

2-Year-Old Sales Analysis, 2006-2007-2008:

Breeze Show Performance vs. Racing Achievement

From DataTrack International

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there is a statistical advantage to buying, or betting, horses that breeze at the five major 2-year-old sales each year and score highest on two of DataTrack's key criteria for analyzing those breezes:

- A horse's **BreezeFig/Group** placement, and,
- A horse's stride length (SL).

This is the first installment of this study and it is focused on the five major 2-year-old sales, and includes only North American racing data from the 2-year-old seasons in which those sales are held. The sales were held in 2006, 2007, and 2008, and are in calendar order and (officially named): Ocala February (OBSFEB), Fasig-Tipton Calder (FTFFEB), Barretts March-Fairplex (BARMAR), Ocala March (OBSMAR), and Keeneland April (KEEAPR).

Subsequent studies will be issued for these five sales and the racing records of the 3-year-old season following each year's sales, e.g., 2006 will be 2007 3-year-old season. A separate study will concentrate on the two mid-level national sales, Ocala April (OBSAPR) and Fasig-Tipton Maryland (EASMAY).

*Those who are completely familiar with what we are talking about can skip to **Page 5** now and come back to the background information that follows below for clarification. Everyone else should read these crib notes before looking at the charts which begin on Page 5.*

BreezeFigs and Different Groups

A **BreezeFig** is a speed figure calculated from data generated by an individual horse's time, stride length and several angulations of power and other "internal factors" that are captured on digital video by DataTrack's analysts using an exclusive and proprietary program.

Horses are then ranked in four **Groups** by sex and distance breezed—although in reality, there are just three Groups when it comes to judging overall quality. These Groups are labeled somewhat differently at the sales from how they are in *Daily Racing Form's BreezeFigs* handicapping tool (at www.drf.com). So in order to avoid confusion, we are explaining our terminology right up front.

Group 1: Horses that are considered the tops in the sale based on their **BreezeFigs** scores and various "internals" are lumped together at the sales as Group 1. There are actually two designations within this grouping—**Group1*** and **Group 1**, with the one carrying the (*) marginally better on overall internals. Thus if two horses in Group 1 have a 65 **BreezeFig**, and one carries an asterisk, it is considered marginally better than the other one, but not by much.

BreezeFigs/Stride Length Study...Page 2

Now for the subtle difference in reporting:

- In *DRF's BreezeFigs* sheet, Group1* = Group 1
- In *DRF's BreezeFigs* sheet, Group1 = Group 2 (please don't ask why).
- For the purposes of our statistical studies, however, **we consider them equal**, but the study still reports the results separately as Group 1 and Group 2 so that you can see the way things break within Group 1*/1.

The other two Groups are also tagged differently at the sales and by *DRF*:

- In *DRF's BreezeFigs*, Group 2 = Group 3.
- In *DRF's BreezeFigs* NQ (Not Qualified) = Group 4.

With key exceptions, horses in the above two Groups are ones that buyers seeking quality do not want to own or that handicappers seeking quick returns do not want to bet.

- The main **exception** is that if a horse in either of these Groups earns a **BreezeFig that is one point under Par** it may be worthwhile to buy that horse, depending upon the potential racing venue and the price to be paid. For betting DataTrack will go as deep as two points below Par, once again depending on the racing venue and the quality of the race. For example, a horse that's two under Par at a major sale may very well be worth buying for a stable on a second-tier racing circuit and do very well in fairly decent company there. Similarly, such horses might be worth buying—or betting—in maiden claiming or restricted races at major circuit tracks. There is a category for this group on the charts beginning on Page 5 labeled “**G3 & G4 (1).**”

Stride Lengths and BreezeFigs

Measuring a horse's stride length (SL) on video is nothing new, but what DataTrack does with that information is to run it through some formulas to assist in the **BreezeFig** calculation, and also:

- Calculates and compares each horse's stride length to every horse of its own sex that breezed at the sale on the same day and at the same distance.
- DataTrack then comes up with an **average SL** for the sex at that distance that day in order to give the buyer, and the handicapper, an idea as to whether or not horses of similar pedigree or size (or those that have the same or similar **BreezeFig** or have breezed in the same time), are worth favoring over others.

Like all other providers of such services, DataTrack assumed that horses with longer stride lengths at 2-year-old sales should be at some sort of advantage when it comes to racing performance. And DataTrack certainly has confidence in stating to both buyer and handicapper that when combined, **BreezeFigs** and SL form a powerful selection tool.

BreezeFigs/Stride Length Study...Page 3

However, until now there has been no measuring tool to prove the point. That's because there has been no way to accurately track the thousands of horses that go through these sales each year because of costs and manpower needs. That all changed with DataTrack's relationship with *Daily Racing Form*, and the results are reflected in this survey.

Parameters

Nearly 3,000 horses were analyzed for this study, and with such a large dataset came the need for strict adherence to certain standards. Here are the main parameters that guided the accumulation of the data:

- At most sales prior to 2008, there were two breeze shows, and at many of these horses breezed one distance one week, another the next. If there were two separate distances, DataTrack always reported the **BreezeFig**, Group, and SL at each distance at both the sales and on www.drf.com. If a horse breezed twice at the same distance, only the better breeze (*i.e.*, **BreezeFig** plus Group) was reported.
- Sometimes horses did much better at one distance but most of the time the profile was comparable at both distances. In this study, we decided to count each horse that breezed at two distances as **one horse only**, and used only the best **BreezeFig** profile regardless of the distance. In case of virtual ties, we chose the **BreezeFig** profile that had the fastest breeze time. The same criteria were applied to horses who breezed at two different sales—it is only counted once.
- The study was conducted in two parts, one for colts, one for fillies. The reason was to see if there are any differences in success rates for either sex. As it turns out, there are virtually none, and as a result we combined all the data in one chart per category. Important note here:
 - The race records cover the **2-year-old racing season only**, and only the **first four starts** or up to the **race in which the horse breaks its maiden**—whichever comes first. The assumption is that if a horse needs more than four starts to break its maiden, it's probably not worth fooling with as a betting proposition.
 - The only exception in this study is if a horse has won or placed in a stakes race at two after it has run four times so that we could keep accurate records on black-type earned. In most cases, these horses have already won, usually in their first couple of starts. In rare circumstances, some horses win or place in stakes as maidens. They are counted as maiden winners and stakes winners, or stakes-placed.

BreezeFigs/Stride Length Study...Page 4

- There are three broad categories within each grouping:
 - Horses that breezed 1/8 mile (or whose best *BreezeFigs* profile was 1/8 mile).
 - Horses that breezed 1/4 mile (or whose best *BreezeFigs* profile was 1/4 mile).
 - Horses whose breeze times were the *two fastest at each sale at both distances*. The reason for this category is to try to discern whether the impression that the fastest horses at the sale were the most successful at the races is either true, or close to the truth.

There is one distance which we also examined, but whose results are completely irrelevant to this study—horses of either sex that *breezed 3/8 mile*. As in other studies over the years, few of these horses get to the races or make their marks on the track. This study proves the point emphatically with two exceptions: 2008 Eclipse 2-year-old Filly Champion Stardom Bound, and Sugar Mom, a stakes winner at two in 2008 at Turfway. Both of them had very fast breezes, and in the past five years, only one other 2-year-old has breezed comparably at 3/8 mile—Read the Footnotes, who also became a stakes winner. The rest of them are irrelevant because the vast majority is unraced.

The study was conducted on a sale-by-sale basis, to see if there were differences in the success rates of particular sales over the years compared to the overall success of the crop, and then the data was combined from that methodology. The results showed very little differences, but further research is likely to be required on a few details. Stay tuned.

Results & Conclusions

The results of the study showed data so consistent on so many levels that one can issue a pretty definitive statement based on the results:

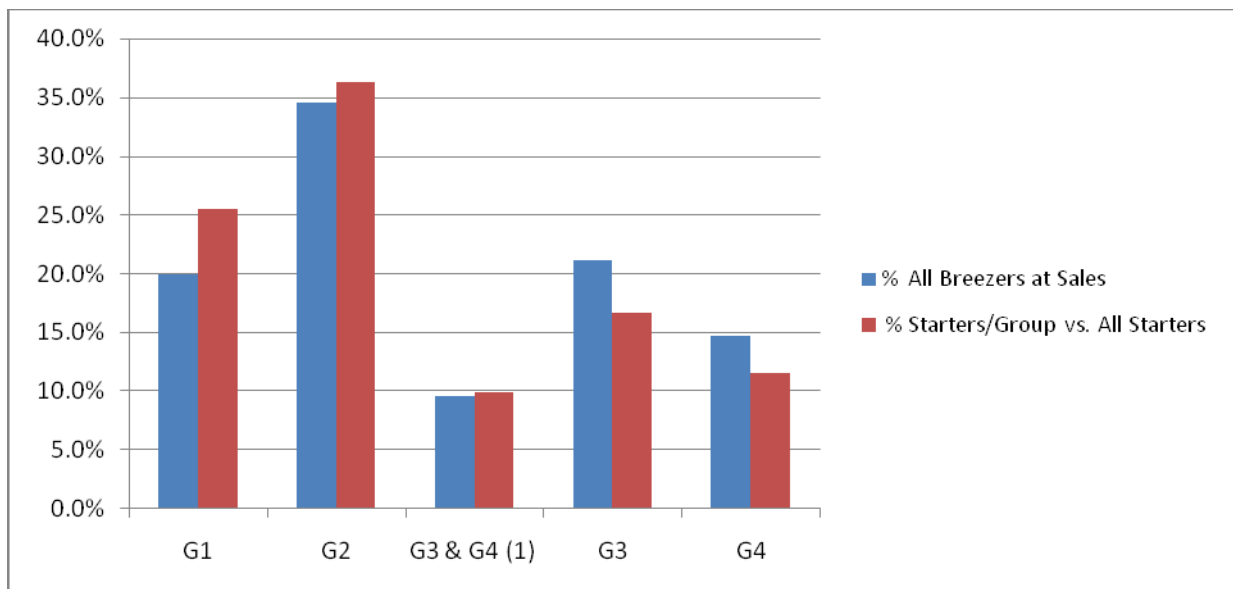
- *Horses that are Group 1*/Group 1 (Group 1/Group 2) whose stride lengths at the sales were above average at any distances on any surfaces are far more successful as racehorses at every level than the rest of the horses that breeze at these sales.*

The results of the study are presented below in a variety of charts for three categories mentioned above with no differentiation for sex, broken down in the following graphs which reflect percentages:

- How many **got to the races at two** per Group compared to the number who earned *BreezeFigs* in that Group?
- How many that started **broke their maidens** in their first four starts?
- How many that broke their maidens in their first four starts **won their first start?**
- How many won **stakes** at two? (Results are for Listed, restricted and Group stakes combined).

Exhibit A: Percent of 2-Y-O Starters vs. Best Breezes at 1/8 Mile

(2,578 Colts and Fillies Combined)



This chart shows what the relationship is between the number of horses that had their best **BreezeFigs** profiles at 1/8 mile and what percent got to the races as 2-year-olds. Of the 2,578 horses in the study, about 20% were Group 1 (G1*), etc., represented by the **blue bar**.

The actual percent of the starters from each Group vs. all the horses that started (1,021) is represented by the **red bar**—*e.g.*, in the case of Group 1 (G1*) horses, that’s about 25% (260) of the total number of horses that got to the races.

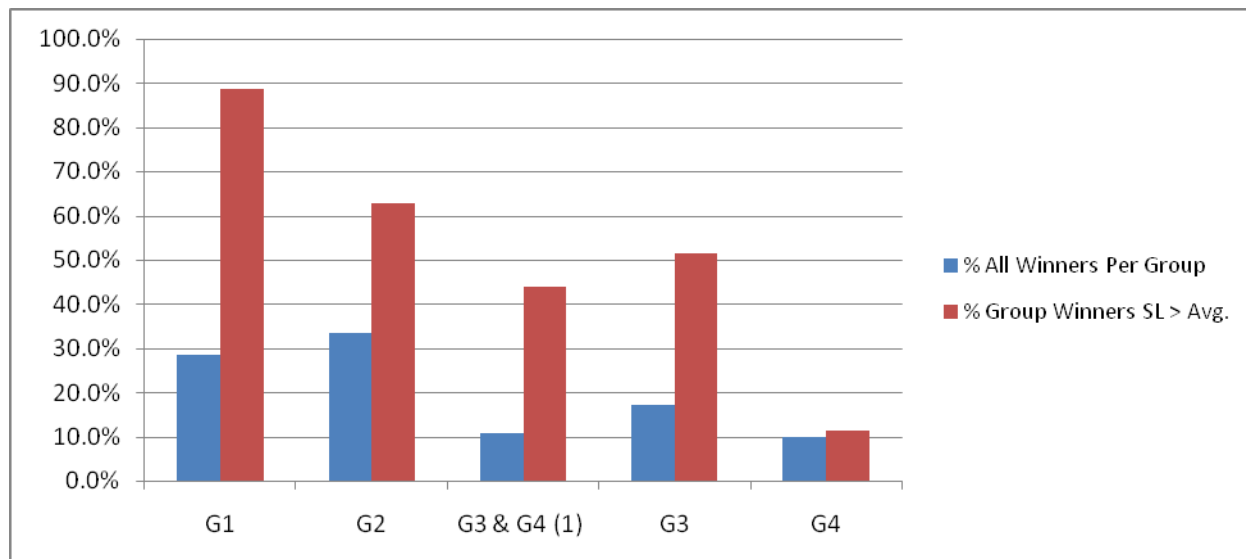
What is interesting here is the potential relationship of early ability and/or soundness compared to the Group level: Note that a much lower percentage of the Group 3 and Group 4 horses got to the races at two than the three higher quality BreezeFigs Groups.

NOTE: Don’t get confused because there are five groups here instead of four because as we noted on Page 2, horses that are technically Group 3 and Group 4, but whose BreezeFigs are one under Par, are sometimes good propositions. We therefore broke these out in a middle grouping so that everyone can see the relativity of this Group throughout the study.

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Exhibit B: Percent of 2-Y-O Winners Per Group vs. Stride Length at 1/8 Mile

(463 Winners)



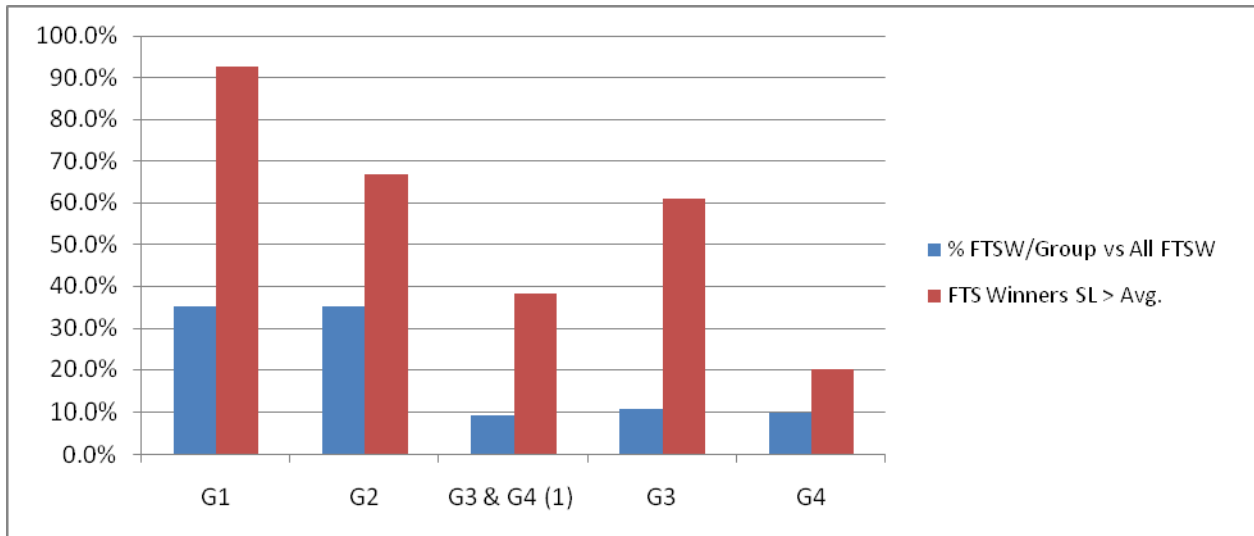
This chart analyzes where the 2-year-old winners came from and how stride length played a factor. The **blue bar** shows the percent of winners for that group compared to the total of 1,021 that started at age two from all Groups. Thus, Group 1*/Group 1 (Group 1 & Group 2) make up 54% of the horses that breezed, and 62% of the horses that won at age two.

*The **red bar** is the major find here—the percentage of winners whose stride lengths were longer than average at the sales, which is certainly an eye-opener across the board—even marginal horses (Group 3 and Group 4) need this advantage.*

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Exhibit C: First-Time Start Winners Per Group vs. Stride Length 1/8 Mile

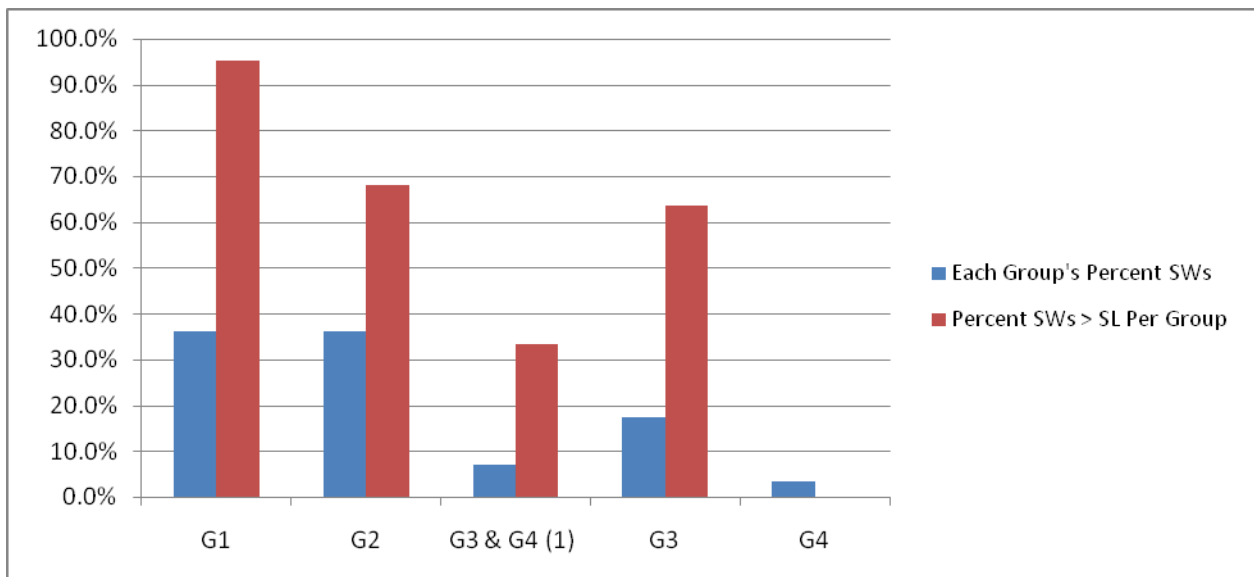
(165 FTSW Winners)



The quickest return on investment for a buyer or handicapper is a horse that wins first time out (FTSW). This chart is pretty self-explanatory: The **blue bar** shows the percent of the 165 FTSW per Group vs. all winners (463). The **red bar** represents the number of FTSW with a longer than average stride length per Group.

Bottom line: *Approximately 35% of the 2-year-old winners were FTSW, and 66% of them had longer-than-average stride lengths.*

Exhibit D: Percent of Stakes Winners Per Group vs. Stride Length 1/8 Mile



Pretty self-explanatory, we'd say.

We don't think the rest of the charts require too much explanation. They are identical in format to the ones for 1/8 of a mile, and the results vary only slightly.

Exhibit E: Percent of Starters vs. Best Breezes at 1/4 Mile

(799 Colts and Fillies Combined)

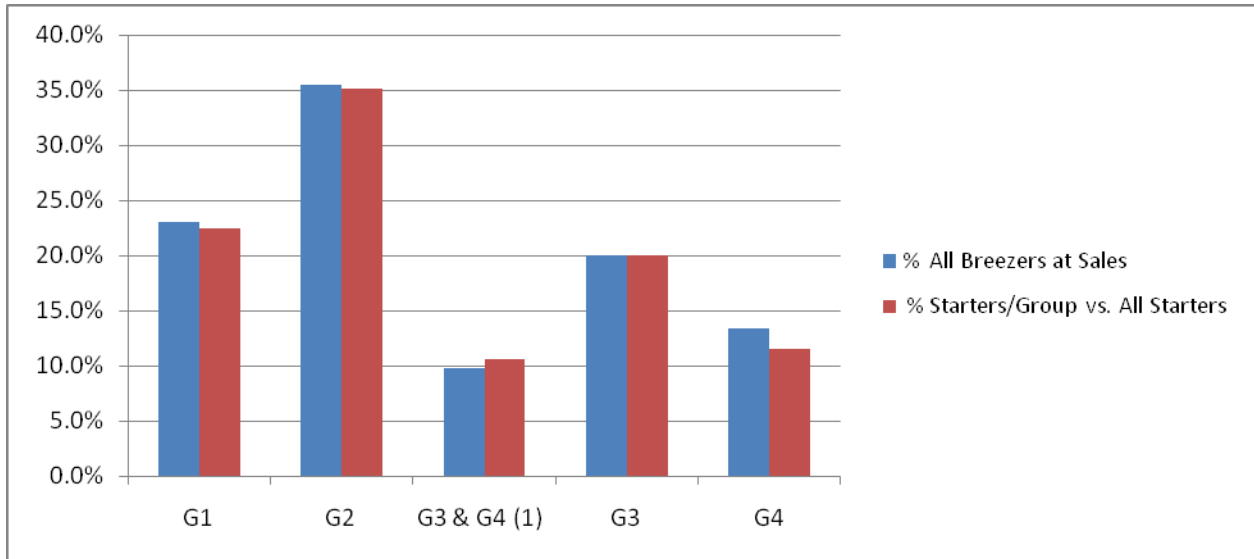
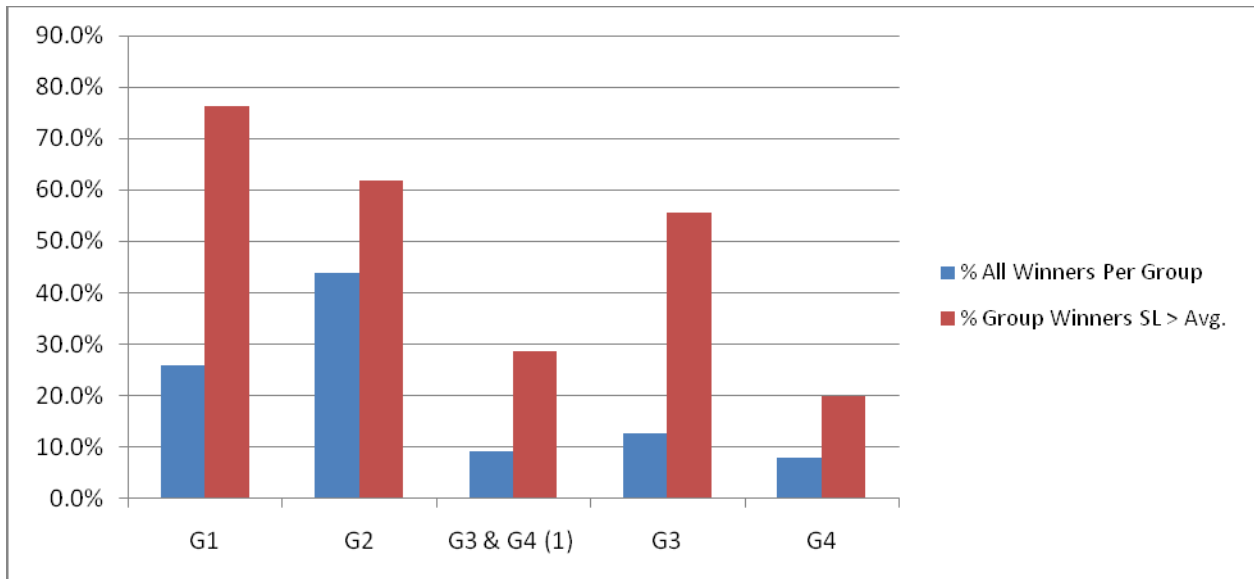


Exhibit F: Percent of Winners Per Group vs. Stride Length at 1/4 Mile

(150 Winners)



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Exhibit G: First-Time Start Winners Per Group vs. Stride Length 1/4 Mile

(62 FTS Winners)

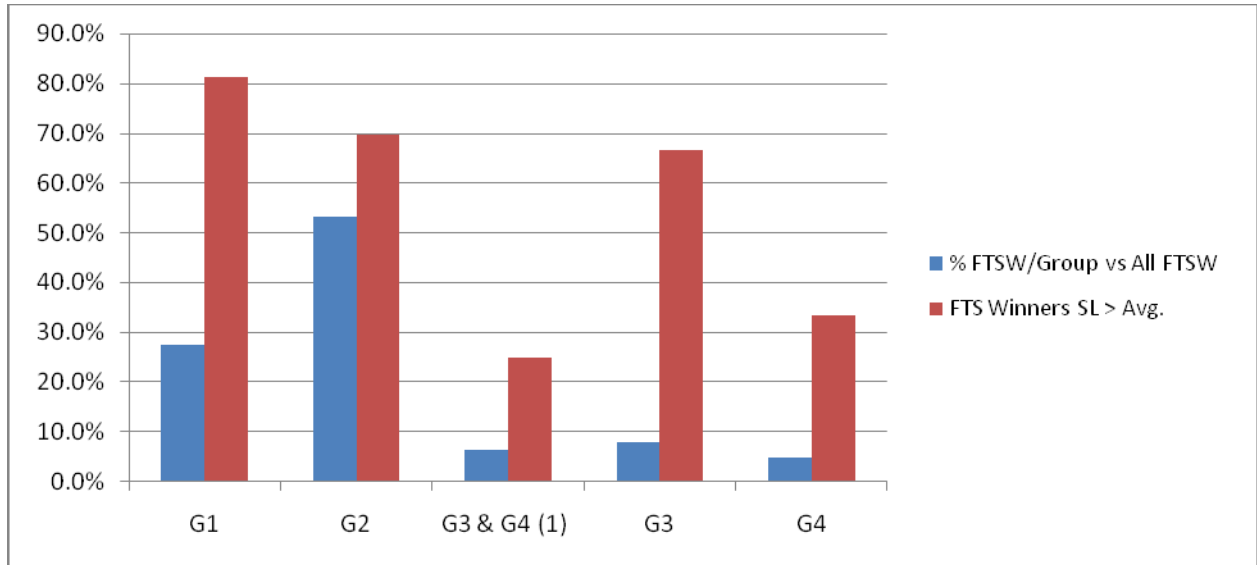
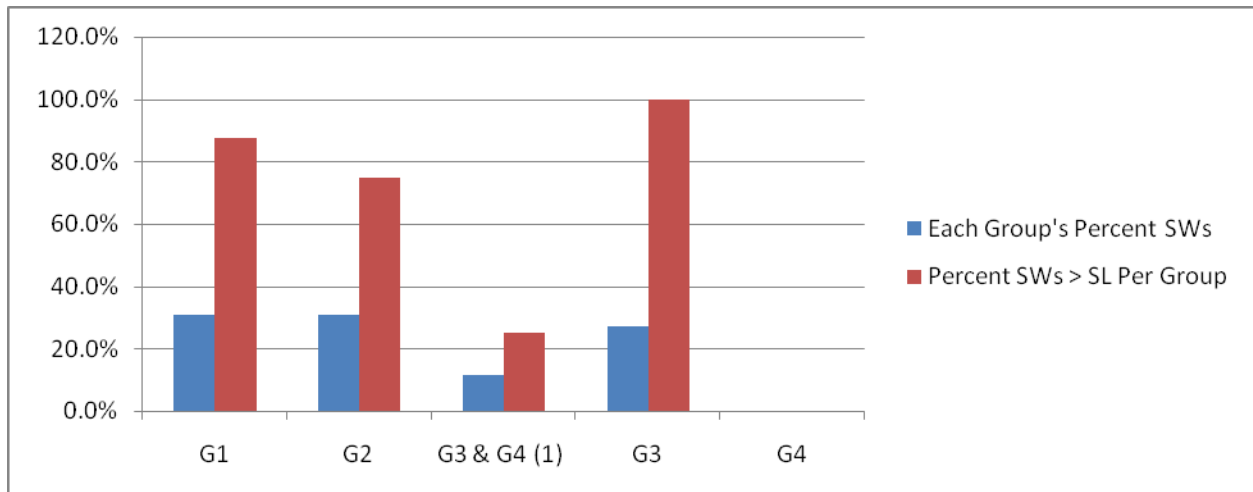


Exhibit H: Percent of Stakes Winners Per Group vs. Stride Length 1/4 Mile



Once again, especially in these two charts above, the enormous advantage a horse has with a longer-than-average stride length, regardless of the Group, is obvious. Even the Group 3 and Group 4 horses that are FTSW or stakes winners (no SWs in Group 4) have that advantage.

One final category follows.

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These charts cover horses that breezed the two fastest times per sale (eighth and quarter), both sexes.

Exhibit I: Percent of Starters vs. Fastest Breezes

(598 Colts and Fillies Combined)

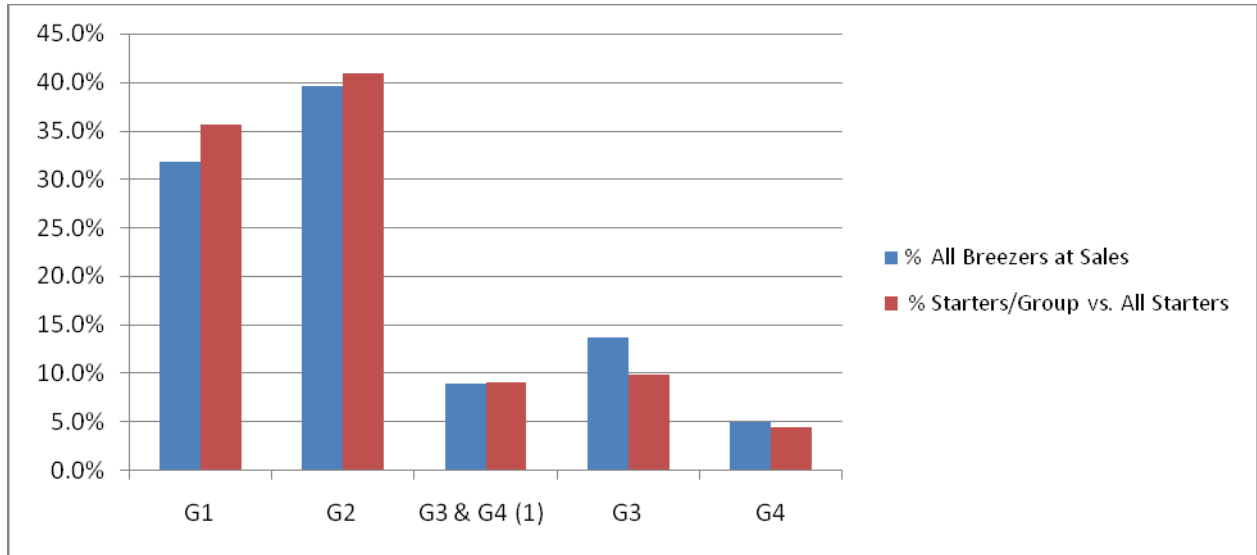
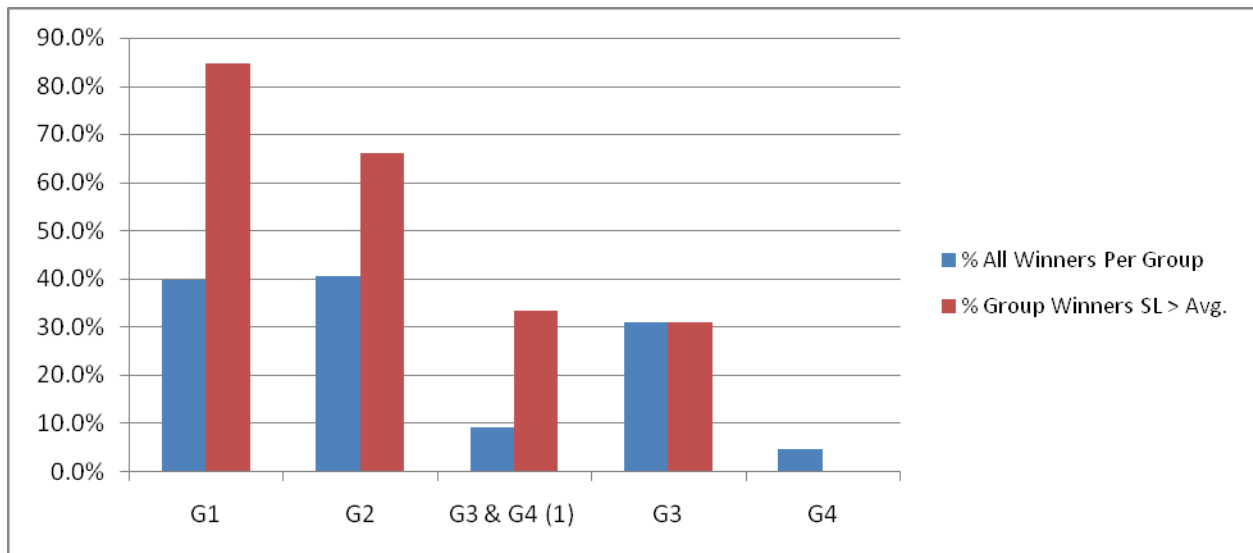


Exhibit J: Percent of Winners Per Group vs. Stride Length: Fastest Breezes

(136 Winners)



These two charts show that horses may breeze like bullets in 9.3, 9.4, 20.1, or 21.0, but they still might not earn top-rated BreezeFigs—and except in the case of Group 4 horses, even the ones that don't make it on BreezeFigs need longer stride lengths to succeed.

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Exhibit K First-Time Start Winners Per Group vs. Stride Length: Fastest Breezes

(69 FTS Winners)

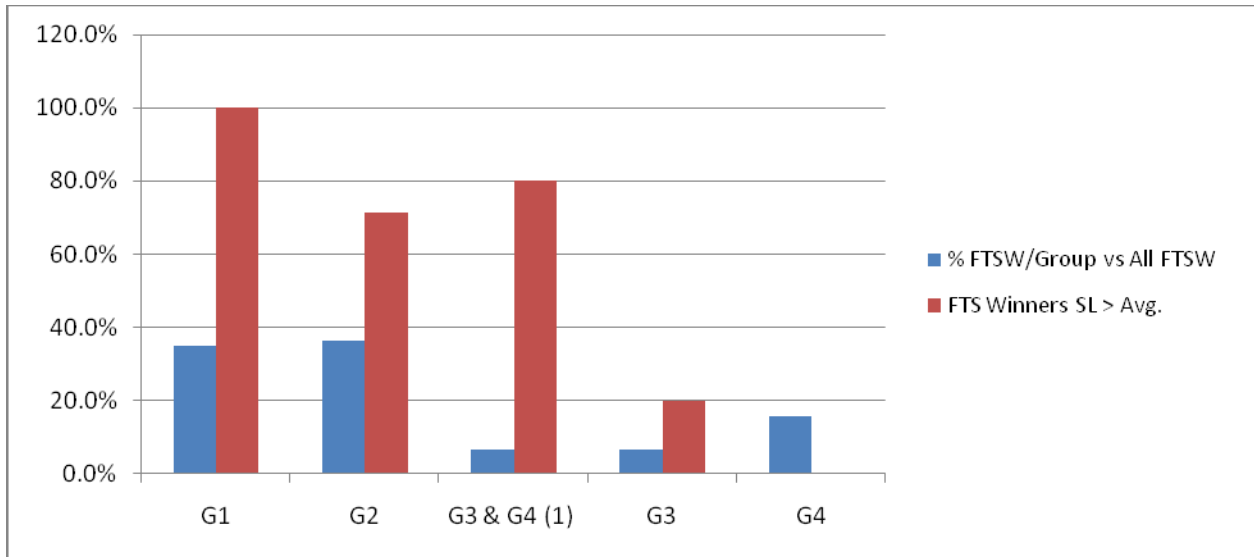
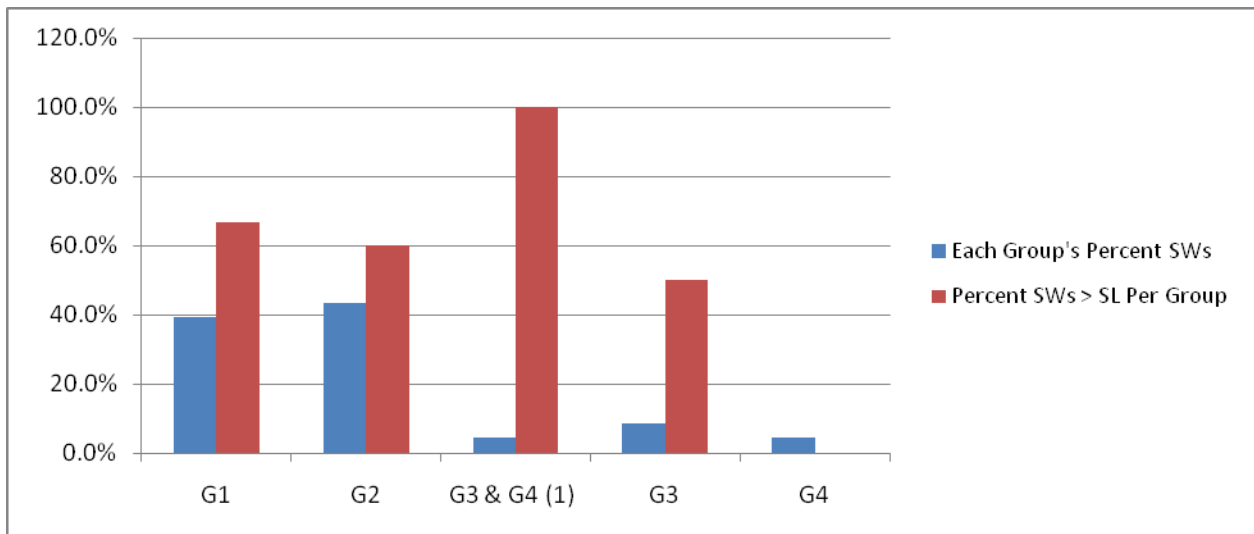


Exhibit L: Percent of Stakes Winners Per Group vs. Stride Length: Fastest Breezes



If you are a buyer who wants a horse that wins early and can win black type at two, the *BreezeFigs-Stride Length* combo is a major part of the search process. We think when combined with stride quality, cardio and biomechanical analyses, you’ve got a potential “killer app.” If you are handicapping 2-year-old maiden races, the BreezeFigs-SL combo is not a guarantee of success every race, but the odds are in your favor, and increased if you avoid betting on the lower Groups. Other surveys will follow.

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