"Advantaged Spot Plays"

Wouldn't it be great if - instead of horse handicappers - we were all 'horse-whisperers' - or at least had a horse psychic hot-line we could call up before each race?!

Seriously though, knowing the psychology of a horse and what's in it's head . . . now that would be fascinating - and extremely profitable.

Horses are such impressionable and sensitive animals, and they mature and learn so rapidly. How can we use this fact in our horse handicapping to make some smart wagers?

I gave a spot-play method in one of the other articles that has worked for decades and continues to bring in good profits:

> Watch for any Maiden or Maiden Claimer that is spotted in a higher level race with winners (open claimer, stakes, handicap, allowance - etc.). If it loses that race (<u>very</u> likely) and is then run back with maidens for it's next race - **bet it**. If it then loses that race with a decent showing - bet it back one more time.

Why does that spot play work so well? I think the answer has to do with the psychology of the horse. Many of those runners "wake-up" when entered with winners. They will watch those others that have already figured out how to run to win - and feel, and learn <u>in one race</u> what the game is all about for them.

Below is another spot-play/ (race condition-play) that also has a bit of this learning process involved, as well as trainer-intent and expectations.

Fred Davis was a horse handicapping researcher who published in the early 70's. He was heavily into statistics, and did exhaustive studies that led him to his creation of "Impact Values." These were essentially long-term ROI expectations for narrowly-defined niches discovered in the over-all results stats from thousands of horse races.

One interesting part of his findings had to do with Allowance-level horses, and was somewhat like the spot-play given above . . .

> Anytime a horse has been entered into a stakes race (any non-restricted stakes) - then is brought back into an allowance race following the stakes try - they run much better than their odds overall. And - <u>they do this regardless of how they ran in that stakes try</u>.

If (and only if) these runners **have never been entered in a claiming race** - they win far more than their rightful share, and provide a good positive ROI expectancy . . . bet them.

Why does this spot play work?

These are horses in whom the trainers have seen extra promise - enough to give them an early try at stakes glory. They are usually young horses, and this race gives them another good lesson in the game of serious racing against higher quality foes. They learn, light bulbs go on, and they then apply that new-found awareness and extra conditioning against the 'lesser' allowance competition when entered back at that level.

The proof of the value of this spot play was exhibited by the figures Davis got for other patterns of Allowance horses:

> - Allowance horses that had never been entered in a stakes (only straight maiden and other allowance races) <u>won fewer than they should</u> and returned a negative expectancy.

> - Allowance runners that had at any time been entered into a claiming race (maiden claimers or straight claimers) <u>had a miserable ROI</u> and were real money burners.

in your horse handicapping, by scanning through the pp's for 5 or 6 tracks each day - you will get several plays a week. Combine those with the maiden-back-against-winners play mentioned earlier and you would have even more plays.

You could bet nothing else - no other types of races - and still rake steady profits following just these.

The addition of basic, solid handicapping principles to the play can only enhance its return.

As I've discussed many times, **what a player really wants from the races will determine what he/she gets from the game.**

Do you want lots of action, excitement, and entertainment? Okay - you've got a never-ending supply of that out there.

Steady profits is another matter altogether. If you want a restricted set of spot-plays that will churn out those steady profits - that possibility is also out there - it's really your choice.