

Winning at the Track

DATABASE Program

Downloading a Race Card

It is now possible to receive DAILY RACING FORM data from a computer service company and download one or more files from its website. When a data source file is entered into the Winning at the Track DATABASE Transfer program, you can create a WATT Race File (a complete race card) in just a matter of minutes with little or no typing. Today, an entire WATT race card file can be created in less time than it once took to type all the horses and their data for ONE race manually. And, typically, the downloaded file costs only about \$1.00 per race card.

The recommended file for this purpose can be downloaded from Bloodstock Research (also known as BRIS) of Lexington, Kentucky. BRIS refers to their file as the "Single File - Past Performances" and is sent as a compressed ("zip") file making the file smaller and faster to download. Once the file is decompressed (opened or "unzipped"), the file is called the .DRF file. In zipped form the file is typically 150k in size. Opened, the file is about 350k in size.

As an example, a file for November 17, 2007 for Aqueduct would be called AQU1117k.ZIP in zipped format. Opened, the file would bear the name AQU1117.DRF. To open the file the user would require a small program called PKUNZIP. This program is available free from BRIS and is also included as part of the DATABASE package.

Any time a BRIS .DRF file is entered into the DATABASE program, it must be located in the same "Track" directory (folder) as the WATT and DATABASE programs. The BRIS .DRF file cannot be entered into the DATABASE program unless it is available in the "Track" folder.

The "path" to download the sample file into the "Track" directory for example would be...

C:\TRACK\AQU1117k.ZIP

Active racing fans who download many source files over time may prefer to create a separate BRIS directory, decompress the .ZIP file in that directory, then copy the .DRF file into the "Track" directory. This way, users can save source files and create an archive of older files for back testing at a later date. Developing new handicap methods always requires some back testing. Otherwise, the .DRF and .ZIP files can be deleted once the WATT file is created (we definitely suggest saving old WATT race files since they are small and easy to access later). If a BRIS directory is created be sure the PKUNZIP.EXE file is also copied into that directory as well. By typing PKUNZIP in front of the .ZIP file name, it will open. For example ... C:\TRACK> pkunzip AQU1117k.ZIP Do this, and you will have your required AQU1117.DRF file.

To enter the DATABASE Transfer program, at the DOS prompt of "Track," type the following message, TRANSFER (or run TRANSFER.EXE in Win95/98/XP or Vista). Next, when it asks to enter the BRIS File Name, type in the .DRF file (e.g., AQU1117.DRF). Then, the Transfer program will prompt you to name the WATT file you are creating (we suggest you name the new WATT file "11-17-07.AQU"). Later, both the WATTdos and WATTwin programs can use this file.

Once you are inside the DATABASE program, follow the menu at the bottom of the screen to create the WATT file. After the file is made, exit the Transfer program and use the file in the *Winning at the Track* program (type DESKTOP to enter the WATT program). Also, inside WATT you can use the "Go-to" feature to see the file in the various WATT sections.

We suggest that you create your WATT race file with the Transfer program and then immediately to the WATTdos program (type DESKTOP at the C:\TRACK> prompt). Put the finishing touches on your WATT race file (enter Notes, etc.), save the file, and then use it in the WATTwin program.

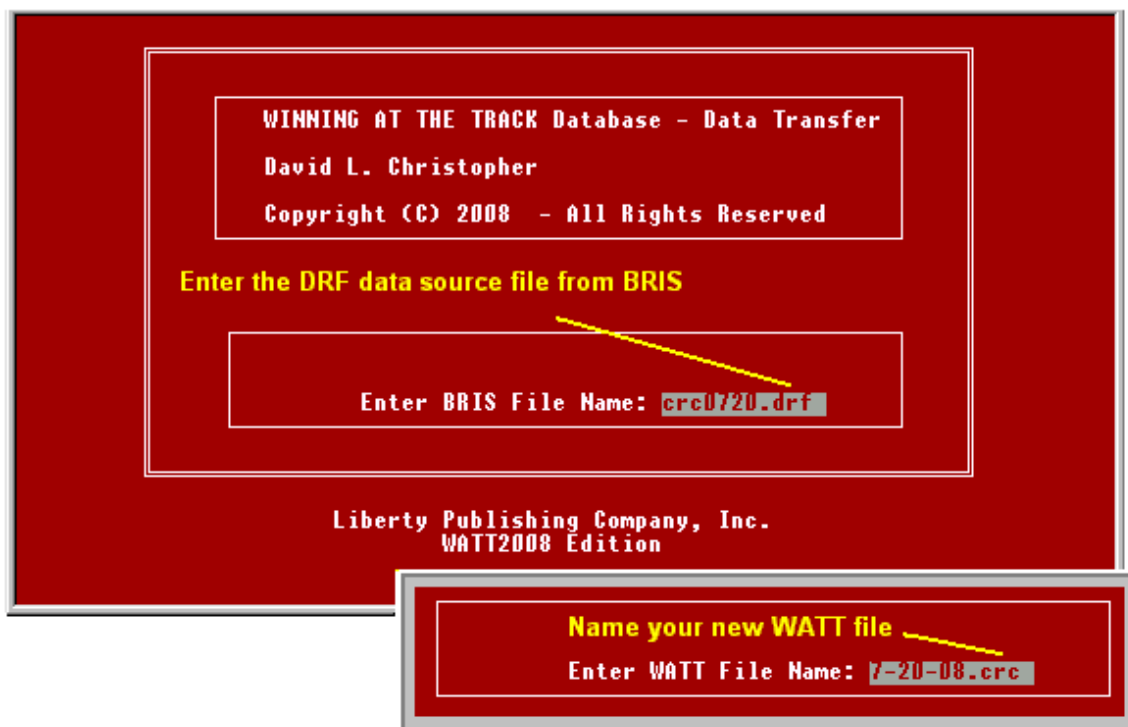
A typical sequence of DOS commands might be:

C:\TRACK> pkunzip AQU1117k.ZIP (this opens your BRIS file)

C:\TRACK> transfer (this allows you to enter the Database Transfer program)
(Next enter the .DRF file and name the WATT file you are creating and then create your file)

C:\TRACK> desktop (this allows you to enter the "Winning at the Track" program – WATTdos)
(put the finishing touches on your WATT race file and begin handicapping).

Type the word TRANSFER at the C:\TRACK> prompt ...



Operating the Transfer Segment

Once inside the DATABASE Transfer program, there are only three choices: "Include," or "Blank," or "Delete." The Transfer segment of the DATABASE program is not a data-entry program. All the data is transferred from the .DRF source file, entered into the proper cells, and automatically denoted with "i" (include). It is then up to the user to decide whether the data is to remain as it was initially or whether it is removed. To remove the data, the "i" is changed either to a "b" (blank) or "d" (delete).

If the data is "blanked" it is removed, but all data below it remains in place. If the data is "deleted," all the data is removed, but all data below moves up. For example, if the third race is deleted with the STATUS key, in the new file being created, the fourth race becomes the third; the fifth becomes the fourth and so on. If the third race is "blanked," all the races below remain as they are shown. The same concept applies to the data in the Entry (History Worksheet)

screen(s). If a pace line is removed with "b" the data below remains in place. If a pace line is removed with "d" all data below it will move up.

RACE CARD RACETRACK: Calder Race Crse FL

Include, Delete, or Blank this Race: I (Race Status)

	Name	Status	Name	Status
1st	STEPHEN LOVES ME	I		
2nd	AFLEET IN DISGUISE	I		
3rd	FINALLYUNBRIDLED	I		
4th	TIMETOLITETHESTAR	I		
5th	MAJESTIC WONDER	I		
6th	GOLD DIGGIN DIVA	I		
7th	SARAH	I		
8th	MACUMBIRA	I		
9th	PURE HEAT	I		
10th				
11th				

Maximum WATT Races/file: 11

Hit "E" to review or change the pp lines of each horse.

When finished, hit "W" to save your file to "TRACK".

Status Entries WATT File Help Conditions Load Keep Quit
Change the Include Status of the selected race

This horse was later scratched (with the "zero" function) in the WATT file.

ENTRY SCREEN RACE (Max. 10) 2
Horse Name: TIMETOLITETHESTAR Today's Weight: 118
Include/Delete Horse? I **A turf line is being removed from this dirt race.**

Track	Dist.				Lengths Out			Wt.	SR	TU	I/D/B	
1	CRC	7 f	0:22.2	0:45.3	1:26.0	5	12	21	118	0	12	I
2	CRC	Mile 70	0:49.1	1:15.1	1:48.1	2	5	34	121	0	25	I
3	CRC	6 f	0:23.0	0:47.1	1:14.1	1	4	10	121	0	19	I
4	CRC	1 1/16	0:49.1	1:13.4	1:44.0	6	7	9	118	0	14	B
5	CRC	6 f	0:22.4	0:47.2	1:14.2	6	6	9	118	0	18	I
6	GP	6 1/2 f	0:23.3	0:47.2	1:19.2	5	10	28	121	0	19	I
7	GP	6 f	0:22.4	0:46.0	1:11.3	10	10	12	121	0	7	I
8												

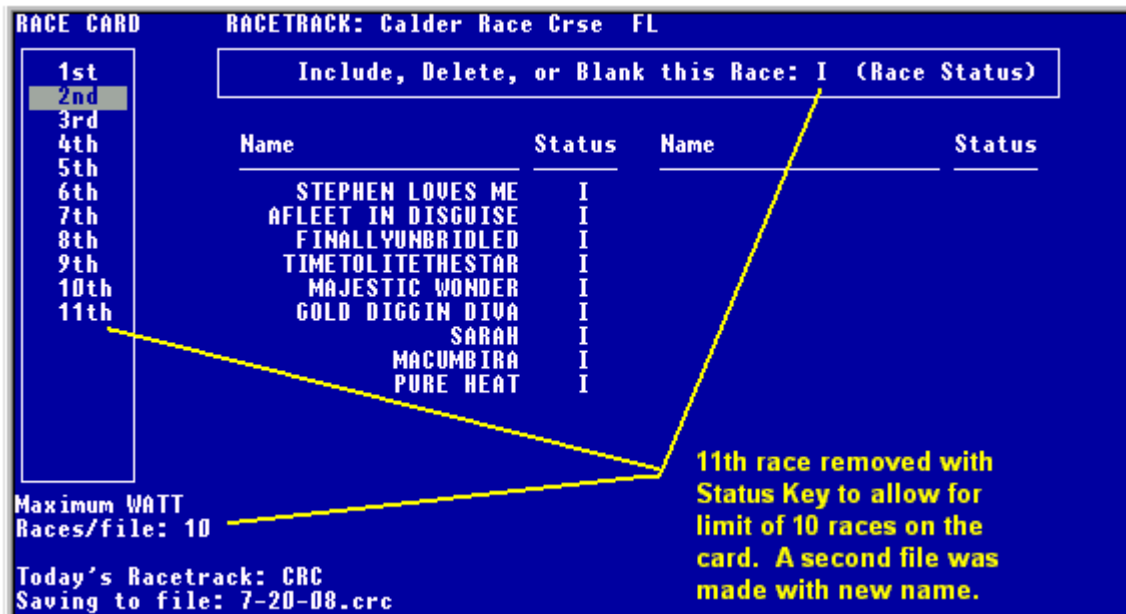
PAGE DOWN - Next Horse
PAGE UP - Previous Horse
Help? (Hit Alt-H)

DECISION - Include, Delete, or send Blank
F1 Key - Include or Delete this Horse
ESCAPE (Esc) - Return to Race Card

The Two Program Limitations

There are two instances when the Transfer program will not allow the user to save the final race file with "WATT File Save" – (1) if there are more than ten races, the program will not allow the file to be saved. (2) If there are more than fifteen horses in any single race, again, the file cannot be saved.

If the user has a race card with, say, twelve races and wants to play all twelve, then *two* WATT race files must be created -- one with ten races and one with two. Of course, the user must not name both race files with the identical name. For example, the first WATT race file can be named 11-17-07.AQU and the second one can be named 11-17B.AQU.



The Status Key

The purpose of the Status Key is to select which races on the card are to be included in the new WATT race file. If there are nine races on the card and the user wants all nine to be in the new file, then the Status Key is never touched. If there are more than ten races, then the Status Key is used to select which ten races are to be included and which are not. Remember, a "d" will allow each race below it to move up; whereas a "b" will blank that race and all the races below will remain in their proper slots but the total number of races will not change.

Also-Eligible Horses

Hit "E" on the menu and you will go to the Entry Screen where decisions are made regarding which horses are to be included in the field and which are not (hit the F1 key on each horse's Entry Screen whenever making that decision). On the Race Card screen, if fifteen horses appear (twelve in the first column and three in the next column), the last three (called "Also-Eligibles") can be included in the file or removed. It is up to the user to make that decision. However, it is likely that most, if not all, will be "scratched." If there are sixteen horses, one will have to be removed, regardless (otherwise the file cannot be saved). It's up to the user to decide exactly how the Also-Eligibles are to be ejected. Remember, any Also-Eligibles included can also be removed later in the WATT program. We suggest that you confine your scratches to the WATTdos program.

The Entry Screen

In the Entry Screen, the user decides which pace lines are to be included (no need to change anything) or deleted (either blank or delete). Follow the menu at the bottom.

If an improper letter is typed in a cell (anything other than i, b, or d) the program will not allow the user to move. An "X" designation tells the user the data cannot be saved to the new file. The only letter that can replace an "X" is a "B". Each past performance line that is noted with an "i" will be saved unless the user decides otherwise. The user simply pages up and down through the horses to be sure each horse's worksheet is as the user wishes it to be. The entire process should take no more than two minutes per race.

Recommendations: Remove all turf races from a horse's history if tomorrow's contest is to be run on the dirt. If tomorrow's race is to be run on the grass (turf), then it's best that ALL pace lines, both dirt and turf, be left in the worksheet. Also, to decide which pace lines are kept in or removed, first check the "Conditions" screen to determine the distance. Remove all inappropriate races (for example, a five furlong sprint is probably of little value handicapping a 1 1/4 mile route). In most other cases, however, trust the program to make the proper adjustments between distances. Including turf lines in a dirt race is an important decision. Here is a good rule: **Most talented dirt-running horses run well on the turf. However, not all talented turf horses run well on the dirt.** This is important at most racetracks.

Remember, in the WATT program, the first three lines represent the "Ability Factor" so, when reviewing each horse's Entry Screen, the user can apply a little judgment and common sense to the process: "Do these three top lines fairly represent this animal's current 'form'?" These are not critical decisions but they do lead to more accurate readings later.

Do not close any Window without making the proper exit from the WATT program first.

Summary of the Entire Process

1. Download a BRIS "k" file into the TRACK directory;
2. PKUNZIP the BRIS file (you now have a BRIS "DRF" file);
3. Type "TRANSFER" to enter the DATABASE and enter the BRIS "DRF" file;
4. Type the name of the new WATT race file you are creating – see above;
5. Remove unwanted races and PP's using the STATUS key and Entry Screens;
6. Exit the program by saving the file (hit "WATT File Save" and "Q");
7. Type "DESKTOP" to enter the WATTdos program and enter the new WATT file;
8. Go to the P/M Table for each race to bring in the data before hitting SAVE (Calc);
9. Put "finishing touches" on the new file by going to a "Name Line" and hitting Alt-A;
10. Use your new WATT race file with WATTdos and WATTwin (horse icon) to handicap.

Rules: Always follow the menu at the bottom of each screen and hit "SAVE" periodically.

The Data (Storage) Function

The first and most widely used function to the DATABASE program is the Transfer Segment. The second function is the Storage Function for saving the histories of individual horses. In so doing, individual horses can be moved within the WATT program. For example, because each horse has its own file, the order of the horses listed in the field can be rearranged in another order if the user desires to do so. Or, horses on the Also-Eligible list can be written to the DATABASE, scratched from the contest, and then retrieved at will. Up to 5,000 horses can be saved in the program.

When saving individual horses to the DATABASE the program automatically assigns a number to each new horse added to the archive. Dr. Fager, the sample horse, has been given the first number (1.HDB). The next horse saved will be numbered 2.HDB, the horse after that, 3.HDB, and so on.

Creating New .HDB Files (Writing new horses to the archives)

Existing WINNING AT THE TRACK race files can be a valuable source of DATABASE information. If old race files have been saved and they aren't too out of date, it is possible to begin your DATABASE archive with several hundred horses or more.

Upon entering any P/M Table of an existing WINNING AT THE TRACK race file, you will see all the horses listed, as they were when the file was first used. When "Name" is hit on the Menu, a horse's name will be highlighted. If you want the horse's name and its history written to the DATABASE, simply hit the "Alt" and the "W" (write) keys simultaneously and a new .HDB file will be created. Make a note of each horse's newly- assigned ID number next to its name in the newspaper (assuming you save old newspapers as many handicappers do). You can use the "Peek" function in the DATABASE, or go to the HDBFILES sub-directory to find the most recently assigned ID numbers. Thereafter, each new ID assignment will be one digit higher.

Later, when you enter the Storage Segment (keyword is "DATA" or "DATA.EXE" using Windows), the ID number will allow you to retrieve that horse's history which can be updated at any time.

Importing Horse Data Files into WATT

If your DATABASE files are current, an entire WINNING AT THE TRACK Race Card can be created from the archives quickly and easily.

To import an .HDB file, set the proper distance for today's contest on the Race Card, go to the P/M Table and hit "Name" on the Menu below. When the word NAME is blinking on the P/M Table, hit "Alt-D" to retrieve a horse. Next, enter the horse's ID number (for example, type 1.HDB), hit "Enter," and the horse's name and History Worksheet will automatically be inserted into the WATT file.

When this is done, the horse's abbreviated name will appear, although the cells on the P/M Table will remain empty until the History Worksheet is flashed to bring the data in.

Once all the names and History Worksheets are in, you can hit "Alt-A" on any name line to bring in the Notes that normally appear after each horse's name. These are, as the Help section to the Pace Analyst explains, the Pole Speed / Pure Speed figures (valuable in the handicapping process).

The DATABASE Help Screens

Whenever you have a question using the DATABASE program, like all WATT programs, just hit "Alt-H" and the Help screen will appear. If the user happens to be in the WATT program and a DATABASE question arises, you must first go to the "Name" line on the P/M Table and then hit Alt-H (otherwise, only the WATT Help section will appear). To repeat, every WATT program segment has its own Help section. It is advisable to print out each one.

Liberty Publishing Company, Inc.
P.O. Box 4485
Deerfield Beach, FL 33442

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Offices: (954) 426-9677
HorseRacingUSA.com

Helpful DOS and Windows Computer Notes

For those who are not familiar with, or who have forgotten, the older Disc Operating System (DOS) computer commands, here are a few for your convenience:

Click on START, PROGRAMS, MS-DOS (or to Accessories, then MS-DOS)

(How to obtain the DOS prompt on most Win95/98 or Millennium systems)

C:\Windows> **CD\TRACK**

(How to go from the WINDOWS directory to the TRACK directory)

C:\TRACK> **MD HDBFILES**

Be sure to copy 1.HDB into your new sub-directory

How to make a sub-directory of TRACK and call it "HDBFILES")

A:\> **Copy *.* C:\TRACK** (or from the "D" drive if you are using a CD)

(Copy everything from the "A" drive disc into the TRACK directory on the "C" drive).

A:\> **Dir** or C:\> **Dir A:**

(Show me everything listed on the "A" drive disc)

C:\TRACK> **Dir**

(Show me everything listed in the TRACK directory)

C:\> **Exit**

(Type "Exit" at the prompt to return to the Windows Desktop from DOS)

Note: It is also possible to set the icon to Window-size rather than full-screen.

Place the cursor arrow on the Windows Desktop and RIGHT click.

Go to "New"

Go to "Shortcut"

Enter C:\TRACK\WATT_WIN.EXE in the command box

Next, select a name (Winning at the Track) and pick an icon (Money?)

(How to create a WATTwin icon for using "Winning at the Track" with WINDOWS)
