



Frandsen Publishing Presents
Favorite ALL-Ways™ Newsletter Articles

“Position Versus Pace”

So, who gets the lead?

We are frequently asked questions about how to handle pace situations that appear to be contradictory. For example, we are asked how to handle the situation of a horse with a Presser (“P”) running style having a Quirin Speed Point Rating of 7 or 8. After all, “P” horses like to run mid-pack, but a Quirin Speed Point Rating of 7 or 8 clearly indicates the horse likes to be on the lead or up close to the lead at the 1st Call. Another example is how to handle the situation where a “P” horse, or even a late running “S” horse, has a higher Early Pace Rating than a horse or horses with an Early (“E”) or Early Presser (“EP”) running style. Again, the “P” horse likes to run mid-pack whereas the “E” and “EP” horses want to be on or near the lead at the 1st and 2nd Calls. The Early Pace Rating measures how fast a horse runs from the gate to the 2nd Call. So, is the “P” horse with a higher Early Pace figure going to be on the lead at the 2nd Call in today’s race? This article will help shed some light on how to handle these situations.

Even if you do not currently use ALL-Ways software, you will still gain helpful insights from this article. These concepts “travel well” and can be used effectively with handicapping information in ALL-Ways Software as well as information from other sources, such as the BRIS Ultimate Past Performances.

All past ALL-Ways Newsletters, as well as a Major Topic Index, are posted on both the BRIS and Frandsen Publishing Web sites and they are always free. Also, articles already published as part of the Favorite ALL-Ways Newsletter Article series are posted in the Newsletter Section on the Frandsen Publishing Web site and they are free as well. See the links at the end of this article.

“Positional” versus “Pace” Defined

Horseplayers who use pace handicapping as part of their handicapping process want to be able to visualize where the horses in the field are going to be at the 1st Call and the 2nd Call and how much pace pressure the horses on or near the lead at these calls will likely face as they run this early part of the race. To do this with reasonable success, it is important to understand the differences between positional and speed/velocity related pace handicapping factors. Readers of ALL-Ways Newsletters know how strongly we feel that pace handicapping should be a part of every handicapper’s arsenal. There are some very strong articles on the subject in ALL-Ways Newsletters, including articles that are part of the Favorite ALL-Ways Newsletter series. ALL-Ways Newsletter #3, now also a Favorite Article as well, introduced the concept of Race Pace Shapes. ALL-Ways Newsletter #13, now a Favorite Article, covers Quirin Speed Points. ALL-Ways Newsletter #21 presents a comprehensive pace handicapping process.

“Speed/Velocity” Based Pace Factors

The three primary speed based pace factors used in virtually all pace handicapping methods are the following:

- 1st Call Pace is a measure of how fast a horse runs from the gate to the 1st Call, which is at the two furlong point in sprints and the four furlong point in routes.
- 2nd Call Pace, generally referred to as “Early Pace”, is a measure of how fast a horse runs from the gate to the 2nd Call, which is the four furlong point in sprints and the six furlong point in routes.
- Final Fraction Pace measures how fast a horse runs from the 2nd Call to the finish.

To be sure, there are other speed based pace ratings such as Turn-Time that measures how fast a horse runs from the 1st Call to the 2nd Call and many compound pace ratings such as Combined Pace that adds a horse’s Early Pace Rating plus its Final Fraction Rating. However, for the purpose of this newsletter subject, we will focus on the 1st Call and 2nd Call (Early Pace).

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Positional Based Pace Factors

Positional based pace factors have no direct relationship to how fast a horse runs during any part of a race. These factors are determined only based on the position and leading/beaten lengths of a horse at the 1st Call and/or 2nd Call. Here are the positional pace factors in ALL-Ways software. They are also available in the BRIS Ultimate Past Performances.

Quirin Speed Points

The Quirin Speed Points rating is determined by a horse's propensity to be on the lead or up close at the 1st Call. The rating does not measure speed or velocity. It is a positional rating that reflects a horse's desire ... will ... and ability to be on the lead or up close at this early point in the race.

To calculate the Quirin Speed Points rating, up to three races are selected from the most recent five races in a horse's past performance record. The specific races selected and the actual method of calculations are different depending on the distance of today's race. The rating will be within a range of zero to eight (0 to 8). The higher the rating, the more likely the horse will be on the lead or up very close at the 1st Call. Here is how to interpret these numbers:

- **8 Quirin Speed Points:** Demonstrated desire/ability to be on the lead or 2nd or 3rd but within a neck of the lead at the 1st Call
- **7 Quirin Speed Points:** Demonstrated desire/ability to be on the lead or 2nd or 3rd but within 2 lengths at the 1st Call
- **4, 5 or 6 Quirin Speed Points:** Demonstrated desire/ability to stay in touch with the leaders at the 1st Call. On occasion, the horse will be among the first three horses at the 1st Call, particularly in the absence of higher QSP rated horses in the race
- **1, 2 or 3 Quirin Speed Points:** Will generally be in the last half of the field at the 1st Call
- **0 (Zero) Quirin Speed Points:** Will be in the back of the field at the 1st Call or has no qualifying races in its past performance lines

For a thorough discussion on Quirin Speed Points, see ALL-Ways Newsletter #13 or the Favorite ALL-Ways Newsletter Article covering Quirin Speed Points, Quirin Race Shapes and Quirin Impact Values.

Horse Running Styles

Continuing with positional based pace, every horse, without exception, has one of four distinct running styles. ALL-Ways software looks at all the past performances of a horse to determine the horse's preferred running style. These are referred to as ESP Running Styles, a term borrowed, with permission, from Tom Brohamer and the Sartin Methodology. These running styles are determined only based on a horse's position and leading/beaten lengths at both the 1st Call and 2nd Call. They do not consider how fast a horse runs in any part of a race.

The four styles are:

- **Early (ESP "E"):** The horse must have the lead.
- **Early Presser (ESP "EP"):** The horse is comfortable on the lead or following the leader one to three lengths back.
- **Presser (ESP "P"):** Prefers to run mid-pack, about four to seven lengths behind the leader.
- **Sustainer (ESP "S"):** Prefers staying in the back of the pack in favor of a strong closing run.

For a thorough discussion of ESP Running Styles, see the Favorite ALL-Ways Article on Race Pace Shapes.

Putting It All Together

Here is a typical, straight forward chart for a race showing each horse's Running Style, Quirin Speed Points, 1st Call Pace Rating and Early Pace Rating (2nd Call).

<u>Horse</u>	<u>Running Style</u>	<u>Quirin Speed Points</u>	<u>Call 1 Pace Rating</u>	<u>Early Pace Rating</u>
A	EP	7	94	94
B	E	8	95	96
C	P	5	88	89
D	P	4	85	87
E	E	7	93	95
F	P	3	81	82
G	S	2	78	81

Here is how we would interpret this chart: The “E” horses, with Quirin Speed Points of Q7 and Q8, will fight for the lead at the 1st Call and because of their “E” running styles will keep fighting to the 2nd Call. The “EP” horse will be very close at both the 1st Call and 2nd Call, but will be content to be a step behind the leaders. The “P” and “S” horses will be mid-pack or back-of-the-pack respectively at both the 1st Call and 2nd Call. Again, this is very straight forward.

ESP Running Styles, Quirin Speed Points, 1st Call Pace and Early Pace ratings will almost always show you where the horses will be at the 1st Call and 2nd Call, probably 90% of the time. There will be exceptions, of course, when a trainer decides to have a horse run a race using a running style that is different than the horse is accustomed to, such as having a “P” horse try to take the lead and wire the field. More often than not, such a move will not lead to success. Horses asked to run in a manner that is against their preferred running style often do not do well.

With all of this said, you will occasionally see race situations where the positional pace factors seem to be at odds with the speed based pace factors. Let’s make some changes to the straight forward chart we showed earlier.

<u>Horse</u>	<u>Running Style</u>	<u>Quirin Speed Points</u>	<u>Call 1 Pace Rating</u>	<u>Early Pace Rating</u>
A	EP	7	94	94
B	E	8	95	96
C	P	5	88	98
D	P	8	85	87
E	E	7	93	95
F	P	3	81	82
G	S	2	78	81

Horse D has been given Quirin Speed Points of 8. Horse C has been given the top Early Pace Rating of 98. Now, here is a rule you can “take to the bank”: **When there is a conflict between positional pace ratings and speed based pace ratings, the positional ratings will almost always be the most predictive. Position ratings rule!**

(Continued)

Let's look at the specific examples in our chart:

If a "P" horse has 7 or 8 Quirin Speed Points, it will be on or near the lead at the 1st Call but it will fade back to mid-pack by the time it reaches the 2nd Call. This situation happens frequently. The Presser gets a good fast start out of the gate, so it is on the lead or up close at the 1st Call. However, its "P" running style dictates that the horse will not have, or even try, for the lead at the 2nd Call.

The second apparent discrepancy is when a "P" horse, or even an "S" horse, has a high Early Pace Rating, perhaps the highest in the race. There are a couple things that explain this kind of anomaly. The most common cause is that the horse's last race had an early speed duel between "E" and/or "EP" horses causing this horse to run faster than it likes getting to the 1st and 2nd Calls. It does not mean the horse had the lead or was near to the lead position. The horse, as well as all the other horses in the race, simply had to run faster to stay somewhat in touch with the field. The other cause can be that the trainer decided to have the horse run in a different manner than it has in the past, as we pointed out earlier. You can, of course, look at the past performance races of the horse to determine what the actual situation was. In this situation, where the "P" or "S" horse has a high 1st Call and/or high Early Pace Rating, the position based pace factor ("P" or "S" in our example) will almost always rule. These horses will run based on their position based pace factors and will not actually be near the lead at the 2nd Call. In this case, a "P" horse with a 98 Early Pace Rating will not beat an "E" horse with a 95 Early Pace Rating to the 2nd Call. Either the "E" horse will run faster to get the lead or the "P" horse will run slower to avoid the lead.

Take It To the Bank!

**When there is a conflict between the positional based pace ratings
and speed/velocity based pace ratings of a horse,
the positional ratings will almost always be the most predictive.**

Position Ratings Rule!

Note: The Quirin Speed Points Rating in ALL-Ways Software is passed through directly from BRIS and will be the same as the rating in the BRIS Ultimate PP's. ALL-Ways Software designation of a horse's "preferred running style" is determined differently than the method used by BRIS and the ALL-Ways designation may be different than the BRIS designation.

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Email: FrandsenPublishing@Comcast.net
Web Site: www.frandsen.com
Phone: 952.937.9180

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[All Newsletters and Major Topic Index](#)

Frandsen Publishing is also the developer of ALL-Ways Handicapping Software. ALL-Ways is serious software for professional and serious horseplayers. Phillips Racing Newsletter calls ALL-Ways Software "absolutely the best free handicapping tool on the market" and gives ALL-Ways a 9 ½ rating ... the highest ever awarded. And, ALL-Ways Software is FREE!

[More about ALL-Ways Software](#)

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