

HTR Report
Thoroughbred Handicapping Newsletter
May / June 2008

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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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*News and Notes***HTR Annual Seminar 2008 / Orleans Tournament Results****HTR Seminar July 23**

We hope 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 collected after you arrive, cash or check. 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. There is no direct profit for HTR, HDW or Ken Massa.

- 10:00 am Seating, Introduction and Handouts
 10:15 am HTR Basics w/ Ken Massa, (K) rating and Vi, Workouts and Pedigree
 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 (see below)
 3:00 pm Tournament Session w/ Mel Moser
 4:00 pm Taxes and Record Keeping w/ Mike Mayo
- 6:00 pm Research Evening Workshop: Massa and Naderman

The afternoon seminar will include the following topics and detailed handout.

- Six key trainer stats that have the most power in predicting live horses
- High impact layoff / workout scenarios (see page 3 this issue)
- PED vs. PER handicapping maidens
- HTR2 Software updates for greater efficiency and focus
- Using the Robot and Modeler to handicap live races (for Thursday's contest).

Much gratitude to this year's speakers and help crew: Donnie, Rick, Ernie, Mel and Mike. Ron Tiller from HDW is expected to attend as well.

Orleans Tourney / HTR Player Results

The Orleans Spring tournament was held April 3-5 in Las Vegas. Great showing from several HTR subscribers, especially Gordon Bergman (3rd) – congrats to all of you listed below for an excellent competition! Typical winning score at the Orleans is around 10,000 points, and this one was no exception with the top five players all over that total and the winner getting the \$90,000 first prize in a photo finish. There were 565 entries this time, which may be a new low for this contest.

<u>HTR Players In-the-Money at the Orleans</u>		
<u>Player</u>	<u>Finish</u>	<u>Cash Prize</u>
Gordon Bergman	3rd*	\$18,000**
David Najar	10th*	\$5,700**
Barbara Buckley	14th*	\$2,800**
Pat Bergman	18th*	\$2,800
Javier Jaramillo	23rd*	\$1,700
Rich Goodall	53rd	\$1,000
Jerry Pagels	62nd	\$600
Bill Hogarth	65th	\$600
Wayne Kwan	74th	\$600

* Receive free qualifier (\$1000) to the Horseplayer World Series 2009

** Also won additional day money prizes

Handicapping with HTR
Fit and Fresh for Route

At the seminar we will be discussing the keys to identifying fit and fresh horses. Training techniques have changed for the better in this modern era of greater drug scrutiny. These include heightened understanding of work/recovery patterns combined with technology for keeping better training records. This gives the computer handicapper a big edge over our fellow bettors who still use 'paper and pencil' methods because they can't quantify this information.

Profits are definitely attainable by looking at the following three factors in unison →

- Route (any surface) 8.0f - 14.0f
- Workout Rating 85+
- Layoff 29+

This is a potent combination for a horse entering a route. It's a signal that the trainer has been patient, given the horse some time to recover from previous races and is training well. Recovery and renewed fitness are the keys to a live effort.

For these tests, races with purses \$10,000 up were used. I used every surface including Turf, Wet Dirt and Artificial in this study. Our object here is to understand how horses are prepared for route races. We will provide a more specific spot play later in this text.

Routes and Layoff and Wk 85+

<u>All Routes</u>	<u>8.0f-14.0f</u>	<u>Purse \$10,000+</u>		<u>Wk 85+</u>	
<u>Layoff Days</u>	<u>Horses</u>	<u>Win%</u>	<u>ITM%</u>	<u>ROI</u>	<u>I.V.</u>
002-010	0337	14%	45%	0.87	1.15
011-020	2523	15%	43%	0.89	1.24
021-028	2518	17%	44%	0.92	1.40
029-065	3029	19%	45%	1.05	1.58
066-165	0560	18%	47%	1.03	1.53
166-999	0343	16%	41%	1.27	1.36

Analysis

There is a lot to talk about from this data. Some of it may transcend your previous beliefs about layoffs and trainer preparation. I sincerely invite you to attend the seminar to get more information from me about this, as we can only touch the surface in a few pages in the newsletter.

Let's remind ourselves that these are routes only, distances 8.0f or more and there is no surface distinction here yet. In addition, these horses also had a workout rating (Wk) of 85 or higher.

The most glaring item from the chart is that shorter layoffs produce the worst results. This includes the win% and Impact Value, not just the ROI. A thoroughbred returning quickly to a route distance will not win as often as those getting more time to rest. More importantly, the quick returnees are bet more heavily and the ROI suffers. Keep in mind that Wk 85+ attached to a horse with a layoff shorter than 20 days has probably not worked since its last outing, and this could indicate a "stale" workout score based on a previous form-cycle.

The results definitely improve with longer layoffs. After a month off or more, a horse's entire workout rating will probably be based on morning drills completed since the last start. This lends confidence to the Wk score and may be a key reason why the results are so clearly positive here.

Handicapping with HTR
Fit and Fresh for Route

We have solid evidence here that thoroughbreds respond to a little extra rest if they also show a concurrent healthy workout pattern. Obviously the Wk rating may be another indicator that the rest has been stimulating. The time off from racing may heal minor injuries, relieve soreness and allow the animal to gain some solid weight back. Not to mention it helps clear the head to have a little more quiet time in the barn without the pressure of race day.

The well-documented modern science of training human athletes has rubbed off on thoroughbred trainers. Unfortunately we are speaking of both drug and non-drug methods here. Where there is money and fame there will be cheating. I doubt anyone is naïve enough to believe that the upcoming Olympics will be free of drug cheats because of announced rigorous testing. They will invent new substances that are not on the detection list. Horse trainers are not all boy scouts either, but there are some positive developments.

Steroids are used as a shortcut to recovery time. They don't enhance performance directly but they allow the athlete to recuperate far more quickly and attain speedy training results. Steroids are not illegal in most states for thoroughbreds (although this is changing) and there is generally no random testing for it. If trainers had found value in steroids, wouldn't it follow that they would be getting quicker results with *less* layoff time? This is a little tricky, and I'll explain at the seminar about why this is more sinister than you might think. For now, it is encouraging that trainers are recognizing the value of some down time and becoming more patient.

Spot Play Development

The data is clear that a layoff over 29-days is profitable with this angle. Let's run it through the Robot with filter settings to match our data. I used the LEARN ALL option to get a list of strengths and weakness.

1. Route Only; **8.0f – 14.0f**
2. Layoff range **30 –365** days (removed layoffs longer than 1 year)
3. Wk Rating **85-95**
4. Purse \$10,000+

All Routes Type	8. 0f-14. 0f Horses	Purse \$10, 000+ Win%	\$10, 000+ ITM%	Wk 85+ ROI	85+ I. V.
All	3625	19%	46%	1. 08	1. 58
\$\$	1692	12%	31%	1. 25	1. 14

Analysis

A positive result overall with flat bet profits (+8%) and it can be enhanced. The \$\$ (double-strength price play) increases the ROI to +25%, probably due to the fact that the '\$\$' horses are restricted to 6/1 minimum MLO.

Turf Routes were the worst performing surface (0.92 ROI) while the Artificial Routes (ROI = 1.40) had the strongest result of any category found on the LEARN ALL report.

If the play is confined to the top trainer, TRN=1, or top early speed, FR1=1, the results are also very profitable and increase the win% considerably.

Interesting that the (K) performed strongest with ranks 5-9. Top ranked (K) ratings did ok with ROI approaching break-even and K=1 hit 37% winners with the play.

The average win payoff for this play was \$11.40 and 91 of the 682 winners paid \$20 or more. The highest priced winner was \$126. So it is a consistent longshot angle as well.

*Handicapping with HTR2***>>>>>The Dashes <<<<<**

This month we are going to go into depth on a rarely covered aspect of the thoroughbred game – the dashes, which are races at 5.0 furlongs or less. The following were researched →

- Baby (2yr) maiden races from 2.0f - 5.0f
- Dashes and Bull Ring races for non-maidens 3up.
- Grass Dashes, 4.5T, 5.0T

Baby 2yr Maiden Races 2.0f – 5.0f

Racing two-year-olds before summer is very controversial. Some of the youngsters have not even reached their actual second birthday when first entered to race. The babies are so green and immature that it seems obvious they are being rushed to the races and they are vulnerable to permanent physical injury.

Looking at the past-performances of the current crop of sophomores contending for the major 3yr Stakes, you'll rarely find one that was initially entered in one of these dashes. The early ones are strictly speed breed and precocious for a few quick scores. The vast majority will become claiming sprinters when they get older.

The early baby races have become a reliable field-filler for the tracks that run them. Let's look at the demographics of these races. Data sample: April 1, 2007 – March 31, 2008. The median field size = 9 runners.

2yr Maiden Dashes 2.0f – 5.0f Fast Dirt or Artificial

<u>Time Period</u>	<u>Races</u>
1st Quarter (Jan, Feb, Mar)	007
2nd Quarter (Apr, May, Jun)	291
3rd Quarter (Jul, Aug, Sep)	396
4th Quarter (Oct, Nov, Dec)	122
	(816)

Tracks that carded at least 20 Maiden Baby Dashes

<u>Track</u>	<u>Races</u>
CRC	076
WO	071
CT	057
EMD	037
GLD	034
NP	032
CD	030
DED	031
DEL	032
HOL	026
AP	023
PRM	021

Favorites/Longshots and Maiden Baby Dashes

The tote favorite won **36%** of these races, which is well above normal for all thoroughbred races; **72%** of the chalk finished 1-2-3 (ITM) and that is also above normal. The 2nd favorites won **20%** of the races, which is normal. Those numbers are actually remarkable for races that feature large fields and a high percentage of first time starters (FTS) and “green” inexperienced and fractious youngsters. Results with favorites indicate distinct talent differences among the entrants who are not really separated by class this early in their racing career. As for longshots, there were 117 winners that paid \$20 or more in the sample of 816 races, or about 14%, which is within the normal range.

Handicapping with HTR2
>>>>>The Dashes >>>>>

2yr Maidens - continued

FYI: all statistics this month are derived from the HTR2' Robot. You can easily verify my stats by using the LEARN ALL and LEARN MORE options and setting the same filters.

Now we'll look at how the various HTR factors performed with the Baby Dashes. Although I didn't specifically remove races with purse under \$10k in this sample, 90% of the maiden dashes in this study had purses that high anyway.

<u>2yr Maiden dashes 2.0f - 5.0f Fast Dirt or Artificial PL-5</u>				
<u>Top Factors in terms of ROI Min 100 Races</u>				
<u>Factor</u>	<u>Horses</u>	<u>Win%</u>	<u>ITM%</u>	<u>ROI</u>
bo	0387	12%	37%	1.06
RS=E	0626	23%	54%	1.05
PED=1	0827	19%	48%	0.96
Fr1=1	0649	24%	59%	0.94
PAC=1, 2	1182	22%	55%	0.93
WK=1, 2	1668	18%	52%	0.92
WK=85+	0134	27%	60%	0.92
PER=1	0677	25%	62%	0.88

other factors of interest

K=1	0818	30%	70%	0.81
K=2	0817	22%	58%	0.82
HTR=1	0834	29%	69%	0.79
PED 450+	1208	17%	45%	0.85
FT>50	0825	16%	42%	0.86
TRN=1	0845	22%	57%	0.86
TRN 400+	0201	21%	52%	0.82

Analysis

The baby races feature about 50% FTS entrants on average. It's important to make a distinction between factors that are applied to all the horses such as PED, TRN, Wk and (K) vs. the ratings that can only be computed after the horse has a race under its belt (Fr1, RS=E, PAC, PER).

The factors that require a past-performance line may have deceptive statistics if most of the other starters are FTS. For example, an entrant can become PER=1 if it is the only horse that has previously raced. Despite that, the ROI is indicative that experience is a major factor as is any indicator of previous early speed such as Fr1.

While blinkers ON produced a high ROI, it was based on a few big bombs. It is the PED=1 that is the key factor for predicting live runners at all prices. The top ranked pedigree, PED=1, produced nearly 20% winners and a close to a positive ROI, proving the value of the rating with unknown FTS.

A workout rating (Wk) that is ranked in the top-2 also helps considerably. Workout ratings tend to be lower for 2yr because they drill at shorter distances. There are very few of these 2yr maidens that are ranked 85 or higher, but if you find one, they are a pretty good bet to be a live runner (60% ITM),

The (K) rating performed above 50% rate for the top-2 as expected, but most of them are too obvious and end up chalk, reducing the ROI to a -19% loss. Important to note that top-4 (K) won 80% of these races even though those ranks represent just 42% of the horses entered, for a strong impact value near 2.00 I.V.

*Handicapping with HTR2***>>>>>The Dashes >>>>>****Bull Rings and other Dashes for Older Non-Maidens**

Many of the non-maiden sprints, at distances less than 5.5f, are run at smaller 'bull-ring' tracks such as Charles Town and Los Alamitos. Handicappers think the horses entered in 4.5f races are cheap and have no class. That may be true, but to compete in these dashes, it takes some aggressive early speed and a little grit to fight it out for the win, as the early tussle is usually furious. There are many converts from the major tracks who have high early speed, but just cannot last 6.0f, so they are transitioned to the 4.5f races. Although some large tracks run these distances for 2yr and maidens, it is rare to see them for older non-maidens. Here are the demographics for the last 365-days in North America.

The statistics below are based on Fast Dirt or Artificial Surfaces only; no wet races were included.

Tracks carding the most 3yr or 3up Non-Maiden 4.0f - 5.0f (fast surfaces)

Track	Races
All	2454
CT	420
LA	295
GLD	199
DED	145
FE	110
MNR	106
PEN	088
TDN	062
EVD	061
FON	057
BEU	056
FL	054

Favorites and Field Size

Most handicappers are not exposed regularly to short sprints outside of 2yr because they tend to stay away from minor tracks and bullrings or night racing. But unlike most other non-maiden dirt races carded in North America, these dashes feature full fields with a median of about 9 horses per race and 10 horse fields are very common. They are a welcome lure for any bettor looking for action.

Favorites won about **35%** of these dashes for non-maidens, and second favorites won about **22%** of them. That is **57%** top-2 for a composite ROI of about 0.83 (-17%); making it tough for price shoppers to net a profit with so much winning chalk.

K rating finds overlays.

Factor	4.0f - 5.0f Non-Maiden	Non-2yr	Fast Dirt or Artificial	PL-5
	Horses	Win%	ITM%	ROI
K=1	2454	33%	67%	0.92
K=2	2454	22%	58%	0.89
K110	0805	42%	78%	0.94

Analysis

The highest (K) win slightly fewer races than the favorites. Yet the ROI is considerably better. What causes this ROI discrepancy, which is commonly found between K=1 and the favorite when you run tests with the Robot? The short answer is that the public makes more mistakes than the (K) in terms of predicting overlays. Almost all favorites are over bet and very few are worth their odds. But the (K) can find a modest number of winners at fair value that the public misses. These short dashes produce many more of those value plays than most other types of thoroughbred races. And the best K=1 horses (K110+) are even better bets (ROI = 0.94).

Handicapping with HTR2
>>>>>The Dashes >>>>>

HTR Factors w/ Short Sprints for Non-Maidens

The (K) rating does great with the short dashes and finds many overlays and most of the contenders. Let's look at other factors in the HTR-Software that portend winners and possible profit in the non-maiden dashes →

Non-Maiden dashes 3yr/3up 2.0f - 5.0f Fast Dirt or Artificial PL-5				
Top Factors in terms of ROI Min 100 Races				
Factor	Horses	Win%	ITM%	ROI
HTR=2	2510	22%	54%	0.99
bo	0203	12%	36%	0.96
FC 85+	0602	25%	55%	0.95
FC=1	0649	24%	53%	0.94
EP=1or2	4901	22%	52%	0.92
PAC=1	2773	23%	54%	0.91
FR1=1	2457	22%	53%	0.90

Analysis

It's a mixed bag on ROI performance in these races with HTR factors. As previously discussed, we are aware that favorites win a large share of these events and that the public is no doubt leaning toward horses with early speed. Yet, the early speed factors (EP, PAC and FR1) hold their profits and show results that are better than we would get if testing 6.0f races at major tracks in a similar sample. The HTR-Consensus rank=2 (HTR=2) had the best return of any item and may reveal that the public is over betting the more obvious top choices and allowing a reasonable contender or second-choice odds to rise into some value.

The FC rating was a nice surprise here and tells us that the public is missing some aspect of overall speed in their handicapping of the dashes.

The Turf Dashes

Now we'll look at the 'grass dash' – those races carded on turf for distances of 5.0f and under. Here are the demographics by track. No filters applied, these were all races run in North America during the last 365-days at distances 4.0f - 5.0f on grass. It's a diverse and interesting mix of locations that are now carding these quickies on the turf and their popularity is growing with race bettors and trainers alike.

All Grass Dashes; 4.0-5.0f	
Track	Races
All	0779
CRC	059
PHA	052
PIM	047
GP	045
RET	041
LS	041
CNL	036
PEN	036
RP	034
TUP	034
LAD	033
AP	029
TAM	029
SUF	028
HOU	024
CD	022
DMR	019

Handicapping with HTR2
>>>>>The Dashes >>>>>

Grass Dashes --- continued

The average field size for these races is over 9 horses per race, with 10 entrants being very common. The favorites won just below normal at 32% and second favorites won 21%. Longshots win at slightly higher levels and the average mutuel was \$13.60. The top-2 (K) hit just 49% winners with a terrible ROI. But other HTR factors were extremely effective at predicting outcomes of these races and producing profit →

Short Turf Sprints 4.0f – 5.0f		All Race Types	PL-5	
Factor	Horses	Win%	ITM%	ROI
T+J> 30	0318	23%	50%	1.21
E/P=1	0780	24%	51%	1.16
\$\$	0936	10%	32%	1.05
JKY 350+	0420	23%	53%	1.05
FR1=1	0780	19%	44%	1.04
A/P=1	0779	24%	55%	1.00

Analysis

Money can definitely be made with the grass dashes. The two keys are jockey and early speed. It is surprising to see high percentage jockey factors with substantial ROI. This is evidence that these races do not suffer the heavy betting that is common with dirt sprints and popular riders. E/P and Fr1 did very well and it should be noted that the win rates are not any higher than dirt or artificial sprints, so the profitable ROI stems from public confusion, overlays and predictable longshot play.

Summary

The quick sprints are becoming more popular and increasing in numbers. Racing secretaries love them because they always fill. Fans seem to enjoy the fast and furious nature of the races and the more volatile outcomes, particularly with the grass dashes.

E/P and Distance

To end this discussion of the short sprints, take a look at the table below. It shows you the Win%, Impact Value and ROI for the entire range of distances using E/P = 1 (2nd Call Velocity top rank). Common sense dictates that the top E/P rank should have diminishing impact as distance increase. Yet we know from experience that ROI does not always line up so neatly. Take a look →

E/P=1	All Races	PL-5			
Distance	Win%	ITM%	ROI	I.V.	
2.0-5.0f	25%	56%	0.95	2.01	
5.5f	23%	54%	0.90	1.88	
6.0f	22%	51%	0.85	1.77	
6.5f	21%	50%	0.89	1.74	
7.0-7.5f	19%	47%	0.84	1.62	
8.0-8.3f	19%	47%	0.87	1.51	
8.5f	17%	45%	0.83	1.44	
9.0-9.5f	18%	47%	0.82	1.50	
10.0-14.0f	13%	40%	0.74	1.07	

Analysis

For once the conventional wisdom is right. As distances increase, the impact of early speed decreases. But earning profits (ROI) is not always as easy. For example, 6.5f races produce a far better ROI than the shorter 6.0f races do if using E/P=1. Separation by surface and class levels would result in an entirely different ROI profile as well. Still, the relationship between early speed and distance is neatly correlated on this chart and that says something about the continued predictability and even the overall honesty of the game.

Longshots and Tournaments Plays
Rick's Longshot Chart / \$\$ by Track

Webmaster Rick regularly posts a "Longshot Chart" that lists the tracks by percentage of high-priced winners. Here are the top-12 and the bottom-6 tracks according to his chart. The top group generally has a 22% or higher rate of winners with horses paying \$17 or more and the bottom ones typically hit under 15% for the same horses.

<u>Longshot%</u>	<u>Raw Win Data</u>
<u>Top Dozen</u>	<u>Worst-6</u>
PID*	BOI
BRD	DEL
KEE*	BM
WO*	CLS
TAM	LNN
FMT	MTH
DMR*	
IND	
EVD	
AP*	
SAR	
SA*	

* All weather / Artificial Surface

Analysis

The chart above is based on raw stats and could be considered cyclical or even correlated with average field size. Notice the bottom feeders such as DEL, BM and MTH had average fields of around 6-horses per race, tough to produce price winners without any competition. But the most glaring piece of information from Rick's chart is the emergence of the Artificial tracks dominating the list.

Now let's examine a prediction method (\$\$) from HTR to compare whether these locations can be exploited. The "\$\$" horses are assigned to ML 6/1 and up only and is based on two or more key factors that tend to produce longshots.

Top (\$\$) Tracks by ROI – All Races – Minimum 100 \$\$ Plays Last 365-Days

<u>Top-Dozen (ROI)</u>	<u>Bottom-6</u>
GLD (1.27)	TUP (0.66)
*KEE (1.22)	TDN (0.70)
LA (1.19)	HOL (0.71)
RET (1.15)	GP (0.72)
*PID (1.12)	SR (0.73)
NP (1.11)	**MTH (0.73)
*AP (1.08)	
FPX (1.07)	
ALB (1.06)	
ZIA (1.06)	
AQU (1.05)	
*DMR (1.05)	
**BM (1.05)	

* On Rick's Longshot Chart Top-12

** On Rick's Longshot Chart Bottom-6

Analysis

The win rate at most tracks falls between 9%-12% with "\$\$". Interesting that BM, a track with hardly any horses and seemingly few longshots, shows a flat bet profit with the "\$\$" runners! We see four key matches on both charts though, PID, KEE, AP and DMR, all of which are Artificial tracks. Only MTH gets the double-bogey by matching on both bottom lists.

*Book Review***Freedom's Rein / the Autobiography of Shane Sellers**

I don't think you'll find this book on Amazon or the local bookstore. It is currently only sold through the Internet site: www.freedomsrein.com by the author and his wife. Someone sent me this link and I was taken by the photos on the homepage and ordered the book immediately. Former Jockey great Shane Sellers is the listed author along with a writer co-author. The book has a handsome jacket, but the print type and writing style are not professional and it is evident that the book is self-published. But it is an excellent read for any horseracing fan and I highly recommend it.

The book's prologue starts with this: "Do you know what it's like for your body to cannibalize its own organs? For you to deprive your body of food for so long that it retaliates by eating itself?" That fore-shadows how Sellers deals with every topic in this book, blatant and openly honest.

Shane Sellers was born in 1966. He begins his biography with his humble childhood in southern Louisiana and his relationship with a dominating, abusive father. But it was his forceful dad that got him going as a kid with riding racehorses and during his 'education' he relates why so many great riders are from Cajun country.

Shane loved horses and racing from the very beginning and his small frame and passion enabled him to become a rider at a young age. But weight was a persistent problem and his descriptions of how jocks fight their weight on a daily basis (flipping and sweating and starving) is graphic. He also paints a colorful picture of life at the Louisiana tracks Delta and Evangeline, where he claims that all the jocks used the 'buzzer' in his time there!

Sellers never won a Triple Crown race. He rode in them many times and won a couple of Breeder's Cup events. He spent most of his jockey years at tracks in the Midwest and rode major stakes on both coasts on many occasions including winning with the great *Skip Away*. He won more than 4,000 races in over 25 years of riding and retired in 2004 due to injuries, weight and discouragement about the poor treatment of riders.

Many topics are covered in the book that are controversial to this day. These include →

- Jockey weight, the physical toll it takes to keep it off and the futile fight to raise weights so riders don't have to use barbaric methods to keep off the pounds.
- Lack of fair pay and medical insurance for riders who are considered independent contractors by the tracks and owners. The fight to get protection for injured jocks. The inevitable injuries that force so many riders into poverty, drug abuse and worse.
- The fight to allow jockeys to promote products for a little extra income or wear advertising gear while racing.

There is no doubt that Shane Sellers loves to ride horses and cares about the sport like few other have been able to relate. The ups and downs and joys of winning are also part of this interesting book. His relationships with other jocks and the interesting sub-culture they inhabit, is explored as well. There are no handicapping secrets in here, but if you are like me, you'll find the book a page-turner and a very worthwhile addition to your knowledge and interest in horseracing for \$25 + shipping.

FYI: Shane Sellers was one of the subjects in the Emmy nominated documentary "Jockey" which was shown on HBO. Here is a link: www.hbo.com/docs/programs/jockey/index.html

Late Announcements and Reminders

Seminar Reservations

You can call the Gold Coast for room reservations at 1-800-331-5334 or go online at <http://www.goldcoastcasino.com>. Rooms for the night of the seminar Tues or Wed are very inexpensive and if you are entering the Gold Coast contest the next day, you'll get a player's rate.

Tournament News

Congrats to Henry Damgaard (VA) and Mel Moser (KY) for again qualifying for the NHC. Mel finished 3rd at the Ellis Park tourney and Henry got his spot by finishing 3rd on the NHC Qualify on-line contest. The two are partners at all the major contests and have become formidable tournament challengers every time they compete. They join Sally and Richard Goodall as the first four HTR subscribers to earn a slot at the NHC 2009.

HTR Triple Crown On-Line Contest

We had 9 winners and 38 qualifiers moving on to compete in the second round at the Preakness on May 17. This happened because the majority of players used Derby winner Big Brown as a selection. The top-10 finishers (plus ties) in the Preakness round will advance to the final round at the Belmont and the final round winner will get a free entry at the Gold Coast tourney. Good luck!

HTR Software

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