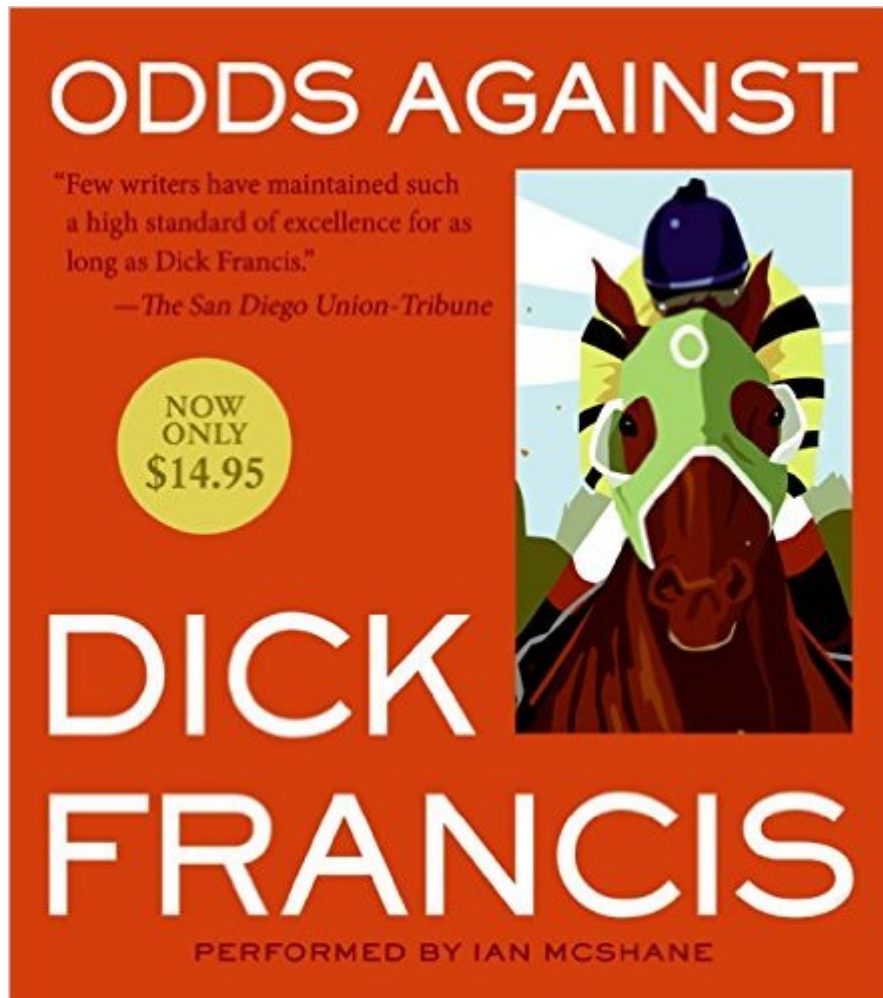


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Odds Against Low Price CD



Synopsis

A hard fall took hotshot jockey Sid Halley out of the horse racing game, leaving him with a crippled hand, a broken heart, and the desperate need for a new job. Now he's landed a position with a detective agency, only to catch a bullet from some penny-ante thug. And things are about to get even more hectic—the agency is giving him a case to handle on his own. The case brings him to the door of Zanna Martin, a woman who might be just what Sid needs to get him back up and running. But he's up against a field of thoroughbred criminals, and the odds against him are making it a long shot that he'll even survive . . .

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (33 customer reviews)

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[Authors, A-Z > \(F \) > Francis, Dick](#) #1379 in [Books > Books on CD > Mystery & Thrillers](#) #2518 in [Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Mystery > Cozy > Animals](#)

Customer Reviews

Francis' third book, written back in the mid-Sixties, though still a great read (curious reference to The Beatles is the only jarring reminder of its time), and a wonderful example of how quickly Francis picked up his new craft. If he was as fluent, smooth, and skillful jockey as he is writer he must, indeed, have been great. This book first introduces Sid Halley, one of Francis' two recurring heroes, the jockey-turned-detective with a damaged left hand. Halley has been drifting through life since his career-ending injury; a further injury (caused by a bullet) and the not so subtle intervention of his father-in-law bring a change to his attitude, a radically different outlook, and a desire to work effectively and properly at his new job. He is badly frightened, and physically damaged ~ two things Francis excels at writing, his fear, especially, is thoroughly convincing ~ but succeeds in both defeating the baddies and renewing his life.

I give ***** to the version read by Ian McShane (avoid the other readers). I enjoyed McShane's read voice. Some actor/readers, try to act too much when they read - I mean males doing higher voices for females are such a pain. McShane gives the right tone, a narrator and is it an enjoyed voice that carries you vividly into the world of ex-jockey Sid Halley. Injured in a riding accident, he now is an Enquiry agent/security expert that is looking into the strange accidents happening at Seabury Race Course. Dick Francis' writing, quite naturally, is excellent, though it is McShane's excellent narration that has me listening to this tape again and again. I have given it several times and gifts and recommended it to friends. All have thanked me for the enjoyment.

Once I started reading Dick Francis's books, I couldn't stop with one or two. I hope to get through all of them, and now his son, Felix, is writing the mysteries since his father's death in 2010. "Odds Against" is the first book in the Sid Halley trilogy. Sid Halley is a former jockey who lost the use of his hand when he had an accident during a race and a horse fell on him. He can no longer ride, so his father-in-law has taken him into his business as a private investigator. Although Sid has been with the firm for two years, he has done little work but has observed and absorbed a lot. When he takes on the case of what's happening at Seabury racetrack when a shady property dealer appears on the scene, Sid risks life and limb to find out what is going on and to make sure Seabury is safe. Francis's mysteries don't usually start off with a fast and furious beginning, but the story builds slowly and steadily with characters being introduced along the way. I can usually never figure out who the culprit is because Francis's writing makes it hard to guess. I like his style of writing that is not hurried and his characters are so convincing they could be real people. I recommend "Odds Against" for mystery readers and also for anyone interested in racehorses and horseracing. I always learn a little more about these subjects with each of Dick Francis's books I read.

I've read every Dick Francis novel, and have never been disappointed by any story he wrote. The point is the mystery. And no one does it better than Francis. The research is detailed and perfect. Whether or not you also like horses has no bearing on the essence of the mystery. Every book is a page-turner...you just can't put the book down. If you also like horses, consider some stories to allow you a bonus as sooner or later the protagonist will come in contact with a steeplechase track...a jockey, an architect, an artist, a glass-blower, a wine merchant, a pilot, and even a toy-manufacturer. Simply be prepared for a lively, well-told mystery that will grab your attention from page one, and never let go until you're done....and then you're sorry to see the story conclude...but will be satisfied with that conclusion.

In my opinion, this is not one of Dick Francis's best books. Starts out at a fairly good pace but then gets bogged down as it nears the end -- as if he needed filler to reach a quota of pages. A couple of interesting characters -- and the main character is likable -- but I could not give it 5 stars.

I quite enjoyed *Odds Against*, and found it to be an intriguing and exciting novel. Sid Halley is an unusual protagonist -- an ex-jockey who had been forced to give up his career through a fall from his horse that crippled his hand. Divorced and spiritless, he has been working for his former father-in-law's firm as a private investigator, but doing little for his paycheck. When a group of ruthless individuals seek to sabotage a local racetrack, Sid takes on the case, and while nearly losing his life, he regains a reason for living. During the extended climax, he races against time to figure out how the racetrack has been sabotaged, being chased all the while by the killers. Oddly, the reader is not drawn into the feelings of the protagonist (despite the first-person narrative, its affect is a bit flat, compared to the pain and terror he must have felt). In addition, while Sid solves the case, the cruelty of the perpetrators is not compensated by a cathartic denouement;. Both of these features may reflect the author's goal of writing in the "hard boiled" genre. In any case, as entertainment, this work more than satisfies. I am eager to read other contributions in the Sid Halley series.

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