

How to read the Visual Form Guide.

The Concept

A traditional greyhound form guide is loaded with information. A standard racecard contains 11 data items for 5 races for 6 greyhounds = **330 pieces of data to evaluate for every race**...an almost impossible task for the average race-goer or punter.

By representing the data visually, Visual Form Guides make it easier to evaluate this information and make form comparison and trend identification much easier.

The Visual Form Guide

The Visual Form Guide shows the same information as a standard form guide together with 4 charts for each greyhound and consolidated charts at the bottom of the guide.

The first section of the form guide contains mostly information found in a traditional guide .

TRAP	DST	TRP	GA	GD	PN	FN	COMMENTS	SEC TIME	SECTIONAL TIMES
2	480	2	0	A3	4444	5th	msd brk, crd3	3.26	
	642	2	0	S4	4421	1st	bmp1&3, led6	13.16	
	480	2	10	A4	1111	1st	q aw, a led	3.17	
	480	2	0	A5	5522	1st	bmp1, ck4, led nr ln	3.19	
	480	2	10	T3	3333	2nd	rls, fed to ck1, ran on	5.02	

Any GREYED OUT rows show races with a different distance to today's, are runs in handicap races or are races run at different tracks to today's. Greyed out sections will not have a corresponding entry in the charts for this dog / race. In this example above the 2nd row is greyed out because this run was over 642 metres whilst today's is run over 420.

The headings refer to the following:

TRAP – Trap Number in this Race

For the Greyhounds' previous 5 runs :

DIST – Distance of the race (in metres)

TRP – Trap Number the dog ran from

GA – Going Adjustment

GD – Grade of Race

PN – Position at each turn

Comments – Racing manager's comments about the running of this greyhound in the race. See appendix for list of common abbreviations used.

After the Comments column there is a coloured block when the greyhound has encountered trouble in the running of the race. RED for significant trouble, ORANGE for minor trouble. This feature is useful when evaluating the charts showing the times of previous runs in evaluating the usefulness or otherwise for the time of the run.

SEC TIME – The sectional time or time to the winning line first time round.

The bottom 2 rows of the guide bring the dogs Best Recent and Average Performances together into single charts. This helps us see more readily things such as best performances and is especially useful when we want to consider the dogs' likely positions at the first bend.

The charts are the same in these two rows but the information is slightly different :

BEST RECENT TIMES :			
TRAP	NAME	TRAINER	SEC TIME
1	Heart Of Glass	S W Deakin	4.96
2	Sunnycroft Me	J R Hall	5.18
3	Compass Eve	S M Buckland	5.03
4	Fast Track Home	A T Bodell	5.01
5	Whip Ahoy	A K Jenkins	4.98
6	Copeland Elana	G B Ballentine	5.00

AVERAGE TIMES :			
TRAP	NAME	DOB	SEC TIME
1	Heart Of Glass	Jul '08	4.99
2	Sunnycroft Me	Aug '10	5.28
3	Compass Eve	Mar '10	5.10
4	Fast Track Home	Sep '08	5.08
5	Whip Ahoy	May '10	5.08
6	Copeland Elana	Mar '11	5.03

The trap numbers, names of the dogs and birth dates are shown in this section. Highlighted in the times columns are the best performances in each section. i.e. the best recent time and the best average time.

The Charts

For each chart the length of each block corresponds to a distance of 1 metre and the colours are as the colours worn by the greyhound in the race. The “winning” line or the bold line within the chart shows where the dogs in the race with the best performance (fastest sectional, race time etc) would be positioned if it ran that time.

Reading left to right there are 4 charts for each greyhound. In this guide we will look at Charts 1 and 3 first as the the other charts are derives from these two charts.

Chart 1 – Sectional Times

The sectional times are shown visually to show how quick a starter the greyhound has been recently and how consistent or otherwise its starts have been. The line shows the position of the greyhound with the best start in its recent races. Obviously we want to compare how this dog compares with other dogs in the race so to enable this the charts for each greyhound are aligned :

TRAP	DST	TRP	GA	GD	PN	FN	COMMENTS	SEC TIME	SECTIONAL TIMES
1	480	1	10	A3	3666	5th	clear run	4.96	
	480	2	0	HP	2224	2nd	clear run	0.00	
	480	1	-40	T3	3333	3rd	clr run	5.02	
	480	1	0	T3	3333	3rd	clear run	4.86	
	480	1	-5	T3	3333	3rd	clear run	5.02	
2	480	2	15	A3	2456	6th	balked3	4.85	
	480	2	0	A2	5555	5th	balked1	4.94	
	480	6	-40	HP	6666	6th	clr run	0.00	
	480	4	-30	T3	1111	1st	a led	4.88	
	480	2	-20	T3	2233	3rd	checked2	4.91	
3	480	3	25	A3	1111	3rd	early pace, middle	4.69	
	480	4	10	A4	1111	1st	always led	4.62	
	480	3	20	A4	4123	4th	soon led to3	4.76	
	480	3	0	A4	1111	4th	early pace, middle	4.71	
	480	4	15	A3	2111	6th	early pace, middle	4.72	

Clearly we can see that in this example trap 3 has consistently been the fastest starter compared to traps 1 and 2.

Chart 3 – Calculated Times

We are explaining Chart 3 before Chart 2 here because Chart 3 combines information from both Charts 1 and 3.

In the same way as for sectional times (Chart 1) this chart takes the calculated times for each greyhound and represents them visually.

CALC TM	CALCULATED TIMES
30.04	
29.73	
29.57	
29.34	
16.69	
29.82	
16.82	
30.88	
30.12	
29.55	

In this example we can see that Trap 1 has run the fastest time of the 2 dogs being looked at here but it is also showing worsening performances from its 3 runs since then. It's useful when evaluating these performances to cross reference with the colour-coded trouble indicator (next to Comments column) to see how any trouble during the races may have affected the times.

Chart 2- Position at First Bend

The expected **position at the first bend** is key to evaluating likely trouble (crowding, bumping etc) at this point in the race. The second chart in the Visual Form Guide uses timing information of the start and the calculated time of the race to estimate the likely positions of the greyhounds at this point.

TRAP	DST	TRP	GA	GD	PN	FN	COMMENTS	SEC TIME	SECTIONAL TIMES	POSITION AT 1ST BEND
5	480	6	-50	A7	2112	2nd	s aw, bmp& ld t 3/4, crd	4.98		
	480	5	-20	A7	4222	2nd	v s aw ep, w, fin wll	5.09		
	480	5	-30	A7	2222	2nd	ep, mid w, a handy,(h t)	0.00		
	480	5	0	A7	6222	2nd	s aw mid w crd stt, ep	5.12		
	480	5	-20	A7	4345	6th	s aw ep, mid w fcd ck2	5.11		
6	480	6	-50	A7	2222	3rd	ep, w crd2, a handy	5.05		
	480	6	-10	A7	2222	2nd	ep, w, a handy	5.03		
	480	5	-10	A7	4345	5th	s aw, mid w, fcd t ck 3/4	5.05		
	480	6	0	T3	2221	3rd	mid w, ld 3/4 t rn in	5.04		
	480	5	-10	A7	4666	6th	w, ep, b crd1	5.00		

In this example we can see that Trap 5 seems to be improving in its start times whereas Trap 6 is the model of consistency with very similar starts for every race. Projecting this to the first bend we can see that trap 5 is the likely leader if it repeats that latest effort.

NB Trap 5's third from last race is missing although the distance is the same as today's. This is because the race was hand times and the sectional split is unavailable.

For the full first bend picture we need to consider all the dogs in the race. The Best Recent Times charts bring all the dogs' best recent performances together in one chart and the Average Times chart does the same with the greyhounds' average times.

BEST RECENT TIMES :

TRAP	NAME	TRAINER	SEC TIME	POSITION AT 1ST BEND
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So based on both measures (Best Recent Time and Average Time) we see in this example Trap 1 is the likely leader at bend 1, 2 may find itself some way adrift and there may be trouble in store for traps 3, 4 and 5.

Chart 4 – Adjusted Times

TRAP	DST	TRP	GA	GD	PN	FN	COMMENTS	CALC TM	CALCULATED TIMES	ADJ TM	ADJUSTED TIMES
5	480	6	-50	A,7	2112	2nd	s aw, bmp& ld1 t 3/4, crd	30.08		29.85	
	480	5	-20	A,7	4222	2nd	v s aw ep, w, fin wll	29.76		29.76	
	480	5	-30	A,7	2222	2nd	ep, mid w, a handy,(h t)	29.41		29.41	
	480	5	0	A,7	6222	2nd	s aw mid w crd stt, ep	29.70		29.57	
	480	5	-20	A,7	4345	6th	s aw ep, mid w fcd ck2	29.93		29.63	
6	480	6	-50	A,7	2222	3rd	ep, w crd2, a handy	29.84		29.71	
	480	6	-10	A,7	2222	2nd	ep, w, a handy	29.81		29.81	
	480	5	-10	A,7	4345	5th	s aw, mid w, fcd t ck 3/4	29.97		29.67	
	480	6	0	T,3	2221	3rd	mid w, ld 3/4 t rn in	29.89		30.00	
	480	5	-10	A,7	4666	6th	w, ep, b crd1	30.49		30.27	

Chart 4 adjusts Chart 3 (Calculated Times) to take trouble in running and grade into account. You can see in this example that Trap 5 met plenty of trouble in its last race (s aw, bmp& ld1 t 3/4, crd and highlighted **RED**). So the block position of this run is adjusted forward for this run in the adjusted times chart.

The latest run of trap 6 is probably the best example. Its last run in the Calculated Times column is shown as being worse than its penultimate run. However the dog encountered trouble in this race (crd 2) so once adjusted this performance shows as a better run in the Adjusted Times column.

This is clearly now an exact science, it is almost impossible to know how a bumping or crowding incident actually affected the winning time but can be useful addition to the form analysis.

Thank you for taking the time to read this user guide. We're sure it will help you make the most of Visual Form Guides and help identify many winners in the future.

Remember sample guides and a contact form for any questions or comments are available on the website www.visualformguides.com