

HTR Monthly Report

Thoroughbred Handicapping Newsletter

October 2000

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[Handicapping Technology and Research](#)

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News from Thoroughbred Racing
Handicapping Contest at Orleans Hotel, Vegas

At least a dozen HTR members, maybe more, will contest the autumn edition of the Orleans Handicapping Challenge in Las Vegas from October 12 – 15. We'll be joining 700 other very determined handicappers seeking more than \$350,000 in prize money. The toughest tournament players on earth will be there and they want that \$125,000 top-prize in their pocket too. A sharp group of handicappers to compete against and it takes an extraordinary three days to succeed at the end.

- Each contestant receives 36 wager slips, 12 for each day of the contest. The slips are used to wager a theoretical \$100 to win. Seven tracks are available, all the major circuits. Points are based on the mutuel price of the winning horse. A \$10 winner would net you 500 points. Place and show get zero. If your 80/1 shot loses by a nose, tough luck. Happens to all of us, every tournament. In fact I have been disqualified twice now on winning horses that were 12/1 or more. Tough breaks, sure, but it won't buy you any sympathy at this place.
- There is a maximum odds limit for full point value – 20/1. After that the first \$20 of the contest wager is awarded full value, the other \$80 at the 20/1 rate. Last March I hit a 60/1 shot on the turf at Santa Anita, got about 3,000 points for that one winner and that is about as good as it gets for a single wager.
- To win the contest, typically, you'll need about 9000 points or slightly more. More than 10,000 points will send you home with a \$100,000 for sure. A good prize can be had for 7,500 points. What does it take to get 9000 points? Imagine you are the superman of handicappers and hit 20 of 36 winners (55%) with an average mutuel of \$8.00. Outrageously strong showing, but it still won't likely take home the top prize. You'll get 8,000 points and a nice check, but not the gold medal. Of course, no mortal can hit such a percentage of 3/1 one shots in short succession. The point is that playing short prices is a complete waste of your time in this contest. The top guys shoot for 10/1 or more on every wager. A minimum of one thousand points per contest bet is a good goal.
- Fraction one velocity (Fr1 or Ev1) is the single most potent longshot factor available in HTR. Many of the huge priced winners that HTR members have uncovered during the big tournaments were ranked 1 or 2 in this factor alone. Including the 60/1 shot I mentioned above. But timing is everything here, there is no getting around the fact that you will have to guess right more than once on a factor that hits less than 20% winners in it's top ranking.
- Minimizing the luck factor can be done, and the top tournament players purchase multiple team entries (as many as 8) to increase their chances. Hard work pays off too – finding tracks and situations that produce a high percentage of longshots is extremely worthwhile. When the chalks are hitting – stay away. Favorites need to be avoided like the plague in these contests, look elsewhere, pass the race. There is no possibility that you can win with enough chalk to collect a prize in this contest. Even hitting 50% of your strong favorite plays in the tournament (18 winners / 36 bets) with an average win mutuel of \$5.00 gets you just 4,500 points. Forget about it.
- As serious horse handicappers, this is our Olympics, Super Bowl and World Series. Participating and not winning is still very worthwhile and the learning experience cannot be beaten. The people and the camaraderie are fantastic. Winning is even more fun though and I expect someone from HTR to walk away with a top finish this time. See you there. For those that don't come, I'll report on the tournament in the November issue or on the Internet message board.

Information for HTR Users
Locating the Longshots in HTR

Tournament players must bank on hitting several longshots in succession to take home the top cash awards. But the search for good priced winners is an everyday thing if you are a serious bettor looking to make a hefty score once in awhile. Let's review the raw facts regarding win prices in North America first. The chart below gives the percentage of winners that fall into various payoff ranges –

North American Win Mutuel Ranges
All tracks and races.

Range	Percent	Avg Mutuel	Comment
\$2.10–5.90	29.6%	\$ 4.36	<i>Chalk Zone</i>
\$6.00–9.90	30.5%	\$ 7.66	<i>2nd favorite zone</i>
\$10.0–19.9	25.3%	\$13.74	<i>overlay zone</i>
\$20.0+	14.6%	\$37.80	<i>longshot zone</i>

More than 60% of all winners in North America pay less than \$10 to win. That is a sobering statistic if you are longshot player. The *longshot zone* (\$20 and up) has less than 15% of the total – about 1 winner in 7 races. The \$20+ range is also the largest group of horses going to post – making it very difficult to select a single longshot from among several choices in any given race. Contrast that with the *chalk zone* (\$2.10 - \$5.90) in which there is rarely more than one horse in the race likely to pay in that range. The task of picking longshots appears formidable at first glance.

Two questions must be answered if you are going to hunt for high priced winners:

- Are there factors in HTR that are highly predictive of winners in the *longshot zone*?
- Can we identify race situations that produce longshots more often than normal?

Luckily the answer is yes to both questions - let's look at the numbers for velocity factors first. I used paceline mode (5). First I queried all the horses in the \$20+ category to find out what HTR factor(s) they were ranked highly with, if any. By *ranked highly*, I mean they ranked **1** or **2** in that factor.

% of Longshots = this column tells us how many of the \$20+ group winners were identified with a **1** or **2** ranking in that factor. Ties are very rare with velocity data because it is presented in decimal format.

<u>Factor</u>	<u>% of Longshots</u>
Fr1/Ev	22.7%
Fr2 / Turn Time	17.8%
Fr3 / Final Frac	19.8%
A/P	12.8%
E/P	19.4%
S/P	12.8%
F/X	16.5%
L/P or Lv	17.4%
VEL (overall velocity)	13.9%

This chart reveals that HTR's fraction one velocity (**Fr1** or **Ev**) can uncover 21.4% of those horses that paid \$20 or more. Early speed is an obvious key element to predicting high-priced winners. One thing to remember here is that **Fr1**, **Fr2** and **E/P** rankings may have significant overlap. In other words, horses ranked **1** with **Fr1** will often be ranked **1** with **E/P** as well. However, there is very little overlap between **Fr1** and **Fr3**. Very few longshots are ranked **1-2** in both factors. Looking at the chart then, we can assume that at about 40% of all longshots paying over \$20 will have be ranked **1-2** in *either* **Fr1** or **Fr3**.

Information for HTR Users
Locating the Longshots in HTR.....continued

Next we'll check the new IMPACT figures and find out how they compare with the regular velocity numbers. One thing that should be remembered here is that the IMPACT numbers will have occasional ties in the data because the ratings are presented as whole numbers.

<u>Factor</u>	<u>% of Longshots</u>
ESpeed	22.9%
Attack	19.7%
Resist	16.8%
Total	13.4%

The **ESpeed** tests very effectively for longshots, and it should because it is really a quantified version of **Fr1**. The Attack rating improves upon the percentage of longshots found with the more traditional **Fr2**/turn time. The best use of IMPACT figures is with past-performance appraisal, but it is good to know that the numbers are as accurate as their velocity cousins in locating the high priced winners.

Velocity factors, and especially the early speed elements, are the cornerstones in the quest for longshot winners. Other computer handicapping programs have been unable to produce the excellent results we get with HTR velocity rankings. This is because the fractional segments are beautifully balanced and adjusted according to a unique algorithm developed by Tom Brohamer and myself in 1994. Generic calculations of feet-per-second will produce inferior results. Ample credit must also be given to Jim Cramer who diligently computes the daily variants and speed figures in our data files. The accuracy of that variant is critical to proper adjustment of the f/p/s numbers.

Let's turn to the non-velocity HTR components now and find out if any of those factors can help us identify the longshots. These items have some advantages over velocity factors – primarily that a number is assigned to every horse regardless of circumstances. The f/p/s cannot be computed without a running line, so factors such as the Pscan and HTR consensus are instrumental in handicapping first time starters or foreign shippers.

<u>Factor</u>	<u>% of Longshots</u>
Pscan	5.9%
PER (recent performance)	10.1%
CLA (recent class)	9.9%
HTR (consensus)	4.7%
ACL (avg comp level)	16.7%
TRN (trainer)	18.1%
JKY (jockey)	17.3%
(K)	4.3%

Among these ratings, the Trainer (**TRN**) and Jockey (**JKY**) ratings have surprisingly good success uncovering longshots. Unfortunately, these two items have a very low win percentages overall. The velocity numbers are more reliable. Factors such as **Pscan** and **(K)** select a high percentage of low and medium priced winners, but rarely find \$20 and up longshots. The **ACL** rating scored pretty well, but that may be to the multitude of ties found in the data. Keep in mind that I did no additional handicapping when running these tests. Some of these results could be increased in effectiveness if various elimination methods are applied - I'll leave that to the reader for now and maybe a good topic for a future newsletter.

Handicapping the Jockey and Jockey Statistics

We know that jockey win percentages are often an illusion, and even downright unfair to the less popular riders. The top guys and gals get the best horses and they continue to win at a high percentage. This does not mean they are more talented – just getting better stock to ride. The lesser-known riders may be equally capable, but rarely get a chance on a solid contender.

Imagine if all jocks were given their mounts randomly. Would the win percentages among the jockey colony become tighter? I think it would for sure. But the issue is hard to prove on paper because a rider's real ability to *move a horse up* is extremely difficult to quantify when the best jocks get the best horses to ride every day. As bettors, we don't really have to care about the true talent levels among the jockeys anyway, our only concern is if they are capable of giving the horse a good trip and not impeding the animal's chances of winning by making stupid mistakes.

We could argue all day about the effect of jockeys on winning races, but nobody can dispute that the assigned riders have a tremendous effect on the public wagering. Most tracks have one or two really standout personalities in the jockey colony and their win percentage is usually well above 20% most of the year. Let's test some jockey data and find out if those high percentage riders help our ROI or whether the lesser percentage jocks actually make us more money at the windows.

The charts below tested a massive database of over 130,000 races in the last 24 months. Let's start by looking at a pure ranking of jockey win percentage and find out what happens when we do nothing else but wager \$1 to win on the top percentage rider in all races.

Rank (jockey by win%)	Win%	\$ROI	I.V.
1	23.1	0.81	1.59
2	18.2	0.84	1.31
3	14.5	0.78	1.09

There is no profit advantage to knowing the top rated rider in a race based on win percentage. Even the impact value for the top rated rider is disappointing. The next chart is a more realistic breakdown of jockey win rates and ROI based on the riders 1-year win percentage.

Jock% = the percentage of all jockeys in North America that have this win rate (total = 100%)

1yrWin%	Jock%	Win%	\$ROI	I.V.
00-05%	5.3	5.9	0.64	0.47
06-10%	24.9	8.5	0.72	0.69
11-15%	43.5	12.2	0.79	1.00
16-20%	21.3	16.1	0.84	1.32
21-25%	3.9	19.9	0.84	1.62
25% +	1.1	28.1	0.83	2.36

Analysis follows – next page.

Jockey Data Testscontinued

<u>1yrWin%</u>	<u>Jock%</u>	<u>Win%</u>	<u>\$ROI</u>	<u>I.V.</u>
00-05%	5.3	5.9	0.64	0.47
06-10%	24.9	8.5	0.72	0.69
11-15%	43.5	12.2	0.79	1.00
16-20%	21.3	16.1	0.84	1.32
21-25%	3.9	19.9	0.84	1.62
25% +	1.1	28.1	0.83	2.36

I pasted the chart here again because it bears some scrutiny. Statistics can be difficult to dissect at times and this chart is worth explaining thoroughly. Here are the fine points I draw from this data –

- The overwhelming majority of jockeys in North America have a win rate of between 8% and 17% with 12% being about average.
- The low percentage riders have incredibly awful ROI. I expected better returns from this group considering that these jockeys (10% or worse) bring home most of the longshot winners. Is this terrible ROI due to the fact that these jocks have inferior talent or that they are stuck with riding the very worst horses on the grounds? We'll test the *bad* jockey – good horse scenario later in this article and find out if the *bad* jockeys are getting a bad rap.
- Look at the 21-25% grouping. The win rate for these riders is only 19.9%. Wait a minute, this group wins 21 to 25% individually over the course of the previous year, why would their win percentage as a group drop below 20% now? The answer could be that these riders, having been very successful in their previous 365 days, are now determinedly facing stiffer competition and squaring off against similar riders for the best mounts. Most well funded stakes events consist of jockeys with high win percentages. Only one rider can win. Successful jockeys at all circuits will move their tack to a tougher colony knowing full well that their win rate may drop, but that their income and prestige will rise.
- The highest percentage jockey group (25% or more winners in the last 365 days) is a very exclusive club. Only one rider out of a 100 is a member. They have a tremendous impact on the outcome of races compared to their population numbers. The I.V. (impact value) is well over the strong benchmark of 2.00. Even the ROI is surprisingly above the normal random loss level (0.80 is the normal ROI for track takeout + breakage). Considering that these guys ride almost nothing but favorites and are heavily bet every time they sit on a horse, this ROI is not below expectations.

Wouldn't it be interesting have a contest between the top jockeys (above 20%) and the lowly ones (below 10%) which would give them equal access to the best horses to answer some basic questions. Do the top jockeys have high win rates because they have great talent or because they acquire the best mounts? If given the same opportunity to ride good stock, would the low percentage riders win at the same rate?

Here is how we'll run the contest on paper: jockeys from the high and low categories will be tested for win percentage and ROI on horses that ranked **1** or **2** in **Pscan** and **(K)** rating. These two HTR factors are based entirely on horse performance, form cycle, class etc. We know that both these ratings tend to produce about 50% with the top two rankings. My theory is that the low percentage riders will win approximately the same as the high percentage group, proving once and for all that jockeys are nothing but passengers. Let' see if I am right or wrong. The chart on the next page lists win% and ROI under the two jockey categories based on how they did with these top (K) and Pscan horses.

Jockey Data Testscontinued

Factor - rank		Low Jocks (< 10%)		High Jocks (> 20%)	
(K)	1	25.3%	0.80 (roi)	36.6%	0.85
(K)	2	26.1%	1.33	24.0%	0.83
Pscan	1	25.5%	0.82	34.5%	0.81
Pscan	2	17.0%	1.01	27.3%	0.95

The low percentage riders performed very well when given a good mount. The 25% win rates on the (K) and Pscan top ranked horses are as good as could be expected for these jocks. While the higher percentage jockeys did win at much better rates with the well-regarded horses, it must be remembered that these jocks are probably getting many of their mounts in races with higher purses, better horses, smaller fields and less competition. The *low* group riders are often competing in larger fields of cheap horses and maiden claimers. The high ROI on the (K)-2 *low* group may be fluky as the sample size was not particularly big and a few huge longshots could have distorted the return.

My conclusion from this data is that life is not fair in the jockey colony. Popular jocks receive the best horses and win the most often because of that, not because they are extremely great athletes. The lesser riders are probably equally talented but must fight for every ride because they haven't reached the level of celebrity or popularity that the top jocks enjoy. When given the chance on logical contenders, most jockeys will bring it home as often as their more famous counterparts.

Final Analysis of Using Jockey Win Percentage

Now there must be some way to capitalize on the public perception of jockeys. The racetrack crowds over-bet the top riders consistently. Cannot we find overlays on lesser riders with good horses that the public will ignore due to the jockey factor? The data tested here do not help us with this answer however. Low percentage jockeys as a whole return miserable ROI as we saw in the first chart. From the second chart the **Pscan** and **(K)** horses that were ranked #1 with the low percentage jockey group returned dismal ROI, no better than the *high* jocks. The expectation might have been that these horses would be under-bet by the public because of the rider. This is apparently not the case. Those horses that were ranked #2 in these factors *did* produce superior returns and even flat bet profits. Yet this is not entirely convincing evidence of the public allowing a good horse to go to post an overlay either. The reason being that the #2 ranks often produce excellent returns by themselves – handicappers can make good returns on horses ranked #2 in many factors regardless of the jockey.

The final word on jockeys and their win percentage may be to forget about them and bet on the merits of the horse. I can't find any convincing evidence that the jockey factor alone will have strong influence on the profit potential of statistical handicapping. Yet experienced players know their local riders, and intuition often tells us when the jock is a bad fit for a certain kind of race. Jockey and trainer data together also may be much more indicative of pre-race intention than just looking at the rider only.

On the next page we'll test the HTR Jockey rating (JKY) which takes a different approach from the traditional win percentage as a measure of ability.

Jockey Data Testscontinued

We turn now to the jockey ranking (**JKY**) found on the HTR consensus. Over the years many people have confronted me with this rating. Usually they want to know why the top percentage rider at the meet is ranked lower than #1 on the listing – “*Edgar Prado is the leading jock at 22% right now and your program has him ranked 5th in your **JKY** rating*”.

The HTR jockey ranking is based on three components in tandem.

1. The 365 day win percentage. Same as tested on page five herein.
2. The jockey/trainer 365 win percentage, if any.
3. The jockey/horse lifetime win percentage, if applicable.

In my original research to determine a jockey rating method, there were some interesting facts that came to light while testing the data. First, the trainer/jockey combination seemed to be much more statistically positive than just the jockey win rate alone. Trainers like to repeat success and will look for a rider that fits a positive race scenario for them. As we all know nowadays though, strong trainer/jockey tandems are well documented and have become popular angles. Most combinations involving top riders and trainer are hammered at the windows.

The jockey/horse lifetime record is a much more obscured statistic. Most trainers want to repeat a winning combination and will secure the same rider for their horse each outing if possible. There was evidence in my data analysis that suggested that when a jockey had ridden the same horse three times or more, there was a positive correlation. So I went ahead and factored that in to the jockey rating in HTR.

The chart below reveals the overall **JKY** ranking statistics from all tracks and race types in North America.

Rank (JKY rating)	Win%	\$ROI	I.V.
1	22.9	0.85	1.60
2	18.3	0.84	1.33
3	14.7	0.80	1.19

If you compare these results to the chart on page 5 (jockey-rank by win percentage) there is not much difference. The only positive is that the **JKY** rating picks more longshots compared to the raw win percentage ranking. This factor is big disappointment for sure and perhaps the weakest prediction indicator in all of HTR software. As a component of the HTR-consensus, it is the most likely item to be replaced or revised.

Four years ago when I created the **JKY** rating, the results were better. The Win% was about 24% and the ROI was about 0.90. In the last few years though, the public has become enormously informed about jockey and trainer/jockey data through advancement of computer technology and the Internet. Jockey and trainer statistical information is pretty easy to digest for most handicappers, much more so than velocity or pace computations.

Other researchers, such as Jim Cramer of HDW, have dug deeper into jockey statistics. Jim organizes the jockey's record with the various running styles to determine if the rider is a proper fit for the horse. This can be solid information if the horse and jockey are making their first start together. Knowing how well the jock performs on front runners is particular interesting. For more information take a look at the HDW web site www.horsedata.com and contact Jim or Richard in Lexington for more details if you want to go further with jockey data.

Anatomy of Spot Play System – 50% Winning Method

If you have become interested in finding spot plays from within the HTR software and data, I would have to believe you are on the road to success. The very nature of spot play methodology is to wait for optimal opportunities before wagering and to pass on races that do not show paper profits. Sitting out unprofitable races and patiently waiting for the solid bets just cannot help but make money in the long run at this game if done exclusively. That is more easily said than done of course, unfortunately we are human and prone to making impetuous, stupid mistakes all the time while betting on horses! I'll leave the reader to take care of the emotional aspects and cover the science of creating a spot play from data testing.

I have identified three basic types of spot plays that are worth uncovering.

1. Very high win percentage (40% and up) scenarios. These will usually be favorites at low odds but do not necessarily need to show a positive ROI to produce big profits. The ability to find singletons for the Pick 3/4/6 wagers can be strategically critical to success. The same is often true of the superfecta. The costs on these wagers can multiply so quickly so it is often imperative to locate a confident single to enable deeper spreading in the other races.
2. High profit long run ROI plays. There are many longshot spot plays that show highly profitable results over the long haul. They are usually low percentage wagers though and require the utmost grinding power from the handicapper. The best of these involve early speed in routes and grass races where the mutuels can be enormous yet the losing streaks ominous. I know of at least three HTR subscribers right now that are making serious money betting on Fr1 (Ev) early speed when the odds are compelling. But they hit less than one wager in ten. If the average mutuel is over \$30 the profits will pile on eventually.
3. Moderate win percentage (20 – 30%) combined with modest ROI (1.05 – 1.25) spot plays. These are the easiest to uncover in the short run and can be found by locating patterns with various factors during individual race meetings. They rarely hold their profitability when used at all tracks or over long periods of time. For example, betting every 2yr first time starter on lasix at the recent Saratoga meeting would have resulted in a flat bet profit. You could have found this out after the first week and continued to make money with it until the meet was over. But that was a single meet occurrence and not likely to happen anywhere else for awhile.

One important aspect to spot plays is the frequency of occurrence. If the method was tested at all tracks and produces only 1 play per 100 races, there won't be much action even if you download all the tracks available every day. If the angle is working at one location only, there might only be one play a week or less in that case. My guideline is to find a minimum of one play every 50 races if working with all tracks, and at least one wager in every 20 races if working at a single track.

This month we'll work toward finding the elusive 50% winner scenario that isolates solid favorites for use as singletons or key horses in many types of wagers. I'll take it step by step starting with a general idea and then add conditions (filters) that are deemed positive to weed out all but the very best plays. Hopefully by the end of the article we will achieve our goal of 50% winners with a reasonable frequency of playable races.

- 1) First step to in getting to 50% winners is to accept that we are looking for solid favorites. We'll use the morning line favorites instead of the tote favorites so we can find our selections in advance. We start by querying our database for all morning line favorites at all races in North America.

Results -> ML Favorites: Win% | 30.7 ROI | 0.81 Frequency | 1 play / race

Win rate is fair, ROI is horrible; frequency is maximum.

Let's add some filter stipulations and try again.

Anatomy of Spot Play System continued

- 2) Step two in this spot play development is to siphon out which morning line favorites are more productive. Several data tests revealed that 2/1 or less morning line choices win at much higher rates than those 5/2 or more. Let's look at the tally now:

Results -> *2/1 ML Favorites only:* **Win% | 36.7** **ROI | 0.83** **Frequency | 1 play / 2.3 races**
Win rate is better, ROI is improved slightly; frequency is still high (43% of all races have a 2/1 or less ML favorite)

- 3) We have gone as far as logically possible with the ML. Waiting for lesser odds would produce slightly higher win percentage but lowers the ROI and reduces the play frequency dramatically. The next stipulation involves layoff. Perhaps restricting the plays to horses that have raced in the last 30 days may improve our confidence. We can't rely on horses with long layoffs at these low odds.

Results -> *2/1 ML Favorites w/ last race in last 30 days:*
Win% | 37.4 **ROI | 0.84** **Frequency | 1 play / 3 races**
Win rate is a tiny bit better, ROI is improved slightly; frequency is still good (32%)

- 4) At this point we need something more dramatic to beef up that win percentage. I tried trainer win percentage next. The average trainer in North America wins about 9% in a year, so we'll try restricting our plays to trainers that win twice that much (18% or more).

Results -> *2/1 ML Favorites w/ last race in last 30 days, trainer wins 18% or more:*
Win% | 40.2 **ROI | 0.84** **Frequency | 1 play / 14 races**
Win rate went up past 40%, ROI not improved; frequency dropped big time (about 7%)

- 5) Let's get some help from the computer and HTR software now. The **Pscan** is an excellent all-around handicapping tool that estimates real ability. If we require that our plays be ranked number **1** in that factor it should improve almost any spot play or contender method.

Results -> *2/1 ML Favorites w/ last race in last 30 days, trainer wins 18% or more; #1 Pscan*
Win% | 44.1 **ROI | 0.88** **Frequency | 1 play / 25 races**
Win rate pushed up past 44%, ROI improved; frequency getting low (about 4%)

- 6) Ok, we have almost made it to the 50% promised land. Problem is, our play frequency is dropping very low. Right now we are at 4% or 1 play in 25 races. Not too bad if you handicap all the cards every day though. The ROI is not increasing however and we have to wonder at this point if anything is being accomplished here. Turf races are more reliable than dirt and oddball distances and wet tracks were found to more volatile also. Filter #6 is then to only accept plays only on Fast Dirt at distances between 5.5 and 10.0 furlongs.

Results -> *2/1 ML Favorites w/ race in last 30 days, trainer wins 18% or more; #1 Pscan, Fast dirt races at 5.5 - 10.0 furlongs only.*
Win% | 46.3 **ROI | 0.89** **Frequency | 1 play / 42 races**
Win rate went up past 46%, ROI not improved; frequency drops again (2.3%)

Almost to the summit but getting desperate. Playable race frequency has already hit near minimum (1 play in 50 races or 2% is my self-imposed minimum) and the ROI is discouraging. Yet the focus here is was strictly for winners, not profits. Our last filter needs to be something clever. What about adding the longshot factor - **Ev** or **Fr1** early velocity? The final test results are on the next page.

Anatomy of Spot Play System continued

- 7) Last item to stipulate on our playable horses is that we require the runner to be ranked #1 or #2 in early velocity (**Fr1** or **Ev**).

Results -> *2/1 ML Favorites w/ race in last 30 days, trainer wins 18% or more; #1 Pscan, Fast dirt races at 5.5 – 10.0 furlongs only and must ranked 1 or 2 in Fr1 velocity.*

Win% | 53.7 ROI | 1.01 Frequency | 1 play / 54 races

Success! And even the ROI is a penny profit. Only one problem, the playable race rate dropped below 1 out of 50 races. Not much action on this system, but hope springs eternal. Perhaps some of the test filters could be altered or used earlier to increase the number of plays. The Pscan and early velocity requirements seem to increase the win rate the most and might beef up almost any spot play methodology.

As in all handicapping literature the author came up with a successful method here. The truth is, I tested dozens of different filtered spot plays before finding this one. The progressive testing methodology is the important lesson. Start with a premise and test it. Add a filter and test again. Did things improve? If so move forward, if not discard the filter item (maybe saving it for later) and try something else. This is lab science at the basic level, and whether you are looking for 50% winners or the cure for cancer, the results are undeniable.

Test information.

Races used: 10,889 races run at major circuits from May through September 2000.
No other restrictions were placed on the data at the start of the test.

Late News and Contact Information

I'll be out of town from October 12 – 16 attending the handicapping tournament at the Orleans Hotel. I'll see many of you there. All other HTR members: please contact me after that date via email or telephone if you need help with anything related to HTR software. If you experience problems with data access or need assistance with your on-line account, please call Ron or Richard at HDW in Lexington at 859-255-8211 during normal business hours.

Notice that the area code for Lexington has changed from 606 to 859. If you still use the old HTR-BBS (almost extinct) or need to call HDW, be sure to dial the 859 prefix beginning October 1st.

HTR is a service of –

KM Software
PMB 315
5024 Katella Ave
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

Voicemail: 714-220-1230

Fax: 714-693-3399

Email: kmssoft@earthlink.net

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

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