

# A GUIDE TO WAGERING ON AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE RACING

APPLICATIONS AND  
TECHNIQUES FOR THE  
ADVANCED THOROUGHBRED  
PLAYER AS WELL AS TIPS  
FOR BEGINNERS

AMERICAN  
QUARTER  
HORSE  

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RACING

AMERICAN  
QUARTER  
HORSE  
ASSOCIATION

## Table Of Contents

<u>Page</u>	<u>Title</u>
2	<i>Introduction</i>
3	<i>Elements of Handicapping &amp; Class</i>
4	<i>Preparing Before Race Day</i>
6	<i>Past Performances</i>
12	<i>Paddock &amp; Post Parade</i>
13	<i>How To Wager</i>
18	<i>Types Of Races</i>
19	<i>Handicapping Sprinters</i>
22	<i>Strategies for Thoroughbred Players</i>
25	<i>Handicapping 870 Races</i>
27	<i>Trip Handicapping</i>
29	<i>Class &amp; Speed Figures</i>
33	<i>Glossary</i>

*This handicapping guide is provided by the American Quarter Horse Association in an effort to promote understanding of American Quarter Horse racing and is provided as a service to the racing fan and wagering public. This guide is not intended to be an enticement to wager on American Quarter Horse racing, nor is it a guarantee that anyone will profit from this information. Although every effort is made to avoid inaccuracies and errors in this guide, AQHA assumes no liability for inaccuracies or errors of any kind.*

**WELCOME** to American Quarter Horse Racing. It's a brand of excitement that only America's Fastest Athlete can deliver. Ours is an adrenaline-pumping sport, a classic confrontation of speed that you're sure to love. These muscular, American-bred speedsters are the sprinters of the racing world. Almost every race features a thrilling stretch run and a heart-stopping photo finish. Handicapping America's Fastest Athlete is equally as thrilling and usually provides racing fans with a good return on their investment.

If you're a fan of Thoroughbred racing, you won't be disappointed with our American Quarter Horse events. The excitement is real. And if you're experienced with handicapping the Thoroughbreds, you'll find yourself on familiar ground here because the similarities between the two breeds greatly outnumber the differences. Class, a prime factor with Thoroughbreds, also is important in handicapping American Quarter Horses. The major difference between the two is pace.

Straightaway American Quarter Horse racing is an all-out burst of speed from the starting gate with every horse trying to put a head in front at the finish. There is no time to maneuver for position or come from behind in the final stretch run as in Thoroughbred racing. Therefore, the experienced handicapper can concentrate on speed, class, jockey/trainer combinations and track conditions without having to spend time trying to predict how the race will be run.

Although you may find our sections on the elements of handicapping and wagering of primary interest to you, we urge you to read through the entire guide. We've included a lot of information on certain factors in American Quarter Horse racing that will influence your success at the wagering window. If you visit [www.aqbaracing.com](http://www.aqbaracing.com) you'll find background information on various racetracks around the country as well as charts on leading trainers, jockeys and sires. Also included are articles by experts dealing specifically with the art of handicapping the American Quarter Horse.

# ELEMENTS OF HANDICAPPING

America's Fastest Athlete, the American Quarter Horse, might be America's most consistent athlete. Look at these figures: from 1999 through 2003, American Quarter Horse wagering favorites finished in the money (first, second or third) 70% of the time, while winning 36%. But that's not saying American Quarter Horse racing lacks the excitement of winning long shots. With 41% of the horses finishing first, second or third going off with odds of 5-1 or greater, exotic wagers have paid some handsome rewards. The key is knowing how to cash in on those rewards yourself. But how? The answer is knowledge.

If you're a smart handicapper you'll do your homework by learning everything you can about the horse, its rider, trainer, bloodlines, competition and even the surface the horse will run on before you invest your hard-earned cash. Your competition is the person standing next to you and all the other patrons at the track. When you learn and observe what they don't, you will increase the frequency of your return trips to the window to cash tickets.

There is much to learn about handicapping, and to help get you started, the American Quarter Horse Association has put together the key elements of handicapping. Remember, knowledge is power. Good luck!

## CLASS

Class is one of the most important factors in handicapping. Analyze everything you see, hear or read in the context of class. In the most basic sense, class refers to the ability to win, produce winners and develop high-quality, competitive races. Class not only involves racehorses, but sires and dams, owners, breeders, trainers, jockeys, races and even tracks. Think of class in terms of levels of excellence and a competitive edge.

Here's an example of class in a racehorse compared to other athletes: During the 1987 National Football League strike, many talented athletes replaced striking players. The replacements made for some exciting Sunday afternoons. But only a few of the replacements were able to keep their jobs when the striking players returned. The reason? They were simply not up to the superior play of the regulars. In other words, they were outclassed. The same can be true of a racehorse. For instance, a horse that might win with a fast time in claiming races would probably lose when going against horses that regularly participate in stakes race competition with similar race times.

Here's how class relates to a racetrack. A horse with a 96 speed figure and a first-place finish at a mid-level track is not necessarily the same as a horse with a 96 speed figure and a first-place finish at a major track, like Los Alamitos. With numerous graded stakes and one of the highest average purse structures, Los Alamitos attracts more of American Quarter Horse racing's premier performers than smaller tracks. You'll hear a lot about class throughout this guide.

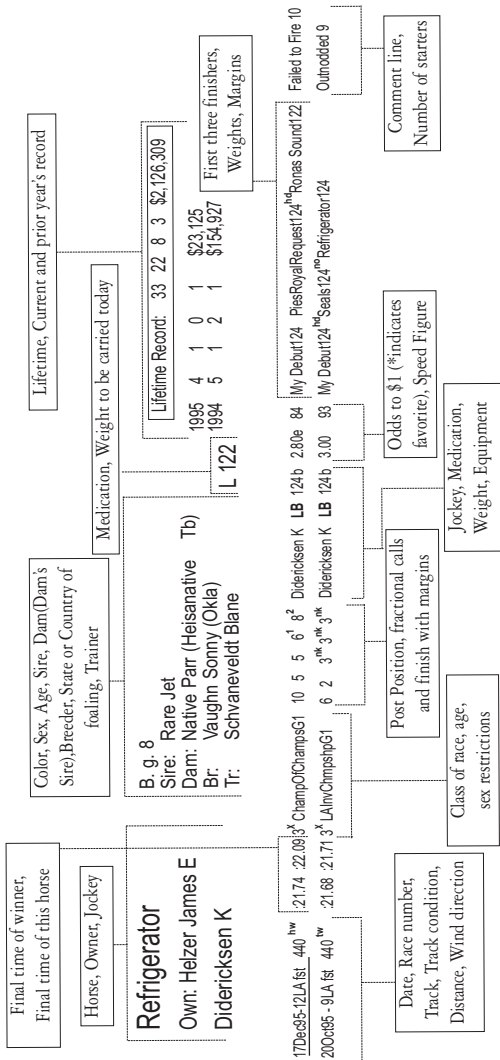
The next section on handicapping is divided into two parts: first, what to do before coming to the races, and second, what to do on race day.

## PREPARING BEFORE RACE DAY

In order to evaluate the entrants in any race, you'll need historical data or past performances (PP's), as they are called. Pick up a program and a *Daily Racing Form* or download the data from TrackMaster ([www.trackmaster.com](http://www.trackmaster.com)) the day before the race and analyze them.

On the following page you'll find an example of a PP entry with notations, followed by full explanations of everything you see.

# AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE PAST PERFORMANCE EXPLANATION



# EVERYTHING YOU WANT TO KNOW IS IN THE PAST PERFORMANCES

*Courtesy of Daily Racing Form*

**Date Race Was Run** - The most recent race on the past performance chart shown was run on Dec. 17, 1995.

**Race Number, Racetrack Abbreviation** - The most recent race on the past performance chart shown was the twelfth race at Los Alamitos. A complete list of racetrack abbreviations is published in the past performance section of most issues of *Daily Racing Form*.

**Track Condition** - The track was fast. Track condition abbreviations are: fst - fast; fr - frozen; gd - good; sl - slow; sly - sloppy; my - muddy; hy - heavy; wf - wet fast.

**Distance of Race** - The most recent race was run at a distance of 440 yards.

**Wind Direction** - hw - there was a head wind during the race. Wind directions are: hw - head wind; cw - cross wind; tw - tail wind.

**Winner's Final Time** - :21.74, the winning horse stopped the timer in 21 and 74 one-hundredth seconds. This always is the time of the first horse across the finish line, even if the winner is disqualified.

**Final Time of This Horse** - :22.09, this horse finished the race in :22.09. Beaten margins behind winners are calculated into time values by this formula - a nose equals .01 seconds; a head equals .02 seconds; and one length equals .16 seconds.

**Type of Race Conditions** - ChampOfChamps G1 stands for Champion Of Champions, the race is a grade one event, which is the highest level of competition in racing.

**Post Position** - This horse broke from the 10 hole in the starting gate. Sometimes post positions can be different from program numbers. When wagering, always refer to the horse's official program number.

**Fractional Calls with Margins** - In the top example, this horse was fifth at the start, fifth by three quarters of a length at the first stretch call at 220 yards from the finish (1/8th pole); sixth at the second stretch call at 110 yards from the finish (1/16th pole) and finished eighth by two lengths. For races of 660 yards or longer, the fractional calls are listed at the start, the first stretch call at 440 yards from the finish (1/4 pole) and the second stretch call at 220 yards from the finish (1/8 pole.)

**Jockey** - In the most recent race on the past performance chart shown, jockey Kip Didericksen was the rider.

**Equipment/Medication/Weight** - This horse competed with the legally permitted medication Lasix (L) and Bute (B) and wore blinkers (b) in the race while carrying 124 pounds.

**Closing Odds** - In the most recent race on the past performance chart shown, this horse went off at odds of \$2.80 to \$1. An asterisk (\*) indicates if the horse was the wagering favorite at post time.

**Top Three Finishers** - In the most recent race on the past performance chart shown, My Debut was the winner by 1/2 of a length, followed by Pies Royal Request which was a head in front of Ronas Sound, which was a half length in front of the fourth-place finisher.

**Comment** - "Failed To Fire" - This is a description of the horse's performance and will include any trouble the horse might encounter. In this example "Failed to Fire" means Refrigerator ran flat and evenly throughout.

**Number of Starters** - In the most recent race on the past performance chart shown there were 10 starters.

## READING BETWEEN THE LINES

The past performance information for each horse in a race is there in black and white for everyone wagering on the race to follow. The only way you can out-handicap the competition is if you can read between the lines.

**RACE FREQUENCY** – As many as 10 of a horse's past races are listed by date beginning with the most recent race.

*TIP - Look for excessive or irregular layoffs between races which could indicate a fitness problem that could keep the horse from running true to form. Conversely, look for a history of regular layoffs with an immediate return to peak form.*

**TRACK CONDITION** – Weather can change a track's condition quickly. Dirt tracks are rated as follows: fst-fast; sly-sloppy; my-muddy; gd-good; sl-slow; hy-heavy; fr-frozen; wf-wet fast.

*TIP - Horses that performed well in conditions similar to today's could have the edge.*

**DISTANCE** – There are three types of races in American Quarter Horse racing: short sprints of 220, 250, 300, 330 and 350 yards; long sprints of 400, 440, 550 and 660 yards; and distance races around one turn of 770, 870 and 1,000 yards.

*TIP - Determine the horse's suitability to today's distance. A horse that performs well at short distances could fade during a longer race. And conversely, a horse that breaks slowly, but performs well in the stretch might need the extra distance to win. In some cases, American Quarter Horses that have not been top performers at short or long sprints, may become competitive at 870 yards.*

**TYPES OF RACES** – Maiden, Speed Index, Trial, Claiming, Allowance, Handicap and Stakes. You'll find a more complete description later in this guide and in the glossary.

*TIP - Think of race classifications as levels of the class of horse they attract with stakes races being the highest and \$2,000 maiden claiming the lowest. The conditions of a race (non-winners of two, three or four) or claiming prices (\$2,000-\$20,000) are significant differences in the same type of race. Comparing the purse value of different races will also give you a good measure of class.*

**POST POSITION** – At certain times or conditions, tracks might have surfaces that favor the inside, middle or outside post positions. Most programs list the percentage of wins from each post position. Some horses also favor certain post positions and dislike others.

*TIP - On races around the turn, unless a horse has a great deal of early speed to go to the front and take the inside rail, an outside post position is definitely a disadvantage. A fast-breaking horse that usually wins when it breaks first can have an edge when positioned with room to run. Look for horses that break well with a post position between two horses that generally do not get away fast. In straightaway races, the one hole is generally a disadvantage, while the outside might be an advantage.*

**POSITION CALLS** – A horse's position during a race and its lengths behind the front-runner are generally described at four locations along the race: the break call at two strides or ten yards from the starting gate; the first stretch call at the 1/8 pole or 220 yards from the finish; the second stretch call at the 1/16 pole or 110 yards from the finish; and at the finish.

*TIP - Look for horses that consistently break well at the start. A quick glance at the last few break calls of a particular horse should give you a good idea whether that horse is likely to compromise his chances with a slow break. A fast breaker drawn between two slow breakers can be a solid wagering opportunity because he should have a clear lane in which to run.*

**MEDICATIONS** – The two types of legally permitted medications are Bute and Lasix. Bute is an anti-inflammatory drug used to reduce stiffness. Lasix (also known as furosemide) is a diuretic used to treat respiratory bleeding that some athletes experience. Racetrack programs and *Daily Racing Form* provide indicators (B = Bute, L = Lasix, L1 = first-time Lasix) as to which horses have raced or are racing on medication.

*TIP - If a horse is on the first-time Lasix list and performed well early in past races but has faded toward the end, the effects of Lasix might make a difference in his next race. Bute is generally not a factor to consider in handicapping, as most horses race with that medication.*

**EQUIPMENT** – The symbol “b” indicates the horse wore blinkers during a race. The symbol “f” indicates the horse wore front “wraps” or bandages during a race.

*TIP - A horse that has been running erratically and shows to be wearing blinkers for the first time might be a good wager. Also, the presence of bandages does not necessarily indicate a soundness problem, unless a horse has previously raced without them.*

**WEIGHT** – The total amount of weight a horse is required to carry (including jockey and tack).

*TIP - In American Quarter Horse racing, weight is not a major factor in the shorter races. However, in races of 440 yards or more, it does have some importance. The horses with the best*

*performance records might be required to carry the most weight in an attempt to make a more even contest. Look for horses that have carried more weight in previous races. In stakes races, the best horses are usually asked to carry the most weight, and they're usually good enough to overcome the high imposts.*

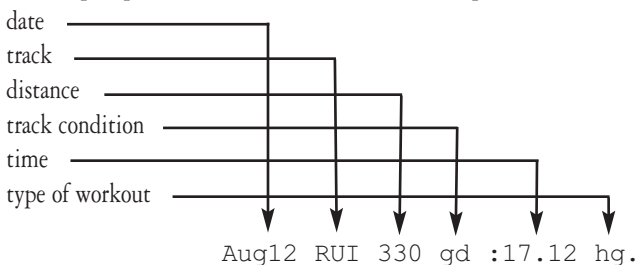
**TIME and INDIVIDUAL TIME** – The time of the race (the winner's time) and the time of the individual horse are shown in seconds and hundredths of seconds.

*TIP - Use best recent times at today's distance, conditions and racetrack. Keep the different elements of class in mind while making your comparisons. Remember that wind and track conditions can have an impact on times.*

**TRACKMASTER SPEED FIGURES** – TrackMaster Speed Figures (frequently called "Speed Rating") are based on the average (or par) times at each class level. They are designed to be used with TrackMaster's class ratings.

*TIP - An average of best recent speed figures is a good basis for comparison. Again, keep the elements of class, wind and track condition in mind.*

**WORKOUTS** – The most recent morning workouts for each horse are listed beneath the past performance lines. This information reports:



The letter "h" describing the type of the workout means handily while a "b" would refer to breezing, which is a less physically exerting workout. The letter "g" means the workout was from the starting gate. Most American Quarter Horse workouts from the gate are electronically timed and are with other horses. Because of this electronic timing, a handicapper can put more

trust in American Quarter Horse gate works than he might be used to doing with Thoroughbreds, which are hand-timed.

**JOCKEYS** – At any given track, there is a broad range of talent. Generally speaking, the best horses will have the best riders (ones who can be found on the leading rider list in your program).

*TIP - Jockey changes can affect the outcome of a race. For instance, if you note that a leading jockey has been taken off his regular mount and switched to another, you could have a better chance of a winning wager on his new mount.*

**TRAINERS** – As with jockeys, any given track will have a broad range of trainers with varying degrees of expertise and experience.

*TIP - Pay attention to their winning percentages, not just their total wins, as a good trainer with a few horses will never lead the trainer's list. Try to keep track of a trainer's ability with different classes or ages of horses. Some trainers are better with claiming horses, while others concentrate on stakes performers. In-depth jockey and trainer statistics can be found in TrackMaster's family of products.*

**BREEDING** – A listing of horse's sire, dam and dam's sire.

*TIP - As a general rule, pedigree has a significant influence on a horse's natural ability to run. Keep note of the leading sires and dams as well as breeders and owners when considering class. This is especially true when handicapping two-year-olds and first-time starters. In-depth pedigree statistics can be found at AQHA's website and TrackMaster's family of products.*

**MONEY LINE** – The number of starts, wins, places (seconds), shows (thirds) and purse money won this year and last year. The lifetime total of wins and in-the-money (firsts, seconds and thirds) and lifetime purse money.

*TIP - This can be an indication of improvement or deterioration and class. Compare percentages of wins, in-the-money or average money earned per start.*

## DAY OF THE RACE

Now that you've done your homework, it's time to go to the races! Remember to do yourself a favor that could mean the difference between winning and losing. Take a trip down to the paddock and/or watch the post parade prior to every race before placing your wager.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN THE PADDOCK & POST PARADE

**CONFORMATION** – Generally, a racing American Quarter Horse has a well-balanced physique with a short back, deep chest, straight legs and an attractive head and neck. The power comes from the hind legs and hip muscles, which should be well-defined. Size is not usually a factor, although a big 2-year-old might need maturity to develop coordination.

**APPEARANCE** – Look for a horse that's fit, healthy, anxious and alert. A healthy horse has a defined, streamlined underline. His coat is shiny and well-groomed. If he has bright, shining eyes and his ears aren't missing a sound, then you have a horse that's alert and ready to win.

**SWEATING** – Sweating can be a sign of nervousness and discomfort, which means the horse might be expending too much energy in the paddock or post parade. Watch for signs of excessive sweating or "washing out" in the chest and neck areas or white lather visible between the horse's hind legs. Remember, though, that wetness alone does not mean the horse has been adversely affected because all horses sweat profusely on hot days, or some might be brought to the paddock drenched in water to reduce sweating. The determining factor here is lathering.

**BANDAGES** – Bandages are not usually a sign of unsoundness. They are normally used for support or to prevent abrasions. Bandages can generally be ignored when evaluating racing American Quarter Horses, unless the horse previously has raced without front bandages.

**POST PARADE** – Take note of a horse's gait or stride. A horse should hold his head high and alert. A fit, eager-to-run horse will move with a smooth, even stride.

# HOW TO WAGER

Now that you've picked the horses worthy of your money, it's time to decide how you'll wager. An important thing to note is what the odds are. This is an indication of how the crowd has evaluated the competition in the race.

## PROBABLE PAYOFFS/ODDS CHART

Odds	Payoff	Odds	Payoff	Odds	Payoff
1-9	\$2.20	3-2	5.00	5-1	12.00
1-5	2.40	8-5	5.20	6-1	14.00
2-5	2.80	9-5	5.60	7-1	16.00
1-2	3.00	2-1	6.00	8-1	18.00
3-5	3.20	5-2	7.00	9-1	20.00
4-5	3.60	3-1	8.00	10-1	22.00
1-1	4.00	7-2	9.00	12-1	26.00
6-5	4.40	4-1	10.00	15-1	32.00
7-5	4.80	9-2	11.00	20-1	42.00

Remember, these are odds on the horse to win only, as the place and show odds hinge on who finishes second and third. However, most toteboards provide the amount of money wagered on each horse to place and show.

**MORNING LINES** – The morning line is established by the track's handicapper and reflects what he feels will be the final odds at the start of each race as established by the wagering public. The morning line does not necessarily reflect his predictions as to the outcome of the race.

**BASIC WAGERS** – The three basic wagers are win, place and show. Exotic wagering is any deviation of these types of wagers.

- **Win** – your horse must finish first for you to collect.
- **Place** – your horse must finish first or second for you to collect.
- **Show** – your horse must finish first, second or third for you to collect.

Your better payoffs come from the win wagers. However, some fans make it a rule to back up each win wager with a place wager on the same horse to “protect” their investment. Unless the odds to win are 4-1 or longer, a place wager will generally not cover the wager to win.

**ENTRIES** – Sometimes you can get more than one horse for a \$2 wager. This is when an owner has more than one horse in a race. In that event, the horses are coupled and constitute one wagering interest. They will be numbered 1 and 1A, 2 and 2B, and so on. Playing entries can be an attractive proposition. However, two long shots coupled does not increase your chances of winning.

**EXOTIC WAGERS** – Playing exotics is attractive to many fans, as the payoffs are generally greater than straight wagering. However, the odds against cashing a ticket also are greater.

#### THE MOST COMMON EXOTIC WAGERS:

**DAILY DOUBLE** – This wager consists of picking the winners of two consecutive races. It is normally the first two races on a card. However, many tracks have added a second Double for later races. Picking the winners of these races will cost you a minimum wager of \$2.

*How to say it:* “\$2 Daily Double 2-3,” which means you have selected the 2 horse in the first half and the 3 horse in the second half.

**THE WHEEL** – This method is used when you are confident of one horse in either race and you combine or “wheel” him with most or all horses in the other race.

**CRISSCROSSING** – This method consists of picking two or three horses in one race and combining them with two or three horses in the other. This can produce many combinations and will cost you accordingly. For example: Race 1- Horses A and B, Race 2- Horses A, B and C. This will produce six different combinations: A-A, A-B, A-C, B-A, B-B and B-C, and will cost \$12.

**EXACTA** – You must select the first- and second-place finishers of a race in exact order. The wager will generally cost a minimum of \$2.

*How to say it:* “\$2 exacta 1-4,” which means that you have selected the 1 horse to win and the 4 horse to finish second.

**EXACTA WHEEL** – The object is to match a single horse with all or part of the rest of the field. You can put him in the win or place position. In a 10-horse field, to key him with all the others would cost \$18 for \$2 Exactas.

*How to say it:* “\$2 Exacta wheel 2 with all,” which means you have selected the 2 to finish first and any horse in the field to finish second. “Exacta wheel all with 2,” means you have selected any horse in the field to finish first and the 2 to finish second.

**EXACTA BOXES** – By boxing two or more horses, you cover many possible combinations of order of finish. A three-horse box, A, B and C would make six combinations (A-B, A-C, B-A, B-C, C-A and C-B) and cost \$12 for \$2 exactas.

*How to say it:* “\$2 Exacta Box 2-3-6,” which means any combination of two of the three horses must finish first and second in any order.

**QUINELLA** – This wager consists of picking the top two finishers in a race regardless of their order and will normally cost a minimum of \$2.

*How to say it:* “\$2 quinella 3-4,” which means the 3 and 4 finish first and second in either order.

**QUINELLA BOX OR “BASEBALL”** – You may choose more than two horses as a way to increase your chances of winning. The box or “baseball” Quinella is among the most popular. The following are some examples of what a \$2 minimum quinella wager would cost:

3-horse box	3 wagers	cost \$6
4-horse box	6 wagers	cost \$12
5-horse box	10 wagers	cost \$20

**TRIFECTA** – You collect if you select the top three horses in the exact order of finish. A Trifecta normally costs \$2. However, this wager may be boxed or wheeled the same as Exactas. Keep in mind you are dealing with three orders of finish and the various combinations will be greater, and so will your

expense. Most tracks offer \$1 Trifecta Boxes or Wheels. The following are the combinations and money necessary for Trifecta Wheels and Boxes.

*How to say it:* "\$2 trifecta 1-3-5," which means the 1 horse must finish first, the 3 horse must finish second and the 5 horse must finish third.

**TRIFECTA WHEEL** – Wheel one horse in any single position (1st, 2nd or 3rd) with:

Total Number of	\$1 Wager	\$2 Wager
3 other horses	\$6	\$12
4 other horses	12	24
5 other horses	20	40

*How to say it:* "\$1 trifecta wheel 2 on top with 3-7-8, 3-7-8," which means the 2 horse must finish first, then either the 3, 7 or 8 finishes second and either the 3, 7 or 8 finishes third.

**TRIFECTA BOX** – A box includes every possible combination that could result from the horses you've selected.

Total Number of	\$1 Wager	\$2 Wager
3 Horse Box	\$6	\$12
4 Horse Box	24	48
5 Horse Box	60	120

If you believe two horses are the class of the field, you could box them in the first and second position and wheel the same or all of the rest of the field for the third.

*How to say it:* "\$2 trifecta box 2-3-6," which means any combination of those three horses must finish first, second and third.

**PICK SIX WAGERING** – This type of wagering consists of picking the winners of six consecutive races. Pick Sixes have been known to pay a few thousand dollars to as much as a million dollars. Most tracks provide cards with specially marked boxes for each race. The wager will cost you \$2 if you only pick one horse in each race. However, if you want to increase your chances of winning by picking more, the price goes up accordingly. Look at the example

below to learn how to figure your cost. Multiply the number of selections in Race 3, by the number of selections in Race 4, by the number of selections in Race 5 and so on through Race 8. That number is multiplied by \$2 to come up with your cost.

# Picks	# Picks	# Picks	# Picks	#Picks	# Picks	Total
1	x	3	x	1	x	2
Race 3		Race 4		Race 5		Race 8
				Race 6	Race 7	Cost
				(30 Selections)		x\$2=\$60

*How to say it (notice that this is the same \$60 wager listed just above):*  
 “\$2 pick 6...3...with 2, 4, 6...with 1...with 1, 2, 4, 6, 7...with 2...with 3, 4,”  
 which means you have chosen the 3 horse in the first leg, the 2, 4, or 6 horse in the second leg, the 1 horse in the third leg, the 1, 2, 4, 6 or 7 horse in the fourth leg, the 2 horse in the fifth leg and the 3 or 4 horse in the sixth leg.

**Other Exotic Wagers** - Many racetracks offer “super” exotics such as the Twin-Trifecta, Superfecta, Twin-Quin and Tri-Super. These wagering bonanzas often offer six figure payoffs. Rules for these types of wagers vary from track to track, so consult your track racing program for details. Other exotic wagers might include the “odd/even” where a wager is made either on an even program number or an odd number. If you wager the evens and a horse with an even program number wins, then you win, too. Racetracks list the types of exotic wagers they offer in the daily program.

**Tip Sheets** – If you don’t think you’re ready to make a wager by yourself or if you’re visiting a racetrack for the first time and are unfamiliar with the horses, trainers and jockeys, there’s help available in the form of tip sheets, which are available for sale at the racetrack and surrounding convenience stores, newsstands or by vendors outside the entrance gates. Tip sheets are published by handicappers who might or might not be employees of the racetrack. The horses selected in the tip sheets are the opinions of someone who closely follows the races at that particular track. In the case of the racetrack, it’s generally the racing secretary, his assistants, morning clockers, or even the public relations department who do tip sheets. Tip sheets sold outside the racetrack are written by almost anyone, including professional handicappers,

horsemen, high school students and other entrepreneurs who are trying to make a profit. Tip sheets normally list three horses and a long shot for each race, with a best wager of the day and suggested exotic wheels, boxes and parlays.

*Newspapers and Daily Racing Form* also provide handicappers' selections for each race. In addition, the program provides the morning line and track handicapper's picks each day. The best way to utilize tip sheets is to follow the success of several by checking their picks against the actual winners. Often a consensus of all the tip sheets and handicapper picks is the best way to utilize this information. The cost of all this advice varies from the cost of a newspaper to about \$5.

## TYPES OF RACES

**STAKES RACES** – These races offer the largest purses. They are races in which the purse consists of nomination, and/or starting fees, plus money added by the track or sponsor. These races generally attract the highest quality horses and are abbreviated by the name of the stakes. For example: **Allamerfut 1** meaning All American Futurity (G1). Graded races are the premier stakes races, whereby a grade one (G1), grade two (G2) or grade three (G3), designate the class of horses participating. The size of purse, amount of added money and the historical significance of the race also are determining factors in the grade status. Grade one (G1) is the highest designation. Some stakes races are restricted to horses bred in a particular state or to horses sired by participating stallions. Some restricted races are graded, whereby a restricted grade one (RG1), restricted grade two (RG2) or restricted grade three (RG3) designate the class of horses participating.

**HANDICAP RACES** – These races feature better quality horses in which the Racing Secretary or Track Handicapper assigns weights designed to equalize the winning chances of entrants. The better horses get higher weights to enable a horse with a lesser record to have a chance at winning. The designation HDGP is utilized.

**CLAIMING RACES** – Claiming races are the most common, constituting approximately 70% of all races run. In these races, horses are entered for a specific price and can be purchased or “claimed” by any licensed owner at the track for that price. This tends to equalize the class or competition in these races. An owner who has a \$25,000 horse is not going to put him in a race with a field of \$5,000 claimers, for fear that someone would claim his horse at a greatly-reduced value. These races are designated by the claiming price (5000). A “C” in front of the claiming price in the past performance line means the horse was claimed in that race.

**ALLOWANCE RACES** – An allowance race is a non-claiming race for better quality or more lightly raced horses. These races generally offer higher purses than claiming races. Eligibility requirements and conditions are similar to those of claiming races, and weight allowances are given based on winnings and/or number or type of wins in a given time. These races are designated by ALW plus the purse (ALW12500).

**MAIDEN RACES** – Maiden (MDN) races are limited to horses that have never won a race. There are two types of maiden races: “Maiden Special Weights” for better horses and “Maiden Claiming,” which is designated by the claiming price (MD5000).

**TRIAL** – A trial (TRL) is a race designed to determine the qualifiers for a final based on the fastest qualifying times or order of finish. A trial might be run as a purse race, or it might be run with no purse at all.

## HANDICAPPING SPRINTERS

By Fred Faour

The American Quarter Horse is America’s Fastest Athlete. With a little luck at the track, you can take a wild ride to a fast buck or two wagering on one of the most exciting sports around. With American Quarter Horse racing spreading like wildfire, it’s important to look at some basic doctrines

that will help you sort out the best horses. Handicapping the sprinters is different from handicapping other breeds, but the basics are the same. Like all wagering, there's a certain risk involved, but American Quarter Horse racing is one of the best bets around.

*Here are four things to look for:*

## **SPEED**

That's what American Quarter Horse racing is all about. Which horse is the fastest? Which horse will reach the finish line first? Of all handicapping factors, this is the most important. In the past performance lines in your program or *Daily Racing Form*, you are provided with the final time of the race. For each horse, you also are given a number called the Equibase Speed Figure (ESF, sometimes called "speed rating"). The ESF is the best measure of just how fast a horse ran in a given race. Let's take an example. If Horse A ran an ESF of 95 for all of its races, and Horse B averages an ESF of 78, then Horse A will, on the average, be considerably faster. Most of the horses that run higher ESFs will be the favorites in their races, and your betting value won't always be that high. In general, the Speed Figure is a dependable variable in American Quarter Horse racing. The horses that run the fastest on a consistent basis will win most often.

## **CLASS**

One of the most hard-to-define terms in horse racing is *class*. It also is a critical factor in picking out the best horse. Class is a combination of the horse's breeding, and most importantly, the quality of competition that a horse has faced. In general, a "class" horse has been theoretically facing superior animals and when lowered to an easier level will perform better. Horses "dropping" in class, or going down from one class level to an easier one, generally will show an increase in their Speed Indexes. Horses going up in class, or facing higher-quality animals, will find the going a little tougher and might not perform as well as they did at a lower level. Combining these two key factors - speed and class - gives you a good basis for picking winners. Once you've sorted out the speed horses and the class horses, the animal's human connections come into play.

## JOCKEYS

Jockeys are often popular to wager on. Many people will pick out their favorite jockey and wager on him or her no matter what horses that jockey is riding. Jockeys do have an impact on the race because they make split-second decisions that often make as much as a length of difference in the outcome of the race. One key to discovering how well a jockey is riding is the win percentage. In your program, you will find the list of leading jockeys. Just because a rider is not on the leading rider standings does not mean that he can't be a major factor. Look for the jockey's win percentage -- not just how many wins -- to see how well he is riding. If, for example, Jockey A is winning 22 percent of the time and has ridden in 100 races, and jockey B only has won 10 races but has accomplished this on 40 mounts, Jockey B is riding better because of a 25 percent winning rate. Also, watch for the hot jockey. When a jockey is riding extremely well, he or she will often win or finish in the money in several races in a row.

## TRAINER

The often overlooked factor is a trainer. A good trainer has the biggest impact on a race. A trainer spends countless hours preparing the horses to race and knows where they are able to compete better than anyone else. The sharp trainer will win several races just by putting horses in the right competitive spot. As with jockeys, high-percentage trainers are the best plays. They are even more important when teamed with a top jockey.

These are just some of the basics to help you pick out the best horses. There are a number of other factors, but these will get you off to a good start. By using the Speed Index, Class, Jockeys and Trainers, you're on your way to catching "*America's Fastest Athlete!*"

# AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE STRATEGIES FOR THOROUGHBRED PLAYERS

By Rick Baedeker

## I. DEBUNKING THE MYTHS

### A. MYTH: THERE CAN BE NO CONSISTENCY IN A 17-SECOND CAVALRY CHARGE

1. The facts speak for themselves: there is a higher percentage of winning favorites in American Quarter Horse racing than in Thoroughbred racing.
2. American Quarter Horses run shorter distances than Thoroughbreds, experiencing less muscle fatigue and hence less soreness/lameness; horses run back more frequently and are able to hold their form better from race to race.

### B. MYTH: THE WHOLE RACE IS DECIDED AT THE BREAK

1. While it is true that many races are decided at the start, a horse's chances of breaking cleanly can be predicted in the handicapping process.
2. Anticipating the break can give you an edge (see handicapping, below).

## II. HANDICAPPING AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE RACING

### A. SIMILARITIES TO THOROUGHBRED RACING. Virtually no difference in the following areas:

1. Time between starts – be suspicious of gaps in training, although American Quarter Horses tend to win more “first after layoff” starts than Thoroughbreds.
2. Horses-for-courses – a horse that likes Ruidoso Downs might not like Los Alamitos, etc.
3. Distance – just as a Thoroughbred may run well at 6 furlongs but not 7 furlongs, an American Quarter Horse may like 350 yards but not 400 yards; both breeds require the same approach - isolate performances at the distance of today’s race.
4. Track condition
5. Class – virtually the same as Thoroughbreds, except for trial races where maidens may face stakes winners. (Tip: A good opportunity to cash a wager: horse A, a winner that finished third in a trial that was made up of mostly maidens, goes up against horse B, a maiden that just finished third in a trial that included winners, including two stakes types. Horse B has a better class and might bring a good payoff.)
6. Position calls
7. Final time
8. Jockey/trainer
9. Breeding (strengths/weaknesses regarding stamina, age, mud, etc.)
10. Company line (the top-3 finishers of a race as listed in the past performance line of a race program)

## B. VARIATIONS FROM THOROUGHBRED HANDICAPPING

1. Post position – while an even track from inside to out is the goal of every trackman, a track bias is inevitable at times. The serious handicapper will study:
  - a. Results to determine if there is a track bias on a given day or on a seasonal basis (rail bad, etc.)
  - b. Post position shifts from bad to good or vice versa (example: horse A has started his last three races from the rail which has been slow all season but now gets the #7 slot - tab improvement).
  - c. A horse drawn outside a short field figures to rate an edge because a wide path is assured with trouble possible from only one side.
  
2. Early speed – a quick start from the gate is vital in a race that involves yards rather than furlongs. Handicappers should highlight:
  - a. Horses that break well consistently (i.e., are within a half length of the leader at the middle or gap call).
  - b. Slow breakers - rarely a good wager.
  
  - c. A fast breaker drawn between two slow starters should ensure a wide path.
  
3. Weight – insignificant in Quarter Horse races except when there are wide disparities with other foes at 440 yards or farther; fans should understand that most Quarter Horse jockeys ride heavy.
  
4. Speed figure – can be used as a good indicator in Quarter Horse racing whereas it is totally useless in Thoroughbred racing because it fails to take into account the fractional times.

# HANDICAPPING 870 RACES

By Bill Melzer

Quarter Horse races around the “hook” present a different kind of puzzle to handicappers than do the shorter straightaway dashes. The runners must deal with tighter traffic, a left-hand turn at near-top speed and, of course, the added quarter-mile or so of distance. Similarities in appearances might tempt handicappers to view 870-yard Quarter Horse races as close kin to Thoroughbred races held at five or six furlongs, but appearances are deceiving. The truth is that there is little strategy involved in most hook races, and that pace considerations which work well in analyzing Thoroughbred contests will lead hook race bettors astray.

What are the keys to selecting winners in 870-yard races? There are three that stand out: *early speed, post position and trips.*

## EARLY SPEED

At 5/8ths-mile ovals such as Los Alamitos the run down the backstretch and to the turn in 870-yard races is about a quarter-mile. Statistics show that in such contests the eventual race winner is already in front entering the turn about a third of the time, and in over 80% of such races the winner will be found among the first three at that point of the race. At larger, one-mile tracks, such as Lone Star Park and Sam Houston Race Park in Texas, the extremely short run to the turn makes this early-speed bias even more pronounced. **The lesson to be taken from this: Speed wins hook races!**

Look for runners that have shown good early quickness in previous 870-yard tries or for horses stretching out from straightaway sprints in which they have broken in the top half of their fields and are entered at a level where they are likely to be competitive. Many horses race extremely well in their first race over the 870-yard distance, oftentimes better than they will in subsequent efforts around the bend.

Thoroughbreds are permitted to compete against Quarter Horses in some

870-yard contests. How should they be viewed? The pace of Quarter Horse races is typically MUCH quicker than most Thoroughbreds are accustomed to, so be very leery of backing a “need-to-lead,” front running Thoroughbred its first time against Quarter Horses - it’s not likely to be able to get to the front! Look for Thoroughbreds that have good early speed but also a proven ability to win from just off the pace - these are often competitive against Quarter Horses right out of the box.

## POST POSITION

Since the turns at most Quarter Horse ovals are quite sharp, wide trips in hook races spell doom for most runners. In an evenly matched field, a horse forced to circle four-wide or wider around the bend has little chance to win, but the very same horse starting from the rail post will likely be a big factor.

At Los Alamitos and other 5/8ths-mile ovals, the inside two post positions account for about one-third of all 870-yard winners; at the larger tracks this figure skyrockets to close to 50 percent. On the flip side, horses unfortunate enough to draw the two outside posts in the gate win barely 20 percent of the time at Los Alamitos, and at the one-mile tracks horses starting from posts 7 and 8, combined, win only about 10 percent of the time! The prepared handicapper will examine the post position results for his or her track (usually provided in the track program) and weigh post positions accordingly.

**The lesson: Focus your handicapping attention on those horses drawn inside.** The exceptions to this rule would be (1) a race in which a lone starter has exceptional early quickness - it will be a contender regardless of post position - or (2) a race in which a prime contender breaking from a post between 5 and 8 possesses good early speed, and few of the horses drawn inside of it have shown such in any of their races.

## TRIPS

Since early position is crucially important in 870-yard races, it follows that a horse unable to obtain a good striking position in a race due to a bad post position draw or an excess of speedy types drawn inside of it is likely to perform poorly. A racer that would have been “there or thereabouts” with a

good trip might end up being beaten double-digit lengths in a race in which its jockey doesn't pursue once the situation proves hopeless. A post switch from outside to inside in its next start might be all that is needed for such a hard-luck horse to find the winner's circle, and oftentimes the odds will be quite juicy due to the public's shortsightedness regarding the reasons for the poor outcome of the previous effort.

**The lesson: Be quick to forgive a poor performance in a hook race in which a horse was forced to race wide, or was unable to obtain good early position due to tight traffic.**

With better racing luck, expect a bounce back in the next race. If a horse shows several wide trips in its most recent tries and looks likely to get an inside trip today, step up and wager with confidence.

Handicap all "hook" races with these three factors in the forefront of your analysis and you are likely to go home a winner!

## TRIP HANDICAPPING

By Rick Baedeker

Public or private handicappers used to be characterized generally as either speed or class handicappers. Then, with the advent of the VCR, trip handicapping came into vogue. The best method of handicapping is not one of those mentioned above but a combination of all three.

**TRIP HANDICAPPING** means studying the horse's trip, or journey, during the race. Notations are made if a horse:

Bumps or stumbles at the start...  
Drifts in or out during the race...  
Is forced to alter course, etc.

It is also wise to include pre-race notes such as fractiousness in the gate, i.e.,

tossing of the head, rearing, trying to flip, etc. This nervous behavior obviously affects the horse itself, but can also bother neighboring horses or the entire field by prolonging time spent in the gate.

You'll need video of the races to make these kinds of trip notes. Ideally, a nightly television show presenting a full replay of the day's races will provide an economical source of race video. If such a show does not exist in your market, tapes or DVDs can usually be purchased from the racetrack.

Most trip notes are generated from the break of the race. It is important to record whether a horse broke in or out, bumped, stumbled, etc. When making this notation, try to estimate the distance of ground, in terms of a length, that the horse sacrificed because of the incident. The subsequent notation might read: "*broke-in and bumped hard, -3/4.*" The "-3/4" indicated that the incident caused the horse to lose three-quarters of a length. If the horse overcomes the trouble to make up all or part of the lost ground, it should be interpreted as an impressive performance.

Horses will occasionally perform incredibly well after encountering trouble. It is logical to presume that the horse would have won the contest had it had clear sailing. Usually such horses are good wagers next time, but be wary of horses that always seem to get into trouble. And make sure that regardless of the impression the horse made last time, that he is not subsequently entered over his head, a mistake sometimes made by an overly impressed owner or trainer.

An aspect of trip handicapping that is often overlooked should be the most obvious: studying the winner. It is easy to get so caught up in the trouble horses that the horse that beat them is ignored. Study the winner, both at the start and at the finish. Sharp American Quarter Horses will seem to "pop" out of the gate. That early burst of speed is an obvious advantage, and a horse that habitually breaks straight is a good percentage play.

Also watch the winner as he finishes the race. Is he down and digging, looking like he wants more? Or is he all-out, under a hard and steady whip?

The former will likely come back at the same or slightly higher class level and win again. The latter, because the winning effort was so taxing, might not be able to repeat the performance...even versus the identical field.

Trip handicapping will set you apart from the rest. Regardless of your overall expertise, simply noting big race efforts and playing those horses when they return in the right spot will likely be profitable. Remember that you are competing against the rest of the crowd.

## CLASS AND SPEED FIGURES

By Andrea Caudill,

Field Editor for *The American Quarter Horse Racing Journal*

Handicappers have a new tool. Under an agreement with AQHA, TrackMaster, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Equibase Company LLC, has developed and produced new class and speed figures for American Quarter Horses.

Similar to Thoroughbred racing's Beyer figures, the Equibase Speed Figure standardizes horses' finishing times across all different tracks, distances, surfaces and weather conditions using a complex computer modeling system. The numbers are generally between 50 and 100, with 100 being an extremely high figure.

The speed figure, the first and more important of the two new assessments, combines three factors in its final figure. The first component is a raw speed rating that directly converts time and distance to a number. (For example, a horse receives one point for every 1/20th of a second it runs at a quarter-mile distance, and a point for every 1/25th at 350 yards.) The number then is modified with an Intertrack Variant (ITV), a number that allows for time and speed variations between tracks.

The speed figure has all but replaced the old speed index system. According

to TrackMaster President David Siegel, American Quarter Horse racing's previous method of rating speed had an inherent flaw. A speed index was calculated by averaging the three fastest times for a certain distance at a track over three years. However, because the quality of horses differs from track to track, the indices were unequal and difficult to use when comparing horses from different tracks.

"The fundamental problem is that the baseline setter is not the same caliber at every racetrack" says Siegel. "You have to figure how much slower one track is than another. Ideally, you could make a mechanical horse, have it expend the same amount of energy at each track and time it. Of course, that is not possible. What our computer tries to do is get as close as we can to that when we establish these baselines, so we do our best by analyzing shippers."

The ITV uses a vast compilation of records on shippers (horses coming in from other tracks) to determine the fundamental speed differentials between tracks for each distance run. These records add together the figures from a number of individual horses making multiple starts at multiple tracks.

The third number involved in creating the speed figure is the Daily Track Variant (DTV). The DTV makes adjustments for things such as a slow track, wind, etc., that happen on a day-to-day basis and can even vary between races if conditions change.

The class rating, a separate number from the speed figure, makes it easier to compare horses in a field to each other. The number is a projection of what the expected winning speed figure would be for that particular race. In other words, if a race is given a class rating of 80, a horse that can run that speed figure or better would be expected to have a good shot at winning the race.

"If people want to know whether the horse is moving up or down in class, it is pretty easy in claiming races," Siegel says. "It's much more difficult if the horse is switching from a starter's allowance to a low-grade stakes race. You can't always tell from the race description. The class rating clears all that up."

For that matter, it also gets a little tricky at the bottom of the claiming ranks -- going from \$3,000 claiming to \$5,000 claiming is not always a step up in class. It's a different situation: There might just be higher purses in a different state or that the individual fields are stronger or weaker. The class rating takes all the guesswork out -- you just have to read a number."

The new figures are available in all TrackMaster Quarter Horse past performance reports and can be accessed through *The American Quarter Horse Racing Journal's* Web site at <http://www.aqharacing.com>. The figures also are available to tracks for use in programs.

4 LOS ALAMITOS - SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2003		PURSE \$7,750	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Claiming \$10,000</li> <li>• 350 Yards - Dirt - Age 3</li> <li>• CR: 80 (Par of 17.91)</li> </ul>		Quarter Horse 350Y, FOR THREE YEAR OLDS. 124 lbs. CLAIMING PRICE \$10,000.	
POST 7:45 <b>1 Scuba Steve</b>		S1 EXACTA & S1 TRIFECTA S1 PICK 3 (RACES 4,5,6)	
<b>124</b> Sor g 3 Sire: Bobby Badine Dam: Miss Philly Lite (Easy Request) Br: Marthe F Wells (CA) Own: Marthe Wells		Quarter Horse Lifetime Record 9 2 2 1 315.192 2003 1 0 0 1 300 Test: 3 0 0 0 81 2002 6 2 2 0 112.502 Wtd: 0 0 0 0 80 LA 9 2 2 1 115.192 Dist: 1 0 0 1 890	
PP-1 Jacks: Bodilla Jr Ave (S1 20 W 15% P 10% S 15% ITM 40% ROI -43%) 5/2 Tr: Fronzone Den C (S1 13 W 23% P 15% S 15% ITM 53% ROI -43%)		10Jan03 SLA H 350 17.77 17.88 3 Sta 10000 182 80 7 3 1M 1M 22Nov02 SLA H 300 1W 15.50 15.57 2 Ch 10000 177 82 4 2 11 1Nov02 SLA H 300 1W 15.53 15.79 2 Aw 11000-00 175 74 10 5 41 13Oct02 TLA H 300 CW 15.82 15.80 2 Aw 10500-00 173 77 7 5 41 19Sep02 SLA H 300 CW 15.71 15.71 2 Aw 10000 171 77 7 5 41	
81 Sanchez R B 124H 2.60 2 EmbStone119M OnBigLow120H ScubaSteve124H Dotted out 7 11 Bodilla J.P. B 124H 2.20 4 ScubaSteve124H InAPrizeBobby124H Lovelady124H Held on red 7 511 Garcia V B 124H 7.40 3 DotsSilverShadon124M Smanaphos124M PncZemply124H Dotted out 10 511 Badiska C.A. B 124H 4.40 0 TrailSignature124H Metanaphos124M PanBleak124M Banned 10 124 Scuba Steve 124H 17.91 17.91 2 Aw 10000 171 77 7 5 41		124 Scuba Steve 124H 17.91 17.91 2 Aw 10000 171 77 7 5 41	

Highlighted under the conditions is the class rating for the fourth race on February 1 at Los Alamitos. Highlighted in the horses' past performance lines are (at left) class ratings for each race and (at right) speed figures for what the horse ran in the race. For example, the February 1 race was an 80-class event at 350 yards, with 80 (or par) being :17.91. Scuba Steve raced along the rail to win the race, backing up his last performance when he compiled a speed figure of 83 in an 82-class race at the same distance.

VISIT AQHARACING.COM FOR MORE HANDICAPPING  
INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:

- Maiden Races -
- Exotic Wagering -
- Jockeys and Trainers -
- General Handicapping -
- Speed Figures and Track Variance -
- Quarter Horse vs. Thoroughbred Handicapping -  
*and more...*

Plus, AQHA has two free videos on  
handicapping and wagering:

1. *A Winner's Guide to Wagering w/ Applications for the Thoroughbred Player* - Rick Baedeker takes American Quarter Horse fans a step beyond the basics while at the same time teaching Thoroughbred players many of the similarities between handicapping the two breeds. In this 45-minute video, fans learn what to watch for and how to use simple tools - like a VCR or DVD player - to unlock some of the "mysteries" of handicapping. Available on DVD.

2. *American Quarter Horse Handicapping With The Pros! A guide to wagering on AQHA's fastest discipline with Thoroughbred techniques* - Tom Dawson hosts this video with tips and techniques from three of America's top handicappers - Bob Baedeker, Ed Burgart and Les Onaka. Each handicapper gives his views on ways for Thoroughbred and American Quarter Horse players to have the chance for a big payoff at the track. Available on DVD.

Call the AQHA Racing Department at (806) 376-4811  
or e-mail [racing@aqha.org](mailto:racing@aqha.org).

# GLOSSARY OF RACING TERMS

**ACROSS THE BOARD** - A method of wagering on a horse to win, place and show. If the horse wins, the player collects three ways.

**ADDED MONEY** - That money which is added to a purse by the racing association (track), or by sponsors, state-bred programs or other funds added to the money gathered by nomination, entry, sustaining and other fees coming from the horsemen.

**AGE** - All racehorses have January 1 of the year they were born as their official birth date, regardless of their foaling date.

**ALLOWANCE RACE** - A race in which eligibility is based upon amounts of money won or earned, or number of races a horse has won over a specified time.

**ALSO-ELIGIBLE** - A horse officially entered but not permitted to start unless the field is reduced by scratches.

**ALSO-RAN** - Used to describe a horse that did not finish in the money (first, second or third).

**APPRENTICE ALLOWANCE** - The allowance or weight off allowed an apprentice jockey during his/her first year of riding. Usually an apprentice or "bug" rider gets 10 lbs. off until his/her 35th winner. This gives younger, inexperienced riders a more even chance against older more experienced "journeyman" jockeys. This rule varies from state to state, and does not apply to Quarter Horse racing.

**ASSISTANT TRAINER** - A person employed by a licensed trainer to assist and assume responsibility in the absence of that trainer in all the daily work, chores, saddling, etc. involved in the training of horses. Assistant trainers are required to be tested and licensed by state racing commissioners.

**AT THE POST** - Term used by track announcers signifying to the public that the horses have arrived at and are ready to be loaded into the starting gate.

**AUTHORIZED AGENT** - A person licensed by the commission and appointed by a written instrument, signed and acknowledged before a notary public by the owner in whose behalf the agent will act.

**BACKSIDE** - The stable and training area of a racetrack.

**BACKSTRETCH** - Straight or far-side of track between the turns; stable area.

**BANDAGES** - For horses, these come in two forms: 1) Standing—used in the stall at rest, for therapeutic purposes and 2) Racing—using Vetrap<sup>(R)</sup> or Ace<sup>(R)</sup> type bandages for support of tendons and to prevent a horse from "running down" or burning his heels on the track surface as legs tire and strain more.

**BEARING IN (OR OUT)** - A horse that moves or lugs inward (to its left toward the inside rail) or outward while racing. May be due to weariness, infirmity, whip use by rider or rider's inability to control the mount.

**BEST BET** - Term used by track handicappers, tip sheets, selectors, etc., to signify the horse they feel most likely to win that day.

**BLACK TYPE** - Used in a sale catalogue to designate a horse has won or placed in a stakes. The name of a stakes winner is printed in boldface upper-case letters (i.e., **DASH FOR SPEED**), while the name of a stakes-placed horse is in boldface upper- and lower-case letters (i.e., Dash For Speed).

**BLANKET FINISH** - Or photo-finish; in which two or more horses are very close at the finish (one can “throw a blanket over them”). Very common in American Quarter Horse racing.

**BLEEDER** - A horse that during or following exercise or the race is observed to be shedding blood from one or both nostrils or the mouth, or is observed by scope to be hemorrhaging in the lumen of the respiratory tract.

**BLINKERS** - A hood placed over a horse’s head with cups sewn onto the eye openings. The cups prevent a horse from seeing anywhere but straight ahead, thus preventing distractions.

**BOLT** - When a horse swerves sharply from his lane or the regular course; also a runaway.

**BOOK** - Group of mares being bred to a stallion in a given year.

**BOTTOM LINE** - Part of a horse’s pedigree or bloodlines which indicates the dam, granddam, maternal grandsire, etc.

**BREAKAGE** - That portion of the payoff to winning bettors that is retained by the association. In most North American racing jurisdictions payoffs are to the next lower dime (i.e., the computer calculates an actual payoff as being \$4.47896 for \$2.00, then the actual payoff will be \$4.40 and the breakage is \$.07896).

**BREEDER** - The breeder of an American Quarter Horse is considered to be the owner of the dam at the time of service, while the breeder of a Thoroughbred is the owner of the dam at the time of foaling.

**BREEZE** - Working a horse at a moderate speed.

**BROODMARE SIRE**-The sire of a broodmare.

**BULLET WORK** - The best time for the distance on the work tab for a given day at a track.

**BULLRING** - A racetrack with either a half-mile or 5/8ths mile oval.

**BUTE** - Trade name for Phenylbutazone, a commonly used analgesic for horses.

**BUY BACK** - A horse put through public auction that did not reach his reserve and was retained by the consignor.

**CAULKS** - Otherwise known as “mud caulks;” small cleats inserted on the back end of a horse’s shoe or racing plate; most often used when the track’s surface becomes muddy, heavy or slick; allows the horse a better grip of the surface and eliminates slipping and provides sounder footing.

**CHART** - The “box score” of a race. The chart gives all the information of the running of a race including horses’ positions during the race, official

order of finish, wagering handle, payoffs, closing odds, owner, trainer, jockey, purse distribution, times, speed figures and conditions of race.

**CHECKED** - The pulling back or sudden slowing due to traffic problems during the running of a race.

**CIRCUIT** - Describes several race tracks with complementing racing dates, which form a circuit within a certain geographic area.

**CLAIMER** - Horse which consistently runs in claiming races.

**CLAIMING BOX** - The compartment usually found adjacent to the paddock where the claim sheet/card is dropped.

**CLAIMING PRICE** - The price for which a horse is running in a claiming race.

**CLAIMING RACE** - A selling race in which the conditions provide that each entry may be bought by a licensed owner, either directly or through a trainer. The claim can only be made until a few minutes before post time, at which time the claiming box is closed. A claimed horse becomes the property of the new owner when the race starts, but the purse winnings from that race go to the previous owner.

**CLASS** - A horse showing all the best qualities in breeding, conformation, ability and stamina.

**CLOCKER** - Person responsible for accurately timing the workouts of a horse. All workouts are taken during the morning training hours.

**CLOSING** - The time published by the organization after which nominations or entries will not be accepted for a race.

**CLUBHOUSE TURN** - Generally, the turn closest to the clubhouse.

**COLT** - A male horse at the ages of two and three.

**CONDITION** - The qualifications or eligibility rules for horses to be entered into a race.

**CONDITION BOOK** - A book written by the racing secretary for the horsemen by the racing association usually every two weeks, which lists all races, conditions and other information pertinent to the race meet.

**CONFORMATION** - Term used to describe a racing animal's build, muscle and bone structure as they relate to racing.

**CONSIGNOR/CONSIGNMENT** - The person(s) responsible for selling a horse at a public sale. The owner pays the person(s) a commission based on the horse's selling price.

**COUPLED ENTRY** - Two or more horses belonging to the same owner or trained by the same trainer are said to be coupled, as they run as an entry comprising a single wagering interest.

**COVER** - A single breeding of a mare to a stallion.

**CROP** - The group of foals sired by a stallion in a given season.

**CUSHION** - The loose, top surface of the racetrack.

**DAILY DOUBLE** - A wager which one must select the winners of two races in succession.

DAM - The female parent or broodmare.

DAMSIRE (BROODMARE SIRE) - The sire of a broodmare.

DEAD HEAT - Where the photo-finish camera shows two horses inseparable at the finish, the race is declared a dead heat or tie.

DECLARATION-The act of withdrawing an entered horse from a race before the closing of overnight entries. A horse that has been withdrawn is said to have been declared.

DERBY - A stakes exclusively for 3-year-olds.

DISQUALIFICATION - Change in the order of finish by officials for an infraction of the rules.

DISTAFF-The female designation for racehorses.

DISTANCED - Well beaten, finishing a great distance behind the winner.

DRIVING - A horse under strong urging by the rider.

DROPDOWN-A horse meeting a lower class of rival that he had been running against.

EASED - A horse not allowed to continue in a race due to injury, poor conditioning or inability to compete.

ENTER - To enroll a horse in a race.

ENTRY - A horse eligible to run in a race; also, two or more horses entered in the same race that have common ties of ownership, lease or training.

ENTRY BOX-A locked box into which trainers drop entry forms.

ENTRY CLERK-A track employee stationed in the racing secretary's office to take entries in person and collect those from the entry box.

ENTRY FEE-Money paid to enter a horse in a race.

EQUIPMENT - Gear carried by horse and jockey in a race, such as whip or blinkers.

EXACTA - A wager in which the bettor must select the first- and second-place finishers in order.

EXERCISE RIDER - Rider who exercises horses in the morning training hours.

EXOTIC WAGER - Any wager that involves more than one horse; generally the pari-mutuel takeout is higher, and the mutuel payoffs are higher than straight wagers (i.e., Quinella, Daily Double and Trifecta).

FALSE FAVORITE - A horse that is wagered down to favoritism when others would appear to outclass him.

FAVORITE - An entrant that has the shortest odds on the toteboard.

FEATURE - The best race on a card.

FIELD - The entire group of starters in a race; or the mutuel field with several longshots coupled as a single wagering interest when more horses are entered than the toteboard allows.

FILLY - A female horse at the ages of 2 and 3.

FIRST TURN - Bend in the track beyond the starting point; also, clubhouse turn.

FIT - Term commonly used to describe a horse in the peak of condition.

**FOUL** - An action by any horse or jockey that hinders or interferes with another horse or jockey during the running of a race.

**FULL BROTHER/SISTER** - Horses that have both the same sire and dam.

**FUTURITY** - A stakes race for 2-year-olds in which owners must pay nominating money and sustaining payments.

**GELDING** - A castrated male horse of any age.

**GET** - Offspring of a male horse.

**GRADED RACE** - The grade that may be given traditional handicap, stakes or classic races by quality of horses and size of the purse, with Grade 1 being best, Grade 2 next best and Grade 3 next.

**GRANDDAM** - The mother of a horse's dam (also called the second dam).

**GRANDSIRE** - The father of a horse's sire, unless otherwise stated (see maternal grandsire).

**GROOM** - The stable worker, employed by the trainer, who cares for horses. Performs daily chores such as grooming, bedding stall, bandaging, feeding, tacking and race preparation.

**HALF BROTHER/SISTER** - Horses out of the same dam but by different sires.

**HALTER** - Headgear used on horse when being handled around barn or when being walked, when not using bridle; also, to claim a horse.

**HAND** - A unit of measurement, approximately four inches, by which a horse's height is measured; determined by placing one hand above the other from the ground to the withers or the point where the saddle rests.

**HAND RIDE** - Urging a horse with hands rather than using the whip.

**HANDICAP** - A race in which the weights are assigned depending on a horse's past performance and present form. The racing secretary or handicapper assigns a range of weights which would theoretically cause horses to finish in a dead heat.

**HANDICAPPER** - The racing secretary or other official who assigns weights, handicaps, and races; also, the journalist who handicaps a day's racing card and reports his selections for the wagering public.

**HANDICAPPING** - Making selections by determining relative qualities of horses through their past performances and class.

**HANDILY** - Of a horse in a race, winning easily; in a workout, a pace which is a bit slower than driving but faster than breezing.

**HANDLE** - The aggregate amount of money passing through the pari-mutuel machines for a given period; total money wagered.

**HEAD** - A margin between horses which describes one horse leading another by the length of his head.

**HOME BRED** - A horse bred by his owner.

**HOMESTRETCH** - The straightaway between the end of the far turn and the finish line.

**HORSE** - Any equine regardless of sex; specifically, an entire male 4 years of age or older.

**IDENTIFICATION** - Of horses, involves a system of recognition of several types of markings by the horse identifier. Markings are noted on animal's breed registry papers and usually range from coat color, lip tattoos, hair whorls, cowlicks, white markings, night eyes, scars and brands.

**INFIELD** - Area within the inner rail of the racetrack.

**IN THE MONEY** - A horse finishing first, second or third is "in the money" for the wagering public.

**INQUIRY** - The stewards' immediate investigation into interference in the running of a race which may result in the disqualification of one or more horses.

**INVITATIONAL** - A race in which the field of competing horses is selected by inviting horse owners to enter specific horses.

**IRONS** - Stirrups or where the jockey puts his feet while riding.

**JAIL** - Signifying the 30 days after a horse has been claimed, in which it must run for a 25 percent higher claiming price than for what it was claimed.

**JOCKEY** - Professional rider; also, to maneuver a horse in a race.

**JOCKEY AGENT** - Person employed by a jockey to secure mounts.

**JUVENILE** - A 2-year-old American Quarter Horse and the youngest age at which one can race.

**LAY UP** - A period of time in which a racehorse is sent away from the race-track to rest.

**LENGTH** - Unit of measurement in racing and charting terminology. The length of an American Quarter Horse, the distance from the horse's nose to the tip of his flying tail, is .16 seconds (16/100ths), while the length of a Thoroughbred is .20 seconds (20/100ths).

**MAIDEN** - A horse that has never won a race recognized by qualified governing bodies, commissions or breed registry.

**MAIDEN RACE** - A race for non-winners.

**MARE** - A female horse 4 years of age or older.

**MATCH** - A challenge race between two horses.

**MATERNAL GRANDSIRE** - The sire of a horse's dam.

**MATURITY** - A stakes race for 4-year-olds and up in which owners must pay nominating money and sustaining payments.

**MEDICATION LIST** - A list kept by the track veterinarian and posted at the track showing which horses have been treated with legally permitted medication, usually limited to Bute and Lasix.

**MINUS POOL** - When a horse is so heavily played by bettors that after the deduction of the state tax and commissions, not enough money remains in the pool to pay off the legally prescribed minimum.

**MIXED SALE** - A sale consisting of varying types of horses, such as yearlings, broodmares, horses in training, etc.

**MORNING LINE** - The approximate odds usually printed in the program and posted on the totalizator board prior to any wagering. The morning line is a prediction of how the wagering will go on a race.

**MOUNT FEE** - The flat fee earned by a jockey who has not finished in the top three where he might earn a percentage of the purse.

**MUDDER** - Horse that races well on a muddy track.

**MUTUEL POOL** - The total amount wagered on a race in each ticket category. The total number of winning tickets in the win category share the entire pool equally after the takeout is deducted. The same is true of the Daily Double and other exotic pools. The place pool is divided into two parts and the show pool into three parts and divided among the holders of winning tickets on the horses involved.

**NECK** - Unit of measurement; the length of a horse's neck; a quarter of a length.

**NOSE** - Smallest advantage by which a horse wins.

**OBJECTION** - A written complaint made to the stewards concerning a horse entered in a race and filed no later than two hours prior to the scheduled post time for the first race on the day which the questionable horse is entered; also, a verbal claim of foul in a race lodged by the horse's jockey, trainer, owner or the owner's licensed authorized agent before the race is declared official.

**ODDS-ON** - Odds of less than even money.

**OFF THE BOARD** - Used to describe a horse that has finished worse than third.

**OFF-TRACK BETTING** - Wagering on horses at legalized wagering offices, usually run by the state or the tracks.

**OFFICIAL** - The designation given to the result of a race by the stewards when any occurrences that affected the actual order of finish have been decided in terms of pari-mutuel payoffs to winning bettors.

**OVERLAY** - A horse going off at a higher price than he appears to warrant based on his past performances.

**OVERNIGHT** - A race for which entries close 72 hours or less before the post time for the first race on the day the race is to be run; also, the sheet available to horsemen at the racing secretary's office showing the entries, post positions, weights and jockeys for the next race day.

**OVERWEIGHT** - Pounds that a horse carries in excess of his officially assigned weight because the jockey is too heavy.

**PADDOCK** - The area where the horses are saddled and viewed prior to a race.

**PARI-MUTUEL** - From French meaning "wager amongst us;" the system for racetrack wagering that returns to winning bettors the amounts wagered by unsuccessful bettors, less takeout taxes to state, track and purse.

**PAST PERFORMANCES** - Information published by *Daily Racing Form* or the racetrack which gives information on a horse's most recent races and works for handicapping purposes.

**PATROL JUDGE** - The racing official placed at critical points around the track in stands or towers, who observes the running of the race and reports back to stewards as to any interference or careless riding.

**PHOTO-FINISH** - Indicative of a very close finish in which only careful viewing of the photo-finish picture can determine the order of finish.

**PICK-THREE, PICK-SIX, PICK-NINE, ETC** - Wagers in which the winners of all the included races must be selected.

**PLACE** - A wager in which one collects if the horse finishes first or second.

**PLACING JUDGE** - The racing official in charge of the official placing or order of finish of horses during and after the running of a race through the viewing of the race, especially at the finish, and the viewing of the photo-finish strip with stewards. At some tracks the stewards also serve as placing judges.

**POST PARADE** - Time prior to the race when the horses leave the paddock, come on the racetrack, parade in front of the grandstands and warm up.

**POST POSITION** - A horse's position in the starting gate from the inside rail out, decided by a drawing at the close of entries prior to the race, with the approval of the starter.

**POST TIME** - The official time set by the stewards and the mutuel department at which a race will start and the horses are required to be at the post and ready to start.

**PREFERENCE LIST** - A system which makes entering a horse to race more fair; horses with the longest time since last racing or having a chance to race, have the higher preference for the next race entered.

**PROGENY** - The offspring of either a male or female horse.

**PROGRAM** - The general program published and sold by the racing association; also, includes all vital information on the day's racing card, including race number, conditions, distance, types of wagering, horses' names, numbers, jockeys and weights.

**PROTEST** - A written complaint signed by the protester against any horse which has started in a race, and shall be made to the stewards within 48 hours after the running of the race.

**PUBLIC TRAINER** - One whose services are available to the public and who expects to train a number of horses from a number of owners.

**PURSE** - Prize money in a race, generally made up of the added money based on handle and/or sponsor's contribution, and any nomination, sustaining or entry fees.

**QUINELLA** - Wager in which the first two finishers must be picked, but payoff is made no matter which wins and which runs second.

**RACING BOARD/COMMISSION** - A state-appointed body charged with the duty of regulating and supervising the conduct of racing in that state.

**RACING SECRETARY** - The official who writes conditions for races,

assigns the weights for handicap races, receives entries, conducts the draw and is responsible for operation and organization of the race office.

**RAIL** - A barrier, generally made of aluminum covered with a plastic shield, which forms the inside and outside perimeter of the racing surface.

**REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE** - The document forwarded by the breed registry that certifies that the horse is a duly registered Thoroughbred or American Quarter Horse; also includes all identification markings of that animal, registration number, owner, breeder and state foaled.

**RESTRICTED STAKES** - A stakes race in which conditions limit the participants based upon certain criteria. The more common restricted stakes races are state-bred races and races written for horses purchased through or consigned to a certain sale.

**RIDDEN OUT** - Winning a race without the rider urging the horse to do his utmost because he has a wide margin over the second-place horse.

**RUN-OUT BIT** - A special type of bit to prevent a horse from bearing in or out.

**RUNDOWN BANDAGES (WRAPS)** - Bandages on the hind legs, usually with a pad inside, to keep a horse from burning or scraping his heels or fetlocks when he races.

**SADDLE CLOTH (TOWEL)** - Cloth under the saddle on which program numbers and sometimes horse's name are displayed.

**SCHOOL** - To train a horse, especially at the gate, in the paddock and before a crowd, and otherwise teaching him racing practices.

**SCHOOLING RACE** - A pre-race which conforms to requirements adopted by the state racing commission.

**SCRATCH** - The act of withdrawing an entered horse from a race after the closing of overnight entries.

**SCRATCH TIME** - The deadline established by the racing office for horses to be scratched prior to the printing of the official program. Generally, races are drawn 72 to 48 hours before race day and scratch time will be 24 hours before race day; for stakes races, scratch time can be up to 15 minutes before post time.

**SEX ALLOWANCE** - Fillies and mares, according to their age and time of year, are allowed to carry 3 to 5 pounds less when racing against males.

**SHADOW ROLL** - Sheepskin or cloth cylinder strapped across a horse's nose to bar its vision of the ground, preventing him from shying from shadows.

**SHEDROW** - Stable area with barns and walkways under a roof.

**SHOW** - Third-place position at the finish. A wager in which one collects if the chosen horse finishes first, second or third.

**SILKS** - Shirt worn by a jockey in a race.

**SIMULCAST** - Televising races to other tracks, locations or outlets for the purpose of wagering.

SIRE - A male parent; father.

SOPHOMORE - A 3-year-old horse.

SOUND - The condition of a horse that is free of lameness, injury or illness.

STAKES - A stakes race is a race in which stakes of \$50 or more are posted by the owners of the participating horses and is still a stakes when money or other prize is added. Nominations must close more than 48 hours before time for the first race of the day on which such stakes are to be run. A stakes may not be restricted or exclude entries in any way other than age or sex. No race with a purse of less than \$15,000 will be considered a stakes. The minimum purse for American Quarter Horse stakes races conducted internationally is \$7,500 U.S. Funds, based on the conversion rate on each race day, except in Canada where the minimum is \$15,000 Canadian Funds. Match races are not eligible for stakes recognition. For a more detailed description of what constitutes a stakes race, please see the *Official Handbook of Rules and Regulations* published by AQHA.

STAKES PLACED - Finishing second or third in a stakes race.

STAKES PRODUCER - A mare that has produced at least one foal that finished first, second or third in a stakes race.

STALLION - Entire or uncut male horse.

STARTER - The track official who has complete jurisdiction over the starting of the horses and authority to give orders necessary to ensure a fair start; also, a horse that is in the starting gate when his stall door opens as the field is dispatched.

STARTERS ALLOWANCE - An allowance or handicap race restricted to horses that have started for a specific claiming price by the state law and commission rules, and is eligible to compete in special races or for purse supplements.

STEWARDS - Racetrack official who presides over the race meeting, has superior jurisdiction over all racing officials, rules on claims of foul or any protests, imposes fines and suspensions and is responsible to the racing commission for the enforcement of the rules and regulations as stipulated in the state statutes. The board of stewards consists of three members at most racetracks.

STRAIGHT WAGER - Win, place or show.

STRETCH - Final straightaway portion of the racetrack to the finish line.

STRETCH CALL - Position of horses at designated pole markers, dependent upon the length of the race.

TAKEOUT - The percentage taken out of every dollar wager, and split between state, track and purses; generally, in pari-mutuel racing, the percentage taken out is usually between 15-20% for straight wagers and 20-25% for exotic wagers.

TATTOO - A form of identification in which race horses are marked under the upper lip with a letter/number combination, which is also reflected on the registration certificate.

**TONGUE STRAP** - Strap or tape bandage used to tie down a horse's tongue to prevent choking in a race or workout.

**TOTEBOARD** - A display board in the infield on which data is posted electronically. Data includes approximate odds, total amount wagered in each pool, track condition, post time, time of day, result of race, official and inquiry signs, running time of the race and the mutuel payoff prices after each race is declared official, as well as other pertinent information.

**TOUT** - To give or sell wagering advice; also, a person who does so.

**TRACK CONDITIONS:**

*FAST* - A track that is thoroughly dry and at its best. The footing is even.

*SLOPPY* - During or immediately after a heavy rain, water has saturated the cushion and may form puddles. The base is still firm. Footing is splashy but even, and the running time remains fast.

*MUDDY* - Water has soaked into the base and it is soft and wet. The footing is deep and slow.

*HEAVY* - A drying track that is muddy and drying out. Footing is heavy and sticky.

*SLOW* - Still wet, between heavy and good. Footing is heavy.

*GOOD* - Rated between slow and fast. Moisture remains in the strip but footing is firm.

*FROZEN* - The track surface is frozen solid and unable to be maintained.

**TRACK RECORD** - Fastest time at each distance recorded at a particular track.

**TRAINER** - The person who conditions and prepares horses for racing, with the absolute responsibility to ensure the physical condition and eligibility of the horse in accordance with the strict interpretation of the rules, regulations and laws of racing.

**TRIAL** - Race in which eligible horses compete to determine the finalists in a nomination race.

**TRIFECTA** - A wager in which the first three finishers must be chosen in exact order.

**TURF** - Term used for infield grass course on which some races are run.

**UNDER WRAPS** - Horse under stout restraint in a race or workout.

**UNDERLAY** - A horse racing at shorter odds than he should.

**VALET** - An employee who takes care of a jockey's equipment, ensures that the correct silks are at his locker and the rider has the proper weight in his lead pad. He carries the saddle and equipment to the jockey's room.

**WASHY** - Horse breaking out in a nervous sweat before a race.

**WEANLING** - A foal being weaned and until he becomes a yearling on January 1 of the following year.

**WEIGH-IN** - The procedure where the clerk of scales, prior to the race, checks the weights of jockeys and their riding equipment against the offi-

cially assigned weight for each horse in the race.

**WEIGH-OUT** - The procedure where the clerk of scales, after the race, re-checks the weights of jockeys and their riding equipment against the officially assigned weight for each horse in the race.

**WEIGHT-FOR-AGE** - Fixed scale of weights to be carried by horses according to age, sex, distance of the race and season of the year.

**WHEEL** - A type of wager where one entrant is combined with every other entrant in the race; can be done with various types of wagers.

**WHIP** - Leather instrument with which a rider encourages his horse to increase his speed.

**WIN** - Type of wager in which one collects only if a horse wins the race.

**WINNER'S CIRCLE** - Area adjacent to the racing oval where a winning horse is brought for ceremonial win photo with the owner, trainer, etc.

**YEARLING** - A horse's age following January 1 of the year after foaling.

# CHALLENGE

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# CHALLENGE

**BANK OF AMERICA RACING CHALLENGE**

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