

***HTR Report***  
**Thoroughbred Handicapping Newsletter**  
**Sept/Oct 2010**

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Horse Racing Technology and Research

Contents

[1] Front Page	
[2] Seminar 2010	<i>Annual Seminar Wrap Up</i>
[3] Tournament Tips	<i>The 'Outlook' and Longshots</i>
[5] HTR_Tour Handicapping	<i>ML Favorite Stats Pace Scenarios and Longshot ID</i>
[7] Research and Spot Plays	<i>The Endless Show Parlay?</i>
[9] Updates	<i>On Demand Expanded</i>
[10] HTR Software	<i>Hot Keys and Easter Eggs</i>
[11] Book Review	<i>“Lay the Favorite”</i>
[12] Back Page	<i>Late News and Information</i>

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*Seminar 2010*  
**Annual Seminar – Wrap Up**

A Short History of the HTR Seminar

The annual HTR seminar was held on July 28 at the Gold Coast in Las Vegas. This was our 5th consecutive year at the Gold Coast and we have held at least a dozen seminars in Las Vegas starting in 1996 at the Stardust. In the mid-1990s, Las Vegas sports books began to convert from house wagers to pari-mutuel action. Robert Walker, a long-time client of HTR, was at that time the race & sports manager of the legendary Stardust book. He invited us to hold a seminar for the public and to create a daily handout for his patrons. This relationship was highly beneficial for both of us. We held our last seminar at the Stardust in 2004, the handout continued until the Stardust closed in late 2006. The hotel and casino have been demolished but a planned new resort has yet to be built.

We had a large turnout at this year's event. At least 60 people attended all or part of the seminar and we had a lot of new information to discuss. Our 2010 Seminar E-Book has all of the details, so be sure to order your copy from webmaster Rick -- click the link below for information and instant access. The HTR Discussion Forum also has a separate section with photos and stories from the seminar.

<http://www.homebased2.com/km/SeminarEbook.htm>

The Future of the HTR Seminar

While at the Gold Coast tournament I spoke with Bob Scucci and Carol Boyd. Bob is the top man for Coast Casinos Race & Sport and Carol is the manager at the Gold Coast book. We talked about the excellent turnout for our seminar and they seemed optimistic that we could return. That would depend entirely on the Gold Coast rescheduling their contest next summer though. It is no sure thing that the summer tournament will continue, but they did seem satisfied with the outcome in light of all of the difficulties affecting horse racing, including the economy and tournament declines in general.

If you would like to read more about our previous annual seminars, visit the HTR Library and the newsletter archives. The seminar summaries can be found in the summer editions.

New Developments

Seminar attendees often praise the continuous updates and innovations with HTR each year. This is especially important in light of the difficulty of staying ahead of the game in an era of rapidly changing information technology. It is a challenge to create new ratings and methods, but it must be done. All serious horse bettors are involved with data analysis these days. "Swimming with the sharks" is almost an understatement in the business of gambling for profit with sports and horses. Prices are deflating while the percentage of favorites and lower odds winners is rising. Hard core horseplayers are slashing value and hammering obvious picks with abandon. The issue is not your ability to pick winners anymore, but to locate glaring betting mistakes by your fellow players. This is a new paradigm that is difficult to handle for many old-school horse bettors.

One of our areas of focus for 2011 will be 'chalk-busting' or identifying beatable low-odds horses. We discussed this in some detail in our morning session at the seminar this year, and you can read the notes in the E-Book. HTR has moved knee-deep into the realm of negative factor identification. The negatives are the key to locating beatable favorites. So 2011 will set in motion new tools for this purpose.

Thanks for sticking with HTR and for attending the seminar and reading the E-Book. Your support, encouragement and suggestions are much appreciated.

## Tournament Strategy

**'Outlook' for Tournament and Longshot Play**

As any tournament player knows, the focus is on hitting horses with odds that push the point totals up in a hurry. There are two key questions to ask during the pre-race assessment =

1. Which categories of races can be identified to produce the most high-priced winners?
2. How predictable are the factors in HTR for locating these plum winners?

Let's start by looking at Outlook categories from the Tour program. In these tests, we record the total number of races in each category and then look at how many of those races were won by horses at odds that were 8/1 or more (% shown in parenthesis). Finally we record the number of those 8/1 up winners that were 'predictable' based on being identified by the "\$\$", Tour or Bomb designations in HTR. The final ( ) tells us what percentage of the longshot winners we could have reasonably identified in HTR. Let's look at the numbers first and then explain the data and analyze the results below.

<b>Purse \$10,000+</b>	<b>All Races Aug 1, 2009 - July 31, 2010</b>				
<b>Item</b>	<b>Races</b>	<b>8/1 up Winners</b>		<b>Predictable</b>	<b>Avg Win</b>
<b>ALL</b>	<b>35747</b>	<b>5760</b>	<b>(16%)</b>	<b>2493 (43%)</b>	<b>\$12</b>
<b>Very Chalky</b>	<b>03630</b>	<b>0327</b>	<b>(09%)</b>	<b>0135 (41%)</b>	<b>\$9</b>
<b>Chalky</b>	<b>10296</b>	<b>1171</b>	<b>(11%)</b>	<b>0575 (49%)</b>	<b>\$10</b>
<b>Mixed</b>	<b>08619</b>	<b>1462</b>	<b>(17%)</b>	<b>0645 (44%)</b>	<b>\$12</b>
<b>Value</b>	<b>07964</b>	<b>1577</b>	<b>(19%)</b>	<b>0618 (39%)</b>	<b>\$14</b>
<b>Wide Open</b>	<b>04301</b>	<b>0990</b>	<b>(23%)</b>	<b>0426 (43%)</b>	<b>\$15</b>
<b>Bombs Away</b>	<b>00937</b>	<b>0233</b>	<b>(25%)</b>	<b>0094 (48%)</b>	<b>\$17</b>

Analysis

This is a new format of data for all of you, so let's explain it carefully so that you will understand the importance of this information. First look at the ALL category. There were 35,747 races tested. Of those, 5,760 were won by horses at odds of 8/1 or more (paying \$18+ to Win). This means that the normal rate for 'longshots' in North America, as defined by odds 8/1 up, is about 16%. In other words, 16% or about 1 of every 6 races is won by a horse paying \$18 or more. The average Win payoff for all races is \$12.20.

Continuing with the 'ALL' group - the "Predictable" category looked at how many of the 8/1+ winners were tagged by the "Tour", "Bomb" and/or "\$\$" markings in HTR. It is not enough to know that certain types of races produce more or less longshot winners; the real issue for handicappers is whether we can realistically locate them. The "Tour", "Bomb", "\$\$" were able to pick up about 43% of these longshot winners - that is a very promising statistic.

Now let's look at each individual category. First a reminder that many "Tour", "Bomb" and "\$\$" horses win and pay less than 8/1 odds. So don't confuse the numbers above with the overall impact of these ratings. Keep in mind that those paying \$18 or more are the sole focus of this research.

Very Chalky

As expected, these races produce the lowest rate of longshot winners (just 9%) and have the smallest average Win price (\$9). Favorites dominate the "Very Chalky" category and it is tough for price horses to break through. The prediction rate of 41% is not bad, but notice that just 135 "Tour", "Bomb" and "\$\$" designees were able to score at odds of 8/1 or more in the "Very Chalky" category from 3,630 races.

Chalky

Chalky is the most common category on the 'Outlook'. When combined with "Very Chalky" the represent some 39% of all races. Makes sense in light of the overall rate of winning favorites at over 35%. About 11% of the "Chalky" races are won by horses at odds of 8/1 up. These are slightly better results than the "Very Chalky" category (9%), but well below the normal rate of 16%. So it is tough for longshots to get a win in a "Chalky" event. Interesting stat here is the 49% 'predictable' outcome. This was the highest of all the categories.

*Tournament Strategy***'Outlook' for Tournament and Longshot Play (continued)**Mixed

This group produces a level of longshots and predictability that nearly matches the "ALL" results. It is quite a break from the "Chalky" groups at this point with 17% of the races being won by horses at 8/1 or more. Clear separation on the chart starts here.

Value

The average winner in "Value" race pays above \$14 to Win and nearly 20% of the winners are horses with odds greater than 8/1. That's the good news. However, it is curious that this is the category with the least predictability with the "\$\$" and Tour/Bomb picks. The only way I can account for this is that many of the "Value" races are maiden events and they produce FTS and other surprise longshots that are difficult to tag with the software.

Wide Open

These races live up to their reputation and feature 23% winners that pay above 8/1. The HTR longshot identifiers do an excellent job of picking them up with 43% of them tagged with "Tour, Bomb" and/or "\$\$". Confidence is high for a good gamble if you encounter a "Wide Open" race in the contest.

Bombs Away

There aren't many of these, under a 1000 races in a sample of 35,000+, but they have unique characteristics that produce the highest percentage of longshot winners and have strong predictability with the HTR factors. The average winner pays more than \$17 in these races, so they are prime territory for taking a stab.

Summary

Obviously, if you have optional plays in a tournament and are looking to maximize the chances for a big hit, you will stay away from the "Chalky" categories. The "Outlook' is a reliable prognosticator for contest play or for hunting live prices. The statistics are clear in terms of separation for 'Outlook' race types with a tendency to pay \$18 or more.

For a handicapper, it isn't enough to just expect a longshot winner in certain types of races. The real issue is whether we can actually target them. That's why the chart on page-3 is so useful. The 'Predictable' column helps us to understand that HTR is very effective at locating many of the price plays with our longshot identifiers (\$\$, Tour, Bomb). Those are not the only factors in the software that can uncover a longshot though. Do your homework with Robot2 or the Export and set an odds range 8/1 up to find out what the high-priced winners have in common at individual tracks.

On the next two pages, we'll follow up with some additional tests using the other header items from the HTR\_Tour report.

*Handicapping with HTR\_Tour***Longshots and the HTR Tour Header - ML Favorites**

Next we'll look at two charts similar to the one on page-3. The other two header items on the HTR\_Tour are the 'ML Favorite' designator and the 'Probable Pace' predictor. Let's find out how valuable they are in terms of longshot prediction and the HTR factors.

ML Favorite Designate

The purpose of the 'ML Favorite' header is to give the handicapper a heads up on the strength of the morning-line choice. The overwhelming majority of ML Favorites also become the public betting choice and the ML Favorites are critical to the betting on the horizontal exotic wagers (Daily Double, PickX).

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Guessing right about the vulnerability or strength of the favorite is the single most important decision you make as a handicapper. That is why HTR expends a lot of its resources on predicting this outcome.

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Purse \$10,000+	All Races Aug 1, 2009 - July 31, 2010			
Item	Races	8/1 up Winners	Predictable	Avg Win
ALL	35747	5760 (16%)	2493 (43%)	\$12
Dominant	01419	0186 (13%)	0078 (42%)	\$10
Solid	06023	0873 (14%)	0375 (43%)	\$11
Legit	12099	1973 (16%)	0865 (44%)	\$12
Vulnerable	09308	1557 (17%)	0696 (45%)	\$13
Very Vulnerable	06898	1171 (17%)	0479 (41%)	\$13

Analysis

Statistically, the ML Favorite categories are accurate in terms of predicting the strength and weakness of the morning line choice. However, as the chart reveals, this does not necessarily produce any appreciable gain in longshot winner impact. The main reason for this is that the "ML Favorite" designation is only focusing on one horse - the ML Favorite. The 'Outlook' considers the entire field. So even if the ML Favorite is vulnerable, it does not indicate that the other low odds contenders have a reduced chance of winning. The 'Outlook' is still extremely accurate even if the favorite is vulnerable. In fact, it may be a strong signal that the 2nd betting choice offers some value.

As sometimes happens, the 'Outlook' is "Chalky" but the ML Favorite is listed as "Vulnerable". This is not a contradiction if there are other contenders at low odds with a decent shot to win the race. Many of the iffy favorites are also spotted by the public and are not sent off as final betting choice.

We do see some evidence from the statistics above that "Vulnerable" and "Very Vulnerable" ML Favorites mildly increase our chances with a longshot. So now we'll combine our two best 'Outlook' categories with the weakest ML Favorites and see if we can peak the output of winners paying over 8/1 odds.

On the data chart below, the item "Spot Races" refers to =

- Outlook = Wide Open, Bombs Away
- ML Favorite = Vulnerable, Very Vulnerable

Purse \$10,000+	All Races Aug 1, 2009 - July 31, 2010			
Item	Races	8/1 up Winners	Predictable	Avg Win
ALL	35747	5760 (16%)	2493 (43%)	\$12
Spot Races	03998	0928 (23%)	0078 (42%)	\$14

Analysis

A good result, but it does not improve longshot impact vs. using the 'Outlook' items alone (see page-3). The data did reveal that these race types reduce winning favorites to 26% and just 56% of them finish ITM, so they return a lot of good exactas and trifectas with the chalk knocked out.

*Handicapping with HTR\_Tour*  
**Longshots and the Predicted Pace**

Let's look at one final aspect to race prediction and longshots with the data from the previous pages - the projected "Pace" scenario. There are five predicted pace scenarios found on the HTR\_TOUR screen (and the KM screen in HTR2) --

1. **Lone Speed:** a single horse is likely to control the pace, possibly without pressure
2. **Hot:** there are several horses that may want the lead and the pace is expected to be rapid
3. **Fast:** two or three horses expected to contend for the front and the pace may be hurried
4. **Normal:** pace setup looks normal with one or two logical pacesetters; average fractions
5. **Slow:** None of the horse in this race wants the front, early fractions should be slow

Pace prediction is based on previous running style and Quirin Speed Points. Unfortunately it is a very inexact science and our best guesses as to speed duels or lone speed do not pan out as often as we would expect. Even in an apparent "Hot" or "Fast" pace, a single horse (*speed of the speed*) can dominate. Jockeys will often improvise according to the gate break and post-position and trainers will tell them to try a new tactic. This can result in an entirely different pace dynamic than was anticipated on paper.

With the uncertainty of pace prediction in mind, we will look at the Tour 'Pace' categories to locate any scenarios for improving longshot productivity.

Purse \$10,000+	All Races Aug 1, 2009 - July 31, 2010				
Item	Races	8/1 up	Winners	Predictable	Avg Win
ALL	35747	5760	(16%)	2493 (43%)	\$12
Lone Speed	04004	0594	(15%)	0232 (39%)	\$12
Hot	00913	0188	(21%)	0101 (53%)	\$14
Fast	06706	1201	(18%)	0567 (47%)	\$13
Normal	15719	2540	(16%)	1069 (42%)	\$12
Slow	08405	1237	(15%)	0524 (42%)	\$12

Analysis

There is some food for thought here. The "Hot" category has very limited data, but clearly offers the highest probability for a longshot winner. The "Predictable" HTR factors (\$\$, Tour, Bomb) pick up more than 50% of these winners in "Hot" races. The "Fast" category also has above average statistics for longshots. It may be that a contested pace tends to produce more surprises.

The "Lone Speed" group has disappointing numbers for longshot players. This may be a result of the public's ability to spot the obvious front runner and bet them down. The other categories ("Normal" and "Slow") had average expectations with no apparent advantage or disadvantage.

Next test we'll combine the "Hot" and "Fast" 'Pace' categories with the 'Outlook' = "Wide Open" and "Bombs Away". Those categories comprise the "Spot Races" in the data below. We are looking again to maximize the advantage with longshots.

Purse \$10,000+	All Races Aug 1, 2009 - July 31, 2010				
Item	Races	8/1 up	Winners	Predictable	Avg Win
ALL	35747	5760	(16%)	2493 (43%)	\$12
Spot Races	01191	0290	(24%)	0141 (48%)	\$16

Analysis

This is encouraging data. Here we combined the most beneficial 'Outlook' and 'Pace' situations for longshots and pushed the probability way up for hitting a fat price. HTR longshot factors (\$\$, Tour, Bomb) latch on to nearly half of these winners.

*Research and Data Testing*  
**The Endless Show Parlay**

Bill Ulrich ("completebill"), who has generously submitted some of his best spot plays for our 2010 E-Book as well as on the HTR Discussion Board, was issued an impossible challenge from me last month. I asked him to come up with a spot play - with at least 30 plays per month - that would produce 100% ITM (In-The-Money, 1-2-3 finish). He replied that he would give it a try and that if he succeeded, "it would become the first ever infinite winning Show Parlay!" Exactly right, we would never lose again, even if they all paid \$2.10, who cares. In fact, the heck with the Show Parlay, we would make more money as 'bridge jumpers' betting huge amounts to Show and never worrying about a run out.

Incredibly, he came darn close to accomplishing the 100% ITM. I just ran his play on the last 365-days and it hit 94% ITM with about a 400 play sample (1.04 ROI). His initial test caught 96% to Show. Bill's spot play is highly refined in order to push ITM% to its most extreme. You can get this spot play in the HTR Subscriber Zone at this link. Download 777.HSP and run Robot2 'Spot Play Desktop' to view it.

[http://htr.horsedata.com/HTR\\_Protected/dnl/777.HSP](http://htr.horsedata.com/HTR_Protected/dnl/777.HSP)

For our purposes in this newsletter, we want to learn the basic process of how to produce a very high hit rate for 1-2-3 finishers. We'll also discuss the merits of betting to Show, Show Parlays and the limits of our data prediction ability at the end of the article.

We start with some basics and then evolve our play to higher levels of results. This process is important to learn as it is the fundamental methodology for uncovering profit and impact with the Robot. Begin with the following factors that are well documented producers in HTR for high hit rates.

- **Race 'Outlook' = Very Chalky, Chalky**
- **K=1**
- **K 110+**
- **HTR=1**
- **KMS = 1**
- **ML 5/2 or less**

Note the KMS=1 addition. The KMS rating has been part of HTR2 only since July 2010 and it should prove to be a strong solidifying factor in your spot plays. Let's look at the results of our basic play so far.

**Plays = 4,223**  
**Win = 48% (Win ROI = 0.90)**  
**ITM = 83% (Show ROI = 0.94)**

Over 4000 races, that's a healthy sample size to start our research. We need to push up the 83% ITM and the ROI by applying some additional filters. First thing to do is look over the items on the Tour test report. These horses are obviously highly rated with both K=1 and HTR=1 and generally have zero negatives, so there was really nothing to eliminate with negative items. However, the B#= 3+ (Buzz = 3 items or more) did pump up the numbers quite a bit. Here is the result with "B#= 3+" added.

**Plays = 2,421**  
**Win = 52% (Win ROI = 0.92)**  
**ITM = 85% (Show ROI = 0.95)**

We are getting closer to a reasonable goal of 90% ITM. The 52% Win rate is a powerful statistic considering this sample has over 2400 races. Next, the play is tested with Learn All/More and see if there is anything else we can use to increase the hit rate. Right now, here are the only filters.

**K=1, K 110+, HTR=1, KMS=1, Very Chalky/Chalky, ML < 3/1, B#= 3+.**

*Research and Data Testing*  
**The Endless Show Parlay**

After looking over the Learn All report it appears that Fr1= 1 is the most significant catalyst. Below are the spot play results after adding Fr1= 1.

**Plays = 1,117**  
**Win = 56% (Win ROI = 0.98)**  
**ITM = 88% (Show ROI = 0.99)**

Outstanding results and still holding at well over 1000 plays and the win rate and ITM are going up. I see one final filter that will push the result over the 90% ITM without killing the play count or having to cut with individual track selection: **VI 38-50**. When the VI filter is applied, these are the final results of the spot play.

**Plays = 725**  
**Win = 58% (Win ROI = 0.99)**  
**ITM = 91% (Show ROI = 1.00)**

Is this a legitimate research effort for profit or just an intellectual exercise? Doesn't matter, it was the process that mattered. There is something to gain every time we test, adjust and retest. Remember the old saying: "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" The answer: practice, practice, practice!

Show Parlay

The odds of hitting Show parlays with an 87% ITM hit rate is shown below. We start the parlay with a \$20 wager and anticipate an average Show payoff of \$2.30.

<u>Races</u>	<u>Prob. of Success</u>	<u>Return w/ \$20 Bet</u>
2	76%	\$26
3	66%	\$29
4	57%	\$33
5	50%	\$38
6	43%	\$43
7	38%	\$49

Analysis

It doesn't take long to see the math on this. The 5-race parlay will hit 50% of the time, but only returns about \$38 for \$20; a small loss. In order for the parlay to turn a profit we need to hit at least one Show payoff in the sequence that exceeds \$2.30. Breakage is obviously a major issue with Show betting and it may be beneficial to play Show parlays in a state like NY with a 10-cent breakage.

Prediction Limits

This exercise in data manipulation has taught us some lessons. The most important thing learned may be that our realistic ability to predict the outcome of horse races is limited by random luck and the physical unpredictability of fragile racehorses. We extracted the most potent factors found in HTR and combined them, yet the Win rate never exceeded 60%. It seems incredible that 40-50% of the dominant horses we isolated, usually prohibitive favorites -- will lose. Add on a high takeout and it is a daunting task to realize a profit.

On the other hand, despite all of the obstacles and drawbacks with betting low-odds horses to Win or Show, the Robot plugged away and pushed the results toward profitability. In the daily pari-mutuel war, the most successful players will be those that are ruthless in their drive to uncover an edge. Therein lies the fundamental advantage with Robot2, it just keeps humming. No quitting, no excuses, never tired.

Thanks again to Bill Ulrich for sharing his spot plays and results.

*Software Updates*  
**HTR Tour Expands 'On Demand'**

**Maxvel 2010**

MaxVel software will be updated with the next newsletter in November - after the Breeder's Cup Nov 6.

**HTR2 and Robot2**

These two have no upgrades scheduled until January.

**HTR TOUR**

If you like the *On Demand* button on the HTR\_Tour program, you'll appreciate this new addition. All of the *On Demand* selections are now part of the second panel. You'll see an "ON" column and the point totals for the On Demand picks will appear there. You can get this HTR\_Tour update (Sept 7, 2010) from the HTR2 home-page.

**How On Demand is Computed**

*On Demand* computes a score using the Negatives and Buzz items from the Tour screen. These are the only factors used. The output is then segregated by ML groups. The horse with the highest point total in each ML category is then chosen for *On Demand*.

**Solid Tournament Pick** - ML 7/2 - 7/1 (if *not* ML rank = 1,2)

**Alternate Tournament Pick** - ML 8/1 - 14/1 (if *not* ML rank 1,2,3)

**Bomb or Desperation Pick** - ML 15/1 - 30/1 (if *not* ML rank 1,2,3,4)

**Single or Key Horse** - ML Favorite rank =1,2 and ML 3/1 or less.

This methodology is unique to HTR and has several interesting features.

1. The "\$\$", "Tour" and "Bomb" often match one of the *On Demand* picks, but not always. The *On Demand* selections use an entirely separate methodology. This does not mean that one method is superior to the other - just different criteria.
2. There is always just one horse chosen by *On Demand* in each of the ML categories (above). Those selected have scored the highest number of points in their odds category. For example, if there are two or more horses in the race with ML 5/1 or 6/1, the one selected by *On Demand* is considered the best of that group. There is also a pre-set minimum number of points necessary to be selected. If none of the horses reaches this total, then none of them are picked.
3. The higher the point total, the greater the probability of winning. Those horses selected with *On Demand* that are rated above 70, will have significant positives on the Tour screen and the most likely to be "live" at any odds. Those rated below 65 are slightly weaker picks, but may still represent good value if the final odds are above 8/1.

Maybe we will test the *On Demand* picks in a future newsletter and possibly add the item to Robot2. Or maybe we won't. Many HTR members have told me that they would prefer that *On Demand* remain quiet. I welcome your feedback on this.

*Handicapping with HTR***List of Hot Keys found in HTR Software Programs**

Over the years, HTR software has added various "Hot-Keys" or "Easter Eggs". These are keystrokes that trigger something to happen on the screen. The list below should help you to find most of them. None of these are really secrets anymore and most have been part of the software for years. There may be a few unexpected hot-keys still buried within the various HTR programs, but they are usually leftovers from custom programs and have no use for most of us. A few old hot-keys, not mentioned below, have been rendered useless due to adding a button-click to the handicapping screen.

**<Enter> Select Paceline**      Application: HTR2, MaxVel      Screen: PPQ, PPS, FIG2, FPS

While highlighting a running line on a past-performance screen, pressing the <Enter> key will toggle the selected line on/off and mark it with a "#" to the left of the date. This transfers the paceline mode to PL-0 (user selected) and these lines are used in the velocity and pace computations.

**<C> Result Chart View**      Application: HTR2, MaxVel      Screen: PPQ, PPS, PPX, FIG2, FPS

While highlighting a running line in the past-performance view, press the <C> key to pop up the result chart for that race. The Chart must have been downloaded for the date and track requested. This is HTR's answer to the "Company Line" - but is much more beneficial because all the horses are shown. Note this is different than viewing the Chart for the current race; the <C> is used on past running lines.

**<F> Past-Performance Filter**      Application: HTR2      Screen: PPQ, PPS, PPX, FIG2, FPS

While viewing the PP screens, press the <F> key to filter the line display with distance/surface compatible lines only. Press <F> again to return to the full PPs.

**<F6><F7><F8> FIG2 Alternates**      Application: HTR2      Screen: FIG2

Press <F6> to view "Old Fig2" which includes the PAC-PER and Weight history.

Press <F7> to view "DFIGS" a figure that includes pace in the formula.

Press <F8> to view "Donnie's Custom" which includes the Purse and Fr3

Press <F9> to return to the default view - "FIG2 2010"

Note: Paceline selection (PL-0) is not available in the optional modes.

**<R> XFIG Performance Graph**      Application: HTR2      Screen: XFIG

The <R> is the best "Easter Egg" found in HTR2. While viewing the XFIG screen, press the <R> to toggle a graphic view of the race. The first line-connector (X) is the pace call. The entire line graph is a physical representation of what might happen if each horse runs its best race.

**<A><S> XFIG and Light Bulb Toggle**      Application: HTR2      Screen: XFIG or Light Bulb

<A> <S> keys move the sorting bar while viewing the XFIG columns. They also are used on the "Light Bulb" screen to move from horse to horse.

**<G> Trainer Grade 'Noise' Reducer**      Application: HTR2      Screen [T] Trainer Report Card

While viewing the [T] screen or Trainer Report Card grades, press the <G> key to toggle the grade 'noise'. This removes the "C" grades from the display on the first stroke of the <G> key, and then will blank out all but the "A" and "F" grades on the next stroke of the <G> key. This helps you focus on the most critical trainer strengths and weaknesses. Press the <G> again to return to the default.

**<P> Toggle [FPS] Display**      Application: HTR2      Screen [FPS] Feet-Per-Second PPs

Pressing the <P> key on the [FPS] screen toggles the display between feet-per-second decimal ratings (default) and Integer numbers (previously known as PRAT = Performance whole number Ratings).

**<N><K> HTR Tour Sort Toggle**      Application: HTR Tour Screen (default main screen)

Press the <N> to sort the screen by the total negatives (secondary sort is the K-rating). Press the <K> to return to the K-rating sort.

*Book Review***Lay the Favorite by Beth Raymer**

Let me preface the review by telling you that I bought the (unabridged) audio book on this one. It was a good choice as the actor/narrator plays all of the parts well and handles the New York and Caribbean accents with wonderful distinction.

The book is predominantly about the author's remarkable experience working for heavy hitter professional gamblers - mostly sports betting - but there is a lot of horse racing in here too. Believe me, she takes you into the deepest bowels of the gambling sub-culture from Vegas and New York to Curacao and Costa Rica, and those parts are fascinating. I did not care as much for her personal story, her love life, etc. But she didn't dwell too long on that and it doesn't interrupt the excellent storytelling. The book ends with a nice twist as well.

For almost all of you that read or listen to "Laying the Favorite", the book will hit home from many angles. Here is just a partial bullet list of the details --

- Vegas baby, lots of it - her first boss is quite a character and a heavy hitter
- New York scene - a *whale* of professional gambling experience
- Curacao - the offshore experience
- Costa Rica - in the heat of gambling pressure

Beth Raymer had no money and no clue when she first went to work for a professional gambler in Vegas (around the year 2002 I believe). She details her early experience with a crew of pros led by the eccentric "Dinky". Later she moves to New York and lands a job with a gambling whale who eventually takes her to Curacao to open an offshore book. I don't want to provide too many of the colorful details, but as you would expect from a book about professional gamblers, it is a roller-coaster ride with many dips and wild turns.

There seems to be a common thread in all books about professional gamblers. It is the hyper-speed of the rise and fall. They accumulate massive fortunes with incredible scores, and then watch it all spiral down, often with self-destructive behavior. Betrayal, violence and addiction are the norm. I suppose a true life story about a middle class gambler raising a family and living a normal life in a suburban neighborhood would not be very interesting (so I won't be writing my autobiography anytime soon!). What we want from a good book are the extremes and a wild ride. *Laying the Favorite* satisfies on all of those levels.

You can buy this one at any online bookseller including Amazon. I purchased and downloaded the audio book to my i-Phone via audible.com.

**Movie Review - 1974 *The Gambler*, starring James Caan**

Don't confuse this with the similar title starring Kenny Rodgers based on his famous song that came out in the 1980s. The 1974 film is serious drama and based loosely on the novel by Dostoyevsky. It is a blunt look at a man's gambling obsession. A tremendous cast and a riveting story takes the main character (Caan) from the highest triumph of a winning night in Vegas to the lowest depths of bad beats, bookie debt, and even game fixing. His entire life is nothing but a facade in his quest for more action. In the end, he drags down and betrays everyone who loves him, including his mother.

This movie is rarely seen on television. It is a true sleeper and a great 70s film for every gambler to watch. You can buy the DVD cheap, download it online from Amazon, or rent it from NetFlix. It received a strong 86% rating on RottenTomatoes.com movie review archive.

## Late News and Information

### BBS = HTR Live From Vegas; or Anywhere Else

Our Discussion Forums receive the highest number of hits when HTR players are involved in tournaments and reporting live from the scene. I'll be in Vegas October 7-9 competing at the Orleans with some of you, and we will post the latest news and results. If you are attending a contest anywhere, please chime in. Lately, many of our members have been reporting on their experiences with general betting and this is encouraging as well. Horseplayers love to hear stories about big scores and bad beats!

### Software Updates

By the time you read this, the new HTR\_Tour version (Sept 7) should be available on our website for installation. See page-9 for the details. I have also updated the HTR\_Tour User Guide in the Library. Subscribers can get the Show Parlay spot play file discussed herein, in the [Subscriber Zone](#). [Download "777.HSP"](#) to your Robot2 work folder.

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*HTR Report* is an on-line newsletter and is published bi-monthly; it is available in the HTR Subscriber Zone around the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month. Monthly subscribers can view the current newsletter for no charge on-line, Adobe Reader software (free) required. Past issues over a year old are available in our website archive library.

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