

When ticked your system is enabled and qualifiers will be shown on the welcome screen
 Turn OFF BOG Calculations
Untick to turn off BOG

Restrict system to look at races from the past: Days

Restrict system to start on a certain day (dd/mm/yyyy): EP TOTE

Restrict system to look at certain days of the month:

Restrict system to look at races on a set day of the week:

Restrict Searches to a Specific Day, Course or Race
 Date to use for declaration filters below:

March 2024

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
26	27	28	29	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Choose your Declaration Type
 All Races
 Use HORSES decs
 Use JOCKEYS rides
 Use TRAINERS runners
 Use DAM decs
 Use SIRE decs
 Use Trainer/Jockey Combo
 Use DAMSIRE decs

I've now gone to the Date tab, and I've chosen today's date in the calendar, selected 0 days from the past (because I'm only looking for today's first FTH) and then 'use HORSES decs' to show me the names of horses rather than trainers or sires & dams for example. And I get this.

System Results (BOG ON) Betfair Price Used : Betfair SP (Prices up-to-date to: 31/03/2024 17:39:00)

System Qualifiers from Decs

Date	Time	Course	Race Card No	Horse	Jockey	Trainer	Race Name
30/03/2024	13:50	MusSELburgh	4	Individualism	Joe Fanning	Charlie Johnston	Virgin Bet Royal Mile Handicap (Class C)
30/03/2024	13:50	MusSELburgh	2	Power Of Zeus	Ben Robinson	Brian Ellison	Virgin Bet Royal Mile Handicap (Class C)
30/03/2024	13:50	MusSELburgh	6	Berkshire Nugget	David Probert	Andrew Balding	Virgin Bet Royal Mile Handicap (Class C)
30/03/2024	13:50	MusSELburgh	3	Johnny Ringo	Paul Mulrennan	Lucinda Russell	Virgin Bet Royal Mile Handicap (Class C)
30/03/2024	14:20	Cork	5	Vangelis	Ronan Whelan	Jack W Davison	Buy Annual Membership Today Handicap (Class D) (0-80)
30/03/2024	16:40	Cork	10	Goal Exceeded	Ronan Whelan	John O'Donoghue	Tote, Never Beaten By SP Handicap (Class C) (0-95)
30/03/2024	17:20	MusSELburgh	10	Letsbefrank	Miss Amie Waugh	Jim Goldie	Virgin Bet Daily Price Boosts Handicap (Div 1) (Class D)
30/03/2024	17:50	MusSELburgh	1	Walsingham	Daniel Tudhope	David O'Meara	Virgin Bet Daily Price Boosts Handicap (Div 2) (Class D)
30/03/2024	19:00	Wolverhampton	2	Elforleather	Rossa Ryan	Jack Channon	Sky Sports Racing Sky 415 Handicap (Class F)
30/03/2024	19:00	Wolverhampton	1	Road To Wembley	Finley Marsh	Richard Hughes	Sky Sports Racing Sky 415 Handicap (Class F)
30/03/2024	19:00	Wolverhampton	4	Cock And Bull	Hector Crouch	Michael Bell	Sky Sports Racing Sky 415 Handicap (Class F)
30/03/2024	19:00	Wolverhampton	5	The Crafty Mole	Jason Watson	David O'Meara	Sky Sports Racing Sky 415 Handicap (Class F)
30/03/2024	19:00	Wolverhampton	9	Succeed	Josephine Gordon	Phil McEntee	Sky Sports Racing Sky 415 Handicap (Class F)

There's nothing in the top section because this is where horses from past races would appear and I'm not looking for them at this stage. But today's first-time handicappers in FLAT races are shown in the bottom section.

Anyway, that's how to access FTH but what we're interested in is how to find out which trainers' horses improve the most (or least) when running in a handicap for the first time.

I've created another ad-hoc system just looking at FTH in Hurdles races in January 2024, but I've used Race Code in the Horse 2 tab (a zero in Hurdle and Chase) so it will give me only horses that have not run in a handicap in either of those race types. That's just personal preference. I could look as far back as I want to and can export all the data to work with as I like but this sample is just for illustrative purposes. The bottom line, backing all Hurdle FTH in January 2024 produces a loss of 23.04 points at Betfair SP and a greater loss at Industry SP.

System Results (BOG ON) Betfair Price Used : Betfair SP (Prices up-to-date to: 29/03/2024 17:10:00)

Runners	Winners	Win S/R	IV	PRB	PRB^2	WAX	EX Wins	A/E	Chi Scr	50%SR	P/L Betfair	ROI Betfair	bsp DD	TEW_PL	TEP_PL	P/L to SP	ROI to SP
195	16	8.21	0.90	47.17	33.83	-0.69	16.69	0.96	0.03	44.10	-44.92	-23.04	-88.87	-64.28	5.75	-68.47	-35.11

We can display the breakdown for these runners and here it is.

System Results (Betfair Price Used : Betfair SP) (Prices up-to-date to: 29/03/2024 17:10:00)										Speed Rating	HA Career	Last Time Out	2nd Last Time Out	3rd Last Time Out
Date	Time	Horse	Course	Fin Pos	SP	SP Num	BSP	Jockey	Trainer					
01/01/2024	12:30	Belle The Lioness	Tramore	2	4/1	4.00	6.50	Darragh O'Keefe	Henry De Bromhead	58	72	56	65	55
01/01/2024	13:15	Givehimthehonour	Fairyhouse	3	18/1	18.00	30.94	Sean O'Keefe	Paul Nolan	54	61	61	32	48
01/01/2024	13:15	Coco Kolada	Fairyhouse	4	28/1	28.00	38.23	Donagh Meyler	Karl Thornton	53	34	1	34	32
01/01/2024	13:15	Glorytogod Tom	Fairyhouse	10	11/1	11.00	16.50	Mr D M Fitzgerald	Martin Paul Fitzgerald	38	57	57	28	0
01/01/2024	13:15	Pipers Boreen	Fairyhouse	2	33/1	33.00	61.55	Conor McNamara	Shane Nolan	55	50	36	50	37
01/01/2024	13:15	Miss Oreo	Fairyhouse	9	14/1	14.00	17.25	Mr S Fenelon	John Joseph Hanlon	43	69	69	0	0
01/01/2024	13:40	Walk In The Stars	Tramore	PU	25/1	25.00	40.40	Darragh O'Keefe	P Corkery	0	32	22	0	0
01/01/2024	13:40	Therailwayman	Tramore	PU	80/1	80.00	199.22	Jody McGarvey	John Joseph Hanlon	0	57	0	0	0
01/01/2024	13:40	Kilbarry Saint	Tramore	5	10/1	10.00	14.41	Danny Mullins	C O'Keefe	22	54	52	54	51
01/01/2024	13:40	Party Pack	Tramore	PU	20/1	20.00	30.00	J J Slevin	J P Flavin	0	49	49	31	48
01/01/2024	13:45	Belle Of Annandale	Musselburgh	3	25/1	25.00	31.18	Henry Brooke	Adrian Paul Keatley	72	65	65	63	55
01/01/2024	13:45	Sluggler	Musselburgh	6	33/1	33.00	43.77	Sean Quinlan	Iain Jardine	69	61	56	61	0
01/01/2024	13:45	San Martino	Fairyhouse	7	100/1	100.00	211.27	Mr N Gault	S Millar	21	65	51	41	44
02/01/2024	13:15	Rory's Story	Ayr	PU	33/1	33.00	65.00	John Kington	Tristan Davidson	0	50	48	24	50
04/01/2024	12:58	Rick Blaine	Hereford	PU	33/1	33.00	52.36	Miss Lilly Pinchin	Shaun Lycett	0	66	66	59	0
04/01/2024	12:58	La Gomera	Hereford	9	9/1	9.00	10.00	Miss H C Tucker	Alex Hales	58	59	55	59	55
04/01/2024	12:58	I Got Stung	Hereford	11	9/1	9.00	10.88	Mr J Hogan	Kim Bailey	54	56	51	56	37
04/01/2024	15:28	Inchiquin Spirit	Hereford	PU	28/1	28.00	49.47	Ciaran Gettings	Alastair Ralph	0	56	56	42	45
05/01/2024	14:10	Saint Davy	Ludlow	1	6/5	1.20	2.26	Jonjo O'Neill Jr	Jonjo O'Neill	66	71	71	0	0
05/01/2024	14:30	Whozatgirl	Musselburgh	PU	66/1	66.00	108.66	Stephen Mulqueen	Lucinda Russell	0	51	34	47	51
06/01/2024	14:05	Feach Amach	Wincanton	PU	4/1	4.00	5.72	Lorcan Murtagh	Nigel Hawke	0	62	62	49	0
06/01/2024	15:15	Don't Rightly Know	Wincanton	3	5/1	5.00	6.77	Miss Chloe Emsley	Polly Gundry	54	70	32	60	0
06/01/2024	15:15	Intimate	Wincanton	6	15/2	7.50	10.57	Charlie Deutsch	Venetia Williams	48	62	62	62	38
06/01/2024	15:25	Scalloway Bay	Newcastle	3	22/1	22.00	31.67	Henry Brooke	N W Alexander	40	51	51	0	0
06/01/2024	15:25	Glory Hights	Newcastle	2	13/2	6.50	7.40	Danny McMenamin	Chris Grant	43	57	57	40	36
06/01/2024	15:25	Mister Smartly	Newcastle	9	25/1	25.00	30.27	Stephen Mulqueen	Tina Jackson	33	41	41	39	32
06/01/2024	15:25	Yealand	Newcastle	1	15/8	1.88	2.90	Sean Quinlan	Jennie Candlish	43	65	65	58	53
06/01/2024	15:25	Tommy Johnson	Newcastle	5	7/2	3.50	5.77	Jamie Hamilton	Mark Walford	38	58	55	58	0
07/01/2024	15:55	Colours On Canvas	Plumpton	8	7/1	7.00	10.76	Harry Reed	Suzi Best	59	48	48	44	0
08/01/2024	15:00	El Rio	Taunton	PU	9/1	9.00	12.00	David Bass	Kim Bailey	0	60	57	60	0

This shows the results and some other data for each of the FTH horses but of particular interest are the highlighted columns which give us the Proform Speed Rating for the race shown but also the career best speed rating and the speed ratings from each of the last three runs.

If I just concentrate on the winners for now, I get this.

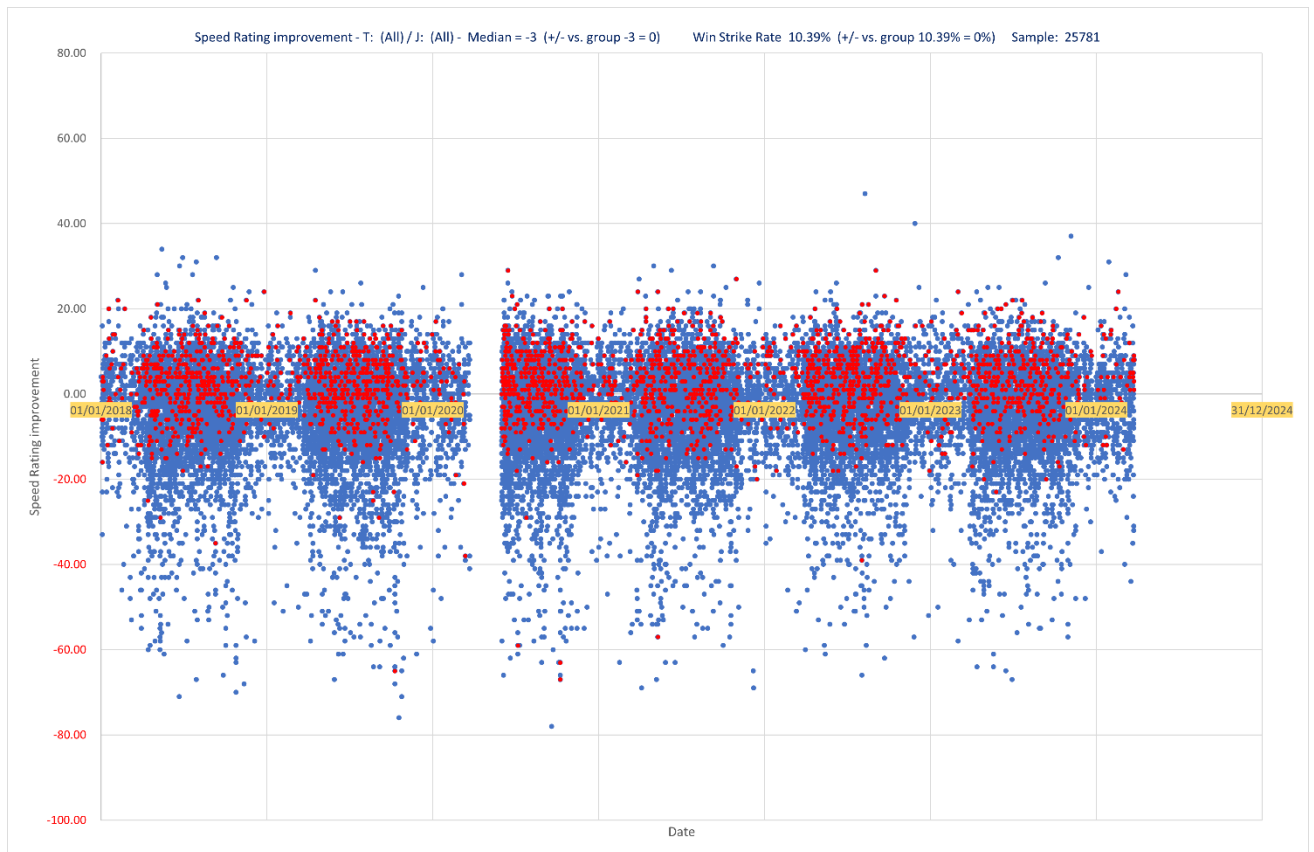
System Results (Betfair Price Used : Betfair SP) (Prices up-to-date to: 29/03/2024 17:10:00)										Speed Rating	HA Career	Last Time Out	2nd Last Time Out	3rd Last Time Out
Date	Time	Horse	Course	Fin Pos	SP	SP Num	BSP	Jockey	Trainer					
25/01/2024	13:50	Goguenard	Wetherby	1	40/1	40.00	46.00	Mr Harry Atkins	D J Jeffreys	71	43	43	0	0
14/01/2024	14:35	Idol	Punchestown	1	100/30	3.33	4.67	Phillip Enright	S Curling	51	48	44	48	46
29/01/2024	16:20	Good Lord	Plumpton	1	10/1	10.00	11.33	Gavin Sheehan	Billy Arahamian	67	50	30	41	0
28/01/2024	15:35	Notimeforanother	Doncaster	1	16/1	16.00	27.54	Henry Brooke	Jedd O'Keefe	63	55	55	44	0
28/01/2024	13:45	Pride Of Paris	Fontwell	1	3/1	3.00	4.32	Mr Fergus Gillard	Victor Dartnall	57	56	38	36	56
17/01/2024	13:35	Sangiovese	Southwell	1	15/8	1.88	3.03	Tom Cannon	Gary Moore	71	56	47	56	43
10/01/2024	15:50	Billytherealbigred	Leicester	1	11/2	5.50	7.55	Adam Wedge	Evan Williams	71	56	56	41	0
23/01/2024	13:45	Timeless Piece	Down Royal	1	4/1	4.00	7.18	Jack Kennedy	Gordon Elliott	34	60	57	60	41
29/01/2024	13:40	Eagles Reign	Punchestown	1	6/1	6.00	8.25	T P Harney	Ross O'Sullivan	58	62	33	62	57
12/01/2024	13:20	Bitsnbuckles	Huntingdon	1	9/4	2.25	3.39	Mr D Johnston	Oily Murphy	65	63	63	47	46
21/01/2024	16:10	Inthewaterside	Lingfield	1	4/1	4.00	6.20	Harry Cobden	Paul Nicholls	72	65	61	65	0
06/01/2024	15:25	Yealand	Newcastle	1	15/8	1.88	2.90	Sean Quinlan	Jennie Candlish	43	65	65	58	53
17/01/2024	15:55	Catch Him Derry	Southwell	1	3/1	3.00	4.30	Harry Skelton	Dan Skelton	50	66	66	56	0
13/01/2024	13:22	Mint Boy	Fairyhouse	1	7/2	3.50	5.02	Keith Donoghue	Mark Cromwell	61	67	67	47	27
30/01/2024	13:25	Noble Talent	Limerick	1	5/1	5.00	8.20	Mr R P Geoghegan	T J Nagle Jr	68	67	25	63	67
05/01/2024	14:10	Saint Davy	Ludlow	1	6/5	1.20	2.26	Jonjo O'Neill Jr	Jonjo O'Neill	66	71	71	0	0

I've sorted the Career best Speed Rating (HA Career) in ascending order i.e. lowest/worst at the top. What we see here is that the first horse, Goguenard, has a career best figure of 43 but managed to achieve a 71 when running in a handicap for the first time. Also notice some of the other huge improvements as we work down the list; 50 to 67 and 56 to 71 twice. If nothing else, this might encourage us to watch out for horses from these trainers when they run for the first time in a handicap. The caveat to using speed as a metric of performance is that fast horses can win slow races and get a low speed rating. However, it's less likely a slow horse will win a fast race.

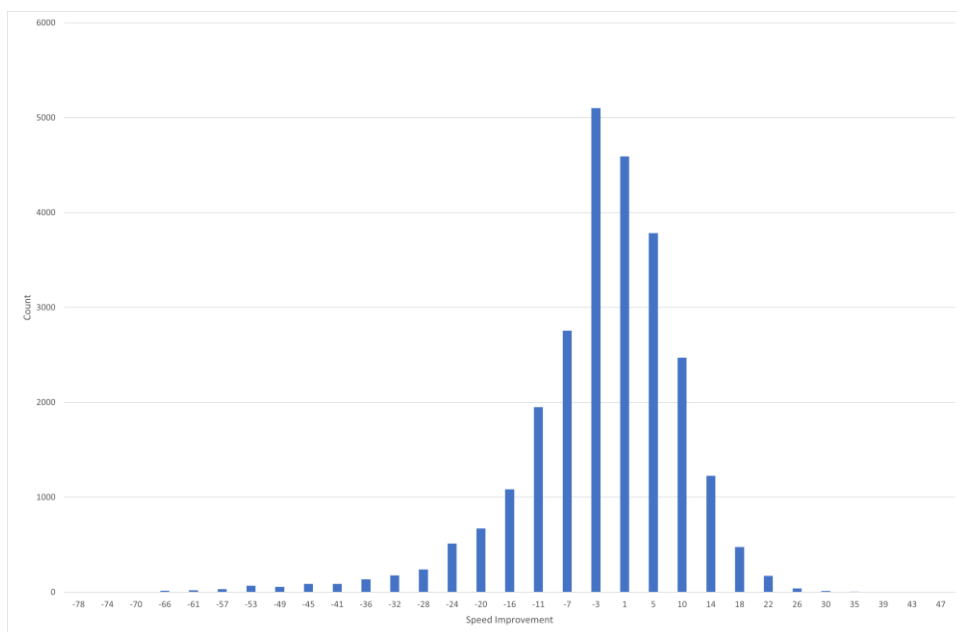
So, what this demonstrates is that by utilising the Proform data we can quickly gain an insight as to which trainers are capable of benefitting from the handicapping system. We could simply export this data for a whole year and with some simple spreadsheet maths we could quickly identify the trainers who make the greatest improvements.

But we can take things further and overcome the issue of relying solely on speed figures. I have my own ratings which produce an estimated OR for every run of every horse. Again, that's been done by utilising Proform data via the export feature. I can upload my ratings into Proform and run the same analyses as above but if you don't have your own you might use Racing Post ratings for example rather than go to the trouble of creating new ratings.

The ultimate goal is to establish some benchmarks against which we can analyse each trainer. Below is a representation of all FTH in Flat races since January 2018 with winners shown in red.

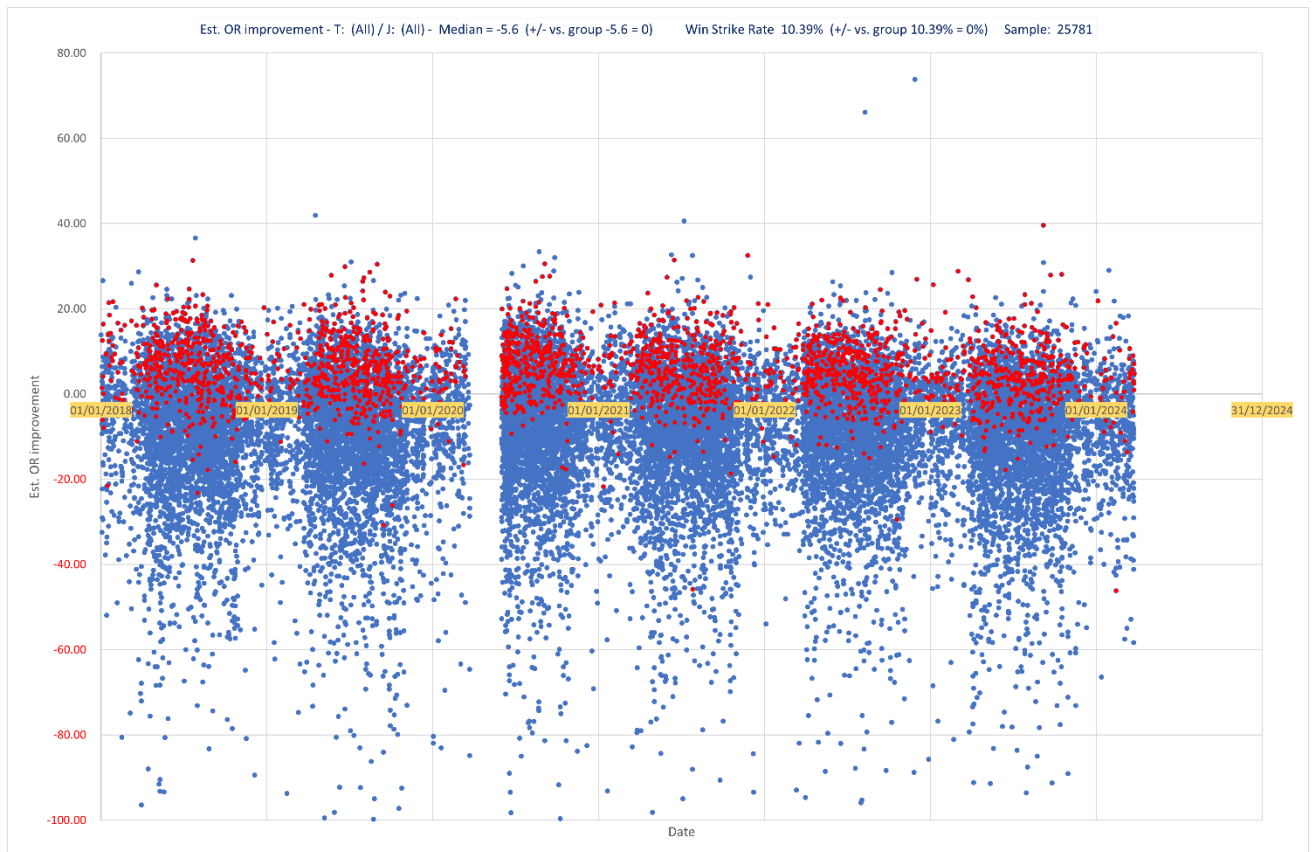


This tells us that the median improvement in speed rating is -3 from a sample of nearly 26,000. But we can also see that the range is pretty much between -30 and +20. That's quite a big range and might not necessarily help us too much. The distribution chart looks like this, and the standard deviation is 11.58.

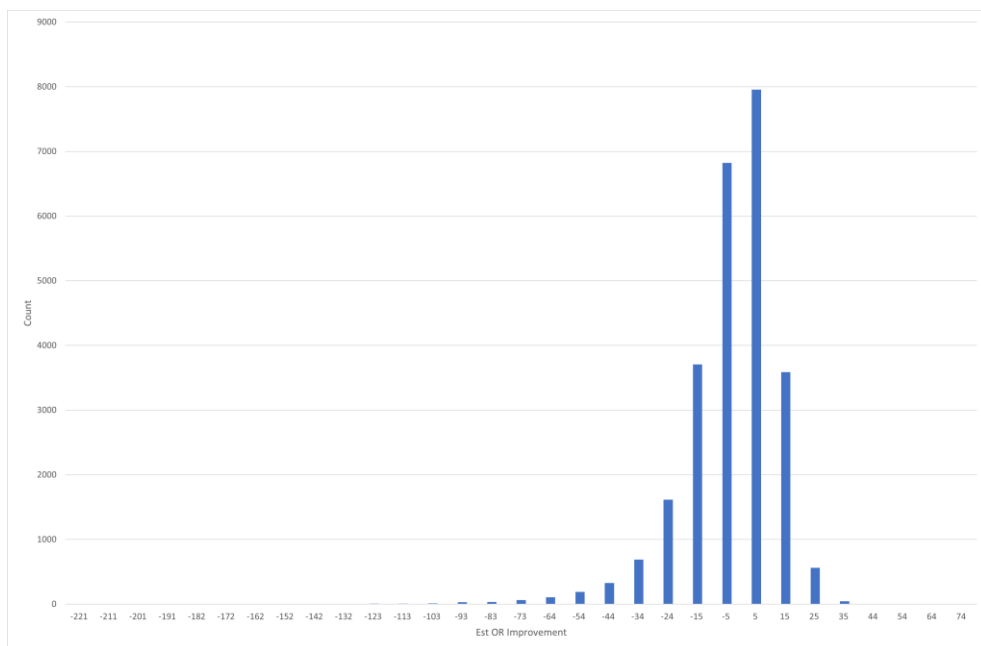


I'm certainly not a statistician but a fairly normal distribution like this is pleasing as it suggests that any trainers who have improvement figures towards either end of this distribution should be looked at in terms of doing much better or much worse than the norm.

I'll now show the same charts using my estimated OR's

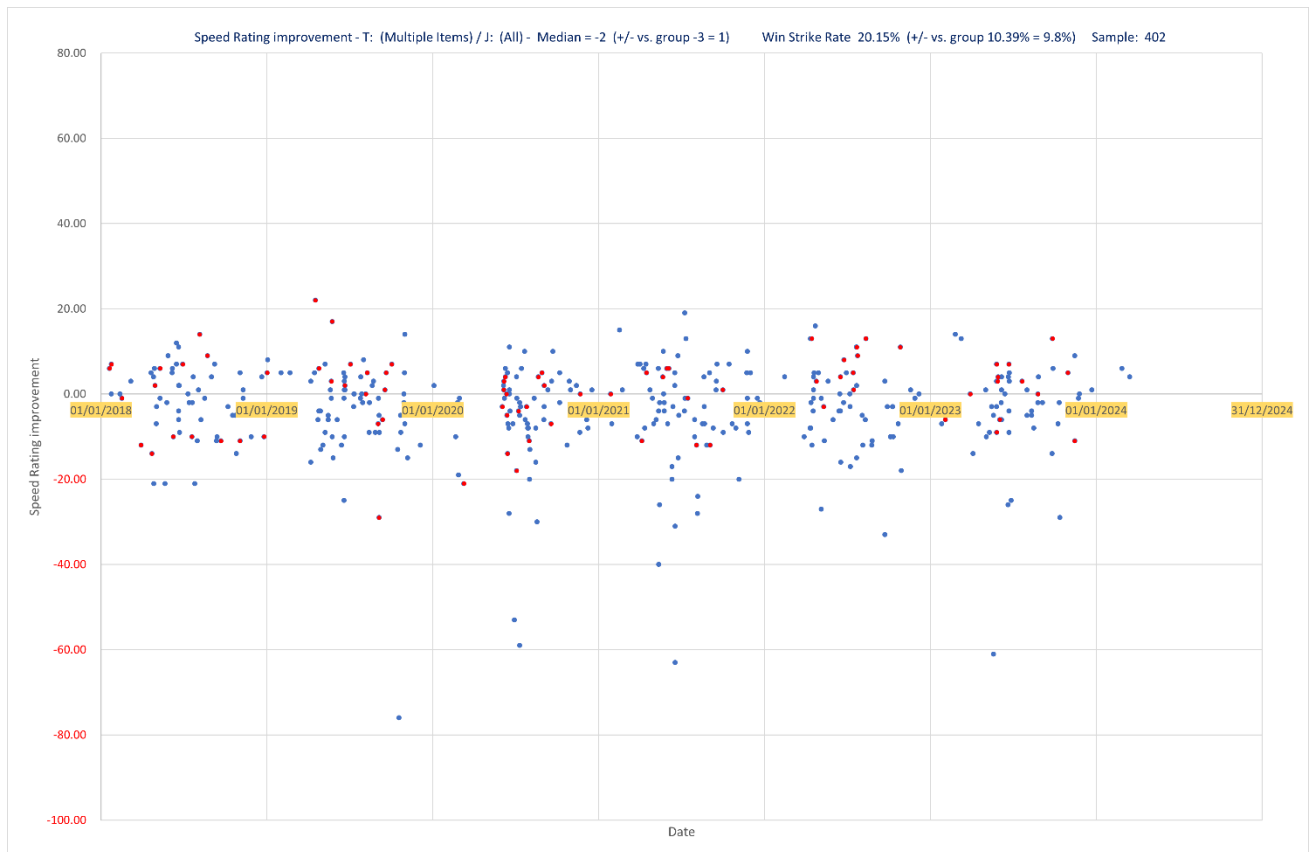


And below, the distribution with a standard deviation of 16.41



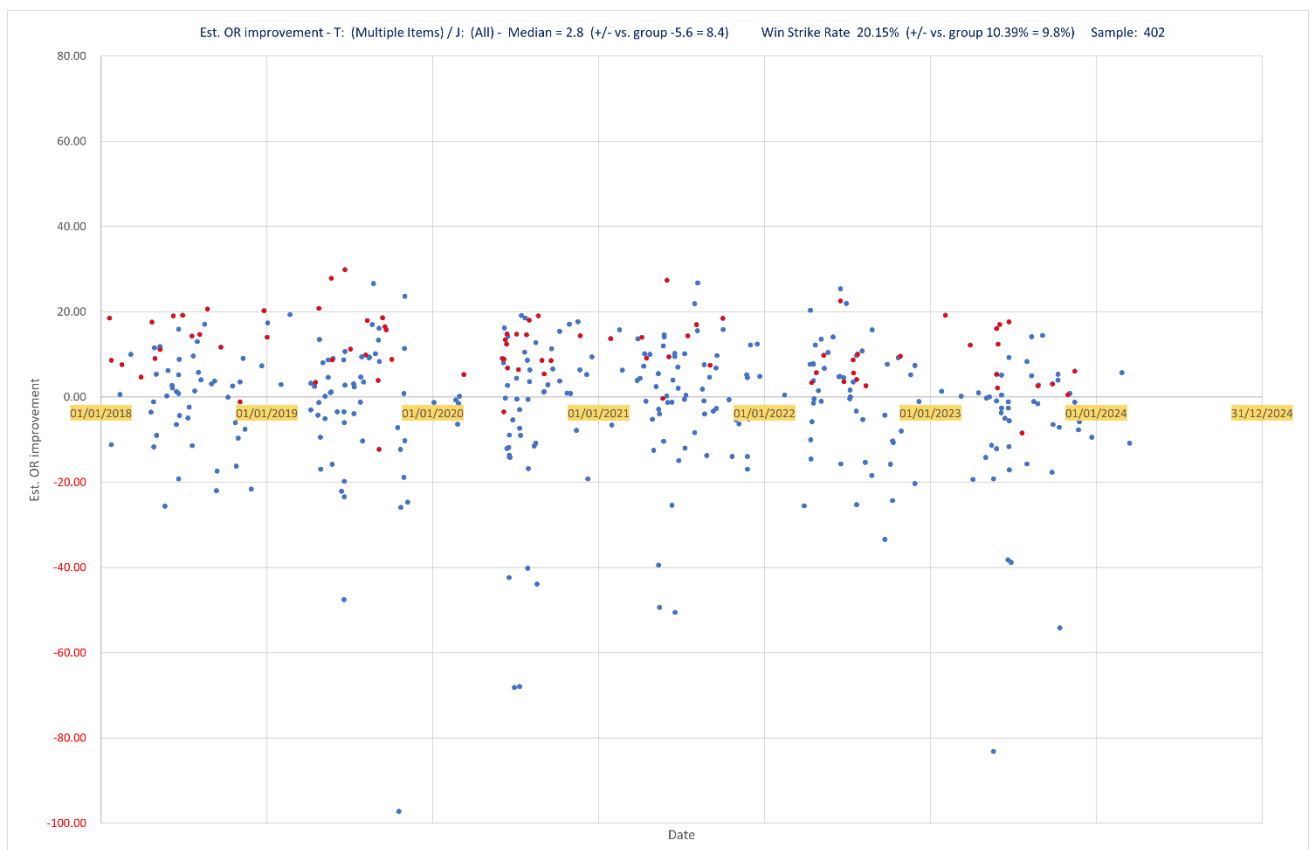
I'm happy that the two unrelated metrics appear to support each other but now we can dig deeper to find out who are the best & worst trainers when it comes to placing their horses in handicaps for the first time.

To do this I'm just using an Excel spreadsheet. Let's take a look at a couple of well-known trainers.



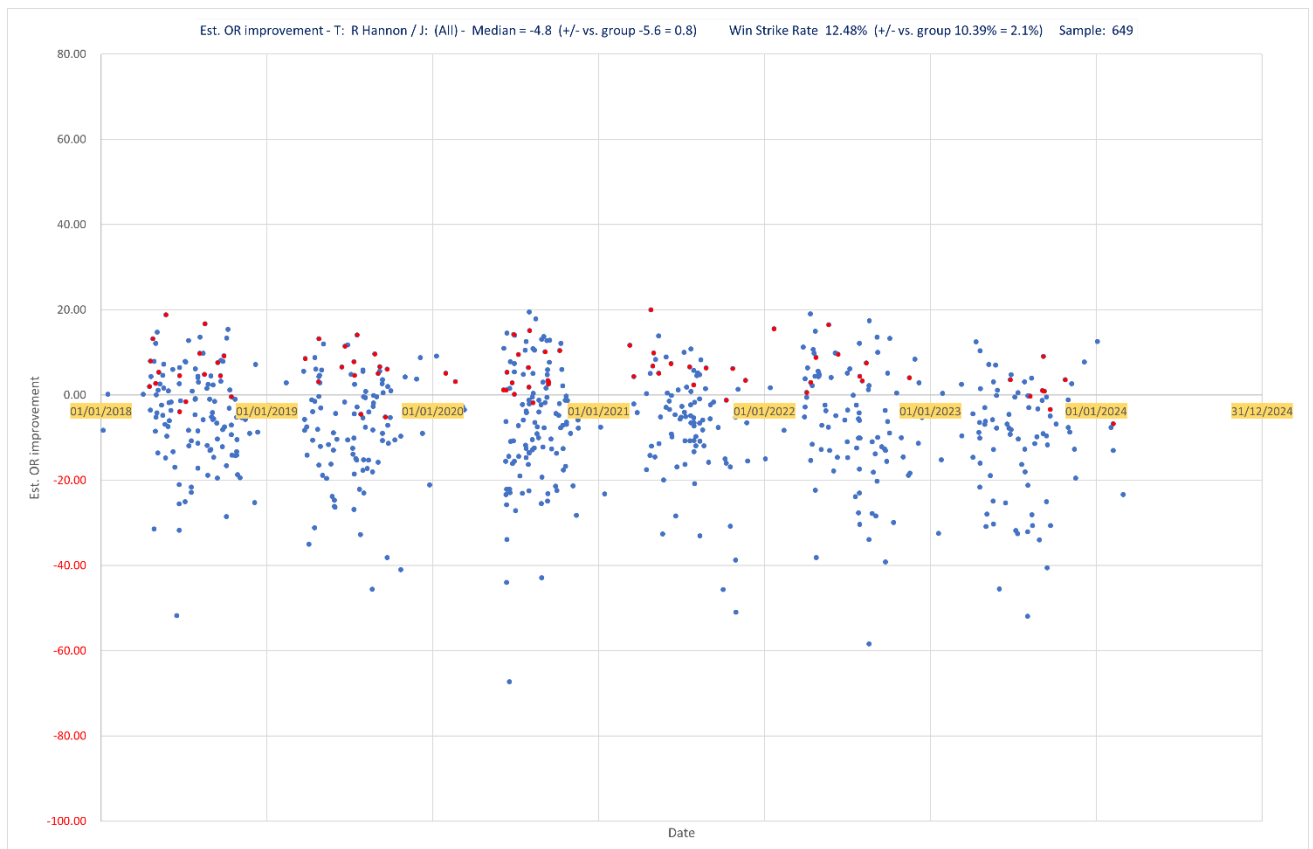
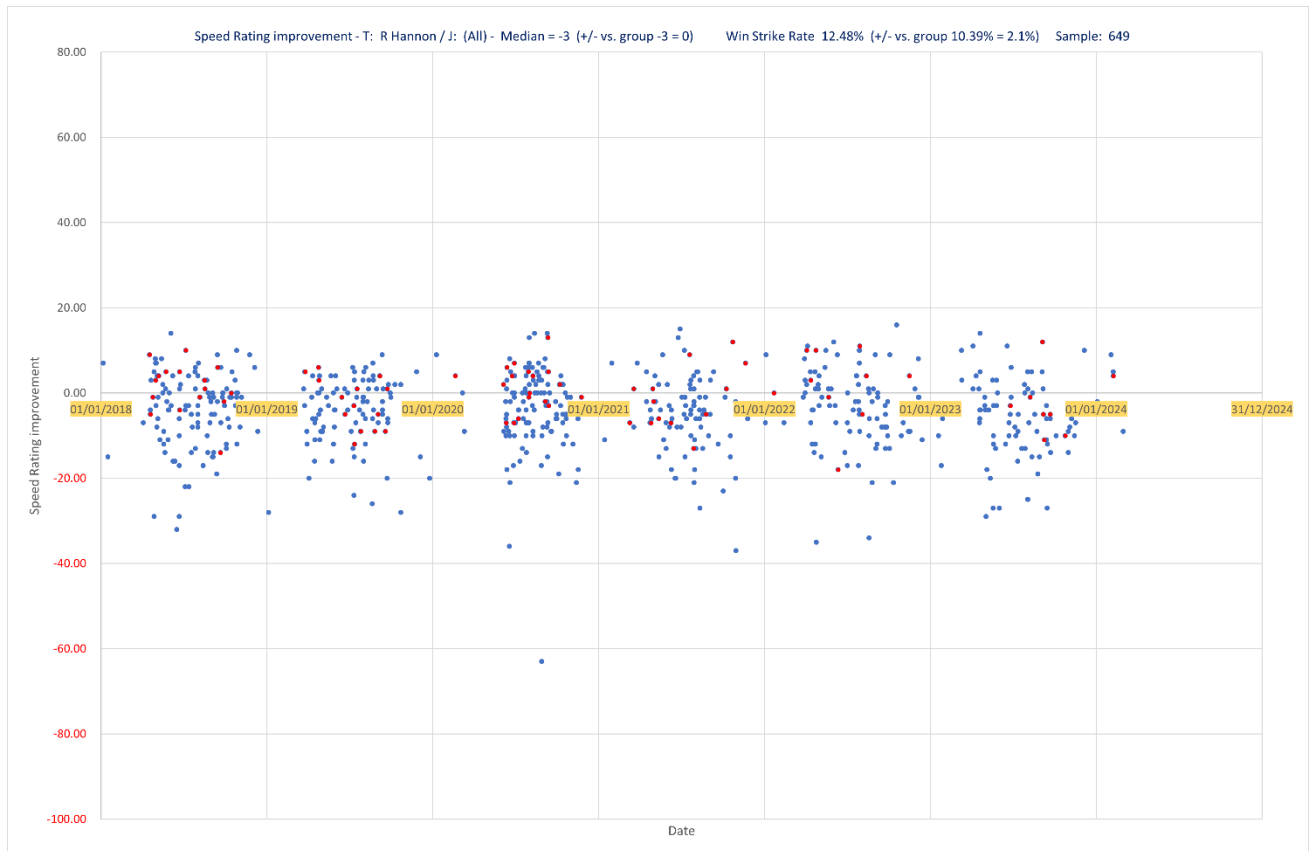
This is John & Thady Gosden who have a median improvement of -2 which is 1 better than the benchmark from the total population of horses. Their win strike rate however is 20.15% which is 9.8% better than the benchmark. This suggests they win more often than most trainers but that their horses have usually already shown their speed capability in their pre-handicap races.

Their estimated OR chart however looks like this



Their median improvement of 2.8 is 8.4 above the benchmark median and that is significant. This suggests that whilst the horse's speed capability is already known by the public, the trainer seems quite adept at placing their horses in the right races. Common knowledge perhaps but it's reassuring that this data approach has some validation.

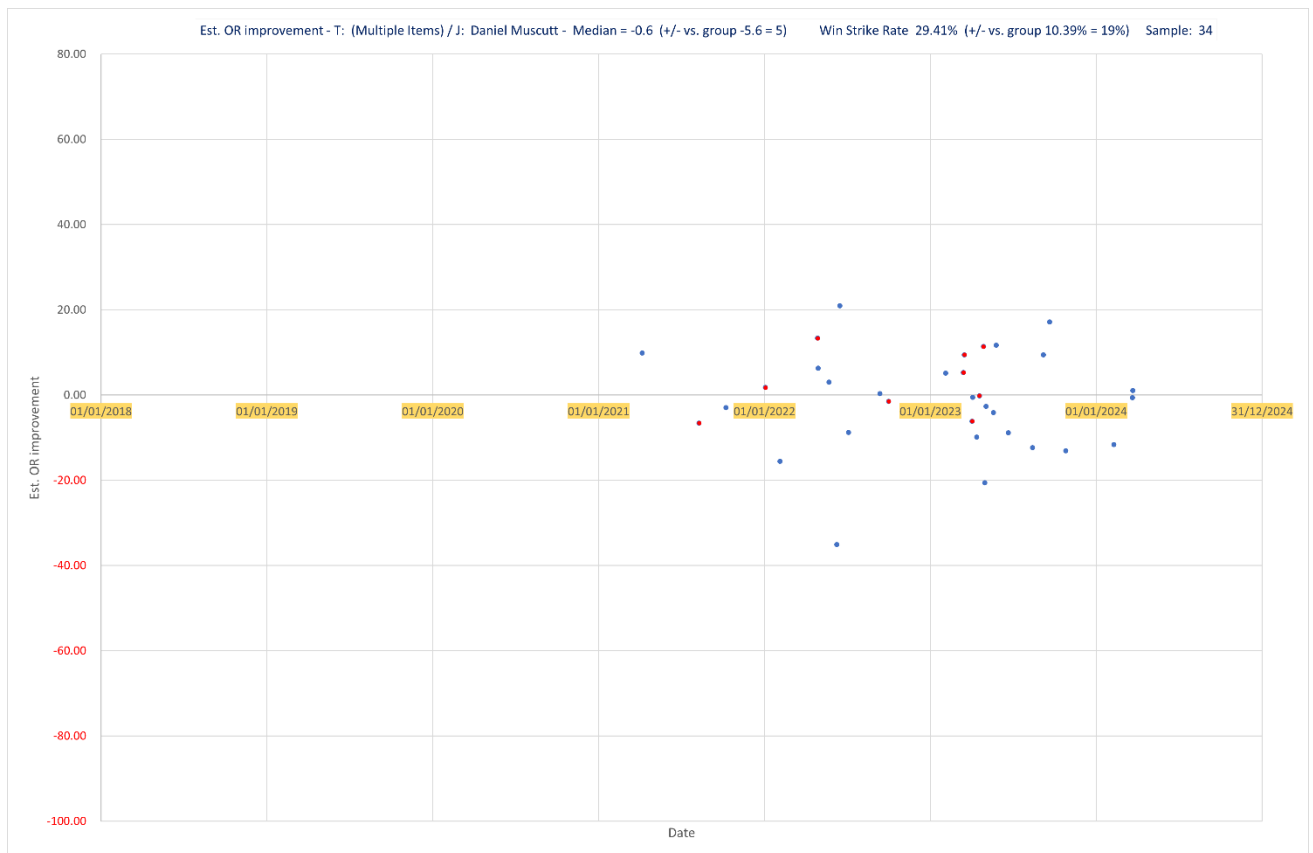
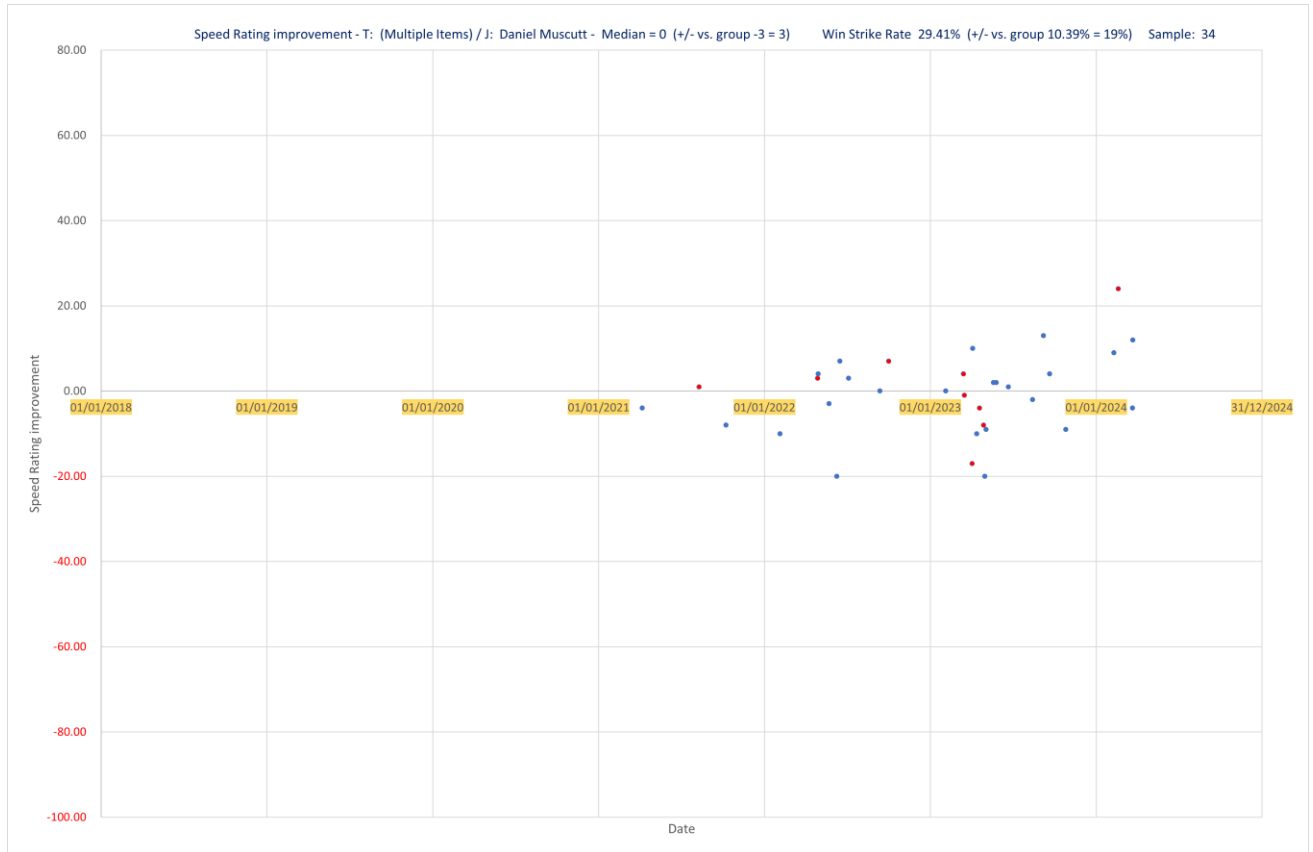
Here are the charts for Richard Hannon.



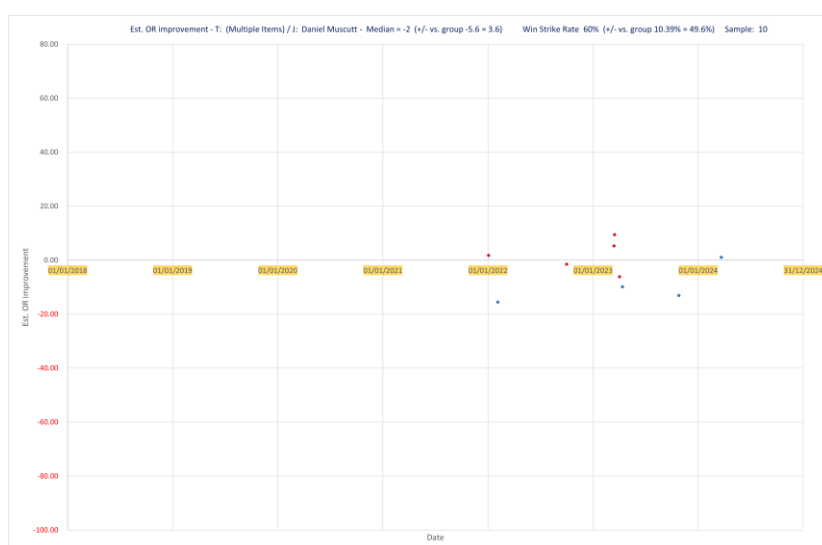
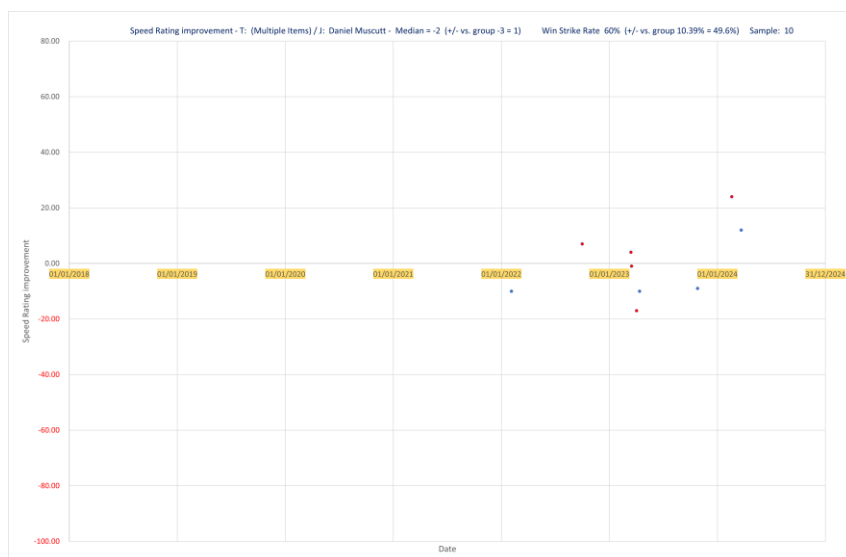
Basically, his horses are in line with the benchmark median.

But here's how we can go even deeper and get something useful from the numbers.

Here are the charts for J Ferguson with Daniel Muscutt riding.



But if we just look at AW races at Lingfield, Newcastle & Wolverhampton we get this.



A strike rate of 60% which is 49.6% above the benchmark and with a speed median 1 above the benchmark and an estimated OR median 3.6 above the benchmark.

Those numbers suggest to me that his horses don't need to improve much to win but when he sends them to those three courses with Daniel Muscutt riding, they are more likely to do well.

In summary there are definitely some trainers whose horses can improve significantly upon anything they've shown in their pre-handicap races. Similarly, there are some trainers whose horses rarely improve. The data is all there in Proform, as are many of the tools you need, and for those who prefer to create their own ratings and tools, the export feature gives you everything you need.

by Keith Wright

Involved in racing as a serious hobby for more than thirty-five years, always believing there's a holy grail; there isn't. What there is, in my view, is a set of tools, strategies & methods which enable us to get nearer to sustained profitability and greater enjoyment.

My background is engineering and more recently delivering 'software as a service' to the public sector.

I've done quite a bit of work on dosage (using breeding to determine a horse's likely distance preference) and I've had one or two notable successes. I'm now part of a small team researching new angles using various analyses with a focus on being agile enough to adapt to the rapidly changing form cycles of horses.

The single most important thing I've learned about backing horses is to have realistic expectations. Even bookmakers have losing days and we will have more than they do. So long as we expect it, accept it and manage it, then we'll be okay.