

OptixEQ Interview with attorney, handicapper and contest player Frank Polk

When did you first start following Horseracing?

In 1965, when I was eleven years old my parents were going to meet friends at one of the few race tracks close to my home state, Oklahoma. The person who was supposed to look after me canceled. Suddenly, and with little notice, I was packed into the car along with the luggage and we hit the dusty road for La Mesa Park in Raton, NM. While La Mesa Park was a modest outpost (at best) for thoroughbred races it was a fantastic place of discovery for me. I was hanging out, handicapping, betting and winning. I loved it all.

For information on Raton and La Mesa Park... <http://www.horseracing-tracks.com/tracks/nm/homeLam.html>

The next significant event was finding Andy Beyer's "Picking Winners" at a book store in North Carolina which adversely impacted my law school grades for at least a semester.

Please share your proudest achievement as a horseplayer?

I'll share three:

1. Hitting the twin perfecta (or something like that) on the La Mesa Park trip (it was like a twin trifecta except with exactas).
2. Qualifying for my first NHC after several years of trying (I've now qualified for 7 NHCs)
3. Much to my surprise, winning the 2018 DRF "World Handicapping Championship" and cashing for \$138,500.

Are you a circuit, tournament, track specific, etc. player? How often do you play?

I mostly play tracks that are used in tournaments, including the NY circuit, FL circuit, KY circuit and SCAL circuit.

I split time between tournament play on online betting but the trend is to more tournament play. Handicapping, betting and tournament play are my primary hobbies - and I'm in the process of retiring - so I have been playing a lot lately.

What kind of handicapper are you, and which types of bets favor your style?

My approach to handicapping starts with pace analysis which is great because that's a strength of Optix. My second level of analysis is speed, which is also a strength of Optix. Beyond pace and speed, I'll use anything, anything that may give me an advantage in any race.

As to betting, I keep thinking I am an exotics player - vertical and horizontal - but then I check my records and realize I should be a Win- Place better for real money and need to restrict my exotics play to paper bets.

How long have you been using Optix and what brought you to try our handicapping platform?

I've been working with Optix for over a year now. I was initially attracted to the Optix platform when I visited their website and read one of Emily's 'race of the day' analysis that was spot-on. I happened to have spent a lot of time on that race and missed it completely (both for real money and in a tournament). So, I looked deeper and the first thing that grabbed me was the "Plot" component, which presents the pace of the race visually and in a clear, clever and unique way. This sounds crazy but a quick glance at the Optix "Plot" provides significant information on the projected pace of the race, the position of the horses, and whether a horse tends to close or fade (and more). Other components of the program include excellent speed figures (that can be sorted many ways), trip and trouble notes, and projections for improvement or decline (based primarily on the trip and trouble notes). All of the components, when taken together, are incredibly helpful in getting a complete picture of a race and identifying betting opportunities. For people that want to dig deeper, the platform also includes a variety of interesting bells and whistles which I don't understand and have not incorporated into my handicapping (so I have something to do in my retirement).

Describe how OptixEQ has enhanced (or added to) your game?

I have used another program (including a recent upgrade) for the last 10 years and Optix has been an excellent supplement to the information provided by that program (or maybe it's vice versa).

Optix has enhanced or added to my game because it is one of the few programs that presents a great deal of information visually in a clear and logical way, especially related to pace and speed. Additionally, the trip/trouble notes and projections are extremely helpful to someone like me who is unlikely to watch race replays on a regular basis. All of that added up means I have a better understanding of a race and any betting opportunities. So that's a good thing!

Over the past two years, Optix users have been finishing very well in tournaments. What advice do you have for users who are new to the platform?

Identify the races in which you have an advantage or a unique insight and do not be afraid to bet them in the tournaments, even (or especially) if they are going off at high odds. Don't talk yourself off a potential tournament winning score just because the odds are high or the horse has some problems in its past performances.

Put another way, identify the information in Optix that you understand and that speaks to you. Use that information in an aggressive way to select picks for a tournament... unless, of course that doesn't work and then try something else!

What would you like to see integrated into the platform to further enhance the product?

It's already a great platform, but I'll think about it.