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Data Offer

I have read several letters from the readers of your magazine requesting computer data so they can write their own handicapping programs. I have purchased 500 races of computer data from Pender Noriega and changed the data to ASCII and dBASE files, as his program was not designed to read these formats. I have his permission to sell the data files and my ad is submitted for print in the next issue. I hope this will help out those who have been waiting for the large amounts of data it takes to perfect their own handicapping system.

Mike Swanson
P.O. Box 1851, Camp Butler
FPO Seattle, WA 98773

Caught in the Act

Have you considered giving a free jacket (advertised on page 52 of February 1990 issue) to an individual who attends one of the larger greyhound tracks? This could be a good promotional tool to increase sales of the jackets. For example, you could give one to the first individual from each large track who finds three errors in an issue of Racing Greyhounds. Of course auditors have an advantage in finding errors that miss the proofreaders.

On page 24 of the February 1990 issue it states "The greyhound from the one box will be in the money about 19% of the time in all long races." That would be a terrible percentage considering that 37.5% is the normal percentage with all things being equal (3 out of 8). I think Pender Noriega meant to say that the greyhound from the one box wins 19% of the time.

Also the chart of favorable conditions on page 25 shows a "midtrack running eight" being in the money 59% when it should be 42% (152 out of 361). The chart is confusing as the last column should be percentage in the money and not out of the money as it is listed.

Your article on sizing up new handicapping software had an input error on the example shown on page 42 as the one short time for post 8 Ale Cool Water has a time of 22.93 instead of 32.93 (or whatever). The 22.03 would be a jet-propelled greyhound setting a new world's record. That input error also caused the three short figure of 88.15 for the eight box to be in error. Could this input error have affected the outcome of one of the races in the handicapping comparison? It is so easy to make an input error and change the handicapping predictions.

I also wondered why Prof. David Marans' article on page 26 had the win percentages totalling 145%. Odds ranging from 1:9 through 5:2 won 99.4% of the time according to the chart, and odds ranging from 3:1 through 99:1 won 45.6% of the time. Shouldn't the win percentage total 100%?

Hope you don't mind these proofreading comments. However, you can tell I am analyzing everything to try and find an advantage to improve my winning at the greyhound track.

If you attend the $150,000 3/8ths mile tournament at the Woodlands, maybe you could give me tips on how to handicap shippers in stakes races. My wagering strategy has not been as good as my proofreading.

Keep up the good work on attacking increases in the takeout percentage by the greyhound tracks.

T. Akers
Spring Hill, Kansas

On the charge of "showing in a win zone" the magazine pleads guilty. On the charge of miscalculating on a midtrack running eight, the magazine pleads guilty. On the charge of having a typo in a software review, the magazine pleads guilty, but with extenuating circumstances—the mistake wasn't made in

Do You Know How Much These Plays Cost?

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Play</th>
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<td>$24</td>
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"...Topdog Plus has by far the most professional looking screens and data entry routines," said Gordon Waite in his August 1989 review in Racing Greyhounds magazine. He went on to say that "In our test race, Topdog selected the winner with no problem, and the quiniela was hit in the straight selections, the part wheel and the box." Now these are statements that we can be proud of, but he wasn't finished yet. In comparing Topdog Plus to the original Topdog, Mr. Waite went on to say, "The newest release of Topdog is quite an improvement over previous versions... The manual is easily the longest and most detailed of any under review, reaching nearly 100 pages in length."

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Handicappers' Exchange

the actual data used for the comparison tests. On the charge of Prof. Marans' percentages adding up to more than 100%, the magazine pleads not guilty. The percentages are calculated within each group, and don't have to add up to 100%. Let's take an example. There are eight dogs running in a race. Their odds are: 2.0, 2.4, 6.3, 6.5, 7.5, 10.4, 10.9, and 18.8. Break these eight dogs into two groups, those with odds less than 4.0, and those with odds greater than or equal to 4.0. Consider that the 2.0 dog won the race. The group with odds less than 4.0 has two dogs, one of which won, for a winning percentage of 50.0%. The other group had no winners among the six dogs, for a winning percentage of 0.0%. It's not valid to try to add the 50% to the 0% and expect to get a 100% total. The defense asks for a suspended sentence, with a promise of restitution to the victims.

RaceSim Review Comments

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to write a review of RaceSim! I am very happy that you concluded that RaceSim has "Strong handicapping on minimal information", a truly complementary statement. It was my intent to develop a program that would return a profit to all the users without having to spend inordinate amounts of time entering or managing databases. I feel that RaceSim gives both the casual and the professional handicapper a powerful weapon in the pari-mutuel wars.

I was, however somewhat surprised to observe the method used to compare the relative merits of Timesim, RaceSim, CompuWinner and the handicapping public. You based your comparison upon the ability to pick the winner of a specific race. As many authors of your magazine have discussed in the past, this approach to winning at the track is not the wisest way to invest your dollar. RaceSim is a system that is based purely on identifying overlays. It is pretty much an established fact of pari-mutuel gambling that the only way to show a long term profit is bet on overlays, and to avoid underlays, even if they are the winners, because they will not yield enough of a return in the long run.

In your analysis of the nine races, which as you acknowledge are too few to draw any conclusions from, you evaluated the performance of RaceSim based on its ability to pick the winners straight up. Given the concepts underlying RaceSim, I feel that this is somewhat of a slanted approach to compare the programs, but I do understand that because of.

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For Simple System, cross out the dollar amount you wish to spend.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>10 weeks</th>
<th>25 weeks</th>
<th>50 weeks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>US$40</td>
<td>US$80</td>
<td>US$165</td>
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Step 2.
Select 6 different numbers from 1 to 44 inclusive for each game.

Example:

Game 1: 1 2 3 21 36 44
Game 2: 5 6 7 8 9 10
Game 3: 11 12 13 14 15 16
Game 4: 17 18 19 20 21 22
Game 5: 23 24 25 26 27 28
Game 6: 29 30 31 32 33 34

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[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

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Handicappers' Exchange

constraints of time you could not perform any more detailed studies. I have used Timesim extensively and compared it to RaceSim in its ability to generate long term profits. Based on approximately 500 races at Mile High, Rocky Mountain, and Interstate Kennel Clubs, I can tell you that both Timesim and RaceSim showed a profit when betting on the straight and quiniela overlays. However, RaceSim showed a 6% greater return on investment than Timesim. I believe that this increased profitability is the true benefit of RaceSim and well worth the purchase price.

There are a few items that came up in your review that I wish to clarify and explain. You mentioned that you did not like having to enter the track abbreviation for every dog, for every past performance line. I agree. However, as the "Using RaceSim" chapter of the instructions points out, it is not necessary to enter the track abbreviation for those races that were run at the current track—the system will assume this information by default. I was surprised that you did not enter the times from different distances and tracks when performing your analysis of the nine races at Waterloo. It is one of the nice features of RaceSim that it automatically translates times from different distances and tracks, reducing much of the manual drudgery involved with manually computing times to be used by Timesim.

You expressed some concern that the adjustment data could go stale because of the inability to remove old data making up the adjustment data. In fact RaceSim uses a moving average system, with 35 races being the maximum making up every post/break combination, and 150 races for the break adjustment. This moving average makes sure that a solid combination of statistically accurate and timely data is used by the system.

Your review stated that it was based on version 1.01 of RaceSim. Well I'm glad to report that version 1.10 is about 6 times faster, and I am currently working on increasing the speed another 10 times. Additionally, RaceSim, unlike Timesim, allows you to enter all the races at the same time and then you can run the computer handicap after you have entered the data for all races. This batch processing allows the computer to perform its handicapping calculations unattended, storing the results for later review.

To alleviate any concerns about worn disks, registered owners can purchase a single backup disk for $20, or if their disk actually wears out, send it to me and I will replace it free of charge.

---

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Racing Greyhounds • March 1990
I want to thank you for some of your suggestions, which will be incorporated in version 2.0. The scheduled release date of version 2.0 is early May, 1990. Version 2.0, which will retail for $175, will include a report option to allow you to rank the straight, quinella, and trifecta outcomes by probability. It will also include a report showing you the top 50 trifecta combinations. However, the big enhancement of version 2.0 will be the ability to maintain a database of the daily track speed variant, and have it automatically applied to the past performance times entered. Registered owners will be able to purchase this update for $50 and will be notified as soon as it is available.

I am strongly committed to making RaceSim the standard of handicapping software for those that wish to show a profit at the track. To that end, I am always grateful for any solid suggestions to improve RaceSim, such as those offered in your review.

Michael K. Harrmann
Denver, Colorado

I'll admit that betting on the "best pick" in a race may not be the most profitable handicapping strategy. But the ability to accurately call a top pick is still important. The methodology I used to evaluate RaceSim and Compuwinner didn't rely on picking the winner in nine races. Instead, it looked at how highly each program rated the winners, the quinella winners, and the trifecta winners across all the races. Obviously, any program that has the ability to put eventual winners higher up on the percentage list than other systems is the better handicapping tool.

The use of moving averages in the automatic adjustments calculation is nice, but without having the ability to enter the dates of the lines, I assume you are forced to enter the data in correct time order. Otherwise the program would not know which points are more current, and which should be ignored.

My apologies for not using races at different tracks and/or distances. In any case, this was not a large number of lines in any of the test races. There were only 15 of these lines available for use, and in every case, there were other lines from the correct distance at the current track for their replacement.

I am certainly looking forward to your next major update. The features you have mentioned should make RaceSim an even stronger entry in the handicapping software market. One last idea: allow the user to enter more than six past performance lines for each dog. Certain tracks publish seven or more lines, and the option would make back-checking lines a valuable effort. The averages and standard deviations would be even more accurate if eight or more lines were allowed to be used.

Thanks, Dan!

Writing in behalf of many thousands of greyhound racing fans throughout the country, sincere congratulations to Dan Casey for his well-researched editorial "The For-
By Dan Casey

What You Should Know About

The First Turn In 5/16th Races

The first turn is the most important part of a sprint race. Here the greyhounds have a long run to the first turn after they leave the starting box. This means they reach the turn at the fastest speed they are capable of running, close to 40 miles per hour, at the very moment the dogs have to make a turn to the left.

Most greyhound track programs don’t give us a good picture of what happens in the run to the first turn. The program lists the box the dog is running out of, its position at the start, and then makes us wait until the field reaches the 1/8th pole before giving us another call. But at least one track, Waterloo Greyhound Park, has a call at the beginning of the 1st turn. Unfortunately this is not a wide-spread practice among greyhound tracks.

The action between the starting call and the 1/8th call is the most important part of the race in deciding which dogs have the best chance of winning or finishing in the money. But the program doesn’t help us to find out what happened in past races in this crucial part of a sprint race.

The starting call is not much help in handicapping races because the call comes right after the greyhounds jump out of their boxes. This gives us a picture of the field only a few feet away from the start and then we have to guess what happened until the field reaches the 1/8th pole, after the first turn.

Many greyhounds don’t get into full stride until they’re past the starting call. So they’re listed as being third or fourth at the start but they rush into the lead well before the field reaches the first turn. Other dogs jump out quickly and then pull themselves back off the early pace. In this case, a greyhound with a number of 1’s and 2’s for the first call is really running third or fourth down the track to the first turn.

There really should be another call in the past performance lines, between the starting call and the 1/8th call. Some tracks did try to make up for the deficiency in the program calls by giving the time for the lead dog in sprints as it reached the beginning of the first turn, a distance of 380 feet from the start.
The final running time of a race is really of no importance for handicapping. A greyhound who wins in 31.20 will often not beat another dog who ran out of the money in a 31.40 race. Why? Because class, pace, style, and box position, are more important factors in determining the winner of a dog race. Final times give more indication about the condition of the track that night than they do about the quality of the greyhounds in a particular race.

Internal times, such as the first turn time, are far more significant than final times. By noting that the first turn time was 8.07 or 7.57 in a 5/16th race, we get an idea of how fast the pace was during the early part of a race. And, since over half of all sprints are won by greyhounds who reach the first turn or the 1/8th call in the lead, this bit of information is of great importance.

In a study of thousands of races, it was revealed that almost 54% of dogs in the lead at the 1/8th pole in sprints went on to win. Another study of results from a major track showed that about 52% of dogs reaching the first turn in the lead won their sprint races. Surprisingly, many of the greyhounds first going into the turn lost their lead by the 1/8th call because of trouble on the turn.

These percentages can be deceiving if you don’t understand their implications and how to use them. The average fan reasons that since the lead dog at the first turn or the 1/8th pole wins over half of its races, all they have to do is find the early speed dog in each race in order to win a lot of bets. It isn’t really this simple. The reason it isn’t so easy is that a number of factors go into determining which greyhounds get to the first turn in the lead, not just good early speed ability. For example, a greyhound who shows quick early speed to the first turn in a C race will often not run well in the early part of a B race because it’s outclassed. Outclassed dogs don’t give their best efforts or run in their usual style.

Another thing that could hurt a greyhound’s early chances is a box that doesn’t suit it, or one that creates a conflict with another dog because of their styles. A wide-running dog, for example, draws an inside box while a rail runner is coming out of the seven box. They could cause trouble for each other in a rush to the first turn if they both have early foot.

An early speed dog with little competition for the lead at the first turn will have its chances for winning increased but the same dog will be less of a bet if it has early competition. Over and over again, I see greyhounds win if they reach the first turn without being pressured in 7.90 but I see the same dog lose if it had to run 7.60 to get the lead at the first turn.

The first turn timer points out the great importance of pace in the early part of a race. Late runners need a fast early pace to tire out the leaders, while front runners profit from a slower run to the first turn.

Unfortunately, the first turn timer is used to give us only the time of the first greyhound who reaches this point. If we had the time for each dog at this point, or were then given the lengths back for each dog so we could figure out the time for ourselves, the timer would be much more helpful.

Only a couple of tracks gave the lengths back for each greyhound at the 1/8th pole. This important addition to greyhound past performances was not copied by the other tracks. This is another example of greyhound players being deprived of useful information they have a right to expect in greyhound racing programs. After all, this sort of information is given in past performances for both thoroughbreds and trotters.

There is another use of the first turn timer. When a late running greyhound was second or third at the 1/8th pole in its last race but didn’t show its usual kick coming on in the later part of race, take the time to look up the official chart for the race. The pace may have been so slow the front runner didn’t tire. On the other hand, if the pace was fast it could mean that the late running dog is off its form.

In sprints, “The race is made at the first turn and paid for at the 1/8th pole.” How true! □

---

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*DGP Racing Weekly*
BETTING STYLE IS THE SECRET

By Pender Noriega

There are so many fans that are placing all of their emphasis on handicapping and not enough emphasis on betting. It does not cost anything to handicap the races, but placing bets can be very expensive. The majority of the fans that write me are extremely interested in learning new handicapping techniques to help prevent them from losing. Once you have the fundamental techniques of handicapping, I honestly feel that more emphasis should be placed on betting. If you are to become a consistent winner, you will have to learn that designing bets to maximize profit and to prevent loss is just as important as handicapping, and in most cases is even more important. You could be one of the greatest handicappers in the world and still come up a loser because of ineffective betting. Or you could be only a fair handicapper and yet be a consistent winner because of good betting habits and practices.

I receive so many letters from fans wanting to know what to do to stop losing so often. Sometimes fans are losing because they are betting too many races—and sometimes they are trying to play too many multiple bets. If I had but one message to give to all of our fans that would like to become winners, I would say, “It is not handicapping that causes you to lose, it is betting.” Therefore, proper betting deserves just as much concern, if not more, as handicapping.

Because so much more attention is given to handicapping than betting, several fans will end up losing money through poor betting habits. This can result in their taking an attitude that you cannot win at the track. You can definitely make money at the track, but it takes a lot of work and patience. Any successful handicapper will tell you that the primary reason so many fans lose at the track is from trying to bet too many races or, in some cases, every race. No matter how many times this issue has been addressed, fans will continually try and play them all. If you are constantly looking for the magic with the automatic payoffs, you are in trouble.

Just as some people are good at certain sports or skills, some people are more skillful at handicapping and placing bets. If you do not have the patience to wait for the right race, and then have the knowledge to develop a bet that will hit the race, you should only play the races for entertainment. We must all accept the fact that there are some things we cannot do as well as others. That is just a fact of life. However, we do know that with practice and effort, we can improve some of our skills, and in doing so we can at least become efficient in most areas, even though we may never be the greatest. For many of us, this is how we need to approach betting on greyhound races.

If you do not have the skills to adjust your bets to different races within the limited time frame between
races, you must establish methods to assist you when you are under this pressure. The limited amount of time for handicapping is my reason for using the computer to assist me in handicapping. I know that I cannot effectively handicap a matinee and a night program without the possibility of overlooking something, due to the limited amount of time that you have between purchasing programs and going back and forth to the track.

The computer will help me throw out the bad races, and assist me in zeroing in on the ones I may be able to play. It also allows me the time to try and design bets for those races that I may have a chance to hit. The computer saves me a great deal of time and allows me to compare greyhounds that are eliminated and those that could possibly be used for a key, so that I can bet accordingly. Even though I have spent years developing my program, because of comments in the racing program, schooling races, and new greyhounds, it is still up to me to compare the computer results with the racing program and then decide on the proper bet. There is no magic in any method, but using the computer works for me because of the time allowed. Most of the computer prevents me from making that fatal error of betting on too many races.

The majority of the bettors at the track will normally fall into one of the following five categories:

1. There are those individuals that are out for an evening of entertainment and will just play numbers and names of greyhounds. These individuals normally contribute to the pool of money that the more serious handicappers and bettors will draw from. This is not to say that these individuals never win—it is just that the majority of them will probably lose unless they are very lucky. In fact, if an individual from this category should have a profitable evening, the person may end up in one of the following categories as a full time player.

2. This category is composed of those individuals that are number carriers and system and method bettors that do not rely on handicapping to make choices for betting. This category also contains a lot of system number players that follow certain conditions, greyhounds, or numbers to make their bets.

Some individuals, usually those that have given up on handicapping, will just play the same two or three numbers every race. These individuals will hit a large bet on some occasions since they have no regard for the odds. If a long shot should come in, they may have a winning ticket. Unless these individuals are lucky, they will probably lose over an extended time. They can actually lose quite frequently if they select post positions that are not hot boxes at that particular track. If a person is a number carrier and the numbers being carried do not include the one, two, or eight, the person could have quite a long wait between payoffs.

One of the other dangers of being a number carrier is the habit of not being able to exclude the carried numbers in a bet, even when the individual attempts to make another bet. If a number carrier is carrying the 1, 2, and 4, even though there are two greyhounds in a race with other numbers that are the obvious favorites, the number carrier will either drop one of those favorites and include the other one with his 1, 2, and 4, or the individual will play all five grey-
hounds. A carrier cannot easily break the habit, even if the 1, 2, and 4 are the weakest greyhounds in the field. If the individual should hit with the favorite and one of the regular numbers, carrying the extra baggage on the bet still causes the person not to win very much.

3. The next category encompasses the majority of the fans, and these are the $2 bettors. The people in this category are probably the best handicappers at the track. These individuals will normally take $20 or $30 to the track and squeeze out the best bets possible. The previously mentioned categories of number carriers and the helter-skelter bettors often originate in this category. When the $2 bettor is not able to improve his handicapping (or betting!) to remain in this category, the bettor will usually either give up going to the track on a frequent basis, or will become a number carrier and part-time handicapper. If there is one major short-coming with the majority of the $2 bettors, it is their attempt to try and handicap and play every race. Those who accept that some races cannot be handicapped will normally move into category five which contains the successful bettors.

4. The individuals in this category are the fans that have been somewhat successful as $2 bettors, and they are usually not affected as much financially by the loss of a $2 bet. These fans can usually afford to bet more than $2, and they are basically helter-skelter bettors. These individuals usually believe that bigger is always better, and they tend to lose some of their handicapping skills through the process of trying to cover all angles through additional bets.

These individuals often purchase a lot of handicapping books and systems, but eventually get away from the fine tuning of handicapping by just purchasing more tickets and figuring that they will have a winner because they are in the right ball park. These fans are basically good handicappers in their own right, but they have strayed away from good handicapping practices by trying to hit the big one and by trying to hit every race. These fans have almost given up on the small payoffs and have chosen to focus on the big ones.

These people could be very successful because they normally have the knowledge and experience over the individuals in categories one and two. However, these individuals control their own destiny. They must either develop good betting habits or they will continue to be losers and will always blame their losses on bad breaks or handicapping mistakes. Even though these individuals know that some races cannot be handicapped, they will not accept it. Because of the helter-skelter betting style of these individuals, which includes placing too many different bets on the same race, they really contribute a great deal of money to the pool. That money is divided up by the individuals in category five.

5. This category includes successful bettors, and they usually fall into two groups. There is that group of individuals who have the skills and patience to select the right situation and wait for it. And then there is a group of individuals who just have the skill or knack for handicapping that also have good money management practices. In the first group, there are those who have the patience of Job in being able to wait for the right situation. They can just enjoy watching the races while waiting for the race they have selected to play. These are not always big bettors, but they are good money managers and are always in control.

They do not get caught up in the heat of the situation and start making loose bets.

The second group in this category are those individuals who play a great deal of races but have a different bet for each situation. These individuals are really good at betting and money management and can really adapt to each situation. You must also understand that these individuals are not just helter-skelter bettors. They have thought out like situations in several practice reviews, long before trying them at the track, or they have gained this knowledge through observing results of previous races and payoffs.

When you see them at the track, they may appear totally disorganized, but they are keenly aware of the situation, and they are usually watching the tote board and making bets during the last minutes. They may bet $20 on a greyhound to win in one race and eliminate two greyhounds the next race and play a part trifecta wheel for $20 with a greyhound on top. They may not have made this bet in the previous race because they did not feel that they could successfully eliminate two greyhounds, even though they still felt that they could select the winner. This differs from the individuals in categories 3 and 4, as they would still have tried to eliminate two greyhounds in the previous race so that they could play a part wheel in both situations.

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PENDER NORIEGA: A PERSONAL BIOGRAPHY

As for my Bio, there is not much to tell. I am presently Professor Pender B. Noriega but I really prefer to be called Pender, as I have found that the greyhounds could not care less about how much education you have and most of the students will have several other names for you anyway. I do not like to be called doctor, since I am not an MD and I do not want to be called General, since it may get me shot. So everyone that knows me including my students call me Pender. I am presently the Regional Director for Central Texas College in Okinawa, Japan and I am an adjunct professor for the MBA and HRMD graduate programs for Chapman College. My wife and I both teach in the graduate programs and we are both on contract with the college as she is a full time professor. My educational background is in the area of business and I accepted this position in 1983 so that I could write my dissertation concerning a foreign country since my degree is a Doctorate in Business Administration Management. I only intended to stay two years, but not having to pay taxes felt a lot better than I thought and I have now been over here six years.

I was able to hit the Pic-Six twice, and both times it only cost me $20. I hit five of six several times and as a result of hitting the Pic-Six, one of the things that I wanted to do while overseas was to work on a computer program that could handicap trifectas as best possible. Therefore, before I left the states, I collected all of the 1983 programs from Tampa, St. Pete, and Sarasota. I then took a couple more computer classes, and began to evaluate data and write the program. I purchased all of the systems and methods that I found, and evaluated each one of them to see if I could salvage anything for my program as I wanted the program to be as accurate as possible. One of the reasons I remained in this position was because it gave me access to 22 computers at one time. During the day and on weekends, I am able to keep all 22 computers running. For the past six years, I have had over 20 computers evaluating data on a weekly or daily basis. I have compared every correlation possible and then some. My present program will allow me to play about three trifectas per day, and I will hit at least 2 of the three. Greyhound racing is just more evenly matched than most people would like to admit. I am satisfied that I can make a profit with my present program even though it only allows me a limited number of races.

The highlight of my handicapping career was not hitting the two Pic-Sixes, which was certainly a challenge, but hitting 11 out of 12 trifectas my last night at the track at Derby Lane in St. Pete in April of last year. This was without the computer, and I purchased a program at the track, two minutes before post time.

I own my home in Tampa, Florida, which I had built in 1982, and I will be returning to the states permanently in June. You can usually find me at the track with the $2 bettors as they usually have a better rhythm of handicapping. I usually sit around the senior citizens as you can always learn so much by looking over their shoulders.

Pender Noriega

ting, but they actually know how to adjust to each situation. If you are to be successful at the track, you may have to adapt the betting styles of one of these two groups. You will either have to become very patient in being able to wait for the situation for your betting style, or you will have to be able to adapt your style to the situation. In either case, it is probably your betting style that must be reviewed for maximization rather than your handicapping style. While all fans will not fall cleanly into one of these five categories, the majority of them can be closely associated with one of them.

An important step toward becoming a winner is to become more interested in your betting techniques. Stop looking for magic because there is none. Try to learn how to design bets for different situations. If you are not as skilled as some others, design methods in your mind that you will be able to use in certain situations. Some of us must have a plan, I know that I am basically that way because of the time involved between races. I can usually handle a single performance without too much trouble, but once I try to attend a matinee and a night race on the same day, I must have some good betting habits to help me to make decisions.

Evaluate Your Hand

You need a betting plan when you are going to invest your money, the same as you would need a plan in any other type of business venture. In order to start betting more effectively, you need to review old programs and try to determine how you could have bet certain situations to maximize profit.

There are times when you feel that a certain greyhound will definitely finish in the money and you get busy trying to figure out what other greyhounds could come with it so that you can play the quinella or trifecta. In some cases you may be better off playing that one greyhound alone, as a little of something is better than a whole lot of nothing. In trying to find another greyhound, you may lose a chance to make a profit. It is very disappointing when you do not have a ticket on the greyhound you felt strongly about, and the greyhound actually finishes in the money and you could have made a few dollars. Also, if the odds were right you may have been better off playing more greyhounds with the one you felt strongly about, and this is why you need to be aware of the possible results of the odds on the tote board.

It is up to you to decide what category you fall into when it comes to making bets. If you are a very skillful person, then you might already be a winner. If you are losing money and you do not have a great deal of time for the sport, you may want to decide on a form of betting that you can afford, and just learn to pass races that appear too evenly matched. This may mean that you will only be able to play a quinella box, or some other type of traditional bet. There is nothing wrong with this as long as you learn to pass races when you do not feel that you can narrow the field to three.

If you have additional time for the sport, you may want to devise bets for dif-
different situations. If you are able to do this you will probably win more money. What you do not want to happen is to get into a trend of thinking that you can hit a large wager in every situation. The races are so evenly matched that there are times when you will only be able to buy a $2 win ticket and hope for the best.

Money is not lost until the bet is made. In many cases, how to lay down the bet can be significantly more important than the handicapping. When playing poker, what good is it to draw a royal flush, if you cannot get any one to call because you did not properly bet the hand? The right type of bet, in the right situation, at the right time, is what will usually determine a winner.

I have a friend in Tampa named Henry who will ride to the track with me from time to time, as we are very old friends. Henry will never purchase a racing program because he is not at the track to bet. He is only there to spend an evening out with me. But at times, if it is less than a minute until post time and he sees a quiniela on the tote board that is showing 5 to 1 or a little less, he will go up and buy a $2 ticket. Believe me, I have seen him hit so many of these!

Henry is not a handicapper or a bettor. He figures that it is just common sense that if that many fans at the track believe that quiniela will be the winner, then it is worth a $2 bet. He does not attempt to see if he could make more money by playing a long shot, since the crowd has picked a favorite. He feels that the favorites are worth a $2 bet if that many people believe in them. He does not mind spending $2 when he feels that he at least has a good chance of a return on his investment. Even though he is not a serious greyhound advocate, he understands the importance of betting to win. You will also have to learn how to put betting into perspective if you intend to become a winner.

Since no money is lost until the bet is made, it becomes important to understanding how you are going to bet once you make your selection. Handicapping is somewhat like learning the rules and methods of a business, while betting is more like the marketing and selling of a product. You need to know the ins and outs of the business, but it is the actual application that will determine whether you will be profitable. In other words, why should you spend the ten minutes between races trying to handicap the race and then miss a chance for a good return on your profit because you were not prepared to bet your results effectively?

If you have to spend the time between races trying to handicap races, because you are not able to get a racing program early enough, then you should have betting patterns for different situations already established in your mind. Some of the questions you may need to think about are as follows:

1. If you like to play greyhounds to win and you cannot make a decision between two greyhounds, should you pass the race, play both of them to win, play both of them to place, or do you need to know what odds are available to make the decision?

2. If you are a quiniela player and you cannot narrow the field to three greyhounds, should you pass the race if you do not feel strongly enough about one greyhound to key? Or since you do feel strongly about

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one greyhound, should you play the greyhound to win and place, or are the odds sufficient for you to play your favorite with three or four others?

3. If you are a trifecta player and you are unable to narrow the field in order to key a greyhound over three others, should you include an additional one or two greyhounds under your key? If you are a trifecta box player, should you box the trifecta when you really don’t feel that all of the greyhounds in the box can win the race? If your main concern is which greyhound can finish third, but you are satisfied with your top choices, would it be more profitable in this case to play a quinella?

4. If you are a superfecta player and there are two or three back runners being omitted from your bet, would you be better off not playing the superfecta? I keep trying to remind greyhound fans that back runners seldom finish last. While they may not always make the superfecta, that late rush may kill your bet on the superfecta if you have not included them.

These are just a few of the questions you must answer before going to the betting window. I am not saying you should become mechanical. But if you get up in the morning at the same time as everyone else, it can be very difficult to make a betting decision at 9 or 10 at night unless you are extremely skillful or have given it some previous thought.

One of the major pitfalls of some of the fans that write in is that they refuse to get away from multiple bets, even though they are having trouble reducing the size of the field. If you usually play multiple bets such as the quinella and superfecta, and you are having difficulty trying to narrow the field, would it be better in that case to bet your first choice to win or place rather than miss the race all together because of trying to hit the big one? Remember it is often difficult enough to select one greyhound that may finish in the money. Why should you miss a chance to make a profit when you feel good about one greyhound just because you want to hit a larger wager every time?

Missing the ones you should hit will surely cost you in the long run. You must learn to bet smart and not allow greed to become the most important factor. Try to capitalize on all opportunities in your favor by remembering the old adage about a bird in the hand. Multiple bets are not always the answer for every race, just as sometimes races may be so close that a box may be the best answer.

Learn to bet smart and be prepared by having given thought to different options. Dig out those old programs and review what happened in certain situations. See if the greyhounds you selected as keys finished in the money and yet you did not have a winning ticket because you were trying to hit a multiple bet. If this is the case, there is probably nothing at all wrong with your handicapping.

If you are losing money, and you are able to select a key greyhound in most races and that greyhound finishes in the money over 60% of the time, there is nothing wrong with your handicapping. If you can select this many key greyhounds and you are still losing money, you are probably playing too many races, too many multiple bets, or too many wasted bets.

If you are not in category five, I would suggest that you take the time to evaluate your betting style. I think that you would be surprised at how much your winning can be improved by becoming more concerned with betting. I am sure you remember all of the long hours you spent evaluating old programs, trying to determine the best greyhounds to play. Do not let that hard work go to waste, as now is the time to concentrate on how to maximize those efforts. Remember that handicapping is fine, but betting can be extremely expensive! And please keep the mail coming!
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The Importance of

By M. Blake Leonard

Pace pays off. Above, John Allen Kernel’s Big Ale Star en route to setting the Palm Beach Kennel Club Royal Palm Course track record of 29.24 seconds.

Photo courtesy of PBKC.
Pace is one of the least understood and least emphasized factors in greyhound race handicapping. This is the case despite the fact that thorough “pace analysis” is such an important predictor of which greyhounds are most likely to finish in the money.

With this premise in mind, the astute handicapper will reason that in a pari-mutuel environment (where competitors are actually betting among themselves) any important factor that is not greatly understood or emphasized by the majority presents an excellent opportunity for the few who do emphasize this factor.

Before I get into defining what “pace analysis” is and how to incorporate it into your handicapping, I want to first examine why I feel pace is so often either neglected or de-emphasized by the average handicapper.

The greyhound racing environment is a microcosm of life in that in each situation man attempts to interpret order in a seemingly chaotic situation. At the greyhound races, the handicapper is in constant search of an explanation as to why the greyhounds run as they do and how their running can best be predicted. The area where most handicappers lose this search is they become too narrowly focused on a certain handicapping factor that they believe is the key to predicting races. This narrow emphasis on a certain factor is often correlated with a de-emphasis or even exclusion of other equally important factors. Just as in life, this failure to see the “big picture” is often quite costly.

One factor many handicappers will often overemphasize is time. Time can be a valuable aid in analyzing races and as Kevin Hulick’s “Speed N Grade Hit List” system demonstrates, time can even be used as the key factor in certain spots. Time can also be modified to reflect the daily variation in track conditions (see Racing Greyhounds, Sept. ‘89).
therefore giving a truer picture of a greyhound’s speed on that particular day.

Despite the inherent rationality of using time to determine a greyhound’s ability, I believe a truer understanding of each greyhound’s ability can be gleaned by focusing on pace rather than time. Several insights lead me to this conclusion.

**Andrew Beyer’s Discovery**

Andrew Beyer, one of the foremost thoroughbred handicappers in America, wrote a revolutionary book on thoroughbred handicapping called *Picking Winners*. In this book he used 42 pages of calculated figures to introduce the world to the concept of “speed handicapping.” His system focused on adjusting a horse’s running time with his own unique daily track variant to arrive at a horse’s “speed figure.”

Beyer documented how successful and profitable his “speed handicapping” system could be in his book *My $50,000 Year at the Races*. Beyer’s theories were enthusiastically embraced by the handicapping community and even spurred other more complex treatises on the subject, including an exhaustive look at speed handicapping by Mathematics Professor William Quinin in a book called *Par Times*.

Speed handicapping has become very popular at tracks along the east coast. A New York speed handicapper, Leo Ragin, has become so renowned that when his followers, the “Ragies,” like a horse, then a profound effect on the horse’s odds immediately ensues. At New York tracks, when a horse’s odds drop from 3-1 to 8-5 at the last tick, the fans naturally assume the “Ragies” like that one.

The most remarkable thing about Andrew Beyer is that after literally changing the nature of thoroughbred handicapping with his “speed figures,” he later wrote another book called *The Winning Horseplayer* in which he admitted that despite having a winning system, he wasn’t fully comprehending the “big picture.” In this book there is a method described which Beyer called “trip handicapping.” He became convinced that these methods could be used to augment and strengthen his “speed figures.” In describing trip handicappers he states:

“They believed that the way a race developed—the fact some horses would have “easy trips” and others “tough trips”—would largely determine who won or lost. They paid special attention to the position of horses on the turn, noting who raced wide and who saved ground along the rail... They watched the performances of horses in relation to any track bias—the tendency of racing strips to favor certain post positions or running styles. They believed strongly in the importance of pace, a handicapping factor I had always thought was grossly overrated.”

Beyer realized there was more going on during a race than his speed figures explained. He knew then that incorporating “pace” and “trips” into his overall analysis would explain why a horse attained a certain speed figure. Beyer’s insights are just as applicable to thoroughbred racing, especially in dealing with variant adjusted times.

**Times are Sometimes Misleading**

Those individuals who place too great an emphasis on time (even if the times are modified by “mean times” or “daily variants,”) will sometimes be dealing with misleading data because not only do track conditions vary from day to day but from race to race. At its fall meeting, Tampa Greyhound Track was ac-

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The Points of Call

(Figure 1)

keep running. Obviously this dog has energy in reserve after the wire and thus hasn't expended his available energy in the most efficient manner.

In most instances, the amount of energy a dog expends is a product of the conditions in a race the dog is encountering. If the dog runs ideally on the rail but is impeded from reaching the rail by other dogs, then he won't run as efficiently. If the dog prefers to be the pacemaker but is forced to struggle early with other dogs who also want to set the pace, he may be forced to expend his energy too early in the race—and thus be used up before the stretch run.

Track Conditions and Pace

The first thing to understand about pace is that certain tracks, because of their surface depth and composition, length and width configurations, embankment on the turns, and angle of the starting box, will favor a certain type of dog over others. In the May '89 issue of Racing Greyhounds (page 20) Gordon Waite conducted a study which illustrated how some tracks favor dogs that run near the early pace, while other tracks have a higher percentage of dogs who run from off the pace finish in the money. It behooves the handicapper to conduct his own study (at the track he attends) and see if any general biases exist.

The weather conditions can also affect whether the early pace will hold up. After a series of warm, dry days the track is usually hard enough to enable the early pacers to run comfortably without tiring too quickly. When the track turns heavy and slow, after several days of rain for instance, then the early pacers tire sooner. The dogs running off the pace will still be running their normal style, but as the tired early leaders begin giving way sooner, the off-the-pace runners are able to overtake these tired dogs.

The 1/8th Call

The most important thing to look at in attempting to determine the anticipated pace of the race is the 1/8th call. (Figure 1 illustrates where this call is made at various distances at the track.)

Careful evaluation of each dog's past performance lines will give the handicapper some indication of which dogs prefer to set the pace, which dogs run near the lead, and which dogs generally run from off the pace. The handicapper should focus on using these past performance lines to anticipate how the pace of today's race is likely to unfold. Ideally the handicapper should become proficient at envisioning what the position of each dog will be when they reach the 1/8th call in today's race.

Developing this vision takes practice and requires incorporating into the handicap an evaluation of where on the track each dog prefers to run,
and how the running preferences of the other dogs in the race may help or hinder this effort.

In Figure 2 I have included the lines of ALLA CACCITORA. This dog fits the description of super early speed. He is consistently the pacesetter, utilizing his greatest burst of energy from the break call to the 1/6th call. From that point the dog will continue to run until caught, then gives way. The presence of this dog in any race will have an effect on any other dogs in that race that need the early lead to be competitive. As I alluded to earlier, when more than one dog battles to set the pace it may use up the allotted speed of the dogs fighting to set the pace.

Of course, for the early pacers to be caught there must be other dogs in the race with enough ability to run past the early pacers. It is important to keep in mind that even though the 1/8th call is the most critical point of focus, it is not the only element of pace.

In Figure 3 I have included the lines of GALLANT NOSTRUM. This dog is at the opposite end of the spectrum (regarding pace) in comparison to the previous example. This dog will not be a factor in determining how the pace of the race will unfold and based on his recent form I would eliminate this dog in all but the weakest of fields. Any dog who generally reaches the 1/8th call fifth or worse will not affect the pace of a race.

Dogs who run off the pace can still earn their share of paydays. This is particularly true if the dog demonstrates a good stretch kick, benefits from a speed duel on the front end, or track conditions are slow. Nevertheless, I have found that the most consistent type of dog to key is one that will run near the early lead and has demonstrated that he is comfortable setting or stalking the pace. These types of dogs generally reach the 1/8th call third or better and can hold that position or gain with consistency.

**Conclusion**

In evaluating the anticipated pace of a race, what the handicapper is essentially trying to accomplish is to visualize how the running of the race will unfold and how this unfolding will effect each dog’s ability to run their optimum race.

**Footnotes**

2. Ibid, p. 5-6
The Perfect Partner
Has years of experience and doesn’t want a share of the profits.

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2. Never bet a longshot without backing him up to place.
3. Because the pick 3's takeout is high, it's a much worse risk than simply betting three horses to win.
4. A 2 x 2 crosswager is the easiest way to play the daily double.
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Before going on, here are the answers to the test questions at the top of this page:

1. BOXING YOUR TOP THREE CHOICES IS AN EXCELLENT WAY TO PLAY THE EXACTA is FALSE. It’s a money-wasting, though popular, folly. See page 65.
2. NEVER BET A LONGSHOT WITHOUT BACKING HIM UP TO PLACE is FALSE. Virtually all your place bets should be on long odds horses. See page 57.
3. BECAUSE THE PICK 3'S TAKEOUT IS HIGH, IT'S A MUCH WORSE RISK THAN SIMPLY BETTING THREE HORSES TO WIN is FALSE. Since the takeout is already built into the odds, you actually receive a return of 50% on your bet. See page 7.
4. A 2 X 2 CROSSWAGER IS THE EASIEST WAY TO PLAY THE DAILY DOUBLE is FALSE. You play the double on your own, depending on your opinion of each race. See page 62.
5. IF YOUR FLAT BETS SHOW A LOSS, A GOOD BETTING PLAN CAN TURN THOSE LOSSES INTO PROFITS is FALSE. Anyone who tries to use some crazy betting scheme based on this premise should be reported to the Better Business Bureau. See page 33.

Barry Meadow is the author of two acclaimed books on harness handicapping — Success at the Harness Races and Proven Harness Betting — and was a long-time columnist for Gambling Times. His new book is designed for all types of bettors — thoroughbred, harness, quarterhorse, and thoroughbred players can take full advantage of the secrets contained in MONEY SECRETS AT THE RACETRACK.

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Owning a Racing Greyhound

By Tom Walsh

Part Three
of a Three-Part Series

Ownership: A Big Step

Ownership of a racing greyhound is a big step. The investment requires both money and time. The first step is the selection of a quality breeding farm or kennel that offers greyhounds for sale.

The serious investor must research the entire ownership process. The selection of the seller should be well thought out. Greyhound sellers advertise in many greyhound publications. Many sellers will offer an entire package which includes purchase, placing the dog or dogs with a kennel, raising the pup or pups, and care and maintenance throughout their racing career.

When you are ready to make these decisions it should be a family or group project. Potential greyhound owners are involved with days or months of research, which includes seeking out a quality seller, phone calls, track visits—a lot of time and effort. Group or family support with be of great assistance.

An investment in a young greyhound is quite different than other investments and often not as simple. Successful owners realize that the capital return on a pup cannot be predicted. The cash you intend to invest for greyhounds should be from sources other than your family’s living income. Some pups may have only pet potential. Many never turn a profit at the track.

The easiest part of greyhound ownership is locating pups for sale. There are more greyhounds on the market at this time than at any other time in the history of the sport. A visit to the National Greyhound Association’s annual meet in Abilene, Kansas is worth the trip. Track-ready greyhounds are offered for sale at an auction at the meet. There are also hundreds of breeding farms throughout the U.S. that offer greyhounds for sale. Many other kennels and companies offer a complete package deal to the potential owner. A buyer should research the qualifications of the seller, and also investigate the dogs’ bloodlines. The buyer must be satisfied that they are dealing with a farm or company with a good reputation.

Racing career of both studs, and bitch’s who produce offspring can be checked through track galley books, and weekly and monthly greyhound publications. Parents who have done well at the track tend to produce quality off-spring. There is, however, always a chance of a zero return from your purchase. Research as much as possible before making a purchase.

A question to consider is what age pup to purchase. Never purchase a track-ready pup unless you can see it run in competition in a schooling or actual race. The best age for the purchase of a pup is over 14 weeks, and under 14 months. Sometimes the worst looking pup in the litter turns out to be the best at the track.

Bloodlines are most important. Stick with the breedings that are proven success stories for more than one generation. The females are considered an equal partner to the male. Good brood females have produced many successful champions. When your purchase is for only one pup, note that more American stakes dogs are male. Your purchase of a single dog might best be a male.

When considering a multiple purchase, it is suggested that one or two dogs from several litters be selected in order to vary the bloodlines, and have a continuous supply of fresh stock. Your chances of getting a good pup or several good pups are better than by the purchase of an entire litter.

Greyhounds range in price from $500 for a three month old pup, to $20,000 for a dog purchased at auction. Pups that show a better than average potential are priced between $1,000 and $2,000, which is considered an average price. The purchase of a full litter will earn a discount off the advertised price.

The purchase of a greyhound, at any price, involves many decisions and questions.

Q. How much should I spend? (Choose your price through research.)
Q. Who can I trust? (Seek out sellers with a continued good reputation.)
Q. What are the best bloodlines? (Again, research is the answer.)
Q. Were the parents good racers? (Check all the statistics available from tracks where the parents ran.)
Q. What age dog should I buy? (14 months is recommended.)
Q. How many should I buy? (Whatever is within your budget.)
Q. Who will raise the pup? (Either the seller/breeder or a kennel owner.)
Q. Who will train the pup? (An experienced trainer with a good kennel.)
Q. Is the pup physically sound? (Have the veterinarian check all points.)

After these questions have been answered, you should shop for a kennel that has a good reputation and one that has a history of producing winners. Most kennels offer a complete service which includes raising, training, boarding, registration, and racing your greyhound. The best insurance after a purchase is working with experts in the field.

After the purchase of a dog or dogs, an independent owner leases the greyhound to a kennel for racing. The owner receives 35% of the earnings for each race. The kennel owner retains 65%. Greyhounds finishing lower than 4th place earn no money for the owner except in championship races when the purse is divided for lower than 4th place finishers.

An average dog may have to run for two years in order to show a profit. This may make ownership look bleak. But a better than average greyhound can support the owner, and the entire litter.

Owning a racing greyhound is a serious step. Every aspect should be studied before investing your dollars. The thought of ownership may be exciting, but the excitement may soon subside when the invested cash is gone. On the other hand, there’s nothing more exciting than watching your greyhound take a whirl around the track, into the winner’s circle.
Dr. James Quinn's
The New Expert Handicappers

Rarely is the average bettor given the opportunity to hear the top practitioners of handicapping (those who actually make their living at the track) expounding on the game. When this opportunity does arise, it behooves aspiring handicappers to pay close attention.

James Quinn is a psychology professor, prolific writer, and handicapping aficionado. He spent time with 14 of the best thoroughbred racing handicappers in the game today. His fascinating exploration into how these experts ply their trade is an educational experience that anyone who participates in pari-mutuel wagering can benefit from.

One mark of a good writer is that he knows the audience for which he is writing. In *The New Expert Handicappers* James Quinn demonstrates he not only knows his audience, but is intimate with their thoughts. Quinn realizes that any person who has ever inclined to place a wager has, at one time or another, fantasized about what it might be like to earn a living as a professional gambler. This book shows us the reality of the professional gambler's world. Struggling handicappers everywhere will find the world of the professional both inspirational and sobering.

The 14 handicappers profiled in the book are defined as experts because they are certifiable winners. Each of these handicappers approaches the game in a slightly different way and each utilizes distinct methodologies to achieve their goals. What they all have in common is a single-minded focus on results. In their view, results are defined as the amount of money won. Nothing else matters.

This focus on results is correlated with a willingness to alter or even abandon past strategies when the strategies no longer make money. These handicappers are not married to their systems. They are willing to incorporate any method into their handicapping, no matter how complex or time consuming, if it will help achieve positive results.

This open-minded approach has allowed these handicappers to evolve into winners. I stress the word evolve because another characteristic Quinn found common among these experts is that at one time they were losers. These handicappers have all grown to become winners.

The growth process these handicappers experienced sometimes extracted a heavy toll in terms of time and money lost. However, these handicappers believe that the time and money expended to reach their current level of expertise was well worth the cost. They consider these costs their education expenses. Now and in the future they will reap the benefits of this education.

We must note that the learning process the professional handicapper experiences is continuous. In fact, the mental demands placed on the professional increase with the passage of time. Frank Romano, a "heavy roller" and winner profiled in the book, states succinctly, "Professional handicapping is hard work and instead of getting easier, it seems to get harder. The more you know, the more you have to learn." (Page 161.)

Romano describes handicapping as hard work and so do the other devoted handicappers in the book. In fact, these handicappers cite hard work as the major reason for their success at the track. These experts put in the time it takes to find that extra edge. Tom Brohamer, another professional profiled in the book, devotes three hours to preparation before entering the track and then spends another six hours at the track. When the day is done, Brohamer spends
an hour and a half updating records. Thomas Edison once said, "Genius is 1% inspiration and 99% perspiration." The same might be said about professional handicapping.

There are several common factors these handicappers noted which led to the development of their expertise. Each expert emphasized the importance of exposure to the best literature on the subject. These handicappers however don't just read this literature and discard it like yesterday's coffee. They devour any writing they believe may be useful, then test the theories empirically at the tracks they play. If a system or angle yields positive results, they add it to their arsenal. If the system fails the test at their local oval, it is abandoned and the search for more useful information continues.

The approach each of these handicappers bring to the game is also crucial to why they are experts. In their mind, going to the track is business, not recreation. They do enjoy what they are doing—this is truly their chosen profession. However, they realize the purpose of being at the track is to make money.

As part of this businesslike approach, these handicappers recognize the importance of balance in handling both winning and losing. Regardless of the outcome of a race, they attempt to remain stoical.

This balance is achieved by the realization there will be bankroll fluctuations, but over the course of the season a profit will be made. They know their overall winning percentage. They know how many "prime" bets they will get each day and what their return on investment will be. They ignore the day-to-day gyrations and instead focus on the overall picture. Mental energy is therefore most efficiently reserved for handicapping.

One weakness Professor Quinn found common among these experts was their wagering skills. Although they all are proven winners, their lack of sophistication in wagering often prevents them from winning as much as they should. Apparently, their emphasis is fixed on handicapping. Wagering is regarded almost as an afterthought. Quinn describes Frank Romano (who bets $2,000 a race) as fascinated by the subject of handicapping, but bored with the subject of wagering.

Regarding wagering, most of these experts advocate betting a percentage of the bankroll, usually a conservative 2% to 5% of current betting capital. Erika Holdertith, the lone female handicapper profiled in the book, advocates the "Kelly approach" to betting. She believes in betting your advantage and in betting more when your chance to win is higher.

The one area where these experts do differ is in their betting style. Their betting styles can be compared to the swing of different baseball players. Some players, such as Ron Cox, (nicknamed "Captain Cover" for his ability to spot and cover the real possibilities in a race) tend to swing for the home run every time. He puts his money in the exotics and is constantly seeking a huge return on investment. Darryll Claussen is more like a singles hitter. He tries to win a lot of races, settling for smaller returns. Claussen says, "My only goal is to have a winning day. Enough of them add up to a winning season." (p. 128)

Each handicapper stresses that whatever pool a player chooses to enter and whatever amount a player chooses to wager, he ultimately must find his "comfort zone." This comfort zone is that level where a player can remain comfortable despite losing. If losing money becomes a concern then the player's handicapping will generally suffer.

James Quinn's book, although written about thoroughbred handicappers, is packed full of advice on testing theories on paper, keeping betting capital separate from rent money, and other hints very similar to the kind found monthly in Racing Greyhounds magazine. In The New Expert Handicappers, the top practitioners of the parimutuel game talk and this is one instance when it pays to listen.


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A SERIOUS LOOK AT LUCKY NUMBERS

So you've always envied those people who come to the track and play "lucky numbers," and you'd be more than willing to try it, except that in all your years you've never stumbled upon one, let alone a combination of numbers you would consider particularly lucky. Well, hopefully, this article will give you an edge on selecting greyhounds to come in by playing numbers.

BY REBECCA S. TURNER

Since handicapping is not random, although quite often it may seem so, numbers should not be picked randomly either, with high hopes being your only rationale. If you truly have lucky numbers you believe in, or have recently paid your numerologist for a fortuitous combination, stick with them. But for the rest of us, selecting our number associations "more or less" scientifically would seem the order of the day and give us more grounds for confidence in challenging chance.

In a recent survey of patrons at Daytona Beach Kennel Club, I asked what was the most important factor in selecting which dogs they picked to finish well in any race. There were roughly 14 answers to choose from, such as time, post position, odds, weight, drop in class, the break, and so on. There were 236 replies, and some replies were for more than one answer. I discovered that approximately 17% of those surveyed said they played numbers. Many were regular players, while others were only occasional. Their replies as to which numbers they favored were varied: birthday numbers, even or odd numbers, house numbers, etc. When I asked if the combinations worked, their replies were usually the contradictory "W-e-1...yes...and no," accompanied by an ambiguous yet sportive smile.

We all recognize that numbers are fascinating. They do such curious things in mathematics, have profoundly mystical qualities in religion and superstition, and are ultimately deceiving when you're doing your checkbook. Some say figures don't lie, but we've all noted their Alice in Wonderlandish properties; that they're never what they seem.

One exceptional fact about numbers according to Warren Weaver in his book, Lady Luck: The Theory of Probability, is that "...1, 2, 3, and 4 occur much more frequently, as the first digit of a number, than do 5, 6, 7, 8 or 9." In other words, the first digits of random numbers are not distributed evenly in the gestalt, or big picture of all the numbers in the world. This is a very unique fact, discovered in the beginning by an engineer for General Electric who noticed that a book of logarithmic tables he was using was decidedly more thumbed through the first half than the last half.

Perhaps, in light of Weaver's amazing assertion, we should like to discover for ourselves which numbers occur at random more often, and in the process see whether or not we can confirm Weaver's statement by our own findings, even if only on the tiniest
inductive scale. Perhaps numbers which we find occurring with frequency could be played to win with frequency as well. Let us try random sampling.

By definition, the goal of random sampling is to let chance determine the items that make up the sample. There are several ways to get a random sample of numbers. For the purposes of dog racing, we can discard 9 and use only 1 through 8. One method is to write the individual numbers on slips of paper, fold them all the same, and draw them one at a time from a box, keeping track of which number is selected each time through a certain number of drawings, say 100. The drawing must remain as purely random as possible. That is, each number must retain an equal chance of being selected, with no recognizable differentiations in the paper and no bias in choosing. And the representative sampling must be large enough for you to determine a predominance of certain numbers over others even though they are chosen in random fashion.

Another and more challenging method requires obtaining one or more books containing a more or less large supply of numbers. Phone books, almanacs, mathematics texts will serve, or copy some pages of the Table of Random Units. Determine a random selection process by which to get a representative number of digits. An example of a systematic process, would be to let a pencil fall on a number on every n'th page, or select a random starting point and choose every n'th element for your sample. Or you might want to pick the first column, first number, second column, third number, third column, fifth number, and so on, if you are using several columns of numbers such as with the Table of Random Units. It's important to recognize that phone books and almanacs aren't totally random and that you would have to rule out telephone prefixes (area codes and exchanges) and almanac dates, and also that elements other than 1-8 would be discounted for the purposes of your study.

After you have a lengthy enough representative sampling, make two columns, headed 1-4 and 5-8. Tabulate the totals of the digits under each column and fix these sums as a ratio of the numbers 1-4 over 5-8. By this method you can see if Weaver's statement that 1-4 are favored is borne out by the results of your mini-experiment.

To see the phenomena of numbers taking shape before your eyes, tally the number of times each digit, one through eight, occurred in your sampling. Using these totals, make a simple frequency polygon graph depicting the total number of times each digit occurred in your study. You may perform the activity several different times and make several different graphs using one source to see if any patterns emerge which would demonstrate the higher frequencies of certain numbers, or you may conclude there is no pattern at all. Or you may wish to sample several sources separately. Compare them or synthesize them into one big polygon graph. The graphs will give visual fruition to your efforts, and high points on the graphs could be "lucky numbers!"

Overall, your experiment is sure to stimulate a sense of wonderment as well as being fun. Numbers are like sugar plum fairies—they are never dull when they are dancing in your head as you approach the teller window. And they're like diamonds too—they have extraordinary facets. You should examine them with care, and note their special brilliance alone or in certain combinations. They are capricious, there's no doubt, but we can see from Weaver's assertion and from our own studies that their apparent overall randomness may not be so confoundingly random after all. By all means, experiment with numbers, and don't forget to check the statistics in your racing program. There are certain combinations at

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High points on the graph: 1, 2, and 3. Low points: 6 and 7.

The phone book sample of 95 numbers did not favor Weaver's statement. 42 first digits began with 1-4 and 53 began with 5-8. Rounding, the ratio is 4-5, not in favor of 1-4. I used the 255 exchange (phone number prefix) because it is older, and most telephone numbers in this exchange would have been assigned. I did not use the Yellow Pages. I chose a number at random on every second page and listed the nearest 255 exchange number I came to, either up or down.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Digit Occurrence</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
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High points on the graph: 3, 6, and 8. Low point: 7.

Conclusion: 3 and 2 were relatively high on both graphs, while 7 was low on both. A third sampling would probably determine whether I would opt for 1, 6, or 8. I would base my lucky number combinations on the results of the random number samplings, the track statistics on post position, quinellas, and trifectas, and Weaver's statement.

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Good luck at the track!
While we’re on the subject of lucky numbers, I thought I might throw in a few of my own. I took the most recent 1,437 trifectas from the Woodlands track, and counted up how many times each possible trifecta was a winner. Then I sorted the list, to get these 48 lucky trifectas. The table shows the most frequently winning straight trifecta plays, along with the exact number of times each was seen. You might note that while these 48 trifectas make up only 14% of all possible trifecta combinations, they represent over 28% of all wins. If you are going to use a lucky number, you might as well grab one that’s worked well in the past! —GW

**LUCKY TRIFECTAS**

1. (13) 3-1-2  25. (8) 4-2-1
2. (13) 1-8-2  26. (8) 3-7-1
3. (12) 8-1-2  27. (8) 3-5-6
4. (12) 2-8-3  28. (8) 3-4-1
5. (11) 1-2-7  29. (8) 1-8-3
6. (11) 1-2-3  30. (7) 8-1-7
7. (10) 8-7-6  31. (7) 8-1-6
8. (10) 6-8-1  32. (7) 7-8-1
9. (10) 4-7-1  33. (7) 6-3-4
10. (10) 2-1-3  34. (7) 5-8-6
11. (10) 1-2-6  35. (7) 5-8-1
12. (9) 8-7-4  36. (7) 4-7-2
13. (9) 8-5-6  37. (7) 4-6-8
14. (9) 6-8-7  38. (7) 4-5-8
15. (9) 4-2-8  39. (7) 3-7-8
16. (9) 4-1-8  40. (7) 2-8-1
17. (9) 2-1-8  41. (7) 2-5-8
18. (8) 8-7-5  42. (7) 2-3-1
19. (8) 8-7-2  43. (7) 2-1-4
20. (8) 6-8-2  44. (7) 1-6-8
21. (8) 6-1-8  45. (7) 1-6-7
22. (8) 5-1-2  46. (7) 1-6-5
23. (8) 4-8-1  47. (7) 1-5-6
24. (8) 4-5-1  48. (7) 1-5-3

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TRIFECTA WAGERING AND STAKES COMPETITION

To paraphrase Shakespeare, "To play or not to play. That is the question." And it’s arguably the most important decision in the handicapping process for it determines, to a great extent, the handicapper’s final financial fortunes.

Accurately evaluating a race's "playability," to coin a term, is especially important for trifecta players who tend to risk larger outlays than do win, place, and show wagerers, or quiniela bettors. On any given 13-, 14-, or 15-race card, a certain number of races—because of their character and/or composition—should be considered poor plays. The reasons may be many. Perhaps because of the high quality of entries, such as in grade A outings, the race is simply too close to call. Perhaps the field is composed of greyhounds whose racing history shows them to be erratic. Maybe the entries in a particular race include several ship-ins. Or perhaps the field is a patchwork of older greyhounds dropping in grade, younger dogs on the rise and an entry or two returning to the track after a layoff.

For whatever reasons, trifecta wagerers are better off not playing some races (a point Pender Noriega reiterates several times in his article, "Play To Win," in the December, 1989 issue of RG.) Knowing when to resist the temptation to head up to the cashier’s window and actually exercising that self-restraint is a dichotomous problem plaguing even the most experienced track-goers.

On the other hand, there are certain races among those on any racing
card which simply should not be bypassed by trifecta players. Many of these are the ones which seem to jump out at the handicapper as he or she browses through the program for the first time. Sometimes handicappers need only glance at a given race to realize that a certain greyhound will likely win and that the second and third place finishers will probably come from among a group of three or four. The playability of these races is obvious, even to novice handicappers, and the resulting payoffs are usually small. Cost-effective wagering, though, can ensure a profit.

In the December, 1989 issue, M. Blake Leonard pointed out the potentially profitable opportunities—not just for trifecta players—presented by grade T races. His basic argument was that in grade T races, there are usually a number of entries which are simply out-classed and hence have little or no likelihood of even finishing in the money, let alone winning. The bi-level composition of such races should make for more accurate handicapping, hence improving the probabilities of cashing winning tickets.

Similar situations often present themselves when tracks host the preliminary rounds of stakes races. Such contests, especially in the qualifying rounds, usually include proven grade A competitors, the best the track has to offer, along with ship-ins, as well as greyhounds which have little realistic hope of competing at that level. Sometimes greyhounds which are obviously out-classed in such races will be entered simply because their handlers and owners feel they have little to lose by doing so. These races will invariably result in mismatches which should be easy pickings for experienced trifecta players.

To reap this harvest, however, trifecta players must be able not only to accurately handicap the race, but also to formulate cost-effective wagers. This two-part task is often more difficult than it sounds because in many grade T races, the betting public targets the eventual winner and the resulting trifecta payoffs are consequently small. Spending $42 for a wheel and then collecting less than the investment
would not be uncommon. Under these conditions, narrowing down the field of possible second and third place finishers is a prerequisite to producing a profit. This is where knowledge of the particular biases of the track, familiarity with the running styles of the greyhounds, and the ability to psychoanalyze the wagering public usually separate the short-term winners from the long-term profit-makers. (See Gordon Waite’s article in the October, 1988 issue, “Psychoanalyze the Crowd.”)

The Naples-Ft. Myers Track conducted the preliminary rounds of its $25,000 Gulf Coast Sprint Championship, which was run over the 5/16-mile course, in late December and early January. The final was conducted January 27. During the early rounds of the competition, before the obviously out-classed and over-matched greyhounds were weeded out, trifecta players should have been cashing tickets on a regular basis. Veteran handicappers who were able to parlay their experience and knowledge into both accurate and cost-effective wagers should have been able to do better, not just winning, but accruing a handsome profit.

The initial race of qualifying round one was the first race on December 29. It featured one of the pre-stakes favorites, Tubby Bowman, running from box four. (For more on Tubby Bowman, as well as the other dogs from this remarkable litter, see Kevin Hulick’s article, “Puppy Potential—One Year Later,” in the December, 1989 issue.) Tubby appeared to be the class of the field and figured to break quickly, leaving the other greyhounds in his wake.

Believing that Tubby Bowman would run either first or second and that if he

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Racing Greyhounds • March 1990

---

Tubby Bowman

Maddie Might; all showed some early speed, but none held the prospect of being able to run with Tubby.

Regular patrons of the Naples-Ft. Myers Track enjoyed a decided advantage over the many holiday tourists who populated the track this night because #2. It's Mr. To You, had been one of the top grade A competitors at the track before shipping off to the Miami circuit. He figured to be a component of any winning trifecta combination. The other two entries, #1, Ray Ray, and #5, Shadow Red, were closers and appeared to be likely candidates for possibly the second, but more likely the third spot in the trifecta.

Believing that Tubby Bowman would run either first or second and that if he
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The eleventh race that same evening offered another opportunity to take advantage of a grade T field. #5, Swanner's Sharoon, was everyone's selection to win, but which greyhounds would round out the trifecta? #1, Pursloined, appeared to be in over her head. #2, Go Go Troy, had fared well in AA races at Lincoln, Rhode Island, but had been on hiatus for two months and his schooling races had produced less-than-impressive times. Similar comments could apply to #3, J.C.'s Cannon, although his Miami circuit experience hinted at more promise. #4, T's Rebel Rouser, showed some early speed, but hadn't proven his ability to compete at this level.

#7, Mi Mi Mecca, was an established grade A runner and seemed certain to run either second or third. #6, Dark Splendor, and #8, Sonic Phrog, were both late speed entries who appeared to be the other likely combatants for the bottom two spots in the trifecta.

The initial wagers became a pair of $2 trifecta partial wheels, 5/7/4-6-8, and 5/4-6-8/7, costing a total of $12. Then because of the running style of #8, Sonic Phrog, an outside runner who comes from off the pace, and the decided bias of the eighth box, a second key bet was 5/7/8, bringing the total wager to $16. (See article, “Box Bias and Betting Favorites,” in the August, 1989 issue.)

#5, Swanner's Sharoon, didn't disappoint, going box-to-wire for the win. #8, Sonic Phrog, took the anticipated outside route and ran down #7, Mi Mi Mecca, in the stretch to produce a 5-8-7 finish. The $2 trifecta payoff was only $36.40, but our two-bet approach yielded a pair of winning tickets and a respectable $56.80 profit.
The final race of the evening on December 29 looked like another good money-making opportunity for trifecta players. #1, Stridden Rite, a ship-in from Miami’s Flagler Track who had been running what amounted to 3/8-mile races, and #7, My Blue Boy, an outsider runner with good late speed (targeted for Kevin Hulick’s Speed and Grade Greyhound Hit List—see the “They’re on Our Tail” section in the December, 1989 issue), figured to run first and second. Handicapping the third element of the trifecta, though, was difficult. #3, Hang For Hedging, showed a win at the grade A level, but his times were not competitive, and he tended to encounter trouble. #4, Cam’s Ferdinand, was a possibility, as were #6, Cal’s Berkeley, a recent ship-in from Flagler, and #8, Mega Force, a young greyhound climbing the grade ladder. #5, Lady Double, faded her last time out and was consequently eliminated and #2, Dansforth, was scratched.

To ensure a winning ticket, a pair of $2 partial wheels, 1/7/3-4-6-8 and 7/1/3-4-6-8, were played costing $8 apiece. A second wager, again based upon the advantage greyhounds housed in the eight box enjoy at this track, became 1/7/8 and 7/1/8, bringing the total outlay on the race to $20.

The risk proved profitable when #1 won, #7 closed nicely to finish second, and #8 avoided trouble at the far turn to wind up third. That trouble knocked #3 and #6 out of contention for the third spot. The 1/7/8 combination returned $49.80 for an after-wager profit of $78.80.

Sometimes the preliminary rounds of stakes competition present experienced handicappers with the opportunity to reap nice rewards by looking beyond the obvious and risking a larger outlay. This is especially true at tracks which draw many novice bettors and tourists, such as most of the Florida tracks. Such an opportunity arose with the fourth race on January 5. The favorites were #2, Mika J; #4, Lapo Pag’s Bogs; #5, Seven Ten; and #6, Tracy Special. All four were established competitors at the grade A level and the winner appeared certain to come from among them. Tracy Special, the winner of the 1989 Naples-
Ft. Myers Derby, however, was suspect in this race, having tired badly her last three times out. #2, Mika J., was also suspect—even though the wagering public made him the overwhelming favorite—because he was an outside runner who had drawn into an inside box. On the other hand, #7, Delta Miss, and #8, Sonic Pris—both considered long shots by the betting public—appeared to be strong candidates for either the second or third position in the trifecta, since they were both outside runners who had drawn outside boxes.

Eliminating only #3, Honda Jock, despite the grade A victory in his previous outing, the wager became two $1 partial wheels, 4-5-7-8/1-2-4-5-6-7-8 and 4-5-1-2-4-5-6-7-8/7-8, each costing $20. #4, Lapo Pag's Bogs, led the race from start to finish. #7, Delta Miss, broke well, stayed to the outside and chased the winner, and #8, Sonic Pris, broke badly but was able to maneuver on the outside of the track and finished with a rush to wind up second.

Most of the patrons apparently figured at least two of the four favorites would find their way into the trifecta, because the 4/8/7 combination paid $927.20. Bettors holding $2 winning tickets had to make a mandatory stop at the IRS window. Fortunately, we were able to avoid that trip and still reap the full reward of our risk, since each of our $1 partial wheels produced a $463.60 payoff.

A tourist-saturated crowd and the recommendations of the track-produced tip sheet combined to present a similar opportunity with the fourteenth race on December 30. #6, Beauty Baby, and #7, Black Glass, both breakers, looked certain to finish either first or second.
and third. The other tip sheet favorites were #3, I'm Julian, and #4, Girl of Iron. Monitoring the tote board led to the conclusion that the crowd, laden with tourists, was relying largely on the recommendations of the tip sheet and those of "Railbird," "Trackman," and "Consensus" at the bottom of the page in the daily program.

Consequently, an alternative strategy (see article in the December, 1989 issue entitled, "Tip Sheet Accuracy Levels and Wagering Strategies") was employed based upon two premises: (1) #7, Black Glass, would finish first or second, and (2) at least one of three non-tip sheet selections—#1, #2, and #5—would be part of the winning trifecta combination. The wager, composed of four $1 partial wheels costing $18 each, became: 7-1-2-5/1-2-3-4-5-6-8, 7-1-2-3-4-5-6-8-1-2-5, 1-2-3-5/1-2-3-4-5-6-8 and 1-2-3-4-5-6-8/7/1-2-5.

As anticipated, #7, Black Glass fired out, but so did #5, Leon Lightfoot. #6, Beauty Baby, was bumped at the first turn and knocked out of the race. Eventually, Leon Lightfoot earned the victory, Black Glass ran second and #2, Seven Ten, finished third. The $72 risk proved worthwhile, since the 5/7/2 trifecta returned $1,518.20 and our 1-2-5/7/1-2-3-4-5-6-8 and 1-2-3-4-5-6-8/7/1-2-5 tickets each earned $759.10 and an inescapable stop at the IRS window.

Lest the impression be created that the preliminary rounds of stakes races produce "can't lose" situations for trifecta players, such is obviously not the case. Consider the fourth race on December 29. #3, Cheetle, was the favorite, having won his last three races in impressive fashion. #7, Rudic Rose, a ship-in from...
Flagler, and #4, RN's Toad, were both closers and likely candidates for one or both of the bottom two spots in the trifecta. #1, Beer Frame, #5, Rosco Cole, and #8, Shymmer, all had early speed and also constituted possible second or third place finishers. #6, Natural Ability, and #2, Pro's Grin Girl, looked to be also-rans.

Concluding that Cheddle, would finish either first or second and that either #4, RN's Toad, or #7, Rudie Rose, would find their way into the trifecta, the wager became 3/4-7/1-4-5-7-8, 3/4-1-4-5-7-8/4-7, 4-7/3/4-5-7-8/3/4-7, and 1-4-5-7-8/3/4-7, where each of the four partial wheels cost $8.

Unfortunately, #4, RN's Toad, and #7, Rudie Rose, were both bumped at the first turn and finished fifth and sixth, respectively. #1, Beer Frame, won; Cheddle closed to run second and #2, Pro's Grin Girl, wound up third. The trifecta 1/3/2 paid $688.80. The results were a sobering reminder that unforeseen trouble at the first turn can—and too often does—ruin what appears to be even the most promising wager.

As good an opportunity as the preliminary rounds of stakes races represent for trifecta players, such bettors must be leery of over-handicapping the races and attempting to make too fine of a distinction among the greyhounds. As a case in point, consider the fourth race on January 6, which was a round one quarterfinal contest. #7, Tubby Bowman, was the prohibitive favorite. #5, Beauty Baby, boxed between two slow starters, figured to break well and chase Tubby Bowman, perhaps catching him. Likely possibilities for the third spot in the trifecta were #1, RN's Toad, #4, Cause For Pause, and #6, Electric Soldier, all closers, and #8, Fond A Hulk.

The wagers, consisting of three $2 partial wheels, 7/5/1-4-6-8, 7/5/1-4-6-8, and 5/7/1-4-6-8, cost $8 apiece, but became a $24 loss moments later. Tubby Bowman uncharacteristically missed the break and would up chasing #5,
Beauty Baby, #1, RN's Toad hugged the rail and ran down both early leaders in the deep stretch to win by half of a length. The 1/5/7 trifecta paid $409.80.

Handicappers who concluded that either #5 or #7 would surely win the race found themselves with losing tickets. Those who liked the 1/5/7 combination and foresaw either the possibility of #1 winning or #7 missing the break—probably few and far between—or those who simply decided to play it safe with a 1/5/7 trifecta box for $6, enjoyed a profitable trip to the cashier's window. More than likely, bettors cashing winning trifecta tickets for this race were novice or first-time track-goers and tourists who hadn't learned the more sophisticated betting techniques of keys and partial wheels. In this case, ignorance was profitable bliss.

Conclusions

Assessing the playability of races is one of the most important judgments handicappers make. In general, there is a direct relationship between playability level, handicapping accuracy, and profit opportunity.

Among the various types of races, playability levels are often highest for those races conducted during the early rounds of stakes competition. This is because the fields are usually composed not only of legitimate grade A competitors, but also of entries which are simply outclassed and consequently have very little chance of competing successfully. As a result, handicappers are actually dealing with a smaller number of greyhounds when making their evaluations, rather than with the entire field of eight, or sometimes nine dogs.

The bi-level composition of these races should lead to increased handicapping accuracy and more frequent trips to the cashier's window for both beginning bettors and experienced wagerers. The consequentially larger number of winning tickets will result in smaller payoffs and a diminution of the profit margin, but veteran handicappers who can successfully employ their knowledge and ex-
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In pursuit of profit, trifecta players should always be aware of a pair of potentially lethal pitfalls: over-handicapping, which can produce one of the most frustrating feelings wagerers can experience, and first turn trouble, which can ruin what appears to be even the most promising bet.

John L. Kerr
Devoted to the Greyhound
Published by the NATIONAL GREYHOUND ASSOCIATION

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P.O. Box 543, Abilene, KS 67410 913-263-4660
It's time for us to pick that pup! In earlier issues, we've asked you to help pick a greyhound for me—one of the three females and one male we've pictured here. I know I said I wanted a female, but response from the first batch of pictures caused me to include the big guy with the white boots also.

As of this writing the pups are four months old exactly. They have been wormed again and vaccinated against five different canine ills. Sonny Olson of the Go Fast Kennel has moved them into runs that are 300 feet long and 35 feet wide. They will remain in these runs until Sonny sees fit to begin formal training. They will be handled regularly by Sonny and his wife Mavis at feeding time, and when the runs are cleaned daily of doggie do-do.

During this period they will race up and down the runs from dawn to dusk challenging the pups in adjacent runs to race with them. It is a time to develop muscles and particularly the heart and lungs. They will establish a pattern of dominance among themselves and begin to learn the system. It is important to set a schedule and stick to it. Feeding time, clean-up, and grooming must become a routine.

During their stint at the track, routine is the name of the game. If they are used to the idea of a schedule while on the farm, it will make the transition to kennel breaking that much easier. This is one of the hardest things involved in raising good pups. When they ex-

Racing greyhounds are actually constructed long before they are even born.
pect you to be there with their dinner, you need to be there! It's all part of developing a trust between the pups and humans. If you disappoint them even occasionally, you break down that bond of trust. Sonny's most adamant lesson, (and I hear this every time I see him) is: "You can't raise pups sitting at the diner sucking on a cup of coffee." I have seen Mavis outside in bitter cold weather when she was too sick to speak. Sonny never misses chores in spite of the fact he has a replacement valve in his heart and his breast bone is held together with stainless steel wires!

These pups are leaving a stage now when the dangers of most puppyhood diseases are behind them, although it always remains a possibility. They now enter a period when injury is a greater concern. Flying up and down a 300-foot run all day long, they run some risk of crashing into each other. There is always the risk of turned ankles or a freak accident while starting or stopping. Sonny minimizes this by keeping his runs free of debris and constantly leveling them.

Reassured that whatever pup we pick will have the best care any greyhound ever had, go ahead and pick one: A, B, C, or D. Send a note to Racing Greyhounds and identify the pup you like the most. The countdown is on—one year from now we will know what we have.

A Little History...

Aside from the fact that these pups are being raised and trained by a true professional, receiving the finest of everything, what else would indicate these pups will have what it takes to be successful at the track? Bloodlines, of course. When they turn for home—when they've taxed their physical abilities to the limit—when the crowd cheers and that quiniela ticket you're holding lies in the balance and you need that dog to give just a little more to send you to the cashier's window—that's when a good dog finds something extra, when he reaches back and runs on his pedigree.

Greyhound bloodlines fascinate me. That may be because I am not real busy doing lunch with my accountant or reading the Wall Street Journal. So I spend endless hours tracing bloodlines back ten or fifteen generations.

If you will indulge me, I'd like to take you back for three generations and investigate the heritage of these pups. I have them traced back to the early 1900's, but for three generations we'll only need to go to the early sixties.
In past issues we have expounded on the ability of King Kannon to produce quality offspring. Even as I am writing this, he has another litter climbing the ladder in Phoenix, winning maiden races in times quicker than grade A winners on the same night. We ran down the racing history of Full Of Kisses in January. But will she produce?

This ad below from the Winter Directory of Sires (1989, Greyhound Review) would seem to indicate so. Tikita is a litter sister to Estee. These stud dogs also display the same propensity for running both sprints and distance that Full Of Kisses displayed. Of course, being sired by the great Placid Ace didn’t hurt these boys any. Further investigation uncovered this quote from the book Great Names in Greyhound Pedigrees, written by Gary Guccione, Executive Editor of the Greyhound Review, and without a doubt the most notable authority on the subject of bloodlines: “POLICED stock was noted for its speed, but it was not at all uncommon for it to go 3/8ths or even marathon.”

When we wrote about Full Of Kisses in January, we learned that her sire, Sunsand Lou, won over 60 races at six tracks and came from a litter that won more than 200 races. Although I said I would only go back three generations I must point out the name Westy Whizzer, sire of B. Whiz and grandsire of Downing. He was a Hall of Famer who produced four All Americans, a Flashy Sir Award winner, a pair of Rural Rube winners, and grandsire to three others including Downing. He won 107 races himself and was a three-time All American. (You ought to hear about his daddy.)

Now, about B. Whiz, who was from a January, 1969 litter (eleven males and one female) out of the great Flying Slipper. The winningest litter of all time, the “Whiz Kids” won 399 races! B. Whiz was a top-ranked sire in 1979, ‘80, and ‘81.

Downing, sire of Sunsand Lou is legendary. Grandson of Westy Whizzer, he deserves a chapter on his own, but for our purposes he was awesome. And the best goes on, as many of his sons are now top producers.

Greyhound Review Directory of Sires, Fall 1989:

Top grade wins by progeny of below listed sires through October 1989. Tracks with average handle per performance of $240,000 or greater. Greyhound Review publication.

1. B.J. JUSTIN (K'S Flak-Hy Times)
2. NICKY FINN (Downing-Beauty May)
3. Straight Thru (Great Escape-Winter Dee)
4. DUTCH BAHAMA (Hairless Jee-Dutch Delta)
5. HONDO MONOPOLY (Rooster-Cogburn-Hondo Nameg)
6. P.K'S Jet (Kelly Jones-Oshomiki Bunny)
7. Unruly (Kelly Jones-Skillful)
8. BOB'S DASH (Carry-On-Dromara Darly)
9. PERCEIVE (Downing-Lucky Carmel)
10. SPORTS REVIEW (Unruly-Making Eyes)
11. Black Aztec (Ungwila-Lad-Eboy-Aztec)
12. Profits Andy (Share Profit-Marcia Meyer)
13. SPORTS SPECIAL (K'S Flak-Festive Lace)
14. DARK RUMOR (Kelly Jones-Mandy Lane)
15. KUNTA KINTE (S.S. Jeno-Lucky Terra)
16. K'S Flak (Onie Jones-Montague Memory)
17. UNDERSTOOD (Downing-Economy)
18. Bold Footprint (Downing-All Heart)
19. W.D.'s Chirp (Downing-All Heart)

Raced at Wonderland Grade A and AA. Ran all distances, 5/16, 3/8 and 7/16. Has litters at tracks.

**STATE STREET**

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<td>Owned by Steve Kareltz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**UP MARKET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLACID ACE</th>
<th>Fee: $500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Onie Jones</td>
<td>Festive Lace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herter</td>
<td>Eak Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Como Ring</td>
<td>Festive Lace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tikita</td>
<td>B. Whiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Pearl</td>
<td>Westy Whizzer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying Slipper</td>
<td>Policed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dainty Spark</td>
<td>Owned by Steve Kareltz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So far, via Full Of Kisses, we have a double dose of Westy Whizzer through Downing and B. Whiz, plus Policed, a great dog in his own right. What did King Kannon bring to the party? More bloodlines, of course.

King's father, C's Mickey, could run a little. He went to post 159 times, won 52, placed 33, showed 21, and fin-
ished four 14 times. That’s 120 times on the pay sheet! He had a pair of brothers, C’s Marty and C’s Matt who were pretty good also:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Starts</th>
<th>W</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>4th</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mickey</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marty</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C’s Mickey could run a little, but could he produce? I mean besides King Kannon, of course. Alright already!

**MY RED STREAK**

Fee: $1,000

**MY TIPPER**

Fee: $1,500

**JENO’S LEO GO**

May 1973

S.S. JENO (Venerable-Kitty Hoss)

R.L.’s ROYAL MISSY (Duke Of Loup-Cindy Troubles)

From a great litter, one of Southland’s very best prior to injury. Now a proven producer of top racers on major tracks. Has had an excellent percentage of pups per litter make the race track. Just some of his better offspring include SCOTT SIX, CONFIRMED, NYANZA, HIGH DIVER, OKLAHOMA RANDY, RAINBOW MIST, G.H.’S AIMEE, TEXAS TWISTER, SANDY SIX. There have been many others.

**IRISH MATTER**


King’s mama, Dixie Go, is a littermate to Norma Go, who won the Memphis Derby. And she was a sister to Jeno’s Leo Go...

**1989 Sprint Dam Standings**

Major Tracks

Top grade wins by progeny of below listed dams through July 1989 for distances less than 1,900 yards, with average handle per performance of $350,000 or greater. (Compiled by Wendie Scott)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Dam Name</th>
<th>sire(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>OSHKOSH PINE (Pecos-Cannon)</td>
<td>Oshkosh Viger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>P.F.’S MISTY (Purple-Kat)</td>
<td>Truly Blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>VALDEZ (Jiff-Jones’ Spot)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>OSHKOSH BENEFIT (Oshkosh-Champ-Oshkosh)</td>
<td>Champ-Oshkosh Cash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>BIJOU WALLET (General-Linney-Bijou Sparkle)</td>
<td>Lincoln Sparkle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>FAST LIZ (President-Elect-Wise Liz)</td>
<td>President-Elect-Wise Liz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>OSHKOSH DISCO (Pecos-Oshkosh-Bettor)</td>
<td>Oshkosh-Bettor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>CHAR’S DREAM (Shredder-Urban-Met)</td>
<td>Shredder-Urban-Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>OH MERCY ME (Odd Enough-Judith)</td>
<td>Odd Enough-Judith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>BEYOND BASIC (Unruly-Valerie-White)</td>
<td>Unruly-Valerie-White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>FRESH APPROACH (One Jones-Final Approach)</td>
<td>One Jones-Final Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>BELENA (Unruly-Racing Fever)</td>
<td>Unruly-Racing Fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>PINK SUNSHINE (Sandy Painter-Groovy Collette)</td>
<td>Sandy Painter-Groovy Collette</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>SHELLY SPEED (June’s-TP-Full)</td>
<td>June’s-TP-Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>BEAU LIZ (Beau-Bigge-Wise Liz)</td>
<td>Beau-Bigge-Wise Liz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>INITIATIVE (K.C.’s-Clover-Pewter)</td>
<td>K.C.’s-Clover-Pewter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>OSHKOSH BUDDY (Pecos-Oshkosh-Viger)</td>
<td>Pecos-Oshkosh-Viger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>HELLO BRENDA (K’s-Clever-K’s-Sugar)</td>
<td>K’s-Clever-K’s-Sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LONING LOOK (Doming-Bracha Sue)</td>
<td>Doming-Bracha Sue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MISS COGBURN (Rooster-Coburn-By-Hy’s-Winsome)</td>
<td>Rooster-Coburn-By-Hy’s-Winsome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NOTHINGS EASY (Kelly-Jones-Gurley)</td>
<td>Kelly-Jones-Gurley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**JASS L,” Leo Go**

It would seem Bill Pollard of “Oshkosh” fame is a little bit partial to Pecos Cannon blood as well!

By the way (again), Cruison Wolfe, mother of Sunsand Lou, is a daughter of Pecos Cannon.

**IRISH MATTER**

In the final of the $50,000 Raynham President’s Day Distance Championship, Irish Matter’s son, Prexy Prince and his sister major stake competitor, Marble Meddler, ran a fast closing 2nd and 3rd, only a whisker apart. “Prince” had himself won A4 spots at Wonderland showing the versatility of this first litter from Irish Matter. He was one of the best of a litter of 11 (7-4-3-1) at Wonderland. The female sire behind this dog is sold. Note “Dick Go” is a sister to Jeno’s Leo Go. He is an excellent breeder. The big money is in distance racing. Most kennels never have enough good 3/8 and 7/16 dogs. Irish Matter can help you in this department.

King Kannon’s granddaddy, Pecos Cannon, won the Rural Rube in 1974. He won the U.S. Sire Championship at least two times in my knowledge. His exploits as a producer are too numerous to detail. You might have heard of some of those Oshkosh dogs, sired by Pecos Cannon? Oshkosh, by gosh!

That leaves us with a dog named S.S. Jeno. As you might have guessed, he was pretty good as well. After winning the 1971 American Derby, he went on to produce P.L. Greer, who won the Flashy Sir Award twice!
And a couple of others.
Females like Lucky Carmell:

And her brother Kunta Kinte:

To quote the book Great Names in Greyhound Pedigrees one more time...
"Venerated's magnificent compatibility with the Kinto Nebo and Tell You Why females was the cornerstone of his success..." (O.K., I'll bite, who the heck is Venerated??)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sire: S.S. Jeno</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kitty Hess</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sire: DOWNING ↔ Dam: LUCKY CARMELL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Big Whizzer-Hookers Flower)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(S.S. Jeno-Lucky Terra)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three-time All-American PERCEIVE was one of the greatest track dogs in the country. He won 98 races at Southland and Derby Lane and earned approximately $175,000 in purse money. Held track record at Southland.

**KUNTA KINTE**

The #1 active stud dog in the country

Sire: S.S. Jeno

$1,500

Dam: Lucky Terra

Consider that a good litter of pups might run out $100,000 or more during their racing careers and an outstanding litter might run out that amount every year. It's obvious that females that have proven they can produce winners are nearly priceless.

Wayne Strong of Abilene, one of the most successful breeders in the history of the sport, with Rooster Cogburn, Friend Westy, and other notables, would be the first guy to tell you he would resurrect a bitch named Miss Gorgeous if he could bring any of them back. Kinto Nebo, a bitch who probably ran out less than $100 during her racing career would be worth 100 times the measly $250 she was purchased for in 1961.

**Back to Our Pups**

These pups, with a minimum of luck, ought to do just fine. They are rich in heritage, being out of bloodlines which have proven their abilities to not only reproduce quality but also to cross with each other. As the future owner of one of these pups, they represent to me another chance to send home enough money to raise more of my own, and to upgrade the quality of the stock on my farm.

Not unlike everyone who has ever owned a greyhound, I can dream that this could be the one that puts me on the map—the next Westy Whizzer, Pecos Cannon, or Oshkosh Juliet. Every greyhound that goes under a blanket represents that kind of dream to someone, somewhere.

"But for now," he said as he snapped back to reality, "I better turn out, and pick up the runs, and change the bedding, mix feed, and break the ice out of the water buckets and..."
Now the Wilkens’ children can honestly say that they have royal blood in their family.

Most people don’t know that greyhounds can be traced all the way back to the Pharaohs of Egypt. Or that in 17th century England only nobility could own the dogs.

The Wilkens family certainly didn’t know all that when they adopted Phoebe. The Wilkens just wanted a loving, trusting animal for their two children. They wanted an animal that was playful, but not too playful. An animal that could teach their kids about responsibility, and more importantly, tender loving care. Well, they got all that and more with Phoebe.

For more information about adopting a greyhound, call GPA. And then you, too, can have royal blood in your family.
Odds Versus Winning Percentage

by Gordon Waite

Our lives as handicappers might be a lot easier if we could just interview a few greyhounds after their races. In every other sport, the writers and sportscasters mob the players in the locker room right after the game. They always get to the winners first, but the losers usually get their fair share as well.

Of course, both groups give the same interviews, year in and year out. The star on the winning team gets to talk about how it was really a team effort, even though he scored all the points. The lesser stars talk about how the Almighty was on their side today, and how they were really psyched up to win. And in the other locker room, the losers talk about how they failed to take it one game at a time, but there is always next year, and they have a lot of good younger players that just need time to get seasoned. (The manager's thinking about seasoning him and roasting him over a fire.)

Wouldn't it be great to stick a microphone in front of He's My Man, after yet another win, and listen to his comments. "I knew when I drew the 1 hole that I'd have a good shot. The Almighty must have been on my side when that crash happened on the first turn. And my sore muscle is pretty much at 100% again..."

Well, maybe that wouldn't help so much after all. In any case, we can't interview the great ones after they do their job and pick up their paychecks. So we handicappers just have to rely on statistics to tell us the stories.

In the last few months we've been looking at win odds, and trying to understand their messages. David Marans has looked at the relationship between win odds, and place and show probabilities. And our TRIFECTA program looked at the relationship between win odds and overlays and underlays in the trifecta pool. This month, I want to pull up some more detailed stats, and look at graphical views.

Many months ago, I found that favorites have fewer finishes in third place than dogs with much worse odds. Professor Marans' articles looked first at favorites and then at odds groupings. His work led to two regression formulae that helped a player predict a dog's place and show probabilities based on her win odds. And these studies also confirmed that low odds dogs will finish in third less often than you would expect.

As I read these studies, I got curious enough to go back and look at the statistics in greater detail. After all of the revelations I dug up using the TRIFECTA program (Jan. '90 RG), I figured that the Woodlands database would be a good place to start. Before running any more studies, though, I went ahead and entered the results from many more races. This brought the database up to 1,437 races, including something over 11,000 dogs' lines run in Kansas City.

The one thing that had bothered me about David Marans' study was the grouping of the greyhounds. Prof. Marans grouped dogs in certain odds ranges. For example, he found that dogs with win odds between 1:9 and 6:5 won 44.4% of their races, finished second 15.5%, and finished third 10.7%. But there is a big difference between a dog that goes off at 1:9 and one that goes off at 6:5.

So, I added a new study to the TRIFECTA program to run out the actual finish percentages for dogs at every odds break between 0.1 and 25.0. And as long as the...
computer wasn’t complaining about the work, I went ahead and looked at all eight possible finish positions. This entire study is printed here, so you can use the results to help answer any of your own questions.

The first column of the report is the odds column. The report is sorted so that the low odds dogs are at the top, and the long shots are at the end. A number like 2.0 identifies the line that shows data for dogs that started at 2 to 1. The second column shows the theoretical winning percentage for that odds figure. This theoretical winning percentage is enclosed in parenthesis so you won’t confuse them with the actual winning percentage, which is given in the third column. The next seven columns show the actual percentage of times those dogs finished second, third, etc., down to eighth. The final column shows the number of greyhounds that were included in the data on that line.

For those statisticians out there, I have to tell you that I did some minor smoothing on this data. As you would expect, some of the lines were a little short of dogs. So I included dogs in adjacent lines to increase the sample size without introducing glaring irregularities in the data. For example, if a dog went off at 4.3, I included her data in both the 4.2 and the 4.4 lines, as well as the 4.3 line. Again, the intention was to smooth out the data a little by increasing the sample sizes.

### What’s to be Learned?

Looking at the details like this does bring out some of the differences between certain dogs at different odds. Consider the group we mentioned previously, starting at 1:9 (0.1) and going up to 6:5 (1.2). In Prof. Marans’ article, this group won 44% of their races. But with the detail broken out, you can see that they actually win a range from a high of 75% to a low of 37.6%. That’s a pretty wide range to include in one group.

To get a better feeling for the data, I plotted some graphs for certain lines in the report. You should look at the thirteen little graphs included elsewhere in this article. The first of these graphs looks at the line with odds of 1.0. I plotted eight percentages, one for each of the eight finish positions. There are no real surprises here. The graph starts up high on the left, and rapidly drops down to below 10% for finishes of third place or worse.

The graph for 2.0 looks quite a bit different from the 1.0 graph. Here, the 2.0 dogs still win more races, but their second place finish percentage rivals their winning percentage. And now we start to see a rather curious thing. The dogs with win odds of 2.0 have almost identical percentages in every finish position from third to seventh! It seems a little surprising that a dog with odds that low (2.0 is often a favorite) would have exactly the same probability of finishing third as of finishing seventh. Remember, these are actual observed percentages, and not estimates or theories.
A Different View

Those horizontal slices through the table give a fairly good profile of finishes for dogs at a given odds level. The next set of graphs shows different, vertical slices through the report.

The next graph is probably the most interesting study in this piece. Here I have plotted the winning percentage for all dogs with odds from .1 through 16.0. (see Win Odds versus Winning Percentage.) If you’ll look at this chart, you’ll see two plots. The jagged plot is the actual winning percentage data. The smooth curve is a plot of the theoretical winning percentage for each of the odds along the bottom.

This graph is particularly important because it is the only chart that shows overlays and underlays. If the jagged line falls above the smooth curve, that is an overlay situation. If the jagged line falls under the curve, you have an underlay.

Look at this graph more closely. There are two features that are really interesting. In the odds range from around 3.0 through 7.0, most of the jagged line falls above the smooth curve. Only a few of the valleys fall below. This entire range is basically an overlay range.

In contrast, the area from about 8.0 through 13.0 mostly falls below the curve. Only a few peaks break out above. This area is an underlay region.

Now that’s an interesting observation. After all, the crowd sets the odds with their wagering action. Apparently, the crowd bets too little on dogs in the 3.0 through 7.0 range, and too much on dogs 8.0 or worse. So the crowd is overbetting on long shots, and underbetting the middle dogs.
Win Odds versus Winning Percentage

Winning Percentage

Win Odds

At first glance, it appears that the underbet, overlaid middle range is a pretty small section of the chart. But you have to remember that the chart doesn't show you how many dogs fall in that range. If you go back to the table of raw numbers, you'll see that at 4.0 alone, there were 333 lines in the sample. Roughly, if you add up the sample sizes from 3.0 through 7.0, and divide by three to eliminate my sample smoothing, you'll find that about 3,900 lines fall into this area. And that's about 35% of all lines! That's a pretty big segment to show an overall overlaid bias.

Place, Show, and Worse

The final three graphs included here are plots for the place, show, and eighth place finishes for dogs arranged by win odds. For the win odds versus second place percentage graph, you'll notice how rough the plot is. There is a clear downward trend as the win odds get higher. So generally, the longer the win odds, the lower the probability of finishing in second place. But notice how wide the swings are on this chart. Adjacent peaks and valleys are often nearly ten percentage points apart! That's not a smooth curve at all, but reminds one of the look of a graph of stock market prices over time.

The more interesting graph is the win odds versus third place percentages. Take a good look at this chart. This chart has even wider swings than the place graph. But where the place graph showed a steady downhill fall, this graph is fairly level across the whole range. And that's pretty remarkable. After all, it means that a dog with win odds of 2.5 has almost exactly the same chance of finishing in third place as a dog with 15.0 win odds!

That knowledge has pretty important implications for trifecta players, especially those that play keys or wheels. If you can isolate one or two dogs for the top two spots, it really doesn't matter at all, probability wise, which dog you put in the third slot. I'm not saying that the payoff will be the same with a 3.0 dog in third versus a 15.0 dog in third, but I am saying that both of those dogs have about the same chance of finishing there!

The final graph shows how often dogs finish in the basement, dead last. This graph has the general shape that I expected. Long shots finish last more often than low odds dogs. The erratic swings at longer odds are mostly due to small samples sizes that aren't very stable. If there is anything surprising here, it's that long shots don't finish last.
as often as you might expect. The worst numbers are well under 30% in last place. So if you compared the last place numbers with the win percentages, it seems that bad dogs finish last less often than good dogs finish first. I'll leave you to work more on that philosophy for yourself.

**Parting Shots**

Often in the past, I and others have mentioned that the crowd's win odds are a good indicator of a dog's actual win probability. We can now see that is roughly true, but there are certainly places where the crowd overbets or underbets entire ranges of dogs. The astute handicapper can certainly take advantage of this knowledge.

---

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Los Gatos, CA 95032

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- MNCAP: A handicapping program where you set the weights and let the program crunch the numbers. MNCAP looks like a spreadsheet and handles up to 9 dogs per race.

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Send $6 to: Racing Greyhounds, 512 Paramount Bldg., Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
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Name
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City State Zip

I guess the best recommendation I can give here is for you to spend a little time looking at the original numbers. There are some very interesting patterns, if you explore. Remember that these numbers are from the Woodlands, and reflect the 18% take out on the win pool. If your track has a much different take out, the numbers won't be identical.

As I mentioned earlier, I produced these numbers using the TRIPECTA program that I first introduced in January. We are still offering that Digital Dog program for $6, and it now includes both the programming changes to run this study for yourself on your own track's data, as well as a much larger number of pre-entered race data from the Woodlands. And it's easy to remove the Woodlands data so you can enter names from your own track. Call or write us at Pico Publishing to secure your own copy, or an upgrade.
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Present coupon at admission gate. Void where prohibited.

EXPIRES 4-30-90
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gotten Fan" in the January, 1990 issue of *Racing Greyhounds*. Also, congratulations are in order to *Racing Greyhounds* for publishing the editorial. Track management should be most concerned with the many issues raised by Mr. Casey and proceed to do something about them. It might be later than you think!

Cliff Cyza
Alliance, Nebraska

**Kennel Prep**

In your September, 1988 edition of *Racing Greyhounds*, your reply to my letter caused me to believe that someday there would be an article about "How the fan can make an intelligent decision about which dogs are getting the big effort from the kennels."

I thought my letter made the point that what the kennel does to a dog during the day or so before the dog runs in a race can be the single most important factor in the outcome of a race. This point was backed up by the racing secretary at the local track assigning values of 50% to kennel ability, 25% to luck, and only 25% to the running ability of the dog, those being the three majors factors that determine the outcome of a dog race.

The grading system is designed to bring animals of nearly equal running ability together in race after race. This system effectively neutralizes the edge that could evolve from a super dog running against a field of non-performers. This event rarely happens.

There's always a luck factor in every race, but it's predictability is practically negligible.

The kennel factor is also present in every race. Some of the kennel-related factors that I have noted over the years include:

a. Some kennels consistently show maximum efforts from dogs in the Daily Double and/or Big Q races.

b. Some kennels get their purse money locked up early in the pay period, and tend to back off on preparing the dogs that run late in the pay period. To elaborate, the pay received by the kennels at the local track covers the purses won from Tuesday through Sunday. The checks are ready on Wednesday of the following week.

c. Nearly every kennel that is competitive, that has a small check coming into the final performance or two of the pay period, tends to come alive during the last couple of racing cards.

---

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d. Certain kennels seem to run grudge races against each other when they each have a dog in the same race. At times, these could be the number one and two ranking kennels at the track, but more often this occurs when members of the same family have different kennels at the same track.

e. Trainers decide that certain dogs must be in certain boxes, or they will not be a contender. The fan usually recognizes these dogs as 1-hole or 8-hole specialists.

f. Nearly every kennel has its star performer. On days that the star performer is in a race, the other dogs from that kennel also run well.

g. Some kennels are strictly streak performers. If you spot one of these kennels with a dog in an early race that runs a maximum effort race, the remaining dogs from the same kennel that run that night will show big efforts.

The question may arise concerning the possibility that every dog has been prepared to run its best race every time it steps on the track. Since the track has complete control of the scheduling, unless a dog is removed by the trainer from the active list of runners, the same dogs will run week after week on a regular basis. No dog can run so often at its peak every race. Therefore, a trainer will have the opportunity to decide when to put forth his best effort to prepare a dog to run its best race. It's like each dog starts its career with a certain number of maximum effort performances in its future. Each time this effort is used, the number of maximum effort races remaining is reduced.

The February 1990 issue of National Greyhound Update touched on the preparation phase of the kennels in the regular article known as "The Starting Box." A popular trainer was asked how he treated his greyhounds differently on race days. His reply was, "You're getting into my business now... Don't ask how I get a dog ready because I'm running against 19 other guys... Money's the name of the game." Later in the same article the local racing secretary was named, concerning a different matter. This combination reminded me of my earlier letter mentioned at the start of this letter.

How the kennels manage to get the big effort is a question for the trainers to explore. When the conditions are present that could lead to a betting opportunity from a possible maximum effort race, it is of major importance to the betting fan.

The January 1990 edition of Racing Greyhounds contains an article index going back to when the first edition was published. Since I couldn't remember anything on this matter of kennel influence in your magazine, I carefully reviewed the list looking for something I may have forgotten or missed. Nothing emerged.

Hiding our heads in the sands will not cause this enormously pertinent factor of kennel influence on racing to go away. Interview some trainers, talk to some top handicappers, give us eager fans something to use to improve our chances of surviving, or perhaps even winning at the dog tracks. That's the major reasons for buying the Magazine of Greyhound Handicapping.

Victor Passiglia
Tucson, Arizona

I'll try, I'll try! — GW

In the Doghouse Again

Holy smokes!!! I just received my January issue of Racing Greyhounds and did a quick scan of your Digital Dog articles. They look great, as usual, but I've got a problem. With each new Digital Dog, I always go and get my own data and try the program out. The results are always satisfying, so that's not the problem. The problem is time. Data collection for VARIANT took about twenty hours; data collection for STATNAL runs anywhere from two to eight hours for each hypothesis.

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Mike Swanson
P.O. Box 1851, Camp Butler
FPO Seattle, WA 98178

Granted, SHIPPERS is a gimme. My problem is this, my girlfriend/life-mate just sees all this as more time I spend with THAT COMPUTER. I've explained that "all that time" is really an investment in information. I've explained that "all that time" gives me a real advantage over the casual players at the track. I've explained that I find "all that time" to be a relaxing hobby. How'm I gonna explain the eighty or so hours it looks like it's gonna take to collect the data for TRIFECTA ANALYST?? I gotta come up with somethin' new. Got any suggestions?

Bruce Bieszki
Tucson, Arizona

Well, it really shouldn't take eighty hours to knock in your data for TRIFECTA. If you're any good on the ten-key pad, you should able to do 100 races in a half hour. Figure a long five hours for a 1,000-race database. That's still not an appealing idea, but hey, anything that's worthwhile won't come easy.

We've also been exploring the idea of sharing data through our Electronic Services bulletin board (319-362-7420, 2400, N81). With the exception of a few generous people, everyone around is waiting for "the other guy" to put his data up first. Sigh. But if you would be interested in PAYING us to whip in your data for you, we might be able to strike a deal...

That's Success!

I enjoy your magazine very much. Using the "Superfecta Strategies" from the November '88 issue, I made $10,000 in two days. Only I make my own picks instead of using the crowds. In the bets below, 1 is my key, 2-3-4 are the contenders, 5 is the dog with the best third and fourth place percentage, and 6 has the best late speed. The 5 and 6 are picked from what's left after my key and contenders.

1/2-3-4/2-3-4/5-6
1/2-3-4/5-6/2-3-4
1/5-6/2-3-4/2-3-4
2-3-4/1/2-3-4/5-6
2-3-4/1/1-5-6/2-3-4

Sometimes a dog will have outstanding third and fourth place percentages, so I use:

1/2-3-4/2-3-4/5
1/2-3-4/5-2-3-4

Keep up the good work.

P. Horn
Laird Hill, Texas

Share the Secrets

Please find enclosed my check for the following software: Combo, Duo Disk, and Trifecta. With respect to the Trifecta program, could you share the mathematical formula you used to determine the trifecta probability and the fair payoff? Thanks for producing such a great magazine!

A. Gibson
Salem, Oregon

Sure, I'll share. It's easiest with an example. Let's say you have a three-dog

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Handicappers' Exchange

trifecta, where the odds were, win dog: 2.0, place dog: 3.5, and show dog: 5.0. Also, your track has an 18% take out from the win pool. First, you have to calculate the win probabilities for the three dogs. (The .52 is 1.00 minus the .48 takeout.)

\[
\frac{1}{1(1+2.0)} = 0.42 \quad \text{or} \quad 27.3\%
\]
\[
\frac{1}{1(1+3.5)} = 0.28 \quad \text{or} \quad 18.2\%
\]
\[
\frac{1}{1(1+5.0)} = 0.20 \quad \text{or} \quad 13.7\%
\]

To calculate the trifecta odds, use the following formula:

\[
\frac{0.273 \times (1.821(1-.273)) \times (1.371(1-(.273+.182)))}{1.01718} = 0.42\%
\]

The final payoff is then:

\[
\frac{1.01718}{1} = $58.20
\]

Another Data Offer

In the January issue in the Handicapper's Exchange, E. Dahlquist was looking for Lotus 1-2-3 databases. I have two such databases, one from 1988 for about 2-3 months and another 1988-1990 for 3 or 4 months. If you would have him contact me or put me in touch with him I would be glad to share them. Thank you.

Ken Lavine
7718 Marisu Ln. Ct.
LaVista, NE 68128

TGP Tales

Editor's Note: The following letter was sent to David Marans by a reader who has been using Marans' The Greyhound Predictor (TGP). I thought you might like to hear his story.

Dear David,

I received the TGP Reporter recently, and I thought I would update you on my experiences with TGP. First of all, I'm glad I followed your advice to process a few hundred races in order to get an idea what TGP can do. I had some difficulty at first selecting the races to enter, and I became too liberal in my approach and basically wound up using only "clean" races. This did not produce very satisfactory results, and after processing about 200 races from the 1988 and 1989 programs at Rocky Mountain Greyhound Park, TGP was in a tailspin, with all data trending downward. I didn't lose any money on these races, as I was just handicapping them and not actually betting.

At any rate, I decided to change my method of selecting races to use from the past performance lines... unless the dog had an obvious problem in a race, such as an obviously abnormal time combined with a comment such as hit, collided, etc., then I just used the most recent four races. I attacked the past programs from the Mile High 1988 and 1989 seasons and I began to notice a trend. To describe this briefly, I noticed that whenever TGP's ratings showed a strong favorite (5:2 or less) with a rating advantage of at least 5 points, then there was a very good chance that the quiniela would include that top rated dog along with one of the next two rated dogs. I processed 500 races and found 265 races where the TGP ratings met the criteria described above. By placing a $4 quiniela bet, keying the top rated dog with the next two contenders, in each of

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those 265 races, the quiniela was hit 89 times (33%) for an average payoff of $19.89, for a return on investment of 64%! I ran the data from the 265 qualifying races through David Kirby's statistical analyzer program (Racing Greyhound's Digital Dog feature, November 1989) and this methodology shows a profit forecast of 12.4% at the 95% confidence level, and it shows further that it won't lose money at the 98% level of confidence.

I used this same approach in screening 300 races at Cloverleaf from past programs. I was unable to duplicate the success at Mile High. I found 150 play-able races but could only connect on 31 (20%) at an average payoff of $21.88. Although this showed a small profit of 9%, the statistical projections for profitability do not extend beyond the 80% confidence level. These results from Cloverleaf do not really surprise me, as the times from this track are very erratic. Cloverleaf runs during the spring months, and in Colorado that means the racing surface alternately freezes and thaws almost daily. The times used in the Mile High test run were much more consistent.

I just started to re-examine the races from Rocky Mountain Greyhound Park, and the results seem to be following the pattern established at Mile High.

I'm planning on adapting this strategy for the 1990 season at Mile High. I realize it isn't what you advise as strategy, i.e. waiting for overlays. But this method does allow me to go to the track, place my bets at the futures window, and leave.

Perhaps after I retire I can, but while I'm still working for a living I prefer to get in and out of the track as quickly as possible. I enjoy the challenge of handicapping the dogs, and the opportunity to make a profit is my main motivation. But I have so many other demands on my time that I cannot justify spending more time at the track.

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I feel fortunate in having chosen to purchase TGP. It's the only system I've seen in which I've been able to statistically prove profitability to a degree of 95% certainty. Plus, it's a great deal of fun, user friendly, and its ease of operation actually inspired me to analyze close to 1,000 races so far. If you see anything wrong in my approach, I would appreciate a critique whenever you have time. I will be calling you for an updated disk soon. Thank you for your time.

J. Schell
Aurora, Colorado

Live Greyhound Racing Returns to Las Vegas
By Janine Nickels

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