

# RACING POST

Tuesday, November 18, 2003 Racing Post

## BLOODSTOCK DESK

### New tests on market to aid breeders with mating plans

TWO new genetic tests professing to help breeders eliminate some of the guess work from their mating plans are being marketed by The Thoroughbred Genetics Company, a commercial research operation based at Sittingbourne Research Centre in Kent, writes Rachel Pagnon.

The tests, called GhP Score and MD Match, are said to provide "vital

genetic input on progeny stamping, levels of inbreeding and stamina potential". Test results are derived from blood samples.

The company claims that the GhP Score gives a precise indication of how strongly, and in what way, a mare or stallion is likely to influence the genetic profile of a foal. MD Match is said to "assess the inheritance of

a specific DNA component, which is likely to have a direct performance role".

Dr Stephen Harrison, the company's director, said: "GhP score completely rewrites traditional selection theories and pinpoints levels of inbreeding through scientific means. There is an optimal GhP score that is desirable in a horse.

"Below this, there is a danger that the animal may be subject to inbreeding depression and less likely to perform well.

"Too far above this level will make the animal an unreliable breeding prospect and also means that fewer useful genes affecting performance might be 'fixed'."

The company's website states:

"We wish to emphasize that this company is not involved in animal experimentation or the collection of genetic material resulting in the death of an animal or foetus.

"Furthermore, it is not our objective to clone or genetically manipulate racehorses."

For more information, see [www.thoroughbredgenetics.com](http://www.thoroughbredgenetics.com).