

In-Running Betting: A Technical Perspective
Global Games & Gaming (G3) Magazine: January 2009

Some of you might remember, not so long ago, when opportunities to place a bet after the event had started were few and far between. Then, as ideas and developments evolved, players could wait until almost any point in the game to make a wager.

Or maybe you're from a jurisdiction that doesn't allow in-running betting, so you're surprised to hear that punters elsewhere are even permitted to place bets after the game has started!

Either way, let's investigate what in-running betting is all about, since it could have a significant impact on your events betting operations.

In-running betting (also known as in-play betting) is betting while the event to which the bet relates is actually in progress. For example, placing a bet on a football game after the game has started.

This type of betting takes place primarily, but not exclusively, with sporting events such as horseracing, football, tennis and cricket.

So why is in-running betting becoming so popular?

The main advantage to punters is that they can watch and assess how a particular player or team is doing before committing to a bet. With in-running betting, punters can join the action whenever they want, and make what they feel to be the best possible choice for their bet.

Whether the punter is betting directly over the Internet using an account, or placing a wager at a traditional betting shop, the Internet is the driving force that makes it all happen. Betting shops require an Internet connection of their own in order to access up-to-the-moment information on odds / payouts.

Naturally, for in-running betting to work, the odds / payouts need to be updated throughout the entire event.

This can be extremely challenging at times, and requires a lot of help from technology. In fact, one of the best forums for in-running betting is a betting exchange like Betfair, where the players set their own odds / payouts on a dynamic basis. The result is that betting exchanges tend to be more fluid and vary in liquidity compared to the markets offered by traditional bookmakers.

In-running betting does not come without a price. Many players and especially regulatory bodies have concerns about the fairness of this fast-paced innovation to gambling.

In-running betting depends on live feeds of information that display the events to the general public, such as television, mobile telephone, radio and Internet. The problem is that the signals used to send out these feeds are not always the same speed. The result is a variable time delay between different feeds showing exactly the same sporting event.

This gap in the speed of information can be exploited by punters. Those who have a faster source of information can use it to take advantage of odds / payouts that do not yet reflect the actual progress of the event. This principle is compounded by punters attending the actual event in person – using a wireless Internet connection to place bets.

There are also other factors that can impact the fairness of in-running betting.

The variable speed of Internet connections, such as dial-up versus broadband, can significantly impact how quickly a punter can place a bet. This puts people with a slower Internet connection at a disadvantage.

What's more, the use of automated software 'bots' can have an effect on fairness with in-running betting. These bots can place bets better and faster than any human being ever could unassisted. They can also search for mismatched odds / payouts that will allow the punter to guarantee a profit.

As you can see, there are indeed pro's and con's to in-running betting, and many technological hurdles to overcome.

Moving forward, the decision to include in-running betting in your events betting operations should not be made lightly.

Bio



Mr. Noah Turner is the Chief Technical Officer (CTO) of Technical Systems Testing (TST), an internationally recognized Accredited Testing Facility (ATF) offering evaluation and consultation services for both the land-based (traditional / terrestrial) and Interactive gaming, lottery and Information Technology (IT) industries.

Office: +1 (604) 873-5833
Email: nturner@tstglobal.com

OFFICES:

Vancouver – Suite #420, 1367 West Broadway, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, V6H 4A7 // O: +1 (604) 873-5833 // F: +1 (604) 873-1075
London – Swan Centre, Fishers Lane, Chiswick, London, England, United Kingdom, W4 1RX // O: +44 (0)2087 474 956 // F: +44 (0)2087 427 967
Sydney – Suite #305 / 306, 30 – 40 Harcourt Parade, Rosebery, New South Wales, Australia, 2018 // O: +61(2) 9700 7023 // F: +61(2) 9700 7024
Melbourne – Level 28, 303 Collins Street, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, 3000 // O: +61 (3) 9678 9095 // F: +61 (2) 9700 7024
Macau – Macau Number 39, 17F Central Plaza, 61 Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro, Macau, China // O: +853 8291 3992 // F: +853 8291 3889