The Matchmaker

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This newsletter represents the opinions of George William Smith

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**Contains information and opinion you will get nowhere else…**Beats the others out of sight

March has arrived and the weather is typical for March here in Alberta. I haven’t been able to get out as much as I normally do because of a skin graft on my forehead. I look like I have been just tossed out of an Army ambulance with a huge bandage on my forehead and stitches visible in my ear. And, of course no washing allowed of my head and so hair is pointed in every direction. They can only keep me bottled up for so long so every two days or so, I break out and go for a walk. The reason is I go nuts staring at a computer for too long and one can only take so many naps. The big reason is that the area of the skin graft is an area where skin graft chances taking is only ‘so so’ and I don’t want to further reduce my chances.

It hasn’t helped that February is a short month and without my doing actual hard physical exercise takes away many of the motives I have during the day. Racing has not been particularly good and doing 40-50 horses every couple of days for my GSV race cards has not been exciting because most of them only do a race or so in dog meat time and then retired.

About the only good thing that has happened is that my previous served shuts down their services as of March 8 so I have been busy building a new website to go with a new server. I am only intelligent in that I will stay at something until I get it right. So I prefer to build the site from scratch or a previous copy of a page of mine that I built from scratch. I know I can easily go to other sources to build it for me and with my buying of a new domain name I get that free through Wordpress, etc. But I won’t. I want to go through all the agony again of learning again how to write the code and implement it into something of which I can be proud, rather than simply insert this and that here and there and pretend I built it.

My new site is a ‘work in progress and will not be finished anytime soon, so please bear with me. The site is ‘thematchmaker.ca’. I’ve got some links working but many are linked to old pages which will end in a couple of days. I was extremely lucky to get a domain name exactly as my title. I never guessed that I could and was prepared for everyone who is used to going to the site to have to bookmark and recognize something totally different. The ( .ca) simply indicates it is a Canadian site. Who would have thought that with all the matchmaking sites out there to help find mates, it was open.

Here are some facts that might interest you many of which arise out of every race run at Aqueduct, Woodbine, Oaklawn, Gulfstream, Golden Gate, Santa Anita and Fair Grounds from December 1, 2016 to Feb 21, 2017.

1. I have been hiding out at home as the stitches and tissue graft on the ear and scalp require tender care and constant dressing changes.  Currently there is a 6 inch bandage x 2 inch to cover the skin graft and some of the stitches
2. I now have 132,425 horses in the racing data bank from 2101 days of generating race cards, of which sometimes a day might have actually resulted in 2-4 days of race cards.  So these are actual starters, all of which were entered by hand, individually.
3. Since the study began on December 1st there were 2091 races, not including cancelled races.  There were 2 races with only two starting horses, 3 races with three horses to start, 25 races with four horses, 147 races with 5 horses...damn you Santa Anita, Golden Gate and Aqueduct, 332 races with 6 horses, 367 races with 7 horses, 332 races with 8 horses, 286 races with 9 horses, 236 races with 10 horses, 155 races with 11 to start, 155 with 12 to start, 21 races with 13 to start, and 18 races with 14 races to start.
4. I eliminated betting all races with 6 horses or less as my Genetic Betting program found too little profit to be worth the effort as the odds were hurt by the limited field size.
5. Betting the Post 13 or Post 14 horse provided the most profit and highest winning percentage by far with the exception of Post 1.  The reason seems clear enough and of common sense that if a trainer has his horse ready, gets drawn and starts in Posts 13 or 14 he is more likely to be shooting for the win.  The large number of horses ensures a better price for the gamble and please remember I entered my data as the actual post position at the start of the race and not the program number.  If the price was fairly low [my bottom bet odds in a 12, 13, or 14 starting field is that the horse must be 4.30 to 1, the chances are that the horse would have been 2/1 or lower if drawn ideally where trainers like them to be drawn.
6. Contrary to a popular myth, probably spread by trainers with a limited ability to deal fact rather than anecdotal data, all post positions in those 2901 races had an equal chance to win the race by their actual finishing positions.  For example, PP6 had 159 winners and PP7 165, but the difference is not significant given field size.  Making adjustment to field size all horses had equal opportunity to win and a study of 2901 races is not a small number.  Oh, and I did not give you a true fact just to see if you were speed reading.  I forgot to mention that the number 1 post is significantly out of whack with its number of winners adjusted for field size as 226 won their races, which is 47 more than any other post [PP2 = 179].  The reason is fairly simple and I have known this for a long time both through track and field and my other racing studies which always confirmed the data.  In track and field, in a non-staggered race if you draw post one you can go out hard for the lead and have a better chance than anybody in the race or you can drop back and in both cases you get to run the shortest distance if you choose to.  Same with horse racing.  If a trainers horse has speed, even if hidden in past performances and the trainer is shooting, he will send for the best chance to win the race, keeping other horses outside long enough for the distance saved to make a winning difference.
7. I have just finished my study of the GSV2 race cards and here are the factual results.  I did not bet every race, but I have had this program in place since last spring but only finally tested it beginning on Dec. 1.   I missed many bets due to head being stitched up, cancer removed, dental appointments, mental days off, etc.
8. In races where there were 7 horses starting, from a $2 bet, the profit was 201.10, from 8 or more horses to bet, the profit was $935.10 from a $2 bet.
9. In all 2901 races where there was a playable bet, the profit from a $2 Exacta on the qualified play to ALL [thus a 10 horse field required an $18 bet, etc. 9 in field x $2], the profit was $14,421.90.  The preferred sire or broodmare sire bet yielded a profit of $3695.30, which I rank the highest but also has the least number of plays.  The Genetic Advantage bet with the highest dam GSV and highest horse GSV2 score yielded a profit of $7410.40.  The Genetic Advantage bet with the highest GSV2 and 2nd highest dam GSV yielded $3372.20, and the bet using only the highest dam GSV score and no cap on the ranking of the GSV2 score yielded $1107.40

*Can I ask you this? In many professional human sports there is a requirement that a blood test be taken in competition and out and stored so that it might be retested in the future to ensure that there was no cheating on illegal substances. In big events like the Olympics this blood can be tested for 8 years or more in the future. Olympic medals are lost left and right when the cheaters are exposed for using illicit but not testable at the time drugs, etc.*

*However, in horse racing where humans are the trainers, vets, owners, etc., in a sport where millions of dollars might be gained in a single race or much more over the course of a lifetime at stud if a stallion or mare is involved, no blood tests are taken nor demanded.*

*So let me get this straight. We do not trust humans in sport, but we trust humans who deal with animals where big money is involved. No damn wonder, I’m skeptical that horse races are mostly clean. The motto in horse racing is “you have to be an idiot to get caught, so don’t be an idiot and get caught” And if you get caught, fight it every step of the way and eventually they’ll give up and give you shorter time or no time at all. Imagine that philosophy in the Olympics where it is “fess up now” serve your suspension and get back out there, because if they find it out down the road it is* ***far more likely a retest will show up the cheaters*** *and were cheating with a drug that you knew was not testable now.*

*Just for instance, suppose [and I am definitely using this as a hypothetical example only] that in the future a horse wins the Triple Crown and because he wins the Triple Crown, his stud fee is $100,000 a shot. Suppose also that his foals run like a dachshund so a breeder that sent a mare to him sues to have his blood retested for performance-enhancing drugs and they find illegal drugs. Clearly, millions of dollars have switched hands. The laws having been changed find the trainer, owner and vet guilty. The horse loses all of its earnings. The trainer, etc., go to jail for 10 years for fraud over $5000.00 Oh, what a perfect world.*

*In the last Breeders’ Cup Sprint a trainer cheated with a known performance enhancing drug. That horse had its winnings [is in the process of?] taken away and a slap on the wrist for the trainer. To make things worse, he even informed the Breeders’ Cup that his horse might test positive because his system had not yet cleared the good stuff out of it. In a nutshell, he knew the drug could not be taken near race time because it was a PED and gave it anyway, hoping it would clear in time. It did not and millions of dollars ended up in the wrong hands….****part of that money was mine in the exacta and tri’s I played*** *and would have won had he not cheated and the authorities acted in such a brain dead manner. I left with the feeling that the officials might have actually gained financially from the race. They do bet, you know.*

*In my view, the trainer goes to jail for 3 years, banned from the track for life and if there are other guilty parties they suffer the same fate. And the authorities who could be proved to know, all get fired and banned from all race tracks for 5 years. A class action suit should also win millions in the process who could prove their bets that they would have won.*

DUI - TEXAS STYLE

Only a person in Texas could think of this.

From the county where drunk driving is considered a sport, comes this true story.

Recently a routine police patrol parked outside a bar in Austin , Texas . After last call the officer noticed a man leaving the bar so apparently intoxicated that he could barely walk.

The man stumbled around the parking lot for a few minutes, with the officer quietly observing. After what seemed an eternity in which he tried his keys on five different vehicles, the man managed to find his car and fall into it.

He sat there for a few minutes as a number of other patrons left the bar and drove off.

Finally he started the car, switched the wipers on and off--it was a fine, dry summer night, flicked the blinkers on and off a couple of times, honked the horn and then switched on the lights.

He moved the vehicle forward a few inches, reversed a little and then remained still for a few more minutes as some more of the other patrons' vehicles left.

At last, when his was the only car left in the parking lot, he pulled out and drove slowly down the road.

The police officer, having waited patiently all this time, now started up his patrol car, put on the flashing lights, promptly pulled the man over and administered a breathalyzer test.

To his amazement, the breathalyzer indicated no evidence that the man had consumed any alcohol at all!

Dumbfounded, the officer said, I'll have to ask you to accompany me to the police station. This breathalyzer equipment must be broken.'

"I doubt it", said the truly proud Redneck. 'Tonight I'm the designated decoy.'

**This just in:** Citing new research that suggests the metabolite of Dextromethorphan, Dextrorphan, can stay in a horse's system at a wider variance of time than previously realized, the Kentucky Horse Racing Commission earlier this year dropped sanctions in three cases where the metabolite was discovered.

KHRC equine medical director Mary Scollay offered a presentation at the regular KHRC meeting Feb. 21 to explain the new research that led to the stewards rescinding sanctions against at least two trainers while reinstating purse winnings for at least two owners. Also, the KHRC's lab, LGC Science, updated its findings to consider these tests to report them as "passed."

The trainers who saw sanctions dropped included Mike Maker, trainer of [Harlan's Howling](http://www.bloodhorse.com/horse-racing/thoroughbred/harlans-howling/2012?source=BHonline), who initially tested positive following a Jan. 9, 2016 race at [Turfway Park](http://www.bloodhorse.com/horse-racing/racetracks/27/turfway-park); and Michael Ann Ewing, trainer of [Covert Gem](http://www.bloodhorse.com/horse-racing/thoroughbred/covert-gem/2013?source=BHonline), who initially tested positive following a Nov. 28, 2015 race at [Churchill Downs](http://www.bloodhorse.com/horse-racing/racetracks/10/churchill-downs). The positives initially were called for findings of the metabolite Dextrorphan.

Dextromethorphan is a common ingredient in human cough suppressants and can be administered to horses as a way to address cribbing, Scollay said. She added that the cases were not rescinded because of a determination of environmental contamination.

***Cribbing! Horses that crib have to have that information available at thoroughbred sales so now when it shows up later, you can give them Dextromethorphan***

What is dextromethorphan? [from www.drugs.com]

Dextromethorphan is a cough suppressant. It affects the signals in the brain that trigger cough reflex.

Dextromethorphan is used to treat a cough.

Dextromethorphan will not treat a cough that is caused by smoking, asthma, or emphysema. ***Why, then would it treat a habit that might be genetically controlled. Smoking? Asthma …ah if a trainer thinks that one can enlarge the airways and give the horse more air…..now I would see why they use it, but here it says it won’t help, nor would the horse smoke so long that they get emphysema. Give me a break.***

Important information

Do not give dextromethorphan to a child younger than 4 years old. **Harlan’s Howling had just turned 4.**

Always ask a doctor before giving a cough or cold medicine to a child. Death can occur from the misuse of cough and cold medicines in very young children.

Do not use dextromethorphan if you have used an MAO inhibitor such as isocarboxazid (Marplan), phenelzine (Nardil), rasagiline (Azilect), selegiline (Eldepryl, Emsam), or tranylcypromine (Parnate) within the past 14 days. Serious, life-threatening side effects can occur if you take dextromethorphan before the MAO inhibitor has cleared from your body. ***I would suspect a vet here since you wouldn’t want to give this horse. MAO inhibitors treat depression…ah, now I see. If the horse was winning he would not be depressed and not likely on a MAO inhibitor. What if the horse was depressed and you wanted to help him out by stopping his cribbing, give him this drug. Oh wait, if the horse is dead because it was on MAO and you gave him this drug it would stop his cribbing. He’d be dead. My parrot’s not dead. He’s taking a nap.***

**And then this**: The Kentucky Horse Racing Commission Feb. 21 settled its case against Otabek Umarov, suspending the trainer for five years and fining him $5,000 in a case involving Umarov's refusal to allow an out-of-competition sample to be collected from [Looks to Spare](http://www.bloodhorse.com/horse-racing/thoroughbred/looks-to-spare/2010?source=BHonline) on April 30, 2016 at [Churchill Downs](http://www.bloodhorse.com/horse-racing/racetracks/10/churchill-downs).

At its regular meeting Tuesday, the KHRC discussed the settlement in executive session before returning to open session, where it unanimously approved the settlement.

Umarov had been facing a license revocation of 10 years and fines of $10,000 after KHRC officials said the trainer removed Looks to Spare from the Churchill grounds to an undisclosed location after receiving notification the horse had been selected for out-of competition testing. He also faced charges of possession hypodermic needles, syringes, and injectable medications. ***Hmmm, where did he acquire these and are they helping him pay the fine and taking part of the sentence in a show of solidarity.***

Umarov's attorney, Justin Fowles, said during the five-year absence the trainer will be dedicated to rebuilding the trust of regulators and racing fans. Editor’s Note: ***Everyone deserves a second chance. They don’t deserve 3rd, 4th, ….and 20 like some have attained***

On the hypodermic needles offense, he received a 60-day suspension that will run concurrently with the five year suspension. KHRC executive director Marc Guilfoil said the agreement upholds industry standards.

"The rules and regulations of the Commission are in place for the betterment of the equine industry and to protect the safety of the animals," Guilfoil said.  "It is our job to uphold the high standards of our industry and initiate disciplinary action when those standards are violated." ***Oh boy, I feel better now. My parrot’s alive!***

Subject: Getting Old Is No Problem in Texas

An 80-year-old Texas farmer goes to the clinic in Dallas for a check-up.

The doctor is amazed at what good shape the guy is in and asks, "How do you stay in such great physical condition?"

"I'm from Texas and in my spare time I like to hunt and fish," says the old guy, "and that's why I'm In such good shape. I'm up well before daylight in the field plowing and mending fences and when I'm not doing that, I'm out hunting or fishing. In the evening, I have a beer and all is well."

"Well," says the doctor, "I'm sure that helps, but there's got to be more to it. How old was your father when he died?"

"Who said my father's dead?"

The doctor is amazed, "You mean you're 80 years old and your father's still alive? How old is he?"

"He's 100 years old," says the old Texas boy. "In fact he worked and hunted with me this morning. Then we went to the topless bar for a while and had some beers. That's why he's still alive. He's a Texas farmer. And he's a hunter and fisherman, too."

"Well," the doctor says, "that's great, but I'm sure there's more to it than that. How about your father's father? How old was he when he died?"

"Who said my Grandpa's dead?"

Stunned, the doctor asks, "you mean you're 80 years old and your grandfather is still alive?"

"He's 118 years old," says the man.

The doctor is getting frustrated at this point, "So, I guess he went hunting with you this morning too?"

"No, Grandpa couldn't go this morning because he's getting married today."

At this point the doctor is close to losing it, "Getting married!! Why would a 118 year-old guy want to get married?"

"Who said he wanted to?"

**From 20 years ago March 1997, excerpts from The Matchmaker Newsletter**

Wow, February was a short month to me. Perhaps, that's why this newsletter wasn't ready on the first of March. The weather up here in Alberta, Canada has been unusually mild.

I actually got two runs in with just running shorts and a sweatshirt. I hope your February was as good for you and that your horses are coming along nicely.

I've really done it this time. Ladies and Gentlemen step right up. Watch the fool up in the tree. What's he doing up there anyway? I remember seeing the great horses of the 50's race at Santa Anita, Bay Meadows, Tanforan, Hollywood and Golden Gate. My parents took me to see the big races of that era. I once had five decks of playing cards with the head of Citation on the back of each card.....side track...why can't you find decks of cards like that anymore?....what a great way to advertise the sport...oh, well too logical for the great heads in this sport.

I had the pleasure of watching Pulpit in his second start. Not knowing that even such a horse existed, I went home, ran his pedigree, studied it and the racing form for the day and fell off my chair Pulpit has the best pedigree fit I have seen for a live horse since I began researching horses in 1972. Immediately, I sent out a fax to those clients who I believed had the means and the inclination to "get in on Pulpit at the beginning" of what I believed must be nothing short of another hero appearing on the scene. The difference in this case is that this horse has the goods as a runner and as a fantastic sire. He contains the least number of holes in a pedigree since Nearco and Hyperion and his ability apparently matches his pedigree. He may yet have character flaws and may spit out the bit or he may take a bad step and be injured, but there is very little in his pedigree to suggest a lack of character and less to suggest any problems with soundness. If he should get to stud, he should upgrade the vast majority of his mares. In the faxes I sent out, I stated that I believed that he would retired undefeated and/or become the leading sire on more than one occasion. I cannot see another horse beating him unless he is having a bout of colic or his jockey has a heart attack and falls off. Even then, he may be able to stop, pick up the jockey in his teeth and carry him to a win and a waiting ambulance.

Now that's what I call going out on a limb.

The Thoroughbred Times had an article where four experts picked the top stallions whose

(F)irst (F)oals (R)ace in 1997. The article gave a list of 27 stallions, standing for $3,500 +.

The four experts were John Sparkman who had no one particular selection, but preferred Kingmambo, Gilded Time, Alydeed, Sultry Song, In Excess, Bertrando, and Strike The Gold.

*Editors Note [2017]: Kingmambo, In Excess and Bertrando did well. Good for him.*

Allen Porter, while he thought Kingmambo would be a success in Europe and Japan, chose Gilded Time and Fly So Free.

Ken Ellenberg chose Marquetry and Fly So Free as his top two with other possibles as Alydeed, Kingmambo, Mountain Cat, Sultry Song and Future Storm.

Dr. Mosert [one of the leading experts at the time (1997) Line In The Sand (who gives the highest values of any modern horse in his program), Strike The Gold and Future Storm for sires who stand for $5,000 and up. For stallions standing for less, he picked Senor Speedy, Becker, Compelling Sound. Other sires who look especially good to Dr. Mosert are Alydeed, Marquetry, Gilded Time and Kingmambo. Sires who are non-commercial but have an excellent chance of siring quality runners are Sultry Song, Personal Hope, Lil E. Tee. Stallions who stood in New York who look good are Belong To Me, Missionary Ridge and Now Listen.

The Matchmaker : It is a little bit more difficult for me because I have analyzed 83 stallions whose FFR race in 1997, but here are my selections: Kingmambo on top, Gilded Time and Mountain Cat. My best cheaper stallion ($5,000) is Future Storm. In Europe, I like the chances of Zafonic and Rainbows for Life, although I have no idea of how many foals have been sired by each. In California, Flying Continental is promising. ***Hmmm, maybe I should have deleted this part of the newsletter, ha ha…I guess the point is that we all were not spot on. At least I added***

As good as the stallions with FFR in 1996, I would be remiss if I didn't tell you that "the stallions whose FFR in 1997" are a bad lot on the whole. Why do I think so? Did you know that the average stallion in my databank producing FFR in 1996 earned an average of $563,658 on the racetrack? I would have guessed about $200,000. The average stallion whose FFR in 1997 earned $609,173 on the racetrack, but took a great many more starts to earn than extra money. My 1996 crop also has a much higher average pedigree value than the 1997 crop. The 1996 crop has three stallions with over 54 pedigree points. The 1997 group has a highest value of only 46.

When the stallions with FFR in 1997 lose their first, second and third crop special identity as published in our trade magazines most if not all will seldom be heard from again. Of the stallions with FFR in 1996 crop, A.P. Indy, Arazi and Jolie's Halo had pedigrees evaluated at over 40 points. In addition, A.P. Indy, Arazi, St. Jovite, Pleasant Tap, Olympio, and Western Playboy had racing ability evaluated above 12 points. However, stallions with FFR in 1997 had only Majesterian (a stallion standing in the state of Washington, hence little or no opportunity) was above 40 pedigree points and only Zafonic, Gilded Time, Peteski, Gold Spring and Alydeed were above 12 points in racing ability. This is another reason why I believe the 1997 crop will largely fail. Pinhookers beware.

Is there such a thing as a sireline or is there just a perception of a sireline. Isn't it quite possible that the perception of a sireline is has its beginnings with unsound, fast horses. These are the very first foals of a new stallion who go to stud and get mares of decent quality who also have inherent soundness to compliment the new stallion. Mr. Prospector was brilliantly fast as was his sire, Raise A Native.....hmmm....could be something here. Once the perception is established then many sons by that stallion are given a chance at stud.

There are 164 stallions in my Sire Selection program whose first foals race in 1996 or 1997. The average SSI of these 164 stallions is 26.13. The stallion with the most new sons whose first foals race in 1996 or 1997 is Mr. Prospector with 16. Seems to prove my point, especially when I found out that the average SSI of those 16 was only 11.16. Second was Seattle Slew (also brilliantly fast...hmmm) with 12 for an average SSI of 21.88. Third was Danzig (also brilliantly fast....double hmmm) with 8 for an average SSI of 21.88.

I am often asked by clients if they should attempt to breed their late foaling mare or wait until the next year and get to a stallion early with their mare. I believe that if a client breeds to race, he should always opt for a May, June or even July breeding. This is the perfect time that most mares are the most likely to get in foal and when they drop the foal the next year, that the conditions will be best to raise that foal (green grass and sunshine). I also believe that there is a lot that can happen to a mare in waiting the extra time for a foal. Some mares do not get in foal until May and June anyway, so what have you gained by sending her to a stallion in February. Of course, if you breed to sell, late foals are at a distinct disadvantage.

I have noticed that a great many horses who carry two or more crosses of the stallion "Discovery" within five generations are disasters as stallions or broodmares. While Discovery was most definitely a good sire, his AEI/CI ratio was marginally positive at 1.71/1.65 and he failed with winning dams, non-winning dams and unraced dams. He succeeded only with stake-winning dams.

Most dosage programs have Discovery as a stout influence, but Varola and I agreed that his influence was much more speed-oriented. As a broodmare sire, Discovery sired 28% two year old runners, a value far too high for a stout stallion. It is interesting to note that Bold Ruler was said to have been able to negotiate classic distances because his dam, Miss Disco, was by Discovery. Since Pulpit carries Bold Ruler 5x4x5, the stallion most pedigree experts advised against inbreeding to, how can he possible go over a mile? By the way, his sire A.P. Indy was also inbred to Bold Ruler 3x4 and that didn't stop him.

A father buys a lie detector robot that slaps people when they lie.

He decides to test it out at dinner one night. The father asks his son what he did that afternoon.

The son says, "I did some schoolwork."

The robot slaps the son.

The son says, "Ok, Ok. I was at a friend's house watching movies."

Dad asks, "What movie did you watch?"

Son says, "Toy Story."

The robot slaps the son.

Son says, "Ok, Ok, we were watching porn."

Dad says, "What? At your age I didn't even know what porn was."

The robot slaps the father.

Mom laughs and says, "Well, he certainly is your son."

The robot slaps the mother.

Robot for sale.

As she lay there dozing next to me a voice inside my head kept saying, "Relax, you are not the first doctor to sleep with one of his patients." But another voice kept saying, "Howard, you are a veterinarian."

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