Frandsen Publishing Presents
Favorite ALL-Ways™ Newsletter Articles

Handicapping Process Series
Part 4 of 6: "Getting Unstuck"

This six-part Handicapping Process Series covers, in a simple step-by-step manner, how to develop a personal, organized and efficient handicapping process that neatly coordinates with the wagering decisions that must be made. **It is easy to make the effort of developing a personal handicapping process harder than it needs to be. In this Part 4 of the series, we provide some ideas that are helpful for making good progress with less hassle.**

If you have not already done so, you will want to read the first three parts of this Handicapping Process Series. Also, the series logically follows up on our previous five-part Wagering Series. If you have not read the articles in the Wagering Series, we suggest you at the least read the Wagering Series wrap up paying particular attention to the one page Summary Reference Sheet. All these articles are available as part of the Favorite ALL-Ways Newsletter Articles.

All past ALL-Ways Newsletters, as well as a Major Topic Index, are posted on both the BRIS and Frandsen Publishing Web sites and they are always free. Also, articles already published as part of the Favorite ALL-Ways Newsletter Article series are posted in the Newsletter Section on the Frandsen Publishing Web site and they are free as well. See the links at the end of this article.

Recap

Here are the six sequential steps we believe should be part of an effective handicapping process:

Step 1) From the full field of horses, isolate all horses having a legitimate chance to finish in the top four finish positions. (Must include the favorite)

Step 2) Isolate the top 3 or 4 candidates to win the race. (Must include the favorite)

Step 3) Classify the favorite as legitimate, vulnerable or false.

Step 4) Identify the two non-favorite horses most likely to beat the favorite.

Step 5) Identify a non-favorite Key Horse.

Step 6) Make final handicapping decisions.

Here is how these steps are handled in the first three parts of the Handicapping Process Series.

Part 1 ("Toolbox Handicapping")

This part covers how to identify the horses that may have a decent shot of finishing in the top four finish positions and how to isolate the 3 or 4 horses with the best chance to win the race.

Part 2 ("The Keystone")

This part describes how to place contending horses into one of 3 groups. Group 1 includes the horses having a good chance to win the race. Group 2 includes other horses with a good chance to finish in-the-money. Group 3 includes marginal horses that, nevertheless, should not be ignored. Part 2 also shows how to classify the favorite as "legitimate", "vulnerable" or "false".

Part 3 ("Key Decisions")

This part discusses how to identify the two non-favorite horses with the best chance to beat the favorite and how to identify a good Key Horse.

Part 4: Getting "Un-Stuck"

Developing an efficient and effective personal handicapping process is not an easy thing to do, but it is absolutely essential for profitable play. It is easy to make the process development effort harder than it needs to be. And, the process should keep being refined over time. In this Part 4, we are going to provide some ideas that may help you make good progress with less hassle.

Some reminders:

1) **Toolbox Handicapping**: Remember that ALL-Ways software is a very large toolbox of powerful handicapping tools. You will never use them all. Instead, you should select

and integrate the ALL-Ways software tools that best suit your personal handicapping process.

2) **Unique Information**: Just about every handicapper has easy access to speed and class information as well as past performances. You must use this fundamental information as well. But, to handicap and wager better than other players, you should take advantage of as much unique information as possible that is not generally in the hands of the public. It is this unique information that gives you the edge over your competitors, namely the other horseplayers. ALL-Ways software abounds with unique handicapping information.

3) **Comprehensive Handicapping**: Successful handicapping means you must go far beyond the basics of speed and class. You will want to cover suitability to the distance and surface of today's race, class, current form, pace, speed, jockey/trainer considerations and, in some cases, pedigree information. You will also want to include important situational considerations that provide insight into whether the horse can be expected to do as well as its past performances or if it may do better or worse.

Some Helpful Ideas

Here are some ideas that may help you make good progress in developing your personal handicapping process.

Ask Questions: This may seem obvious, but many people will find this technique to be very helpful. Ask yourself key questions in order to determine the information you need and then find the best source of the information. To get your thought processes going, here are examples of the kinds of questions you may want to ask:

"What would convince me ...."

…. the horse is a legitimate contender?
…. the horse is an ALL-Ways Dangerous Non-Contender that I should not ignore
…. the horse deserves to be in Group 1 (win candidates)?
…. the horse deserves to be In Group 2 (in-the-money)?
…. the horse deserves to be In Group 3 (marginal horses)?
…. the horse is a legitimate favorite?
…. the horse is a vulnerable favorite?
…. the horse is a false favorite?
…. the horse would be a good Key Horse
…. the horse will do better than its last race?
…. the horse will do worse today than its last race?   …. etc., etc., etc.

Ask Both "Why?" and "Why Not?": For example, ask "What would convince me the horse should be in Group 1?" And, ask "What would convince me the horse does not belong in Group 1? Your thought process for the "Why?" answers and for the "Why not?" answers will be very different. It is good to see positive things about a horse. But, it is equally important to find the negative things as well.

Avoid Self Fulfilling Prophecies: A very common problem in a handicapping process is to see a horse that you like early in the process and then make your initial evaluation come true by accentuating positive things and downplaying the importance of negative things.

Keep It Simple: Don't try to do too much too quickly. Let the process evolve. Most people will not be able to go from a lack of success to all success in a short period of time. There are a couple of specific things we recommend regarding this. One is to read our five part Wagering Series. **Pay particular attention to the concept of mastering the foundation wagers before moving up the logical progression to the more advanced wagers.** Note that the Foundation Wagers are also discussed in the upcoming Part 5 of this Handicapping Process Series. This will greatly simplify your initial handicapping tasks. Another helpful idea is for you to use the Custom Handicapping Report feature that is available in ALL-Ways Software. These reports automatically include each horse's program number and name. Then, you select the thirteen fields of data you want to show on the report. These Custom Reports also automatically identify ALL-Ways designated Contenders, Dangerous Non Contenders and Key Horse Candidates as well as the win probabilities for each horse in the field.   **And, you can create several different Custom Reports that focus on answering the specific questions you ask of yourself as discussed earlier.**

Feedback Is Critically Important: No process starts out completely effective. A good process develops over time and should get better and better as you refine it. Here are a couple ideas for you in this area. First, take the 30 to 60 seconds needed to review each race after it is run to look at what worked and what did not work and to try to explain surprises. Second, after the races are run and the results are automatically entered into your ALL-Ways software database using the Exotic Results Data file, print out one or two or three of the ALL-Ways software handicapping reports that show you the top four finishers. This is a great way to continuously improve your handicapping process. The top four finishers are shown on all Custom Reports you create as well as the Odds-Line Report, Pace-Line Report, Top 10/Ranking Report, Search Report and the Spot Play-Final Process Report. Again, there is no need to print them all out, just the ones you use or may want to use in your personal handicapping process.

What's Next? Handicapping Process Series Part 5 of 6: "Feedback"

Along the way, it is helpful to objectively evaluate how well the developing handicapping process is working and to identify ways to improve the process. This is the subject of Part 5 of the Handicapping Process Series. More specifically, Part 5 discusses the logical progression of key handicapping skills tied to wager types including starting with the Foundation Wagers, ways to measure the effectiveness of each set of key handicapping skills and ways to improve and refine the developing handicapping process.

For Non-ALL-Ways Users

If you ever thought of giving ALL-Ways software a try, now is a great time to do it. This will let you follow this Handicapping Process Series to gradually ease into the use of ALL-Ways software while, at the same time, developing a personal, profitable, handicapping and wagering process. **We suggest new ALL-Ways software users visit the "What's New Page" on the Frandsen Publishing Web site and click the link to "Getting Started With ALL-Ways".** When you are there, we suggest you print and read the short paper on "How ALL-Ways Works" and also note the options presented for a "Fast Track" approach, an "Accelerated Track" approach and an "As You Go approach". Note that you can download ALL-Ways Software for free from the Free Software Page on the BRIS Web site. When you install the software, it automatically includes a sample race card data file that you can use to explore the concepts presented in the Handicapping Process Series.

ALL–Ways™ Newsletter Handicapping Process Series Reference Sheet
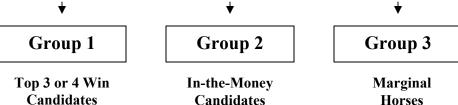
Full Field of Horses

↓

Isolate All Contenders for the Top 4 Finish Positions

↓

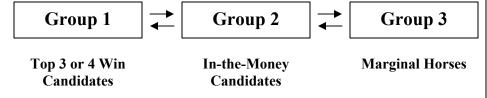### *The Keystone Steps*

● **Initial Assignments** ●

Assign to a Group based on speed, class, compound pace and comprehensive ratings using the concept of Gap Advantage. Exclude horses eliminated from further consideration.

↓   ↓   ↓

Group 1	**Group 2**	**Group 3**
Top 3 or 4 Win Candidates	In-the-Money Candidates	Marginal Horses
Include Favorite		

● **Final Assignments** ●

Move horses between groups based on suitability to surface/distance, the pace scenario, form factors, jockey/trainer influence and situational changes from past performance races to today's race.
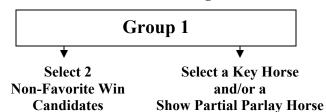
Group 1 ⇄	**Group 2** ⇄	**Group 3**
Top 3 or 4 Win Candidates	In-the-Money Candidates	Marginal Horses

Evaluate the Favorite

Decide which group you would now assign the favorite

If Group 1: Legitimate
If Group 2: Vulnerable
If Group 3: False

Key Decisions

Decide: Pass or Play the Race?
Remember "The Curse of the Legitimate Favorite"

Group 1

↓   ↓

Select 2
Non-Favorite Win
Candidates

Select a Key Horse
and/or a
Show Partial Parlay Horse

Supporting "Favorite Articles"

● **Wagering Series**

Part 1 *"Realistic Expectations"*
Part 2 *"3 Critical Skills"*
Part 3 *"How Are You Really Doing?"*
Part 4 *"Where to Go from Here"*
Part 5 *"Wrapping It Up"*

● **Handicapping Process Series**

Part 1 *"Isolating Contenders"*
Part 2 *" Keystone of the Process"*
Part 3 *"Key Decisions"*
Part 4 *"Getting Unstuck"*
Part 5 *"Feedback"*
Part 6 *"Wrapping It Up"*

● *"Fourth … place … itis"*
   How to Avoid It

● **Race Pace Shapes**

● **The Curse of the Legitimate Favorite**

● **To Pass or to Play?**
   That Should Be the Question

● **How I Use ALL-Ways**

   A compilation of articles
   submitted by ALL-Ways
   handicappers

The Foundation Wagers

● **The 2-Horse Win Wager**

● **The Win-Insurance Wager**

● **Show Partial Parlay Wager**

   - Part 1 *"Getting Started"*
   - Part 2 *"Becoming an Expert"*

ALL-Ways Newsletters, including a Major Topic Index, and more than two dozen articles making up the Favorite Article Series are posted in the Newsletter Section of the Frandsen Publishing Web site at www.frandsen.com.

Frandsen Publishing Corporation is the publisher of the quarterly ALL-Ways Newsletters, which are widely considered to be one of the best sources of handicapping and wagering insights available in the industry. And, ALL-Ways Newsletters are FREE! These newsletters are posted on both the BRIS and Frandsen Publishing Web sites. All articles that are part of the Favorite ALL-Ways Newsletter Article series are available on the Frandsen Publishing Web site.

All Newsletters and Major Topic Index

Frandsen Publishing is also the developer of ALL-Ways Handicapping Software. ALL-Ways is serious software for professional and serious horseplayers. Phillips Racing Newsletter calls ALL-Ways Software "absolutely the best free handicapping tool on the market" and gives ALL-Ways a 9 ½ rating … the highest ever awarded. And, ALL-Ways Software is FREE!

More about ALL-Ways Software

Bloodstock Research Information Services and Frandsen Publishing Corporation are pleased to provide ALL-Ways Software, ALL-Ways Newsletters and the "Favorite ALL-Ways Newsletter Articles" series, all for FREE.

.