

BC F&M Sprint

--first thing to state is that this is a really difficult race with several equally matched runners—a lot of whom have the same running style and several of whom are exiting the same race, the Ballerina.

--because 7-furlongs is a specialty distance, I like to really focus on the Surface/Distance PLOT.

--a look at the PLOT confirms that it should be a fairly slow pace but a contentious one since there isn't really a clear-cut leader in terms of early speed. Several of these seem capable of getting the lead, but they all seem more comfortable with stalking journeys.

--because 7-furlongs is such a tricky distance, I want to focus on the horses who have shown an ability to finish races. We have to be careful, however, not to rely too much on those who will be too far off the pace because of the seeming lack of pace in the race.

--based on the PLOT, Haveyougoneaway and By The Moon, the one-two finishers of the Ballerina, interest me the most because they should get the right tracking trip behind a bunched-group of horses—and they seem to have the best finishing ability of the tactically inclined runners.

--because several of these have squared off against each other, it's important to note that OptixNOTES from this Current Year takes on even extra significance in this race.

#1 PAOLA QUEEN won the Test for 3-year-olds, but it was a taxing effort, suggesting a Regress, which she did in her next start. She'll have to go from the rail, and it's unlikely she can wire this field.

#2 HAVEYOUGONEAWAY is just incredibly consistent, never running less than a B- this year, and her last race, which was her first at 7-furlongs, was her best ever—earning a 101 OptixFIG and the designation GRIT, which is an important trait to have at this taxing distance.

#3 TARA'S TANGO, a California-based horse, is very consistent, and even though the connections have always wanted her to be a two-turn horse, she's run very well twice at elongated sprint distances. She couldn't keep pace with Stellar Wind and Beholder last time, but the fact that she was with them early suggests she'll be fit on the cutback.

#4 GOMO has a nice Prep designation after a long layoff, but this seems like a very difficult spot for a horse who has had physical issues.

#5 WONDER GAL has one race that sticks out, but it came off a 202-day layoff with a perfect trip against NY-breds. Her tries against graded-company aren't nearly as good.

#6 BY THE MOON has been creeping forward in each of her starts this year after coming off a long layoff. She seems to do well with time between races, which she gets today, and her position on the PLOT looks solid.

#7 GLORYZAPPER is a little interesting because she has speed and versatility, and she hasn't run a bad race on dirt this year. Check out all of the GRIT comments as well. I'm not crazy about her position on the PLOT, but she's not impossible if she steps forward today.

#8 CARINA MIA looks pretty solid on the PLOT, and she's an obvious contender, especially if you see her Ballerina note, where she moved a little too early and lost as the even-money favorite. Two things to note: she was facing elders for the first time; and she wasn't with her regular jock, Leparoux, who she's reunited with today. That said, she's been chasing Songbird this year and has a HARD keyword three back. She can win but I'm against her at the price.

#9 PAULASSILVERLINING was part of the early pace in the Ballerina but was easily overtaken by the top few. She's run extremely well against Grade 2 and Grade 3 competition, but her one Grade 1 try resulted in defeat. She's probably more for underneath.

#10 WAVELL AVENUE won this race last year with a pace meltdown—something that is unlikely today. She hasn't really been the same horse this year, with her only really good performance coming in an overnight-stakes race. If she gets a hot pace, maybe she can bounce back, but that seems a bit unlikely.

#11 IRISH JASPER has a weird position on the PLOT, but based on her NOTES, she seems to be headed the right way, running a B+ in the Keeneland prep race for this. She gets a class test today but she's not without a shot if she can improve on her last race.

#12 FINEST CITY doesn't have a good PLOT position, but her campaign this year has been sneaky, running on turf in her last two starts. Two NOTES really stand out: back on 2/11, we have: "probably needs a soft pace and an outside post to be at her best." Well, she gets that today. And then on 7/16, we have: "still prefer this one sprinting." There is some hidden form in here, and I would be very interested in her at a big price.

#13 SPELLING AGAIN is a deep closer who has been crying out for more ground (STRETCH) in her last two starts. Well, she gets that today, but will she be too far back? She couldn't close into a soft pace in the 7-furlong Ballerina, and it looks like the same fate might await her today—but she seems usable for underneath.

MAIN CONTENDERS:

#2 HAVEYOU GONE AWAY

#6 BY THE MOON

#3 TARA'S TANGO

#7 GLORY ZAPPER

#8 CARINA MIA

LIVE LONGSHOT:

#12 FINEST CITY