

## Handicapping Race Horse

A handicapping race horse is a horse which is being disadvantaged in a certain competition due to its' superior experience and qualities. This measure is taken in order to make the competition less predictable and equal among all participating horses.

A handicapping race has two meanings though. And the first one refers exactly to disadvantaging a horse over the other due to its' superior skill. The second one is an entirely different story, and it actually is the art of predicting how a certain race would end basing the assumption on different factors likely to be present at the start of the race.

The practice of disadvantaging another competitor is encountered also in other sports than horse racing. This makes chances of winning relatively equal among all the participants to the competition. The means of achieving this differ from sport to sport, depending on the competing format.

In the case of horse racing, a more experienced and overall better horse will be disadvantaged by placing extra weights in its' saddle. This race will be called a handicap race. The extra weights will make the jockey heavier, and this is an important handicap. Just think about the fact that a mere 2 or 3 extra pounds can slow down the horse by a length.

Maybe the icon of handicap racing is the horse called Seabiscuit, which had its' glory days in the 30s and early 40s. Seabiscuit used to compete in handicap races bearing a ridiculously high extra weight of 130 pounds. This didn't however stop the horse from winning the 1940 Santa Anita handicap race.

Talking about the other meaning of horse race handicapping, it is the art (or skill) of predicting one outcome or another by analyzing different factors that are influential in a horse race's possible result. Not everyone can do this, as it takes a lot of skill and experience to be able to practice it.

There are many factors which are being used by people practicing this technique. For example, a horse's speed is a very important factor in its' finishing position. Then, what many people consider to be the single most important factor that experts take into consideration is the pace. This is based upon on each horse's running style and although it is very important, it is too dependant on the randomness of a race. A jockey can easily control the pace of a horse especially at the beginning of each race.

There are several other factors taken into consideration also, like the class of a horse or another, their experience, the track conditions, etc. But since we are not all experts at that, we will just have to watch, enjoy, and maybe even place a bet on our favorite handicapping race horse.

## About the Author

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