

Seminar 2007 – Summary of Events and Presentations

Close to 60 people attended some or all of our HTR Seminar 2007 at the Gold Coast Hotel in Las Vegas on July 25. Thanks for coming everyone – great turnout and feedback!

The seminar began with awards –

Discussion Board Winners

Jim Cramer (*NJCurveball*)

Tommy Castillo (*TommyC*)

Dan Graham (*DanG* – not present)

Special Awards

Daven Turner for beta-testing, suggestions and proofing newsletter

John Buckley for beta-testing upgrades and important feedback on Robot

Mike Mayo for referring the most new customers to HTR

Seminar Morning Session: 10:30am – 11:30am

I began the seminar with a comparison of “old school” handicapping vs. HTR methodology. The key emphasis was on these two notions →

- 1) Picking the Winner (Old School) vs. Making Money (HTR)
- 2) “Let’s see one first” (Old School) vs. “Bet it now before the public catches on” (HTR)

The idea in both cases is that we are not interested in the “best horse at any odds” – but instead focusing on runners that are most likely to improve at a price or horses that will surprise the public and outrun their perceived chances.

The morning session continued with a Discussion of the Vi rating.

The Vi is found in the header of every HTR screen and is a rough estimate of the chances of the favorite and K=1 horse. Sample statistics were shown of how accurate this is. Example Vi = 30, the favorites will win approximately 30% of these races and the K=1 very close to that.

The higher the Vi, the more likely the favorites are to win and the lower the Vi the greater the chances that a longshot will score and the favorites will lose.

As the Vi drops lower, the races have higher volatility and the favorites win less often. The extremely low Vi numbers (under 23) are indicative of a race that has a great deal of volatility and unknowns in it.

The extreme low Vi also means the KLine and K rating are less accurate due to the number of unknown horses. The (K) is dependent on Pace and Speed for its backbone formula. If the race consists of FTS, lightly raced young horses, foreign shippers, layoffs, chronic losers, etc., the (K) cannot make an accurate comparison or probability line and the Vi will drop.

The ‘sweet spot’ for the Vi lies between 25-30, low enough to expect the favorites are more vulnerable, yet high enough to trust the KLine and accuracy of the (K) rating.

*Big thanks to our morning setup team: **Rick Bush, Ernie Logsdon and Herman Bell!***

Early Afternoon Session

We started the afternoon with a discussion of HTR's unique PED rating. The PED is an abbreviation for Pedigree rating, but the rating would be better served if called "intrinsic class".

The PED rating can be understood with a basic hierarchy =

990	Maximum Rating
750	Outstanding Pedigree
600	Excellent rating
450	Above Average
300	Average
200	Weak
100	Poor

To achieve a high PED rating the offspring of the Sire and Broodmare Sire must exhibit some or all of the following characteristics →

- Quality earnings – the PED includes a class component
- Soundness – any physical weakness in the bloodline will lower the winning tendencies
- Ability to ship and handle pressure – higher class horses compete anywhere
- Handle challenges and changes – class rises, new surfaces and longer distances
- Deal with race trouble – bad post, wide trips, tight quarters overcome

The PED computes this information in six categories (below) with a sophisticated formula →

- Dirt Sprint
- Dirt Route
- Artificial (Poly) Sprint
- Artificial (Poly) Route
- Turf Sprint
- Turf Route

Our files now contain separation between Artificial and Dirt surfaces (wet dirt races are included in the Dirt category) and they are updated daily. The PED rating reflects this new dynamic. This will lower sample sizes for Poly track runners, but we have had good success with doing the same separation with Turf Sprints. As time goes on, the Poly statistics will widen and we may find significant advantage with this method.

Trainer Stats

Along with PED rating, the key factor toward understanding if a runner can handle the demands of today's race is the Trainer factor. Our basic trainer rating (TRN) is just a small step toward that understanding and it's most significant edge is the immediate identification of the "super trainer" with a rating of 400 or more.

But it is the individual Trainer Stats data that leads to a more likely confirmation that the horse has been prepared for the specific challenges of today's race. Does the trainer show success with the specific layoff, distance or surface change, class movement, equipment or with shipping horses? Check the stats on [Trnr] button or Light Bulb for individual horses (see next page).

The Trainer Stats and the PED rating are the keys to projecting improvement or decline and enable a solid 'educated guess' as to how the horse will respond to new demands placed upon it in each start.

Critical Analysis Screen (Light Bulb!)

To conclude my part of the seminar and put together all the ideas discussed we spent quite a bit of time discussing all the aspects of the new “Light Bulb” button →

- This option is only available with the 23 July 2007 (or later) versions of HTR2.
- The “Light Bulb” button is found on the main HTR2 screen at the top right. Clicking it will toggle through each horse in the race in post-position order. Using the <A><S> keys on the keyboard, the user can toggle from horse to horse back and forth. Click the <Shark> button (added in 3 Aug 07 version) to instantly scroll to the bottom of the page to view the trainer stats.
- The critical analysis includes the following items per horse →
 1. (!) New challenges the horse faces today
 2. (!) Changes the horse (and trainer) must deal with
 3. (!) Negative aspects to his career or contention in this race
 4. (!) Problems with the connections or pedigree in this scenario
 5. (!) Various scenarios and situations that may prove difficult to overcome

 6. (+) Positive changes
 7. (+) Advantages over the field from Pace to Pedigree
 8. (+) Definitive signs of fitness (workouts) or possible improvement
 9. (+) Strength of human connections

The screen includes additional material including six PP lines, workouts, and full individual trainer stats (if downloaded) as well as key factors found on other HTR screens.

There are options to Print out one horse at a time or the entire field at once with large or regular font sizes.

Late Afternoon Session

Our annual HTR Seminar Contest was held on DMR races and it was won by **Richard Goodall** who took home \$380 cash prize. **George Smith** finished 2nd and **Ernie Logsdon** was third.

Mel Moser was a new guest speaker this year and gave us an interesting account of his tournament partnership experiences and some excellent insights into tournament play. Mel is a veteran and successful contest player and he shared with us how his team will organize themselves to compete effectively and deal with time and travel constraints.

Evening

Donnie Nadermann ran the night shift as usual with his superb Access database workshop. His beautifully formatted color-coded reports are impressive and he showed us how he was able to improvise when new data is added to HTR. (*Thank you Donnie and Mel for a terrific seminar!*)

UPDATE to HTR2

The final summer version of HTR2 is dated “August 3, 2007” and can be downloaded from our website. If you are installing to a new computer – be sure to run the Full Install (Setup) from our homepage at www.htr2.com. If you need help getting the update, contact Rick or Ken.