

HTR Monthly Report
Thoroughbred Handicapping Newsletter
May 2004

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KM Software
Handicapping Technology and Research

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The HTR Monthly Report is converted from a Microsoft Word Document to a .PDF file for viewing with the free Adobe Reader. The newsletter may be viewed while on-line or the file can be downloaded to any computer hard-drive for off-line reading and printing.

Each month, the current edition of the HTR Monthly Report is available on the Internet from our members' web site only. This is not a free newsletter; it is included as part of a paid subscription to HTR's monthly download service (\$119/mo). Selected articles and all past-issues can be found on the free HTR web site (see back page for web addresses). The HTR Monthly Report is expected to be available around the 5th of each month.

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*News for HTR Subscribers***HTR 2004 Seminar Preview - Access and Database Workshop**

Our 9th annual seminar takes place on Wednesday July 14 at the Gold Coast Hotel in Las Vegas. Check last month's newsletter for the early itinerary and all the basic details. We have offered an Access workshop each of the last four years and we never seem to have enough time for Donnie to get in all your questions and go over the material without feeling rushed. This year is different. I have set aside a 5 to 6 hour block of time on seminar evening and Mike Dee will be joining Donnie for a very comprehensive but unhurried class, discussion and plenty of time for your questions. We'll stay as late as necessary.

Last year at our Lexington seminar, Donnie gave us an excellent lesson in creating a report and daily-play sheet from new material I had just presented an hour before. Our Access workshops not only teach you how to use a database combined with the HTR2 export files, but more importantly give you tools to create your own unique handicapping report, formatted custom output or daily spot-play generator. Not to mention the ability to run queries with multiple data items. Access also has a wide variety of screen formatting, colors, shading and font-variations to customize your reports beyond anything I can reasonably code in the software.

Over the years, many subscribers have paid me considerable sums to format a report they could easily have done themselves with the information in these seminars. Certainly some custom screens require the ability to write computer code and perform complicated tasks, but that is not typical. Certainly you will benefit from the research expansion that a database offers over the standard.

Please visit page-11 herein for some excerpts from the upcoming Access manual upgrade revised by Mike Dee for 2004 from Donnie's original text.

New Tester, Expanded Filter and Spot-Play Generator for HTR2

For those of you that prefer your research quick and easy (in other words, you refuse to learn Access!) I am expanding the HTR2 Tester to include some additional functionality and filtering that will help your cause. Seminar attendees will get first grab, but it will be posted on our web-site soon after. Anyone with sufficient races + results in the local folder will be able to run tests and generate spot-plays based on specific criteria. For example, you could run a test on Fr1 = 1,2 combined with Wk 85+ for 6.0f Fast Dirt Sprints at GP. If the result is promising and shows profits, the updated Tester will then allow you to click a "My Plays" button and get the qualifying horses that fit these parameters every day. You can also duplicate most of the spot-plays found in the newsletter this way. A big time-saver to get those best bets out of the computer effortlessly.

K-Line Odds Prediction

Another new tool we'll introduce at the seminar is an odds predictor based on the (K). Unlike a typical Morning Line or Value Betting Line this one has a less noble purpose. It is designed only to estimate the final odds of every horse when all the money has been bet. It is not prediction of overlay value or probability of winning. If the "K-Line" proves fairly accurate with its final odds projections, the tool will be a tremendous benefit in many situations ==>

- "K-Line" is static. You can base spot plays and bet simulations on it that will allow you to go forward and not be concerned about the wild betting action that takes place after the bell.
- A good tool to estimate the late wagering from the "simulcast dump" and overcome the indecision about whether your 7/1 shot will end up 7/2 on the backstretch and ruin a positive expectation.
- Dutching -- is nearly impossible these days with the wild late betting fluctuations. But the "K-Line" will allow you to dutch multiple horses confidently using a static line and expect that the future results will be consistent. Certainly there will be wide variances with predicted odds, but the swings will iron out in the long run because the "K-Line" has pre-computed the medians.

Tournament News

National Tournament News and Results

It's been somewhat of a dry spell in the realm of tournament news. Curious that there is little information coming out from most sources and there seems to be confusion among almost everyone and a lot of questions to be asked about both major tournament championships scheduled for next January.

- What is the NTRA doing? Nothing on their website and no news or publicity about the annual National Handicapping Championship (NHC) as of this writing. Delayed recent coverage from the co-sponsor Daily Racing Form (DRF) is welcome. A date and location for the NHC have not been announced.
- The number of NHC qualifiers seems to be diminishing, but it is hard to tell as many past qualifying locations have not announced their plans. They seem to be on the fence and not sure how to proceed. If the blackout of information available on the NTRA website is an indication, they aren't getting any help. The newly announced "World Series of Handicapping" to be held at the Orleans during the last week in January has obviously put a monkey wrench into the entire process. But there are plenty of questions about that one as well.
- The Reno Hilton, directed by race supervisor and experienced tournament coordinator Steve Fierro, has decided to stop holding contests with NHC qualifying. This is unfortunate as the Reno Hilton sent a dozen players every year to the finals, but they no doubt felt their hands were tied by the NTRA and its insufferable attitude to the hosts. Instead, the Reno contest will offer 2 qualifying spots for the "World Series" and throw in some expenses for Vegas. That's the plan for the *Summer Showdown* there on June 19-20. For more information contact Steve at 1-866-BET-RENO.
- Hawthorne held an NTRA/NHC qualifier on April 23-25. Two of our best contest players - TommyC and *Navrah* report that Hawthorne was a well-run tourney with good customer service. The format leaves something to be desired with just 6 mandatory plays from the host track each day. Both players did well and accumulated points, but not enough for prize money or to qualify in the necessary top-3. Remember that most tournaments will now be sending three or less qualifiers according to the new NTRA mandates in 2004.
- LRL held one of their money contests the same weekend. The format is very predictable for the finale as someone always plunks a healthy accumulated bank onto one horse and wins it all. This was the case again according to Henry D (*dehere*) who reported the news on our discussion board about his experience. Henry attempted the logical strategy to win, but his final stab fell short.
- Tommy C. drove on from Chicago to Vegas and entered the *Coast Derby Shootout* on April 28. It was a big disappointment for several reasons. First the contest did not fill nearly as well as expected (about 135 entrants, 250 expected) and they cut the number of "World Series" qualifiers from the announced 15 to just 6! Not too popular with the participants I'm sure, and the prize money was severely dropped as well (the 'Coast' always has a disclaimer for low turnout). Tommy was happy to hit a few and get his stake back in the money format. This is the second time the Coast has run a money format contest (January at the Barbary) that flopped.
- One thing that has become frustratingly apparent with nearly all the tourneys nationwide is the information void. Results and stories are tough to find unless someone at the contest reports in. Thanks to *Navrah*, *Dehere* and especially Tommy for their on-scene news, otherwise we would have few additional details, news and gossip to relate beyond the generic results this month. Results for recent qualifiers have finally been updated on the DRF contest page through April (absolutely zero on the NTRA site) but the host venues seldom post on-line information either. Horseplayerdaily.com does report contest news when one of their staff is attending, but the HTR website is as good a source as any when one or more of our regulars makes the trip.

A lot of questions surround both of the yearly championship contests right now. We'll attempt to answer some of them each month if we can gather more information. A large contingent of HTR players will be in action at the Gold Coast in July, we will be right in the thick of it by then.

KY Derby 2004 -- Monday Morning Quarterback

The outcome of the 130th running of the Kentucky Derby seemed very conclusive to handicappers that rely on pace and speed analysis. The winner, Smarty Jones, received a perfect trip and overhauled the logical front runner Lion Heart to complete a chalk exacta for the first time in 25 years. Here are my comments on the "known" and the "unknown" regarding these 3yr olds as they move on to the Preakness.

The Known

- Smarty Jones was clearly the best horse on paper and he didn't disappoint anyone using pace/speed figures or computer software for analysis. His performance ratings, early and late speed velocity, tremendous workout score and most other factors gave him the look of a modest stick out. The winner of the Derby over the last 10-years has tended toward horses with similar solid numbers. Charismatic in 1999, was an exception, but he did have a very strong race prior to the Derby (Lexington Stakes) yet he was snubbed by the bettors due to having been run in claimers a few months earlier. The 'experts' had voiced two problems with Smarty Jones - they said his pedigree wouldn't make it 10-furlongs and that his winning races were against weaker company. The majority of bettors wisely defied that analysis in favor of the distinct edge he had with the numbers.
- Smarty Jones went on Lasix for the first time in the Derby. That was a very interesting and positive indicator. The horse was a rare exception to the 95% of thoroughbreds that are using Lasix every time out and all the other entrants in this year's race had used the drug their entire careers. It was apparent that Smarty was a healthy non-bleeder and perhaps his trainer preferred nutritional methods instead of chemicals to train up to prior victories. So why add the anti-bleeding medication for the biggest race of his life? No doubt a bit of insurance - don't lose the race over a bloody nose when it can be avoided so easily. Smarty seems to be a hearty thoroughbred with unusual genetic toughness. I'm rooting for him to go all the way and it would be a tremendous boost for sport to have Triple Crown winner. Maybe he's got what it takes. But the Belmont usually ruins the dream.
- Lion Heart was a complete standout on pace. That's always a tricky assignment in the Kentucky Derby though. His early fractions did banish all the other early speed except the winner and the Lion showed some grit after running fast early fractions on a dull track to hold on for second. The third place finisher Imperialism had a 21-year female trainer that drew lots of grateful attention away from the Zito, Frankel and Baffert barns in the week prior to the race. But they may have something to learn from her. Kristin Mulhall's relationship with her horse comes across as beloved friends instead of trainer and racehorse. Devotion like that has to result in positive health and performance for any animal so well treated.

The Unknown

- How much have the wet-tracks contributed to Smarty Jones' winning ways? That's two straight authoritative wins on off tracks, perhaps he moves up on them. I don't know; I'm guessing it's more a case of proving how durable he is on any surface. On the other hand, the track at Churchill on May 1st was certainly difficult to get a hold of, it was "sticky" and horses were not passing late. Which of the also-rans was truly limited by the off-track becomes the guessing game when they return.
- How good was the race time and how much did the effort take out of the top two? Lion Heart cruised to the front and was not challenged until the top of the stretch, but the early fractions were strong on the dull surface. The final time was slow (2:04) in the mud and it remains to be seen what the figures will look like. Even an average final figure will result in a big pace number. Looking at the chart of the race, there are a lot of lengths between the top two and the rest of the field which tells us one of two things: (1) the field was dominated and outclassed or (2) the surface was like quicksand. Smarty Jones was in hand after passing the tired Lion in the stretch and it did not appear that his effort was maxed-out. Lion Heart was urged with some intensity by the jock to hold second and did so easily in the end. I would expect both horses to emerge in great shape and be tough to beat again in Baltimore.

Handicapping
Long Layoffs - 180-Days+

For this article: 'long layoff' will be defined as 180-days (6-months) or more since last raced.

Long layoffs have a generally negative connotation. A non-stakes thoroughbred out of training costs as much or more than one that is continuing to race and earn, so the layoff almost has to be due to injury or severe health failure. The "freshening" is a positive training move, but those layoffs are typically 30-90 days, not 6-months. Grass horses tend to have longer time outs as they are more often seasonal runners and don't necessarily require a recent race to perform their best.

First, we benchmark the results of all horses returning from long layoffs in three distance surface categories. I used no other filter except purse \$10,000 or more.

180+ Layoffs	All Horses	Purse \$10,000+	1yr	Sample	
Race Type	Plays	Win%	ROI	WP%	Longs
Dirt Sprint	9299	09%	0.57	18%	12%
Dirt Route	1115	10%	0.77	17%	22%
Turf Route	1691	12%	0.81	19%	19%

Analysis

Nine out of ten horses that haven't raced for 6-months or more will lose their comeback start on dirt. Yet I find it amazing that 10% of them actually do score! The ROI for the sprints is so low as to leave no doubt that many of these horses are underlays and attract lots of betting despite the long time off.

The vast majority of long layoff runners enter a sprint for their comeback. No doubt as tune-up, workout and re-acclimation after a long rest. The stats make the 180+ layoff seem like an automatic eliminator on the dirt unless we can locate some way to clearly identify one of those longshots -- these layoffs seem very difficult to overcome in any case. Turf races have the best results and many trainers are specialists who perform very well after downtime with their top grass runners. Some barns also excel with foreign shippers on turf, most of whom have been laid off for 6-months or more before racing in North America. The extended layoff situation is much easier to deal with on turf than dirt due to the trainer angle.

Next chart shows us the composite results of these horses with long layoffs and the (K) rating. Keep in mind that the typical (K) result are 30%, 21% and 15% win rates respectively for K-1,2,3.

180+ Layoffs	All Horses	Any Dist/Surf	Purse \$10,000+	1yr	Sample	
K-Rank	Plays	Win%	ROI	WP%	Longs	
1	313	32%	0.82	49%	12%	
2	1124	23%	0.74	39%	21%	
3	1891	16%	0.67	31%	22%	
4	2460	12%	0.68	24%	31%	

Analysis

I couldn't believe these results and re-tested it. The top-4 (K) score at or above the normal win rates with horses coming from long layoffs. No doubt many of these are absolute standouts on paper having been laid off to nurse injury and then substantially dropped in class on the comeback and the public over-bets them. That explains the terrible ROI despite the solid win rates. Layoff days are included in the (K) formula so very few horses make the top-K coming off a 180-day respite. To overcome the negative adjustment for the long layoff, these horses look overwhelming from a class/speed standpoint and the public jumps on them at low odds.

How should we bet if encountering a horse that is K-1 or 2 in the entries coming from a 6-month down time? They are decent bets percentage-wise. Could use them to save in exotics, but bet against in them in the win pool at low odds and look for an overlay among the other contenders.

Handicapping with HTR2
Long Layoffs and the Workout Rating

If there is a tool that can help us locate one of these rare long-layoff winners it might be the Workout rating (Wk). We know that the Wk tends to identify more than its share of 'live' horses and longshots; many of those winners are clueless otherwise. Let's see if it can buck the tide in this test.

<u>180+ Layoffs</u>	<u>All Horses</u>	<u>Any Dist/Surf</u>	<u>Purse \$10,000+</u>	<u>1yr Sample</u>	
<u>Wk Factor</u>	<u>Plays</u>	<u>Win%</u>	<u>ROI</u>	<u>WP%</u>	<u>Longs</u>
Rank-1	2351	14%	0.69	25%	2%
Rank-2	2267	13%	0.71	22%	3%
Wk 80+	4898	12%	0.75	23%	14%
Wk 85+	1548	14%	0.72	25%	8%

Analysis

No good at all. The win rate and ROI slightly improve the horrid numbers seen with the bare 'long layoff' test, but not enough to get us anywhere. Remember that most of these horses are entered in sprints. Testing the routes and grass separately might have helped. One point that can be made though, there are lots of these comebackers that show decent work patterns (80+ Wk), but a strong workout score is not enough to make much difference. Obviously a test on the Wk with layoff < 180 will reverse the trend considerably. Those of you using a database with the export may want to try querying the Wk with various layoff ranges from 30 - 120 days.

Summary

There is almost nothing that will push the ROI past 0.80 with horses laid-off more than six months. I tested all the factors in HTR2 and the results are similarly dismal. One surprise is how much betting action these horses attract despite the obvious negative. Be careful of being sucked in by a horse that is superior on numbers and dropping big in class after a long rest. Classier grass horses return from long vacations and run well all the time. I don't include the layoff factor when computing grass runners in the (K) formula -- check the trainer's record with these horses.

Spot Play for the Long Layoff?

I also tested the long layoff group with *Trn* >= 400 ('super trainer') see page-8 for the results.

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Handicapping with HTR2

"Super Trainers"

The sport of thoroughbred racing has been turned on its ear in the 21st century with the rise and dominance of the 'super trainer'. We have a very specific identification for these conditioners in the HTR2 software, but the term is generally applied to men and women with the following characteristics =

- Exceptionally consistent and high win rates throughout the year. In the past, some trainers would prepare well and get very hot at a single meet, such as Saratoga, Keeneland or Del Mar that had been targeted by their owners. Today the 'super trainers' are everywhere and dominate month after month with no letup. Horseplayers become cynical, suspicious and frustrated when one or two barns seem to be controlling the very heart of the racing meet.
- Big improvement with horses they have just acquired, particularly claims. This is the primary reason why most 'super trainers' are accused of using drugs on their runners. The mystery of how these trainers can perform miracle form reversals and wake up chronic losers is discussed below.
- Winning under all conditions. While most trainers tend to specialize, 'super trainers' often have massive stable operations that win all types of races regularly and seem to improve any horse they get their hand on -- claims, grass runners, class droppers, layoff horses, maiden claimers, etc, etc.

Cocktails

Some 'super trainers' have slowed down when speculation and scrutiny of their barn becomes public. The suspicion is that the trainer is using some sort of 'cocktail' on the horses. The 'cocktails' may contain designer drugs, stimulants, analgesics, steroids, various legal nutritional supplements such as herbs and high doses of vitamins and even liquid oxygen. The sky is the limit. A good chemist can stay months ahead of the latest drug testing and even concoct a "mask" that hides the use of other illegal substances. Lasix, administered to nearly every horse in training the days, is an excellent "mask" and drug "flusher".

The 'super trainers' have been asked about drugging their horses and the secret to their success. They all deny doing anything illegal but say they cannot reveal their training secrets if they want to remain on top.

HTR Trainer Rating > 400

We can quickly identify a 'super trainer' from the HTR2 trainer rating (Trn) score. When the rating reaches 400 or higher you can confidently raise the red flag. Our stats are based on 365-day rotation of the results. A "hot" trainer for only part of the year will not be able to sustain a rating above 400. Live horses are coming in regularly to maintain such a rating. Why 400? Sounds too simple. The real benchmark is probably between 370-390, so 400 is a level that gives us a clear radar alert for the high power barn. In other words, the trainer, not the horse has become the key handicapping factor. Expect the 'super trainer' to perform and don't be naive to the possibility of a big form reversal.

I'll put together several articles and tests over the next few months discussing the 'super trainers' as we try to relate them from the Trn \geq 400 rating. Let's start by putting a name to the rating and show you a list of some of the highest rated trainers going strong right now. Be sure to check the 'Trainer Last 30-day' record when dealing with this handicapping factor. It is amazing to watch the extremely high win percentages they can pull off in short time. The [TLC] screen displays this under the **TrL30** column in section II. Our PDF or text "comprehensive trainer" reports are of greater value when the number of starts is less than 200 over the one-year period for 'super trainer' as they will more likely be specialists. Those trainers with 500 or more starters will be difficult to pin down with any specialty; as mentioned, they tend to excel in most situations.

Handicapping with HTR2
Dealing with the "Super Trainers"

On May 1st, Kentucky Derby day I scrolled through the entries in HTR2 and configured a subjective list of some of the trainers that have struck me as 'super'. Remember that the HTR2 trainer rating has some situational adjustments, such as the jockey/trainer success rate, so a few of the entrants may have been listed below 400 in some races. Many of these trainers also had horses entered at multiple tracks, but I listed them only once. Most have 200 or more starters over last 365-days, a few do not. This is by no means a complete list and every HTR handicapper needs to keep a close eye on any race when a 400+ trainer shows up. Unfortunately, at some tracks, the 'super trainers' are taking control of the condition book and smother much of the handicapping challenge.

<u>Track</u>	<u>Trainer</u>	<u>Comments</u>
AQU	Dutrow, Richard	Suddenly the king of NYRA
AQU	Pletcher, Todd	Always dangerous
BM	Martin, John	Rating scares Hollendorfer now
CD	Amoss, Thomas	Live horses galore
CD	Asmussen, Steve	Gigantic operation, he's everywhere
CD	Frankel, Bobby	Ruler of the Grade-I grass stakes
CRC	Wolfson, Martin	After GP closes, he's tops in FL
CT	Allbright, Amy	Queen of the 4.5f
DEL	Pino, Michael	Best of strongmen (Lake, Iwinksi, Zimmrmn)
FP	Martinez, Ralph	Just doesn't miss very often
HOL	Mullins, Jeff	Mr. Big on SoCal circuit now
LS	Norman, Cole	The king, the original 'super trainer'
MNR	Catalano, Wayne	The man on top of the 'mountain'
MNR	Stokes, Lonnie	Not many horses, but they are all "live"
WO	Tiller, Robt	No mistakes - throw him in the tri

If you take the time to look over the trainer numbers, it is interesting that some circuits rarely see an entrant from a 'super trainer' with a rating > 400 and other places have several, such as CT, DEL and TUP (which I didn't list here - but the circuit is dominated by a handful of power barns). Keep the number of starters in mind when looking at the rating. A trainer with less than 100 starts in the last 365-days might be a new face that has become hot in a short time, but it could also be a smaller barn with a very selective and focused approach and they usually specialize.

Super Trainer with Long Layoff Spot Play

While running the stats on the Layoff >= 180, I threw in a filter for trainer >= 400. Can the 'super trainer' penetrate those terrible returns for the long layoffs and perform their miracles on horses that have been off for 6-months or more?

Spot Play Trainer >= 400 Layoff >= 180 days Any Race Purse \$10,000+

<u>Plays</u>	<u>Win%</u>	<u>ROI</u>	<u>WP%</u>	<u>Longs</u>
603	17%	0.74	32%	9%

Analysis

Nothing doing. Even those 'cocktails' can't often push forward a horse that has been on vacation for 6-months or longer. I didn't separate the routes or turf races because of the small sample size, but the grass winners did return an ROI of 0.86 with these trainers.

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Handicapping with HTR2

Specializing with the K-Rating - Older Males

Older Male race designation = "3up" or "4up" (open to any horse age 3/4up, 99.9% males entered)

When subscribers ask me what group of horses are best to specialize with, I generally persuade them to stick with *Older Males*. Are mature male thoroughbreds more consistent? That's the theory. We know that the majority of claimers are geldings and there isn't much else for them to think about except running! It's a worthwhile project to discover the conditions that provide the highest rates of effective win percentage + ROI rather than make our own assumptions. Rebate players and those who stick to a strict contender regimen will be particularly interested in this study. "Older Male" is too broad a category by itself. I have broken down the results into various distance/surface/class categories to locate distinctions.

The (K) rating is the mainline contender selector in HTR. We depend on it to point us to the majority of winners. The rating was created and adjusted in an attempt to hold the statistics steady regardless of conditions dealing with age/sex/class type/distance/surface and track location. The formula morphs according to the conditions and is absolutely not a static algorithm for all race situations.

If the (K) was designed to hold a certain level of winners in its top-4, then wouldn't any set of conditions get the same type of results? Why recommend older male races as the best source of stability? That's why we have unbiased testing - to put to rest the conventional wisdom if necessary. Below you will see older male categories rated with accumulative win% top-4 and the ROI for the K-1 and 2. At the bottom of the chart is the "all burger" to benchmark the chart. PL-5 was used. Analysis follows on page-10.

"3up" or "4up" Males or Open Races Only	2yr Data				Min 1000 race sample	
Type of Race	KTop1	KTop2	KTop3	KTop4	ROI-1	ROI-2
Dirt-Sprint Alw/Stk	31%	50%	66%	78%	0.88	0.80
Dirt-Sprint Clm	29%	49%	63%	75%	0.89	0.85
Dirt-Sprint Msw	33%	53%	67%	79%	0.90	0.79
Dirt-Sprint Mcl	31%	51%	67%	77%	0.85	0.84
Dirt-Route Alw/Stk	30%	50%	65%	77%	0.84	0.83
Dirt-Route Clm	28%	47%	62%	74%	0.89	0.83
Dirt-Route Msw	33%	54%	69%	80%	1.00	0.99
Dirt-Route Mcl	31%	52%	67%	78%	0.81	0.75
Turf-Route Alw/Stk	28%	46%	61%	75%	0.90	0.81
Turf-Route Clm	28%	45%	60%	73%	0.96	0.75
Turf-Route Msw and Mcl	insufficient data					

Benchmark All Races	30%	51%	66%	77%	0.89	0.84

Handicapping with HTR2

K-Rating - Tested on Older Male Races

While there are some interesting statistical variations here, the overall impression is that older males fit right in with normal ranges of the (K) overall. Typical is the 50% winners in the top-2 and 75-80% success with top-4 on dirt. The grass win rates are not as high, but the ROI improves. This is exactly what we expect for a contender selector. On one hand it can be disappointing that the rating does not assert itself dramatically with different types of races; yet maintaining solid consistent results under all types of conditions is reassuring.

- Maiden Special Weight (Msw) gave us the best results with win% and ROI on dirt. It is important to note that they are also the smallest sample group and that lowers the confidence somewhat. However, I have watched these results for years and they have remained stronger than the overall (K) samplings. Also, the purse minimum for the test was set at \$10,000; the weaker and more volatile minor-track Msw races are not used so we can count on these results carrying forward. One other factor is that older male (non-claiming) maidens also have far fewer first-time-starters (FTS) than races restricted to 2yr and 3yr. An ROI = 1.00 for the Msw routers is inspiring. I suspect early speed overlays (often sprint to route plays) are a key to that excellent return.
- Maiden claimers maintain the good win percentages, but the ROI is below expectations for both sprint and route. Favorites are obviously hammered as they often lay over the field on paper if they have early speed dominance, are dropping from an Msw and possess the only decent speed figs in the race. The old adage "something in a nothing race" is most common with maiden claimers and the public will energetically splatter money all over the obvious picks if the other entrants look awful. Win bets on K-1,2 tote favorites in maiden claimers are taking the worst of it and the odds will usually drop after the gates open, ruining any chance of profit in the long run.
- Turf races for claimers are your best bet for overlays with the (K). The public just does not pummel the favorites as heavily as they do on dirt. Grass races tend to be wide open and the outcome dependent on unpredictable trips that result in greater flux of the odds in our favor. ROI is excellent for the K-1 on grass and there were far more \$20 up winners than on the dirt for the top rank.
- The dirt races are all in the same ballpark with the results and there is no need to worry about passing or specializing with older males on the main track if using the (K) for contenders and value identification. K-2 has always been a disappointment with the ROI. I would have expected a higher return due to the value that often occurs when the favorite is heavily over bet. Apparently the (K) pulls up many of these overlay second favorites into the top slot - a very positive sign for the rating.
- We have not entirely proven my recommendation that older males are the most consistent performers. That will happen after we test the other groups and compare the statistics. At least with this test group we have the confidence that the (K) performs its desired function smoothly and without much fluctuation from day to day and month to month at every track under all conditions.

Access/HTR2 Export - User Manual Update 2004 Excerpts

From the Introduction by KM

The export options were created in HTR2 to allow advanced research. There is no mistaking the value of doing the extra homework to fatten profits and gain greater insights that the general public cannot comprehend. Today's blazing computers and massive storage space allow us to crunch numbers like never before. Cost for large lot data has also dropped significantly - HTR subscribers can accumulate a quality 50,000 race database within a year for under \$1500 (3 cents per race!). Using HTR2's export function in tandem with MS Access, we can process, query and test huge data samples with virtually any parameter and factor combination in a matter of minutes. The sky is the limit for the creative data-miner right now. I can assure you the extra effort to learn the steps and techniques in this manual will payoff with a depth of understanding that cannot help but improve your results. My sincere gratitude to Don Nadermann, Mike DeRienzo and Rick Bush for their efforts to produce and update this text. The original manual was a labor of love for Donnie and we cannot thank him enough for his contributions to improving our understanding of data management.

Chapter One and Access

An Access database is a collection of information related to a particular subject or purpose. If your database isn't stored on a computer, or only parts of it are, you may be tracking information from a variety of sources that you must coordinate and organize yourself. With Access, you can manage all your information from a single database file. Within the file, your data is divided into separate storage containers called tables. You can: view, add, and update table data: Retrieve just the data you want using queries; and analyze or print data in a specific layout using reports: or export query outputs to Excel or Word.

The HTR2 Export Screen (shown with screen-shot in the manual)

Next you will select if you want HTR2 to export races without results. Normally you will only export races where you have added the result files for research. The "without results" option is provided for those that want do their pre-race handicapping with the exported data by creating a custom report in Access. This is an advanced technique that requires some experience and perhaps a trip to our annual seminar for instruction. You will also indicate if you want additional chart data included in your export (default). There are fields in the HX4 file (i.e. final tote odds and official finish position for all runners) that are dependent on information found in the results charts. If you do not include the chart data these fields will be blank. If you decide to include chart data you will need to download the corresponding result charts along with the regular results file and race files. No error will occur if a chart is not available when this option is checked.

Importing to Access - Introduction

*Now we turn to the simple yet sometimes confusing aspect of importing the data into Access after we have used HTR2 to export the comma delimited text files. The computer and Access will do all the grunt work. The user only needs to follow the sequence of instructions. First - during the export process we know that **HTR2** created a file and saved it to our hard drive, we'll assume a file named "ALL_HX4.TXT". When we are ready to import this data into Access, we must know the name and folder location of this file to direct Access to open it for us. By 'importing', what we are attempting to do is use Access to draw all the information out of the text file and put them nice, neat and orderly into tables. Once the data is contained in a table it may then be queried, filtered and sorted. Calculations may be run on the fields within the table and information may be called up at will by the user.*

On Query

A query is a method by which you ask Access to show you specific pieces of a data table while allowing you to specify exactly which pieces of that table you wish to view. Queries can be selected for any combination of the data in the table; for example you could query your Access data table to show you all the records for winners of turf-routes at SAR in 2003, or perhaps query a specific trainer at the SAR meet and view all his results.

Late News

Seminar/Tournament 2004

There should be no problem getting entered at the Gold Coast tournament right up until July 14. I'm usually one of the last to register and have never been turned down for the contest entry or the special room package. But room reservations for July in Las Vegas can get busy, so get your plans done for the seminar as soon as reasonable. Be sure to let me know you are coming and you can post a message on our discussion board for Donnie and Mike if you have any special interests you would like addressed during their Access class and workshop. Ernie and I will be available for the entire weekend if you want to talk about HTR or have questions about the program output. Q & A time will be scheduled during all seminar sessions.

Is \$400 a bit steep for you take a first plunge in the Gold Coast tourney? Best solution is to get a partner that has tournament experience and put up \$200/each. We can try to find partners for you among our group. Send me an email if interested.

HTR2 Software Update

I am revising the HTR-Consensus screen to include the Wk rank. It will have other new features and large print. Also fixed a few bugs in the Tester. This new version will be available sometime before June 1st. A major upgrade will be introduced at the seminar.

HTR is a service of –

KM Software

PMB 315

5024 Katella Ave

Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Voicemail: 714-366-1HTR

Fax: 714-693-3399

Email: kmssoft@earthlink.net

Free HTR website (software updates): www.homebased2.com/km

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