

Racing Buzz Speed Ratings – A Users Guide

What are speed ratings?

Speed Ratings are a numerical rating of a horse's performance in a given race based on the finishing time of the winner against our master time. We then calculate the seconds per length of the winner, usually between 0.18 and 0.22 seconds, and use the finishing distances of the horses behind to calculate their rating. We then make a going allowance depending on the conditions. The going allowance is based on the finishing time of a race and the factors that may have made that run faster or slower. We judge this by the finishing time compared to a standard time and the finishing time of horses in the race as compared to previous races.

How do you use those ratings to make selections?

The first thing you are presented with is the racecard (figure 1) ordered by draw number (found to the right of the horse's name). This gives you the race details, the average, lowest, highest, best at course and best at distance speed ratings (from the last five years) and the last five most recent speed ratings each horse has achieved. It is recommended that you order the race card by the LTO rating but you can order the card by horse, Draw, OR, Min, Max, Avg, Course and Dist by clicking on the table headers.

12/10/2009 Kempton (All Weather)																
14.20 Visit the New spreadex.com Handicap (DIV I) class 6 3yo+ 1 M																
Race Card		Draw Stats		Jockey / Trainer Course Stats				Head to Head								
HORSE	DRW	AGE	WEIGHT	OR	TRAINER	JOCKEY	MIN	MAX	AVG	COURSE	DIST	LTO 1	SR 2	SR 3	SR 4	SR 5
Sunny Spells (GB)	4	4	9st 7lb	65	S C Williams	Saleem Golam	94.89	99.79	96.98	-----	-----	99.79	99.77	98.30	96.36	95.72
Red Suede Shoes (GB)	3	3	9st 4lb	65	B R Millman	James Millman	94.61	99.40	97.26	99.32	99.32	99.32	96.71	97.64	98.39	99.25
The Grey One (IRE)	6	6	9st 1lb	59	J M Bradley	Kevin Ghunowa	93.32	101.07	97.43	98.82	99.76	98.82	99.42	97.95	98.62	98.41
Diamond Twister (USA)	13	3	9st 3lb	64	J R Best	Marc Halford	92.45	101.95	97.60	97.89	97.66	98.42	99.46	97.66	94.23	98.35
Dialalabad (FR)	8	5	8st 8lb	52	Mrs C A Dunnett	Micky Fenton	91.46	100.88	96.58	98.56	98.99	97.95	99.89	95.96	92.98	96.63
Under Fire (IRE)	9	6	8st 13lb	57	A W Carroll	Jack Dean	92.16	102.40	97.14	99.05	102.40	97.74	94.89	96.30	97.61	97.82
Takitwo (GB)	2	6	8st 9lb	53	P D Cundell	Simon Whitworth	94.28	102.85	97.79	99.71	99.31	97.64	95.76	95.80	100.33	96.98
Marmooq (GB)	1	6	9st 5lb	63	M J Attwater	Liam Jones	93.09	99.57	97.11	98.94	98.27	97.42	97.81	97.54	96.44	95.34
Professor Malone (GB)	10	4	8st 7lb	49	M S Tuck	Sam Hitchcott	92.61	97.25	95.02	96.79	-----	97.25	94.24	97.00	96.79	94.92
Binfield (IRE)	5	4	9st 7lb	65	B G Powell	Russell Kennemore	94.06	101.81	97.19	98.03	101.81	97.00	100.71	98.03	98.65	99.87
Artesium (GB)	12	3	8st 8lb	55	Patrick Morris	L P Keniry	90.51	98.82	95.60	96.67	96.08	96.67	98.82	96.55	96.56	93.99
Josr's Magic (IRE)	7	5	8st 12lb	56	T E Powell	T P O'Shea	89.98	100.22	96.53	97.69	98.07	96.11	97.96	92.35	98.37	97.26
Burnbrake (GB)	11	4	9st 2lb	60	L Montague Hall	Robert Havlin	93.84	99.80	96.09	96.90	98.10	94.73	96.90	94.98	94.36	96.36

Figure 1 - The Racecard ordered by the LTO rating

A quick glance at the card above shows 6 runners that haven't achieved a 99 or better in their last 5 runs. These horses can probably be discounted after a quick hover over each rating to check that there is no reason to discount the runs and dig deeper. For instance if Artesiums (figure 1) last 5 runs had all been over 1m 4f and on soft going then it would be wise to check further back for more relevant form.

By Clicking on the horses name the horse pop up window will open giving a more detailed view of a runner's history.

Red Suede Shoes (GB) 3 yo

10 Run(s) 0 Win(s) 7 Place(s) Win Strike Rate 0 % £3322 Total Prize Money Last Run 12 days ago

DATE	COURSE	RACE	DISTANCE	GOING	PLACE	BEHIND	DRAW	WEIGHT	TRAINER	JOCKEY	SP	OR	SR
30/09/2009	Kempton (All Weather)	kempton.co.uk Classified Claiming Stakes (6)	1 m	Std	5/13	4.40	7	9 st 8 lb	B R Millman	T G McLaughlin	9/1	67	99.32
21/08/2009	Sandown	Hampton Court Handicap (4)	1 m 2 f 7 yds	GF	4/5	4.75	3	9 st 0 lb	B R Millman	Chris Catlin	14/1	68	96.71
11/08/2009	Lingfield (All Weather)	Tigger Handicap (5)	1 m	Std	3/11	3.00	5	9 st 5 lb	B R Millman	Michael Hills	4/1	68	97.64
29/07/2009	Sandown	Drivers Jonas Handicap (4)	1 m 14 yds	Good	4/5	1.40	6	8 st 11 lb	B R Millman	Hayley Turner	12/1	68	98.39
10/07/2009	Chepstow	"Waitrose Caldicot Is Now Open" Handicap (5)	1 m 14 yds	GF	4/12	5.70	4	9 st 5 lb	B R Millman	James Millman	8/1	70	99.25
25/06/2009	Leicester	Cold Overton Handicap (5)	1 m 60 yds	GF	4/6	2.80	7	8 st 13 lb	B R Millman	James Millman	14/1	70	99.40
12/06/2009	Goodwood	Crimbourne Stud Stakes (Handicap) (4)	1 m 1 f 192 yds	Good	6/7	12.00	8	8 st 12 lb	B R Millman	James Millman	16/1	72	97.55
21/02/2009	Lingfield (All Weather)	Bet Premier League Football - Betdaq Maiden Stakes (5)	1 m 4 f	Std	2/7	1.50	5	9 st 0 lb	B R Millman	James Millman	11/4	0	94.61
23/01/2009	Lingfield (All Weather)	Play Poker @ williamhill.com Maiden Stakes (5)	1 m 2 f	Std	2/10	0.30	5	9 st 0 lb	B R Millman	James Millman	25/1	0	94.74
10/01/2009	Lingfield (All Weather)	William Hill January Sale - Now On! Median Auction Maiden Stakes (5)	1 m	Std	8/12	4.35	3	9 st 0 lb	B R Millman	James Millman	66/1	0	94.96

1 to 10 of 10 Runs

Figure 2 - Horse pop up

By using the filters (figure 3) it is possible to show runs under similar conditions.

Hint: To filter by all weather runs only leave the course filter on all and set the going filter to standard.

DATE	COURSE	RACE	DISTANCE	GOING	PLACE	BEHIND	DRAW	WEIGHT	TRAINER	JOCKEY	SP	OR	SR
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21/08/2009	Sandown	Hampton Court Handicap (4)	1 m 2 f 7 yds	GF	4/5	4.75	3	9 st 0 lb	B R Millman	Chris Catlin	14/1	68	96.71

Figure 3 - Filter relevant form

Look for the best, recent as possible, rating for a horse when it has raced under similar conditions (same going, similar distance etc) and then look at the horse's recent runs to see if it is ready to perform to that level again. Red Suede Shoes from the above example had the second highest LTO rating achieved at course and distance (figure 4).

Hint: For certain courses, like Haydock, Goodwood, Chester and the AW courses filter for course form

We now have an idea of how we expect the horse to perform. The next thing we need to establish is any negative factors that could affect the horse's performance.

DATE	COURSE	RACE	DISTANCE	GOING	PLACE	BEHIND	DRAW	WEIGHT	TRAINER	JOCKEY	SP	OR	SR
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Figure 4 - LTO

We've already looked at how the horse performs at the distance, going and where possible course, we can move on to the weight that it's carrying. The official handicapper uses weight in an attempt to give all horses an equal chance of winning the race. Most horses handle a few pounds extra quite easily until they hit a plateau where the extra weight starts to affect them. Check what sort of ratings the horse has achieved carrying the same or more weight under similar conditions. Carrying on from the above card we can see that Red Suede Shoes is 4lb lighter this time out.

The next factor that could reduce or enhance the horses' performance is the draw. The effect of the draw varies greatly between courses, conditions, distances and even races; it's always possible for a good horse to win from a bad draw. So while the effect of the draw is never set in stone it can be a guiding factor. A quick glance at the draw graph is usually enough to determine if a draw is good, bad or indifferent.

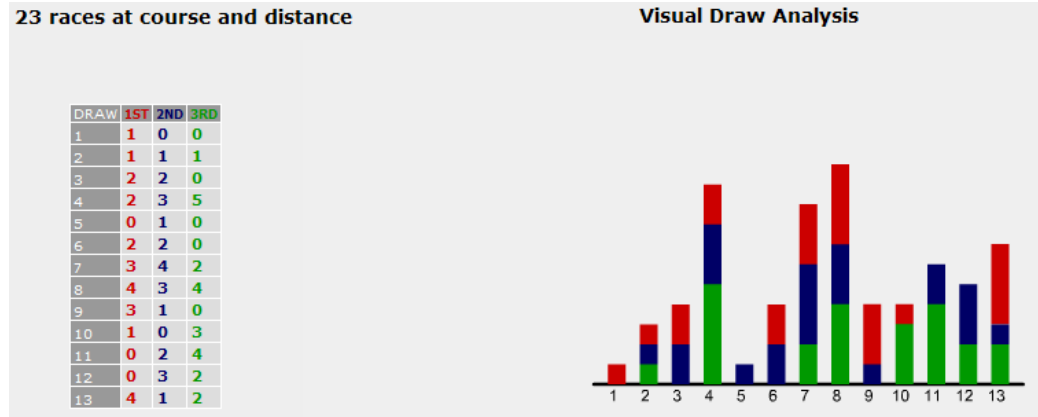


Figure 5 - The draw tab

The draw stats above (figure 5) show that draws 1 and 5 are best avoided unless the horse is head and shoulders above the rest. While draws 11 and 12 show no winners yet the fact they have a decent number of places which suggest they are not impossible to win from. Horses drawn in stalls 4, 7, 8 and 13 look to have an advantage while Red Suede Shoes is drawn 3 which is a fairly neutral.

Another factor to consider is the track record for the jockey and trainer. Much like the draw, a trainers or jockeys previous form can be completely reversed if the horse is that much better than its rivals but both have courses that they perform well or poorly at.

James Millman						B R Millman							
Red Suede Shoes (GB)						Red Suede Shoes (GB)							
2009	8	1	(13%)	2	(25%)	£4435	2009	20	2	(10%)	5	(25%)	£7300
2008	7	0	(0%)	1	(14%)	£605	2008	27	1	(4%)	4	(15%)	£5891
2007	11	1	(9%)	3	(27%)	£3351	2007	24	3	(13%)	5	(21%)	£15523

Figure 6 - Jockey & Trainer Stats

Things we need to be aware of

Speed ratings attained at Great Leighs, Ffos Las or at rarely run distances may be artificially high due to the limited number of races from which we can calculate master times from. These include:

- Musselburgh – 2m 2f 37yds
- Ripon – 1m 3f 14yds
- Beverley – 1m 3f 216yds
- Ascot – 5f 110yds

Another way horses can gain an artificially high speed rating is to be dragged around by a speed horse and tail off, finishing in a good time without being competitive. Be wary of ratings that stand out in a horse's history when they finished more than 5 lengths behind the winner - look for more solid form.

In many horse racing books and websites you'll come across the term 'bounce'. Many horses put in a good performance and then make a few runs at the same level and then their performance drops for a few runs before returning to a higher level. This rise and fall in performance is called the bounce and is different for every horse. Try and look for patterns in a horse's performance and gauge where in that pattern the next run will come. If we discount Red Suede Shoes runs over 1m then we can see performances cluster in highs and lows, two or three under par speed figures followed by two or three good figures. We can expect Red Suede Shoes to dip in performance within the next two runs.

Canny trainers will often 'sandbag' a horse to gain a drop in OR for a targeted race later on. Sandbagging is running a horse in unfavourable conditions, such as the wrong distance or a going the horse doesn't like, so that the handicapper drops the horse's rating and the horse carries less weight next time and increases its chance of winning. Occasionally a jockey will come in overweight. Trainers often deride the handicapper for raising their horse's OR too much after a good performance but how often do you hear them complain about a jockey being overweight after a race?

Speed ratings are a way of reading form they are not the magic oracle. They will save you a lot of work but it still requires time and effort to profit from horse racing.