

Understanding Daily Racing Form Past Performances



March 29, 2008

Using DRF Past Performances

When I was at the National Handicapping Contest this year in Las Vegas (no I wasn't a contestant, just a supporter) I was handicapping the races at Santa Anita when a gentleman behind me said, "Excuse me, this is embarrassing, I have been playing horses for 30 years and I don't know what the dot in a square symbol means". I told him that it was an inner dirt track, and more than likely was an Aqueduct (a New York race track) race (which it was). This is a regular occurrence when I am at an OTB (Off Track Betting) or at the track. I then thought about the fact that it was only a couple of years ago that I figured out what the "lollipop" symbol meant - a dead heat.

It is not surprising that there is an awful lot of hit or miss on anything that has as much data as the DRF Past Performances. It is crammed full of critical data, and there is only so much room, making symbols and abbreviations a necessity. If horseplayers with 30 years of experience don't know what certain symbols or abbreviations mean, how is a new player supposed to be able to understand the data? In many ways it is like using a computer software program like Microsoft Word - you can get along ok, but you know there are many things that the software will do but you just haven't learned those features. As a computer trainer I routinely see people using what they know to get to where they want to be, except that it took them five times longer and it came out less than perfect - less than productive when one key command could have done the same thing.

When we wrote this guide, we made a conscious decision to stick to the data and not get into how to use the data for handicapping. There are three skills that everyone needs to be a successful horse player:

1. Be able to completely understand the data.
2. Be able to accurately handicap the race.
3. Understand and use coherent risk/benefit wagering.

This guide is designed to meet the first need, understanding the data, ALL the data. No two races are the same, so using a single data point or set on all of your race evaluations is like using a Crescent wrench as everything from a wrench to a hammer. Without all of the data you will miss tremendous opportunities. With the data you will be able to clearly understand the probable race scenarios, identify false favorites and will get to the point that you will *know* when your big longshot is actually very live.

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Acknowledgements

This project would not have been possible without the gracious assistance of the crowd over on DRF's FormBlog. I would like to personally thank some of the individuals who gave us detailed reviews and suggestions - Dan, Alan, "C", PGM, larryk, SR Vegas, Afi, AlHattab, Blue Horseshoe and a bunch of others. Thank You!

Race Information Header

Daily Racing Form

Santa Anita (3/29/2008)

4

Santa Anita

Clm 40000(40-35)



About 6 1/2 Furlongs (Turf). (1:11) CLAIMING. Purse \$38,000 (plus \$4,560 CBOIF - California Bred Owner Fund) Downhill Turf For Four Year Olds and Upward. Weight, 123 lbs. Non-winners of a race since February 1 Allowed 2 lbs. Claiming Price \$40,000, if for \$35,000, allowed 2 lbs. (Rail at 8 feet).

Santa Anita (3/29/2008)

4

Santa Anita

Clm 40000 (40-35)

About 6 1/2 Furlongs

(Turf)

(1:11)

CLAIMING

Purse \$38,000

(plus \$4,560 CBOIF)

Downhill Turf for Four Year Olds and Up

Weight, 123 lbs.

Non-winners of a race...

Claiming Price \$40,000

... if for \$35,000, allowed 2 lbs.

(Rail at 8 feet)

Course Diagram

The track and date of the past performances.

The race number.

The race track.

The race type and weight for price allowance.

The distance of the race.

The racing surface. The main track does not use a designation.

The track record for the distance and course.

The type of race.

The purse for the race.

An addition to the purse for runners who are statebreds.

Course description and age restriction.

The designated weight for the race.

The weight break condition for non-winners since Feb 1st.

The claiming price for runners in this race.

A weight break that requires a reduction in claiming price.

The position of the rail from the interior of the turf course.

The diagram of the course being run.

Race Header

There is a wealth of information in the race header, and it is often overlooked by handicappers. It will tell you not only the fundamentals of the race (surface, distance, etc.) but will also give you the specific conditions and restrictions that apply to the race and the actual purse money as well as the rail setting for turf courses.

Rail Settings

Because 1,000 pound horses wearing metal shoes are very hard on the grass surface, the track superintendent will move the rail in or out to keep the horses from wearing out a specific patch of turf. Generally the closer the rail is to its inside limit the faster the course. Remember too that when they move the rail out there is less width on the course, so the runners have a narrower track on which to run and pass.

Basic Runner Information

<p>5 Bettin an Sweatin <small>Green</small> Own: Mike Pegram Red, Red 'Mp' On Yellow Ball, Yellow ESPINOZA V (181 25 16 26 .14) 2007: (1162 185 .16)</p>

5	The program number for the runner.
Bettin an Sweatin	The name of the runner.
Own: Mike Pegram	The owner of the runner.
Green	The saddle cloth color.
Red, Red "MP" on Yellow Ball, Yellow	The stable's silk colors and design worn by the jockey.
ESPINOZA V	The jockey (in this case Victor Espinoza).
(181 25 16 26 .14)	The jockey's meet stats (starts, wins, places, shows, win rate).
2007: (1162 185 .16)	The jockey's number of races, wins and win rate for 2007.

Detailed Runner Information

<p>Ch. c. 4 (May) KEESEP05 \$150,000 Sire: E Dubai (Mr. Prospector) \$15,000 Dam: Chatta Code (Lost Code) Br: ClassicStar (Ky) Tr: Hofmans David (52 6 7 2 .12) 2007: (218 20 .09)</p>

Ch.	The color of the horse.
c.	The sex of the runner.
4	The age of the runner.
(May)	The birth month of the runner.
KEESEP05 \$150,000	The sale location, month, and year with the price paid at the sale.
Sire: E Dubai (Mr. Prospector) \$15,000	The sire, (his sire) and the sire's current stud fee.
Dam: Chatta Code (Lost Code)	The dam, (and her sire).
Br: ClassicStar (Ky)	The breeder and the state where the runner was foaled.
Tr: Hofmans David	The name of the trainer.
(52 6 7 2 .12)	The trainer's meet stats (starts, win, place, show, win rate).
2007: (218 20 .09)	The trainer's number of races, wins and win rate for 2007.

Post vs. Program Numbers

The post number and the program numbers are NOT necessarily one and the same, and is a great way to end up with a 50/1 shot you had no intention of betting. The number you wager on is the PROGRAM NUMBER, not the post number. If you think about it for a minute this makes sense - if the 3 horse scratches they are not going to leave the 3 post empty, they will slide everyone over one gate, so now the 4 is running from the 3 post, the 5 from the 4, etc. Also when you have coupled entries, there is no 1A post. How do they determine the post position initially for a race? They draw small "pills" with the post position engraved on them horse by horse. This is called the "post draw". So when your horse ends up in the 10 gate, this is why he got there.

Horse Color Abbreviations

b	Bay
blk	Black
br	Brown
ch	Chestnut
dkb	Dark Bay
gr/ro	Gray or Roan

Horse Sex Abbreviations

c	Colt (male horse less than 5 years old)
f	Filly (female horse less than 5 years old)
g	Gelding (neutered male)
h	Horse (male horse 5 years old or older)
m	Mare (female horse 5 years old or older)
r	Ridgling (male horse with undescended testicle(s))

Country Codes

2 Ksayban (Fr)

Own: Seidler & Vegso

White Dark Green, Green And Beige Diagonal

BEJARANO R (282 60 56 36 .21) 2008: (279 57 .20)

4 Meer Kat (Ire)

Own: Dolantori Racing

Yellow White, White D&t On Blue, Green

BAZE M C (306 36 48 23 .12) 2008: (294 36 .12)

Horses that are foaled outside of the United States and Canada will have a country code in parentheses to the right of their name. In the cases above, Ksayban is from France and Meer Kat from Ireland. There may be times when you see a horse that has raced exclusively overseas but has no country code - that is because they were foaled in the U.S. or Canada. A good example of this is Tomcito, a horse foaled in the U.S. but raced in Peru.

Country Codes

ALG	Algeria	HOL	Holland (Netherlands)	POL	Poland
ARG	Argentina	HK	Hong Kong	POR	Portugal
AUS	Australia	HUN	Hungary	PR	Puerto Rico
AUT	Austria	IND	India	QA	Qatar
BHR	Bahrain	NDO	Indonesia	RUM	Rumania
BAR	Barbados	IRA	Iran	RUS	Russia
BEL	Belgium	IRE	Ireland	KSA	Saudi Arabia
BOL	Bolivia	ISR	Israel	SVK	Slovak Republic
BRZ	Brazil	ITY	Italy (Ity)	SVN	Slovenia
CEY	Ceylon	JAM	Jamaica	SAF	South Africa
CHI	Chile	JPN	Japan (Jpn)	SPA	Spain
CHN	China	KAZ	Khazakhstan	SUD	Sudan
COL	Colombia	KEN	Kenya	SWE	Sweden
CRI	Costa Rica	KOR	Korea	SWI	Switzerland
CRO	Croatia	LEB	Lebanon	THA	Thailand
CUB	Cuba	LIB	Libya	TRI	Trinidad and Tobago
CYP	Cyprus	LUX	Luxemborg	TUN	Tunisia
CZE	Czech Republic	MAL	Malaysia	TUR	Turkey
DEN	Denmark	MTA	Malta	UKR	Ukraine
DOM	Dominican Republic	MAU	Mauritius	UAE	United Arab Emirates
ECU	Ecuador	MEX	Mexico	URU	Uruguay
EGY	Egypt	MDA	Moldavia	VEN	Venezuela
SLV	El Salvador	MOR	Morocco	ZIM	Zimbabwe
FIN	Finland	NZ	New Zealand		
FR	France	NOR	Norway		
GEO	Georgia	PAK	Pakistan		
GER	Germany	PAN	Panama		
GB	Great Britain (GB)	PRY	Paraguay		
GR	Greece	PER	Peru		
GTM	Guatemala	PHI	Philippines		

Horse Ages and Birth Months

Horses in the northern hemisphere (North America, Europe, Japan, China, etc.) are foaled from January to June, where southern hemisphere horses (Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Argentina, Brazil, etc.) are foaled from July to December. For the purpose of determining age of the thoroughbred, the date of birth of a thoroughbred is deemed to be January 1 of the year of foaling for the northern hemisphere and July 1 for the southern hemisphere.

Major Horse Auction Venues

KEE Keeneland (Lexington, KY)

OBS Ocala Breeders Sale (Ocala, FL)

BAR Barretts Equine Limited (Pomona, CA)

EAS Fasig-Tipton (Timonium, MD)

FTK Fasig-Tipton (Lexington, KY)

SAR Fasig-Tipton (Saratoga Springs, NY)

TT Tattersalls Limited (UK)

Runner Records

Blinkers ON	Life	4	1	1	0	\$29,000	82	D.Fst	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
	2008	2	0	0	0	\$800	66	Wet(434)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
L 119	2007	2	1	1	0	\$28,200	82	Synth	3	1	1	0	\$28,200	82
	SA	2	0	1	0	\$3,400	66	Turf(312)	1	0	0	0	\$400	52
								Dist(406)	1	1	0	0	\$25,200	82

Blinkers ON/OFF

L 119

Life 4 1 1 0, \$29,000, 82

2008 2 0 0 0, \$800, 66

2007 2 1 1 0, \$28,200, 82

SA 2 0 1 0, \$3,400, 66

D.Fst 0 0 0 0, \$0, -

Wet (434) 0 0 0 0, \$0, -

Synth 3 1 1 0, \$28,000, 82

Turf (312) 1 0 0 0, \$400, 52

Dist (406) 1 0 1 0, \$25,200, 82

The runner is now wearing blinkers, a change from their last race.

The runner is using Lasix and is assigned 119 pounds.

The lifetime record, total earnings, and highest lifetime Beyer.

The 2008 record, total earnings, and highest Beyer for the year.

The 2007 record, total earnings, and highest Beyer for the year.

The record at Santa Anita for the surface, earnings, and highest Beyer.

The dirt record on fast tracks with earnings, and highest Beyer.

The wet track record with (Tomlinson Rating), earnings, and highest Beyer.

The synthetic track record with earnings, and highest Beyer.

The turf track record with (Tomlinson Rating), earnings, and highest Beyer.

The record at the distance with (Tomlinson Rating), earnings, and highest lifetime Beyer.

Section Symbols



Designates first time Lasix usage.



Designates regular Lasix usage.



Designates regular usage of Lasix and Butazolidin.

Tomlinson Rating

The brainchild of Lee Tomlinson, Tomlinson ratings assess a horse's likely aptitude for performing on turf courses, on off tracks (muddy, sloppy, slow and wet-fast) and at various distances. They are a compilation of the racing record of the sire, grandsire and damsire for these conditions. They range from 0 (very poor) to 480 (outstanding). They are extremely useful for first time runners on a new surface and/or a new distance. Here is a basic interpretation of the Tomlinson rating numbers:

- 400-480 Top notch performance at the distance or on the surface.
- 300-399 Excellent performance at the distance or on the surface.
- 200-299 Fair to good performance at the distance or on the surface.
- 100-199 Probably not the distance or surface of choice.
- 0-99 Definitely not the distance or surface of choice.

Remember that these ratings are *guides*, many times sires that are known to produce sprinters will have progeny who can make route distances, and sires that never won on the turf will have progeny who love the turf. The ratings are the best guess as to how the runner will perform in a new environment.

Sprints and Routes

Sprints are races less than one mile. Routes are races of a mile or more. Routes will generally pay 10-20% more in purses at a given level than sprints.

Apprentice Weight Allowances

Apprentice jockeys get varying weight allowances for their first year riding. Traditionally it is ten pounds until their fifth winner, then seven pounds until their 35th winner, and then five pounds for the remainder of the year. The specific allowance will be noted next to the weight as shown below:

113⁷

Synthetic Track Surfaces

The original theory behind the use of synthetic surfaces at horse tracks was twofold, 1) To reduce the number of injuries to the horses and 2) To provide an all weather, reduced maintenance running surface. The jury is still out on the effectiveness of the synthetics in reducing injuries, but they have (with the exception of the Winter 2008 problems at Santa Anita) been effective in conducting races in wet conditions.

Synthetic Track Brands

Equitrack - the first of the synthetic track surfaces, originally installed at Remington Park, it is not currently in use at any track in North America.

Polytrack - the next generation of synthetic track surface, it is in use at Del Mar, Keeneland, Turfway Park, Woodbine and Arlington Park. It is also used extensively in the UK. It is the slowest of the surfaces, and tends to favor turf horses.

Cushion Track - has a checkered track record, flawless at Hollywood Park and a disaster at Santa Anita (the only two tracks that use it). It is the fastest of the synthetic surfaces.

Pro-Ride - was developed in Australia and has not been installed outside of Australia and New Zealand. They did use their product to reformulate the track surface at Santa Anita with the existing Cushion Track.

Tapeta Footings - probably the truest playing surface, it is currently installed at Presque Isle, Golden Gate and Fair Hill, and does not seem to receive many complaints from trainers, jockeys or horseplayers.

SafeTrack - the newest of the synthetics, it is currently installed only at the Ocala Training Center. It appears to play alot like Tapeta.

Note: Although they play extremely differently, DRF lumps all synthetics into the same category in the runner records.

Race Data and Conditions

2Mar08-8SA	fm	*6½f	Ⓟ	:21 ³	:43 ³	1:06 ⁴	1:13	Baldwin-G3
16Feb08-4SA	fm	*6½f	Ⓟ	:21 ¹	:43 ²	1:07	1:13 ¹	OC 80k/n1x
26Jan08-8GG	fst	6f	Ⓢ	:21 ³	:45	:57 ²	1:09 ³	OC 32k/n1x -N
23Nov07-5Hol	fm	1	Ⓟ	:22 ²	:45 ⁴	1:10 ¹	1:34 ¹	Generous-G3
21Oct07-40SA	fst	6f	Ⓢ	:21	:43 ¹	:55 ³	1:08 ²	JGoodman94k
30Oct07-30SA	fst	6½f	Ⓢ	:21 ²	:44 ¹	1:09 ¹	1:16	Alw 4000s
Previously trained by Oliver Terrance 2007(as of 8/23): (30 5 2 5								
23Aug07-5Crc	sly ^s	5f		:22 ²	:46 ³	:59 ²		Md 25000

2Mar08-8SA

The date (2Mar08), race (-8) and place of the race (SA).

fm

The track condition, in this case the turf was firm.

*6½f

The distance of the race, in this case about 6½ furlongs.

T in a circle

The surface the race was run on, in this case turf.

:21³ :43³ 1:06⁴ 1:13

The fractions for the lead horse, with the last time the time of the winner.

What was MY horse's time?

The only time for the race is the winner's time, in this case a time of 1:13 flat. You then need to know how far behind the winner your horse finished (take a look at the Running Lines section). In this case he finished 4 lengths behind the winner. For each length behind add 1/5 of a second. So our runner above ran approximately 1:13 and 4/5 seconds to the winner's 1:13 flat.

Racing Surface Condition - Dirt	Racing Surface Condition - Turf
fr Frozen fst Fast gd Good hy Heavy my Muddy sl Slow sly Sloppy wf Wet-Fast Note: an "s" after the track condition indicates that the track has been sealed.	fm Firm gd Good hd Hard hy Heavy sf Soft yl Yielding

sly^s

The "sly" with the superscript "s" indicates that the track was sloppy and had been sealed.

*7½f

The asterisk before the distance indicates that it is "about" that distance. The actual distance is either lesser or greater than 7.5 furlongs.

Sealing the Track

What does "sealing" the track mean? A sealed track is a dirt track that has been packed down. Dry tracks are sealed so that water runs off the track, reducing the amount of rain that is absorbed into the track. Wet tracks are sealed to provide a safe and even racing surface. A sealed track is designated by a small "s" immediately after the track condition.

Turf Chutes

The use of a chute on a turf course is identified by a "+" sign after the final running time as indicated below (after the 1:44).

4Jly07-6Mth fm 1¼f Ⓟ :23³ :48¹ 1:12 1:44 +3+ⓈMd 35000(35-30)

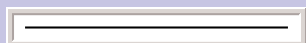
Fractional Times and Points of Call

The Past Performances list the points of call and fractional times for each race. This is confusing because the fractional time listed is for the horse that was leading at that point, and the points of call are different for each distance. They are NOT tied together, that is the point of call is not necessarily where the fractional time is captured. To determine the actual time for your horse, you can use the 1 length = 1/5 of a second at those points of call that are the same, for example on 6F races you could calculate the fractions for your horse at the 1/4 and 1/2 calls, but not the "stretch" call as it does not correspond to the 5/8 fractional time. Here are the points of call and fractional times for the most common distances in North America:

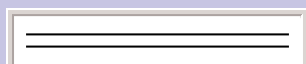
Points of Call and Fractional Times									
Distance	Points of Call					Fractional Times			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th				
3.5F	Start	1/4	-	Stretch	Finish	-	1/4	3/8	Finish
4.0F	Start	1/4	-	Stretch	Finish	-	1/4	3/8	Finish
4.5F	Start	1/4	-	Stretch	Finish	-	1/4	1/2	Finish
5.0F	Start	3/16	3/8	Stretch	Finish	-	1/4	1/2	Finish
5.5	Start	1/4	3/8	Stretch	Finish	1/4	1/2	5/8	Finish
6.0F	Start	1/4	1/2	Stretch	Finish	1/4	1/2	5/8	Finish
6.5F	Start	1/4	1/2	Stretch	Finish	1/4	1/2	3/4	Finish
7.0F	Start	1/4	1/2	Stretch	Finish	1/4	1/2	3/4	Finish
7.5F	Start	1/4	1/2	Stretch	Finish	1/4	1/2	3/4	Finish
Mile	1/4	1/2	3/4	Stretch	Finish	1/4	1/2	3/4	Finish
1 Mile, 40 Yards	1/4	1/2	3/4	Stretch	Finish	1/4	1/2	3/4	Finish
1 Mile, 70 Yards	1/4	1/2	3/4	Stretch	Finish	1/4	1/2	3/4	Finish
1 1/16 Miles	1/4	1/2	3/4	Stretch	Finish	1/4	1/2	3/4	Finish
1 1/8 Miles	1/4	1/2	3/4	Stretch	Finish	1/2	3/4	Mile	Finish
1 3/16 Miles	1/4	1/2	3/4	Stretch	Finish	1/2	3/4	Mile	Finish
1 1/4 Miles	1/4	1/2	Mile	Stretch	Finish	1/2	3/4	Mile	Finish
1 3/8 Miles	1/4	1/2	Mile	Stretch	Finish	1/2	3/4	Mile	Finish
1 1/2 Miles	1/4	1/2	1 1/4	Stretch	Finish	1/2	3/4	1 1/4	Finish
1 5/8 Miles	1/4	1/2	1 3/8	Stretch	Finish	1/2	Mile	1 1/4	Finish
1 3/4 Miles	1/2	Mile	1 1/2	Stretch	Finish	1/2	1 1/4	1 1/2	Finish
1 7/8 Miles	1/2	Mile	1 5/8	Stretch	Finish	1/2	1 1/4	1 3/4	Finish
2 Miles	1/2	Mile	1 3/4	Stretch	Finish	1/2	1 1/2	1 3/4	Finish

Layoff Symbols

When you see one of these symbols over a race date, they mean that the horse has been on a layoff since that date, that is they were either hurt or needed a rest.



The single line indicates a layoff of 46 days to 364 days in length.











The double line indicates a layoff of a year or longer.

Here is an example of what it looks like in the actual Past Performance:












 31Mar07 Nad Al Sheba (UAE) Racing Post Rating: 6Jan07-8SA fst 1¹/₁₆

This runner actually had two layoffs, the first began on January 6th, 2007 and ended on March 31st, 2007. He has not raced since, so he earns the double line long layoff lines.

Racing Surface Symbols

-  Designates a race on a synthetic race surface.
-  Designates a race on grass.
-  Designates a left hand course (counter clockwise). This is used for foreign races only.
-  Designates a right hand course (clockwise). This is used for foreign races only.
-  Designates a straight course.
-  Designates a race on the inner dirt track.
-  Designates a race on the inner turf track.
-  Indicates a race that was originally scheduled for the turf, but was run on the main track due to the condition of the turf course (usually rain).

Restriction and Condition Symbols

-  Designates a race restricted to fillies and/or mares.
-  Designates a race restricted to statebreds.
-  Designates a race restricted to three year olds and up.
-  Designates a race restricted to four year olds and up.
-  Designates a race restricted to nonwinners of 1 race other than maiden, claiming or starter events.
-  Designates a race restricted to nonwinners of 2 races other than maiden, claiming or starter events.
-  Designates a race restricted to nonwinners of 3 races other than maiden, claiming or starter events.
-  Designates a race restricted to nonwinners of 1 race in the last year.
-  Designates a race restricted to nonwinners of 2 races lifetime.
-  Designates a race restricted to of nonwinners of a stated amount of money during the previous year .
-  Designates a restricted stakes race, for example the “Sunshine Millions”, a series of stakes races restricted to California and Florida Breds held at Santa Anita and Gulfstream Park every January.

Race Distances

<u>Miles</u>	<u>Furlongs</u>	<u>Feet</u>	<u>Yards</u>	<u>Meters</u>
1/8	1	660	220	201
1/4	2	1320	440	402
3/8	3	1980	660	603
1/2	4	2640	880	804
9/16	4.5	2970	990	905
5/8	5	3300	1100	1006
11/16	5.5	3630	1210	1106
3/4	6	3960	1320	1206
13/16	6.5	4290	1430	1307
7/8	7	4620	1540	1408
15/16	7.5	4950	1650	1508
1	8	5280	1760	1609
1 1/16	8.5	5610	1870	1709
1/18	9	5940	1980	1810
1 3/16	9.5	6270	2090	1910
1 1/4	10	6600	2200	2011
1 3/8	11	7260	2420	2212
1 1/2	12	7920	2640	2413
1 5/8	13	8580	2860	2614
1 3/4	14	9240	3080	2815

Oddball Distances

Because of the track size and configuration, some tracks have unusual distances. The two most common are one mile and 40 yards (designated as 1⁴⁰) and one mile and 70 yards (designated as 1⁷⁰). An asterisk (*) before the distance is used to denote an “about distance”. So a race that is about 6 1/2 furlongs is designated *6 1/2.

Track Size and Turns

The actual size of the race track varies widely from small courses (also called “bull rings”) of 5/8 of a mile (like Timonium and Fairplex) to gigantic Belmont Park (known as “Big Sandy”) that is a mile and a half oval. The effect on racing is significant, the width and size of the course many times dictates the running style of the horses. You will see comment about horses that have yet to “make it around two turns”. At Belmont, the minimum distance to make a race two turns is a mile and a half!

Here are the sizes of some of the major tracks in the United States:

<u>Track</u>	<u>Main Track</u>	<u>Stretch Length</u>	<u>Turf Track</u>
Aqueduct	1 1/8 Mile Oval ¹	1155.5 Feet	7 Furlongs, 43 Feet Oval
Arlington	1 1/8 Mile Oval	1049 Feet	1 Mile Oval
Belmont	1 1/2 Mile Oval	1097 Feet	1 5/16 Mile, 27 Feet Oval ²
Calder	1 Mile Oval	990 Feet	7 Furlongs Oval
Churchill Downs	1 Mile Oval	1234.5 Feet	7 Furlongs Oval
Del Mar	1 Mile Oval	919 Feet	7 Furlongs Oval
Gulfstream	1 1/8 Mile Oval	898 Feet	1 Mile Oval
Hollywood	1 1/8 Mile Oval	991 Feet	1 Mile, 145 Feet Oval
Keeneland	1 1/16 Mile Oval	1174 Feet	7.5 Furlong Oval
Santa Anita	1 Mile Oval	990 Feet	7 Furlongs Oval
Saratoga	1 1/8 Mile Oval	1144 Feet	1 Mile, 98 Feet Oval ³

¹ Aqueduct has two dirt tracks, the main track and an inner track that is a one mile oval.

² Belmont Park has two turf courses, the Widener, (the main turf track), and an inner turf course that is 1 3/16 miles, 103 feet.

³ Saratoga has two turf tracks, the Mellon Turf (the main turf track), and an inner turf track that is 7 Furlongs, 304 Feet.

North American Track Abbreviations

AIK	AIKEN	GLN	GLYNDON	RPD	ROSSBURN PARKLAND DOWNS
AJX	AJAX DOWNS	GN	GRAND NATIONAL	RUI	RUIDOSO DOWNS
ALB	ALBUQUERQUE	GP	GULFSTREAM PARK	RUP	MINIDOKA COUNTY FAIR
ANF	ANTHONY DOWNS	GPR	GRANDE PRAIRIE	SA	SANTA ANITA PARK
AP	ARLINGTON PARK	GRP	GRANTS PASS	SAC	SACRAMENTO
AQU	AQUEDUCT	GRA	GREEN ACRES	SAF	GRAHAM COUNTY FAIR
ARP	ARAPAHOE PARK	GRM	GREAT MEADOW	SAN	SANDOWN PARK
ASD	ASSINIBOIA DOWNS	GS	GARDEN STATE PARK	SAR	SARATOGA
ATH	ATLANTA	GV	GENESEE VALLEY	SDY	SANDY DOWNS
ATL	ATLANTIC CITY	HAW	HAWTHORNE	SH	STRAWBERRY HILL
ATO	HORSEMEN'S ATOKAD DOWNS	HIA	HIALEAH PARK	SHD	SHENNANDOAH DOWNS
BCF	BROWN COUNTY FAIR	HOL	HOLLYWOOD PARK	SHW	SHAWAN DOWNS
BEL	BELMONT PARK	HOO	HOOSIER PARK	SJ	APACHE COUNTY FAIR
BEU	BEULAH PARK	HOU	SAM HOUSTON RACE PARK	SJD	SAN JUAN DOWNS
BF	BROCKTON FAIR	HPO	HORSEMEN'S PARK	SND	SUNFLOWER
BIR	BIRMINGHAM TURF CLUB	HACF	HUMBOLDT COUNTY FAIR	SOL	SOLANO
BKF	BLACK FOOT	HST	HASTINGS RACECOURSE	SON	SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR
BM	BAY MEADOWS	IND	INDIANA DOWNS	SOP	SOUTHERN PINES
BMF	BAY MEADOWS FAIR	ING	INGLESIDE	SPT	SPORTSMAN'S PARK
BOI	LES BOIS PARK(BOI) -Boise,ID	JRM	JEROME COUNTY FAIR	SR	SANTA ROSA
BOW	BOWIE	KAM	KAMLOOPS	SRP	SUNRAY PARK
BRD	BLUE RIBBON DOWNS	KD	KENTUCKY DOWNS	STK	STOCKTON
BRN	HARNEY COUNTY FAIR	KEE	KEENELAND	STN	STONEBROOK AT FIVE POINTS
BRO	BROOKHILL FARM	KIN	KIN PARK	STP	STAMPEDE PARK
CAM	CAMDEN	KSP	KALISPELL	SUD	SUN DOWNS
CBY	CANTERBURY PARK	LA	LOS ALAMITOS	SUF	SUFFOLK DOWNS
CAS	CASSIA COUNTY FAIR	LAD	LOUISIANA DOWNS	SUN	SUNLAND PARK
CD	CHURCHILL DOWNS	LBG	LETHBRIDGE	TAM	TAMPA BAY DOWNS
CHA	CHARLESTON	LBT	LAUREL BROWN RACETRACK	TDN	THISTLEDOWN
CHL	CHARLOTTE	LEV	LITTLE EVERGLADES	TGD	TIOGA DOWNS
CLM	CLEMMONS	LEX	LEXINGTON	TIL	TILLAMOOK COUNTY FAIR
CLS	COLUMBUS	LNN	LINCOLN STATE FAIR	TIM	TIMONIUM
CNL	COLONIAL DOWNS	LRL	LAUREL PARK	TP	TURFWAY PARK
CPW	CHIPPEWA DOWNS	LS	LONE STAR PARK	TRY	TRYON
CRC	CALDER RACE COURSE	MAF	MARIAS FAIR	TS	TROUT SPRINGS
CT	CHARLES TOWN RACES & SLOTS	MAL	MALVERN	TUP	TURF PARADISE
CWF	CENTRAL WYOMING FAIR	MAN	MANOR DOWNS	UN	EASTERN OREGON LIVESTOCK
DAY	DAYTON	MAR	MARLBORO	UNI	UNIONVILLE
DED	DELTA DOWNS	MC	MILES CITY	WDS	THE WOODLANDS
DEL	DELAWARE PARK	MD	MARQUIS DOWNS	WIL	WILLOWDALE STEEPLECHASE
DEP	DESERT PARK	MDA	MELVILLE DISTRICT AGRIPAR	WMF	WESTERN MONTANA FAIR
DET	DETROIT RACE COURSE	MED	MEADOWLANDS	WNT	WINTERTHUR
DG	COCHISE COUNTY FAIR	MID	MIDDLEBURG	WPR	WHITE PINE RACEWAY
DMR	DEL MAR	MIL	MILLARVILLE	WRD	WILL ROGERS DOWNS
DUN	GREENELEE COUNTY FAIR	MNR	MOUNTAINEER CASINO RACETRACK	WO	WOODBINE
DUQ	DU QUOIN	MOF	MOHAVE COUNTY FAIR	WTS	WAITSBURG RACE TRACK
DXD	DIXIE DOWNS	MON	MONKTON	WW	WALLA WALLA
ELK	ELKO COUNTY FAIR	MOR	MORVEN PARK	WYO	WYOMING DOWNS
ELP	ELLIS PARK	MPM	MT. PLEASANT MEADOWS	YAV	YAVAPAI DOWNS
ELY	WHITE PINE RACING	MTH	MONMOUTH PARK	YD	YELLOWSTONE DOWNS
EMD	EMERALD DOWNS	MTP	MONTPELIER	YKT	YORKTON EXH. ASSOC
EMT	EMMETT	NMP	NORTHAMPTON	YM	YAKIMA MEADOWS
EQ	EQUIBASE	NP	NORTHLANDS PARK	ZIA	ZIA PARK
EQB	EQUIBASE MEDIA PP'S	OKR	OAK RIDGE		
EUR	EUREKA	ONE	ONEIDA COUNTY FAIR		
EVD	EVANGELINE DOWNS	OP	OAKLAWN PARK		
FAI	FAIR HILL	OSA	OAK TREE AT SANTA ANITA		
FAR	NORTH DAKOTA HORSE PARK	OTC	OCALA TRAINING CENTER		
FAX	FAIRFAX	OXM	OXMOOR		
FE	FORT ERIE	PEN	PENN NATIONAL		
FER	FERNDALE	PHA	PHILADELPHIA PARK		
FG	FAIR GROUNDS	PIC	PICOV DOWNS		
FH	FAR HILLS	PID	PRESQUE ISLE DOWNS		
FL	FINGER LAKES	PIM	PIMLICO		
FLG	FLAGSTAFF	PLA	PLAYFAIR		
FMT	FAIR MEADOWS	PLN	PLEASANTON		
FNO	FRESNO	PM	PORTLAND MEADOWS		
FON	FONNER PARK	PMT	PINE MTN-CALLOWAY GARDEN		
FP	FAIRMOUNT PARK	POD	POCATELLO DOWNS		
FPL	FAIR PLAY PARK	PRM	PRAIRIE MEADOWS		
FPX	FAIRPLEX PARK	PRV	CROOKED RIVER ROUNDUP		
FTP	FORT PIERRE	PW	PERCY WARNER		
FX	FOXFIELD	QBY	QUEENSBURY DOWNS		
GBF	GREAT BARRINGTON FAIR	RDM	RED MILE		
GCF	GILA COUNTY FAIR	RET	RETAMA PARK		
GF	GREAT FALLS	RKM	ROCKINGHAM PARK		
GG	GOLDEN GATE FIELDS	RIL	RILLITO		
GIL	GILLESPIE COUNTY FAIR	RD	RIVER DOWNS		
GLD	GREAT LAKES DOWNS	RP	REMINGTON PARK		

Race Types

There are a wide variety of race classifications, ranging from \$2,000 claimers to \$6,000,000 stakes. Along with the basic classification, there are many races that have conditions and restrictions for the entrants.

Maiden

Any horse who has not won a race is known as a maiden. There are three types of races that are restricted to maidens, Maiden Special Weight, Maiden Claiming, and Maiden Optional Claiming. Generally, top maidens run in Maiden Special Weight mid-level maidens run in Maiden Optional Claiming races and lesser maidens run in Maiden Claiming. That being said, obviously an \$8K MSW horse from Zia Park will probably not fair well against \$80K maiden claimers at Santa Anita. The purses for Maiden Special Weight races range from \$8,000 to \$80,000. Maiden claiming races set claiming prices from \$2,000 to \$100,000. Let's look at how the race is noted in the past performance:

Md Sp Wt 61k

This designates the race as a Maiden Special Weight with a purse of \$61,000.

F M oc 30000

This designates the race as a Maiden Optional Claiming race with a claiming price of \$30,000. The "F" symbol indicates that the race is restricted to fillies.

S Md 35000

This designates the race as a Maiden Claiming race with a claiming price of \$35,000. The "S" symbol indicates that the race is restricted to statebreds.

Can a maiden run in allowance or stakes races? Yes, if they meet the conditions and restrictions. It is not common, but it does happen, especially with two year olds.

Claiming

The majority of races at a track are claiming races (generally about 50% of all races). These are races where the entrants are available to be purchased or "claimed". The buyer must put in their claim BEFORE the race. The previous owner gets any purse money won. The new owner gets the horse for the claiming price - even if the horse is injured or dies. This is also known as "running for a tag". Here is the standard line in the Past Performance for a claiming race:

Clm 7500

In this case the claiming price is \$7,500. Claiming races can also have restrictions and conditions.

One of the conditions you may see is this designation for a weight allowance for a reduction in the claiming price in the running lines:

F Md 50000(50-40)

This is a \$50K maiden claimer that offers a reduction in weight for a reduction in the claiming price - in this case \$5,000 per pound to a maximum of 2 pounds. So if you reduce the claiming price from \$50K to \$40K your horse could run at 119 pounds, where the others would have to carry 121 pounds.

A subset of Claiming races are Optional Claimers. In these races the owner can choose to enter the runner for a claim or just run for the purse. They are in effect a hybrid between Claiming and Allowance races. An "N" after the race type in the PP's indicates that they ran under the allowance conditions: Here is the standard line for an Optional Claiming race in the Past Performance:

4↑ OC 75k/N1X

In this case it is an optional claiming race with a claiming price of \$75,000 but is restricted to 4 year olds and up and has an N1X condition.

Many assume that claiming races are always the "bottom" of the rung of race horses. Many times this is true, but an OC 75K is going to have some tough horses and they are going to be better than most allowance races.

Allowance

The next level of races are allowance races. In these races the horses run for a purse and cannot be purchased as in a claiming race. Generally they have restrictions (statebred, fillies, etc.) and/or conditions (N1X, N2X, etc.). A "C" after the purse indicated that there are multiple conditions, an "NC" indicates no conditions. Here is the race line for an allowance race in the Past Performance:

3↑ Alw 45000N2L

This race is a \$45,000 allowance race for 3 year olds and up who are non winners of two races lifetime.

Many allowance races offer weight breaks if the horse hasn't won since a certain date or has not earned a certain threshold number of dollars. It is always important to read the restrictions and conditions of an allowance race carefully.

Starter Allowances and Starter Handicaps

Starter Allowances and Starter Handicaps are races that are open to the graduates of lower level maiden claiming races, or horses who have never run in a claiming race greater than \$X and have never won a race other than..., or who have never run in a claiming race greater than \$X. They are listed as Allowance races with a suffix of an "s" like this: Alw 40000s. The 40000 indicates that the race is for runners who broke their maiden for a claiming price of \$40,000 or less. It is an "N1X Lite" that allows lesser horses to run without running the risk of being claimed. Starter Handicaps are like Starter Allowance races except that the horses are individually weighted to create an even opportunity to win for all runners.

Alw 40000s

This is the header for a \$40,000 Starter Allowance race. Remember, the purse for this race, unlike other allowance races is not \$40,000, it is actually \$26,000. So don't use the \$40K figure in equivalency.

Stakes

There are two varieties of stakes races - local stakes offered by the track, where the purses can vary from \$4,000 to \$200,000 and often are restricted to statebreds. Here is the race line for a restricted stakes race in the Past Performances:

4↑ TParadiseH75k

This is a \$75,000 local stakes, the "Turf Paradise Handicap" that is restricted to 4 year olds and up.

The second type of stakes is a Graded stakes. These races cannot have any restrictions other than for sex or age. They are assigned gradings as Grades 1, 2 and 3, with Grade 1 being the top stakes run (Kentucky Derby, Breeders Cup, etc.). Graded Stakes designations began in 1973 and the grading and assignment of races is controlled by the Graded Stakes Committee of the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association. They range in purses from \$150,000 to \$6,000,000. Here is a race designation line for a graded stakes race in the Past Performance:

3↑ CigarMiH-G1

This designates a Grade 1 stakes, the "Cigar Mile" for 3 year olds and up.

Handicap System

When a race is listed as a "Handicap", the weight to be carried in the race is assigned by the track Racing Secretary based upon the performance of each horse. The Experimental Free Handicap, published annually by The Jockey Club since 1935, is a weight-based assessment of the previous year's leading two-year-olds, with the weights compiled for a hypothetical race at 1 1/16 miles on dirt. This year's weighting committee of racing secretaries was composed of Ben Huffman of Churchill Downs, P.J. Campo of the New York Racing Association and Thomas S. Robbins of the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club. The committee weighted a total of 105 males and 99 fillies. Eligible for weighting were all two-year-olds of 2007 that finished among the top four in graded or other unrestricted races with an added value of at least \$75,000, run in the continental United States.

Statebred Programs

Statebred programs were created to promote the horse racing business within the state. To that end they created two special inducements for statebred runners - races that are restricted to statebred horses, and purse enhancements (kickers) that can be as much as 25% of the purse. The added kicker is a very big deal to owners and trainers who can win more money by running Cal bred in California or New York bred in New York without running against a higher level of company.

Race Equivalency

One of the toughest things for new horseplayers to understand is what race is "better" than another race. Are allowances always better than claiming races? No. Well stakes races must be better than allowance races, right? Usually yes, but not always. Okay then how in the world can you compare races? I use the purse money as my standard for determining equality of races. Trainers will always try to run in a race where they can make maximum return in the easiest race they can find.

Here is a sample card from Santa Anita with the race types and purses:

Race 1: Claiming \$40,000 - Purse \$38,000

Race 2: Maiden Claiming \$50,000 - Purse \$29,000

Race 3: Local Stakes \$75,000 - Purse \$75,000

Race 4: Maiden Claiming \$32,000 - Purse \$20,000

Race 5: MSW \$50,000 - Purse \$50,000
Race 7: Allowance \$61,000 - Purse \$61,000
Race 9: Grade 2 Stakes - Purse \$200,000

Race 6: Starter Allowance \$40,000 - Purse \$26,000
Race 8: Claiming \$16,000 - Purse \$21,000
Race 10: Maiden Claiming \$50,000 - Purse \$27,000

So the maiden claimer for \$50K pays *less* than the \$40K claimer. Trainers and owners pay attention to the purse size, if you do the same you can easily approximate the equivalency of two races.

Foreign Races

Very few handicappers can get a handle on foreign past performances, and there are a number of reasons for this failure:

The race classifications are different from those used in the U.S. and Canada, which generally results in confusion about the class level that the runner was competing against. Exactly how much is 28,000 Dinars? Is a maiden auction race better or worse than a maiden stakes? Is a Group 1 in Denmark the same level as a Group 1 in France or Italy? The Europeans and Australia/New Zealand tend to run in a different style, especially on turf, where the jockeys tend to all go at about the same pace until they hit the stretch and then it is a cavalry charge to the finish line. The races in South America are an eclectic amalgam of U.S. and European racing styles - in fact many have both left AND right handed tracks in the same country (as does Japan). There are a large number of associations and regulatory bodies, each with their own version of race classifications, making a stab at calculating the class equivalency dicey at best.

European Group Races

In 1970 the racing bodies of Great Britain, France and Ireland formed the European Pattern Committee to standardize the classifications and conditions of major stakes races, much like the United States and Canada did with graded stakes. Italy and Germany joined the association two years later. The races they govern are called "Group" races, and like the American grades have three levels (Group 1, 2, and 3). The committee that oversees the stakes races is comprised of a representative of Great Britain, Ireland, France, Germany and Italy. The basic rules for the Group classification as set forth by the committee:

GENERAL RULES FOR RACES IN THE EUROPEAN PATTERN

Every race in the European Pattern must conform to the following rules:

- 1. It should have no indigenous conditions.*
- 2. It must have a permanent element in the title, to which a prefix or suffix may be added.*
- 3. It must justify its grouping by the quality of its runners, assessed primarily by its Pattern Race Rating.*
- 4. A Pattern Race Rating is the average of the Annual Ratings achieved by a race over a three-year period. The Annual Rating is the average of the official ratings, as agreed by the ICC, of the first four horses to finish plus, in respect of all races restricted to fillies, an allowance of 3lb for races restricted to 2 year olds and 5lb for all other races.*
- 5. Group 1 races must be run with no penalties or allowances other than a sex allowance, and a weight-for-age allowance where applicable.*
- 6. Geldings may be eligible for all Pattern races except those Group 1 races confined to 2yo's or 3yo's.*

What about other countries? How do they assign stakes classifications? There are many associations and government bodies that control the process in other countries. Outside of the members of the European Pattern Committee, or the Australian Pattern Committee it becomes tough to ascertain just how good (or bad) a Group 1 race really is.

Standard Race Classifications

It is almost impossible to shoehorn the multitude of foreign race classifications into the U.S. system. Probably the closest to our classifications is the system in use in Great Britain. The tables of equivalents below is rough, they use a wide variety of classifications. The book "Bet with the Best" has the most complete section on calculating race equivalency between the U.S. and Europe if you are interested.

<u>GB Class</u>	<u>US Class</u>
Maiden Auction	Maiden Claiming
Maiden Stakes	Maiden Special Weight
Listed Stakes	Allowances and Local Stakes
Handicaps	Handicaps
Group 3	Grade 3
Group 2	Grade 2
Group 1	Grade 1

Race Track Class Levels

With over 100 tracks in North America running regular meets, not to mention the fairs and short meets, how can you determine what level of horses run at each track? By utilizing the *average* purse per race, we can categorize the tracks into A, B, C, D, and E levels:

<u>"A" Tracks (>\$50K)</u>	<u>"B" Tracks (\$30-49K)</u>	<u>"C" Tracks (\$20-29K)</u>	<u>"D" Tracks (\$10-19K)</u>	<u>"E" Tracks (< \$10K)</u>
Belmont Park	Aqueduct	Atlantic City	Albuquerque Downs	Arapahoe Park
Churchill Downs	Arlington Park	Bay Meadows	Assiniboia Downs	Beulah
Del Mar	Fair Grounds	Calder Race Course	Atokad Downs	Blue Ribbon Downs
Hollywood Park	Gulfstream Park	Charles Town	Bay Meadows Fair	Columbus (NE)
Keeneland	Meadowlands	Colonial Downs	Canterbury Park	Fairmount Park
Ocala Training Center	Monmouth Park	Delta Downs	Ellis Park	Ferndale
Santa Anita	Pimlico	Delaware Park	Emerald Downs	Flagstaff
Saratoga		Evangeline Downs	Fair Meadows	Fonner Park
Woodbine		Fairplex Park	Finger Lakes	Grants Pass
		Golden Gate Fields	Fort Erie	Kamloops
		Hawthorne	Fresno	Kin Park
		Horsemen's Park	Great Lakes Downs	Lincoln (NE)
		Kentucky Downs	Hastings	Marquis Downs
		Laurel Park	Hoosier Park	Penn National
		Lone Star Park	Indiana Downs	Portland Meadows
		Louisiana Downs	Los Alamitos	Retama Park
		Mountaineer	Northlands Park	Rillito
		Oaklawn Park	Philadelphia Park	River Downs
		Prairie Meadows	Pleasanton	Sunflower Downs
		Presque Isle Downs	Remington Park	Thistledown
		Sunland Park	Ruidoso Downs	Turf Paradise
		Zia Park	Sam Houston	Will Rogers Downs
			Santa Rosa	Woodlands
			Solano	Yavapai Downs
			Stampede Park	
			Stockton	
			Suffolk Downs	
			SunRay Park	
			Tampa Bay Downs	
			Timonium	
			Turfway Park	

Running Lines

82	3	7	5 $\frac{3}{4}$	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	5 $\frac{3}{4}$	34	Bejarano R	LB117 b	3.50
86	3	7	44 $\frac{1}{2}$	42	31	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	Bejarano R	LB120 b	3.40e
78	5	6	55 $\frac{1}{4}$	52 $\frac{1}{2}$	31 $\frac{1}{2}$	12	Bisono A	LB120 b	2.70e
75	4	33 $\frac{1}{2}$	32	2 ^{hd}	43	77 $\frac{1}{4}$	Smith M E	LB117 b	42.00
68	3	4	43	42	53 $\frac{1}{4}$	44 $\frac{3}{4}$	Garcia M	LB116 b	5.50
78	9	4	31	31	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	Smith M E	LB120 b	3.00
17)									
75	4	4	22	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	2 ³	11 $\frac{3}{4}$	Cardoso D ⁵	L113 b	3.10

82	The Beyer Speed Figure assigned for that race.
3 7 5$\frac{3}{4}$ 5$\frac{1}{4}$ 5$\frac{3}{4}$ 3⁴	Running lines for that performance showing position and lengths behind/ahead.
Bejarano R	The jockey for that race, in this case Rafael Bejarano.
LB117b	Lists the medications (Lasix and Bute), the weight, and equipment (blinkers).
3.50	The final odds for the runner in that race (expressed as a ratio to 1). An “e” after the odds indicates that the runner was part of a coupled entry, and an “f” indicates that he was part of a field bet. An asterisk (*) before the odds indicates that the horse was the post time favorite.

Equipment		Medication	
b	Blinkers	L	Lasix (furosemide)
f	Front Bandages	B	Bute (butazolidin)
n	Nasal Strip	A	Adjunct Medication
r	Bar Shoe		

Running Line Symbols



Designates a dead heat.

Equipment and Medication

Why do trainers use equipment and medication? The short answer is to make their horse more competitive by using equipment and medication to counter a problem.

Blinkers - are used to focus the horse on the race and not on the surrounding distractions. They can also be used to keep horses from veering out or in.

Front Bandages - are officially used to keep the horse from hitting itself, though many times they are warnings of tendon or ligament damage. Also known as “front wraps”.

Nasal Strip - same use as for humans, at attempt to keep the nasal openings as open as possible.

Bar Shoe - a bar shoe is used for horses that have hoof problems, primarily quarter cracks.

Mud Calks - are shoes specially designed for running on muddy or sloppy tracks, they have small projections, much like cleats in sports. Also called “stickers”. The use of mud calks is not identified in the DRF past performances and is usually announced prior to the race or during the post parade.

Shadow Roll - is a large sheepskin band that fits over the nose to keep a horse’s eyes focused forward and away from distractions underfoot. Generally it is used when horses are bothered by changes in light on the track or have “jumped shadows”. This is not noted in the DRF Past Performances.

Lasix - is a diuretic that is used to reduce the total circulating volume of fluid to prevent a build up in the lungs which can cause bleeding.

Butazolidin - is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory that is like Motrin for horses. It reduces inflammation and is also an analgesic.

Adjunct Medication - is used for horses that run with medication other than Lasix or Butazolidin.

Coupled Entries

When two or more horses are entered into the same race with the same owner and the same trainer (in some states they are coupled if they both have the same trainer), they become a “coupled entry”, that is when you bet on one you get both. They are identified by the use of a special program number (which is also displayed on the saddle cloth). The maximum number of coupled entries in a race is three, they are identified as:

- 1, 1A and 1X
- 2, 2B and 2X
- 3, 3C and 3X

Note that if one part of the entry is disqualified by the stewards, both horses are disqualified.

Weight Assignments

The assignment of weight to a runner is an attempt to “level the playing field” by adding weight to better horses or subtracting weight from lesser horses.

The physics behind carrying additional weight is interesting, and this is based upon machines (not horses). If you take two identical 1150 pound machines and add one pound to machine “A” it will suffer a loss of 6” per furlong, so adding 4 pounds in a ten furlong race would theoretically cause a loss of 20 feet at the wire (4 x 6 inches = 2 feet x 10 furlongs = 20 feet). Horses are not machines, but the physics behind weight assignments is scientifically sound. Does it really matter? Some say it does, many say they don’t look twice at weight assignments. There have been some great horses carrying 134-142 pounds that still won easily (Dr. Fager, Ta Wee, John Henry).

Beyer Speed Figures

The Beyer Speed Figures were created by Andrew Beyer and are a numerical representation of a horse's performance, based on the final time and the inherent speed over the track on which the race was run. The higher the Beyer Speed Figure, the better the performance. Beyer Speed Figures are interchangeable from track to track and from distance to distance. So, a horse who is stepping up in class but has been posting recent Beyer Speed Figures in the 90's may in reality be simply faster than a horse dropping out of seemingly better races, but who has been posting Beyer Speed Figures in the 80's.

There are several handicapping rating systems in use throughout Europe, Australia and New Zealand. The two largest are the Timeform Timefigures and Timeform Ratings, and the Racing Post Ratings.

Timeform Timefigures

Timefigures measure the performance of horses not on their form one against another but in terms of time, in seconds (per five furlongs) faster or slower than a certain fixed standard. Their calculation takes account of track differences, race distances, the ages of the horses concerned, weight-for-age, weights carried, the state of the track surface and the strength and direction of the prevailing wind. Calculation and print-out are by computer. For convenience, timefigures are usually transcribed into their equivalent 'timeratings' in pounds. These timeratings are directly comparable with Timeform Ratings - that is to say, they are tailored to the same scale. It must be appreciated that a Timeform Rating is a considered assessment of the merit of a horse on form, whereas a timefigure (or its equivalent timerating) represents the calculated time value of a single performance, which can often be well below what the horse is capable of recording.

Racing Post Ratings

Racing Post Ratings are a handicap rating determined by a horse's overall performance in a given race with respect to the race level, field quality, weight carried and time of the race. (Note: these are not directly comparable to speed ratings, which use different methodology).

Race Detail and Comment

87-09 Ten Meropa115¹/₄ Sky Cape119²/₄ D.DoubleYou117^{no} Rail bid,game for 3rd 8
 90-12 D. DoubleYou120¹/₄ **Belafonte**118¹ **DevilsAfleet**118¹/₂ 5wd into lane,bid,game 8
 93-10 *D. Double You*120² Savo Island120¹/₄ Vadheim120¹/₂ Svd grnd,rallied,drvng 9
 86-09 The Leopard117²/₄ Indian Sun117²/₄ Meer Kat117^{nk} Pulled,bid 3wd,wkened 9
 - - WiseMndte119¹/₄ GunsOntheTbl116¹ *RmmbrBoffi*120² Waited bit into lane 8
 - - DDoublyou120¹/₂ RodsdRst120²/₄ HrlnsFortun120³/₄ Led into str,held game 11

87-09

Ten Meropa 115¹/₄

Sky Cape 119²/₄

D.DoubleYou117^{no}

Rail bid, game for 3rd

8

The speed rating and track variant for this race (- - means no figures available).

The winner of the race, the weight carried and the distance ahead of the place.

The place horse, weight carried and distance ahead of the show.

The show horse, weight carried and distance ahead of the 4th horse.

The comments on the run of the horse by the charter.

The number of runners in that race.

Race Detail Special Designations

In the race details you will see some of the runners name(s) in *italics* and some in **bold**. When a runner's name is italicized, they won next time out. When the name is in bold, that particular runner is entered into the current race.

Comment Line Symbols



Designates a disqualification.



Designates a dead heat.

Inquiries, Objections, Fouls, Protests and Disqualifications

There is nothing that strikes fear into the heart of a horseplayer like the "Inquiry" sign flashing in red on the tote board. You just booted home a 40/1 shot, beating the favorite by a nose and then... So what are the rules regarding inquiries, objections, fouls, protests and disqualifications?

Stewards' Inquiry

This is the actual process during which the stewards consider the objection and then render their decision as to whether the horse(s) in question will be disqualified and what final position they will be assigned (anywhere from the position directly behind the aggrieved horse to dead last)

"The stewards shall make diligent inquiry into any objection or protest made either upon their own motion, by any racing official, or by any other person empowered by this division to make such protest or objection."

Objection

An objection can be filed by a racing official, a jockey, a trainer, or an owner. The objection can be prior to the race, questioning eligibility, weights or other conditions and/or restrictions, or can be made immediately following a race (before it has been declared official). Here is New Jersey's definition of incidents that warrant an objection:

"Objections to the participation of a horse entered in any race shall be made to the stewards and confirmed in writing by the objector. An objection to a horse entered in a race shall be made not later than one hour before the scheduled post time of the race in which such horse is entered, except that the stewards upon their own motion may consider an objection until such time as the horse becomes a starter."

"If a horse crosses another horse so as to interfere with that, or any other horse, or jostles, or itself, or its rider, in any way interferes with another horse or its rider, unless such jostle or interference was caused by some other horse or rider, or the horse or rider jostled or interfered with was partly at fault - such horse and any other horse in the same nomination may be disqualified for the race. If a horse or its rider causes interference within the meaning of this Rule to another placed horse, and the stewards are of the opinion that the horse interfered with would have finished ahead of the first mentioned horse had such interference not occurred, they may place the first mentioned horse immediately after the horse interfered with. For the purpose of this Rule "placed horse" shall be a horse placed by the Judge."

Protests

Where an objection is normally made prior to or immediately following a race, a protest is a request to overturn the results of a race that has been declared official. Here is the California rule on filing protests.

"A protest against any horse which has started in a race, shall be made to the stewards in writing, signed by the protestor, no later than seventy-two (72) hours after the race is declared official excluding non-racing days of the meeting. If the incident the protest is based upon occurs within the last two (2) days of the race meeting, the protest may be filed with the Executive Director of the Board no later than seventy-two (72) hours after the race is declared official excluding Saturdays, Sundays, or official holidays. Upon receipt of the protest the Executive Director will assign the protest to an active board of stewards. Protests shall state the specific reason or reasons in such detail to establish probable cause for the protest."

Disqualifications

As previously stated the stewards can disqualify a horse and place him anywhere behind the aggrieved horse. But what if it is part of a coupled entry? Here are the rules from Pennsylvania on disqualification in the case of a coupled entry:

"Coupled Entries - All disqualified horses shall be placed behind the impeded entry, except disqualification of coupled entries which is governed by the following paragraph:

When a horse is disqualified, every entry coupled therewith shall be disqualified if the impeded horse, except for interference, would have arrived at the finish ahead of any of the coupled entry which comes in the money. The disqualification in such case shall operate as follows:

1. The coupled entry, if finished in the money and ahead of the impeded horse shall be placed behind that impeded horse.

2. However, if the coupled entry finished in the money handily and/or convincingly, wherein the elements of "chance of success" cannot apply, then the coupled entry shall still be declared in the money ahead of the impeded horse and the rule on disqualification shall not be enforced. The infraction committed shall be treated as a foul and penalized depending on the gravity of the infraction.

3. A coupled entry which places among the first four placers in a race with a correct weight shall be declared a winner or placer, despite the lack of weight of the coupled entry/ies."

No Contest Races

The Stewards may declare a race "no contest" due to mechanical failure (the gate did not open or could not be moved), or interference (such as a loose horse) during the running of the race which affects the majority of the horses in that race.

Cancellation of Races

The Stewards can cancel any and all races on a card due to weather, unsafe conditions, equipment malfunction or if the start of the race would be after a certain time (in California it is midnight).

Walkover

The rare case where no other runner shows up to race and the entered runner wins by default - these are almost always horses that are virtually unbeatable by available competition.

Works

WORKS: Mar16 SA ◊ 5f fst 1:00² H 11/40 Mar10 SA ◊ 5f fst :59⁴ Hg 11/54 Mar3 SA ◊ 6f fst 1:14² H 7/23 Feb26 SA ◊ 6f fst 1:15² H 7/8 Feb20 SA ◊ 5f fst 1:03² H 18/21 Feb14 SA ◊ 5f fst 1:03² H 15/14
Feb8 SA tr.t 4f fst :48² H 3/19 Feb2 SA ◊ 4f fst :46⁴ H 5/9 Jan26 SA tr.t 3f mg :37 H 1/3 Jan17 SA ◊ 3f fst :37² H 17/26 Dec29 OTC ◊ 4f fst :49⁴ B 5/14 Dec21 NET 4f fst :52² B 3/4

Mar16	The date of the work.
SA	The track where the work was held.
Diamond A	Indicates that the work was held on a synthetic track.
5f	The distance of the work.
1:00²	The time of the work, one minute 2/5 seconds.
H	The way the horse worked, in this case “handily”
11/40	The rank position for the horse to all of the works at that distance, that day.

Work Designations and Additional Data

●	Best of day/distance (bullet)	g	Worked from gate
B	Breezing	H	Handily
D	Driving	tr.t	Training track
(d)	Worked around dogs	TR	Training race
E	Easily	(W)	Wood Chips

About Work Designations and Additional Data

Although there are four primary work designations (Breezing, Driving, Easily, Handily) only two are really used - Breezing and Handily. In 40 years I think I have seen “Easily” a dozen times, and “Driving” twice. So what do the designations really mean? Not much actually, they are subjective and different tracks seem to use one or the other predominantly, for example in Southern California 95% of all works are listed as “Handily”, where back east the majority of works are listed as “Breezing”. The lower case additional data symbols are used in combination with the designator, so when you see an “Hg” it was a gate work that was designated “Handily”. A turf work is designated by the standard turf symbol (a “T” in a circle) for turf works.

Dogs are cones that are positioned on the turf track to designate the part of the turf course that is available for works. At most tracks there are no gate works on the turf, in fact at most tracks special permission is required to work on the turf course - pretty logical as the turf will suffer damage from the gate as well as the runners.

The idea that a lone horse comes out on the track at 4:30 in the morning by himself to work is great for the movies, but in reality it is organized chaos. There are lots of horses on the track, most working from a different starting point and the clockers 99% of the time keeping track of who is working and their time. It is worth going to watch, it is like a horse ballet with a bunch of people with stop watches looking on.

Trainer Statistics

TRAINER: 1stClaim(10 .30 \$3.66) 31-60Days(33 .12 \$1.46) Dirt(73 .22 \$2.16) Sprint(42 .17 \$2.89) Claim(62 .24 \$2.38)

J/T 2007-08 AQU(3 .33 \$8.13) J/T 2007-08(5 .20 \$4.88)

1stClaim
(10 .30 \$3.66)

The statistical category.
The 10 is the number of horses that the trainer has had in this category, .30 (30%) is the win rate, and \$3.66 is the ROI.

31-60Days
(33 .12 \$1.46)

The statistical category.
The 33 is the number of horses that the trainer has had in this category, .12 (12%) is the win rate, and \$1.46 is the ROI.

Dirt
(73 .22 \$2.16)

The statistical category.
The 73 is the number of horses that the trainer has had in this category, .22 (22%) is the win rate, and \$2.16 is the ROI.

Sprint
(42 .17 \$2.89)

The statistical category.
The 42 is the number of horses that the trainer has had in this category, .17 (17%) is the win rate, and \$2.89 is the ROI.

Claim
(62 .24 \$2.38)

The statistical category.
The 62 is the number of horses that the trainer has had in this category, .24 (24%) is the win rate, and \$2.38 is the ROI.

Jockey/Trainer Statistics

J/T 2007-08 AQU
(3 .33 \$8.13)

The Jockey/Trainer stats as a team for 2007-08 at Aqueduct.
The 3 is the number of horses that the jockey/trainer have teamed up on at Aqueduct, .33 (33%) is the win rate for the team and \$8.13 is the ROI for the team at Aqueduct.

J/T 2007-08
(5 .20 \$4.88)

The Jockey/Trainer stats as a team for 2007-08 at any track.
The 5 is the number of horses that the jockey/trainer have teamed up on at any track, .20 (20%) is the win rate for the team and \$4.88 is the ROI for the team total at all tracks, including Aqueduct.

Trainer Statistic Categories

First North American Start
1st Race After Claim
1st Race With Trainer
180 Days Since Last Race
60-180 Days Since Last Race
2 Off Over 180 Days
1-7 Days Since Last Race
1st Time Starter
2nd Start of Career
1st Time Turf
1st Time Blinkers
1st Time Lasix

2 Year Olds
Dirt to Turf
Turf to Dirt
Blinkers On
Blinkers Off
Sprint to Route
Route to Sprint
31-60 Days Since Last Race.
Dirt
Turf
Sprints
Routes

Maiden Claiming
Maiden Special Weight
Claiming
Allowance
Stakes
Graded Stakes
MSW to MCL
Synthetic
Synthetic to Turf
Turf to Synthetic

Trainer Statistics Time Period

The trainer statistics noted in the DRF Past Performances are for the last two years, although the Formulator edition is for the last five years. Formulator is a DRF software handicapping program that uses specially formatted Past Performances.

ROI (Return on Investment)

Throughout the trainer and jockey stats you will see a dollar number that represents the return on your investment if you had played two dollars to win on every horse in that category. So a .42 ROI means you would have gotten .42 for every two dollars you invested. If the ROI was \$11.35, you would get \$11.35 for every two dollars you invested.

ROI is a useful tool for handicappers, it is the ultimate measure of success as a horseplayer - How much do you win? The formula is simple:

$$\frac{\text{PROFIT}}{\text{TOTAL INVESTMENT}}$$

Notification of Trainer Change or Claim

When a horse changes trainers or is claimed, that fact is noted in the running lines as follows:

Previously trained by Asmussen Steven M 2005: Denotes the change of trainer.

Claimed from Barber, Gary and Cecil for \$25,000, Sadler John W Denotes a claim.

This is what it looks like in the actual Past Performance:

25Apr07-3Hol fm 6f ① :22 ³ :45 :57 1:09 ² 4+ⓈCIm 35000(40-35)	67	7	9	10 ¹⁶	10 ¹²	10 ⁸ ¹	10 ⁵	Arias S	LB118 b	50.10	89- 06	Whatwerewethi
8Mar07-6SA fst 1 :23 ¹ :47 ² 1:12 ³ 1:38 ⁴ 4+ⓈCIm c-(20-18)	-	1	7 ⁵	8 ⁶	8 ¹²	8 ²⁵	-	Migliore R	LB120	12.00	- 24	WtchMeWin120
Claimed from Santa Fe Stable and Shapiro, Mr. and Mrs. Richard for \$20,000, Vienna Darrell Trainer 2006: (133 17 16 17 0.13) Previously trained by Hofman												
7Jan07-4SA fm ① :21 ² :43 ² 1:06 ⁴ 1:13 4+ⓈCIm 50000(50-45)	65	1	10	10 ⁷ ²	10 ⁹ ²	10 ⁹ ¹	8 ⁷ ¹	Migliore R	LB121	23.10	82- 10	StrutYourStuff
2Dec06-7Hol fm 1 ① :23 ⁴ :48 1:11 ³ 1:35 ³ 3+ⓈAlw 51588n1x	71	7	5 ⁴ ¹	6 ¹ ²	5 ¹ ²	5 ² ²	8 ⁶ ¹	Migliore R	LB122	20.20	80- 11	YoursTruly121 ¹
Previously trained by Gustavo Scarpello												

In this example we have a change of trainer on December 2nd, 2006 and then the horse was claimed from a \$20K claiming race on March 8th, 2007.

References and Resources

Internet Resources

Below are some great Internet sites that can give you just about any kind of information you are looking for, from pedigrees to work analysis to opinions and statistics and news.

Alex Brown Racing	http://alexbrownracing.com/
Bloodstock Research Information Services (BRIS)	www.bris.com
Breeders' Cup	www.breederscup.com
Brooklyn Backstretch	http://brooklynbackstretch.blogspot.com/
Cal Racing	www.calracing.com
Chef-de-Race	www.chef-de-race.com
Chicago Barn to Wire	http://barntowire.com/
Daily Racing Form	www.drf.com
Equibase	www.equibase.com
Equidaily	http://equidaily.com/
Fasig-Tipton	http://www.fasigtipton.com/
Foolish Pleasure	http://foolishpleasure-valerie.blogspot.com/
Jockey Club	www.jockeyclub.com
Handicapping.Com	http://handicapping.com/
Horseplayer Magazine	www.horseplayerdaily.com
Horseraces.net	www.horse-races.net
Horseraceinsider	www.horseraceinsider.com
Horsephotos	www.horsephotos.com
Let it Ride	http://letitride.com/
National Thoroughbred Racing Association (NTRA)	www.ntra.com
Ocala Breeders' Sales Company	www.obssales.com/
Onefasthorse	http://onefasthorse.com/
Pedigree Query	www.pedigreequery.com
Paul Moran at the Races	http://paulmoranattheraces.blogspot.com/
Race Replays	www.racereplays.com
Railbird	www.jessicachapel.com
The Bloodhorse	www.bloodhorse.com
The Florida Horse	www.thefloridahorse.com
They Are at The Post	www.theyareatthepost.com
Thoroughbred Bloggers Alliance	http://thoroughbredbloggersalliance.blogspot.com/
Thoroughbred Daily News	www.thoroughbreddailynews.com
Thoroughbred Heritage	www.tbheritage.com
Thoroughbred Ink	www.thoroughbredink.com
Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association	www.toba.org
Thoroughbred Times	www.thoroughbredtimes.com
Turfpedia	www.turfpedia.com
Yahoo Horse Racing	http://sports.yahoo.com/rah

Books

There are a fair number of books out there, but some are invaluable and we highly recommend them as a base library for any horseplayer. There are many more on handicapping and betting which we will talk about in the handicapping and betting guides. But these are a great start on understanding the intricacies of the data.

Trainer Angles	Dean Keppler	DRF Press
Betting Maidens & Two Year Olds	Dan Illman	DRF Press
Beyer on Speed	Andrew Beyer	DRF Press
Bruno on Workouts	Bruno DeJulio	DRF Press
Pedigree Handicapping	Lauren Stich	DRF Press
Go for the Green	Bill Heller	DRF Press