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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Racing Secrets Exposed.

When I first wrote this guide, way back in 2006, I had no idea how popular it would become.

The betting exchanges were still a relatively new phenomenon but punters had a massive interest in winning money from laying horses.

Laying is simply betting on an outcome not to happen.

So if you were to lay a horse you would be betting that it does NOT win the race.

If this is a new concept to you please check out the excellent guide here...

<http://betting.betfair.com/what-is-lay-betting.html>

To place a lay bet you need to use a betting exchange. Betfair are the biggest and they have a great video tutorial series that teaches you everything you need to know.

Check out the videos here...

<http://learning.betfair.com/en/videos/welcome-to-betfair.html>

I'd like to briefly say a word on how this guide came about.

My name is Kristian Jackman, and I know it sounds a bit melodramatic but I owe all of my success to a chance meeting with a freelance odds compiler.

I'd always had a keen interest in betting, both on the horses and football, but like most I was not a winning gambler.

I couldn't say how much I lost because I didn't record my bets but I know for a fact that it's in the thousands.

I suppose I was like most punters.

I didn't really know the fundamentals of reading form and most of my betting decisions were heavily influenced by what the journalists were saying.

The typical mug punter really.

That all changed when I received a phone call from a friend of mine whose family ran the local newsagent.

He'd been chatting to a customer who came in very every morning and bought the Racing Post.

It turns out this guy was a freelance odds compiler.

Fast forward a couple of days and he'd very kindly agreed to meet me over a coffee.

It was a very eye opening experience.

He completely broke down the basics of horse racing betting.

He explained what he looks for when compiling odds, and the big mistakes the majority of punters make.

By the time he'd finished talking (and I'd finished asking a multitude of questions) my copy of the Racing Post was covered in notes.

There literally wasn't a bit of blank space left.

To be honest it was a little overwhelming.

I realised I'd been going about things in completely the wrong manner.

When I got home I wrote the notes up and the basics became the very first edition of Racing Secrets Exposed that I wrote way back in 2006.

Since then it's been downloaded over 5000 times and I've had great feedback from many, many customers.

It seems a very long time ago now but my betting has improved immeasurably.

Betting is just like any skill.

First you have to master the fundamentals and then you can begin to go a little deeper.

The UK's best known and most successful gambler, Patrick Veitch, once said there are up to 80 variables that affect a race...

*"Betting's an immensely layered logic problem," he said.*

*"You've got potentially 50, 60, 70, 80 different factors, each very subjective.*

*The skill is in recognising which factors truly are important on any given day, and whether the combination is enough to make a horse seriously underestimated in the betting.*

*The cliché is of the killer instinct – being able, without drawing a massive chart, to sift it through your mind and sense that enough boxes have been ticked."*

~ Patrick Veitch

The key is to never stop learning. Read the racing newspapers, read blogs, read racing and betting books.

You don't have to go overboard though.

(Patrick spends around 80 hours a week on research!)

Remember it's a hobby. But done right it's a hobby that can provide an excellent second income.

I really hope you take the time to actually read this manual and put it into action.

Please don't let it sit on your hard drive gathering dust.

I've divided this guide into several parts.

Part 1 is all about the Racing Post.

If you want to get good at reading form you simply can't rely on a regular newspaper.

You simply have to use a dedicated racing newspaper and the Racing Post is the very best.

In part 1 I'll show you how to study race cards and form with particular reference to the Racing Post website (which is very similar to the print newspaper).

In part 2 I'll go through the key factors of form reading you have to study if you ever want to make money betting on horses.

I've included examples so you can see exactly how I go about this process.

I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed putting it together.

Let's crack on.

## BETTING EXCHANGES

A betting exchange is a betting website where punters bet against each other.

It is the only place where you can lay horses.

The majority of traditional bookmakers do not take lay bets.

The biggest betting exchange is called Betfair.

I'm sure you've heard of them as they're now really pushing the TV advertising.

So if you don't have a Betfair account, you should set one up straight away.

It will take less than 2 minutes.

### **FREE £25 Bet With Betfair**

If you'd like a free £25 bet with Betfair simply open a new account using the promo code **HKVKENPGW**.

[Click Here To Sign Up Now](#)

[https://account.betfair.com/account-web/registerAccount.html?  
promotionCode=HKVKENPGW](https://account.betfair.com/account-web/registerAccount.html?promotionCode=HKVKENPGW)

Just a reminder that Betfair have produced several video tutorials that take you through the basics of their site.

If you're new to Betfair I highly recommend you give them a quick watch.

Check them out here...

<http://learning.betfair.com/en/videos/welcome-to-betfair.html>

## **THE RACING POST**

In order to study the form we will be using the Racing Post.

Although other papers include race cards in their horse racing sections they do not contain enough information for us to carry out the necessary study.

You can either buy the Racing Post newspaper everyday or use their website. I prefer the website just for convenience.

If you are picking your selections the night before then you will need to use the website.

I imagine most people will be using the website and so I have included this section which details how to navigate around it.

To be able to access all the data you will need to buy a subscription.

Don't worry it's very cheap and costs under 40p a day.

The website can be visited by clicking on the link → <http://www.racingpost.com>

## UNDERSTANDING RACE CARDS

A typical race card will look like this...

« **4:30** » **Newcastle**  
TUESDAY, 21 MAY 2013

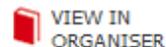
**VERTEM HANDICAP (CLASS 4) (4yo+ 0-80)**



VIDEO  
FORM



PRINT  
OUTS



VIEW IN  
ORGANISER

Winner: **£4,690**

Runners: **8**

Distance: **1m2f32y**

Going: **Soft**

Channel: **ATR**

£7,250 guaranteed **For** 4yo+ Rated 66-80 (also open to such horses rated 65 and below) **Weights** highest weight 9st 7lb **Weight raised** 2 **Minimum weight** 8-7 **Penalties** after May 11th, each race won 6lb **Mean It's Handicap Mark** 78 **Entries** 20 pay £ 36 **Penalty value** 1st £4,690.02 2nd £1,395.62 3rd £697.45 4th £348.73

STANDARD CARD

**AT-A-GLANCE CARD**

ODDS COMPARISON

LATEST SHOWS

NO.	DRAW	HORSE	AGE	WGT	TRAINER	RTP%	JOCKEY	OR	TS	RPR
1 <sup>6</sup>	21-2	<b>Mean It</b> <sup>36</sup>	4	9-7	David Simcock <sup>59</sup>		Graham Lee	78	84	95
2 <sup>1</sup>	4286-3	<b>I'm Super Too</b> <sup>13</sup>	6	9-4	Alan Swinbank <sup>62</sup>		Robert Winston	75	82	92
3 <sup>2</sup>	5530-8	<b>Joshua The First</b> <sup>16</sup>	4	8-11	Keith Dalgleish <sup>47</sup>		Tom Eaves	68	86	93
4 <sup>7</sup>	03138-	<b>Triple Eight</b> <sup>246</sup> b	5	8-11	Philip Kirby <sup>100</sup>		Michael O'Connell	68	88	92
5 <sup>8</sup>	34-507	<b>Morocco</b> <sup>15</sup>	4	8-9	David O'Meara <sup>51</sup>		Graham Gibbons	66	65	82
6 <sup>4</sup>	37/544	<b>Arc Light</b> <sup>36</sup>	5	8-9	Tim Easterby <sup>30</sup>		Duran Fentiman	66	75	89
7 <sup>5</sup>	4-2317	<b>Titus Bolt</b> <sup>10</sup>	4	8-8	Jim Goldie <sup>64</sup>		DOUBTFUL	65	77	93
8 <sup>3</sup>	0-4264	<b>Blue Maisey</b> <sup>10</sup>	5	8-7	Edwin Tuer <sup>33</sup>		Royston Ffrench	63	87	93

**Long Handicap:** Blue Maisey **8-6**

**Recommended SP: 112%**

**BETTING FORECAST:** 2/1 Mean It, 5/1 I'm Super Too, 6/1 Arc Light, 10/1 Joshua The First, 10/1 Morocco, 14/1 Blue Maisey, 16/1 Triple Eight.

Notice I have selected the 'AT-A-GLANCE CARD' as I find it the easiest on the eye.

The other option is the 'Standard Card' which is more colourful but not as compact.

The very top of the card shows the information about the race itself starting with date, time and course.

Just under that in capitals you'll find the name of the race. After that in brackets you'll see the class of the race, the age restrictions and if it's a handicap race the official ratings restrictions.

Under that is the prize money on offer, the number of runners, the distance and the going.

OK now onto the main section of the card.

There are ten main columns to the card (NO., FORM, HORSE, AGE, WGT, TRAINER RTF%, JOCKEY, OR, TS and RPR) and I'll go into more details on each of them below.

### **NO.**

This is the number of the horse on the race card (also shown on the horse's saddle cloth).

### **Unlabelled column**

These figures represent the finishing positions of the horse in its last 3 runs. A dash indicates the start of the current season, bold type indicates a result on a different surface to today's race, ex indicates an additional weight penalty to be carried, d indicates disqualified.

### **HORSE**

Obviously this is the horse's name. The numerical figure after the name represents the number of days since the horse last ran.

Immediately next to that there may be a letter 'p', 'F' or 'J'. A 'p' simply means the horse's last race was a pointer (a very low standard race not recognised by the BHB), an 'F' means the current race is a jumps race and that horse's last race was on the flat and a 'J' means the current race is a flat race and that horse's last race was over jumps.

Now next to that (still in the **HORSE** column) there may be a 'D', 'C' or 'BF' in a box. A 'D' means the horse has won a race over that exact distance before in its career, a 'C' means that horse has won a race at that course before and 'BF' means that horse was a beaten favourite last time out.

### **AGE**

This is obviously the age of the horse (horses' birthdays are officially deemed to occur on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January in the year of their birth).

### **WGT**

The official weight the horse must carry (stones and pounds) in this particular race.

### **TRAINER RTF%**

This is the name of the trainer. The number after the name represents the percentage of the stable's runners that have run to form in the last 14 days based on the Racing Post's Ratings.

### **JOCKEY**

This is the name of the jockey riding the horse in this race. The number after the name represents any weight allowances due to age or inexperience expressed in pounds (to be deducted from the official weight).

### **OR**

This stands for Official Rating and is the official handicapper's rating of the horse's

race speed. They are used to determine the weights horses will carry in handicap races.

### **TS**

This stands for Top Speed and is the Racing Post's own assessment of each individual horse's race speed. The ratings are measured in pounds and aim to remove the effect of the going on the race times.

### **RPR**

This stands for Racing Post Rating and literally is the Racing Post's own rating of the horse. The figure is expressed in pounds (lbs) so a horse rated at 125 is regarded as 5 lbs better than a horse rated at 120.

That's the main race card explained.

Underneath the main card you will find the betting forecast for the race. These odds are simply early prices (known as tissue prices).

Everyday all the bookmakers will send their tissue prices to the Racing Post and the paper will take an average and these become the tissue price.

They are a good indicator but the starting price odds will often be different.

## UNDERSTANDING THE POSTDATA TABLE

Underneath the main card you will see several headings...

VERDICT COMMENTS MY NOTES STATS POSTDATA OR RPR TOPSPEED SELECTIONS PAST WINNERS

We are interested in the 'VERDICT', the 'COMMENTS' and the 'POSTDATA' tab.

The 'Verdict' is simply the Racing Post's brief summing up of the race, including the main runners and the predicted winner.

The 'Comments' tab has a more detailed summary of each runner's career and prospects in the race.

The 'Postdata' tab brings up a table which is meant to let punters read form at a glance.

Once clicked on this will bring up a table which is a good indicator of the ability of the horse.

An example of the postdata table can be found below:

VERDICT	COMMENTS	MY NOTES	STATS	POSTDATA	OR	RPR	TOPSPEED	SELECTIONS	PAST WINNERS	
RPR	TS	OR	HORSE	TRAINER FORM	GOING G	DIST 9.0F	COURSE	DRAW	ABILITY	RECENT FORM
94	82	77	King Of The Danes	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
93	89	80	Zamoyski	?	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓✓	✓✓
93	85	80	Mysterial	✓	✓	?	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
93	79	79	Swift Bounty	✓	?	?	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
92	75	80	Lamusawama	✓	✓	?	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
91	87	78	Erodium	✓	✓	?	?	—	✓✓✓	✓✓
91	84	77	Strong Conviction	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓	✓✓
91	63	77	Aussie Lyrics	✓	✓	?	?	—	✓✓	?

The important thing we want to look at here are the columns after the horses' names; TRAINER FORM, GOING, DIST., COURSE, DRAW, ABILITY, RECENT FORM.

### TRAINER FORM

This is the Racing Post's own analysis of the trainer's current form.

One tick = in form

Two ticks = in very good form

? = form open to question

X = out of form

- = no runners last 14 days

### GOING

This is the Racing Post's own analysis of the horse's ability on the relevant going.

One tick = proven form on forecast going or on easy/fast ground if going is soft/firm

Two ticks = proven form on forecast going of soft/heavy or firm/hard

? = unproven on forecast going

- = debut

#### DIST.

This is the Racing Post's own analysis of the horse's ability to cope with the race distance.

One tick = proven form around this distance

? = unproven around this distance

- = debut

#### COURSE

The Racing Post's own analysis of the horse's ability over the race course.

One tick = proven form on this course

Two ticks = two or more course wins

? = unproven on this course

- = debut

#### DRAW

The Racing Posts own analysis of the effects of the draw.

One tick = good draw

Two ticks = very good draw

X = bad draw

- = draw neither good nor bad

#### ABILITY

The Racing Post's own analysis of the horse's ability.

One tick = some form within last year

Two ticks = PM or TS rating within 7lb of PM top

Three ticks = PM and TS both within 7lb of PM top

? = last run more than a year ago AND no PM rating

X = no adequate form

- = debut

#### FORM

The Racing Post's own assessment of the horse's most recent form.

One tick = Some for within the last 60 days

Two ticks = PM or TS rating within 7lb of PM top achieved within last 60 days

? = last run more than 60 days ago

- = debut

At the very bottom of the table you will see POSTDATA SELECTION. This is the horse which scores highest on all the attributes in the table.

## STUDYING A HORSE'S RACING HISTORY

To bring up a detailed history of a horse's races simply click on the horse's name in either the race card or the Postdata table.

A new window detailed below with open up as below:

The screenshot shows a horse racing profile for ZAMOYSKI. At the top, there is a dropdown menu with the horse's name. Below it, the horse's age and sex (3-y-o (17Apr10 ch g)) are listed, followed by its sire and dam (Dutch Art (7.2f) — Speech (Red Ransom (USA) (8.8f))). The trainer (Jeremy Noseda), owner (Mrs Susan Roy), and breeder (N C Appleton & Cheveley Park Stud) are also listed. A button labeled 'ADD TO MY HORSE TRACKER' is visible on the right. Below this information are tabs for 'RACE RECORD', 'PEDIGREE', 'MY NOTES', and 'PHOTOS'. The 'RACE RECORD' tab is active, showing a table of 'Flat placings 71-43'. This table has columns for 'LIFETIME RECORD', 'STARTS', 'WINS', '2NDS', '3RDS', 'WINNINGS', 'EARNINGS', 'BEST TS', 'BEST RPR', and 'OR+'. The data shows 4 starts, 1 win, 0 2nds, and 1 3rd in both Flat Turf and Rules Races, with earnings of £3,235 and £4,798. Below the race record are tabs for 'FORM', 'WINS', 'MY RATINGS', 'STATISTICS', 'ENTRIES', 'RELATIVES', 'SALES', and 'QUOTES'. The 'FORM' tab is active, showing a table of race results with columns for 'DATE', 'RACE CONDITIONS', 'WGT', 'RACE OUTCOME', 'JOCKEY', 'OR', 'TS', and 'RPR'. The table lists four races from May 2013 to September 2012, with outcomes such as 3/7, 4/12, 1/8, and 7/17. A footer note states: '\* Topspeed and Racing Post Ratings are part of racingpost.com Members' Club. Details of horses trained outside GB and Ireland or born prior to 1986 may be incomplete. OR Rating is the latest published.'

LIFETIME RECORD	STARTS	WINS	2NDS	3RDS	WINNINGS	EARNINGS	BEST TS	BEST RPR	OR†
Flat Turf	4	1	0	1	£3,235	£4,798	80	84	80
Rules Races	4	1	0	1	£3,235	£4,798	—	—	—

DATE	RACE CONDITIONS	WGT	RACE OUTCOME	JOCKEY	OR	TS	RPR
11May13	Hay 8GS C33yHc 8K	8-9	3/7 (2¼L Hay Dude 9-2) 13/8F	William Buick	80	66	83
22Apr13	Wdr 8Gd C43yHc 4K	9-6	4/12 (2L Sea Shanty 8-13) 7/2	Ryan Moore	80	80	84
26Sep12	Goo 75ft C52yMd 3K	9-3	1/8 (1¼L Pythagorean 9-3) 7/2	William Buick	—	79	80
08Sep12	Asc 7GF C42yMd 5K	9-3	7/17 (7L Snow King 9-3) 20/1	Eddie Ahern	—	46	69

The page is divided into 3 clear sections.

The top section gives us simple information about the horse like name, age, owner, trainer etc.

The middle section shows us the horse's history from a stats point of view.

The final section details every race the horse has competed in. It is this section that is most useful to us as it gives us good information about the horse's abilities on different surfaces and distances.

There are 8 columns here; DATE, RACE CONDITIONS, WGT, RACE OUTCOME, JOCKEY, OR, TS and RPR.

### DATE

The date of the race.

**RACE CONDITIONS**

This column tells us the track, the distance, the going and the type of race. The distance is measured in furlongs (there are 8 furlongs in a mile). The type of race tells us what class it is (For example C5 means class 5 etc.), Hc means it was a handicap, H means it was a hurdle race, CH means it was a chase. The number at the end is simply the amount of prize money that was on offer.

**WGT**

This is the weight the horse had to carry in stones and pounds. 9-2 means 9 stones and 2 lbs.

**RACE OUTCOME**

This tells you the horse's position out of the number of runners, the distance it lost (or won) by, then the name and weight of the winning horse. If you click on this column it brings up the full race result with full Racing Post analysis. This analysis can be a good source of information about how the horse ran.

**JOCKEY**

The jockey on board the horse

**OR**

Official Rating for that race.

**TS**

Topspeed for that race

**RPR**

Racing Post Rating for that race.

## QUICK GUIDE TO FLAT RACING

These races are run over distances ranging from 5 furlongs (5/8 mile or 1000m) to 20 furlongs (2 1/2 miles or 4000m) and are started from stalls.

As the name suggests there are no obstacles in flat racing. The flat season runs from mid-March to mid-November although flat races do still take place in the winter.

Flat horses mature quickly and start running as 2 or 3-year-olds.

Flat races are either run on turf or All Weather (AW) tracks. The AW tracks are comprised of sand and are a completely different kettle of fish to the turf tracks.

There are several different types of races on the flat:

**Maidens:** These are for horses that have never won a race before.

**Sellers:** These races are usually involves pretty poor horses. The winner of the race is offered at an auction afterwards.

**Classified Stakes:** This type of race is for horses who have run 3 or more times and won at least once.

**Conditions Races:** Once a horse has won a maiden it can compete in conditions races. These races are more prestigious with better quality horses.

**Listed Races:** Once a horse has won a conditions race it can be entered into a listed race.

**Group Races:** These are the most prestigious races for a horse on the flat. There are three groups 1, 2 and 3. Group 1 races are the most prestigious and carry the most prize money.

**Handicaps:** In handicaps all the horse's carry different weights depending on their ability as assessed by the official ratings. The better the horse the more weight it has to carry. Theoretically every horses has the same chance of winning.

**Nurseries:** These are handicaps for 2 year old horses only.

## QUICK GUIDE TO NATIONAL HUNT (JUMP) RACING

In National Hunt racing the horses are made to jump a number of obstacles throughout the course.

The courses are at least 2 miles (16 furlongs) long. Jump horses mature more slowly and don't run until they are 4 or 5-year-olds.

Jump racing goes on all year round but its main season runs from November until the end of April.

There are 2 main types of jump race, each with different sized barriers.

**Steeplechases (Chases)** - In these races the horses are made to jump 'fences' which vary in size. These are the biggest obstacles a horse will have to face. The Grand National is the most prestigious steeplechase event in the U.K.

**Hurdles** - In these races the horses are made to jump over obstacles measuring about 3 feet 1 inch in height.

In jump racing there are also handicaps and non-handicap races.

Like on the flat there are different types of races depending on the quality of the field.

**Maidens:** As with the flat maidens are run by horses who have never won before.

**Novices:** These are for horses who have not won a race prior to that season. When a horse wins a novice race it can still compete in novices for the rest of that season but it has to carry a weight penalty.

**Bumpers:** Also called National Hunt Flat Races. These are special flat races for young jump horses.

**Point to Point Races (or Pointers)** - These races are run over fences on designated farmland throughout the country in the Spring and Autumn. This is basically the nursery for young jump horses who will progress to jump over hurdles and fences. We will not be looking at laying horses in point to point races.

## **SPOTTING A WEAK FAVOURITE**

The majority of punters base their betting decisions on one thing: hype.

Punters also love to back favourites.

Obviously favourites have the most chance of winning but not all favourites are created equal.

A lot of punters don't know the difference.

If they haven't had a winner in a race or two they will simply lump some money on the favourite.

The hype surrounding a horse can be heightened by several different factors:

### **1. The trainer**

Trainers are always talking up the chances of their horses.

Some trainers are worse for this than others but I've learnt over the years to ignore what a trainer says publicly.

I'm much more interested in what they say privately but unless you have some serious contacts this is a very difficult thing to find out.

Horses that are trained by trainers who are considered the elite are almost always over bet, especially if they're at the top in the betting.

For example, over the past 10 years, blindly backing all favourites would have seen you lose around 6p in every pound staked.

But in that time blindly backing all favourites trained by Paul Nicholls (probably the leading National Hunt trainer) would see you lose twice as much (around 12p in every pound staked.)

The reason for this worse return on investment is simple...punters over betting his horses.

On any given day they'll be horses that are favourites simply on account of who their trainer is.

### **2. The jockey**

Jockey bookings are also a major factor in where punters place their bets.

Don't get me wrong, a jockey has a massively important part to play in a race and can be the difference between a winner and a loser.

But the major jockeys are almost always over bet especially if they're on the favourite.

As an example let's take Frankie Dettori one of the most well known and respected jockeys.

During 2012 if you were to back every favourite he rode you would have lost around 26p with every pound you staked.

This is solely based on hype and punters over-betting his runners especially when they are at the top of the market.

### 3. Journalists

Journalists are also very much to blame for the hype surrounding certain horses. It's practically their job to whip up excitement regarding every race.

They all have their own opinion that they like to expound, hoping they will look like an expert if the horse ends up winning.

Tipsters in the newspapers have to tip a horse in every race. They obviously haven't got time to study every runner in every race and as such often take just a cursory glance at the form.

However these tipsters will often have an affect on punters' betting habits.

Punters often won't check it see if the horse is a decent favourite they'll just lump their money on.

### 4. Recent Form

One final thing that causes punters to over hype horses is recent form.

Punters love nothing more than to look at the last 3 form figures for a horse and see 1's, 2's and 3's.

Sure it's great to back a horse that is running well but simply looking at the numbers in the form column is not enough.

What sort of races were the previous runs in? Did the horse run to form according to its position in the odds market? If it didn't win how far behind the winner did it finish?

Those three questions are the key to my own betting methodology.

I'm not interested in hype whatsoever.

I don't care what the trainer is saying nor do I care about the opinion of the media personalities.

I'm only interested in cold hard facts. When laying what I look for is simple.

A favourite with a chink in its armour.

I want to find a horse that I believe has a weakness against it that the punting public haven't noticed.

I do this by studying a series of factors I believe are the most important in every horse race.

Namely: Going, distance, class and course.

These are the fundamentals that are the most influential in the outcome of a race.

I simply try to find a favourite that has a question mark concerning its ability on at least one of these fundamentals.

I then take a quick glance over the opposition to see if there's anything I think can beat it and then, depending on the odds, place my lay bet.

I'll now go through each of those factors in turn and show you exactly what I look for.

## **THE 4 MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IN FINDING WINNING BETS**

### **GOING**

The going simply describes what the ground conditions are like on the course. The descriptions are as follows;

Hy = heavy,

Sft = soft,

GS = good-to-soft,

Gd = good,

GF = good-to-firm

Fm = firm

St = Standard (for All-Weather tracks).

Sl = Slow (for All-Weather tracks).

As far as I'm concerned the going is the most important factor in any horse race.

There is a big difference even between good-to-soft and good-to-firm going. And there is a big difference between turf racing and AW racing.

Some horses can run equally well on any type of going/surface but many have a preference.

A horse may be a top performer when the ground is firm but make it run on soft ground and it could be very ordinary.

We simply want to look out for one of two things...

1. A horse running on particular ground conditions for the first time.

If a horse has never raced on heavy going for example and today's race is heavy then no-one can really be sure how it will perform.

It might be favourite and the best horse in the race as far as form is concerned but punters are backing it to do something it hasn't done previously.

For me that's a black mark against it and it could be a possible laying opportunity.

2. A horse that has under performed on the ground conditions.

If a horse has raced in the ground conditions then it still might be a laying opportunity if it has under performed.

How do we ascertain if it has underperformed?

I use two 2 variables...

1. Did the horse perform as expected in relation to its position in the odds

market?

2. Did the horse finish within half a length per furlong of the race winner?

The half a length per furlong method was devised by a man called Van Der Weil and is actually used by odds compilers.

If it's good enough for them it's good enough for me.

So for example if a race is 6f the horse should finish within 3 lengths of the winner.

If a race is 7f the horse should finish within 3 1/2 lengths of the winner, and so on and so forth.

The reason I use these two variables is simple: it gives us a much more accurate analysis of a horse's form.

For example let's say we're looking at a race on heavy ground.

And let's say the favourite has run on heavy ground before and finished 3<sup>rd</sup>.

A lot of punters would quickly peruse the horse's history, see that the horse has been placed on heavy ground before and assume the horse is fine on the mud.

But what if in that previous race on heavy going the horse was a short priced favourite and finished well behind the winner?

For me that would represent an under par run and it may have been the going that caused it.

So it would get a black mark from me and it would be a possible laying opportunity.

To determine if either of these conditions have been met we simply use the Racing Post to quickly glance at the horse's racing history.

Let's go through a couple of examples.

Firstly a word of warning here.

Don't just use the Postdata table in the Racing Post.

I find the Postdata table to be wildly inaccurate but the majority of punters take it as gospel.

I like to dig deeper and find the inaccuracies and exploit them.

Let's look at an example.

Here's the Postdata table for an upcoming race...

**BETTING FORECAST: 7/2 Sign Manual, 6/1 Homeric, 13/2 Kuda Huraa, 8/1 Bow To No One, 8/1 Silver Samba, 9/1 Gabriel's Star, 10/1 Ermyn Lodge, 12/1 Cotton King, 12/1 Quixote, 12/1 Tappanappa, 16/1 Montaff, 16/1 Riptide, 25/1 Toptempo.**

VERDICT COMMENTS MY NOTES STATS POSTDATA OR RPR TOPSPEED SELECTIONS PAST WINNERS

RPR	TS	OR	HORSE	TRAINER FORM	GOING GF	DIST 16.0F	COURSE	DRAW	ABILITY	RECENT FORM
100	91	84	Montaff	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓	✓✓
100	85	80	Sign Manual	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
100	98	72	Riptide	X	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓✓	✓✓
99	37	88	Ermyn Lodge	X	✓	✓	✓✓	—	✓✓	?
99	92	82	Gabriel's Star	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
99	62	72	Cotton King	X	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
99	80	72	Toptempo	X	✓	?	?	—	✓✓	?
98	79	83	Tappanappa	✓✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
97	88	88	Kuda Huraa	✓✓	✓	?	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
97	—	74	Bow To No One	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓	✓
96	84	86	Quixote	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
95	92	69	Silver Samba	✓✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
94	61	85	Homeric	✓	✓	?	?	—	✓✓	✓

The favourite, Sign Manual, has been given a tick in the table so you would think he would have proven form on Good-to-Firm ground.

But look at the horse's racing history below...

**SIGN MANUAL**

4-y-o (17Mar09 b g)

Motivator (10.8f) — New Assembly (IRE) (Machiavellian (USA) (9.2f))

Trainer Michael Bell

Owner The Queen

Breeder The Queen

+ ADD TO MY HORSE TRACKER

RACE RECORD PEDIGREE MY NOTES PHOTOS

Flat placings 6633-1

LIFETIME RECORD	STARTS	WINS	2NDS	3RDS	WINNINGS	EARNINGS	BEST TS	BEST RPR	OR+
Flat Turf	4	1	0	1	£5,175	£5,560	73	86	80
All-weather	1	0	0	1	£0	£337	28	63	—
Rules Races	5	1	0	2	£5,175	£5,897	—	—	—

FORM WINS MY RATINGS STATISTICS ENTRIES RELATIVES SALES QUOTES

DATE	RACE CONDITIONS	WGT	RACE OUTCOME	JOCKEY	OR	TS	RPR
19Apr13	Nby 16GS C4Hc 5K	9-0	1/13 (shd Lieutenant Miller 9-11) 4/1	Hayley Turner	72	43	86
14Jun12	Nby 12GS C53yHc 2K	9-4	3/7 (3½L Nicholascopernicus 9-7) 12/1	Hayley Turner	72	73	74
22May12	Kem 10St C5Md 2K	9-0	3/13 (8¼L Handsome Ransom 9-0) 10/1	Luke Morris	—	28	63
06May12	Sal 12GS C53yMd 4K	9-3	6/12 (11L Estimate 8-12) 25/1	Luke Morris	—	45	73
21Apr12	Nby 115ft C43yMd 5K	9-3	6/9 (11½L Minimise Risk 9-3) 20/1	Hayley Turner	—	49	71

\*Topspeed and Racing Post Ratings are part of racingpost.com Members' Club.

Details of horses trained outside GB and Ireland or born prior to 1986 may be incomplete. OR Rating is the latest published.

The hardest ground the horse has raced on is Good-to-Soft so for me it definitely doesn't deserve a tick in the Postdata table for going.

It is unproven on harder ground and no-one really knows how it will cope.

The majority of punters would simply look at the Postdata table and think the horse has proven form on the going.

But it has taken us just a few seconds to see this isn't the case.

Again punters are backing this horse to do something that it has never done before.

Like I said before, I don't care about hype I care about facts.

This horse has no proven record over this going and depending on the odds and the opposition it could well be a laying opportunity.

Before laying a horse I like to make sure there's another horse in the race with the ability to beat the favourite.

To do this I simply look at the record of the favourite in different race classes and compare that with other horses in the race.

Sign Manual has won a class 4 handicap before but has never raced in a class 3 race (today's race is a class 3 handicap).

Kuda Huraa has also won a class 4 handicap but had also come second in a class 3 handicap before (losing by a head).

Quoxite has won a couple of class four handicaps before.

Tappanappa has won a class 4 handicap before and been placed in a class 3 handicap.

So overall I believe there are several horses in the race that have the ability to beat Sign Manual.

So Sign Manual would definitely be a lay selection.

Incidentally, in this race Sign Manual finished 11<sup>th</sup> after starting 100/30F and have a look at the Racing Post analysis...

**Sign Manual** swooped late when beating a subsequent winner in a 2m handicap at Newbury on his reappearance but he was always in rear and was very laboured off 8lb higher here. He may not have handled the fast ground. [David Moon]

Obviously the thing to note is the last line: *“He may not have handled the fast ground”*.

Let's look at a second example.

**BETTING FORECAST: 3/1 Cherry Tree Hill, 3/1 Politbureau, 5/1 El Bravo, 13/2 Leitrim King, 10/1 Omega Omega, 10/1 Turjuman, 14/1 Son Vida, 20/1 Bernix, 20/1 Heading To First, 33/1 Jakeys Girl, 33/1 Valkov.**

VERDICT COMMENTS MY NOTES STATS POSTDATA OR RPR TOPSPEED SELECTIONS PAST WINNERS

RPR	TS	OR	HORSE	TRAINER FORM	GOING SD	DIST 12.2F	COURSE	DRAW	ABILITY	RECENT FORM
50	41	53	Son Vida	X	✓	?	✓	—	✓✓	X
50	47	50	Turjuman	X	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓✓	✓
50	—	48	Politbureau	✓✓	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓	✓✓
49	24	52	Leitrim King	?	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓	✓
49	47	51	El Bravo	X	✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
46	—	45	Omega Omega	✓	?	?	?	—	✓✓	X
46	15	45	Heading To First	X	✓	✓	?	✓	✓✓	?
43	—	48	Bernix	X	✓	✓	✓✓	—	?	?
42	22	45	Jakeys Girl	X	?	?	?	✓	✓	?
41	24	45	Valkov	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	X
37	—	55	Cherry Tree Hill	✓	?	?	?	—	✓	✓

This race is on Standard going on the All Weather.

At the time of writing Politbureau was the outright favourite so he's the horse I'm going to be concentrating on..

Now he's got a tick in the table for going but let's look at his race history...

FORM	WINS	MY RATINGS	STATISTICS	ENTRIES	RELATIVES	SALES	QUOTES
DATE	RACE CONDITIONS	WGT	RACE OUTCOME	JOCKEY	OR	TS	RPR
▶ 25Apr13	<b>Ncs 10Gd</b> C6Hc 1K	8-7	<b>3/12</b> (5¼L Titus Bolt 9-0) 13/2	Graham Gibbons	51	40	<b>54</b>
▶ 20Oct12	<b>Cat 12Sft</b> C6Cl 2K	9-2	<b>8/11</b> (27L Phase Shift 8-10) 40/1	Graham Gibbons	51	—	<b>27</b>
▶ 06Oct12	<b>Red 10Sft</b> C5Sl 2K	8-13	<b>4/13</b> (14½L Zenarinda 8-9) 20/1	Matthew Hopkins	50	14	<b>53</b>
▶ 02Oct12	<b>Sed 17Gd</b> C4NvH 2K	10-7	<b>6/11</b> (67L Ahyaknowyerself 11-5) 66/1	Jake Greenall	—	—	<b>62</b>
▶ 19Sep12	<b>Bev 8Fm</b> C6 1K	8-11	<b>4/16</b> (4L Praxios 8-11) 12/1	David Simmonson	52	33	<b>45</b>
▶ 15Aug12	<b>Bev 12GF</b> C6Hc 2K	9-4	<b>10/10</b> (28L Aliante 9-3) b 14/1	Paul Mulrennan	55	17	<b>23</b>
▶ 06Aug12	<b>Crl 11Sft</b> C6Hc 1K	10-4	<b>3/12</b> (9¼L Bavarian Nordic 10-5) p 5/1	Miss S Brotherton	55	38	<b>49</b>
▶ 17Jul12	<b>Bev 10GF</b> C6Hc 1K	9-13	<b>13/17</b> (11L Tinseltown 9-13) 14/1	Miss S Brotherton	57	42	<b>45</b>
▶ 04Jul12	<b>Cat 12Sft</b> C6Hc 2K	8-13	<b>7/9</b> (17½L Tinseltown 8-2) 7/1	Paddy Aspell	57	8	<b>39</b>
▶ 21Jun12	<b>Rip 12Hy</b> C6Hc 2K	9-9	<b>2/11</b> (3L Shaloo Diamond 10-7) 2/1F	Miss S Brotherton	53	—	<b>57</b>
▶ 01Jun12	<b>Ncs 12Gd</b> C6Hc 1K	8-11	<b>1/11</b> (hd Coax 9-7) 5/1	Paddy Aspell	50	36	<b>55</b>
▶ 04May12	<b>Wol 9St</b> C6Hc 1K	9-1	<b>6/12</b> (8¾L Harare 8-7) b <sup>1</sup> 9/1	David Simmonson	52	20	<b>45</b>
▶ 04Oct11	<b>Sth 12St</b> C6Hc 1K	9-6	<b>9/14</b> (25L Master Of Song 9-3) 7/1	Paddy Aspell	54	—	<b>26</b>
▶ 03Sep11	<b>Wol 12St</b> C6Hc 2K	9-6	<b>6/10</b> (4L Art Thief 8-8) 15/8F	Graham Gibbons	54	53	<b>55</b>
▶ 25Aug11	<b>Crl 11Gd</b> C6Hc 1K	9-4	<b>2/14</b> (1L La Bacouetteuse 9-7) 6/1	James Sullivan	51	60	<b>59</b>
▶ 10Aug11	<b>Bev 12Sft</b> C6Hc 2K	9-0	<b>2/8</b> (6L Grey Command 9-10) 11/2	James Sullivan	51	42	<b>53</b>
▶ 26Jul11	<b>Bev 10GF</b> C6Hc 1K	9-5	<b>4/11</b> (1¾L Obara D'Avril 8-11) 13/2	Miss Joanna Mason	51	28	<b>56</b>
▶ 16Jul11	<b>Rip 10GS</b> C6Hc 2K	9-7	<b>3/11</b> (6½L Hot Rod Mamma 9-5) 28/1	Paddy Aspell	53	43	<b>57</b>
▶ 27Apr11	<b>Ncs 10GF</b> C6Hc 1K	9-6	<b>16/16</b> (48L Miss Blink 8-9) 20/1	Paul Mulrennan	59	—	—
▶ 14Apr11	<b>Bev 10GF</b> C5Hc 2K	8-12	<b>13/15</b> (19L Tribal Myth 8-9) 50/1	James Sullivan	63	36	<b>36</b>
▶ 30Mar11	<b>Cat 7Gd</b> C5Hc 2K	8-4	<b>15/15</b> (26L Masked Dance 9-7) 20/1	David Simmonson	65	—	<b>6</b>
▶ 12Mar11	<b>Wol 9St</b> C5Md 2K	9-11	<b>7/11</b> (13L Countermarch 7-12) 8/1	James Sullivan	—	31	<b>55</b>
▶ 21Aug10	<b>Bat 8GS</b> C5Md 2K	9-3	<b>4/5</b> (4½L Youm Jamil 9-3) 6/1	Tom Queally	—	39	<b>65</b>
▶ 15Jul10	<b>Lei 10Gd</b> C5Md 2K	8-13	<b>6/16</b> (9¼L Mortbet 8-13) 25/1	Greg Fairley	—	65	<b>65</b>

We can see that this horse has run on Standard going 4 times previously...

7<sup>th</sup> (when 6<sup>th</sup> in the betting) 13 lengths behind the winner.

6<sup>th</sup> (when favourite) 4 lengths behind the winner

9<sup>th</sup> (when joint 4<sup>th</sup> in the betting) 25 lengths behind the winner

6<sup>th</sup> (when 5<sup>th</sup> in the betting) 8 ¾ lengths behind the winner

The horse has underperformed every single time it has raced on sand.

Only once has it finished within half a length per furlong of the winner and that was when it was a short priced favourite.

So all in all let's look at the facts:

- Only run on the All Weather 4 times out of 24 career runs so certainly not an All Weather specialist.
- In those 4 runs he finished 6<sup>th</sup> twice, 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Underperformed in every race based on position in the odds market.
- Only once finished within half a length per furlong of the winner.

- Was a beaten short priced favourite.

Taking everything into account I believe this horse continually under performs on the All Weather.

The surface of today's race is clearly a chink in its armour that other punters won't have spotted and once again it could be a possible lay.

To cement the selection I like to see if there's a horse in the race with the potential to beat it.

To do that I look how the opposition have performed in the class of today's race.

Today's race is a class 6 handicap and Politbureau has previously raced in a number of class 6 handicaps and has won just the once (and it has been a favourite twice).

So hardly a stellar racing career at this level.

Now I quickly have a look at the racing history's of the next few in the betting.

Cherry Tree Hill is the second favourite and has only raced 4 times previously and this is its first handicap.

So there's not much to go on there.

But further down in the betting El Bravo (currently 5/1) has won 2 class 6 handicaps before and Turjuman (currently 8/1) has also won a couple of class 6 handicaps as well as a class 4 handicap.

So overall there's enough ability in the field to beat Politbureau based on previous results in this class of race.

In all honesty this is a very poor quality race and from a backing perspective one that I would never get involved with.

It almost seems impossible to pick a winner. But that makes it a perfect race for us layers.

The result...

Politbureau came 2<sup>nd</sup> (8 lengths behind the winner, El Bravo).

The Racing Post analysis of the race...

**Politbureau**, stepping up in trip having stayed on over 1m2f at Newcastle last time, was nicely positiond but got outpaced 3f out before staying on down the outside to grab second. His best efforts prior to this had come on turf and he won't be far away if getting a more even gallop to aim at.

Again the Racing Post has picked out our concerns: "*His best efforts prior to this*

*had come on turf.”*

I hope you can see the benefit now of taking the Postdata table with a pinch of salt!

## **DISTANCE**

Distance is another vitally important factor in a horse race.

As a general rule horses start off in the sprints and move up in distance.

Some horses are good over a variety of distances others can have speed or stamina issues and only have a chance at specific distances.

Journalists are always harping on about how a horse will benefit from a step up in trip.

But as you've probably gathered by now I'm not interested in guess work. Just cold hard facts.

We're going to follow the same process here as we did for the going and look out for two things.

Firstly is the horse racing at the distance for the first time, and secondly, has the horse underperformed at the race distance before?

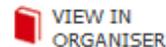
As before we won't take much notice of the Postdata table and we'll obviously check out the horse's race history for ourselves.

Let's look at an example...

# « 4:30 » Newcastle

TUESDAY, 21 MAY 2013

**VERTEM HANDICAP (CLASS 4) (4yo+ 0-80)**



Winner: **£4,690**

Runners: **8**

Distance: **1m2f32y**

Going: **Soft**

Channel: **ATR**

£7,250 guaranteed **For** 4yo+ Rated 66-80 (also open to such horses rated 65 and below) **Weights** highest weight 9st 7lb **Weight raised** 2 **Minimum weight** 8-7 **Penalties** after May 11th, each race won 6lb **Mean It's Handicap Mark** 78 **Entries** 20 pay £ 36 **Penalty value** 1st £4,690.02 2nd £1,395.62 3rd £697.45 4th £348.73

STANDARD CARD **AT-A-GLANCE CARD** ODDS COMPARISON LATEST SHOWS

NO.	DRAW	HORSE	AGE	WGT	TRAINER	RTP%	JOCKEY	OR	TS	RPR
1 <sup>6</sup>	21-2	<b>Mean It</b> <sup>36</sup> BF	4	9-7	David Simcock <sup>59</sup>		Graham Lee	78	84	95
2 <sup>1</sup>	4286-3	<b>I'm Super Too</b> <sup>13</sup>	6	9-4	Alan Swinbank <sup>62</sup>		Robert Winston	75	82	92
3 <sup>2</sup>	5530-8	<b>Joshua The First</b> <sup>16</sup>	4	8-11	Keith Dalglish <sup>47</sup>		Tom Eaves	68	86	93
4 <sup>7</sup>	03138-	<b>Triple Eight</b> <sup>246</sup> b	5	8-11	Philip Kirby <sup>100</sup>		Michael O'Connell	68	88	92
5 <sup>8</sup>	34-507	<b>Morocco</b> <sup>15</sup>	4	8-9	David O'Meara <sup>51</sup>		Graham Gibbons	66	65	82
6 <sup>4</sup>	37/544	<b>Arc Light</b> <sup>36</sup>	5	8-9	Tim Easterby <sup>30</sup>		Duran Fentiman	66	75	89
7 <sup>5</sup>	4-2317	<b>Titus Bolt</b> <sup>10</sup> CD	4	8-8	Jim Goldie <sup>64</sup>		DOUBTFUL	65	77	93
8 <sup>3</sup>	0-4264	<b>Blue Maisey</b> <sup>10</sup>	5	8-7	Edwin Tuer <sup>33</sup>		Royston Ffrench	63	87	93

**Long Handicap:** Blue Maisey **8-6**

**Recommended SP: 112%**

**BETTING FORECAST:** 2/1 Mean It, 5/1 I'm Super Too, 6/1 Arc Light, 10/1 Joshua The First, 10/1 Morocco, 14/1 Blue Maisey, 16/1 Triple Eight.

VERDICT COMMENTS MY NOTES STATS **POSTDATA** OR RPR TOPSPEED SELECTIONS PAST WINNERS

RPR	TS	OR	HORSE	TRAINER FORM	GOING S	DIST 10.1F	COURSE	DRAW	ABILITY	RECENT FORM
95	84	78	Mean It	✓	✓	?	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
93	86	68	Joshua The First	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	X
93	77	65	Titus Bolt	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓	✓✓
93	87	63	Blue Maisey	X	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
92	82	75	I'm Super Too	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓
92	88	68	Triple Eight	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓✓	?
89	75	66	Arc Light	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓	✓✓
82	65	66	Morocco	✓	✓	?	?	—	✓	✓

So Mean It is the favourite here and is the horse I am interested in laying.

It has a question mark over the distance in the Postdata table as always I like to investigate myself.

So let's look at its racing history...

FORM	WINS	MY RATINGS	STATISTICS	ENTRIES	RELATIVES	SALES	QUOTES
DATE	RACE CONDITIONS	WGT	RACE OUTCOME	JOCKEY	OR	TS	RPR
 15Apr13	<b>Wdr 85ft</b> C4Hc 4K	8-13	<b>2/13</b> (2¼L Snow Trooper 9-2) 11/4F	Jamie Spencer	77	77	<b>88</b>
 20Jul12	<b>Hay 8G5</b> C5Md 2K	9-3	<b>1/12</b> (3½L Sunnybridge Boy 9-0) 8/13F	Micky Fenton	—	55	<b>79</b>
 23Jun12	<b>Hay 85ft</b> C5Md 2K	9-2	<b>2/7</b> (¾L Kaafel 9-2) 7/2	Micky Fenton	—	70	<b>83</b>

So we can see that this horse has only run over 8f before but this today's race is 10.1f.

So this is definitely a black mark over the horse and it could be a possibly laying opportunity.

As before we have to see if there are other horses in the race that have the ability to beat it.

Again I simply look at their records by race class.

The favourite, So Mean It has finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in a class 4 handicap previously.

It was the favourite so it did under perform slightly but it didn't finish too far behind the winner so it was not a massive disappointment.

The second horse in the betting, I'm Super Too, has actually won a class 4 handicap although it was a couple of years ago.

Its recent form isn't great but it has finished 2<sup>nd</sup> in a class 4 handicap within the past year.

So on it's day it certainly has the potential to win.

The other horses in the race are of a pretty poor standard to be honest which would make me uneasy about laying So Mean It.

But this brings me onto the second variable: price.

So Mean It actually started the race as a 2/5F.

This price is far too low for me and I would definitely lay at this price.

Backers are hoping it will be able to cope with the extra 2f in distance and 2/5 is just too short for me.

So why is the price so short?

The Racing Post verdict gives us a clue...

Arc Light and Titus Bolt probably have races in them off this mark but MEAN IT (nap) made eye-catching late headway to grab second last time and is favoured stepping up in trip. [Stuart Redding]

Horses that finish quickly (especially in “eye-catching” fashion) are almost always overbet the next race.

Especially if they're stepping up in trip.

Punters will assume that the horse just needs an extra furlong or two to come good.

And I imagine the TV journalists were harping on about this and showing replays of its last race.

All this hype builds and punters can't help but back it into a very short price.

In the end the horse finished 3<sup>rd</sup> and the Racing Post verdict...

**Mean It**, who only made his racecourse debut last June, had already shown his liking for soft ground but things didn't pan out for him over this extra 2f. He carted himself into a handy position early and became short of toe and tight for room when the pace finally quickened. He was staying on again at the line and is well worth another chance.

If this horse had been a 3/1F I would probably not be interested in laying it.

The other horses in the race were of a poor standard and Mean It was probably the best horse in the race ability wise.

2/5 was a crazy price and if you were a punter who likes backing horses this is a horse I would have stayed away from.

The table below shows the ROI based on backing favourites at SP with the number of runs a horse has had at that distance.

Runs at that distance	ROI (based on backing horse at SP)
0	-7.30%
1	-7.17%
2	-5.36%
3	-4.64%

There is a clear correlation between the profits when backing horses and the number of runs a horse has had at that distance.

***Which means if you were laying a favourite you would definitely prefer it to have never run at that distance rather than have had 3 runs for example.***

One thing I particularly like to look out for are favourites who are being moved up just 0.5f from their previous race and are running the new distance for the first

time.

I focus on sprints up to 6 1/2 furlongs.

Most punters just don't realise that even just an increase of half a furlong can make a big difference in sprints.

Similarly the Postdata table doesn't differentiate between 5f and, say, 5.7f even though there is a big difference.

If a horse ran to form at 5f it will get a tick in a 5.7f race and this is something we can use to our advantage.

In fact my analysis shows that you can blindly lay these horses and since 2003 you would have made around a 5% ROI.

Definitely something to keep an eye out for.

## **CLASS**

There are different categories of race depending on the quality of the entrants.

It probably won't surprise you to know that favourites who are moving up in class have a worse strike rate than those either staying in the same class or dropping in class.

And if the horse is running in that class for the first time then it's even worse news for backers.

What you may find is a horse being a short priced favourite in its first conditions race simply because it won its maiden comfortably.

However it may well find itself up against horses who have also won their own maidens.

As well as races being named like maidens and conditions they are also given a class category depending on the prize money available.

The table below summarises the different classes for flat races:

<b>FLAT CLASS SYSTEM</b>								
<b>Cls 1</b>	Group 1.....	<b>3yo+</b> £200	<b>2yo</b> £165k	<b>Cls 3</b>	76-95.....	<b>3yo+</b> £12.5k	<b>2yo</b> £11k	
	Group 2.....	k	£70k		<b>Cls 4</b>	66-85.....		£8.5k
	Group 3.....	£90k	£40k		<b>Cls 5</b>	56-75.....		£5k
	Listed incl 96-110 hcps..	£50k	£23.5k		<b>Cls 6</b>	46-65.....		£3.5k
<b>Cls 2</b>	Heritage open hcps.....	£28k	-	<b>Cls 7</b>	0-	incl regional bands A-D	£2k	
	Nurseries.....	£45k	£20k		50.....			
	86-110.....	-	£13k					
		£18k						

The table below summarises the different classes for jump races:

<b>JUMP CLASS SYSTEM</b>						
		<b>Chase</b>	<b>NovChs</b>	<b>Hurdle</b>	<b>NovHurd</b>	<b>NHFlat</b>
<b>Cls 1</b>	Grade 1.....	£100k	£50k	£75k	£40k	£25k
	Grade 2 incl limited hcps.....	£50k	£32k	£40k	£40k	£20k
	Grade 3 open hcps.....	£50k		£45k	£28k	
	Listed .....	£25k	£20k	£22k		£15k
<b>Cls 2</b>	Open hcps .....	£23k		£18k	£18k	£18k
	0-140+.....	£20k		£14k		£14k
<b>Cls 3</b>	0-115/135.....	£10k		£8k		£8k
<b>Cls 4</b>	0-100/115.....	£5.5-10k		£4.5-8k		£4.5-8k
<b>Cls 5</b>	0-85/95.....	£3.5-5.5k		£3.2-4.5k		£3.2-4.5k
<b>Cls 6</b>	HuntCh & NHF.....	£1.6 – 3.5k				£2.5-3.2k

The lower the class number the better quality the horses are and the more prize money available. Class 1 being the best horses and Class 7 the worst.

We're going to follow the same process that we did for the going and the distance.

We're looking for horses who are moving up in class for the first time or have underperformed in that class.

As always the two factors we'll access for under performance are...

1. The expected finish based on position in the odds market.
2. Did the horse finish between half a length per furlong of the winner.

Now the Postdata table doesn't help us here as it doesn't have a class category.

It does have an ability category which, as you can probably guess, I take with a pinch of salt.

As always the best way to show my methodology is with an example...

« 2:45 » York

THURSDAY, 16 MAY 2013

**BETFRED DANTE STAKES (Group 2) (CLASS 1) (3yo)**

Winner: **£85,065**      Runners: **8**      Distance: **1m2f88y**      Going: **Good**      Channel: **CH4**

[VIDEO FORM](#)    [PRINT OUTS](#)    [VIEW IN ORGANISER](#)

£150,000 guaranteed For 3yo **Weights** colts and geldings 9st; fillies 8st 11lb **Penalties** in 2013, a winner of a Group 1 race 3lb **Entries** 83 pay £ 425 **Confirmed** 15 pay £ 350 **Penalty value** **1st** £85,065.00 **2nd** £32,250.00 **3rd** £16,140.00 **4th** £8,040.00 **5th** £4,035.00 **6th** £2,025.00

**BETTING FORECAST: 11/4 Indian Chief, 7/2 Greatwood, 7/2 Windhoek, 6/1 Ghurair, 6/1 Trading Leather, 13/2 Secret Number, 33/1 Libertarian, 50/1 Dashing Star.**

VERDICT COMMENTS MY NOTES STATS POSTDATA OR RPR TOPSPEED SELECTIONS PAST WINNERS

RPR	TS	OR	HORSE	TRAINER FORM	GOING G	DIST 10.4F	COURSE	DRAW	ABILITY	RECENT FORM	GROUP ENTRY
125	120	106	Trading Leather	✓	✓	?	?	—	✓✓✓	?	G1
125	95	104	Windhoek	✓	?	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓	G1
124	—	109	Secret Number	X	?	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓	G1
122	106	110	Ghurair	✓✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓	G1
118	97	103	Greatwood	✓✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓	G1
110	89	94	Libertarian	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓	✓	G1
102	54	—	Indian Chief	✓✓	?	✓	?	—	✓	✓	G1
99	94	83	Dashing Star	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓	✓	

This is a Class 1 (Group 2) race where the favourite is Indian Chief.

Let's have a look at the horse's racing history...

FORM	WINS	MY RATINGS	STATISTICS	ENTRIES	RELATIVES	SALES	QUOTES
	DATE	RACE CONDITIONS	WGT	RACE OUTCOME	JOCKEY	OR	TS RPR
	15Apr13	<b>Leo 10Sft</b> 3y 6K	9-5	<b>1/7</b> (2L Dubai Deer 9-5) 4/7F	Joseph O'Brien	—	40 <b>80</b>
	24Oct12	<b>Nav 8Hy</b> 2y 5K	9-5	<b>2/8</b> (2¼L Loch Garman 9-5) 4/5F	Joseph O'Brien	—	— <b>80</b>

Now this horse has only raced in Ireland before so we don't have the class information.

However we can see that the two races had prize money of 6K and 5K.

If we cross reference these amounts with the data in the table I included a couple of pages back we can equate these races with class 5 races.

So this is a big step up in class and I'm surprised this horse is favourite.

If I ever find myself surprised that a horse is favourite I always like to do a bit of research as to the reasons.

Firstly we'll look at the racing history of the next 3 horses in the betting as they may well be very poor horses...

# Greatwood

## Race record

3-y-o (01Mar10 b c)

Manduro (GER) (10.6f) — Gaze (Galileo (IRE) (11.1f))

Trainer Luca Cumani

Owner Highclere Thoroughbred Racing - Archer

Breeder The Kingwood Partnership

+ ADD TO MY HORSE TRACKER

RACE RECORD PEDIGREE MY NOTES STORIES PHOTOS

Flat placings 231-2

LIFETIME RECORD	STARTS	WINS	2NDS	3RDS	WINNINGS	EARNINGS	BEST TS	BEST RPR	OR+
Flat Turf	3	0	2	1	£0	£47,399	83	101	103
All-weather	1	1	0	0	£2,911	£2,911	26	81	—
Rules Races	4	1	2	1	£2,911	£50,310	—	—	—

FORM WINS MY RATINGS STATISTICS ENTRIES RELATIVES SALES QUOTES

DATE	RACE CONDITIONS	WGT	RACE OUTCOME	JOCKEY	OR	TS	RPR
 18Apr13	<b>Nmk 10GF</b> C23y 111K	9-3	2/15 (shd Windhoek 9-3) 15/2	Kieren Fallon	84	80	101
 24Oct12	<b>Kem 8St</b> C52yMd 2K	9-3	1/13 (nk Stasio 9-3) 15/8F	Kieren Fallon	—	26	81
 03Oct12	<b>Sal 8GS</b> C42yMd 4K	9-0	3/15 (2¾L So Beloved 9-3) 5/4F	Patrick Hills	—	62	77
 11Sep12	<b>Lei 7Gd</b> C42yMd 4K	9-0	2/16 (¾L Penny Rose 8-12) 7/1	Patrick Hills	—	83	83

# Windhoek

## Race record

3-y-o (03Feb10 b c)

Cape Cross (IRE) (8.9f) — Kahlua Kiss (Mister Baileys (9.9f))

Trainer Mark Johnston

Owner Sheikh Hamdan Bin Mohammed Al Maktoum

Breeder Horizon Bloodstock Limited

+ ADD TO MY HORSE TRACKER

RACE RECORD PEDIGREE MY NOTES STORIES PHOTOS

Flat placings 1-11

LIFETIME RECORD	STARTS	WINS	2NDS	3RDS	WINNINGS	EARNINGS	BEST TS	BEST RPR	OR+
Flat Turf	3	3	0	0	£136,927	£136,927	84	109	104
Stakes	1	1	0	0	£22,684	£22,684	60	109	104
Rules Races	3	3	0	0	£136,927	£136,927	—	—	—

FORM WINS MY RATINGS STATISTICS ENTRIES RELATIVES SALES QUOTES

DATE	RACE CONDITIONS	WGT	RACE OUTCOME	JOCKEY	OR	TS	RPR
 04May13	<b>Nmk 10GF</b> C13yL 22K	8-12	1/6 (3¼L Centurius 8-12) 4/5F	Joe Fanning	104	60	109
 18Apr13	<b>Nmk 10GF</b> C23y 111K	9-3	1/15 (shd Greatwood 9-3) 6/1	Joe Fanning	93	81	102
 22May12	<b>Not 6GF</b> C52yMd 3K	9-3	1/12 (shd Janoub Nibras 9-3) 11/1	Joe Fanning	—	84	87

## Ghurair (USA)

Race record

3-y-o (03Feb10 b/br c)

Elusive Quality (USA) (7.7f) — Alta Moda (Sadler's Wells (USA) (11.4f))

Trainer **John Gosden**

Owner **Hamdan Al Maktoum**

Breeder **Kirsten Rausing**

[+ ADD TO MY HORSE TRACKER](#)

**RACE RECORD** PEDIGREE MY NOTES STORIES PHOTOS

Flat placings 151-3

LIFETIME RECORD	STARTS	WINS	2NDS	3RDS	WINNINGS	EARNINGS	BEST TS	BEST RPR	OR+
Flat Turf	4	2	0	1	£283,991	£305,812	92	108	110
Stakes	1	0	0	0	£0	£1,614	83	104	110
Rules Races	4	2	0	1	£283,991	£305,812	—	—	—

**FORM** WINS MY RATINGS STATISTICS ENTRIES RELATIVES SALES QUOTES

DATE	RACE CONDITIONS	WGT	RACE OUTCOME	JOCKEY	OR	TS	RPR
 18Apr13	<b>Nmk 10GF</b> C23y 111K	9-3	<b>3/15</b> (1/2L Windhoek 9-3) EvensF	Paul Hanagan	111	79	<b>100</b>
 06Oct12	<b>Nmk 7Sft</b> C22y 277K	9-3	<b>1/12</b> (hd Havana Gold 9-3) 7/4F	Paul Hanagan	—	92	<b>108</b>
 01Aug12	<b>Goo 7Gd</b> C12yG2 34K	9-0	<b>5/10</b> (1L Olympic Glory 9-3) 2/1F	Paul Hanagan	—	83	<b>104</b>
 13Jul12	<b>Nmk 7Sft</b> C42yMd 6K	9-3	<b>1/18</b> (1/2L Improvisation 9-3) 3/1F	Paul Hanagan	—	90	<b>95</b>

A quick glance tells us that all 3 have better form than the favourite.

Greatwood has come a close second in a class 2 race, Windhoek has won a class 1 race (and is in fact unbeaten) and Ghurair has won a class 2 race worth 277K.

So why is a horse that has only ever raced in the equivalent of class 5 races the favourite?

The Racing Post analysis of its last race tells us...

A nice performance here from **INDIAN CHIEF** who has earned a crack at a Derby trial after this performance.

He was ridden with plenty of confidence by Joseph O'Brien who held him up at the back of the field off a steady pace. He didn't really ask him to race until over a furlong out but when he picked up he cut through the field and quickened past his rivals very nicely. It was probably the most eye-catching performance seen in a maiden so far this year. He might still have to answer some questions about his resolve for a battle, but there was nothing to fault him on here.

**Dubai Deer** is a nice improving colt and should find a maiden before long, probably on better ground. He tried to make all at a steady pace and found a fair bit in front, but the winner was far too classy for him.

Another to take out of the race is **Protestant** who looks a middle-distance horse, or even further. He lacked acceleration in the straight and just kept staying on, but was a little bit green as well. He's certain to improve and probably wants nice ground.

**Tonabrocky** seemed to have conditions in his favour but ran disappointingly and never picked up to any degree.

**Good On Numbers** travelled well to the two furlong pole then flattened out very quickly. He should come on tons for this run. [Justin O'Hanlon]

**QUOTES:** Aidan O'Brien, trainer of **Indian Chief**: "He looks to be a Montjeu with plenty of speed. Joseph dropped him in and he quickened up well. He could be a Dante horse."

Firstly the Racing Post describes it's victory as *"the most eye-catching performance seen in a maiden so far this year."*

Secondly his trainer compares him the the great Montjeu.

So we can sum up the reason why it is favourite in one word: hype.

As I've stressed in this guide I have no time for hype. I'm only interested in cold hard facts.

The horse is stepping up in class and is racing against very strong opposition for the first time.

Most punters will lap up the hyperbole from the journalists and TV presenters but it pays to take a different view sometimes.

This horse would definitely be a laying opportunity.

The horse ended up finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> and was described in the Racing Post's analysis as disappointing...

Aidan O'Brien's won almost every Derby trial going in Britain and Ireland in the past few weeks, but couldn't add this one despite being represented by the favourite **Indian Chief**. Impressive winner of a 1m2f maiden at Leopardstown on reappearance, this strong-traveller made smooth headway to look the likely winner 2f out, and picked up well when asked, but having ended up switching inside, it was soon clear he was going to be outstayed by the winner. This was a bit disappointing, but it's still early days for him, and it would come as no surprise to see him returned to 1m at some stage.

Kevin Buckley, UK representative for Coolmore, owners of **Indian Chief**: "It was a big step up for him today. Joseph [O'Brien] was happy enough and he stayed well. Our horses have been running very well and it's good to get a line in another Derby trial."

What you may be surprised to learn is that there is a correlation between the race class and the ROI of blindly laying favourites as the table below shows.

Class	ROI (%)
1	-2.79
2	-5.76
3	-6.01
4	-7.85
5	-10.65
6	-10.63
7	-8.4

Now that doesn't mean you should only be focus on laying favourites in class 1 races (just as you shouldn't just back favourites in class 6 races) but it's certainly a decent place to start to improve your returns.

But we can actually improve that further.

My 10 year research shows you can blindly lay favourites on the AW in class 1 and 2 races and profit with a ROI of 3%.

Another interesting stat I've discovered is that laying favourites who are moving up in class, having never raced in that class before, are also profitable when laying blindly.

Over the last 10 years this strategy would have brought you a ROI of just over 2%.

If you discover a race with those variables it's definitely worth taking a look.

What I love to look out for is a favourite that is moving up from a class 2 race to a class 1 race for the first time.

In fact it's profitable to lay these horses blindly. Over the past 10 years doing so would have give you around a 12% ROI.

## **COURSE**

UK horse racing courses vary wildly in their nature and as such is a massively important factor that needs close study.

I'm sure you've heard of the term "Horses For Courses" before. Basically some horses will only ever run well if it is suited to the course.

You could literally spend hours studying a horse's form on different courses.

However I like to keep it simple.

I like to look at three different areas when it comes to course suitability.

## 1. Size and running style of the horse

Some horses are large and natural gallopers with big strides. They are perfectly suited to the flat, galloping tracks with easy bends.

They are not suited to undulating tracks as they can become unbalanced. Nor are they suited to sharp tracks with tight bends.

On the other end of the scale are the smaller, well-balanced, nippier horses.

I've divided the UK racecourses into 2 types which will suit each extreme style.

Not all courses are listed below as some are considered fair tracks that don't favour a particular style.

For example Chepstow is considered a galloping course but it is very undulating and as such does not particularly suit the big striding horse.

The table below shows details which tracks I consider galloping and which are sharp.

<b>Galloping, Flat Courses</b>	<b>Sharp, Undulating Courses</b>
Ascot	Aintree (Mildmay)
Doncaster	Bangor
Ffos Las	Brighton
Haydock	Cartmel
Huntingdon	Catterick
Newbury	Chester
Newcastle	Epsom
Nottingham	Fakenham
Redcar	Folkestone
Salisbury (up to 1m)	Fontwell
Sandown	Goodwood
Wetherby	Kelso
Wincanton	Lingfield (Turf)
Worcester	Market Rasen
Yarmouth (up to 1m)	Newton Abbott
York	Perth
	Plumpton
	Pontefract
	Sedgefield
	Taunton
	Warwick
	Wolverhampton

I like to look for a horse that is either running on a specific type of course for the first time or one that has a poor record on that specific type of course.

## 2. Stiffness of the course

Some courses are considered a real test of stamina. These are usually the ones with a long uphill finish or courses where the ground is very sticky.

The table below shows the courses where stamina is a valuable attribute...

Ascot
Carlisle
Cheltenham
Chepstow
Exeter
Hamilton
Hexham
Leicester
Newcastle
Pontefract
Salisbury
Sandown
Sedgefield
Towcester

I like to look for horses that have a poor record on courses where stamina is key.

This can be especially important if you have already found a horse that is either stepping up in trip or running on softer ground than it has before.

If it is doing either of those on a tough course then all the better.

## 3. Stiffness of the fences

The fences at the NH courses also vary wildly. Some are known to be easy whilst others are renowned as being very tough.

The courses in the table below are those courses where the fences are known to be very stiff...

Ascot
Cheltenham
Chepstow
Doncaster
Hereford
Huntingdon
Musselburgh
Newbury
Newcastle
Wetherby

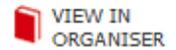
I like to look for a favourite with a poor record over stiff fences.

Let's look at an example of a favourite with a question mark over the suitability of the course...

# « 3:40 » Chester

SATURDAY, 25 MAY 2013

**BLOOM GIN HANDICAP** (CLASS 3) (4yo+ 0-90)



Winner: **£8,410**

Runners: **10**

Distance: **1m5f89y**

Going: **Good**

Channel: **RUK**

£13,000 guaranteed **For** 4yo+ Rated 71-90 (also open to such horses rated 70 and below) **Weights** highest weight 9st 7lb **Minimum weight** 8-2 **Penalties** after May 18th, each race won 6lb **Kuda Huraa's Handicap** **Mark** 88 **Entries** 24 pay £ 52 **Penalty value** **1st** £8,409.70 **2nd** £2,502.50 **3rd** £1,250.60 **4th** £625.30

STANDARD CARD **AT-A-GLANCE CARD** ODDS COMPARISON LATEST SHOWS

NO.	DRAW	HORSE	AGE	WGT	TRAINER	RTF%	JOCKEY	OR	TS	RPR
1 <sup>1</sup>	325-29	<b>Kuda Huraa</b> <sup>15</sup>	5	9-7	Alan King <sup>100</sup>		Tony Hamilton	88	91	100
2 <sup>3</sup>	2140-2	<b>Mysterious Man</b> <sup>20</sup>	4	9-6	Andrew Balding <sup>50</sup>		David Probert	87	93	102
3 <sup>10</sup>	6775-0	<b>Kiama Bay</b> <sup>17</sup>	7	9-6	John Quinn <sup>27</sup>		Martin Harley	87	85	105
4 <sup>2</sup>	2/45-3	<b>Harvard N Yale</b> <sup>14</sup> t	4	9-5	Jeremy Nosedo <sup>70</sup>		Seb Sanders	86	98	103
5 <sup>7</sup>	1343-6	<b>Kiwayu</b> <sup>9</sup> t	4	9-1	Ian Williams <sup>67</sup>		Michael O'Connell	82	97	99
6 <sup>6</sup>	31156	<b>Masterful Act</b> <sup>42</sup>	6	9-0	Alan McCabe <sup>20</sup>		Tadhg O'Shea	81	—	99
7 <sup>5</sup>	04-440	<b>The Fun Crusher</b> <sup>9</sup> b <sup>1</sup>	5	8-13	Tim Easterby <sup>41</sup>		Robert Winston	80	91	103
8 <sup>8</sup>	1823-1	<b>Gabrial's King</b> <sup>8</sup>	4	8-9	David Simcock <sup>55</sup>		Franny Norton	76	83	101
9 <sup>9</sup>	64857-	<b>Swinging Hawk</b> <sup>173</sup>	7	8-3	Ian Williams <sup>67</sup>		Ryan Powell <sup>3</sup>	70	112	104
10 <sup>4</sup>	37711	<b>Hallstatt</b> <sup>14</sup> t	7	8-2	John Mackie <sup>83</sup>		Raul Da Silva <sup>3</sup>	68	97	100

**BETTING FORECAST:** 11/4 **Mysterious Man**, 7/2 Harvard N Yale, 9/2 Kuda Huraa, 8/1 Gabriel's King, 10/1 Hallstatt, 10/1 Kiama Bay, 10/1 Kiwayu, 10/1 The Fun Crusher, 25/1 Masterful Act, 25/1 Swinging Hawk.

VERDICT COMMENTS MY NOTES STATS **POSTDATA** OR RPR TOPSPEED SELECTIONS PAST WINNERS

RPR	TS	OR	HORSE	TRAINER FORM	GOING G	DIST 13.4F	COURSE	DRAW	ABILITY	RECENT FORM
105	85	87	Kiama Bay	X	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓	X
104	112	70	Swinging Hawk	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓✓	?
103	98	86	Harvard N Yale	✓	✓	?	?	—	✓✓✓	✓✓
103	91	80	The Fun Crusher	✓	✓	?	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
102	93	87	Mysterious Man	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
101	83	76	Gabrial's King	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓	✓
100	91	88	Kuda Huraa	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓
100	97	68	Hallstatt	✓	✓	✓	✓	—	✓✓	✓✓
99	97	82	Kiwayu	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓
99	—	81	Masterful Act	✓	✓	✓	?	—	✓✓	✓✓

This is the card for a race at Chester.

Chester is renowned as being one of the sharpest courses in the country and the long striding galloper is at a massive disadvantage here.

The favourite is Mysterious Man.

Let's have a quick glance over his racing history to see which tracks he has previously raced at.

FORM	WINS	MY RATINGS	STATISTICS	ENTRIES	RELATIVES	SALES	QUOTES					
DATE	RACE CONDITIONS	WGT	RACE OUTCOME	JOCKEY	OR	TS	RPR					
 05May13	<b>Sal 14GF</b> C3Hc 13K	8-13	<b>2/13</b> (shd Sun Central 9-7) 9/2	Jimmy Fortune	84	53	<b>94</b>					
 06Oct12	<b>Lon 15V5ft</b> 3yG2 95K	9-2	<b>11/11</b> (43L Canticum 9-2) 25/1	Darryll Holland	—	42	<b>59</b>					
 25Aug12	<b>Yor 14GS</b> C23yHc 43K	8-6	<b>4/16</b> (5¾L Guarantee 9-4) 14/1	David Probert	83	85	<b>91</b>					
 27Jun12	<b>Bat 12GS</b> C5Md 2K	8-13	<b>1/12</b> (2¼L Linkable 8-13) EvensF	David Probert	83	58	<b>77</b>					
 19May12	<b>Nby 10GS</b> C43yMd 5K	9-3	<b>2/12</b> (6L Bishop Roko 9-3) 11/4F	Jimmy Fortune	83	78	<b>85</b>					
 06May12	<b>Sal 12GS</b> C53yMd 4K	9-3	<b>2/12</b> (2¾L Estimate 8-12) 3/1F	Liam Keniry	—	63	<b>87</b>					
 11Oct11	<b>Lei 8Gd</b> C42yMd 4K	9-3	<b>4/11</b> (3½L Thomas Chippendale 9-3) 9/4J	Jimmy Fortune	—	65	<b>78</b>					
 16Sep11	<b>Nby 8GS</b> C22y 9K	8-12	<b>4/7</b> (4¼L Cavaleiro 9-2) 33/1	David Probert	—	41	<b>81</b>					

In England he has raced at Salisbury, York, Bath, Newbury and Leicester.

If we look at the table above we can see that York, Newbury and Salisbury are considered good galloping tracks.

Bath and Leicester are neutral (although the Racing Post considers them galloping tracks).

So Mysterious Man has never raced on a sharp track before and now he's racing on one of the sharpest in the country.

This is a big black mark for me as very few horses can do the business on galloping and sharp tracks.

Other horses in the race have previous form on sharp courses and several have either won or been placed at Chester so can obviously handle the course.

Ability wise, Mysterious Man had won a class 5 maiden race and come second in a class 3 handicap.

The second favourite, Harvard N Yale, had won a class 4 maiden and finished third in a class 3 handicap.

The third favourite, Gabriel's King, had won a class 5 handicap and finished second in a class 3 handicap.

So the first 3 in the betting are very similar ability wise and I feel these two could beat Mysterious Man on the day.

In the end the favourite came third. Here's the Racing Post's analysis...

Despite his trainer's concerns over the suitability of the track, **Mysterious Man** gave himself every chance and was only run out of it late. A return to a more galloping track and a truly run race should see him winning again.

So it seems the trainer himself questioned the suitability of the track but obviously punters didn't take this on board and backed into 2/1.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

In this manual you have everything you will ever need to begin successfully laying horses.

If you have no experience with horse racing you might want to re-read several sections of this ebook until you understand everything fully.

I would wholly recommend that you begin by paper trading and don't risk any money for the first week. This will give you time to get used to the practice of laying horses.

Another key thing to remember is it always pays to specialise.

You simply can't read the form of every horse in every race of the day.

It would just take too long.

There are several different ways you can specialise.

You could specialise by race type.

For example focus on handicaps or maybe maidens.

Over jumps you could choose to focus on hurdles or chases.

You could also focus on specific age categories.

Maybe 2yo races where the horses are very lightly raced or maybe 4yo+ races where you have more form to go on.

You could even choose to simply pick one meeting a day to take a look at.

Whatever you decide try to stick with it for at least a month.

The more time you stick to your specialised area the better you will become at reading the races.

Remember you will lay winning horses from time to time. This is inevitable.

When it happens study the race in more depth to see if there was anything you missed.

If there was, learn from it and move on to the next lay.

Don't expect to pick it up straight away.

Good luck and most importantly have fun!!  
Kristian Jackman