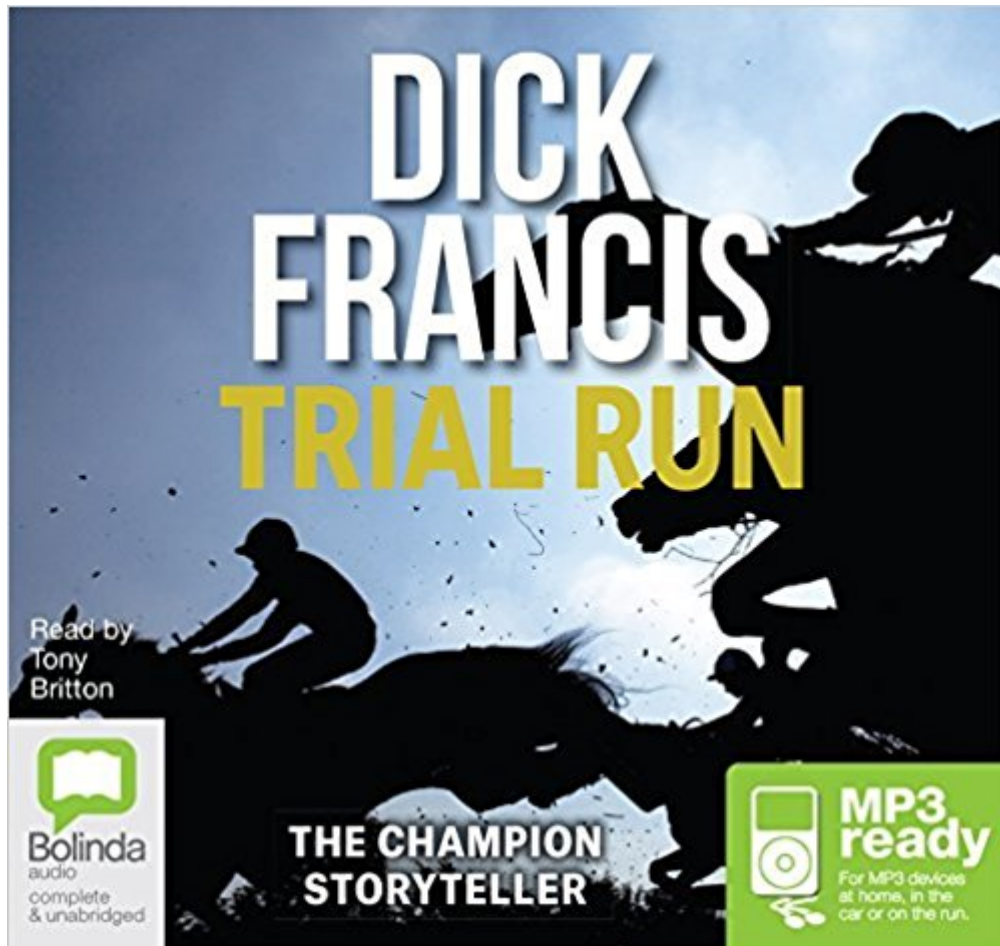




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Trial Run By Dick Francis



Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Bolinda audio (1845)

ASIN: B01MXKXVY5

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 21 customer reviews

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Authors, A-Z > (F) > Francis, Dick

Customer Reviews

It's not quite his home turf, but Dick Francis does a workmanlike job in this book of plotting a spy thriller. The spy is an amateur, in typical Francis fashion. Randall Drew runs a farm, raises horses and until recently has ridden them in steeplechase events. Randall has poor vision and chronic bronchitis, but he's wealthy, well connected, observant and resourceful. People trust him. A royal prince pressures him into undertaking an investigation that has baffled the Foreign Office. The prince's brother-in-law wants to ride in the Olympics in Moscow. But a rumor has arisen that "Alyosha" is waiting for him there, and something terrible will happen. All previous inquiries have failed to find Alyosha or explain the rumor. Randall, who knows horses, may be able to penetrate the mystery through different channels. As it turns out, there does seem to be a brotherhood of the saddle that opens doors everywhere in the world, although the doors don't budge as easily in Russia. Dick Francis fans expect his heroes to sustain vicious attacks, and Randall sees plenty of action in Moscow. He's up against some very nasty terrorists. He also has fascinating interactions with British Embassy personnel, his translator, the racing community and the many people watching him. Trial Run was first published in 1978. It accurately reflects the atmosphere in the USSR in those days: the stores with scant merchandise, the bugging of hotel rooms, the terrible food, the sensation of being watched. I was in Moscow and Leningrad briefly in 1985, and the atmosphere was just the same. It was fun revisiting that weird world through Randall Drew's adventures. But not everyone loves this book, so if you're new to Dick Francis, you might start with another title, perhaps Bonecrack, Flying Finish, Straight, Reflex, Longshot - so many choices!

Some of the reviews I've read, some written as long as 15 years ago, fuss about Trial Run as a repetitive artifact of obsolete Cold War attitudes. Looking at the international news here in 2016, I'd say that pronouncing the obituary of the Cold War is a little premature. In Trial Run Francis does paint a picture of Soviet era repression, but with the current mysterious deaths and peremptory

jailings of present day Russian dissenters, and revived imperialist aggressions of Putin-era policy, the 1978 USSR looks to me to be not quite as dead as we thought it was or as Francis describes it in this dandy thriller. Even the brutal acts of terrorism experienced by Francis' weak chested, near-sighted hero Randall Drew mirror and forecast the near daily outrages by radical religionists reported in US and world-wide media. Even the killers' names sound the same, so do the motivations: "The infliction of pain and fear...the total surrender of reason to raw emotion, in the illusion of being moved by a sort of divine rage...the addictive orgasm of the act of laying waste." In Trial Run Randall Drew's somewhat grudging agreement to try to help head off some potentially awkward and diplomatically undiplomatic consequences for his own country, lead him into lethal danger in another country, where only his own courage and the fortuitous help of unexpected allies and a plucky friend or two bring at least a temporary end to a chilling threat. Today we can only wonder how temporary it actually was.

Dick Francis and now his son Felix Francis are among my top authors. I keep and at some point reread each one. It's like having lunch with a dear friend one hasn't seen in awhile. They are well written. They are full of information about things I don't usually think about - this often finds me doing a little more research on the issue. I've learned a lot about horse racing and the differences in each country. Good murder mysteries and well worth the investment

dick francis never disappoints.....always suspenseful.

As usual, a riveting story, well written and well researched. Even though I know nothing of horses through my own experience, having read almost all Francis's books make me feel I know the scene.

Good. It kept me from involved and n the characters and the story line

ALL Dick Francis books are excellent!

Te best horsethriller thee is.

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