2596	2.2214	7	0.5	1.1143
LAUER MICHAEL E	13	4	0.3077	2.4336	2.2154	5	0.3846	1.4385
NESS JAMIE	6	4	0.6667	5.2729	2.2	4	0.6667	1.4
FERRARO MICHAEL S	9	4	0.4444	3.5148	0.8556	4	0.4444	0.5722
BANKS DAVID P	11	4	0.3636	2.8757	2.5364	5	0.4545	2.2091
LYNCH CATHAL A	16	4	0.25	1.9773	0.6688	6	0.375	0.5438
KLESARIS STEVE	9	4	0.4444	3.5148	1.5111	7	0.7778	1.3889
BRUEGGEMANN ROGER A	13	4	0.3077	2.4336	2.0462	7	0.5385	2.1538
DELACOUR ARNAUD	12	4	0.3333	2.6361	1.2083	5	0.4167	0.875
PUYPE MIKE	23	4	0.1739	1.3754	0.6087	6	0.2609	0.5217
DIMAURO STEPHEN L	18	4	0.2222	1.7574	3.4944	9	0.5	2.2611
MCGAUGHEY III CLAUDE	29	4	0.1379	1.0907	0.5966	8	0.2759	0.6259
GAINES CARLA	15	4	0.2667	2.1093	0.6133	5	0.3333	0.4867
CASSIDY JAMES M	17	4	0.2353	1.861	1.7059	5	0.2941	0.7941
RETTELE RICHARD J	10	4	0.4	3.1636	1.53	5	0.5	0.89
LYNCH BRIAN A	14	4	0.2857	2.2596	1.0607	7	0.5	0.8643
LOPRESTI CHARLES	14	4	0.2857	2.2596	1.5857	5	0.3571	0.9286
SMITH HAMILTON A	28	4	0.1429	1.1302	0.4536	7	0.25	0.5071
NICKS RALPH E	9	4	0.4444	3.5148	2.2556	5	0.5556	1.2167