

For what it's worth

Matt Sun
on the Melbourne Cup



'Blokes will roll their eyes when a woman says she picked a horse because "it has pretty colours" and slink away muttering disgust when it romps home.'

Tomorrow, for one day only, I am a betting expert. I can give you a complete thoroughbred rundown. I'm on the punt. I can make you a lot of money. Enough to make you rich.

I established my expert credentials with a substantial win (\$36.70) after a considered consultation process involving several journalists that resulted in us picking Media Puzzle in the 2002 Melbourne Cup.

Further Melbourne Cup Day bets have also won me small fortunes.

I have never placed a first Tuesday in November bet at Flemington, instead backing a dishlicker running on some outback track on the second Thursday in December.

Nor have I inadvertently won \$13.20 doing so. Honestly.

But before I reveal to you the secret system to ensure Cup Day success, please read the following legal disclaimer.

(Warning – promises to make you money may not result in you winning money. Any advice provided for success in the race that stops a nation may also stop your gas, electricity and water service).

Yes, as happens on every first Tuesday in November, every woman, man and his dishlicker will be an expert on the nags.

Blokes will repeat phrases such as long odds, sure things, stayers, having it each-way, while refusing to admit they have no idea what an exacta is.

Blokes will roll their eyes when a woman says she picked a horse because "it has pretty colours" and slink away muttering disgust when it romps home and wins her enough to buy a new pair of Jimmy Choos.

We will again pore over the form guide with the intensity of a stockbroker examining the financial pages, and understand them just as much as the financial pages.

We will again accidentally cross the wrong box on the TAB ticket and have a \$50 instead of \$5 punt because we are too proud to admit we don't know what we're doing.

So here is my advice for one-day punters – don't become a double dipper or a coverer.

The double dipper is someone who spends their half-day at work topping up their online account and carefully laying their bets when they should be doing a full day's work.

But then they head to the pub and end up laying down cash on more bets because, let's face it, online bets are nothing but numbers on a screen.

Then you've got the coverer. The coverer spends hours on a complex system of bets that will ensure they win a lot of money or break even.

The coverer can never understand why they ended up losing more money than anyone else.

Do not launch into long-winded office lectures about the unknown factor that Equine Influenza will have on this year's field because, quite frankly, one horse is still going to win.

You're probably better off ignoring everything you've read.

Just back the horse with the prettiest colours.

■ Matt Sun is an *mx* journalist who is fearlessly tipping horse No. 25 in the Cup tomorrow.

● HOTEL BIDS

Inn for a penny, inn for a pound

Matt Sun

Travellers looking for cheap hotel accommodation will be able to bid for rooms and hotels will compete for their business.

Ubid4rooms.com, to be launched by Tourism Minister Matt Brown today, will accept bids on rooms for major city hotels across Australia.

Hotels will offer rooms up to two weeks in advance in a bid to make some money rather than have vacant rooms.

Bids can be placed at up to three hotels, who will accept or decline within three hours.

Hotels will be made aware a person has placed bids with another hotel to encourage them to accept rather than lose a potential booking.

Sydney CBD rooms include the Meriton on Kent St, the World Tower, the Marque Hotel and Park Regis Hotel.

Website managing director Gary Berman said his hospitality experience led him to set up the business.

"I believe that a room vacant for a night is revenue lost forever and a property only has a limited supply, so this reven-

ue cannot be made up in the future," Berman said.

On average there are 60,000 rooms vacant each night across Australia.

"If a hotel believes it might still get a conventional booking for a room, it might decline a bid," Berman said.

"But with three hotels aware of a bid, the first to accept will get it."



Shannon Wilton and Aaron Hickey enjoy the Fit2Date workout at Bondi.

Picture: BRITTA CAMPION

● DATING RETHINK

Informal exercise fits model for feelgood courtship

Dating has infiltrated almost every aspect of single lives – except maybe exercise.

Erica French was sick of hearing about people worshipping gym bunnies from afar, but being too intimidated to approach them.

"You see people at the gym who you're attracted to, but you don't go up to them or approach them," she said.

"I don't think it's a nice enough environment – that whole look-at-me thing.

"I figured there had to be a

healthier way of meeting people than being in a bar drinking."

French, 29, launched Fit2Date, and has two budding romances already.

The group of 12 trains after work for four one-hour sessions at beachside locations.

"You're getting to see the real person," French said. "And you have time to establish a connection."

"At least at the end of the day you're going to get fit."

See www.fit2date.com.au.

– VANESSA SANTER

Nice one ✓

Target has found a way to hawk its wares without spending a fortune on diet drinks, carrot sticks and laxatives – a fashion show with no models. All day tomorrow and Wednesday, Vanderbilt Hall at New York's Grand Central station will become a showroom for high-definition holograms sporting designs on a hi-tech catwalk.

● INTERESTS TARGETED

MySpace advertising to get personal

MySpace has announced a new advertising program that will target members based on their profile interests.

A spokeswoman said HyperTargeting would allow the social networking site to "better serve the right advertisement to the right person at the right time".

People who list movies as an interest in their profile, for example, were more likely to see ads for movies when they logged on.

The program will be further developed to include niches such as horror films.

The spokeswoman said 10 categories, including music,

movies, finance, gaming, sports and travel, would be targeted initially.

More than 50 companies, including Microsoft Xbox, Universal Pictures, Fox Searchlight and Ford, have signed up to the program.

HyperTargeting ads will begin in early 2008.

It's true !

When a hippopotamus exerts itself, gets angry or stays out of water for too long, it exudes red sweat-like mucus through its skin.

PICK ME UP

PICK ME UP

mx PICK ME UP