

For folks who want to have a good time at the track without having to spend all their time worrying about what horse to bet, or how much to bet on it, and who want to go home with at least a dollar or two more in their pocket than they came with, and who would prefer to be helped by someone who understands how they think, and what kind of information they want.

Now you can forget about things like speed ratings, past performances, trainers, win percentages, recent form, and all that other boring stuff.

The Fat Cowboy is the only sheet that picks winners using important information like names, birthdates, colors, and your Uncle Louie's hat size. Well, sometimes we try to pick 'em by the way they ran last time, or their forebears, or whether they like to run early or late, and stuff like that, but doing it that way seems to work just about as well as pinning the program up on the wall and throwing darts at it.

The thing is, parimutuel betting is like standing in a windstorm with 20,000 other people, taking a handful of money, and throwing it up in the air. Sometimes some blows back, sometimes some doesn't. Why? How would I know? Go ask Ron Hubbard, or Kreskin, or The National Enquirer.

Betting:

It doesn't do much good to know which horses are likely to win if you don't know how to use that information to make money. The way you do that is by smart betting. To bet smart, be successful, and go home happy, you first have to figure out what kind of bettor you are -- 1) the kind who comes out to make lots of money or 2) the kind who comes out to make lots of bets. The difference usually is in how much money you bet, and how often.

The money bettor might not make more than one bet in a whole day, but when he does bet, it's because he feels everything is in his favor, including odds, jockey, trainer, racing conditions, the horse's appearance, etc.

The recreational bettor makes lots of little bets, with one of two goals in mind: to try and turn \$2 into big money -- knowing you'll lose lots of bets in hopes of winning just one or two big ones -- or by cashing lots of little tickets, to go home with a little more money than you came with (or at worst to try and keep from losing very much.)

One very simple way to try and make some money betting is to take the Fat Cowboy's first pick in each race, and put it in a \$2 exacta box with the crowd favorite -- that is, the one with the lowest odds on the "tote," or "odds" board. If

The Fat Cowboy's favorite is also the crowd favorite, box it with our second pick. If you're really feeling rich and adventurous, box 3 horses in an exacta (\$12). Just remember, it's possible to go all day without winning an exacta. Of course when you win one, it's usually a good payoff -- \$20 or more.

One very simple way to make lots of bets and hopefully not lose very much -- or even win a little -- is to bet two horses to place.

For instance, The Fat Cowboy's choice and the crowd favorite. (If they're the same you might want to risk a win bet.) Suppose, for instance, that the favorite on the odds board is 7-5, and The Fat Cowboy's top choice in the race is 5-2. If you bet them both to place you have the chance of winning neither, one, or both of your bets. If you win your bet on the favorite, you usually will get most, if not all of your total bet back. If you win your bet on the non-favorite, you'll make pretty good money. And if you win both bets you'll make even more money. Of course you can also bet both horses to show, which will pay off more often, but for less money.

How to bet the pick six. Yes, it's worth a bet. But unless you're a big butter and egg person, no more than a \$4 bet, which means you can bet one horse in each of five races, and two horses in the remaining race. It requires luck. Bet The Fat Cowboy's picks, bet all the favorites, bet all longshots, bet a mixture, bet names, numbers, colors, or whatever else you might want to try. Last year a lady won by betting her father's birthday. It's fun, it only costs \$4, you're about as likely to win as you are to catch a glimpse of Elvis at the betting window, but it's just barely possible you might turn \$4 into thousands.

HOW'S YOUR LUCK RUNNING TODAY?

So we've studied the horses, the jockeys, the trainers, the weather, the track surface, and we have a pretty good idea of who should win. Now let's look at something really important -- luck! Remember what the old Chinese philosopher said: "I'd rather be lucky than good any day." So here are The Fat Cowboy's tips on how to get lucky, and a collection of lucky odds, ends, truisms, and miscellanea. Pick and choose -- and get lucky!

Astrologically speaking. Certain signs have certain lucky colors and numbers. Here are yours for today.

Fire Signs.

Aries (The Ram) 9

Leo (The Lion) 1

Sagittarius (The Archer) 3

Earth Signs.

Taurus (The Bull) 6

Virgo (The Virgin) 5

Capricorn (The Goat) 8

Air Signs.

Gemini (The Twins) 5

Libra (The Scales) 6

Aquarius (The Water Bearer) 4

Water Signs.

Cancer (The Crab) 2

Scorpio (The Eagle) 0

Pisces (The Fish) 7

Magic numbers and colors based on your birthdate. If you were born on the:

1st, 10th, 19th, or 28th, your number is 1, colors are golden yellow, bright orange, royal purple.

2nd, 11th, 20th, or 29th, number is 2, colors are light green, pale yellow, silver

3rd, 12th, 21st, or 30th, number is 3, colors are burnt orange, turquoise, sky blue

4th, 13th, 22nd, or 31st, number is 4, colors are cobalt blue, silver grey, ocean green.

5th, 14th, or 23rd, your number is 5, your colors are pearl grey, light green, silver.

6th, 15th, or 24th, your number is 6, your colors are chocolate brown, deep green.

7th, 16th, or 25th, your number is 7, your colors are aqua, pink, white

8th, 17th, or 26th, number is 8, colors brown, dark green, navy blue

9th, 18th, or 27th, number is 9, colors are crimson, ruby red, blue

What do you do with your magic numbers and colors? That's up to you. Bet a Daily Double using both your number or one of your numbers twice. Make them the most important numbers in your Pick Six. Find them in horse's names. Mix them

with a friend's in an exacta. Find your lucky and magic colors in jockey's silks, and in horse's and trainer's names.

A last resort. If you still can't make up your mind, there are a few laws of racing luck you can fall back on.

Grays on grass. Bet gray horses on the turf. If a horse nods "yes" to you in the post parade, bet it. If a horse shakes his head "no" to you in the post parade, don't bet it. Horse is wet, better not bet. (When sweat is literally pouring off a horse, don't bet it.) Horse wears legging, you go begging. (When a horse wears bandages, particularly on the front legs, don't bet it.) Oldest horse? Bet of course. One girl in the race? Bet her to place.

AND NOW FOR A FEW DEFINITIONS

Win, Place, Show. The horses that come in first, second and third, respectively.

On the nose. A bet to win.

Across the board. Actually three bets -- one to win, one to place, and one to show. \$2 across the board costs \$6.

Daily Double. A combination bet. To win it you must pick the winner of the first race and the winner of the second race. It's a two-dollar minimum bet that must be made prior to the first race.

Exacta. A combination bet. To win it you must pick the horse that comes in first and the horse that comes in second in the race, in the exact way they finish.

Exacta box. This is a way of putting horses together in an exacta so if one of them finishes first and another finishes second, you automatically win. Not as easy as it sounds. A \$1 box with 2 horses costs \$2. With 3 horses it costs \$6. A \$2 box with 2 horses costs \$4. With 3 horses it costs \$12.

Wheel. A short way of describing a multiple-horse bet. A wheel combines one horse with one or more others. In the Daily Double, for instance, you can combine one horse in the first race with several horses in the second race by "wheeling" them. For instance: "Wheel number five in the first with numbers four, six, and eight in the second" means "For my Daily Double bet I want number five in the first paired with numbers four, six, and eight to win in the second."

Pick Six. A kind of mini-lottery wherein you try to choose the winner of six races in a row -- at Remington, the third through the eighth. It's a \$2 bet for one horse in each race. You can choose more than one horse per race; which costs another \$2 bet for every extra horse you use. This is okay when you add extra horses in just

one race. The cost adds up very quickly when you start adding extra horses in more than one race. Unless you're mad at your money, you really shouldn't play more than an \$8 bet on the pick six. Unless, of course, you're going to play like the big people and buy a \$1,000 (or \$10,000 or \$30,000) pick six. We've never done that, and have a feeling we never will. Once we played a \$242 pick six and lost the first race. When we stopped crying we decided never to do that again.

Scratches. When a horse you've already bought a ticket on is scratched, you usually have a couple of options. 1) You can keep the ticket and your money will be refunded at the window. Usually the best idea. 2) Sometimes, however, you have enough time to race back to the window and change your bet. This is usually a bad idea, since it's a judgment made in a hurry. 3) If you have the horse in an exacta, you'll get money back for the bets the scratched horse was part of. (In a three-horse box, for instance, you'd get back \$4, and the other part of the ticket would still be valid.) If you have the horse in a daily double, you'll receive some kind of consolation money if your other horse wins. If you have the scratched horse in a pick six, they'll substitute the betting favorite at post time and your ticket will still be valid.

Good luck!