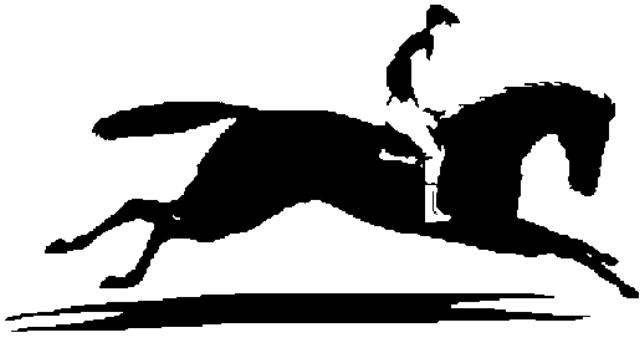
Sire Ratings



2020 - 2021

by Jim Mazur

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Sire Ratings 2020/2021
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*** These appendices can be accessed on-line and printed. Please access at the following link:**
www.proghandicap.com or www.phstats.com

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800-272-8039
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How To Use
Sire Ratings 2020-2021

Welcome to the 2020-2021 edition of *Sire Ratings*. Of course, as we go to press, there is major uncertainty surrounding all aspects of our lives due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic. But I did much of the analysis PRE-pandemic so the show will go on. Whether there will be any horse racing to apply the ratings is an on-going question. But I always look at the glass as half full. So enjoy the read.

For those who purchase this publication annually, we urge you to re-read this introduction for any updates or changes from last year's edition. For new readers or those who have skipped recent editions, please read this introduction as we introduced several upgrades and enhancements in previous editions that will surely aid you while handicapping:

- **NEW FOR 2020: Separate ratings for 415 sires that are also active as damsires.**
- We now identify sires in the last 14 crops and tab those that broke maiden at first asking.
- For the TURF ratings, We changed our codes in the OFF TURF and TURF SPRINT SPECIALIST categories eliminating the multiple use of the symbol "Y".
- We revamped the CLASS ratings, making them simpler and easier to interpret.
- We no longer rely solely on OVERALL stats in the various categories. Instead, we use the ratio of "WINNERS" to "RUNNERS." Thus a "win machine" or a "chronic loser" can't skew the sample.
- We moved a large group of "inactive" sires to an ON LINE APPENDIX accessed via the Internet.

We have made all of these changes with one goal in mind: *to give you, the horseplayer, an edge on any given racing day against your competition, your fellow handicappers.* Though a horse's pedigree can sometimes be used as the only factor in predicting a winning effort, pedigree most often needs to be integrated with speed, pace, and trainer and jockey analysis, as well as a knowledge of the winning par times for each level. The pedigree factor has the best chance of predicting success when a horse bred for a particular distance or surface is trying it for the first time against a field in which all the experienced horses are proven losers, have run below par, and/or have already failed at the distance or on the surface.

Stallion Sample Size, Recency and Value

Our database extends back three years and covers more than 40 race meets conducted in North America and Canada. This year's edition rates more than 4,000 ACTIVE SIRES and DAM SIRES including 44 "FRESHMEN" that have sired their first crop of 2 year olds. The breakdown of our sample is as follows:

- 1,979 were active sires; including 44 freshman sires.
- 2,197 were active primarily as damsires.
- 415 were active both as sires and damsires.
- Ratings for more than 2,600 INACTIVE sires and damsires (accessed via ON LINE APPENDIX).

Since this is a game of "trends," *Sire Ratings 2020/2021* has been weighted away from lifetime averages and toward recent performance. Hence, we confined our study to the last 3 years and then adjusted some of the rating categories up or down based on the most recent year's performance. Just like trainers and jockeys, sires can go through "hot" and "cold" streaks.

Besides adjusting for recency, we again have given weight to pari-mutuel value in this edition. **In this edition more than 100 sires with an A, B or C rating in the FTS category have been coded with a $ because they have recently produced multiple debut winners at big prices.** While handicappers may not score as frequently by betting the progeny of the C $ sires, they should be generously compensated when they do. By looking for profitable trainer/owner pattern matches that can be quickly gleaned from *Debut Trainer Guide 2020*, the handicapper can play those C$ rated sires with even more confidence.

The Categories Explained

What follows is a detailed explanation for each column heading used in *SR '19/'20.* Note that we continue to make enhancements to the coding used in previous editions. As such it is VERY IMPORTANT for even veteran users of *Sire Ratings* to READ THIS CHAPTER CAREFULLY. We understand that it takes time to look up the ratings for an entire race card. And that is the reason we developed *SIRE RATINGS ON LINE*, an Internet daily report that covers ALL the key North American race meets and costs just a few cents per day per track. *SR ON LINE* saves you hours of look-up time. See the inside back cover for details and a sample of this report.

Stallion

In this category, every sire is listed alphabetically by our "Access" database software. When a sire's name is followed by an abbreviated series of letters, that means he WAS BRED in a foreign country such as FR (France), ENG (England), IRE (Ireland), JPN (Japan), SAF (South Africa) and so forth. Warning: I had to manually code the foreign bred sires. Although I double and triple checked, you may come across a sire that I missed (for example **Ben's Ridge (GB)** might show up as just **Ben's Ridge**). My bad. But use the one with the foreign country designation.

Crop/Damsire (DS; SDS)

Crop Codes

The following codes are used in this column:

1st, 2nd, 3rd, ...13th = relatively young sires in their first 13 crops of activity.

DS = Sire Ratings are based solely on the horse's active as a broodmare sire (damsire).

DS or "sire" = Sire is active as a sire and damsire. ***NEW FOR 2020: I have separately rated 415 sires that were active as SIRES and DAMSIRES. Thus, for this group you will see TWO SIRE RATINGS. The SR relating to the SIRE side will show a code of "sire." The SR relating to the DAMSIRE side will show a code of DS.***

Continued.....

Dam Sires and SDS

As a sire ages his SIRE productivity usually diminishes. However, the aging sire can continue to impact our handicapping through his filly and mare progeny that are active in the breeding shed.

IN THE BEGINNING:
I simply made the choice of designating a horse as either a sire or damsire and only used their respective records as a sire or damsire

EVOLUTION #1:
I then designated a small group of horses for the SDS group. For this group, I COMBINED the SIRE AND DAM SIRE starts for all ratings. This allowed for one set of ratings per horse but combining stats surely diluted the final rating. For the other horses with stats on both sides of the ledger, I only used the stats from the dominant side.

BACK TO THE FUTURE:
For 2020, I went back to my original approach EXCEPT I designated 415 horses as sires that have a meaningful % of runners as both a SIRE and DAMSIRE. The criteria was applied to the most active sires and damsires with a cutoff of 15% to 20% of starts on either side although some exceptions were made. This will add several pages to the publication but will provide a more accurate portrayal for those horses. For that group you will see two sets of ratings. Sires will show the word "sire" in the CROP field. Damsires will show a DS.

FTS-First Time Starters

Primary Scale	
25% Higher	A+
18% - 24%	A
16% - 17%	B+
14% - 15%	B
11% - 13%	C+
7% - 10%	C
3% - 6%	D
0% - 2%	F

The A-F ratings in this category measure how successful a sire's progeny are likely to be when they debut in maiden races, with an A rating being the best and an F the worst. Ratings were based on the WIN AVERAGES posted by sires with progeny making their first career start.

In previous editions, we graded sires using two different scales. The PRIMARY A-F scale was applied to experienced sires. The SECONDARY scale was applied ONLY to the FRESHMAN SIRE group. Recently, I scrapped the SECONDARY scale and used the PRIMARY SCALE for the FRESHMAN crop (see page 6 for more details).

A word or two about the overall grade distribution is in order. The table on page 4 upper right lists the grading on the entire active database (3,942 sires and damsires). Note that it looks like I was real stingy with the grades A+ to B (7% of the total Sire sample).

But my grading distribution relating to the MOST ACTIVE sires and damsires (table next page) tells a different story. That group of 900 sires accounted for 95% of the total FTS runners and winners. Per that table, those earning FTS grades of B on up to A+ ACCOUNT FOR 20% OF SIRES THAT REPRESENT 95% OF THE TOTAL DEBUT SIRES. So, Professor Mazur wasn't so stingy after all.

I resisted the temptation to grade on a "curve" to accomplish a Bell Curve distribution (2% each for A and F grades; 14% each for B and Ds, 34% for C and C+) because most maiden fields of, say 10, may only attract 0 to 3 FTS.

The theory and approach is totally different when I calculate and grade for the STAMINA INDEX. In that instance, *ALL* the entrants in, say, a 1 1/2 mile turf marathon have to negotiate the distance. They are all in the same boat and one of them HAS to win. Not so with the FTS. In most instances, they have to be special to beat the experienced runners in the field.

FTS Grading Grid
(entire sample)

	Current Year			Prior Year	
A+	19	0.5%		16	0.5%
A	52	1.2%		59	1.5%
B+	85	2.0%		61	1.5%
B	170	4.1%		139	3.6%
C+	763	18.2%		543	14.0%
C	2201	52.6%		2160	55.5%
D	643	15.4%		692	17.8%
F	253	6.0%		221	5.7%

As previously discussed, I lend more weight to a sire's performance with FTS **DURING THE MOST RECENT YEAR**. While this approach is sound and puts the reader onto the "hot" sires, it can also provide for some disappointments during the year.

The table on page 5 lists 13 SIRES that had enjoyed solid FTS results during the '17 and '18 campaigns but who were disappointing in '19. **Backtalk** racked up an unbelievable 50% hit rate with his debut runners in '17 and '18. But he was a dud in '19, going zip for 10.

In most cases, I dropped the FTS rating down two grades for these disappointing sires. For example, **Macho Uno** came into '19 with a "B" rating. But he went an amazing 0 for 44 during the campaign. I lowered him to a "C" even though a cumulative record of 0 for 44 would've had him with the "F" group. If he throws in another stinker in '20, that's where he will probably end up.

FTS Grading Grid
(most active)

	Current Year			Prior Year	
A+	12	1%		11	1%
A	38	3%		51	5%
B+	65	5%		48	5%
B	134	10%		87	9%
C+	262	20%		170	18%
C	428	33%		268	29%
D	224	17%		208	22%
F	121	9%		97	10%

On the flip side, four FRESHMAN SIRES, **Constitution, Khozan, Tapiture** and **The Big Beast**, did better than their breeding and track history would have suggested (See Box on next page). Others on this list simply reversed form and might revert back. For example, during his first nine years in the breeding shed **Flower Alley** had been a mediocre FTS producer (1 for 20 in '17 and '18). Then, in '19, they clicked at a 50% rate (3 for 6). Go figure.

Ditto for **Songandaprayer**. He is a perfect example of why it made sense to develop two sets of ratings for certain horses. He is active on both the sire and damsire fronts. But when I broke out his FTS stats, he was much more effective as a sire (6 for 14; "A") then as a damsire (8 for 116; "C").

FTS-First Time Starters *(continued)*

SIRES THAT DISAPPOINTED WITH THEIR FTS IN '19									
		FTS Record in '19				FTS Record in '16 thru '18			
SIRE	CY FTS Rating	Sts	W	W%		PY FTS Rating	Sts	W	W%
Backtalk	B	10	0	0%		A+	12	6	50%
Bold Chieftain	B	10	1	10%		B+	12	3	25%
Cool Coal Man	C+	6	0	0%		B	10	2	20%
Decarchy	D	22	0	0%		B+	10	2	20%
El Padrino	B	38	5	13%		A	10	3	30%
Friesan Fire	C	29	2	7%		B	30	7	23%
J P's Gusto	B	17	2	12%		B+	13	3	23%
Lonhro (Aus)	C	18	1	6%		B	28	4	14%
Macho Uno	C	44	0	0%		B	27	6	22%
Maclean's Music	C+	69	7	10%		A	31	6	19%
Star Guitar	C+	29	2	7%		A	20	7	35%
Tribal Rule	C+	21	1	5%		A	21	5	24%
Twirling Candy	B+	117	15	13%		A	43	10	23%

SIRES THAT MOVED UP 1 or 2 GRADES WITH THEIR FTS IN '19										
			FTS Record in '19				FTS Record in '17' & '18			
SIRE	Crop	CY FTS Rating	Sts	W	W%		PY FTS Rating	Sts	W	W%
Biondetti	5th	B+	26	6	23%		C	22	2	9%
Clubhouse Ride		B+	23	4	17%		C	0	0	0%
Constitution	2nd	A+	52	13	25%		B	0	0	0%
Dominus	5th	B+	22	3	14%		C+	12	3	25%
Flower Alley	11th	B+	6	3	50%		C+	20	1	5%
Into Mischief	9th	B+	228	40	18%		C+	105	12	11%
Khozan	2nd	A	38	9	24%		C+	0	0	0%
Signature Red		A	33	7	21%		C+	9	2	22%
Songandaprayer	SDS	A	14	6	43%		C	16	0	0%
Tapiture	2nd	A	46	11	24%		C	0	0	0%
The Big Beast	2nd	A+	25	7	28%		B	0	0	0%

Spotting a likely debut winner in a maiden race is a tricky business. It generally requires not only a productive FTS sire, but a trainer with a proven history of winning with first-time starters. The most precocious pedigree in the world becomes irrelevant in the hands of a trainer (or owner) who doesn't believe in training horses for a maximum effort in their first starts.

FTS-First Time Starters (continued)

Horseplayers who like to play maiden races will profit by ordering a copy of *Debut Trainer Guide 2020.* This guide provides an alphabetically-arranged breakdown of every trainer at the top forty tracks who has had at least one debut winner during the past three years. See the back of this book for further information about it as well as for the *Debut Sire Guide 2020*.

Debut horses off as favorites win less frequently than other types of favorites. Because of their tendency to get agitated during the post parade, break poorly from the gate, and/or run greenly around their first turn, it is important to NOT take too short a price when playing a first-time starter. The most profitable odds range seems to be between 3-1 and 12-1. But some trainer/owner combinations, which can be gleaned from our *Debut Trainer Guide 2020*, regularly hit with even longer odds on their debut horses.

FTS Codes

There are four other FTS "columns" which contain one or more "codes" to alert you to KEY handicapping information related to the sire's FTS performance over the past three years:

Z Contains two code types:

(1) $ = BOMB SQUAD for FTS. High Avg win payoff with FTS (min 5 wins; min 7% win avg with FTS).

(2) & = Sire won at first asking.

T Proficiency with FTS debuting on TURF.

TR = turf route; TS = turf sprint TT=both

X Top FTS Sire on POLY Track or other SYNTHETIC surfaces.

O Proficiency with FTS debuting on off tracks (sly or my) and turf (soft or yielding).

OT = Off Turf OD = Off Dirt

Note the code "&" in the Z column of the FTS ratings. Sires tabbed with a "&" broke maiden in their first career start. We analyzed only the most recent sires (last 13 freshman crops). As previously discussed, a "&" is no guarantee that the progeny will score first out, it's just an additional piece of information. In fact, some sires tabbed with a "&" like **Gators N Bears** have earned low marks with FTS. **Remember, the overall FTS rating carries the most weight.**

FTS Ratings for Freshman Sires

In this edition, we rated 44 **FRESHMAN SIRES**. However, handicappers should not initially be too aggressive when backing the first-time starters of freshman sires of 2020, as their FTS ratings are provisional guesstimates. Here are the factors used in grading FRESHMAN SIRES:

1. Whether the new sire won its debut race.
2. FTS rating for both the sire of the sire and the damsire of the sire.

CL-Class Ratings

In previous editions a rating scale of 1 of 10 was based primarily on the median earnings of the sire's progeny. Through the years, median earnings have become diluted by state-bred bonuses and, as we saw at Monmouth in 2010, by absurd purse subsidies by casinos or on-track slot supplements. In the *'11/'12 edition,* we revised our Class Ratings grading specs. They have remained unchanged since.

Before making the changes, we asked ourselves *"What is the true purpose of assessing the CLASS potential of sires?"* In our minds, the question had several answers including:

- Assessing the chances of a horse in a field of young runners moving up from MSW or ALW competition INTO a STAKES race (graded or ungraded).
- Determining which FTS runner is likely to perform better in MSW company.

With that in mind, we changed the way of grading sires. We have moved AWAY from median earnings and TOWARD other barometers like:

(a) The ratio of individual stakes winners to stakes runners.

(b) The % of winners in five different class categories compared to the sire's total win output.

- ALW = allowance races or high level claimers ($40k and up).
- MSW = or Maiden Special Weights which is an allowance race for maidens.
- MD = or Maiden Claimers which are maidens offered for a claiming price.
- CLM = Claiming races both open and conditioned (non-winners of 2 races lifetime for example) with claiming prices LESS than $40k.
- STK = Stakes or Handicap races with stakes both graded and ungraded.

Here are the specs for the new CLASS ratings which now number 1 thru 5:

To earn a CLASS rating of "1" a sire must have achieved the following:

1) Minimum of 25 overall wins.
2) At least 5 different stakes winners.
3) STAKES wins (from all runners) to total OVERALL wins must be 8% or higher.
4) The % of overall CLAIMING and MDN CLM wins must be less than 55% of the total.
5) The % of CLAIMING wins to OVERALL wins must be less than 40%.
6) For those stallions that produced the most individual stakes winners (Top 15), we accorded them a "1" rating even if they didn't qualify on points (3), (4) or (5) IF their winners/runners stakes ratio was 30% or higher.

To earn a CLASS rating of "2" a sire must have achieved the following:

1) Minimum of 25 overall wins.
2) At least 4 different stakes winners.
3) STAKES wins (from all runners) to total OVERALL wins must be 8% or higher.
4) The % of overall CLAIMING and MDN CLM wins to OVERALL wins must be less than 70%.

To earn a CLASS rating of "3" a sire must have achieved the following:

1) Minimum of 10 overall wins.
2) At least 4 different stakes winners.
3) The % of overall CLAIMING and MDN CLM wins to OVERALL wins must be less than 80%.
4) Less than 4 different stakes winners BUT the % of MSW, ALW and STKS winners to overall winners was greater than 50%.

CL-Class Ratings (continued)

To earn a CLASS rating of "4" a sire must have achieved the following:

1) Less than 4 different stakes winners but at least one.
2) The % of overall CLAIMING and MDN CLM wins to OVERALL wins must be less than 80%.

Those earning a CLASS rating of "5" either (1) didn't earn a single stakes win during the past three years; or (2) had an extremely high average of CLM and MDN CLM winners to their overall total.

Arriving at the Ratings: War Front and Congrats

Here is a look at the painstaking analysis included in formulating the CLASS INDEX. Let's take a look at **War Front,** a veteran sire (11 crops). **War Front** has produced 198 total wins WITH 44 (22%) IN STAKES RACES. Twenty six different runners accounted for those 44 stakes wins (34% hit rate). Note also that 77% of his winners scored in MSW, allowance or stakes races (see box below). **War Front** fits all the criteria above and thus earned a "1*" CLASS RATING.

Class Stats	Wins	CLM	MD	MSW	ALW	STAKES
for War Front	198	19%	4%	29%	26%	22%

Ratings were also shaped by the class composition of total winners. **Congrats** earned a "1" rating in last years edition. But this year, his cumulative stats (see box below) show that CLAIMERS and MAIDEN CLAIMERS accounted for 65% of his total winners (46% CLAIMERS). That made him a non-qualifier for a "1" rating. The bogey for a "1" rating is LESS THAN 55% combined and 40% with CLAIMERS. So **Congrats** CLASS RATING dropped to "2?" Nope. Because his % of STAKES WINNERS to TOTAL WINNERS fell below the 8% bogey, he dropped all the way down to a "3."

Dunkirk is an interesting sire. Half of the 14 **Dunkirk** progeny that tried a stakes race won (50% hit rate). However, only 6% of his total winners scored in stakes races with 73% scoring in CLAIMING and MAIDEN CLAIMING races. Despite that awesome hit rate, his overall CLASS RATING came in at "3."

Class Stats	Wins	CLM	MD	MSW	ALW	STAKES
for Congrats	351	46%	19%	14%	15%	6%

The * Provides Extra Help in Identifying a Potential Stakes Winner

Any CLASS rating followed by a * indicates that the sire earned a 30%+ hit rate in stakes races. For example, **Get Stormy** progeny won a combined 21 stakes races during the last three years. However, the telling statistic is the fact that 19 different **Get Stormy** progeny tried stakes company and 8 of them were successful in that arena (42%). Thus **Get Stormy** earned a CLASS rating of "1*."

HINT #1: It is important to emphasize that a runner's actual race performance SUPERSEDES whatever class and other ratings his sire may have initially given him.

HINT #2: Be it in a MSW race or BC Juvenile, with all things being equal, GO WITH THE RUNNER THAT EARNED THE STRONGEST CLASS RATING ("1").

CLASS Ratings for Freshman Sires

We obviously couldn't use the above criteria to rate FRESHMAN SIRES but instead used the CLASS INDEX for their respective sires and damsires PLUS their on-track achievements PLUS their STUD FEES. This is a NEW approach from previous editions.

For example, **American Pharoah** was a no brainer. Triple Crown winner. BC Classic winner. Both his sire and damsire are rated "1."

It wasn't so clear cut with **Curlin to Mischief**, an unraced colt by **Curlin.** Although **Curlin** is rated a "1," damsire **Tricky Creek** is a "4." Considering the stud fee of $3.5k, I rated this frosh a "2."

Although some freshman sires are bound to throw off a juvenile stakes winner, it usually takes 2-4 crops to determine if the initial CLASS RATING was accurate.

TRF-Turf Ratings

THE TURF RATING WILL HELP YOU ASSESS THE CHANCES OF A RUNNER MAKING ITS 1ST OR 2ND START ON TURF. In previous editions, we used two grading keys depending on the sire's number of turf starters. Active sires and damsires were rated using letter grades A through F. And a secondary scale was used for the Freshman. Similar to the FTS category, I scrapped the secondary scale.

Initially, Mike Helm, the originator of *Sire Ratings*, based sire grades solely on "overall" turf record of the sire's progeny. Since the purpose of the Turf Rating is to assess the chances of an untested runner on the turf, it made more sense to me to base it on how many of a sire's progeny "have won on the turf" instead of on the overall record of those runners, since that can be skewed by the overall record of one or more progeny. Not to be redundant, but this is the same logic described previously for FTS and CLASS.

For example, assume a sire's progeny compiled an overall turf record of 25 for 125 (20%). On the "old" Helm methodology, that sire would've earned a TURF rating of "B+." But what if that sample were comprised of just 15 different runners with only TWO actually winning on the turf with each scoring 10 times on the green during the last 3 years? A better barometer is to calculate "winners to runners" which would be 2 winning sires divided by 15 different runners (13%) and that would translate into a "C" on the new scale. In order for a sire to earn an "A" or "B" grade, it usually had to post at least 10 overall turf wins earned by 5 different runners.

Primary Scale	
50% Higher	A+
40% - 49%	A
35% - 39%	B+
30% - 34%	B
26% - 29%	C+
15% - 25%	C
8% - 14%	D
7% or Lower	F

Combining The Two Methods

While I was satisfied that the change above produced a more accurate rating, I realized that there was one chink still left in the armor so to speak. What about the sire that had 10 progeny active on the turf courses and 8 of them won? That's an 80% hit rate worthy of A+ status.

But then I looked at the overall turf win averages for these sires and saw some of them were dismal. What had happened is that, in some isolated cases, most of the sire's eight turf winners took 10 or maybe 15 starts on the turf to find their first winner. No good! We're looking for a barometer to use for mainly young runners that are making their first few career turf starts.

So I added two other criteria. The first was integrating the most current year's record with RUNNER to WINNERS. The second additional criteria integrated TURF STARTERS VS. RUNNERS but ONLY FOR 2 YEAR OLD TURF RACES. In the end, I gave extra weight to the this latter factor and then averaged the three grades and then did some customization.

Overall Turf Win% Grading Grid	
A+	35%+
A	26% to 34%
B+	21% to 25%
B	16% to 20%
C+	11% to 15%
C	6% to 10%
D	3% to 5%
F	0% to 2%

Only 11% in the Sample Earned "B" or Higher

The table below left lists the grading of the entire active database. In that ENTIRE SAMPLE, ONLY 11% of the sample earned a "B" grade or higher (same as last year; up from 9% two years ago).

However, that % increases to 21% among the MOST ACTIVE SIRES and DAMSIRES. So the hope is that in a field of 10 juvenile maidens routing on the turf, 2 or 3 will have a grade of "B" or higher and thus allow the handicapper a chance to eliminate most of the others in the field.

Turf Grading (ENTIRE SAMPLE)		
A+	13	0.3%
A	37	0.9%
B+	108	2.6%
B	307	7.3%
C+	755	18.0%
C	2452	58.6%
D	392	9.4%
F	122	2.9%

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Turf Grading (MOST ACTIVE)		
A+	5	0.6%
A	17	2.1%
B+	43	5.2%
B	104	12.6%
C+	276	33.5%
C	310	37.7%
D	54	6.6%
F	14	1.7%

Specialty Ratings for the Turf

Similar to our FTS rating category, several other codes may appear in columns AFTER the TURF letter grade to alert you to other KEY handicapping information.

OFF TURF SPECIALIST

O = Sire progeny had some success on turf courses labeled soft or yielding.
(2+ wins on off turf AND 15%+ win average on off turf course).

O+ = Sire shows an above average number of winners on "off" courses.
(3 + wins AND 25% win average on off turf courses).

O- = low performing sire on off turf (minimum of 10 starts on off turf and 5% or lower win average).

TURF SPRINT SPECIALIST

With the proliferation of TURF SPRINTS at most meets, we introduced this new rating a few years ago. This code tabs progeny that recorded 40% or more of its turf wins in TURF SPRINTS based on a minimum of 10 overall turf wins by 5 different turf runners. This code will be very helpful especially since many meets are carding more and more turf sprints.

Sp = Sire progeny recorded 10 or more TURF wins with 40%+ coming in TURF SPRINTS.

Sp+ = 10 or more TURF wins with 70%+ coming in TURF SPRINTS.

Helpful Tips for Using Our TURF RATINGS

If a horse is stretching out for the first time, caution is in order, unless the horse figures to be the lone speed and control the pace or has at least one longer workout and a stamina rating that projects a successful stretch out. Since opportunities vary considerably around the country for horses on the turf, the best rule of thumb is to invoke the ratings primarily in MSW events as well as NW1 allowance and claiming events populated by horses that are already proven losers on the grass at the distance in question.

HANDICAPPING TIP! If confronted with two or more entrants with A or B ratings, give extra credit to the starter with the STRONGEST CLASS RATING ("1").

WARNING! Once a horse has a race record, however, it is important to emphasize that his actual race performance supersedes whatever turf ratings he was assigned based on his sire.

TURF Ratings for Freshman Sires

We obviously couldn't use the above criteria to rate FRESHMAN SIRES so we relied on the turf record of the sire and the ratings of its sire and damsire.

OT-Off Track Ratings

Last year, I began analyzing this category by USING TWO GRADING CRITERIA as with other categories: (1) OVERALL record and (2) % of WINNERS TO RUNNERS. The same PRIMARY SCALE was used for each criteria.

Primary Scale	
41% Higher	A+
35% - 40%	A
30% - 34%	B+
25% - 29%	B
20% - 24%	C+
13% - 19%	C
6% - 12%	D
0% - 5%	F

OFF TRACK Grading Grid
(most active)

	Current Year			Prior Year			2 Yrs Ago	
A+	0	0%		6	1%		2	0%
A	6	1%		10	1%		8	1%
B+	44	5%		41	5%		27	3%
B	182	22%		169	21%		77	9%
C+	153	19%		103	13%		257	30%
C	300	36%		310	39%		336	39%
D	82	10%		107	14%		129	15%
F	58	7%		42	5%		27	3%

The difference was dramatic. Based on the table to the left, 28% of the MOST ACTIVE sires and dam sires earned grades of "B" and higher. That is a more than double the 13% from two years ago.

Note that our sample only drew from races where the track was listed as "muddy" or "sloppy." This included those designations on "sealed" tracks.

WARNING! These ratings are designed to help the handicapper assess the chances of a runner trying an off dirt track for the first few times. Again we reiterate that a horse's established off-track form supercedes whatever OFF TRACK ratings he was assigned based on his sire.

SYN-Synthetic Surfaces

As previously discussed, the SYNTHETIC trend has not moved forward and key California tracks, Santa Anita and Del Mar went back to dirt after the racing commission rescinded the mandate. Keeneland joined them.

Winners to Runners Scale	
80% Higher	A+
70% - 79%	A
58% - 69%	B+
45% - 57%	B
35% - 44%	C+
20% - 34%	C
12% - 19%	D
11% or Lower	F

But we still rate runners so that players at key meets with synthetics—Turfway Park, Woodbine, Presque Isles and Golden Gate—will be able to assess a progeny's chances when trying a synthetic surface for the first time. ***As with our other ratings, SYNTHETIC ratings were based on the # of synthetic individual winners to the # of synthetic individual runners COMBINED with the sire's OVERALL record on SYNTHETICS.***

SI-Stamina Index Ratings

The STAMINA INDEX (SI) indicates how far the progeny of a particular sire are *likely* to be able to run successfully. Our SI ratings are unique in that they are based on a detailed look, crop by crop, at how far a sire's winning progeny have actually run. The value of these ratings was there for anyone with the courage to play **Mine That Bird** in the 2009 Kentucky Derby. *He was the only entrant in the field with best SI on both his sire and damsire sides.* But even the author didn't believe and missed out on a huge payoff.

Use the SI Ratings To Help You Key a Runner or Two in a P4, P5 or P6 sequence with one or more turf races at distances of 9f or longer.

But no one barometer or method is infallible, and the last four Derby winners each ran past their miler pedigrees. 2015 Derby winner **American Pharoah** was an interesting example. Based on his pedigree—young sire Pioneerof the Nile (now in his 6th crop) and the sprint-oriented damsire, Yankee Gentleman—**American Pharoah** looked to be vulnerable at 10f. Here is what I wrote in the ORIGINAL DRAFT of the 2015 *Derby Zone*:

> ***American Pharoah*** *in the GRAY ZONE? Has Mazur caught a touch of the King Rootin Tootin flu? Relax troops. There is no denying that Baffert has a potent 1-2 punch with this son of Pioneerof the Nile. After winning the Front Runner stakes last year,* ***American Pharoah*** *was set to win the BC Juvenile. But a minor injury forced him to the sidelines. He came off the bench with two big scores at Oaklawn. Four of his six knocks relate to pedigree. We simply don't have enough information on young sire Pioneerof the Nile. He ran 2nd in the '09 Derby but was 11th in the Preakness. An injury soon thereafter forced his retirement. His sire, Empire Maker, won the '03 Belmont and owns a Mazur stamina index of "1," a true source of stamina. However, damsire Yankee Gentleman provides no stamina help. Just as important is the weak company lines that* ***American Pharoah*** *has been keeping in Arkansas and prior. I'll wait for the draw to make a final decision.*

But after the post position draw and several additional looks at the field, I reversed course and promoted **American Pharoah** from the GRAY to the CONTENDER ZONE. Here is what I wrote in the *Derby Zone 2015 Update:*

> *So why put* ***American Pharoah*** *up to the CONTENDER group even with 7 knocks? It's simple. With four 100+ Beyers on his resume, he deserves to be there. For readers who are on a tight budget and not able to spread, I think* ***AP*** *has a better shot to win than* ***Carpe Diem****. It's simply the difference between being on the "A" Team versus the "B" Team. Pedigree knocks account for most of* ***AP's*** *total. The problem is that sire Pioneerof the Nile is young and unestablished. He is rated a "2" mainly due to his inability to win at 10f but he only has had a few shots at it. His sire, Empire Maker, is a Belmont winner.*

We all know how the movie played out. Once he "proved" himself, pedigree-wise, in the Derby, **American Pharoah** had very few knocks en route to becoming the first TC winner since Affirmed in 1978. Just for the record, during the 2015 campaign, 10 different Pioneerof the Nile progeny tried 10f on dirt or turf. **American Pharoah** was the only winner in that sample. His record at producing 9f winners was slightly better (5 for 28; 18%). Despite **American Pharoah's** heroics, Pioneerof the Nile earned a "2" Stamina Index the next few years, then a "1" in last year's edition but is now back to a "2" recording just 2 winners at 10f+ from 28 different runners.

In a previous edition, I had noted similar pedigree flaws with **California Chrome**. But he passed muster on most of the Derby profile points and earned a spot with the CONTENDER group.

However, the Stamina Index tool did lead the author to **Animal Kingdom** in 2011 and **Orb** in 2013. The former was one of my Derby "A" team players. The SI also led me to longshot **Golden Soul** (SI of "1" on both sides). That one ran 2nd at 34-1 to produce a "SI" exacta of $982.

Our approach is far more useful for handicapping purposes than employing either average winning distances or Dosage numbers. Average winning distances can be deceptive because of the fact that sprints dominate American racing. This not only results in shorter average winning distances for each sire, but also blurs important distinctions beyond a mile. Dosage is limited by its theoretical bent and the fact that sons and grandsons of *chef de races* don't necessarily run to type.

The Stamina Index Methodology

We tackled this category as we did the others. First we looked at the sire's distribution of overall winners by distance using four basic buckets:

(1) Sprint races of less than 7 furlongs.
(2) Longer sprints and short route distances up to 1 1/16 miles.
(3) Route races run at 9 furlongs.
(4) Routes races run at 10 furlongs and farther.

For the longer distances of 9 furlongs and farther, we analyzed the number of individual winners compared to the runners attempting those distances. Those with the highest "hit" rate were accorded the top ratings. As a rule of thumb, we considered a 20%+ hit rate at 9 furlongs or farther as one worthy of recognition. Remember, it all boils down to picking winners! Thus in a 10-furlong turf race, someone has to win, right? With that in mind, we also gave preference to those with even a modicum of success at those longer distances compared to those with no success.

The criteria used for establishing the stamina index ratings are as follows:

SI Index of 1…the top rating…ability to get 10f or farther

- SI rating of "1" means that the sire's progeny have demonstrated the ability to win at 10f or farther**.**
- In order to qualify, the sire had to record at LEAST 3 DIFFERENT WINNERS at 10f+ and earned a 15%+ success rate of runners to winners trying 10f or farther.
- 1* means the sire had FIVE DIFFERENT WINNERS at 10f+ during the last 3 years.
- 1** means the sire had FIVE DIFFERENT WINNERS and 25% success rate at 10f+.
- As introduced in the '11 edition, a "1 T" indicates that 67%+ of the sire's winners at 10f or longer occurred on turf.

SI-Stamina Index (continued)

SI Index of 2…ability at 9f and maybe farther.

- An SI rating of "2" indicates a distance capacity of up to 1 1/8 mile.
- In order to qualify, the sire had to record at LEAST 3 DIFFERENT WINNERS at 9f and earned a 15%+ success rate of runners to winners trying 9f.
- 2* means the sire had at least FIVE DIFFERENT WINNERS at 9f+ during the last 3 years.
- 2** means the sire had at least FIVE DIFFERENT WINNERS and 25% success rate at 9f.
- As introduced in the '11 edition, a "2 T" indicates that 67% of the sire's winners at 9f or longer occurred on turf.
- INTRODUCED IN 2012: L means MAYBE CAN GO LONGER. An "L" next to the rating means that 1 or 2 winners won at 10f or farther with a 15% overall success rate at that longer distance.

SI Index of 3…The Milers.

- An SI rating of "3" suggests a range of up to 1 1/16 mile. In order to even have a chance of going farther, the horse in question will need a stamina influence on the damsire side.
- 3* means 50% or more of the sires overall winners came at the middle distances.
- INTRODUCED IN 2012: L means MAYBE CAN GO LONGER. An "L" next to the rating means that 2+ winners won at 9f or farther with a 15% overall success rate at the longer distance.

SI Index of 4 and 5…Sprinters and Maybe a Miler.

- An SI rating of 4 means a stallion gets runners able to both sprint and win up to a mile. A rating of "4 L" means that a few of the sire's runners scored at 9f or farther. For example, **Posse** had 262 overall winners during the last 3 years with 99% scoring at distances of 8.5f or less. However, he did record 2 different winners (out of 12 different runners) at 9f and thus earned a "4 L" rating.
- An SI rating of 5 indicates a distance capacity of 5 to 7 furlongs.

Some SI Examples—Misconception Based on Race History

Many players erroneously judge a sire's ability to produce long distance dirt and turf winners based on that horse's on-track accomplishments. But take **Tapit,** for example. In a short career, **Tapit** won the 9f Wood Memorial but then finished 9th behind Smarty Jones in the 2004 Derby. He was all set to run in the Belmont that year but a lung ailment sidelined him. He finished his career by running 4th in the Pennsylvania Derby.

It took him a while at stud, but **Tapit** has become a solid but not spectacular producer at longer distances. Over the past three years, 68 different **Tapits** tried 10f+ with 13 finding the winner circle (19%).

SI-Stamina Index (continued)

Some SI Handicapping Tips

In a full field going 10f or farther, one should look to identify the runners with the best stamina ratings on both sides of the pedigree. Obviously a runner with a "1" on both sides is preferable to one with a "3*" and "2," as that latter pedigree suggests limitations going farther than 9f. In a 9f race in which NONE of the entrants is bred to go the distance, I'd give preference to those in the field with an "L" in the SI as their sires have at least demonstrated some ability to get the distance.

Given the indeterminate nature of breeding, **I suggest horseplayers use the SIs in such a way that no horse is asked to jump two categories from the SI of its sire when stretching out.** The 4s may get 1 1/16 miles, but are unlikely to stay 1 1/8 miles. Likewise the progeny of sires with SIs of 3 may get 1 1/8 miles, but are unlikely to stay a classic distance UNLESS there is a source of stamina on the other side.

SI Ratings for Freshman Sires

It takes several years to assess the SI ratings for freshman and other relatively new sires. No runner from the first group will venture past 9f and many won't even see two turns until age three. Instead we have to live with our initial SI for 3 to 5 years before a big enough sample can validate our opinion. So we have to rely on history: (1) How did the sire fare on the track at distances of 9f and farther? and (2) Is the sire's sire and damsire a source of stamina? If both sides of the FRESHMAN'S pedigree provided stamina genes, then I rated him a "1" no matter what his on-track accomplishments. In the current freshman crop, 9 of 34 earned a "1" STAMINA INDEX.

New 2YR OLD rating replaces AGE BIAS (AB)

The AGE BIAS (AB) rating was initially developed by Mike Helm and designed to indicate how precocious a sire's progeny tended to be. In order to rate the sires in this category, he looked at the various maiden age categories and looked for the specialists in each category. An AB of 2-3 suggests that a sire's runners will break their maidens as both 2 and 3-year-olds. An AB of 3-4 meant that most of the sire's maiden winners scored at ages 3 and 4.

Through the years, customer feedback and my own analysis has found this particular sire rating to be of minimal use during handicapping. Last year, I scrapped this rating and developed a new rating that specifically measures a sire's effectiveness with 2-YEAR-OLD MAIDENS (2YO). I didn't think that was very effective either.

So I went back to the drawing board and determined that the best approach is to simply display the sire's % of JUVENILE MAIDEN WINNERS to TOTAL MAIDEN WINNERS of all ages. So now you will see a % in this column or the symbol "<4" indicating that the sire or damsire had produced LESS THAN 4 MAIDEN WINNERS TOTAL during the last three years.

Top Sires and Damsire With 35%+ Juvenile Maiden Winners to Total

WARNING: all 2nd-crop sires will have earned a 100% in this category. For that crop, I suggest relying on the Precocious Index below to help determine those young sires with the best HIT RATE among their 2nd-crop runners. From the ESTABLISHED active sire side (4th or higher crop), **Rattlesnake Bridge (52%) Shanghai Bobby (49%), Declaration of War (48%), Giant Gizmo (46%), New Year's Day (43%), Square Eddie (43%),** and **Into Mischief (40%)** lead the way.

PI-Precocious Index: No Changes to This Rating.

The second piece of the 2-YR-OLD category hones in on how effective the sire or dam sire has been with ONLY 2-YEAR-OLD MAIDEN RUNNERS. With this rating, I simply looked at the sire's conversion rate of JUVENILE WINNERS to RUNNERS. Two symbols are used:

- ++ Sire or dam sire converted at a 35% + rate (minimum of 2 or more juvenile winners).
- + Sire or dam sire converted at a 25% + rate (minimum of 2 or more juvenile winners).

There are some instances in which a sire produces a low % of 2-year-old maiden winners BUT converts those juveniles at a high %. For example, Only 19% of **In Summation's** maiden winners were juveniles. But of that 19%, he had a 35% conversion rate thus earning the "++" rating.

And you will come across some sires and damsires that earned a "++" or "+" but yet earned an average or poor overall FTS rating. Take **A. P. Warrior**, for example. He is rated a "F" with overall FTS (0 for 22; 0 for 12 with juvenile FTS) but 25% of those juveniles did break maiden thus earning him a "++" rating.

So, in a 2-year-old maiden race, you can use both the FTS and the two 2-YR-OLD ratings. Obviously, you will have extra confidence when you spot a 2-year-old FTS by **Kantharos**, as that sire is "B+" rated with FTS with 46% of his maiden winners coming in juvenile races and "++" conversion rating. But the value may be in a 2-year-old race with no sire having a FTS rating edge but yet earning a high juvenile % AND a "++"

ON LINE SIRE RATINGS APPENDIX

BACK FOR 2020: continual access to a series of sire reports and tables via the Internet. Beginning April 15, the following information will be available on line at our web site:

Appendix A **Sire Ratings for Inactive Sires.**
Appendix B **EZ Reference of Codes**
Appendix C **BACK FOR 2020—Quick Reference list of "A+" and "A" rated Sires.**

How to access the ON LINE SIRE RATINGS APPENDIX:

1. Go to the PH web site at www.proghandicap.com OR www.phstats.com
2. Click on USER LOGIN icon on top right of page.
3. USER NAME IS: srapp20 PASSWORD IS: 5757
4. Access the pdf file and either download or print off the computer.

Final Thoughts

In this day of information overload, getting "the edge" over your fellow horseplayers is becoming tougher and tougher. But I think that "pedigree" handicapping is one of the last frontiers. The *Sire Ratings* may not always lead you to the winner, but this I can guarantee you: *with thousands of horseplayers around the country, YOU are in a very small minority willing to take the extra time and effort to integrate these ratings into your handicapping regimen.*

We are always striving to improve *Sire Ratings* and value YOUR input as well especially in regards to some of the coding changes. We will listen and adjust according to the majority! Please call 800-272-8039 with any comments and/or suggestions or email us at: jmazur@bellsouth.net

As previously mentioned earlier in this chapter, I strongly recommend that you take advantage of *Sire Ratings On Line,* a daily report that produces complete sire ratings for the top race meets throughout the year. It will save you hours upon hours of "look-up" time. Three years ago, I made this product even more affordable, lowering the annual subscription price to just $99.95. All subscriptions expire on December 31 but most of the usage occurs in the spring and summer. As such I will prorate cost for 2020 down to $49.95 after the Del Mar and Saratoga meets. See the inside back cover for more information. All the best.

Jim Mazur

The Readers Speak!

Been a long time buyer and supporter of your products, love the reading, love the cashing. I can honestly say I have never bought one of your books that didn't pay for itself. The first year I purchased the Sire Stats, I had that FTS that was 50/1 or so, a play right out the "stats" at Keeneland! This Saturday @ Belmont your stats pointed out another solid play in race 5 for Gyarmati, a Malibu Moon FTS at 26/1. **D. Dillon**

Just wanted to drop you guys a note and let you know how much I am enjoying my subscription. I used your Belmont pedigree info today to include Noble Moon in the 5th at Belmont, and ended up winning a nice $2,600 pick 4 (He was listed as a B/A FTS and went off at 25-1). So thanks! **A. Doerfer**

Great job. Today in second race at the Spa, #5 TWO STEP FLOR was a FTS with a SIRE RATING of "HL." He STARTED the PICK 4 as a $32 winner. **B. Morgan**

Just a short note to thank you for making available info in particular FTS and Poly ratings. On the undercard of The Queen's Plate a maiden FTS with an "A" rating gave a winning payoff of $70.80. I'm still learning. Merci encore! **N. Madden**

You had Quiet American as "TR" meaning a sire that produces FTS winners in Turf Routes. I just cashed out on Race 5 at CD one mile on the Turf . A Quiet American firster, Gabriel's Cat, crushed the field at 55-1!!! And that's why your books are the greatest! **R. Dawe**

10th race Saturday at Tampa 1st time trf - $79.00 payoff. Other pedigree services did not have Dam-sire in their files. You listed him as an "A+" on turf. THANK YOU! **L. Pink**