**TODAY'S RACING DIGEST**

**2 year olds or “juveniles”** These young horses are still learning how to relax and tend to run as fast as they can as far as they can. They like to be in front (called front runners) and will often discourage those runners who couldn’t get to the lead. When handicapping 2 year olds look for strong breeding and top trainers.

**3 year olds or “sophomores”** This age level of horses are developing and growing quickly. They tend to get bad or good in a hurry. When handicapping 3 year olds look for horses with improving speed figures and form. Throw out those 3 year olds that seem to be declining. Top trainers and riders do better with 3 year olds. Outside of low-level Allowance races, 3 year olds may have a tough time against older horses.

**4 year olds versus older horses** Four year olds have an advantage in low level Allowance and Maiden Races. Keep in mind that early in the season four year olds are at a disadvantage against 5 year olds & older in claiming races.

**Fun Fact:** Horses born in the Northern Hemisphere all celebrate their birthday on January 1.

**Different Types of Races**

**Maiden Race** This type of race is only for horses that have never won a race. There are two types of Maiden races: Maiden Allowance (a.k.a. straight Maiden) and Maiden Claiming. Maiden Allowance races are for good, promising horses. Maiden Claiming Races are for horses not good enough to compete in Maiden Allowance Races.

**Claiming Race** The most common race at the track. Horses that are entered into a claiming race can be bought for a specified amount prior to the start of the race. These races are designed to attract horses of equal ability.

**Allowance Race** These types of races are designed for promising young horses to gain experience. Once a horse wins an Allowance race he will then move up to the next Allowance “level”. Allowance horses are often your future Stakes runners.

**Stakes & Handicap Races** The best horses compete in these types of races. The best Stakes are “Graded.” There are 3 levels of Graded race, Grade I, II, III with Grade I being the best. Purses range from $75,000 to $1,000,000-plus for this level of racing.

**Running Styles**

**Pace Presser** A Pace Presser will give their best efforts when following (stalking) the lead horse (front runner). This kind is usually 1 to 3 horse lengths from the lead horse out of the gate.

**Handicapping TIP:** There is nothing more dangerous than a good pace-presser. That’s because they are usually between one and three horse lengths behind the leader, often immune to the adverse effects of a speed duel, and can still finish up well when there is only one Front Runner.

**Mid Pack Runner** A Mid Pack Runner will run behind the presser and in front of the Closer.

**Closer** Closers are the slowpokes from the starting gate. They lack the speed to keep up with the frontrunners and pace pressers and are content to do their best running in the stretch.

**Handicapping TIP:** Try and identify which running style each horse in the race has. Then ask yourself the following:

1. How many horses figure to be vying for the early lead?
2. Are there any good Pace-Pressers in the race?
3. Who will be coming from far back?

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**At the top of each race analysis Today's Racing Digest Tells You Each Horse's Running Style, Class and Age.**

The age and sex of a horse: 

- F: Filly; M: Mare; C: Colt; G: Gelding; H: Horse (ungelded males 5-years and older); R: Ridgeling (a horse with only one testicle).

The horse’s running style is indicated in the PER (Position Early in Race) column. 

- F: Front Runners
- P: Pace Pressers
- M: Mid-Pack Runner
- R: Closer

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Speed Figures

Every time a horse runs it earns speed figures. Speed figures are numbers arranged on a scale that attempt to measure how fast a horse ran in a particular race. Generally the higher the number, the faster the horse ran.

How do you figure? Speed figures are usually based on the final time of a race. They are then adjusted by the track variant. Today’s racing Digest uses a more sophisticated speed figure called the Fire Number. This speed figure is unique. It is based on a horse’s speed throughout an entire race which is a more accurate gauge of his/her true performance. The Digest also offers an early pace speed figure called the PAC RAT and a final time speed rating called the FNL RAT. (see example below on how to use these speed figures)

I figure I will use them. Speed figures are hardy when you need to do a quick comparison to determine how the horses stack up against each other or the average time for the class. You can also uncover patterns easily by using speed figures to determine if a horse’s performance is improving or declining. Today’s Racing Digest gives you up to the last 10 Fire numbers for each horse.

Beware! Speed figures are not reality, but the estimates of reality, and they can contain degrees of error, usually slight but sometimes gross. Speed figures are only one tool used to solve the handicapping puzzle.

Past Performance

History lesson: “That men do not learn very much from the lessons of history is the most important of all the lessons history has to teach.” Aldous Huxley

Horse Racing Translation: In order to be successful in handicapping you need to look at a horse’s past performances.

Past Performances (PP’s) are a record of how fast a horse ran in previous races at different points around the track called “points of call”. There are numerous publications that offer this raw historical information such as Equibase and the Daily Racing Form. The trick is taking these past performances from different tracks, surfaces, distances and class levels and determining how that horse will do today.

History has passed me by. Today’s Racing Digest has done the work for you and publishes past performances that have already been adjusted to today’s race. With Digest Past Performances you can easily see how fast a horse will run today and compare that horse to other horses in today’s race. See how to read the Digest Past Performances below.

The Fire Number is Today’s Racing Digest’s speed figure that is based on a horse’s performance throughout the entire race. The higher the number the better.

Today’s Racing Digest has done work for you and publishes past performance times that have been adjusted to today’s race. In the box below we see how Cravens would have run at today’s distance and surface based on how it ran in its previous races. With the Digest’s Past Performances you can easily determine if a horse’s form is improving or declining and quickly compare other horses in today’s race to see who has been the fastest horse in the past.

COMMENTS - WORKS - DATA LINES

The PAC RAT is a pace rating/speed figure that shows the horse’s early speed in this race. This rating will also help you determine the horses running style.

The FNL RAT is a final time rating/speed figure that takes into account the horse’s final time on that particular day. The higher the number the better.

Both Ratings are quick and easy to use in order to determine if a horse is improving or declining. You can now easily compare other horses in today’s race to find out who has been the fastest horse in the past.
Win and In-The-Money percentages in every Race Appraisal.

Placing a bet is easy. You never have to feel intimidated or that you're going to say something wrong. The clerks are friendly people and want you to have a good time at the track. If you forget what to say just ask them to help you. It helps to write down your selections and the amount you are going to bet before you go to the window.

To Place a bet tell the clerk:
1) The race track you are betting on
2) The race number you want to bet
3) The dollar amount you are betting
4) The type of bet you are making
5) The program number of the horse

It should sound something like this: “I'd like Del Mar, 3rd race, $2.00 to win on #6.” That's all there is to it.

Betting Tip: Always check your ticket(s) before leaving the teller window to make sure the bet, track, race number and date are correct. Never throw your ticket away, unless you are positive it is not a winner. If there is any doubt, let the teller's computer tell you by reading the ticket.

Betting at a Self-Service Terminal

1) You may purchase a credit voucher from a mutuel clerk, a designated machine or use a winning ticket.
2) Go to any self-service terminal.
3) Insert the voucher and make your selections as prompted on the screen. The machine will delete the cost of your bet from your credit voucher. Remember to take your voucher from the machine. If you win, cash in your voucher at a mutuel window or use it in the self service terminal.

The Odd's are in your favor

The beauty about wagering on horse racing and why some people can make a living betting on horse races is that the odds are not fixed to give the “house” an edge. In other words, when you make a wager at a racetrack you are NOT betting against the race track or “house,” as with most casino games. Pari-mutuel wagering means “betting amongst ourselves.” The odds are dynamic and are solely dependent upon how you, the participants, place your wagers. The track extracts a commission from all wagers made and redistributes the remaining funds (or wagering “pool”) among the winners. In fact, the racetrack has absolutely no interest in the outcome of a race. Your wagering determines the favorite and long shot odds, not the racetrack. The more people that hold the winning ticket the less the payout will be.

Insight: Pari-mutuel wagering is why spending the time handicapping the races is important. Basically, you are betting against everybody else. If you bet on a horse to win you are betting against everybody else who bet on a different horse to win. If your horse wins then the more people that bet on your horse to win the less your payout will be. The people that bet on your horse to win the more the payout will be. These payouts are displayed in the odds posted on the tote board.

It pays to do your homework: Because you are betting against everybody else it is helpful to have as much, if not more, information on the horses, trainers, jockeys than everybody else. Today's Racing Digest is a handicapping publication that provides this type of "inside" information. The “Digest” has a staff of professional handicappers analyzing the races and workouts daily. Today's Racing Digest does most of your homework for you and can be purchased at the track, at numerous retail locations, or on line at www todaysracingdigest.com.

So Many Bets, So Little Money

For horseplayers to succeed, they must be decision makers. Movers and shakers. Doers. Not only must they solve the unique equation that leads to selecting the right horse(s) in a particular race but they also must choose the right wagering approach in order to maximize their profits. The following are a list of bets you can make:

Win: You collect if your horse wins. This is still the best approach to steady success at the races. Today's Racing Digest gives you the favorites win rate in each race's analysis.

Place: You collect if your horse wins or is 2nd. Place betting is expensive insurance. If you're going to make a place bet its a good rule of thumb is only do so when backing horses at higher than 5/1 odds.

Show: You collect if your horse wins or is 2nd or 3rd. The show bet is your greatest chance of cashing a ticket but the payout is typically not that great. This is a good place to start if you are new to handicapping. Today's Racing Digest gives you the favorites “in the money” rate in each race analysis.

Exacta: You collect if you select two horses in one race to finish 1st and 2nd in the exact order. Exacta "boxes" are best employed when you truly can't decide between two horses you think are going to win.

Quinella: You collect if you select the first two finishers in one race in any order. This is similar to the Exacta Box.

Trifecta: You collect if you select three horses in one race to finish 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in the exact order. This can be a tough one to win but it is a good bet if you have 3 horses and you can’t decide which one will win. You can "box" the trifecta and cover all combinations of these three horses for an additional cost. (6 X more)

Superfecta: You collect if you select four horses in one race to finish 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th in the exact order. This is a potentially big payout bet, but hard to win so if you do, it could pay well.

Box: Term to indicate covering your selections in all possible finish orders. As an example, $2 Exacta Box numbers 3 & 8 (your ticket would read 3-8, 8-3).

Daily Double: You collect if you pick the horses who win each of two designated races.

Pick 3: You collect if you pick the horses who win each of three designated races. These are good to use when you can find two out of three races in a sequence with suspect favorites or when you have a strong horse that doesn't figure to be a favorite at post time.

Pick 4: You collect if you pick the horses who win each of four designated races.

Pick 6: You collect if you pick the horses who win each of six designated races. This is a high risk, high reward type of bet. It is very difficult to win but often times the payout can be in the 6 + figures.

Learn to handicap the races with Today’s Racing Digest’s educational video seminars online at www todaysracingdigest.com

Today’s Racing Digest gives you the favorites’ Win and In-The-Money percentages in every Race Appraisal.

RACE APPRAISAL

FAVORITES: In races of this type at Hollywood Park, the favorite’s win rate is far above normal at 41.3%, and their 73.3% in-the-money is above normal.

ANALYSIS: Miss Northern Dawn shook clear of the field and won all out to beat $25,000 Maiden Claimer at start #6. June 15. She hit the board in all three starts and that Maiden win earned a good enough number to post in the Exacta with this crew. Dawns loads solid connections, has finished in-the-money in all three starts and is a likely to keep improving with racing. Given the lack of much from the rest of this group, that’s enough for us to make Dawn the HF. 15a. Well Marn beat this kind going seven furlongs. May 21, in hard-lugging time, but ran an absolute clunker when tried for $16,000 June 25. She should get a good rating trip from the outside stall and figures to be dangerous with the return to this level, but that last one is hard to excuse and that leaves us reservation a bit. Strike Force shows decent numbers while sliding down the class ladder, but she was claimed out of a 3rd for $50,000 by the Ted P., West barn, which is absolutely deadly with its recent purchases. The new stable bumps her up in class and “Cobra still does possess her early lick, so she seems to rate a low to middle the order at the very least.

CLOSED: Fastest in the stretch in recent races at or near this distance have James Mathis, 32.2 – Miss Northern Dawn, 33.3 – Laton Halt, 33.1 TRACK PROFILE: 11 races F = 9/10 P =23.8% B = 30.8% W =47.6% Copyright 2008 Today’s Racing Digest, LLC
The Importance of Luck

When it comes to horse racing, of course, luck is a major element in the equation. A fraction of an inch often determines the winners and the losers as millions of dollars hang on the whim of a head bob at the finish line. Professionals understand the concept that “luck” will even out over the long run and that if you’re good, you have a much better chance of being lucky.

For this reason, it’s important to stay above the fray when it comes to the luck factor, for the sake of your mental well being, if nothing else. The difference between luck and misfortune is an important concept. If you pick a good horse, make the right bet and lose by a lip on the line, that’s unlucky. If your horse stumbles and loses the jockey at the start, that’s misfortune. In the first scenario, you should congratulate yourself for making a good play and move on. In the second, you just move on. In neither situation do you curse the Gods and rue the day you ever got hooked on this idiotic game. It’s counterproductive since your negativity could well lead to future bad decisions that have nothing to do with either luck or misfortune.

The Digest shows you if today’s trainer/jockey team is a winner. Compare that with other teams running in the race.
9 Steps to having a great day

1. Purchase Today’s Racing Digest at the track or online at www.todaysracingdigest.com to get all of the inside information on the horses running today.

2. Pick up a program. This is where you will get the horses’ program numbers and morning line odds. The program also includes information on events happening at the track that day.

3. Visit the Paddock, (15 minutes prior to the start of the race.) This is your opportunity to see the horse before the race. The jockeys and trainers will discuss race strategy at this time and get the horse ready to go on the track. Make note of your horse’s saddlecloth color and jockey silks so you can easily identify them during the race.

4. Handicapping Tip: In the paddock look for lively, alert horses with a bounce in their step. Note horses with healthy, shiny, dappled out coats (light flush spots). A horse with a bowed (arched) neck is a good sign. Excessive sweating, shakiness, or unhealthy looking horses are usually best avoided.

5. Check the Tote Board: This is where you will find the current odds for the horses running in the next race and the time left until the race begins. Compare these odds with The Digest’s Betting Line to ensure you are getting good value on your bet.

6. Place your bet: Give yourself plenty of time (at least 10 minutes) to get to the window and place your bets. In the beginning try simple bets like win, place or show. As you get more comfortable work up to more exotic type wagers.

7. Manage your money: If you plan on playing all of the races during the day you may want to allocate a certain amount to each race instead of using it all on one race. If you can’t afford to lose the money you are betting don’t bet it.

8. Pick the right races: You may find that there are no clear potential winners in a given race and want to pass. This is a good strategy employed by good handicappers.

9. Watch the race: This is where it all comes together. Grab your binoculars, a tv, or your significant other and start cheering...don’t bet it.

Can you imagine the uncanny logic of Sherlock Holmes cracking some of the difficult mysteries offered every day at any racetrack in America?

Serious players would be wise to approach each race they intend to bet in the same manner as this famous sleuth attacked a new case. He would identify the suspects, sift through the evidence, envision the possible scenarios, eliminate those who couldn’t have done it and focus in on those who may have committed the crime. Of course the handicapper has to perform these tasks before they happen but the process is essentially the same. How is it done, you may ask……

Step 1 – Decide on the cases you are going to accept. Holmes for one, was totally disinterested in any situation that didn’t thoroughly test his mental talents. In racing, there are some contests that are simply so obvious that they offer no fulfilling rewards, either mental or financial. They are, in essence, a waste of time. It is essential for bettors to identify and pass races of this sort. When the favorites look strong, there is no reason to get involved. Learn the kinds of races that offer ‘value’ and which ones seem to suit your talents as a handicapper. Watch Today’s Racing Digest’s e-seminar: Investing at the Track: Getting value for Your Money to learn about value races....available on www.todaysracingdigest.com

Step 2 – A good gumshoe may crack a case by using scientific information or reliable informants or may simply follow the facts in a logical progression. None of them work exactly alike. Well there is no one right way to be successful in the racing world either. That is why Today’s Racing Digest gives you over 20 different features that look at different variables ranging from track bias and speed to value and class levels. These variables are the facts you use to help build your case.

Step 3 – Eliminate the non-suspects. Just about every race features horses that can’t win and figure to play no part in the festivities. Remove these horses from the thought process and zero in on those that may actually be “guilty” of crossing the wire first. Once you have determined what can’t happen, you are that much closer to figuring out what will happen.

Step 4 – Begin the search for motive and opportunity. Investigate the background of each of the suspects to try and determine if they have been entered in a race that suits their capabilities. Most evidence of this sort is unearthed by finding out what each individual has been good at in the past. Are they proven sprinters at or above today’s class level? Do they prefer turf to dirt? As far as opportunity goes, is the horse fast enough to beat today’s rivals on his best day? Do some of the potential perpetrators have alibis for past misfortunes? Of course, there are times when you may not have the hard-core evidence you need to answer all of these questions. In these situations, you may need to take the subjective approach. Can a sprinter win a mile? Will the proven dirt horse recreate main-track form on turf? Does this first timer with sneaky looking works and a nice winning pedigree have any talent? Instincts can be critical here and the more you work at it and play the game, the sharper those instincts should become.

Step 5 – Detectives recreate the crime in their mind before they solve it. Handicappers must see it before it happens. Taking the evidence gleaned in Steps 3 and 4, envision the events as you believe they will unfold in reality. Will the likely pace picture favor any of the suspects in particular? Which of them figure to be disadvantaged? The Fractional Charting Feature in Today’s Racing Digest can help you envision the race. (see below)

Step 6 – After going through the mental gymnastics described above, if you reach the same conclusion as your handicapping colleagues, drop the case and let others take the glory en masse. There is very little to be gained by solving mysteries that are easily solved. You are looking for cases that will build both your bankroll and your ego because those are the ones that give you the confidence to take on the ones that will make you famous, even if only in your mind.

How to Win at the Track
It’s All Very Elementary

TODAY’S RACING DIGEST

The Fractional Charting shows today’s races and the order of finish that is likely based on the horse’s past performance in a representative race.

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<td>2. Hawaii</td>
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<td>3. Miss Northern Dawn</td>
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<td>6. Nary Swanson</td>
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Today’s Racing Digest’s Fractional Charting helps you see the race unfold

Today’s Racing Digest’s Fractional Charting shows where each horse is expected to be at each call of the race, this helps you see how the race will unfold. Each underlined time designates the leader at that point in the race. This will help you identify the running style of each horse.

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**Step One – Quick Picks**

If you’re short on time or new to handicapping this is a good place to start. The Quick Picks will give you a good overview of potential winners, threats and possible betting strategies. The Quick Picks is usually found in the middle of the Digest.

**Step Two – Fractional Charting**

The Fractional Charting shows how each horse is likely to perform in the race. It will help you to count the likely position of each horse throughout the race. This will help you to envision how the race might be run by identifying who will be in the early lead (front runners), just behind the lead (pace setters), and coming from behind (closers). The Fractional Charting Page is usually found in the middle of the Digest.

**Step Three – Race Appraisal**

After spending hours watching videos, pouring over past performances, speed figures, identifying track biases and studying breeder, trainer and jockey data, the Digest tells you what they think about the race. This is where you will read about how the race will be run. The race appraisal also tells you who the closers are, and the track profile with the percentage of races won by front runners (F), pace pressers (P), mid pack runners (M), and closers (R). The Race Appraisal can be found on the first page of every race analysis.

**Step Four – Comments – Works – Data Lines**

Included in the race analysis is a comment about each horse running in the race. This is where you will find those key insights that make the difference between a winning and losing ticket. Use this information to help shape your opinion of whether this horse is a contender or not. The comments can be found for every race and horse in the Race Analysis.

The Fire Number is an easy-to-read numerical rating of a horse’s performance throughout the entire race. The higher the number the better. Use the Fire Number to easily compare horses in the race or look at the last 10 Fire numbers to see if the horse is improving.

**Step Five – Workouts**

Today’s Racing Digest is the only publication where you can get Author and Workout Expert Bruno De Julio’s workout report. Bruno is known for his keen eye in watching horses train and uncovering whether a horse is improving or not. Often times this is where you will find the inside information that makes the difference.

**Step Six – Value Line**

Compare your horse’s actual odds, shown on the tote board, with the odds listed in the value line. If the actual odds are higher than the value line, place the bet.

Since making money is the goal in handicapping make sure your horses expected payout is worth the risk. To help you with this, Today’s Racing Digest provides you with Steve Fierro’s Betting Line. It is designed to point out value opportunities in the race. Steve is a professional and is nationally recognized as a leader in identifying value in horse racing. He is the author of The Four Quarters of Horse Investing.