

KENTUCKY DERBY 142 ANALYSIS USING [OPTIXEQ](#) BY EMILY GULLIKSON

#1: TROJAN NATION - Prior to his second place showing in the Wood he had the look of a horse that would move forward over a wet track and that he did. He has all the making of being a nice horse and one I look forward to following down the road but not using today.

#2: SUDDENBREAKINGNEWS - He is one of the horses in Q4, and looks up against it from the Contention and Speed Rating of the race. He does have a positive note that suggests he is well suited for classic distances. The pace does not look favorable for his running style, and he is a bit below on [OptixFIGS](#) to make him a primary contender.

#3: CREATOR - He is similar to Suddenbreakingnews positioned in Q4 and a true Q4 horse. Going back to looking at his plot for the Ark Derby he had an obvious pace advantage and setup which he took full advantage of with a perfect trip. He does not have that edge today and cannot endorse him for a top spot.

#4: MO TOM - He is coming off a series of troubled trips with positive indicators such as **BTL**, **IMPROVE?**, **TWO MOVES**, **BURST** and **GRIT**. A major issue with him is the consistent pattern of **SLOG**. He is listed as a Q4 horse based on those **SLOG** races. Not that I'm counting on it necessarily, but if he does break with the field he could sit closer to the pace based on his races earlier on in his career. Despite his Plot position, he is a horse I will be using on top based on his TripNotes.

#5: GUN RUNNER - He is one of the horses that will take some action on the tote board, and one that I am against for a few reasons. His position as a Q1 small circle plot is not favorable with the other horses that will be contending the pace. On [OptixNOTES](#) he is coming off back to back ground saving **SAVE**, **PERFECT** trips. Also noted is **NO LEAD** and **NO LINE** in his last race. He also has a **SHORTER?** from his race on 11/28 with extended comment "does not look like one that will improve with more ground". I will be playing against on top.

#6 MY MAN SAM - On the [OptixPLOT](#) he looks like a horse that could sit a nice trip and get first run on the Q4 horses. [OptixNOTES](#) are positive both grades and keywords. Based on our information this horse looks like a legit contender worthy of using on top.

#7 OSCAR NOMINATED - Consistent type that looks below on many accounts. From what I have seen in the morning he gets over the track well but looks more suited to turf/synth. If you are using ALL for those underneath spots in exotics you might be glad you have him covered.

#8 LANI - We have the least amount of data on this horse. His UAE Derby was a **B** grade; small field quality suspect. In the morning, by my own account, his works and gallops do little to push him for a top selection.

#9 DESTIN - He ran a **B** race in the Tampa Bay Derby racing with the track profile outside **BIAS**. He is coming into the race on a less than ideal layoff (use the "days last" on the plot) of 56 days. One thing I have noticed just looking over some past plots squares in Q3 tend to do well. On grades, he is a bit light receiving a **"B"** as his highest.

#10 WHITMORE - He is similar to Mo Tom in the sense that his Q4 position is based on some of the trouble he encountered early in his races and does not look like a true Q4 horse factoring in the [OptixNOTES](#). There are enough positive indicator in the Notes that make him a potential use on top at his (likely higher) 20/1ML.

#11 EXHAGGERATOR - He is a play against for me based on a few factors. On Plot, he is Q1 but does not look like he has an advantage over others with similar position. My main play against is based on what I have seen from him in races and on the track in the mornings this past week. His races he looks like a horse that is best suited at a mile, preferable to me, a one-turn mile. Santa Anita derby is a good example of this as he was able to breeze comfortably early and race for the final mile. From a physical standpoint his build is upright and compact, and has a slight front paddle, no surprise he handles a wet track. He is a talented horse, but not for me in this spot.

#12 TOM'S READY - Based on Grades and Notes he comes up a bit short. His plot position looks favorable but as a circle looks unlikely to have the necessary kick when needed. He looks very much below on class on recent Notes and Grades.

#13 NYQUIST - Just like the horse directly to his outside, he should be able to work a good trip and finish. He is coming into this race with the best last out trip grade, which came in a grade one race. He did get a little bit green with the keywords **NO LINE, NO LEAD** late which is not something I like to see at this point in his career. Visually, he did show a burst in the top of the stretch to get away from his rivals something I like to see, and a credit to his class. Doubt I will be betting him to win, but he figures a top contender.

#14 MOHAYMEN - At first glance on the Plot he seems to “jump off the page” and is a must use on top. I expected a bit more from him last out, but according to **TRAINER** possible reasons for effort. Prior to that race he ran B+ races in mostly **PERFECT** trips and did show GRIT on debut. In the mornings leading up to the race, I like what I see from him as an individual. He is high energy and a bit of a character, and exuding his class, he makes his presence known on the track.

#15 OUTWORK - Before the Optix came out, he was a horse I had considered using on top; but based on his Plot and looking deeper at the Notes, I had to downgrade my original assessment. He figures to be forwardly placed but does not look to be able to out kick Nyquist or Mohaymen. After reviewing his Notes, he has run very game in his last two races which may have been a bit **HARD** and might not be as fresh coming into today.

#16 SHAGAF - His best two grades, **B+** have come at a mile distance, his last Note suggests **SHORTER?**. Physically he looks more like a miler and not ideally suited for the classic distance of this race.

#17 MOR SPIRIT - He is one of the horses in this field that has an **A-** grade to his credit. He also has multiple **STRETCH?** keywords that indicate this distance will not be an issue. His Q1 shape and position does not look as strong as others in similar position. Others seems more likely, but he is usable.

#18 MAJESTO - His Grades and Plot look a bit soft, but the Florida Derby did come back on **OptixFIGS** as one of the stronger prep races. As suggested in his Florida Derby extended comment, the extra ground will suit and could be used for underneath plays in exotics.

#19 BRODY'S CAUSE - He is one of the other horses in the race that received an **A-** Grade and is a multiple grade one winner. He is positioned in Q4 with snowflake contention, and mild speed rating, trip will mean everything for him. He has shown the ability, and looks excellent in his past work and gallops coming into this race. Like Mo Tom and Whitmore, he will need to break better and be more forwardly placed to have his best chance.

#20 DANZING CANDY - His best races have come at **LONE** trips and looks unlikely to get that here. He looks to take some pressure early by his circle position on the Plot in Q1 and does not look to be able clear, or have enough to hold late. He had a **GATE** in the last race which is always something to be aware of. Watching him in the morning he has gotten a bit **WARM** in his jogs. He is worth watching going to the gate as he might wash out.