

GULFSTREAM ANALYSIS

By MIKE WELSCH



BEST BET: Formidable (8th race)

First Race: 1. Walkers Beach 2. Emotional 3. My Mom's Image

Just looking for some new faces to this category beginning with first starter WALKERS BEACH, a Melnyk homebred, who has certainly had enough work under her belt to be fit and ready for her bow. By above average debut sire Dixieland Band out of a mare who won on both turf and dirt. EMOTIONAL has shown little in both previous starts, each of which came on turf. Working forwardly over the local strip for switch to the main. MY MOM'S IMAGE has been away since May now drops to weakest level yet off a series of gate works across town.

Second Race: 1. Calabria 2. Kissing Code 3. King of Dreams

CALABRIA could return quick dividends off the claim. Did not get the best of trips in his local debut when shuffled back in the pack early on before passing some tired ones at the end. Showed enough on graduation day in Ky. to merit shaky nod with cleaner sailing. KISSING CODE outlasted the preferred one after getting a perfect ground saving trip under similar conditions on the 22nd. Hard to ignore at this level. KING OF DREAMS exits far and away his best yet on graduation day, a confidence booster which could see him move forward to another Beyer topper here.

Third Race: 1. Keepin Company 2. Choice Play 3. Christina's Dream

KEEPIN COMPANY kept some pretty good company both in New York and locally when returning off a long hiatus last month. Has shown speed against swifter and could end up the controlling speed in this spot if away running. Nicely bred sort by Mineshaft out of a seven time sprint winning mare. CHOICE PLAY strictly the one to beat off a couple of near misses under similar conditions to close out her 3yo campaign but a late running sort who has found trouble in each of her last four starts. CHRISTINA'S DREAM set a very fast pace before fading to third in her local bow and will take this bunch as far as she goes again today.

Fourth Race: 1. Heez for Doc 2. Pick Off 3. Metal Jacket

HEEZ FOR DOC, eliminated right off the bat when dropped to this level for the first time two weeks ago, deserves another chance with a cleaner beginning especially in a race which could collapse at the end. PICK OFF well spotted off popular maiden tally but along with METAL JACKET could be a bit of a question mark at a mile.

Fifth Race: 1. Gran Estreno 2. Leadwithyourchin 3. Drivingmaxandmitzi

GRAN ESTRENO had no visible excuse after chasing ultimate winner, fading a bit at the end when dropped into selling ranks for the first time but might not have to work as hard to get by the speedsters *Somes Sound* and *Bandit Prince* today. One more chance. LEADWITHYOURCHIN had arguably the toughest trip of the group exiting the 1/24 race won by National Captain, doing well to make up some ground after fanning about five wide into the stretch. Best in some time for this one time stakes competitor. DRIVINGMAXANDMITZI in dangerous hands off the claim and another exiting the well graded National Captain affair. Late running sort should benefit from a hot pace scenario.

Sixth Race: 1. Dubai Affair 2. Formal Deputy 3. Perusing

Like the opener, hard to go with the experienced ones in the lineup so we'll just take a shot with firster DUBAI AFFAIR who is a half to seven time sprint winner *Straight Laced* and with a couple of decent half mile drills on the resume'. Wouldn't have to be much to beat these. FORMAL DEPUTY showed enough two back going a mile at Calder to give a look here especially if able to get his head to the front early enough on turn back to 6.5 furlongs. Tossing last when eliminated in the run down the backstretch. PERUSING gets some needed class relief and has a touch of speed if just able to behave himself a little better than in his last few tries. Bore out last time, broke slow in his previous pair on grass. Could be a sleeper for last year's top Chitown apprentice.

Seventh Race: 1. Pampered King 2. Pit Alley 3. Show Me the Cash

PAMPERED KING continues to improve with every start. Could not quite overcome slow start when narrowly beaten on drop to this level three weeks earlier. Should be along with clean sailing. PIT ALLEY another on the improve and likely to benefit from last, his first try in nearly three months. SHOW ME THE CASH virtually lost all chance at the break in the Dania Beach now shows up tagged for the first time and an obvious factor with repeat of his better efforts up north. Must avoid early duel with *Zuloushe* and/or *Vinnies Wild Tale*.

Eighth Race: 1. Formidable 2. Vacation 3. Lion Lord

FORMIDABLE, the day's best, finally ran to his potential when trouncing MSW foes and earning high marks in his local bow. Should be long gone on the front end if away running with these. Has edge on present conditioning over several of his main competitors in salty N1X dash. VACATION got a little freshening after posting career best effort of his own when narrowly defeated by National Pride going a mile in his 3yo finale. Feb. 1 bullet indicates he's primed for a top effort off the layoff. LION LORD, Ghostzapper's baby brother, overcame trouble to post game maiden win at first asking but that victory came a year ago and he's liable to need a race as might multiple graded stakes placed *The Roundhouse*.

Ninth Race: 1. Cozy Lion 2. Sneak Peek 3. Mikoshi

MIKOSHI the logical choice off big grass bow behind next out N1X runnerup *Flornetino* but considering the short price there are some interesting alternatives in this lineup. COZY LION had no chance after stumbling at the break in his debut now gets what he really wants, a chance to stretch out and try grass. By *Tale of the Cat* out of a mare who was a three time SW over the weeks and a half to SP'd turfer *Arcturus*. Prado stays. Should offer some value. The same can be said for SNEAK PEEK who was well backed against a strong bunch when debuting last summer at Saratoga. How strong? Among the also-rans that day was *Pioneer of the Nile*, currently one of the top Derby prospects in the country.