

EQUIBASE SPEED FIGURE NOW DISPLAYED IN YOUR AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE PROGRAMS!

Over the past few years, the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) has sought to provide handicappers an improved and more robust Speed Figure. While the current Speed Index, around since the early 70's, is easy to understand, from a handicapping perspective it is not very useful.

After a full analysis, and with direct input on the calculation, the AQHA has endorsed the Equibase Speed Figure (ESF- **E**) and is pleased to announce that it is now being displayed in printed track programs. Please note it is not replacing the current Speed Index, rather it is being added right next to the Speed Index.

Program #	Owner	Speed Index	Speed	Wgt	Jockey	Trainer		
1 Red 3-1	Harris Racing, Inc. and Maples, W.B. and S.L.					Russell M. Harris (24-0-1-3)		
	Exclusive Listing^(QH) (L)			White, yellow RH, black trim, yellow collar & cuffs				
	Sor.f.3 Feature Mr Jess - Oh Whatta Knockout by Holland Ease, TX			121	Alex Baldillez, Jr.			
					(40-3-7-6)			
12Jun08	Rui3 ft 300Y hw ¹⁰ :15612;15450	3†	Alw 11200nw2/L	87-91 8 4 -- -- 5 ³ / ₄ 31	Martinez FL	124 bl 7.10	First Timber124 ¹ / ₂ Featurimgmissjess121 ¹ / ₂ Exclusive Listing124 ^{nk}	drifted in, mild bid 10
24May08	Rui6 ft 400Y hw ¹⁰ :20162;19628	3	Dtr 4000	79-87 8 6 5 ¹ / ₄ -- 42 43	Perez B	122 bl 34.30	Heartswideopen122 ¹ / ₄ Noconi124 ¹ A Real Shaker122 ³ / ₄	no final kick 8
27Oct07	LS8 ft 400Y nw ⁰ :20618;19674	2	R DSHFORCSHJ -48k	80-61 7 9 9 ³ / ₄ -- 10 ⁶ / ₄ 10 ⁴ / ₄	Leggett TW	122 bl 24.80	Eyesa Jumpn122 ³ / ₄ Defining Difference124 ³ / ₄ Romancing Mary124 ^{ns}	bobbled start 10
13Oct07	LS13 ft 400Y hw ⁵ :20242;20996	2	Ftr 3500	89-90 4 3 3 ¹ / ₂ -- 3 ¹ / ₂ 3 ³ / ₄	Carrillo A Q	126 bl 9.10	Furrtreeous122 ^{hd} Rock Solid Jess126 ³ / ₄ Exclusive Listing126 ¹ / ₄	jostled after start 10
16Aug07	Rui15 ft 440Y cw ³ :21900;21471	2	Ftr 4000	80-81 7 5 3 ^{nk} -- 3 ¹ / ₂ 3 ² / ₂	Carrillo A Q	123 bl 3.50	Red Storm Cat122 ¹ / ₂ Jess Ought to Flash122 ² Exclusive Listing123 ^{nk}	no final kick 10
06Jul07	Rui2 ft 400Y tw ¹⁰ :19701;19659	2	Ftr 4000	90-91 3 4 2 ¹ / ₂ -- 2 ¹ / ₂ 2 ^{nk}	Carrillo A Q	126 bl 6.50	Keep Themusicplaying122 ^{nk} Exclusive Listing126 ¹ Youbchassenme122 ²	broke in, drifted out 10
25May07	Rui2 ft 350Y cw ⁴ :18024;17569	2	Ftr 4000	76-79 5 3 4 ¹ -- 8 ² / ₄ 6 ³	Carrillo A Q	126 bl 4.00	Xo Kate124 ³ / ₄ Early Morning Bite124 ^{nk} Eyesa Lil Cuervo123 ³ / ₄	mild effort 10
03May07	RP7 ft 330Y nw ⁰ :17144;17144	2	E Mdn 12000	91-78 1 2 -- -- 3 ^{nk} 1 ¹ / ₄	Carrillo A Q	125 bl *2.00	Exclusive Listing125 ¹ / ₄ Bye N Pear1s122 ^{hd} Answer the Dream122 ^{nk}	won handily 10
30Mar07	RP6 sy ^s 250Y cw ¹⁰ :13464;13413	2	E Mdn 12000	94-80 4 2 -- -- 3 ¹ / ₂ 2 ^{nk}	Carrillo A Q	124 bl 32.70	Separatist Follies122 ^{nk} Exclusive Listing124 ¹ Presidential Request122 ¹ / ₂	dueled, outfinished 9
Workout(s):	13 May 08 Rui 220Y ft :12.36bg 41/56		4 May 08 Rui 220Y ft :12.41b 8/10		12 Apr 08 Rui 220Y ft :12.59b 4/9		26 Sep 07 LS 220Y ft :11.59b 7/44	

Limitations of the Speed Index

Why is this being done? Let's start with the definition of the Speed Index per the AQHA handbook:

“Speed index ratings are based on an average of the three fastest winning electric times run each year for the immediate past three years for each distance at each track. The average...will represent a speed index rating of 100”.

Simple to understand? Yes. Useful for the handicapper, not really. Take this hypothetical example:

Horse A equals best average time at a track with average or below average horses – earns 100 Speed Index

Horse B equals best average time at a track with above average horses - earns 100 Speed Index

Entered in the same race today, who would you bet on?

Again, while easy to understand, there are many issues with the Index. Using the example above, inferior horses can achieve the same Index as superior horses, rendering the Index useless for handicapping applications. In addition, it poses a barrier to entry for thoroughbred players who are accustomed to a more statistically sound figure. Finally, it only looks at times and does not take into account the differences between tracks, daily variants, or other factors like wind speed and direction.

Equibase Speed Figure (ESF)

The ESF is a much more useful number. It is a “normalization” of finishing times across all tracks and distances and is an indication of how fast a horse ran in a particular race. While rather complex, the calculation combines the raw time, inter-track variant (differences between size, shape and composition of tracks) and the daily-track variant. Also, it has recently been updated to include wind speed and direction in the calculation.

Performance – Equibase Speed Figure (ESF) Significantly Better!

How do the numbers stack up? No question the ESF is more predictive than the Index. Looking at all races in 2007, if you were to bet the horse with the highest ESF and Speed Index based on its last race, the ESF produced 10% more winners than the Index. Now that's certainly beneficial to your wagering customers.

In addition, tests comparing the predicted order of finish versus actual order of finish for all horses, again using the horses last race ESF and Speed Index, the ESF was measurably better.

