

## GULFSTREAM ANALYSIS

By MIKE WELSCH



**BEST BET: Icon Project (7th race)**

**First Race: 1. Sweetsouthernson 2. Five Card Monty 3. Sir Oso**

SWEETSOUTHERNSON back on relatively short rest off the claim against same kind he beat up on 13 days earlier and just a question of whether he'll regress or maintain that form. Might just be too classy for this kind. FIVE CARD MONTY dangerous if loose on the lead and perhaps. Might be quick enough to outswift these, stand some catching if he does on turn back to a mile. SIR OSO no match for preferred choice in their previous encounter after making a bit of a premature run at the leaders going nine furlongs. At the right now level to do some damage at a square price.

**Second Race: 1. Mystery Prospect 2. Black Spot 3. Northern Academy**

MYSTERY PROSPECT flashed improved speed to win his last first off the Walder claim. Steps up a notch, should trip out nicely from the outside box. BLACK SPOT gets some serious class relief after failing to threaten \$40K platers when dropped in for a tag for the first time since late August. Dangerous at his best with this kind. NORTHERN ACADEMY has encountered trouble in each of his last pair, should come running for at least a minor share once again with cleaner sailing.

**Third Race: 1. Thumbin' a Ride 2. La Tetanic 3. Western Sweep**

THUMBIN' A RIDE closed out her '08 campaign with a pair of wins over the artificial stuff at Woodbine but equally if not more adept on conventional dirt. High percentage north of the border barn looking for first win from limited opportunities down here this winter. Figures to trip out nicely just behind speed of LA TETANIC. The latter always at her best when loose on the lead and she looks like the controlling speed in this spot. Might get brave at a square price. WESTERN SWEEP closed out '08 in peak form herself and in new hands since her last. Out of the exacta just twice in 13 tries at this distance. Hard to ignore.

**Fourth Race: 1. Bruce Carl 2. Braciolo 3. Senor Pedro**

BRUCE CARL and BRACIOLE take the plunge from MSW to bottom level maiden claimer while moving from turf to dirt. Former flashed high speed in his debut only to hamper rider trying to bear out leaving the backstretch and around the turn. Might not look back if handling the wider turn on the main track better than the turf course. BRACIOLE steadied along a couple of times in traffic behind the preferred choice while wearing blinkers for the first time and likely to appreciate today's class relief. SENOR PEDRO the logical choice after showing his heels for nearly five furlongs to \$25K maidens before succumbing to 3-2 Moonspout in early stretch and fading late. Another who will appreciate the drop to this category for the first time.

**Fifth Race: 1. Safety Squeeze 2. It's Out There 3. Grand Cash**

SAFETY SQUEEZE tries starter allowance company for the first time off a couple of respectable tries at the allowance level over the local sod. Could not quite contain GRAND CASH going a bit further last month but likely to appreciate the turn back to a mile. Yet to run a poor one on grass but still expecting some value in this contentious spot. IT'S OUT THERE had a rough trip that began with early trouble and increased after he was taken back off the pace under a straight \$50K tag in his local bow. Better when able to stick his head in front early ala his last pair at Calder. Catch him to win. GRAND CASH disappointed at even money after falling far off a very slow pace after beating N1X opposition over the same course 12 days earlier. STretch running sort should appreciate the shorter field which translates into less traffic to negotiate once he begins to rev up that late kick.

**Sixth Race: 1. Jay Mike 2. In a Breeze 3. B. B. Jazz**

JAY MIKE back to the main, adds blinkers and most important drops to more suitable level for just his third start since early June. Should be long gone if clearing off as expected with these. IN A BREEZE the main danger plunging to mid-selling ranks off a steady diet of MSW tries. B. B. JAZZ victimized by unlucky trips in both previous outings this winter. May be running on best of all at the end.

**Seventh Race: 1. Icon Project 2. Receipt 3. Meadow Saffron**

ICON PROJECT, the day's best, good enough to finish less than a length behind Dar Re Mi, a subsequent Group 3 winner and Group 1 placed filly, and a head behind Group 1 winner and Breeders' Cup F & M Turf pacesetter Folk Opera in a Listed stakes last summer in England. Better the further she goes but training extremely well for her U.S. bow. Should have enough foundation and class to handle these with any trip. RECEIPT a classy sort herself but idle since finish third in an overnight stakes at the Spa on 8/31. Should be fit enough off the bench from the looks of his a.m. resume' at Payson. MEADOW SAFFRON had to take up sharply on the final turn, did well to recover to get beat just a length under similar conditions three weeks earlier.

**Eighth Race: 1. One Caroline 2. Alina 3. Miss Isella**

ONE CAROLINE gets a class check stepping into Graded stakes company off a series of easy allowance wins. Might prove good enough especially if able to relax on the lead as expected. ALINA held her own with some good ones during opening half of her 3yo campaign before heading to the sidelines but has several six furlong drills under her belt in preparation for her return. Top pair from her last start won graded stakes in their next start. Strictly the one to fear if not needing a race off the pine. MISS ISELLA idle since closing out '08 with a Grade 2 win in Ky. Steadily improving sort has yet to run a poor one with Borel aboard.

**Ninth Race: 1. Inter Galactic 2. Exclusive Hopper 3. Lady Tropicana**

INTER GALACTIC putting two starts relatively close together for the first time in a while and repeat of her last makes her good enough on the drop to today's level when beaten a length by Little B Rosson, a \$50K claiming winner here Wednesday. EXCLUSIVE HOPPER exits a couple of near misses and taking a slight class plunge of her own for the finale. Top connections. One to beat. LADY TROPICANA can come running at the end for a minor share.