Winning Staking Plans for Horse Racing Betting

When betting on horses one of the most important parts of any strategy is your staking or your staking plan.

It is all very well being able to pick several winners but if your staking is all over the place then you could be actually losing when you should be winning.

I think that most people who are serious about their betting either bet to level stakes where you place the same amount of money on every selection, or work to a percentage of the bank and stake for example, 2% of your current bank on each bet.

Many of these punters may generally be backing horses roughly around the same price bracket as this is their comfort zone and they know that whatever the bracket is, say between 3/1 and 8/1, or just horses from the first three or four in the betting, they will be able to back a good number of winners and hopefully make a profit.

However, there are also many punters who have a different strategy and will find their selections can be anywhere between Evens and 33/1.

If this is you, then just how sensible is it to stake the same amount on a horse that is Evens and one that is 33/1?

When you consider that an Even money shot will win about 45% of the time and a 33/1 shot won't even win 2% of the time, it does seem crazy to want to stake the same amount on each horse.

I can remember reading a book a long time ago where the author, a very successful punter himself, said that if he really fancied a horse at 33/1, then he would double his stake.

He also said that his bets and winners at shorter prices were the ones that kept his bank ticking over, so he could have a good bet at the bigger priced horses. I think this is okay if you are a professional and can find a few 33/1 winners throughout the season.
In fact, the profits of punters like this author probably rest on having one or two big winners each season, whereas for most punters the likely hood of success would be a good strike rate in the '5/1 to 10/1 bracket or thereabouts.

So what is a better option that level or bank % staking on every selection?

Forget Level Stakes and think Level Returns

Level returns is where you decide on an amount that you want to win on each bet rather than what you want to stake. You then place a different amount on each selection, depending on the price.

This means that you will stake more on the shorter priced horses who have a statistically better chance of winning, than you will on an outsider that doesn't.

It is a fact that over the long term horses starting at 2/1 will win more than horses starting at 3/1 and horses starting at 3/1 will win more than horses starting at 4/1 etc., etc..

As the odds on offer are a representation of a horse's chance in the race, by betting to level returns, you place the risk on the return and not on the stake.

Always remember that when betting, it is very hard to turn a profit so a good mindset is to try to lose less before you start thinking about making more and by betting to level returns, you will be reducing your stakes on many of your bets and when you have a run of losing bets, your bank will not decrease as quickly as it would using level stakes.

A simple example.

Below you will see the stakes on three bets at 3/1, 7/1 and 20/1 using level returns of £10.
Horse at 3/1: 10 divided by 3 = a stake of £3.33
Horse at 7/1: 10 divided by 7 = a stake of £1.43
Horse at 20/1: 10 divided by 20 = a stake of 50p

If you take a worst case scenario and all three horses lose, then you have lost a total of £5.26. If on the other hand you were placing £10 on each horse you would be down by £30, nearly six times the loss than using level returns.

I go back to the fact that turning a profit is not so easy and minimising losses should be your initial aim. Especially when you are starting out or trying out a new method or strategy.

Increasing your profits using Level Return staking

This is very simple indeed, as when you increase your bank by a certain amount, instead of increasing your stakes on each bet, just increase your return aim on each bet.

So if you have a bank of £200 and want a return of £10 on each winner, when you double your bank to £400, increase your return aim to £20.

There are also a lot of people that insist on using a retrieval staking plan when using level stakes and as you may know, this is not regarded as a sensible strategy by many punters and me included. We have all had losing runs and doubling your stake every five or six losers expecting a winner to come in soon, can empty a bank rapidly and is not really advised.

However, if betting to level returns, a retrieval plan can be applied much more gently, although I would still advise caution.
By increasing your return aim after five or six losers, you will end up with a bigger profit when you find another winner, but while you are still having a bad case of 'seconditis', your stakes will still be reasonable and manageable compared to level staking.

Level Returns, Value Betting and the Inform Racing Betting Tissue Tool

I have been playing around with the Inform Racing Betting Tissue Tool lately and have come up with a strategy that you may like to use where you bet to level returns and to value at the same time.

It seems to me that this combination of betting and staking will suit a number of fun and serious punters alike and because you will be betting to value prices only, you only need to be reasonably accurate with your choice of settings on the Betting Tissue Tool, to be able to be successful and make money from horse racing.

The idea is to find settings that you are happy with that find a fair number of winners from the top rated or top two rated in the tissue prices that you create.

Then once you have decided on any filters that you want to set, such as a maximum number of runners in a race or only look at horses with a Rank% of 50% or bigger, you will then only back horses with a BSP (Betfair Starting Price or you can use SP odds too), bigger than the MinBsp provided by the Tissue Tool.

An Example

As you can see below, I have some very basic settings that use only Inform Racing speed ratings data in the Ratings and Form box and I am looking at all races with 20 runners or less and just class 1 to class 4.

I am using the MinBSP Multiplier as the default 1.5 and am sorting the races by the Tissue price that is created, which mean that the Tissue favourite will be at the top when we open each race.

On the image below you can see a race from last Thursday at Newcastle, where Venturous is the Tissue favourite after running the rules, we have set above.

▶	15:50 19 Nov 2020	NEWCASTLE (A.W)	PLAY LADBROKES 5-A-SIDE ON FOOTBALL EBF MAIDEN STAKES (PLUS 10 RACE) (4) 2YO									8	SS
▶	16:12 19 Nov 2020	WINCANTON	VISIT RACINGTV.COM NOVICES' LIMITED HANDICAP CHASE (GBB RACE) (0-135) (3) 4YO+									10	GS
▶	16:20 19 Nov 2020	NEWCASTLE (A.W)	HEED YOUR HUNCH AT BETWAY HANDICAP (0-85) (4) 3YO+									7	SS
▶	17:30 19 Nov 2020	CHELMSFORD (A.W)	RACING WELFARE SUPPORTING RACING'S WORKFORCE HANDICAP (0-85) (4) 3YO+									11	SD
▣	17:50 19 Nov 2020	NEWCASTLE (A.W)	BETWAY SUPPORTING SAFER GAMBLING WEEK HANDICAP (0-95) (3) 3YO+									14	SS

ClothNo	HorseName	RatingTotal	RankTotal	RankTotalRace	Rank %	Tissue	FC	FCDecimal	MinBSP	Age	Bsp	PlaceBsp	BspPos
3	Venturous	723.0	993,898,752.0	1,656,899,304.0	60.0	1.67	4/1	5.00	2.50	7	10	2.98	1
5	Orvar	620.0	137,417,280.0	1,656,899,304.0	8.3	12.06	14/1	15.00	18.09	7	16.5	4.44	10
8	John Kirkup	638.0	102,503,232.0	1,656,899,304.0	6.2	16.16	11/1	12.00	24.25	5	18.77	5.52	12
2	Exalted Angel	576.0	101,606,400.0	1,656,899,304.0	6.1	16.31	9/2	5.50	24.46	4	4.31	2.04	2
1	Watchable	695.0	95,397,120.0	1,656,899,304.0	5.8	17.37	11/1	12.00	26.05	10	20	5.19	3
14	Birkenhead	640.0	56,628,000.0	1,656,899,304.0	3.4	29.26	8/1	9.00	43.89	3	12.3	4.3	7
9	El Hombre	654.0	52,920,000.0	1,656,899,304.0	3.2	31.31	16/1	17.00	46.96	6			
10	Big Les	642.0	50,181,120.0	1,656,899,304.0	3.0	33.02	11/1	12.00	49.53	5	22.12	6.4	4
7	Flippa The Strippa	593.0	28,224,000.0	1,656,899,304.0	1.7	58.71	12/1	13.00	88.06	3	12.5	4.1	13
4	Celsius	558.0	20,160,000.0	1,656,899,304.0	1.2	82.19	14/1	15.00	123.28	4	14.5	4.5	8
11	Get Boosting	542.0	11,642,400.0	1,656,899,304.0	0.7	142.32	6/1	7.00	213.47	3	16.5	4.76	5
13	Tanasoq	631.0	3,704,400.0	1,656,899,304.0	0.2	447.28	22/1	23.00	670.92	7	34.74	8.15	9
12	Benefit Street	501.0	1,881,600.0	1,656,899,304.0	0.1	880.58	14/1	15.00	1,320.87	3	9	3.25	6
6	Secret Venture	373.0	735,000.0	1,656,899,304.0	0.0	2,254.28	16/1	17.00	3,381.43	4	29.85	9.5	11

▶	18:00 19 Nov 2020	CHELMSFORD (A.W)	CCR HANDICAP (0-80) (4) 3YO+	6	SD
▶	18:30 19 Nov 2020	CHELMSFORD (A.W)	TOTE.CO.UK FREE STREAMING EVERY UK RACE HANDICAP (0-105) (2) 3YO+	10	SD

You can click the image to enlarge it if you need to but you will see that using the settings shown, Venturous was said to have 60% chance of winning the race which equates to a real time forecast price of 1.67 or shorter than 8/11.

Using the BSP Multiplier of 1.5 where we increase the forecast price by 1.5 to ensure we are getting a value price; you can see that the minimum Betfair price we wanted on this horse was 2.5.

Any horse starting at a BSP bigger than the MinBSP price is shown in yellow on the Betting Tissue Tool and this was the case with Venturous where the horse started at a very generous BSP of 10 or 9/1, far, far bigger than the suggested minimum of 2.5!

Backing these horses using Level Returns

What you can do now is back any of these tissue favourite selections but instead of using the odds on offer for your stake, use the MinBSP price on the Tissue Tool.

The Tissue Tool provides you with a 'value price' for each horse so why not use those odds instead of the actual price as the tissue price is what we think the price should be, given the percentage chance we have calculated.

Staking this way using the MinBSP odds is almost a combination of level stakes and level returns because whilst you may be placing larger stakes on those horses that start at much bigger than the MinBSP suggests, you will still be staking less than you would using level stakes and you will win much more than your level return aim when these horses do come home first.

Take the horse Venturous and let's say your return aim is £10.

As you can see the MinBSP is 2.5, so divide 10 by 1.5. (2.5 is a decimal price and you need to take 1 off to get 1.5 and is 6/4 in fractional odds.) This gives us a stake of £6.66, whereas if we took the odds on offer (BSP of 10 -1 =9), so 10 divided by 9 would equal a stake of £1.11.

This would give us a return of £59.94 instead of the £10 we were aiming for.

Not every horse will have a BSP of far bigger than the MinBSP and as I have suggested before, don't back a horse if the BSP is less than the calculated MinBSP, which ensures you are betting to value prices only.

Look at the Uttoxeter race yesterday and Tissue Favourite Here Comes McCoy.

Time	Course	RaceTitle										Runners	Going
▶ 13:03 22 Nov 2020	EXETER	WATCH RACINGTV WITH FREE TRIAL NOW JUVENILE HURDLE (GBB RACE) (4) 3YO										10	S
☑ 13:18 22 Nov 2020	UTTOXETER	MANSIONBET SUPPORTS SAFER GAMBLING WEEK MAIDEN HURDLE (GBB RACE) (4) 4YO+										14	S

ClothNo	HorseName	RatingTotal	RankTotal	RankTotalRace	Rank %	Tissue	FC	FCDecimal	MinBSP	Age	Bsp	PlaceBsp	BspPos
7	Here Comes McCoy	452.0	940,456,608.0	2,801,548,152.0	33.6	2.98	9/2	5.50	4.47	5	7.71	2.08	1
10	Nickelsonthedime	400.0	856,984,128.0	2,801,548,152.0	30.6	3.27	7/2	4.50	4.90	6	2.98	1.32	3
4	Everything Now	445.0	412,251,840.0	2,801,548,152.0	14.7	6.80	14/1	15.00	10.19	6	15.11	3.45	5
3	Cronk Y Knox	267.0	181,209,600.0	2,801,548,152.0	6.5	15.46	33/1	34.00	23.19	5	260.77	46.91	9
6	Funway Monarch	298.0	152,216,064.0	2,801,548,152.0	5.4	18.41	50/1	51.00	27.61	5	194.78	24.41	
11	On The Platform	224.0	96,324,228.0	2,801,548,152.0	3.4	29.08	66/1	67.00	43.63	4	1000	130	8
13	Happy And Content	204.0	58,858,800.0	2,801,548,152.0	2.1	47.60	100/1	101.00	71.40	4	1000	110	10
5	Folks On The Hill	187.0	52,715,520.0	2,801,548,152.0	1.9	53.14	10/1	11.00	79.72	5	62.38	9.64	6
1	Aronius	190.0	30,023,136.0	2,801,548,152.0	1.1	93.31	33/1	34.00	139.97	5	80	12.5	11
2	Battletank	59.0	9,126,000.0	2,801,548,152.0	0.3	306.99	100/1	101.00	460.48	7	1000	160	
14	Rushmoor Girl	17.0	7,907,328.0	2,801,548,152.0	0.3	354.30	100/1	101.00	531.45	5	1000	150	
8	I'm So Busy	5.0	1,158,300.0	2,801,548,152.0	0.0	2,418.67	13/8	2.63	3,628.01	5	4.59	1.7	7
9	Inishbiggle	5.0	1,158,300.0	2,801,548,152.0	0.0	2,418.67	6/1	7.00	3,628.01	5	19	4.9	4
12	Tallow For Coal	5.0	1,158,300.0	2,801,548,152.0	0.0	2,418.67	9/2	5.50	3,628.01	4	7.85	2.39	2

▶ 13:33 22 Nov 2020	EXETER	100% RACINGTV PROFITS BACK TO RACING NOVICES' CHASE (GBB RACE) (3) 4YO+										7	S
▶ 14:03 22 Nov 2020	EXETER	START YOUR RACINGTV FREE TRIAL NOW MARES' NOVICES' HURDLE (GBB RACE) (4) 4YO+										8	S
▶ 14:18 22 Nov 2020	UTTOXETER	COVERED BY MANSIONBET FALLER INSURANCE MARES' "NATIONAL HUNT" NOVICES' HURDLE (GBB RACE) (4) 4YO+										11	S

Here the BSP was bigger than the MinBSP but not by such a big difference and by using the MinBSP odds of 4.47 instead of the actual BSP of 7.71, the stake used for a £10 return was £2.88 instead of £1.49 and the payout now was £19.32 instead of the desired £10.

I have found that whilst not every race provides a winner of course, those that do with a BSP close the MinBSP keep the bank ticking over and those that win at much bigger odds increase the bank nicely, so a sort of two steps forward, one step back but increasing long term.

Personally, I have been looking at all horses that have a Rank% of 20 or bigger in a race which gives me one or two and sometimes three. From these I look at the prices on offer and decide what to do, normally ignoring anything under a BSP price of 4.0.

Conclusion

Whilst you may not want to follow me in using the Inform Racing Betting Tissue Tool to find your value bets and then stake to the value odds, I hope you will see the value of level returns as opposed to level stakes.

It will suit anyone who prefers caution and betting bank management over large stakes and the hope of a big win. For me those who prefer caution will more than likely succeed in the long term anyway over those that don't. If you do then combine this with value betting at suggested odds, you can also have those nicer wins and larger payouts as well as not over betting on every selection.

Find out more about the Value Betting Tissue Tool here >>