

MOONEE VALLEY BETTING INSIGHTS

Moonee Valley is a unique track that has provoked many betting theories over the years about previous track experience and wins being an advantage, barrier draws, running styles and others. The BetSmart philosophy though is to always question so called “universal truths” about betting and let the facts rather than popular opinion shape our beliefs and decision making.

Following is a cross section of key insights about betting at Moonee Valley, many of which to our knowledge are being made public for the first time and will no doubt surprise you.

THE RECORD OF HORSES BASED ON MARKET PRICE

Moonee Valley has been a track where short priced horses have performed significantly better than all other price groups. The table below shows the result of all runners at Moonee Valley from January 2005 to 30th September 2016, sorted by starting price.

| Starting Price | Runs | Wins | SR% | POT% |
|-------------------|------|------|-------|--------|
| \$1.01 to \$3.00 | 1402 | 578 | 41.2% | 0.8% |
| \$3.1 to \$5.00 | 3875 | 818 | 21.1% | -7.8% |
| \$5.1 to \$7.00 | 3532 | 495 | 14.0% | -5.1% |
| \$7.1 to \$10 | 4651 | 425 | 9.1% | -10.8% |
| \$10.1 to \$15 | 3320 | 182 | 5.5% | -10.9% |
| \$15.1 to \$20 | 1837 | 83 | 4.5% | -4.2% |
| \$20.1 to \$50 | 5208 | 133 | 2.6% | -15.0% |
| Greater than \$50 | 1744 | 7 | 0.4% | -58.7% |

The market average using best of SP / 3 totes as the dividend is -7.5%, so you can see that horses up to \$3.00 have been significant better and actually profitable without any further form analysis. Those up to \$7 have been around the market average, while those longer in the market as a total group are much worse than average (despite a better result in the \$15.1 to \$20 range.)

FAVOURITES

The record of favourites has been strong, with night meetings performing the best.

| Favourites | Runs | Wins | SR% | POT% |
|----------------|-------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Day Meetings | 1253 | 387 | 30.9% | -2.7% |
| Night Meetings | 1537 | 519 | 33.8% | 1.8% |
| TOTAL | 2790 | 906 | 32.5% | -0.2% |

These stats show that you could back every favourite at Moonee Valley and virtually break without any other form analysis. It's further evidence of why a bias against favourites as betting prospects is damaging to your potential of winning. If you can eliminate a small section of under-performing favourites in this sample, then you've made a healthy profit. That's much easier than trying to overcome the -10% market disadvantage presented by longer priced horses.

BARRIER DRAWS

A bias against wide barriers and belief that you should only back horses drawn barriers closer to the inside is very counter-productive to profitable betting. Every track and distance is a case by case basis, but it certainly holds true at Moonee Valley.

The following tables show the result of genuine chances up to \$10 SP by barrier draw between January 2005 and 30th September 2016

955m – 1000m races

| Barrier | Runs | Wins | SR% | POT% |
|---------|------|------|-------|--------|
| 1 to 3 | 960 | 165 | 17.2% | -11.7% |
| 3 to 5 | 905 | 175 | 19.3% | -2.8% |
| 5 to 7 | 847 | 141 | 16.6% | -12.7% |
| 7 to 9 | 631 | 102 | 16.2% | -7.4% |
| 9+ | 341 | 54 | 15.8% | -6.3% |

Even over the shorter trips, wide barriers are on average no great disadvantage compared to inside barriers.

1200m races

| Barrier | Runs | Wins | SR% | POT% |
|---------|------|------|-------|--------|
| 1 to 3 | 1298 | 237 | 18.3% | -4.1% |
| 3 to 5 | 1237 | 233 | 18.8% | -2.6% |
| 5 to 7 | 1180 | 199 | 16.9% | -8.4% |
| 7 to 9 | 956 | 141 | 14.7% | -13.1% |
| 9+ | 653 | 106 | 16.2% | 1.9% |

Barriers 5 to 9 have been underperformers, but again the key point is that wider draws have on average proven to be more profitable than others.

1500m – 1600m races

| Barrier | Runs | Wins | SR% | POT% |
|---------|------|------|-------|--------|
| 1 to 3 | 1307 | 240 | 18.4% | -2.6% |
| 3 to 5 | 1307 | 215 | 16.4% | -12.3% |
| 5 to 7 | 1197 | 178 | 14.9% | -17.1% |
| 7 to 9 | 971 | 173 | 17.8% | 3.3% |
| 9+ | 717 | 121 | 16.9% | 4.4% |

2040m races

| Barrier | Runs | Wins | SR% | POT% |
|---------|------|------|-------|--------|
| 1 to 3 | 645 | 108 | 16.7% | -10.2% |
| 3 to 5 | 594 | 99 | 16.7% | -10.6% |
| 5 to 7 | 570 | 106 | 18.6% | 1.3% |
| 7 to 9 | 494 | 92 | 18.6% | 6.6% |
| 9+ | 325 | 59 | 18.2% | 14.0% |

2500m – 3000m races

| Barrier | Runs | Wins | SR% | POT% |
|---------|------|------|-------|--------|
| 1 to 3 | 330 | 63 | 19.1% | 1.6% |
| 3 to 5 | 330 | 56 | 17.0% | -11.5% |
| 5 to 7 | 351 | 57 | 16.2% | -16.3% |
| 7 to 9 | 294 | 42 | 14.3% | -18.1% |
| 9+ | 199 | 32 | 16.1% | -8.8% |

BARRIERS – ALL DISTANCES

Popular betting theory is that the tight turning nature of the Moonee Valley track says that outside barriers must be a disadvantage, but you can see from the above data, that's not the case at all.

The table below shows all distances combined and presents a compelling picture.

| Barrier | Runs | Wins | SR% | POT% |
|---------|------|------|-------|--------|
| 1 to 3 | 4540 | 813 | 17.9% | -6.0% |
| 3 to 5 | 4373 | 778 | 17.8% | -7.2% |
| 5 to 7 | 4145 | 681 | 16.4% | -11.1% |
| 7 to 9 | 3346 | 550 | 16.4% | -4.8% |
| 9+ | 2235 | 372 | 16.6% | 2.1% |

Historically backing all horses drawn 9+ up to \$10 in the market at Moonee Valley has delivered a betting profit, with no other form or factors taken into account. That's remarkable!

It's one of the best examples I can think of to show how popular betting theory that is widely accepted in the industry can be totally false and actually counter-productive to making a profit.

PREVIOUS WINS & EXPERIENCE AT THE TRACK

The unique nature of the Moonee Valley tracks often leads to clichés such as “it's a specialist's track” or “a previous win at the track is a big advantage.” The reality is though; such theories don't hold much truth at all.

The table below shows the record of genuine winning chances up to \$10 SP in races at Moonee Valley, sorted by their previous number of starts / wins at the track.

| Record @ track | Runs | Wins | SR% | POT% |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|-------|--------|
| Never won at the track | | | | |
| 0 starts - 0 wins | 5578 | 1001 | 17.9% | -3.0% |
| 1 start - 0 wins | 2354 | 386 | 16.4% | -6.4% |
| 2+ starts - 0 wins | 2069 | 334 | 16.1% | -3.5% |
| Previous wins at the track | | | | |
| 1 start - 1 win | 705 | 162 | 23.0% | 1.0% |
| 2 starts - 1 or 2 wins | 572 | 94 | 16.4% | -14.1% |
| 3+ starts - 1 or 2 wins | 1724 | 249 | 14.4% | -17.2% |
| 3+ starts - 3+ wins | 341 | 67 | 19.6% | -1.1% |

The market average of all horses up to \$10 SP racing at Moonee Valley is -6.2%, so from this table we can see that horses having their first start at Moonee Valley have returned just -3%, which is 50% better than the overall average.

We can further summarise this table to paint a very clear picture:

| Record @ track | Runs | Wins | SR% | POT% |
|-------------------------|------|------|-------|--------|
| First start @ track | 5578 | 1001 | 17.9% | -3.0% |
| Prev runs but zero wins | 4423 | 720 | 16.3% | -5.3% |
| 1 or more wins | 3459 | 595 | 17.2% | -11.0% |

The reality about Moonee Valley is that genuine chances up to \$10 in the market having their first start at the track actually win more often and have a significantly better return than horses that have had 1 or more previous wins.

There is a very small sample of 122 runs (which come from 46 individual horses) that have 4+ wins at the track and a return of +13.2%. This could be natural variance, or it could mean that this group 46 horses over the last 11 years were genuinely much better at Moonee Valley, let's call them legitimate track specialists.

Those with 1 to 3 wins though have returned -11.9% from 3,337 runners, which is significantly below the overall market average. It highlights how the market perceives a couple of wins at the track to mean something much more than it really does.

IN RUN POSITION – RAIL MOVEMENTS

This is perhaps the most valuable piece of advice I can ever offer you about betting at Moonee Valley. I'm certain that this type of information has never been published before and there would be very few punters aware of the specifics.

The position of the rail at Moonee Valley has a significant effect on the winning chance and profitability of horses from different in-run positions. The following table shows the results of genuine chances up to \$10 in the market based on the rail position and where they settled in the run.

| Settling Position | RAIL TRUE | | RAIL OUT | |
|-------------------|-----------|--------|----------|--------|
| | SR% | POT% | SR% | POT% |
| Pace 1-2 | 21.4% | 5.3% | 29.1% | 35.4% |
| Off Pace 3-4 | 17.5% | -8.0% | 17.5% | -12.7% |
| Mid 5-8 | 16.5% | -12.7% | 13.1% | -27.0% |
| Mid back 7-10 | 16.7% | -8.4% | 10.6% | -37.3% |
| Back9+ | 13.6% | -13.8% | 7.7% | -48.4% |

When the rail is true at Moonee Valley, on pace runners are still advantaged, but the remaining runners have a relatively even strike rate and return. However when the rail is out (from 2m to 7m) the on-pace runners have a significant advantage and the further back a horse settles the more disadvantaged it is.

You simply don't want to be on a horse that will most likely settle midfield or worse when the rail is out! You might back the odd winner, but I will guarantee that over enough bets on these horses you will end up well and truly behind.

WRAPPING UP

In punting it's important to regularly question the beliefs you hold about certain factors and whether they are actually true. Making decisions on the basis of false beliefs will prevent you from achieving profits and most importantly, you won't even be aware of the mistakes you are making.... it will go on forever.

From these insights I have the following advice for you about betting at Moonee Valley:

- Do not be bias against a horse simply because it's "the favourite." On average they are much easier to profit from.
- Do not dismiss horses as betting prospects simply because they have drawn a wide barrier (unless you are very confident in your speed map to say it's a real disadvantage.) You should embrace these opportunities and accept the good luck with bad luck, under the knowledge that the market is offering you a price advantage.
- Do not buy into the theory that a previous win at the track is any type of advantage, especially in terms of betting value. Horses with no previous starts at the track are on average the most profitable. Even those that have run at the track before but not won are far more profitable than those with previous wins. If you like a horse that has yet to supposedly "prove itself at The Valley" then don't shy away from it, embrace it with the knowledge the market will on average give you a price advantage.
- Be aware of the rail position at Moonee Valley. Look for horses that will race up near the lead when the rail is out. Even more importantly, avoid those that look likely to settle midfield or worse in the run.

Smart punting!

Daniel