



## Breeding and Training Tips

Firstly, I would like to thank Pdraig Hogan, Dave Fuller and JV for their time in making valuable contributions to this document. These three gentlemen have been regularly battling it out against each other and the other top trainers in the top grade races.

We were all once beginners or struggled to compete at the start of our SOPL careers. Over time, we've constantly changed our strategies and eventually created our own game playing methods to maximise the competitiveness of our respective stables within the SOPL League.

This document tries to answer the following questions

- Training - Manual versus Auto?
- Multiple, or just one stable?
- Breeding (How)?
  - Inbreeding or not?
- What do you look for in a game horse before you purchase one at auction?
- Trials, how and where?

Please note, that everybody's private game is different in some manner. What is provided in this document are the best tips and advice that the top trainers can possibly provide. You should take these tips and apply them to your own games. Expect to write off a few seasons due to you experimenting.

# Dave Fuller Outback Stables Australia



## **Training** **Manual versus Auto**

I can now say I have tried them both extensively. Both have their advantages and disadvantages but for me, the auto stable is the way to go now. Advantages of each are listed below

### **Manual**

1. You can decide on what lot you wish to specialise in. Uphill for stamina, downhill for speed or flat for general training.
2. You can see how quick your horses are over sectionals in trialing
3. You can recover a horse more quickly, spell horses and prime horses to their peak more easily.

### **Automatic**

1. You do not have to worry about changing lots at all.
2. Seasons can be completed far quicker

If you want to keep tabs on all your horses, specialise in training for stamina or speed or want to keep a track of sectionals, go with the manual method.

If you want to progress through the seasons quicker and don't want to be constantly flicking back and forth through the training screen, go with the auto.

As far as quality of horses goes, I have bred exceptional horses in both aspects. I have seen no real advantage or disadvantage in horse quality with either one. I do use the auto method however and recommend it due to the time aspects. It takes many seasons of play to find that league quality star and many hours can be sliced off the time to achieve this by using the auto training method.

### **Training Tip**

Use the auto training method so you don't do anything special with training. I use a modified showcase to ensure all the horses I have do have suitable races and that they are well spaced apart however. Only tip to offer here is make your own showcase file to suit your needs and one that doesn't fatigue your horses.

## **Stables**

### **Multiple versus One Stable**

Another one where nothing really conclusive can be given either way. JV is a one stable trainer and he won the trainer premiership in season 4 and 5. Pdraig I believe has a single stable and another split one and has had great success with both. Usually this sort of question comes down to how many horses of a particular type do you want to breed a season. Advantages of each are listed below.

#### **Multiple**

1. You can specialise in certain areas and breed more horses in a specific area each season. More horses bred means great chance of finding a star.
2. If manual training you can specify a certain lot (uphill or downhill) if you have a stayer or sprint specific game.

#### **One Stable**

1. You have the potential to breed a star at any distance in a season.
2. Much easier to crossbreed (sprinters with stayers etc) and inject new blood.

Personally I like to have two stables. One for 5f to 10f horses and the other for 12f to 20f horses. However both stables start from the same roots. What I do is start with one stable. I build that stable up and have it breeding at all distances. When it reaches a certain strength, which is usually about season 25, I will split the stable out into two. To split a stable you go to the /saves directory and find the 4 save files and copy them. Give them a new unused number from 1 to 10 which isn't being used and next time you go to the load game window you will notice a second game in there.

## **Breeding**

This is the section of the game, which needs to be mastered to be a serious contender in the league. Training is irrelevant if you haven't got decent horses to start with. The following are some of the things I find very relevant when breeding.

First and the most important thing:

**GET QUALITY GAMEBREDS!** If you don't have quality gamebreds your stable is not going to go anywhere fast. With this game, quality breeds quality. Not every time but over a course of a decade a quality horse is likely to leave you with some decent offspring to build on.

Now you may want to know what is a quality gamebred and how to get a quality gamebred. A quality gamebred is one that is a group one winner. How do you get such a horse? There are two methods.

First method and the most successful is going to the daily auction. You do this every day by selecting the view races and skip day buttons to activate the daily auction screen. You do this for roughly the first fifteen seasons. It slow and time consuming but you will get more than your fair share of quality homebreds to breed from this way.

Second method is purchasing horses at the yearling auction at the start of the season. Most end up hacks but every now and again you will find a quality horse here.

Don't be tempted to sell yourself short here either. You grab a horse that looks reasonable but is not first rate it will effect you in the long run. You want your stable to be the best then only breed with the best gamebreds.

Second part is your crossbreeding.

When you look at gamebreds most have the same characteristics in their stat bars for specific distances. However to improve the quality you need to crossbreed. Basically what you need to do is transfer your sprinters with 100% speed and 90% acceleration right through your bloodlines. This is a long and gradual process but very effective over the long term. Can take around 40 seasons to get the stat bars to maximum for each specific distance.

I find the gradual for sprinters to classics and accelerated method for turfs to irons the best methods. What you need here is sprinters that have 100% speed and very high acceleration (90%). They mainly happen in 5f sprinters but the occasional 6f will have it.

Methods here are:

### **Gradual method**

With the gradual method you gently slide this acceleration up a few furlongs at a time. Get you 5f or 6f sprinter and bred it with a 9f or 10f horse. Your goal here is to breed a 7f or 8f horse with 100% speed, 35% stamina and 90% acceleration. This is your miler with his bars at optimum level. A lot of trial and error involved here but keep doing this until you have around 3-4 unique pairings with these stats. Once you have your milers like this, any colt with these stats can be bred with other milers until over time all your milers will spawn with 100%spd, 35%stam, 90%acc. With the miler breed it with the classic (9f-10f horses). What you are after here are horses, which spawn with 100%spd, 70%sta, and 90%acc. You can reach these levels easily with 15 seasons.

### **Accelerated method**

You probably wonder what would happen if I breed a 5f sprinter with a 19f horse. Well basically anything can happen. You can get the worst most aborted horse you have seen or you can fluke a 12f horse that spawns with 70%spd, 100%stam, and 90%acc and stays 20 furlongs. It's completely random and you can breed something awesome or something completely rubbish. Rather than being gradual and taking 20-25 seasons to push the speed and acceleration into the turf and leger horses (12-14f)

you try and get it done in one hit. Maybe 1 in 30 of these work well but when they do you will have a horse able to add enormous amounts of speed and acceleration into your turf and higher horses. Took me roughly 35 seasons before all my Iron Horses of 19f had acceleration the same level as a 5f sprinter. They spawn at the maximum possible of 50%spd, 100%sta, and 90%acc all the time now.

Third part is weeding the wheat from the chaff

This is something I have been doing to great success in my sprinter-mile-classic stable. Basically I am breeding thirty horses a season. Midway through the 2yo season I will export all thirty horses I have bred and run a variety of trials from 5f to 9f with them. From these trials I will basically isolate the top three or four horses from each distance and cull the rest of them. You will probably think why bother doing this. You would know who the best horses are by their formline..WRONG!..Just because a horse has great game form doesn't mean it is a great horse to export. A fatal mistake most trainers make. I have discovered quite a few diamonds in the rough this way. I have had horses looking ten times the horse in game than other horses but completely the opposite in the construction kit. Instead of horses with excellent game form the horses with excellent export form are retained by me and added to my breeding stock. Using this method my stable has continually progressed and shown no signs of regression like other stables when they reach a certain point. With the turfs to irons I do this to them as a 3yo. I cull maybe 6 horses that look hopeless, even at 2, and trial 24 horses.

Fourth is inbreeding

This is something I try to avoid at all cost but sometimes it gets hard. As a general rule I try to inject new blood fairly regularly. Keep a look out at the auctions for horses than run competitive with your lot. If your stable is anything like mine not too many group one winners will emanate from outside your stable or horses you have bred. When they do they are usually good to inject into your bloodlines.

Fifth is the CK.

Visit it regularly and trial regularly. Nearly every horse I own will get trialed to some extent and that's what helps you develop depth in your stable. For league purposes the CK is the be all and end all. The horses' game form is irrelevant.

**Padraig Hogan**  
**Black Lightning Stables**  
**Ireland**



## **Training**

### **Manual versus Auto**

Have had good results with both. Cannot see the benefit in manual to be honest, as it takes MUCH longer

## **Stables**

### **Multiple versus One Stable**

Has to be multiple. Upside is that you can specialise in one category, which is what all newbies should do IMO. Once you have got a decent sprint/miler/stayer stable you can then start to breed with different distances. Downside is that if you get a really good sire in one game you cannot breed with your stars in other game. What I tend to do is get some decent sires and then "split" the game (rename save files to 2,3,4 etc.) and start to purchase gamebreds of differing distances. Allows you to have say, sprint, mile, and classic stables with the same sires in each.

I also have one stable with everything in. This is my original "sprint" stable, which I slowly built up in distance to now cover everything from sprinters to stayers. Long process, but it eventually resulted in Now Mau and Nemesis Nine

## **Breeding**

Keep records! No matter how good a horse was in game or CK. The acid test in breeding is in its offspring. If a sire has produced nothing good in first 2 crops (8 foals at least in total) then I tend to discount it. Give a mare 3 seasons of breeding with top sire - if nothing good produced then discard her. As soon as a sire produces a few decent offspring then up his quota of mares immediately. This is THE most important area IMO. Worth spending the time identifying the best sires. Can save countless seasons.

### **Inbreeding or not?**

Short term makes no difference IMO and you can get some seriously decent offspring from closely inbred lines. Long term you need to add some gamebreds every now and then and mix up your own lines also.

## **What you look for in a game horse before you purchase one at auction?**

Purely times in races when dealing with older horses. Multi group winners can look good but don't bother unless times are decent. Unlikely to be up to your own runners but still look for the better ones. Look at any 2 and 3 year olds with a few runs only. You will often find one that has run say three times with two very poor runs and one good one. Very likely that first run was worked up and maybe third was on unsuitable ground or with unsuitable tactics. Pays to look behind the stats basically. I don't waste time with unraced horses, most turn out to be complete duds.

Watch the races where possible, especially early on. Identify gamebreds that catch your eye and visit the auction every day when building a breeding program. I made huge strides in my yard (lines still going) when I bought a mare at 11yo that had slaughtered all of my top 2yos nine seasons before!

## **Trials (how and where)?**

Newmarket (or other track with little bias or "character") and Nad Al Shaba. Big fields, with a pacemaker. Try making 4-6 copies of your best horse to give you best idea of his true level. Save your horses in folders by distance category.

**JV**  
**Weathercock House Stables**  
**UK**



**Training**  
**Manual versus Auto**

The only advantage of manual training is that can rest horses after they have run so they will recover quicker and then be ready to race sooner, I always use auto training as it saves time. Get through more seasons.

**Stables**  
**Multiple versus One Stable**

I only use one stable, I did try 6 but it was too complicated, for my little brain.

**Breeding**

I usually breed horses within 2f-4f of bred distance. I tend not to breed 2 similar horses together, i.e. a 6f horse with 6f horse. You should trial your saved horses often, so if one does stand out you should keep an eye on it for future breeding.

**Inbreeding or not?**

Yes, works fine.

**What you look for in a game horse before you purchase one at auction?**

Rarely buy any game horses, I keep an eye on the top game horses and if one does come up in auction then I will buy it.

**Trials (how and where)?**

I have bred my own pacemakers, sprinter pacemaker, mile pacemaker & a middle distance pacemaker. Every trial I run, I have pacemakers in the race and I keep running the trials until I get a really fast time.

I use the race calendar to decide the tracks. I tend to use Ascot and trial on all types of ground.

**Colm O’Dea**  
**Sandhills Stables**  
**Ireland**



## **Training**

### **Manual versus Auto**

I'm a bit of a control freak when it comes to my horses training, so I always go with the manual method. I like the flexibility that Manual training gives me, so I can try to increase the stamina or speed on a batch of horses. It is very time consuming when it comes to training, but I've still managed to get through my seasons quickly.

#### **Training Tip**

When using the Manual method, trial regularly and sell unwanted horses to reduce your stable size every season. Keeps the stable to a more manageable size.

## **Stables**

### **Multiple versus One Stable**

Have always had multiple stables, usually 3 stables so I can specialise in a particular distance range per stable, e.g. Sprinters up to Classic, Turf up to Iron. I also keep one stable as an all in. Sprinters right through to Iron horse.

When starting a new game, I start with one stable only. I progress about 30 seasons so I have a decent baseline in my bloodlines, then I split the stables. It can be annoying when you get a classy filly or colt in one game and you can't breed it with horses of the same calibre from another game.

## Breeding

In my opinion, it's the most important aspect to the game. Good bloodlines outweigh good training by large amount. You must get bloodlines right, otherwise, you can waste a lot of time.

I try not to breed horses with a massive gap in distance, usually keep it to two category jumps in distances, but will extend that gap if necessary to avoid inbreeding. If you break down horses into their categories

- Sprinters
- Milers
- Classic
- Turf
- Stayers
- Iron

Then, the Sprinters would be bred into the Milers and Classics. Turf horses would be bred with a minimum of Milers and maximum of Iron. You can breed whatever horses you like together, but I've found that breeding Milers or Sprinters with Irons, tend to produce a league quality horse once a millennium. You can waste a lot of seasons and time with incorrect breeding.

With breeding, you must keep good records. I use an Excel spreadsheet like the one in the picture (on the next page).

The Stallions are across the top and Mares, down the left side. Both are marked with a (G) – Gamehorse or (H) Homebred. Each stallion is given a colour. You will notice that the colours are not the full way down the column.

Let's take Selkirk as an example. He's a quality turf stallion. You will see that his colour is only in the boxes for Strong Penny, Kantikoy, Marias Magic and so forth. I limit him to these Mares to avoid inbreeding, and to avoid my bloodline getting full of youngsters, all from the same stallion. The numbers in the boxes are the last game year that these two were paired for breeding.

It's not easy to disperse a mare across Stallions like this when starting a new game, but once you've played a few years and built up the bloodline, then you will start to get more options available to you, and will have the luxury to pick and choose.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	
1		Son Altese (G)	Seikirk (H)	Scott Love (H)			Pistolet Bleu (H)	Flemensfirth (H)	Pompeath (H)	Bunsen Burner (H)	Herbert Crescent (H)	Sea Raven (H)	Agwaas (G)	Adrasteia (G)	Pure Prize (H)	Desert Sun (H)
2	Grab The Green (H)	2129-2132, 2135		2133-2134, 2138			2136	2140			2141	2142				
3	Seamstress (H)	2134, 2143									2141	2140				2142
4	Blanche Dubois (H)	2133, 2140									2143	2141			2142	
5	Princess Satco (H)			2136			2137	2142	2139		2140					2143
6	Rose Crescent (H)	2135									2139	2141	2142			
7	Rongo (H)	2133-2137						2141			2142	2140				
8	Kerryhead Girl (H)	2136, 2138									2140	2141				
9	Cool N Calm (H)	2138									2142	2140				
10	Strong Penny (H)	2138, 2142	2136, 2141										2143			
11	Lost The Toss (H)	2138									2143	2139	2141			
12	Marias Magic (G)		2142	2140		2137	2138			2141					2143	
13	Adjamiya (H)							2139			2140	2142				
14	Kantikoy (H)		2138, 2141									2143			2142	
15	Tune Into The Cat (H)	2138									2140	2141				
16	Puma (G)		2139	2141		2142							2143			
17	Grecian Dancer (H)	2142									2141	2143				
18	Petite Fantasy (H)	2141											2142			
19	Capo Rosso (G)			2142			2143									
20																

### Inbreeding or not?

No. I've tried it and don't see a problem with it. Sometimes it's necessary when starting a new game, just to allow you to build a good bloodline. It's just a personal choice to avoid it.

### What you look for in a game horse before you purchase one at auction?

Times!! Times!! Times!!

I used to look at the auctions here and there and found that my bloodline was advancing on it's own, but only by small jumps. I started trawling the auctions everyday, and have picked up some spectacular game horses. Even if the game horse doesn't win a group race, it's the time it takes to complete the distance, taking ground conditions into consideration, that matter to me.

With young gamebreds, 2yo's bought at start of year, or 3yo's bought mid season, they get trials in the CK before they are retired, and must be competitive. They don't need to win a trial, just run respectable times.

With 5yo's and upwards, their physical stats have started to diminish, so trialing is no longer an option. It's best guess, based on times, conditions and standard of race.

## **Trials (how and where)?**

### **Choosing horses for breeding?**

All tracks, and all surfaces, but I introduce riding instructions, if I feel they are necessary. I usually only need to add instructions to one horse out of every ten that I breed. If a horse does not run well in the CK, it's ejected. Only horses that run consistently good times in the CK make it into my breeding barn. Sometimes, it's as little as one horse, every two seasons. As mentioned above, if you breed from average horses, then you get average horses. I only breed from the best league standard horses.

### **For the League?**

All tracks, and all surfaces. Any horse instructions have already been added at this point and I can't adjust them.

I use the season race calendar that's available on the forum or by browsing TOM, to choose my tracks. I tend to go for Newmarket, Ascot, Curragh, Nad Al Sheba, etc, where all the majors are held.

I always use pacemakers from my own bloodlines. I don't waste time watching the trials. I hit the spacebar almost immediately after I start the race. Take note of the first 3 home and their respective times. I record these details in Excel.