

HTR Monthly Report
Thoroughbred Handicapping Newsletter
February 2005

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KM Software
Handicapping Technology and Research

This Month

[1] This page

[2] News and Views *Championship Tournament Results and Analysis*

[4] Handicapping Class *Class Analysis and a New Class Rating in HTR2*

[7] Handicapping with HTR2 *New Class Rating- Explained and Tested
Special Symbols*

[10] Angles and Spot Plays *Class + Strong Workout*

[11] HTR2 Upgrade *Revised Program Screen, Robot, Export*

[12] *Late News / People in the News*

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*Tournaments***January Handicapping Tournament Championships in Vegas****NTRA and DRE National Handicapping Championship (NHC) VI**

Congrats to our HTR subscribers that qualified for the NHC this year. The finals were held on January 21-22 at Bally's in Las Vegas. First prize was raised to \$200,000 and was received by winner James Michelson with his score of 240 points. The prize money was expanded to 20th place. Here is how the HTR qualifiers fared against 213 of the top handicappers in North America.

Name (Home State)	Points	Finish
Mike/Kathy McKee (OR)	145	23
Tim Holland (KY)	125	32
Mike Mayo (TX)	74	114
Cliff Hartnitt (TX)	67	131
Mel Moser (KY)	32	182
Glen Love (TX)	31	189

Comments

Just getting to the NHC is quite an accomplishment considering the tens of thousands of horseplayers that try each year to qualify. Hundreds of serious handicappers and regular tournament players have never made the big dance at all (including yours truly), so those that do, are on rare ground. The tournament format leaves something to be desired though and could be improved. The mix of mandatory and optional plays is frustrating and loading the second day with late race mandatory bets takes away much of the drama when the favorites win and no one can catch up late.

World Series of Handicapping at the Orleans

The first annual *World Series of Handicapping* took place at the Orleans Hotel from Jan 27-29. They had anticipated 1000 single-entry players with a million bucks in the pot. With about 200 free qualifiers from other contests, the final player tally was 768 (about 550 paid a \$1000 entry fee). Well below expectation and the \$500,000 first prize was reduced to about \$384,000. That is still the highest payout in the history of handicapping tournaments. Perhaps they will reconsider the one-entry-per-player rule next time and they would easily get that \$1,000,000 pool.

For a lot of reasons, it was a blessing that the crowd was not larger. Another 200+ players would have made things even more difficult as the lines were very long for the betting windows. Mobs of bettors were shut out on every race. Reportedly the Orleans is extremely pleased with the record betting handles they took in and the event will be renewed for sure. Hopefully they will add more windows next year and improve a frustrating television situation that made it difficult to find some tracks during peak periods.

HTR players were well represented, too numerous to mention everyone here (but I think I may have named all on a message-board thread about the tourney) and one team of our players did extremely well and cashed big (see page-3). The point totals were unusually high on the first day of the contest. This occurred because Aqueduct was cancelled after race-2 and the cards at LRL and GG looked unplayable. That left GP as the key track and it delivered with bomb after bomb. Those that connected on Thursday were in great shape. Friday was a slow day with few big ones and the standings did not move much. Saturday was another huge day of racing for longshots and more players were able to get back into the game or pad their scores. GP was unquestionably the key track throughout the competition.

We had pre-estimated the final winning score of the contest in the 2500-3000 point range. That was a good guess under normal circumstances, but this contest was unusually strong for longshots and the winner hit 3,200. At least a dozen exceeded 2,500. To cash (top 30) players had to exceed 2,200 points. Many players achieved an excellent score around 2,000 and were disappointed when shut out.

Tournaments

January Handicapping Tournament Championships in VegasScore!

Congratulations to a team of HTR players – Dr. Gupta Etwaru, Mel Moser, Ian Meyers - partnered with a couple of other friends, they took down both 9th and 10th places in the contest! They had two entries with point totals above 2,500 – incredible. The group also grabbed some of the day money on Saturday and collected more than \$30,000 all told. This was the first venture into a major Vegas tournament for most (Moser qualified to the NHC the previous week and was at home along with Meyers, advising by cell phone). These guys are anything but novice horseplayers though and are all outstanding, experienced handicappers. They will be formidable competition from now on if they have caught the tourney bug.

Gerry Pagels and Mike DeRienzo (Mike Dee was teamed up with Tom Walters and John Buls) were the only other HTR entries to make the top 100 or so, with close to 2,000-point totals. Those are impressive scores but not enough to take home prize money this time. Most of the rest of us hit a ‘cap’ winner (\$40+) or two, but could not string more than three together, which was necessary to cash in this time.

Let’s take a look at a list of the top win prices greater than \$30 that occurred in this contest that paid at or above the ‘cap’ (and at least 500 contest points). Every one of these horses was a hit by 20 or more players in the contest; at least three of them had to be on your hit parade to cash at the end. While many were playable \$ and \$\$ from the HTR screens, it was tough to connect more than a couple of them with just 11 bullets to fire each day and multitudes of longshots to choose from. After the list, a few comments on how the bomb plays could have been narrowed down. I used PL-5 to gather the facts below. PL-4 is usually more effective on grass and PL-1 or 2 can be useful with lightly raced or cheaper horses.

KEY: Day = 1 (Thurs Jan 27); 2 = (Fri Jan 28); 3 = (Sat Jan 29). \$ column: 1= (\$) ; 2= (\$\$)

WinPr	Day	Trk-r#	DistS	Class	Vi	Winner	(K)	\$	Key	HTR	Factors
\$142	3	GP-10	9.0D	STKs	28	Musiqu	9	1	Wk=84;		
\$120	1	GP-9	9.0T	Nw1	23	Bluesp	8	2	Lv=2; Fr2=1		
\$ 97	3	SA-4	6.0W	STKs	28	Red Wa	9	1	Wk=86; Wk=1		
\$ 82	3	SA-1	8.5W	C12	33	Irish	7	2	Lv=1; Fr3=1		
\$ 74	1	GP-7	6.0D	Msw	25	Comple	7	1	Fr1=2; E/P=2		
\$ 52	3	FG-4	6.0D	OCL	38	Keep T	6	2	Fr1=1; Jky=1		
\$ 45	3	FG-8	8.0D	OCL	25	Aerial	8	0	None		
\$ 44	3	SA-3	6.0W	STKs	27	Hot St	5	1	Jky=1; Wk=86		
\$ 43	3	LRL-7	7.0D	C08	23	Robin'	9	1	Lv=1;		
\$ 42	1	FG-4	8.0T	C25	24	Won To	7	0	Jky=1;		
\$ 40	3	OP-6	8.0W	C10	25	Testy	8	0	Lv=2;		
\$ 39	1	FG-8	6.0D	M25s	25	Miss S	7	0	None (FTS)		
\$ 38	1	AQU-2	8.5D	C14	19	Delta	8	1	Lv=2;		
\$ 38	1	GP-5	8.0D	C14	28	Mr. Tw	9	0	None		
\$ 36	1	FG-7	7.5T	Nw1	33	Kaylan	8	0	None		

Analysis

This list doesn't really do justice to the parade of longshots during the WSH. Additionally there were another dozen horses that paid between \$25 and \$35. Below are some final observations. Hope to see you in March at the Orleans and we'll continue our quest to win the *title* again in 2006.

- Vi race numbers were below 30 in almost all cases with winners paying above \$25.
- GG, TUP contributed almost nothing to the hit parade; LRL and OP also weak this time.
- GP and SA ran the “Sunshine Millions” on Saturday with full competitive fields of state-bred runners and jocks changing coasts – results are predictably wild at similar events.
- No ‘cap’ horses hit on day-2 (Friday). Scores were very high on Day-1 after AQU cancelled.
- K ratings were weak for virtually all the bombs, won't find them at the top of the (K) list.

Handicapping

HTR2 New Class Rating – Handicapping with Class

I have added a new Class rating to HTR2 (see page 10-11 for software details). The last time an HTR program had such a rating was the 1999 DOS version. When the transition was made to a Windows application in the year 2000, the Class rating was dropped – why? It failed miserably in all my tests for win%, ROI and was a poor combination factor with other items. Adding that money-based Class rating to the HTR-Consensus or K-rating was definitely a drag and hurt performance.

Class was the favored handicapping methodology for a hundred years prior to the 1980's. During the decade of the 80's speed-figure ratings and associated pace and form-cycle methods took over in popularity among serious horseplayers. Authors with hard numbers such as *Beyer*, *Quirin*, *Sartin*, and *Brohamer* along with the rise of new technology grabbed our attention and a revolution in handicapping took place in that period. Class took a back seat, but many bettors remained hooked on it despite declining results. Most class handicappers then and now use earnings, purse values or claiming prices to determine their picks.

Class as Earnings

Money is the key weapon in the arsenal of the class handicapper; here are the methods of computation -

- Earnings per Start. Common method uses the “money box”, the horse's earnings divided by the number of starts. This can be an entire lifetime, the most recent year or two, or even using specific distance/surface earnings to assess how the horse has performed under today's conditions. Earnings Per Start (EPS) was the backbone of most early handicapping calculators and software programs because it was very easy information to acquire and compute. Thousands of horseplayers still use it today and you can find this information in the “Horse History” [HST] screen in HTR2. EPS is not used in any other capacity in HTR software, such as with the K rating or the new Class rating.
- Average Purse Value. Abbreviated APV. Similar to ESP, except that it takes into the account the purse of the race (rather than pure earnings). Various formulas were devised to compute the APV from the money-box using the horse's 1-2-3-4 finishes and this would estimate the approximate average purse the horse had been competing against. Typical was .55-.25-.15-.05 multipliers. I have never used APV in HTR as results are similar to ESP, and it is also unnecessary to compute it with a formula as the actual purse values are found in our data for the last 10 starts in the past-performance lines.
- Claiming Price. The most popular visual method of class handicapping is looking at the change in claiming price. A horse that last competed well in a \$10,000 claimer is suddenly dropped into \$5,000 race. Red flags go up and we can assume the horse is either going to win for fun or go off in the ambulance! Beyond this simplicity though, sharp handicappers note changes in claiming company with the myriad of restrictions that are now written to give chronic losers a chance, such as “non winners of a race in the last year at a mile or more”. Movement between Msw (non-claiming) and Mcl (claimers) or claiming and allowance races is also part of the puzzle in identifying potential class droppers.

Which method produces the best results? We can query easily enough with EPS and APV as they are unambiguous solid numbers for comparison. Unfortunately the rate of return for both of these factors is miserable in large samples. Typical is 22% - 24% winners with an ROI between 0.80 – 0.85 (-15% or more) depending on the method or parameters used. There are many issues with using earnings in our handicapping vs. trying new class methods that we'll explore in the next few pages.

Handicapping

HTR2 New Class Rating – Handicapping with Class

A win rate in the low 20%'s is not bad and that translates to an impact value of about 1.80, which is very good. The problem with both EPS and APV is that the ROI has been depressed and dropping for a decade. Few longshots are tagged with these methods. Here are some of the problems →

1. Purse values and earnings are very distorted for a lot of obvious reasons these days. Slot machines come to mind first. Purse money distribution at slot tracks is very equitable and lower class horses get a hefty boost and many locations pay out past 5th place finishes. Cheap claimers at Mountaineer racing for \$5,000 Maiden Claiming are competing for more purse money than the tough open \$10,000 claimers at Santa Anita! That is astonishing in the hierarchy of class analysis with earnings as there is no comparison in the quality of these horses. To keep horses races at home and to benefit agriculture and jobs, state-bred incentives are huge. Fat purses entice local bred runners and most states have some version of an all stakes day for the homebred thoroughbreds that benefit the entire agricultural sector.
2. Beyond the obvious problems with using earnings to compare quality is the clear popularity of such methods with the public. Determining EPS is an easy task compared to the concentrated analysis required of the speed and pace handicapper. Any handicapping method that is simple to define and implement will be concretely over-bet. Very few horses that are top rated with earnings methods will ever become overlays.
3. Earnings based methods have a detrimental effect when combined with diverse factors such as speed, pace, trainer, pedigree, form-cycle, workouts, etc. This was the main reason I abandoned a specific Class rating in HTR2 in the year 2000. Adding EPS or AVP methods to the HTR-Consensus proved the worst performer with results when factors are shuttled in and out for testing. The ROI will drop in almost any mix using common money class calculations.
4. The most detrimental long-term effect of earnings based class handicapping may be with longshots. Most horses that pay over \$15 to win are usually ranked poorly with EPS and APV and usually look bad on visual class analysis too. Not going to hit any \$30 winners with these methods.

Other methods of Class Analysis

Pedigree – breeding. This is the most fascinating and mysterious method of class analysis and one that is not as easily understood by the public. Our pedigree rating (PED) in HTR2 is an excellent predictor of future class and ability to handle turf and routes. Pedigree analysis is great for uncovering good overlays with first timers, young horses, grass runners and stakes ability at challenging distances. Longshots are abundant with the PED rating and the factor works well in combinations. The downside is that the majority of bread-and-butter sprint claiming races cannot be rated well with pedigree. Experienced runners on dirt have long since put their pedigree number to rest with their race record.

Competition and Company Lines

Facing much tougher competition in previous races can severely cloud a thoroughbred's form. Methods such as our ACL rating (Average Class/Competition Rating) can flag horses that have overmatched recently and improvement is often forthcoming with a drop to an easier spot. There are many drawbacks to these ratings though, including the fact that there is often little separation with the numbers and lots of ties. Assessing previous competition does not necessarily indicate if the horse is fit or capable of beating lower class horses – it just means it faced tougher stock recently – we don't know anything about the horse's real ability from an ACL. Due to the large amount of additional file space necessary, the *company lines* (names of top-3 finishers in previous races) were never included in our data files. Using this information from other sources such as Daily Racing Form is a common method of class appraisal: "That horse once ran well against Smarty Jones – he must be a good one" – but too ambiguous to test.

*Handicapping***HTR2 New Class Rating – Handicapping with Class**

Continuing with class methodology review –

Performance as Class

What is the definition of *class* in thoroughbred racing anyway? Fundamentally it is the ability to deal with whatever situation(s) occur in the running of a race. This can be a fast or slow pace, assertive competition, tricky surfaces and field sizes, the gate break, race trouble, the jockey, stamina, courage, etc. Many will argue that thoroughbreds also have their own instincts for a caste system that prevents them from succeeding beyond their inherited herd position.

Horses that can beat their opponents and handle common race obstacles are generally moved forward in class (and purse value) to face tougher challenges and faster horses. Those that continually fail are dropped to easier races. Chronic losers end up at the bottom of the claiming ladder where they face the softest early pace and wimpiest competition.

Using speed or performance ratings as the primary tool for class appraisal has become the solution for most horseplayers that recognize the futility of using earnings nowadays. Yet while figures are great for analyzing how fast a horse can run, they cannot address the deeper intangibles that thoroughbreds encounter as listed in paragraph one above.

To understand class is to realize what a thoroughbred faces as it move up the class hierarchy –

- More determined and aggressive competition from the other horses.
- Faster pace scenarios.
- Greater reserves of late stamina.
- More complex distance/surface objectives.

On the down elevator of class these are the expectations –

- Less aggressive competitors.
- Softer pace – less early speed.
- Less late energy and stamina.
- Shorter distances on dirt.

Handicappers can pour over past-performances for hours and consider much of the above. A comparative method that quantifies it accurately has always been an elusive goal.

HTR2 Class Rating

Eliminating earnings and money as part of a new class rating was not a problem. As mentioned before, I have tested EPS, APV, claiming changes and similar angles for years with disappointing results. The last thing we need in HTR is another rating with a 20-25% win rate and an ROI below 0.83 that has no impact with higher priced horses. Not to mention we don't want a rating that will drag down the strong results that can be achieved with other factors.

My effort was to create a rating method that scanned the horse's past-performance for the last 365-days and determined the level where the horse has proven itself competitive. This has no relation to speed and pace figures and they are not considered. To uncover a horse's genuine ability to deal with circumstances is complicated. Many of the variables, such as courage, determination and willingness to compete cannot be directly assessed. However, utilizing the SOR (Strength of Race) rating to relate the hierarchy and power of the previous competition, we can make a good estimate.

The numeric class rating (*CLA*) is scaled so that it is congruent to the EPR, SOR, and PAC and PER ratings on the Quirin scale, generally from 75-115.

*Handicapping***HTR2 New Class Rating – Handicapping with Class**

The theoretical aspects of this new class rating are compelling, but there is no point in adding it to the HTR2 software unless it is proven effective. Test results with large samples are below. Beyond having comparable class number and the 1-2-3... rankings, I wanted the rating to give us some additional insights such as whether the horse has proven itself capable at today's level. Here is a key to the Class symbolism used with the rating. I'll elaborate on the symbolism later in this article.

Class Rating – a number assigned to those horses that have shown one or more competitive (“Live”) races in the last 365-days. Rating is scaled and congruent to the *Quirin style* PAC-PER-SOR-EPR ratings.

Class rank – the 1-2-3.....9 rankings for the above rating. 1 = top ranked.

(+) = The horse has proven definitively (in the last 365-days) that it can compete at today's level (EPR).

(-) = The horse has not yet proven it can tackle today's level. This is assigned to horses with clear indications that they need to improve considerably to beat a solid field of this class. Some fields will show a majority of the entrants with the (-); this indicates a weak field for sure, but someone has to win it anyway. Young horses with less than 6 lifetime starts will not receive the (-) rating. Even if they are unproven and have run poorly, improvement is probably forthcoming. Later we'll discuss why some of these horses win despite the negative assessment.

(‘) = Improvement is likely and the class rating is not definitive. The number listed is probably not indicative of potential performance for young and lightly races horses. Pedigree and performance are probably better indicators for these runners. These horses would have received a (-) under the standard computation for the Class rating, so the (‘) is caution that improvement is likely and class undetermined.

Blank – Cannot be rated. First time starters, horses returning from long layoffs and many foreign shippers cannot be rated until they have a race or two.

Let's begin our discovery of a new Class rating with an “all burger” test result of the ranks.

Class Ranking – All Races – Sample size 77,989 races from last 2 years

Rank	Win	\$ROI	W+P	High\$
1	24%	0.90	41%	\$134
2	18%	0.85	35%	\$171
3	15%	0.83	30%	\$167
4	13%	0.81	26%	\$172
5	10%	0.77	22%	\$156
6	09%	0.70	18%	\$163
7	07%	0.71	14%	\$221
8	06%	0.67	11%	\$184
9	04%	0.65	08%	\$223

Analysis

HTR handicappers will typically not be concerned about the overall ranking past the 1-2 as there is the negative (-) and positive (+) symbolic assessment for a faster visual. Yet from top to bottom the win percentage and the ROI show a steady correlation and that is imperative to validate the factor as effective. The 0.90 for the rank = 1 is very encouraging in an “all burger” sample with no ties. Longshot production is steady and compares well with other factors such as A/P or TRN for hitting \$15 up winners. These results are a vast improvement over earnings based class ranking methods such as EPS and APV.

Ties are broken using the (K). **Paceline selection** method (PL) has no effect on the class rating. **Blanks** are common with the Class number - similar to the velocity factors - many horses cannot be rated.

*Handicapping with HTR2***HTR2 New Class Rating – Handicapping with Class**

Research and testing will reveal circumstances where the Class rating will excel and falter. The reader should follow up by examining Turf/Dirt; Route/Sprint; Male/Fem and class distinctions such as maiden vs. non-maiden. The HTR2 robot now contains a special section for testing various aspects of the Class formula (see page 10) and the export file HX4 now includes every nuance.

In the query below, I tested all the typical HTR factors limited to Class rank= 1. Indicated impact on the factor is shown with a (*) to a (****) depending on the amount of improvement in all columns vs. a standard all-burger test with no Class filter.

Class Rank = 1; All Races

Factor	Win	ROI	WP%	Impact
K= 1	35%	0.90	56%	**
K= 2	24%	0.86	45%	*
K= 3	19%	0.88	38%	**
K= 4	15%	0.87	30%	**
K= 5	13%	1.01	26%	***
K110	42%	0.91	64%	*
\$	10%	0.97	21%	****
\$\$	15%	0.98	28%	****
Fr1= 1	29%	0.97	48%	****
Fr1= 2	26%	0.91	45%	**
E/P= 1	30%	0.92	49%	*
E/P= 2	26%	0.91	45%	**
A/P= 1	31%	0.91	50%	*
A/P= 2	25%	0.89	45%	*
VEL= 1	31%	0.91	51%	**
VEL= 2	25%	0.88	44%	*
Fr3= 1	27%	0.90	47%	**
Fr3= 2	27%	0.89	44%	**
L/P= 1	28%	0.90	48%	**
L/P= 2	27%	0.88	46%	*
Wk= 1	29%	0.99	48%	****
Wk 80+	27%	0.95	45%	**
Wk 85+	29%	1.00	48%	****
TRN= 1	34%	0.92	53%	**
TRN= 400+	36%	0.93	56%	*
PED= 1	28%	0.94	47%	**
PED= 450+	26%	0.94	44%	**
JKY= 1	33%	0.91	53%	*
C90= 1	31%	0.91	51%	*
HTR= 1	(see page 8)			
MLO= 1	35%	0.85	60%	**

Analysis

Every factor has an improvement in both win rate and return when restricted to rClass = 1. The \$ and \$\$ were strengthened. Workout and Fr1 were the most impressive. We'll explore the addition of the Class rating to the HTR consensus on page-9. We'll look at a spot play using the Class and Wk on page-10.

*Handicapping with HTR2***HTR2 New Class Rating – Usage**Class symbolism

More details now on the (+) (-) (‘) symbols that you’ll see to the right of the Class rating. The (*) to the left of the rating indicates the 1-rank. Take a look at the four horses below. Today’s EPR = 100.

HorseA 097
HorseB *101+
HorseC 094-
HorseD 094’

HorseA has a rating that is not too far below the EPR for today’s level and seems to be close to a fit on class for the race, but not enough proven success at this level (100) to receive the (+) -- its rating is considered neutral. **HorseB** has shown it can handle this 100 level and more in the last 365-days and is also the top rank – he’ll be tough to beat if still fit. **HorseC** has shown nothing in the last year to prove he can deal with horses at the 100 level – but does that mean he cannot win? Class is only one consideration in the handicapping process, but we will need evidence of likely improvement to make a bet here vs. proven tougher runners. Perhaps a strong workout score, an early speed edge, a switch to a ‘super trainer’ would give us reason to consider **HorseC** against the others. **HorseD** would have received the (-) but this entrant is lightly raced and unproven so far, and we’ll tag him with the (‘) to remind us not to read too much into the Class rating at this point in its career.

Cheap races, particularly maiden claimers will feature a parade of losers with negative (-) next to nearly every entrant. Look for the (‘) or the (+) standouts in here, or consider a FTS. If all the contenders have a the (-), someone still must win it, so class is not an issue in these cases, they are all losers.

The (+) is relatively rare designation as it should be. Most horses move forward in class after a good effort and the trainer is continually searching for a competitive range, usually pitting a sound runner against better company in hopes of making more money with the horse. Thoroughbreds are fragile and temperamental athletes, the best we can do is to attempt to quantify them based on what they have done in the past. They will deceive us more often than not, but the (+) is an excellent positive reminder.

The Class rating is a brand new baby. I don’t have all the answers for you yet. We’ll certainly test it in detail in the coming months and it will be a featured item at the seminar in July for further discussion once more facts are known.

Class Rating added to HTR-Consensus

I mentioned earlier the importance of combining a proposed rating with positive results before including it in HTR2. The new Class rating proved effective when added to the HTR-Consensus. I tested by substituting it with several of the other factors. Replacing the A/P proved the most effective →

Key below: “old” = incl. A/P rank; “new” = Class replaces A/P in the Consensus

Factor	Win%	ROI	WP%	HighPay
HTR=1 (old)	28%	0.91	47%	\$115
HTR=2 (old)	19%	0.87	37%	\$114
HTR=1 (new)	29%	0.92	48%	\$88
HTR=2 (new)	20%	0.87	38%	\$129

Analysis

While there are many ties in the HTR consensus rating that skew the win percentage – the overall ROI is impressive and improves if the Class rating is added (replaces A/P). This change is now reflected in all aspects of HTR2 including the [HTR] screen, robot and export functions.

*Handicapping with HTR2***HTR2 New Class Rating – Spot Play**

The Class rating is tailored made for combining with other factors for a profitable spot play. The chart on page-8 was based on an “all burger” (no filters for race type, dist or surface) and almost every item shows considerable improvement when in tandem with rClass = 1. The Class (+) designation will also pump up the rating and deliver improved results. I used it in the spot play below.

At this point, the Class rating is so new that I can't even tell you if it works better on Turf or Dirt, with Maidens or Stakes, sprint or route, etc. One area of testing that rarely shows any distinctions with other factors or filters, might work well with the Class, is Male / Female.

The Class (-) symbol tends to cluster when the race is weak, usually lots of horses get it at the same time. But you could try testing it with any other spot play or angle you like and see if the results are diminished, perhaps finding a good elimination method. Check page-11 for information on testing.

The following three filters were all I used in the test below. No additional race separations were made and the data covered 1-year.

1. rClass = 1; (*) rank = 1
2. nClassFit = 1; same as Class (+)
3. nWK >= 85; Workout rated 85 or higher

Factor	Plays	Win%	ROI	WP%	HighPay
Spot Play	3881	28%	1.02	46%	\$68

Analysis

The spot play tally shows a positive flat-bet profit for an “all burger” with more than 3000 plays. That is a promising result. Notice that the highest paying winner was only \$68, so this ROI is not dependent on bombs – a sure sign of consistent middle priced hits. You can easily test this yourself in the new ‘robot’ or HX4 export (see page-11). Try variations with race types, distance/surface and age/sex categories.

Where to Find the Class Rating in HTR2 “Feb 2005” version

Program Screen – has been greatly revised (see page-11). The CLASS is located towards the right-hand portion of the screen, next to the (K) column.

TLC Screen – has the Class rating in the Section II, right in the middle.

HTR Consensus screen - The CLA column replaces A/P in the consensus (see page-9).

Robot tester - has 4 filters related to the Class rating found on the left bottom of the screen.

Export HX4 – all aspects of the Class, including the symbolism found in new data fields (see page-11)

I did not yet add the Class rating to any of the PP's screens yet as it would be quite a chore; will consider its inclusion in the future. Read the next page for more information on the software update.

*Software Revision***HTR2 Changes for Feb 2005 version**

Major upgrade this month with HTR2. "Feb 8, 2005" version. Here are the changes →

Program Screen

In addition to the Class rating, the Program screen has a number of new items, all found on final third of the screen on the right following the *Lv*.

PAC-PER-CLASS

I have removed the C90 from this section and replaced it with the three *Quirin style* ratings that are scaled together and comparable to the race EPR (Estimated Performance Rating). The PAC (pace) and PER (performance) ratings as viewed next to the Class provide a three-pronged analysis of the horse's ability.

XFAV (extreme favorite – see Dec 2004 newsletter) –the “XF” in the \$ column identifies these high percentage favorites. On most HTR screens this is found on the far right after the program number.

(K) – The K rating has not changed, but I added a (+) for any of the following situations.

- K110 or higher
- HTR = 1 (top ranked from HTR-consensus)
- VEL = 1 (top ranked VEL velocity consensus)

So you might find as many as three (+)'s appearing in the K column now.

Win%

This is the same as the WinP (Win Probability) rating found in the Wagering Screen and HX4. The typical top ranked (K) runner will win about 30% of the time. But this varies widely and the handicapper will get a better feel for the race by having the approximate probability of winning for each individual entrant.

HTR-Consensus Screen

The “CLA” column appears in place of the A/P. This will slightly alter the consensus results in a positive direction (see page-9). The ‘robot’ tester and export will now reflect this change in the final HTR rating.

Robot - Tester

Adds a new four-item section for the Class rating. Also a filter for the XFAV has been placed under the odds section. You can use these for testing or spot play extraction. In addition the printable output of all your tests will show the four-part Class information at the bottom. Custom/Save functions revised to include the new items seamlessly (won't unsettle your previous setups).

HX4 Export

Five new data fields added →

Field (143) = "nCLASS"	Class number; 0= not rated
Field (144) = "rCLASS"	Ranking of Class; 0= not rated
Field (145) = "nCLASSFIT"	Class symbol IDs; 0 = none; 1= (+); 2= (-); 3= (')
Field (146) = "nXFAV"	Xtreme Favorite; 1 = XFAV; 0 = not XFAV
Field (147) = "nGATEBRK"	Gate Break ID
	1= broke fast from the gate last out
	2= broke poorly/slow from the gate last out

Notes on the “nGATEBREAK”. The = 1 is the same as the >> symbols found in some pp's to indicate the horse broke quickly that day. May be a good sign of sharpness or a superior front-runner. The = 2 is really a quantified trip note that indicates the horse broke badly last time and the race may be excusable.

Notes on the “nCLASSFIT”. Quantifies the Class (+)(-)(') items. See page-9 for complete explanation.

Complete specifications for HX4 are found in the text file: **HX4.txt**. Post a message for *MikeDee*, *Ricks* or *Donnie* on our discussion board *Access forum* if you have questions about how to integrate the new information from HX4.

Final Page

Late News / HTR Names in the News

HTR Winter On-Line Tourney Starts Friday Feb. 11

Whether you have just returned from the Vegas tournament wars, or perhaps have inkling to get involved in one, here is an opportunity to compete from home in a relaxed, but exciting format that stresses skill over luck. Cash prizes and a free shot in the Orleans Spring tournament worth \$500. Read the rules, prizes and entry information on our website: www.htr2.com

HTR is a service of –

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HTR Monthly Report is an on-line newsletter and is normally completed at the end of each month, then placed on the HTR member (download) web site by the 5th of each month. Monthly subscribers to HTR can view the current newsletter for no charge on-line, Adobe Reader software (free) required. Past issues are available in our website archive library.

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