Ragozin figures explained

Len Ragozin, the father of "speed figures," developed a system of measuring how fast every horse has run when taking into account such factors as weight, track condition, surface, depth of track, distance raced off the rail, and wind speed and direction. His method is considered the best, most accurate measure used in Thoroughbred racing because of his use of multiple variants.

The THOROUGHBRED TIMES *Stallion Directory* includes career-best Ragozin numbers for each subject stallion and for each stallion's leading runners, where available. For the subject stallion, the number appears in the tabulated race record directly below the Racing Index (RI). For leading earners, the number appears immediately after earnings. The Ragozin figure information includes the age at which the horse obtained the best figure, the distance, the surface, and the

Ragozin speed figure.

Ragozin's figures are based on a system in which a lower number represents a stronger effort. A figure of 0 is akin to a "perfect" race, though horses can run slightly lower figures (less than 0) due to such factors as wind, distance raced off the rail, etc., that upgrade their performance. The best figures are usually run in such races as the Breeders' Cup Classic (G1), with the winner normally earning a -1 to 1; slower speed figures can run as high as 40 or more in a slow maiden claiming race.

As an example of the practical use of the numbers, a male horse that raced until he was five and never earned a Ragozin figure lower than 13 was essentially no faster than an average $25,000 claimer competing in California. Conversely, a horse that ran a 3 in the spring of his three-year-old campaign ran comparatively fast enough to win an average Kentucky Derby (G1).

The figure for a top effort also can vary due to a horse's sex, age, and the time of year. Females generally run 3 points slower than males in the same category, while three-year-olds will typically run faster in the fall than in the spring.

The numbers for similar levels of dirt and turf races are usually equal, except in graded stakes, where dirt races have historically come in 1 or 2 points lower.

At left is a table of average Ragozin figures to give readers an idea of what any one number means for any one runner.

Average Ragozin figures

Class of race	Typical winning figure	Class of race	Typical winning figure
Grade 1 stakes	–1 to 1	Grade 3 Triple Crown prep	7 to 8
Grade 2 stakes	2 to 5	2yo maiden special (Saratoga Race Course)	9 to 14
Grade 3 stakes	4 to 7	2yo maiden special (Monmouth Park)	13 to 18
Grade 1 stakes (turf)	2 to 3	NW1 allowance (Belmont Park)	9 to 10
Grade 2 stakes (turf)	4 to 5	NW2 allowance (Belmont Park)	8 to 9
Grade 3 stakes (turf)	6 to 7	NW3 allowance (Belmont Park)	7 to 8
$35,000 stakes at Calder Race Course	9 to 10	NW1 allowance (Hawthorne Race Course/spring)	11 to 13
Grade 1 stakes (2yo)	5	NW1 allowance (Hawthorne Race Course/fall)	12 to 14
Triple Crown race	2 to 3	$50,000 claimer (Santa Anita Park)	8 to 11
Grade 1 Triple Crown prep	3 to 4	$25,000 claimer (Santa Anita Park)	11 to 13
Grade 2 Triple Crown prep	5 to 6	$25,000 claimer (Hawthorne Race Course)	13 to 15

Note: Average winning figures for females are generally three points higher at each level.