

Wizard Form - Detailed Explanations

Trainer and Jockey statistics.

The Wizard addresses the human element associated with each horse. The critical human element, the trainer and the jockey.

Nature of the Statistics

The trainer and jockey statistics to which I refer below relate to the last 12 months racing, except for one of the trainer statistics which covers five years and the jockey/horse stats that obviously span the horse's complete racing career.

Also it should be noted that, except for the jockey/horse figures, all of the other stats are limited to horses that started at odds of 20/1 or less. By limiting the report to these horses we are deliberately ingoring all of the long priced horses that account for many runs but few winners, and tend to hide the true ability of the trainers and the jockeys.

The aim of our trainer and jockey stats is to identify those individuals who are more likely to deliver when associated with a horse that rates as a genuine contender.

To give you a frame of reference by which you can judge jockey and trainer performance using these special Wizard statistics I produce below the stats for the winners of the Jockey and Trainer Premierships in Sydney 2002-2003 season.

Darren Beadman

- Location last 12 months (140-197-725 19%) = Loc12m
- Overall last 12 months (170-236-848 20%) = Ovrl12m

Gai Waterhouse

- Location last 12 months (171-185-719 22%) = Loc12m
- Location last 5 years (604-774-2903 21%) = Loc5y
- Overall last 12 months (242-279-1086 22%) = Ovrl12m
- With Chris Munce (81-66-298 27%) = Joc Trn 12m

Any trainer or jockey whose figures approach or better those of Darren and Gai can be regarded as very competent indeed in the location in which they are competing.

Stats by Location

To ensure the Wizard trainer and jockey stats have particular relevance we have broken down Australian (and New Zealand) racing into Location categories. Our classification is as follows:

- Location A – Premier centres – Sydney, Melbourne and their New Zealand equivalents.
- Location B – Major centres – Brisbane, Adelaide, Perth, and selected NZ tracks.
- Location C – Minor metropolitan and major provincial tracks – Hobart, Launceston, Gosford, Ballarat, etc.
- Location D – Minor provincial tracks and more significant country tracks – Canberra,

- Swan Hill etc.
- Locations E and F – Lesser country tracks.

The Jockey Stats

The Wizard jockey stats are listed in three categories.

First we have the win-place-starts and win percentage record of the jockey in the Location of the coming meeting. The stats cover the riding record in this “area of competitiveness” over the last 12 months.

For example, if the coming meeting is at Randwick, then the stats would be derived only from rides in LocA, covering the jockey's rides on all of the Sydney and Melbourne (and NZ equivalents) tracks over the past year. If the meeting was to be at Doomben then the stats would be designated Location B stats (LocB).

If you were using a Wizard Direct race file and analysing the form for (say) Newcastle, the rides that qualified would be those at 20/1 or less on LocC tracks.

By breaking down the stats in this way we can show more clearly just how well each jockey has ridden against a particular level of opposition over the past year. The stats show unexpected strengths and well as weaknesses.

As well as the Location stats we also include the rider's full record on horses at 20/1 or less for the past 12 months as a frame of reference and as relevant stats in their own right.

The final set of stats specific to the jockey is his/her record on the horse to be ridden at the coming meeting.

The Trainer Stats

The Wizard trainer stats also include Location based information, and for the trainer the Location stats cover both 12 months and 5 years.

The 12 month time horizon covers what might be termed the “current” record of the trainer at a particular level of competition.

The reason for including the 5 year period is to pick up those trainers who infrequently venture into certain “locations” but when they do, they do so with a horse they believe to be competitive and are successful more often than their lower profile would suggest likely.

As well as the location stats the trainer's overall record for the past 12 months is included, again for all starters at 20/1 or less.

The Trainer/Jockey Stats

To show the level of success the trainer has had with the jockey who is to ride the horse, the trainer/jockey stats for the past 12 months are included. The 20/1 or less restriction applies here as well.

Weight For Age Improvement

For the ratings analyst the Wizard formline also includes the Weight For Age (WFA) adjustment for a horse's past runs.

The concept of WFA improvement is reflected in the well known WFA scale which sets out weight differentials for horses at different ages, at different times of the year, and at different distances. From this table, derived mainly from the work of Admiral Rous, an English racing administrator and handicapper of the 1860's, it is possible to calculate the improvement a horse "should" make as it matures, grows, strengthens, etc.

Now not all horses improve at the rate set down in the WFA scale but it has been shown to be a remarkably reliable guide to a horse's likely improvement.

Generally, a horse's most recent runs this preparation will have minimal or no WFA improvement and only the base rating is included. Similarly, once a horse has turned 5yo there is no WFA improvement to be made so that runs recorded at this age and older will reflect no WFA improvement.

Note that as the horse matures the WFA rating will change in order to reflect the additional improvement made possible over time. So a rating run three weeks ago might today have a 0.5kg WFA improvement, but in three months time the WFA rating that particular run could be an 2.5kg different. WFA is a dynamic and this is reflected in the Wizard WFA adjustment.

For the Wizard previous six winning runs, space has meant the the full WFA rating cannot be included. In this case to provide you with a horse's WFA adjusted rating we have added an alpha character alongside each of the ratings where some WFA improvement can be expected. The table below indicated the value to be added to the rating for each alpha.

Wizard WFA Adjustment Table

The Following table is used to calculate the Wizard WFA adjusted rating.

WFA Adjustment Guide

a 0.5	h 4.0	o 7.5	u 10.5
b 1.0	l 4.5	p 8.0	v 11.0
c 1.5	j 5.0	q 8.5	w 11.5
d 2.0	k 5.5	r 9.0	x 12.0
e 2.5	l 6.0	s 9.5	y 12.5
f 3.0	m 6.5	t 10.0	z 13.0
g 3.5	n 7.0		

For example, a "d" following a rating of (say) 57kg means that the horse could improve by 2kg on that rating and, if the run was reproduced, return a rating of 59kg.

Odds Fluctuations Indicator

Space constraints do not permit the inclusion of odds fluctuations in the Wizard formline, but to give readers an insight into what happened to a horse in the betting on a race, the Wizard has where appropriate, a + or – alongside a horse's starting price odds.

If the + is present this means that the starting price is shorter than odds that were bet about that horse some time during betting. In short, it is classified as a "firmer".

If the – is present this means that the starting price is the longest price available about that horse throughout betting. This horse has been classified a “drifter”.

Where a horse is steady through betting at a metropolitan track, this is indicated by an absence of a + or -.

At meetings where no odds fluctuations are available, mainly provincial and country meetings in Australia and all meetings overseas, there is no indicator used alongside the starting price odds.

Now, by simply running your eye down the Wizard odds column you will quickly see if a horse has been fancied, or unfancied, at its most recent starts.

Record Times

The Wizard includes whether the race was won in track record time (T), class record time (C), or race record time (R).

The race record indicator is included for both runs in the last eight starts and the horse's previous six wins.

Form Cycles

The form pattern history line starts with the number of runs this race will be since the horse resumed from a spell. For example, RFS=1 means the horse is having its first race since resuming (from a break of 63 days or more). RFS=4 means the horse is having its fourth run since a spell, and so on.

Following this RFS indicator is a summary of how the horse has performed when first-up (1up), second-up (2up), etc, in terms of the number of wins, minor placings, and starts. For example, 2up (1-4-6) means when racing second-up in the past the horse has recorded one win, four 2nd or 3rd placings, from 6 starts.

The individual RFS details are shown for six runs from a spell, that part of the form cycle when pattern performance is likely to be most significant, as well as the particular RFS applying on this occasion if more than 6up. As well, for the seventh and later runs from a spell the information is grouped.... 7+up (2-5-14).

To further assist you in rating the race, the Wizard carries the ratings (weight for age adjustable - see WFA Adjustment Table above) for the last three times the horse was at the same stage of the form cycle to 6up, and the last two occasions when 7up or more.

So, if the horse is having its third run from a spell, the form pattern history line for that horse might contain something like ... 3up (4-1-6) 0203 57.0c 0410 51.0h 1206 52.5m

Here we can see that the horse has recorded 4 wins and 1 minor placing from 6 previous 3up runs. We can also see that at his latest 3up run on March 2 (0203) it ran a 57.0 rating (wfa adjusted a 58.5 rating), the preparation before that on October 4 it ran a 51.0 rating (wfa adjusted 55.0) and three preps back on June 12 when 3up it ran 52.5 (wfa adjusted 59).

By providing you with not only the basic stats about the horse's form cycle but also the ratings returned in the past at the current stage of the cycle, the Wizard is taking you to a

new level of form and ratings analysis. Used in conjunction with the other unique information contained in the Wizard, this form cycle data will give you an information edge over punters who rely on other sources.

Peak Ratings

The reason recorded peak ratings are so important to the keen race handicapper is that they place in context the horse's current form. For example, a horse is having its fourth run from a spell and last start rated 57kg. The vital question confronting the rater is whether or not there is any evidence in the horse's past form that it can improve on this rating.

Now, if we know that the horse ran a weight for age adjusted peak rating last preparation of 60kg then there is every reason to believe that the horse could improve on its current 57kg.

On the other hand, if the best wfa adjusted rating from its last prep was 55kg and the peak before that was 54kg, then there must be an element of doubt surrounding its ability to improve on the 57kg.

These peak rating "flesh out" the ratings history of the runner being examined, and can help to raise your understanding of a horse's capabilities and potential to a new level.

Current Peak Rating

The Current Peak rating is the horse's best rating recorded in the current preparation, adjusted for weight for age improvement.

Younger horses, 2yo and 3yo gallopers, can make natural wfa improvement amounting to several kilograms during a single preparation so it's worth noting their potential by looking not only at the actual ratings run this prep but also at the potential figure that could be recorded if the effort was repeated in the coming race, with the predicted natural wfa improvement also taking place.

Last (preparation) Peak Rating

Once a horse has returned from a break of 63 days or more, we then have a "last preparation" with which to work, and from this we can calculate a Last Peak rating, often referred to as the Expected Peak rating.

To determine the Last Peak rating we take each of the race ratings run last preparation and to each we add the appropriate wfa adjustment. The highest gross figure becomes the horse's Last Peak rating for this current campaign.

Previous (preparation) Peak Rating

If the horse is in its third preparation, then we have two past preparations that have the potential, the very real potential, to throw light on the horse's prospects in the current campaign.

The Previous Peak rating is the highest gross rating (base race rating + wfa improvement) that was recorded by the horse two preps ago.

Race form from two preparations ago should not be ignored. Even with younger horses, the ratings earned some time ago can predict with remarkable accuracy the ratings that horses are capable of producing in the current campaign

Distance Peak Rating

This Distance Peak rating is calculated in the same manner as the above peaks, but in this case only those ratings earned in a race within 10% of the distance of the forthcoming race, and from the current and two previous preps, are taken into account.

Distance ability is a key factor determining the outcome of many races, and it is very useful indeed if you have an insight into the rating that a horse might be able to produce, on its best form, in the distance range of the coming race.

Wet Track Peak Rating

The Wet Track Peak rating is also based on a three preparation time horizon and is calculated in the same manner as all of the other peak ratings. Only form on slow and heavy tracks is taken into account when calculating this peak rating.