

HTR Report
Thoroughbred Handicapping Newsletter
July/August 2008

Brought to you by –
Ken Massa &
Handicapping Technology and Research

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Late News and Information

The *HTR Report* newsletter 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 your computer hard-drive for off-line reading and printing.

The newsletter is available bi-monthly. The current edition of the HTR Report is available on the Internet from our members' web site only. The newsletter is included as part of a paid subscription to HTR's monthly download service (\$119/mo).

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HTR in the News
News and Notes

Lots of New Goodies in HTR2 Upgrade

Most of this newsletter issue is taken up with details surrounding the July 2008 HTR2 upgrade. You'll find new options and tools in the upgraded software that will enhance your handicapping and research tremendously. In addition there are several other PDF documents that are related that you may want to read depending on your interests →

HTR Library

- [Robot User Guide](#) has been completely updated with the new material
- [HX4 File Spec](#)
- [What's New: HTR Upgrade](#) July 2008

HTR Help Area

- FIG2 Help Screen Guide (most details found herein); available by August 1, 2008
- FIGX Help Screen Guide (most details found herein); available by August 1, 2008
- Auto-Scratch Help Sheet (most details found herein)

HELP Screen link

- Bonus Guide PDF – [HTR Newsletters in a Nutshell](#) (see below)

BONUS READING: HTR Newsletters in a Nutshell – by Mel Moser

Mel Moser has generously written a very interesting report for us. This is an excellent guide to some of the key findings, test results and handicapping advice found in past issues of this newsletter. You can read it free by clicking this link below. Big thanks to Mel for providing this great resource for us.

HTR Seminar Wed July 23 10am

We hope that you'll be attending our annual seminar on Wed July 23 at the Gold Coast in Las Vegas. We start at 10am and the fee is \$40, cash or check, collected after you arrive. Below is a preliminary schedule. Due to time constraints we will not be holding a live contest this year, but we will have a drawing for cash and prizes instead. Please be aware that the \$40 donation is used to pay expenses and compensate our excellent speakers.

- 10:00 am Seating, Welcome, Introduction and Handouts
- 10:15 am HTR Basics w/ Ken Massa, (K) rating and Vi
- 11:15 am HTR Basics w/ Don Naderman, Pace & Speed, Figs and Form Cycle

- 1:00 pm Advanced Handicapping Topics with HTR2 w/ Ken Massa
- 3:15 pm Taxes and Record Keeping w/ Mike Mayo
- 4:00 pm Tournament Topics w/ Mel Moser

- 5:30 pm Robot and Spot Plays w/ Ken Massa
- 7:00 pm Access, Export and Database workshop w/Don Naderman

Seminar ends 10pm. Come early for best seating and save your place throughout the entire event. Laptop is optional for the presentations before 5pm. For the research sessions after 5pm, you should bring your laptop. We will provide software updates for everyone needing it.

Seminar Helpers: Tom Walters, John Buls, Ernie Logsdon and Herman Bell

Software Update

Auto-Scratch Button

Great new time-saver enables instant one-click full-card scratching from all tracks directly from the HTR2 software Scratch screen. There is nothing to learn – it is a one click feature.

HDW provides a file that contains scratches from all tracks in operation each racing day. It is updated every 15-minutes and you can click it as often as you wish for an update throughout the day. Any tracks you have downloaded for the day will be processed by the Auto-Scratch.

To utilize it, you'll have to be connected to the Internet and have your Username and Password saved from the HTR2 [Download] screen. The Auto-Scratch is only available during the current racing day while scratches are being reported in real-time. To get previous-day scratches, download the Results+Charts files after the races are over.

IMPORTANT – A valid subscriber Username and Password must be entered into the HTR2 Download Screen before trying to use this feature. If you have already been accessing files from the software's Download area, you're all set.

Auto-Scratch is accessed from the [Scratch] button on the HTR2 main screen.

You'll see a new option → [Auto Scratch HDW] a green button on the bottom of the Scratch screen.

Click it and it will remove all the scratches that have been reported in up to that time for the tracks you have downloaded. Typically this will be about a half an hour prior to the first post-time for deleting all of the scratches on the card. A list will pop up showing all the Scratches that have been removed.

After the Auto-Scratch completes its task, a list of the scratched horses will be displayed.

The tracks are the source of scratch information. They will usually finalize their scratches about one hour before post-time and sent this information to Equibase. HDW then receives the feed and processes the information into a file that can be retrieved by us. Our scratch data for each track is typically ready about 30-minutes prior to first post and has all the known scratches for the day at that time.

Here are some issues you should be aware of regarding the auto-scratch option →

- You can probably get scratch information from the web sooner than our file, particularly from the track's own website. So if you are in a hurry, remove them manually as always.
- Late vet scratches in the paddock, post parade or at the gate will be added to the file, but usually too late for handicapping. So be aware that you won't get 100% of the scratches with the Auto-Scratch ahead of the race. After the day is over, downloading the Results and Charts will automatically remove scratches as well.
- Tracks report their scratches at all hours of the day and evening depending on the various time zones and post-times for their schedule. HDW updates the auto-scratch file every 15-minutes during the racing day. So click the Auto-Scratch button as often as you need an update and be aware that you will not get a report on all tracks early in the day. Locations that run later in the afternoon or evening will not report until about 1-hour prior to their first post.
- Overnight scratches that are removed prior to the production of our files are not shown on the scratch listing, as these horses are already erased from our data.
- [Auto Scratch ATR] is still available for users with the ATR application running. You do not need the ATR application to run the new HDW Auto-Scratch option.

*HTR Software Upgrades***Robot Update**

There are many new features, options and filters to enhance your research with the *Robot*.

The [*Robot User Guide*](#) has been entirely revised and is available in the HTR Library with complete details of these changes and it describes the entire application.

July 2008 Version / Changes and Additions

New Options

- **Quick Test:** Runs a test of the most recent 100 race results only. Best used with individual tracks. Generally takes about 10-seconds to get results in a flash.
- **Daily Report:** Day-by-day and weekly log for the past 8 weeks and includes a profit/loss column. You'll love this one for keeping current track of your spot plays or logs on any set of factors.
- **Get List:** An easy Spot-Play summary report for the day. Concise list of all your qualifying spot plays sorted by post-time with spot play # as ID. Grab the list and go.

New Filters

- **Won Last:** Horses that finished first in their most recent race (including DQs)
- **First Time Gelding:** Has been gelding since the last outing. Note: this item is only available from Feb 2008 forward in our data files. See page-10 herein for more.
- **L1:** 1st Time Lasix
- **L2:** 2nd Time Lasix

These items appear at the bottom of the second filter area. They replace the previous filters.

Quick Tips on the new stuff →

- Over 90% of all thoroughbreds begin their career with Lasix (L1). To get results with L1 on horses that were *not* first-time-starters (FTS) you can try a couple of workarounds. 1) Remove the maiden races from the sample; 2) or mark the boxes for 2TS and 3TS as the majority of maidens who did not receive Lasix in their debut will get it in their 2nd or 3rd start. By using the 2TS and 3TS filters, the first time starters are excluded.
- The Daily Report option automatically tests backward for the last 8-weeks of your data. There is no need to set the "Days-Back" option.
- The P/L column in the *Daily Report* printout is Profit/Loss based on betting \$2 win on all the plays found. For example, suppose I have 10 plays for the day that matched my criteria or spot play. Within these ten plays suppose we had just one winner paid \$25. $10 \times \$2 = \20 wagered. $\$25 - \$20 = +5.0$ for the day. This corresponds to an ROI of 1.25 as well ($25/20 = 1.25$).
- The filter "Won Last" replaces the previous "WinF". Now this filter only seeks horses that finished 1st in their most recent outing. This information is taken from the Charts, so it's possible some horses won and were DQd, including some rare maidens that hit the wire first, but were set back by the stewards and can continue to compete in the maiden ranks.
- The "1st Gelding" option was added to our data files in Feb 2008. These are males that were listed as colts (c) or horses (h) in their previous start and are now shown as (g) geldings. It's possible in some cases the horse ran as a gelding earlier, but Equibase did not get the data in time. Most true gelds receive 30-days rest or more, so you could set the layoff filter to ensure that you are getting a first out gelding.

*HTR Software Upgrades***New Features****Export HX4 Expanded**

HX4 is the only export option that has been expanded. Read the [HX4.pdf](#) file spec for the complete details on the field locations. Below is the new data included in the update →

- Quirin Speed Point Advantage (Q5 = 1)
- Weight Assigned Today
- Newly Gelded (see page 8)
- Class Text for today's race and previous start: "C10r" "MSWs" "GR2" etc.
- Trainer and Jockey record with the Horse
- Claim Value for today's race
- "About" distance flag

Time Zone Option

The opening load screen (when you first initialize the program after clicking the binoculars) has a new option for TIME ZONE. The new option was added to accommodate the growing number of International customers: (*) **Set to GMT**. Clicking this option will display the post-times in GMT (Greenwich, England), which is recognized as the universal setting.

Custom Track Selection Button

At the top of the Main Screen you can click the familiar track-selection short-cut buttons

[GG] [LAD] [CD] for example

Now there is a new one to the right of the others and it has an orange color. This is your custom track selection button and you can choose any track you want for fast access. To customize it – click the [#] button to the right of it, this will toggle through all the current tracks and display them on the orange button. Stop toggling when you get to the track you want to keep on the button. Now you can access your favorite track and also change it later if desired.

FIG Screen Update

There are three different FIG screens available: [FIG1] [FIG2] [XFIG]

Each of these has unique features that are not available in the others. FIG1 remains largely unchanged. FIG2 has some excellent new additions. XFIG is brand new.

FIG Screens Update

[FIG1] screen has only one minor change from the previous version. It is the race-fig or winner's figure, which is now shown prefixed to the class information. This change was also made in [FIG2].

Example snip from past-performance line: **16 3up C20**

The "16" is the winner's sheet fig for this race. The horse's figs are shown on the graph and will match this race-fig if it won or was close at the finish. Using this sheet-style race-fig offers a better visual par for the race. Also, added to FIG2 (see next page) is the sheet par shown above the dotted line that indicates the par level for today's race. The dotted line remains on the graph to benchmark this par.

[FIG1] emphasizes weight history and delineates the figures by ½ point increments while adjusted for weight changes. [FIG1] lists the full date and the day of week for each running line. It also has the "Tops" (top figures earned) in various categories in the header.

*HTR Software Upgrades and Handicapping***FIG2 Screen**

The [FIG2] screen and the [PPQ] display are the most often used past-performances viewed by HTR members. Each has a separate methodology for displaying the numbers. [FIG2] uses a sheet-style, graphic approach (lowest is best) and is geared to form-cycle analysis. The [PPQ] screen utilizes the popular *Quirin-style* pace and speed style figures (highest is best) that emphasize pace.

The older editions of [FIG2] had too much data borrowed from the [PPQ] screen. This combination of the mixing both figure methods with opposite hierarchy was done years ago at the request of members prior to the release of the current [PPQ]. It became stuffed and cluttered on the [FIG2] screen. For the new version of [FIG2] the *Quirin-style* numbers have been removed and the screen has a cleaner look. If you prefer to use the older versions, see page-7

New items on each [FIG2] Running Line

- The Race Winner's Fig has been prefixed to the Class details (see previous page)
- Purse Value added suffixed to the Class info; i.e. **3up Msw \$28** = \$28,000 purse.
- Full Beaten Lengths: 1call – 2call – Stretch – Finish placed right before the graph.
- Trip note is more prominently displayed on the right. Number of horses that ran is shown.
- 6-Month marker is now a less intrusive small line shown on the left graph border. This marker helps you see how many races the horse has run in the last 180 days.

Header Area

- The Sheet-Par for the race is listed above the graph for each horse. It can be seen just above the dotted 'par' line.
- Projected rating and (K) rating are also displayed above the graph for each horse.
- Horse records are now in the top line.
- TPG rating added next to trainer name (B+, C-, etc.)

Hot Keys

- Press <F> to filter the running lines to match today's surface and approximate distance. Also restricts to the last 365-days. This key works on all Past-Performance screens in HTR2. It has changed slightly from the previous version in that the surface must be a 100% match now. The letter "F" will be shown next to the PL-mode in the top of the race header to let you know this filter is currently applied. Press <F> again, to toggle it off.
- Press <D> (new on FIG2 only) to change the display from the sheet numbers to dist/surf labels. *See example next page.* The graph stays the same, but the numbers are changed into one of the following distance/surface labels: **DS** (Dirt Sprint), **DR** (Dirt Route), **TS** (Turf Sprint), **TR** Turf Route), **AS** (Artificial Sprint), **AR** (Artificial Route), **WS** (Wet Sprint), **WR** (Wet Route).
- Press <C> to view the full Chart for the highlighted running line, assuming you have downloaded the chart previously and it can be found in the current folder.
- Press <Enter> in any PP screen, while highlighting a running line, to change the selected paceline for velocity computation. The "#" will be toggled on/off next to the date on the far-left to indicate the chosen line. This automatically places HTR2 into PL-0 mode.

HTR Software Upgrades and Handicapping
FIG2 Handicapping and Previous Versions

The <D> Key Example

I came up with the idea of the <D> hot-key to address the requests by some users to notate the sheet numbers with distance-surface labels. This is a good suggestion as my research shows that surface changes are the single greatest contributor to a horse's volatility on the graph. Take a look below at three different displays for the same horse's last three running lines →

6.0D	13	DS	13DS
8.0T	14	TR	14TR
9.0A	15	AR	15AR

The first set of numbers is the standard numeric graph form-cycle display you are used to seeing on FIG2.

The second one is how it would look if you pressed the <D> key.

3rd method shows what the display would look like if both were combined. But this uses too much space on the graph. So the <D> key was implemented to solved the space problem.

Accessing Previous Versions of FIG2 and DFIGS

The latest FIG2 was designed to make it more attractive for pure figure players. But if you prefer the previous versions of FIG2, or the DFIG screen, you can instantly access them by pressing a hot key while you are viewing in [FIG2]. Don Naderman's custom version has also been added. Contact *Donnie* via the forum, email or at seminar for details and handicapping tips.

Press <F6> displays the previous version of FIG2 (circa 2002-2006)

Press <F7> displays the DFIG screen (2007)

Press <F8> displays Donnie's custom version (2007).

Press <F9> to return to the current FIG2 2008 version (when the program is re-started this is the default).

If you leave [FIG2] and access another screen in HTR2, and then return to [FIG2], the display will revert to the version you had been viewing previously. A caption to identify the current view is shown at the top left of the FIG2 report. This is useful to identify the version in use if you like to toggle between the various FIG2 versions.

FIG2 as Analysis Tool

The most important aspect of your handicapping with a form-cycle tool such as [FIG2] is to predict improvement. These are the key elements →

- Age is critical. Most thoroughbreds reach their peak by age 5yr. Significant improvement past age-4 is rare. 3yr are the most likely to show dramatic forward moves. Lightly raced 4yr can do the same. If you spot a sudden major improvement ('top') on the graph for an older horse, it should be viewed with suspicion. Either the rating is an error or the race itself was an anomaly.
- PED rating. The higher the PED rating the more likely the horse will improve. This is why a combination of a lightly raced 3yr with a big PED rating (450+) is dangerous. These horses are almost 100% certain to exceed their early career ratings.
- Surface changes create the most volatility with the figs. I looked at several different variables that might cause a horse to run a significantly better or worse race than its previous rating. The surface changes were the most apparent. This is obvious with horses that love or hate the wet tracks, but also true among those making transitions to and from artificial/grass/dirt. There are so many permutations of surfaces changes these days it is essential to predict the horse's preference. Reminder to use the <F> key to view the graph from the standpoint of today's surface only.
- Look for a solid follow-up workout after an improved fig. This usually indicates things are going well for the horse and it retains fitness level.

*HTR Software Upgrades***XFIG Screen (NEW)**

Access this screen by clicking the [XFIG] at the top center of the menu buttons.

The all-new and totally interactive [XFIG] screen extracts the past-performance lines and sorts them with user-friendly flexibility. It is primarily performance based (PAC-PER and FIG), but many other categories can be chosen such as purse value and layoff that we have never utilized before.

The [XFIG] screen instantly extracts the top-20 running lines that match the selected sort category. The PL modes (such as PL-5) are not part of this process. Instead, all the PP lines are pulled for possible sorting on this display.

1. **Layoff days (Ago column).** Sorts by the most recent races run. The “=” next to the layoff days indicates that this is the horse’s most recent start.
2. **Purse value.** Extracts the top-20 highest purse-value races found in the entire past-performances. Might be useful for locating the highest class races.
3. **rc-PAC-PER.** Sort by the race pace and performance ratings. Helps you uncover the horses exiting the fastest races.
4. **PAC-PER** Sort by the horse’s own PAC and PER ratings. The default sort is the horse’s PER rating. Reminder again, it will extract the top-20 from the entire PP range
5. **FR3** (Third Fraction velocity) is primarily inserted to notice weakness (below 50.00 fps), but could be a key factor by itself with grass/artificial track races.
6. **FIG.** Sorts the screen with the lowest 20 figs sorted on top as lower is better with sheet-style ratings. To accommodate the screen sorting from lowest to highest, horses rated with zero are shown as “99”, meaning they have no rating.
7. **Finish position.** Sort by the horses best finish positions. This might be useful to compare the strength of all the horse’s top efforts.

To toggle the sort, you can use the keyboard or the mouse.

- Clicking the [XFIG] button over and over.
- Hitting the <A> <S> keys over and over. Sort backward and forward respectively.

When you toggle the sort, you’ll notice the header changes with “****” (asterisks) moving across the top. The ‘stars’ indicate which column is being sorted.

In addition, you can use the following **hot keys** with [XFIG]. Press from the keyboard to activate.

<F> This is the cool filter that is used on all HTR past-performance screens and described previously in the section on FIG2. It strips the PPs of incompatible distance and surface lines. When the key is pressed, only those running lines that match today’s surface and distance within 1-furlong will be shown. Also restricts to races run during last 365-days. You’ll know you are in the filter mode as the “F” is shown next to the PL-# in the top header. Toggle the <F> key on/off as much as desired.

<C> Pops-up the Chart for the selected race if you have it available in your current folder.

Easter Eggs (secret hot keys) – this will be revealed and explained at our seminar on July 23, 2008 and later found in the seminar materials if you wish to purchase them from webmaster Rick for \$40.

HTR Software Upgrades
Trainer Report Card (NEW)

The ***Trainer Report Card*** screen is accessed with the picture button located above and next to the ***Light Bulb*** in the right hand corner of the main HTR2 screen.

The ***Trainer Report Card*** utilizes the downloaded Trainer Stats (text) report to display a more organized and understandable data set for superior analysis. Each trainer is graded in several categories. Most trainers, even the best, will have surprising strengths and weaknesses that are revealed on this report.

The downloaded Trainer Stats (text) report is full of great information. But here are some of the problems overcome with the Trainer Report Card →

- The downloaded trainer stats file is a raw text sheet with scratches not removed and the MLO is not shown. The ***Trainer Report Card*** removes scratches and displays a more orderly and comparable list of the trainers with the MLO showing.
- The trainer text stats do not present a benchmark to understand what the raw percentage or ROI data means. For example, the typical trainer wins 12% with claimers, 32% with Favorites and 8% with First-Time-Starters. What does all that mean? The ***Trainer Report Card*** uses a data bank of North American averages in each trainer stat category and grades accordingly A, B, C, D or F. Easy to understand and compare.
- It's difficult to know how many starters make for a viable sample size in each category. The ***Trainer Report Card*** will blank out any category that doesn't meet a certain statistical minimum.
- Interpolation is not possible with raw statistics. The ***Trainer Report Card*** can lead you to many insights about every trainer and teach you much about their operation and how it affects bettors.

Below are the basic stats presented on the ***Trainer Report Card***. This list is subject to additions and changes as the screen evolves. At the seminar we will discuss the new screen in detail and later I'll write up a more comprehensive review of how to use it and understand trainer data from a comprehensive approach.

Barn = lists the average number of horses under the trainer's care during the last 365-days. This is a composite number based on available stats. The stock in trainer's barn can obviously change on a daily basis depending on claims, owner changes, injuries, acquisitions, deaths, etc.

365 = this is the basic grade assigned to the trainer for win consistency in the last 365-days. Our data is rotated and re-calculated daily.

BET = perhaps the most important grade on the sheet. Reveals what the trainer is returning to bettors.

A or **B** = exceeding expectations and returning fair value or even flat bet profits to bettors.

C = average returns to bettors.

D or **F** = the bettors are being shortchanged wagering on this trainer's horses, odds are underlayed.

FAV and **BOMB** = the trainer is graded based on success with tote favorites and longshot (10/1+)

Track the name of today's track is the column header and the trainer is graded on success or failure with horses run at this specific location. **CLASS** the trainer's record with the specific class type for today's race. **AGE** graded only if the horse is age 2yr or 3yr.

I'm out of space and time for this issue. We will talk much more about this screen and how to interpret it at the seminar and later with a PDF information sheet about it. For now, I hope the rest of it is self-explanatory and useful for your trainer handicapping.

*Research and Testing***1st Time Geldings**

3g* = if you spot the (*) after the “g” in any of the HTR2 age listings, this is the indication that the horse is racing for the first time as a gelding, or at least being reported as such by Equibase.

Ouch, the ultimate equipment change (gelded) for a racehorse is removing the male testicles! Most handicappers are surprised to learn that more than 25% of all racehorses in training are geldings. About 65% of all male thoroughbreds are eventually fixed. The primary reason for the surgery is to reduce the amount of testosterone, the masculine hormone. This has a tendency to calm a fractious (horny) colt and prevent various hormone related problems.

Testosterone is also produced in the adrenal glands, so the castration of a male does not always have the desired effect. Some of you may have noticed this with your dogs that neutered as they still may exhibit some funny behavior! Yet most geldings do become more focused and less interested in females so they can keep their mind on racing.

Starting with our files from February 2008, a flag was placed in our data to indicate a male that is now reported as a gelding. As I mentioned in the previous article on the Robot filter for geldings, this is not a 100% sure thing. Some of these are just late reports. But there are a couple of indicators that should get you 99% accuracy with “1st time gelding” →

- Layoff > 30 days is the key indicator and it will almost always disclose that the castration has taken place since the last start. Based on information gathered on the Internet from vets, it takes about a month to fully recover from the surgery. If you spot a new gelding designation on a male with short rest (under 21 days), it is likely that he was castrated earlier.
- Drop in class. There is no turning back from the surgery to take away a horse’s manhood, so a well-bred male that has not been winning will lose value immediately after being gelded. Might as well drop him down and see if he has more interest in racing. Not likely anyone will gamble on a claim right away. Cheaper males, especially chronic losers, can become ‘claim-proof’ after age 5yr as there are few takers until the horse starts winning.

Now let’s look at some stats on the “1st Gelding” as a handicapping factor. I tested all the horses in my database from Feb 1, 2008 – June 30, 2008 that were tagged in our data as 1st Gelding and had been off at least 30-days. You can duplicate this in the Robot version July 2008. 1st Time Starters are *not* counted in this sample. Reminder that the new-gelding indicator was not placed in our files until February of this year, so I can’t run a fully 356-day test on this yet.

1st Gelding 30+ Day Layoff All Races Feb 1, 2008 – June 30, 2008

Item	Plays	Wins	Win%	ITM%	ROI	AvgWin
All	01115	0120	11%	31%	0.76	\$14.10
Maidens	00677	0066	10%	31%	0.59	\$11.70
Non-Maiden	00438	0054	13%	34%	1.01	\$16.50
K=1	00084	0031	37%	76%	1.07	\$05.80
FR1=1	00146	0032	22%	47%	1.29	\$11.80
PAC=1	00141	0034	24%	57%	1.11	\$09.20
WK=1,2	00280	0048	17%	43%	1.14	\$13.30

Analysis

Overall, the new geldings don’t fare very well, but that’s because they are terrible bets in maiden races. Remember, these are *not* FTS. The poor result with maidens is an eye opener and something to remember. The 1st-Geldings in non-maiden races produce flat bet profits and those with early speed or strong workout ratings are excellent bets. K=1 combined with 1st Gelding is a big winner as well.

*Book Review***Bet with the Best II / Longshots DRF Press**

Re: "[Bet with the Best II / Longshots](#)", Beyer, Brohamer, Crist, et al, DRF Press 2008

I think the book sells for \$24.95 at the stores, maybe less on-line at Amazon or DRF. But I have to be honest and tell you that I did not purchase it. Instead I spent an hour reading it at Borders (that's all you need) taking notes and mostly shaking my head that anyone from HTR could benefit from it.

Let me begin by saying --- you don't need this book. Regular HTR customers are far ahead of the learning curve in terms of longshot education. If you read this newsletter regularly, there is nothing here you won't already be using to pick bombs. The problem may be the definition of a "longshot" in their eyes vs. ours (see Brohamer paragraph below).

The book begins with Andy Beyer once again touting the database capabilities of the DRF *Formula-tor*. As though popping up trainer stats was the world's greatest innovation and only *they* have it. He offers no compelling insights or statistics on longshot winners. Ok, I'm cynical, but there's nada here you haven't seen already.

The 2nd chapter is from our old friend and former mentor Tom Brohamer. At least he offers a specific method of selection. Brohamer was always pragmatic and here he describes the "turn back play". This is a horse moving from a route to sprint that ran a strong pace figure at the route. We have documented this one in the newsletter as not very productive for longshots. But Brohamer's definition of a "longshot" is not close to ours at HTR. He states that 6/1 is the typical dividing line for a price play and in this era of shorter fields and heavy favorites, 4/1 is even a good call. The other authors in the book would seem to agree with that assessment, however they would have a lot of trouble competing in tournaments!

The definition of a longshot could be a key distinction as my tests are usually done at 7/1 or more, and often \$20 and up as shown on the Robot. That's because we are often focusing on tournament plays that approach the 'cap' (\$42) or better. Brohamer is more interested in value plays that hit at a higher percentage. There are different strokes for different folks and I can respect that. But the readers of these DRF books would appreciate some solid statistics on these methods and none are presented.

The usual posse of Crist, Davidowitz, Quinn, Watchmaker and Brad Free tow the DRF line and rehash stuff you already knew about. They are all very good writers and know how to recycle 1980s conventional wisdom into every new book. Lauren Stich however is a highlight and her insights into grass pedigree are always interesting reading.

My favorite chapter of the book was written by Alan Shuback a discussion of foreign imports. Interesting that he relates that there is not much value coming from Europe anymore and challenges the reader to look elsewhere around the world for shippers that pay a decent price. South America, Asia and Australia are better opportunities. Now there's some food for thought.

If you want to pick big priced winners, it is counter-productive to "do as the experts say" because 90% of the public is reading the same source material (*Daily Racing Form*), so the prices will be deflated due to common knowledge. The object is to outthink the conventional wisdom with more creative analysis and research – very little of which is presented in this book.

Late Announcements and Reminders

Last Call for the HTR Seminar 2008

We are on schedule for 10am, Wed July 23 at the Gold Coast Hotel in Las Vegas. Our seminar this year promises to be the best ever. Hope you can make it. You are welcome to come at the last minute, reservations are not necessary. If you need more information, check our website or contact me via email: kmssoft@earthlink.net

Tournament News

Congrats to our subscribers that qualified for the NHC last month – Bobby Brendler (Hollywood Park) and Bernardo Weisner (NHC On-Line)

Custom Programming Suspended

I am no longer taking any requests for new custom programming projects and will not normally be able to update or adapt previous custom versions to the latest HTR2 upgrade. The difficulty of re-inserting a custom application into a newer HTR2 version, particularly the current one, is far too complex and time consuming and in many cases impossible. If you have a custom program now, please consider it “as is”, but it should run just fine for many more years.

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HTR Report is an on-line newsletter and is published bi-monthly, then placed on the HTR member (download) web site around the 5th of the 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 web-site archive library.

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HTR Unlimited Download:	\$119/mo unlimited access, all tracks.
HTR Software	Complimentary, no fee for updates.
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