

GULFSTREAM ANALYSIS

By MIKE WELSCH



BEST BET: Hold Your Ground (8th race)

First Race: 1. Checklist 2. Proud Ruler 3. Captain Rio

CHECKLIST stumbled at the start, ran with a twisted shoe when disappointing at odds on in his second start after cruising to a well graded debut win. Eligible to make amends with a little better racing luck. PROUD RULER comes off his best yet when rallying to his maiden victory going seven eighths while defeating a field that included three next out grads. Turning back in distance while his chief foes Checklist and CAPTAIN RIO both stretching out beyond six furlongs for the first time. Captain Rio earned high mark winning his maiden at first asking and another who had three next out grads in his wake. Barn on fire all winter. Logical choice for the chalkees.

Second Race: 1. Dangerous Diva 2. Flying Dixie 3. Swans Nest

DANGEROUS DIVA couldn't have been gamer, fending off a near race long challenge, before succumbing to ultimate winner in late stretch when sent a mile off a three month hiatus. Has been given ample time to recuperate from the effort. Ready to graduate with anything close to that type of effort in this spot. FLYING DIXIE made a little run into the stretch, flattened out in what figures to be a much needed effort off the layoff. Looking for improvement with that one under her belt. SWANS NEST was hung four wide, finished just in front of Flying Dixie in her 4yo bow and another expected to move forward off the effort.

Third Race: 1. Cat Gone Wild 2. Great Cause 3. Webcast

CAT GONE WILD chased some extremely fast fractions before fading badly when debuting against MSW opposition now comes up tagged for his second start and perhaps a sleeper if able to break clean enough to shake loose from the fence. Worth a look at a square price. GREAT CAUSE has been working bullets for his debut and outside box figures to have him away and running right from the outset. Figures to take plenty of action for his debut. WEBCAST comes off his best yet when second best behind Pletcher firster Island Drums. Like the fact he's had experience at the distance. Similar showing puts him right in the thick of this despite the hike.

Fourth Race: 1. Minister's Joy 2. Prairie Fox 3. Sunshine Kid

MINISTER'S JOY well spotted showing up against second level allowance types with that \$62,500 price tag on his head off a much needed try against much tougher. Finished third going a mile and three eighths and a mile and one half in '06. Must avoid getting trapped too far back off a false pace. PRAIRIE FOX continues to improve but yet to go beyond nine furlongs. SUNSHINE KID has had some experience at the distance and coming off a much needed try in his first start since being transferred to trainer Tim Hamm's barn.

Fifth Race: 1. Bikini 2. Gadda Da Vida 3. Pretty Miss Trippi

BIKINI dons blinkers, an equipment change that trainer Steve Klesaris has used successfully on several occasions over the past couple of years. Showed enough at 2 to perhaps register the upset if moving forward with the shades. GADDA DA VIDA finished well in front of preferred choice when pair met earlier this month although he did have a super clean trip that day. Worked a bullet since her last for high percentage barn. PRETTY MISS TRIPPI chased home a record equalling performance in the OBS Sprint after catching the fastest N1X filly and mare dash of the meet 18 days earlier. Lack of any published works since the Ocala trip of some concern.

Sixth Race: 1. Furthest Land 2. Baltimore Bob 3. Pickapocket

FURTHEST LAND had a three race win streak snapped at Tampa Bay now returns to a course over which he's been perfect this winter. Figures forwardly in a race lacking much in the way of any real speed. BALTIMORE BOB also back to a more suitable spot after finishing off the board in strangely run Mac Diarmida. Previous victory over local sod puts her right in the thick of this mix. PICKAPOCKET in new hands since his last. Held his own with some good ones in a couple of local tries off a lengthy vacation and third could be the charm in this spot.

Seventh Race: 1. Smart Tomcat 2. Stargleam 3. Penalty Kick

SMART TOMCAT plunges well below his selling price as a weanling for his local bow. Turned in promising debut over conventional dirt at Churchill before finishing well back on both Polytrack and the Aqueduct inner in two subsequent starts. Runnerup in his debut finished third behind Old Fashioned in the Grade 3 Southwest earlier this winter. Training forwardly for claiming bow. Might spring the upset if able to overcome tough post. STARGLEAM another getting some major class relief today while adding blinkers for the occasion. Lone try on conventional dirt came against a stellar field that included Holy Bull favorite Danger to Society and Holy Bull winner Saratoga Sinner. Will be coming on strongest at the end. PENALTY KICK passed several following poor start in his only previous start. Has since been back to the gate for some additional work and another getting necessary class drop to get career going in right direction.

Eighth Race: 1. Hold Your Ground 2. Sol a Pino 3. Justenuffhumor

HOLD YOUR GROUND set a pressured pace from tough post, faltered late when sent nine furlongs on 1/28 in just his second start following a lengthy hiatus. Turns back to a mile, need only move forward off last to get back on winning track for team Pletcher. SOL A PINO had modest two race win streak snapped when jumping into allowance company, encountering much trouble behind the preferred choice seven weeks earlier. Training forwardly for the rematch. JUSTENUFFHUMOR turned in impressive inner course debut on graduation day. Might handle the hike to the next level with a similar performance.

Ninth Race: 1. Big Red Hope 2. Chasing the Prize 3. Fiumes

BIG RED HOPE continues to hold his form extremely well. Ran down odds on Le Grand Cru when returning to the main off troubled grass try and has now posted back to back, career best main track performances. Need only repeat either of those efforts to take the measure of this group of starter allowance foes. CHASING THE PRIZE looks like the only real threat to the likely favorite coming off a pair of easy local victories. FIUMES has won three of his last four but no match for Chasing the Prize in their previous encounter.

Tenth Race: 1. Spice Route 2. Quasicobra 3. Presious Passion

SPICE ROUTE ran out of real estate when third in the somewhat strangely run Mac Diarmida but a tried and true mile and one halfer who can make amends at his best. QUASICOBRA looked like he had PRESIOUS PASSION measured but could not get by that game rival in their previous meeting but obviously in peak form at the present time. Presious P. turned in an amazing performance turning back Quasicobra after opening and then relinquishing a long lead in the Mac D. and perhaps just a question of how much that effort took out of the hard knocking, long winded gelding.

Eleventh Race: 1. Working Class Hero 2. Mighty Score 3. D'oro Diablo

WORKING CLASS HERO broke a step slow, took up approaching the turn while still managing to finish mid-pack in the well graded BZ WArrior dash in his debut. Taken to improve with a race under his belt. MIGHTY SCORE the obvious choice after coming out second best as tepid favorite in the very fast Captain Rio dash. Went without a recorded work for four weeks after that outing but back with a couple of slow halves in preparation for his return. The logical choice. D'ORO DIABLO and Purrfect Alibi look potentially best of the new faces. Former by Medaglia d'Oro out of a mare whose first four foals to make the races are all multiple winners. Working extremely well for his bow. Purrfect A. a full brother to G2 winner

and multiple G1 placed Santa Catarina. Showed a couple of bullets albeit with a five week gap in works on his resume'.