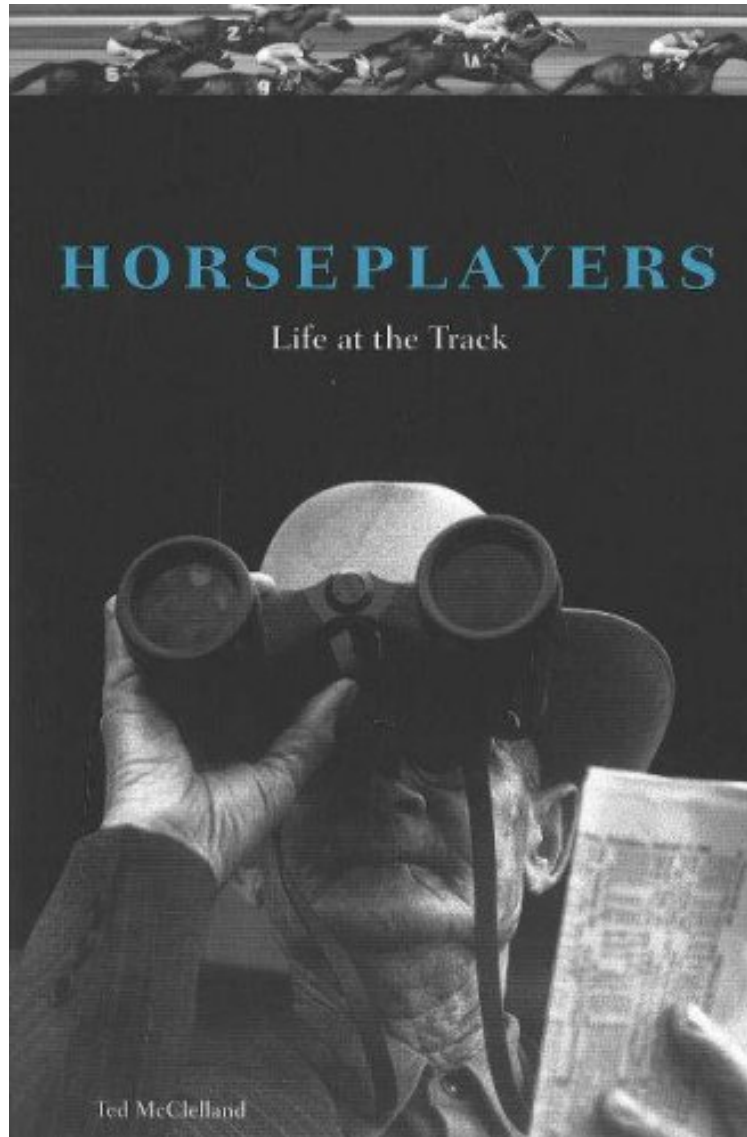


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Horseplayers: Life at the Track

Ted McClelland

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Ted McClelland : Horseplayers: Life at the Track before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Horseplayers: Life at the Track:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A Great, Fun ReadBy George HaywardA well-written and interesting look at handicapping and folks who try to earn a living doing it.What a pleasant surprise! This book paralleled my life in many odd coincidences, and that added to the fun, but even if you didnt grow up near one of Chicagos racetracks there is great material here of interest to any horse fan. The author, Ted McClelland includes tales

of road trips to other tracks large and small, as well as a lot of material about off track betting at Americas great racetracks. Ted somehow finagles his editor to give him a one year stake for betting the horses under the premise that he will write a book about his experience. This book is the account of that year and Teds attempt to come up with a successful system for handicapping. In the process Ted meets a blind man who handicaps with a numbering system that would confuse Fermat, an ex- Nun who successfully handicaps through her perception of the horses willingness to improve, a former college professor who develops a system that leads to paying off the mortgage (and confounding his father-in-law) and a whole cast of characters who live (or try to live) at the track. The book is full of information on horse racing and gambling but its the personal descriptions of the people he encounters that really make the book worth reading. Ted is a gifted writer and he captures and relates the true stories of these people with humor and dignity. Since finishing this book Ive found some of Teds articles and have found them equally well written and I will definitely be buying his other two books. A good book by a good author. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Enjoyable read By Customer I think the author's experience at the racetrack for a year mirrors the experience of many horseplayers, including myself. You meet interesting characters and feel the high and lows of winning and losing bets. As the author painfully points out, handicapping is very time consuming and it is extremely difficult to make money at this game on a consistent basis. You go the racetrack because you enjoy the whole experience - the horses, the people, and yes, once in a while you cash a winning ticket. It was fun to relive my years at racetracks through this book. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Winning Ticket By Best Of All Ted McClelland puts cash in the kitty and takes a year to explore the real world of handicapping the races....from the cheap seats at Hawthorne Race Course to the splendor of Arlington Park and at tracks throughout the country. In Horseplayers, McClelland shares the thrill of cashing the tickets with the nice payouts and the struggles of searching for that one needed winner in the last race, along with the dreams and frustrations of regular fans who find life at the track. There is the husband and wife who have different handicapping strategies, the railbird with a theory that makes calculus seem easy, the fan who looks for cashable tickets left on counters and the veteran who rumor has it is now not welcome in one facility. It is a journey away from the million-dollar races, world-class stables and majestic runners adding new pages to the history books. These regulars - who are found with comparable stories at any track - are more at home seeking out that big play with the hard-knocking claimers on a Thursday afternoon than elbowing through the crowd on Triple Crown simulcast days or on bobblehead giveaway weekends in the summer. And Family Days? Forget it. Though there aren't as many fans going through the gates as in "The Golden Era" of racing, they are as dedicated and have as many conspiracy theories about why that runner should not have stopped in the deep stretch, unless the jocks were doing something - somehow - to fix the outcome. And that is what makes Horseplayers such a great read; because life is about trying to get that edge, playing the odds and cashing the winning ticket at the end of the day. And if the "sure thing" doesn't hit the board, there is always tomorrow.

The author spent a year at tracks and off-track betting facilities in Chicago and across the country, profiling the people who make a career of gambling on horses. This account follows his personal journey of what it means to be a horseplayer as he gambles with his book advance using various betting and handicapping strategies along the way.

"Immensely readable account, by a brutally honest writer...a gambler's book that is well worth a punt" --"The Racing Post"
"Everything a horse-racing book should be." --"Kirkus s"
"Brilliantly captures the pace of track life." --"Chicago Sun-Times"
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"Brilliantly captures the pace of track life." -- "Chicago Sun-Times"
"Thrilling gallop through the world of horse racing and gambling." --"The Economist"
"A delightful memoir . . . McClelland details his transformation from casual fan to obsessed racing geek with humor." -- "Railbird"
"Will best be appreciated for its humor and insight even by those who have had little experience at the racetrack." --"Library Journal"
"Tells it pretty much like it is, and might even persuade other casual handicappers to play like a pro for one exciting year of their lives. Two thumbs up!" --James Quinn, author, "The Best of Thoroughbred Handicapping" and "The Handicapper's Condition Book"
About the Author Ted McClelland is a staff writer for the Chicago Reader, where he writes a popular column called "At the Track" featuring his stories from the racetrack.