

## GULFSTREAM ANALYSIS

By MIKE WELSCH



**BEST BET: Battle Plan (4th race)**

**First Race: 1. ItoBE 2. Trippin' Easy 3. Box of Charms**

ITOBÉ plunges to weakest level yet and perhaps just a bit too quick and too inherently classy for his opposition in the opener. May ultimately have to withstand TRIPPIN' EASY who returns to Vivian Sr. barn after being under tutelage of Vivian Jr. last fall. Looks like the best late threat if this one really ties up at the end. BOX OF CHARMS idle 11 months and showing only two works in preparation for her return but did beat a decent field here on graduation day, one which produced a couple of next out maiden \$40K grads.

**Second Race: 1. Clash of Arms 2. Sayers 3. King Combo**

CLASH OF ARMS dueled 2-1 favorite New Zealander, ultimately faded late behind still undefeated Top Speed who earned stakes brackets earlier this month at Tampa with an 81 Beyer. Runnerup from that race also came back to take an N1X in Maryland in his next start. Should get a nice stalking trip outside the likes of . SAYERS and I'm It Wayne. Former dueled, proved no match to stakes winner Salo Jak in what amounted to a match race under similar \$40K starter conditions in his 2yo finale now turns back to what may actually be his most effective distance. Logical with a repeat of his last. KING COMBO the winningest member of this field and the one true closer amongst a group of speed types. had little chance in his last when dropped back to last off a relatively slow pace, losing considerable ground into the stretch.

**Third Race: 1. Don't Stop Dreamin 2. House Quest 3. Dite Moi**

DON'T STOP DREAMIN has been away since late August but back for a straight tag for the first time since beateing similarlypriced opposition over this course here in April. Should get a nice trip stalking what figures to be a very hot pace. HOUSE QUEST steps up off the Dutrow claim after holding his form nicely during tail end of '08. Has yet to try this distance, another who should come running if the leaders falter. DITE MOI has shown some high speed on the main and is a half to Group 3 Japanese turf winner Daiwa Bandit but idle since Oct. 26 and showing no published works over the past five weeks.

**Fourth Race: 1. Battle Plan 2. Marl 3. Desert Falcon**

BATTLE PLAN, the day's best, chased a fast pace for a half after being fractious at the gate, faded badly in his only previous start but might be long gone against this relatively paceless bunch if away running from the outside. A half to Grade 1 winner Surfside. MARL has shown promise at this level and around two turns in the past but yet to compete on conventional dirt which makes him a bit of a question mark at what figures to be a short price. Has been working regularly and at times fast over the local strip. DESERT FALCON missed a neck in his two turn bow to See My Heart who came right back to wire N1X allowance company at the Meadowlands with an 83 Beyer. Another working steadily here for his '09 bow.

**Fifth Race: 1. Flibberjibit 2. Roll the Di 3. Dottie Booth**

FLIBBERJIBIT will be parked well outside if she should draw in but well spotted back against starter allowance company off a troubled third in a fairly tough two other than here opening weekend. ROLL THE DI gave the preferred choice a run for her money when third under open N1X conditions over the Aqueduct turf back in October before finishing second best behind loose on the lead Tempest Storm under higher level starter conditions three weeks later. Distance the key here as she appears better suited to a mile and one sixteenth. DOTTIE BOOTH beat open \$40K claimers in Kentucky when last trying the lawn and that type of effort would probably be good enough to put her right in this mix but another who faces the prospect of a pretty good ground loss breaking from the extreme outside.

**Sixth Race: 1. Big Flirt 2. Frosty Diamond 3. Cherokee Bull**

BIG FLIRT training bullets for his local and claiming bow. Outside post should have his in nice position behind the abundance of speed in this lineup. FROSTY DIAMOND owns the highest last race Beyer of the bunch but that was nearly three months ago although he's kept a steady work tab over the past four weeks. Showed a little ability to run from off the pace on a couple of earlier occasions. CHEROKEE BULL another late threat but had little excuse when hanging in his last. Turn back to six furlongs might help the cause, carry his closing kick a little further today.

**Seventh Race: 1. Rescue Squad 2. Swinging Bernie 3. Tire Kicker**

RESCUE SQUAD, a half to Criminologist, ran to his breeding at first asking overcoming trouble to beat a full and talented field that included three next out winners in his debut. Taken to score right back with any forward movement. SWINGING BERNIE dueled, faded late behind preferred one when also launching career on 10/11 and one of the three to win their next when rallying to a solid maiden score of his own to close out brief 2-year-old campaign. Figures to give the preferred one a little better run for his money the second time around. TIRE KICKER another impressive debut winner on the lawn, easily handling Masala who Beyered 89 when graduating five weeks later. Training sharply for 3yo bow. Just a question of whether he can sustain a similar run around two turns.

**Eighth Race: 1. Fidelio 2. Dragon Fi 3. On Board Again**

With Leparoux named on both, only one of the Frankels figure to start with FIDELIO accorded the edge if he goes. Dueled with Ling Ling Qi, fell back, came again before succumbing grudgingly to ultimate winner following a prolonged stretch battle. Probably fast enough to just run away early if connections so desire to try that particular strategy. DRAGON FI DRAGON FI back to a sprint off a couple of failed tries going long vs. much tougher than he encounters dropping back to level he beat over Philly Park turf in September. ON BOARD AGAIN, preferred one's mate, hard to fault off his last pair and perhaps rounding back to graded stakes caliber form from several seasons earlier.

**Ninth Race: 1. Intaglio 2. D' Wildcard 3. Rapid Mon**

INTAGLIO paired up career best Beyers in two decent outings this fall in New York and like the fact Coa sees fit to sign back on again. Was hung wide off a slow pace, did well to finish third in his last. Training forwardly on the main for '09 bow. D' WILDCARD returns to his favorite surface off a brief freshening but working steadily for local debut at Palm Meadows. Barn very adept at bringing one back off the layoff and should find plenty of speed to run at in this spot. RAPID MON should be the quickest of the early goers stretching out off a series of main track sprint tries. Bred to handle the added ground being a half to Now MOre Than Ever, a multiple grass winner at distances ranging from a mile to a mile and one eighth.