

PLOT FIT – RED (due to lack of Optix translatable information for the European runners)

CONTENTION – SNOWFLAKE seems a reasonable label. No E type runners. Expect GRETZKY THE GREAT and FIRE AT WILL to show early speed. OUTADORE and BARRISTER TOM (if drawn in) can add to that but are more likely to sit just off. None of them are need the lead types and that is also true of the European runners. SEALIWAY has been forwardly placed in his races, DEVILWALA as well. NEW MANDATE has been placed on stout hold his last two but I wouldn't be surprised to see Frankie let him go some more early to secure position in this large field.

SPEED RATE – 25 (Average) Also reasonable given the composition of this field. Hard to see any kind of meltdown here. When the Euros are added, the majority of runners fall into the P or PC buckets.

OPTIX RPM – (Run Style vs. Plot Position for this race) – GREEN (GRETZKY THE GREAT, BARRISTER TOM ae, PUBLIC SECTOR, EBeko) **RED** (HARLAN ESTATE ae, ABARTA)

NOTE: Due to the absence of **OptixRPM** and **OptixPLOT** information for European based runners are providing a **[projected run style] based on video replay work** in brackets for all entrants below. Highest Racing Post Rating achieved is included for European runners.

(PP#) HORSE NAME (ML ODDS) [projected run style]

(1) SEALIWAY_FR (8/1) [EP 116 RPR]

This colt is trainer Frederic Rossi's first BC starter. Crushed a small field of 4 others over heavy going in The Grand Criterium (Gr.1) at Longchamp last out. All 6 of his efforts have been contested over less than firm ground. This will be his first trip around 2 turns and beyond 7F. Has won 4 of those 6 starts but finished behind GO ATHLETICO in both losses. Will need to be used early from rail during short run up to 1st turn. Showed ability to overcome a very large field in his maiden win. A win here would be difficult but has shown enough to date for inclusion in vertical exotics.

(2) NEW MANDATE_IRE (12/1) [P 111 RPR]

This Ralph Beckett trainee has been quite headstrong at the beginning of many of his races. Frankie has had to do a lot of work to settle him down. Would be surprised to see the same tactics employed today with 12 rivals to his outside and a short run to the 1st turn. One of only two Euros to win at today's distance of one mile. The other being CADILLAC. Has shown heart in last two winning close decisions with determination. Win contender but expect something closer to 6/1. Use in exotics.

(3) ABARTA (12/1) [C]

Brad Cox send out this lightly raced colt for his third start and adds blinkers. Given his lack of early speed in his two outings to date this seems a favorable move. Finished 2nd in The Bourbon

(G2) over this course last out behind MUTASAABEQ who got the jump on him into the stretch after he was shuffled and lacked room on the far turn. Rispoli opted to take him to the far outside and he rallied impressively past all others except the winner. Can turn the tables today with a more favorable trip and improvement. Win contender. Use in exotics.

(4) PUBLIC SECTOR_GB (8/1) [P]

Another lightly raced entrant. This one is sent out by Chad Brown who won his 1st BCJT with STRUCTOR last year. Finished an X_FLOW 2nd behind FIRE AT WILL in The G2 Pilgrim Stakes last out. Optix NOTES extended comment for the winner was “got away with a very soft middle race shape”. We suspect that The Pilgrim was not as strong a race as The Bourbon but it is hard to exclude this Brown trainee as he has shown the ability to produce great leaps in improvement with this type. Reunited with Irad who rode him in his maiden win. Exotics preferred but would be a tempting win bet if ML odds drift upward.

(5) CADILLAC_IRE (6/1) [PC 127 RPR]

Made no impression (PLODDY) last out in what was arguably the strongest European race for 2yos (The Darley Dewhurst Gr.1). Was unable to produce a turn of foot in a 5th place finish behind ST. MARK’S BASILICA (who sports Racing Posts top 2yo rating) that day. He won The KPMG Champions Stakes two back with a sustained even stretch run over VAN GOGH (also highly rated). Connections were 4th in last years BCJFT with ALBIGNA, who was trainer Jessica Harrington’s 1st BC starter. Cannot recommend for win (especially at ML odds) as he has yet to exhibit the quickening needed to beat top class company. Could grind up for a minor award.

(6) MUTASAABEQ (5/1) [PC]

Probable favorite comes in off an impressive victory in The G2 Bourbon Stakes. Pletcher trained Shadwell charge broke slowly and then came with a wide rally to win by just over 2L. He got the jump on ABARTA that day, and an overall better trip, but this was also his turf debut, so he has every right to improve off that effort. Has put in 3 solid works since that effort. Most likely winner offers value at ML odds.

(7) FIRE AT WILL (12/1) [EP]

Wired The G2 Pilgrim Stakes field aided by FLOW as mentioned above against PUBLIC SECTOR. Probably doesn’t get the same advantage in this spot given the larger field and different early course configuration than what he enjoyed at Belmont. Leaning towards toss but with the fall meet at KEE that trainer Maker has had it might be wise to include underneath.

(8) OUTADORE (8/1) [P]

Ward trainee has 2 easy wins from 2 starts but both were at sprint distances against lesser company. Gets tested for class and stamina today. Jose replaces Irad who rides for Chad. Seems an ambitious placement and I think the spacing between this ones starts is not the best sign for a young horse. Toss.

(9) BATTLEGROUND (6/1) [PC 123 RPR]

Aidan O'Brien trained son of BC Turf heroine FOUND ridden by Ryan Moore. Some concern with 101 day layoff but AOB has won 4 more BCJT's than I have. First time beyond 7F as well. Won't be my win bet but can't fault anyone who backs him. Include in exotics.

(10) EBeko_IRe (20/1) [PC]

Zuma Beach Listed Stakes winner ran his first three races in Ireland before being transferred to the Peter Miller barn in August. Was beaten 9L by CADILLAC in a Leopardstown maiden race which was his 2nd start and CADILLAC's debut. Has won and placed in two listed stakes out west stateside. Never say never with Mr. Miller but he looks a cut below many of these and would surprise with an ITM finish. Toss.

(11) GRETZKY THE GREAT_ON (8/1) [EP]

Is the undisputed King of Canadian 2YO's. Casse trainee was last seen winning The Summer Stakes Gr.1 going away at the end. Good to see the fast works continue after his latest effort. Now the not so good news. This will be his first start around two turns (although we can say the same about many others in this field) and at a different track than Woodbine. More importantly he will not be allowed to run with Lasix in this spot. He has been given the medication in all four of his prior starts but BC has adopted new regulations with regard to 2YO races. All other entrants have been lasix free for all their races. Toss.

(12) GO ATHLETICO_FR (10/1) [P 110 RPR]

Like countrymate SEALIWAY he has yet to run on firm ground. Has yet to prove himself in a large field like that one but has gotten the better of him the two times they met. This is trainer Decouz first BC starter. Tough draw for one without much early speed. BC newbie Lemaitre will need to work out a trip. Visually a lot like CADILLAC with a sustained run rather than a quick turn of foot. Minor award at best.

(13) DEVILWALA_IRe (30/1) [EP 126 RPR]

Ralph Beckett's other entrant has participated in 3 high class races this summer/fall but is still only a maiden winner. Optix NOTES projection SPRINTER in last and extended comment "stayed on well after being passed by O'Brien top 3 but concerned about route for this one, has not shown late acceleration against top company" does not bode well for 1st attempt at route. Toss.

(14) THE LIR JET_IRe (20/1) [EP 106 RPR]

Has never raced beyond 6F and was PLODDY in his last effort. Trainer Michael Bell's first BC starter. He did beat Juvenile Turf Sprint favorite GOLDEN PAL at 5F earlier this year but has not yet shown improvement with increased distance. Toss.

ALSO ELIGIBLES:

(15AE) BARRISTER TOM (30/1) [EP] – Completely overmatched in Bourbon Stakes. TOSS.

(16AE) HARLAN ESTATE_ON (30/1) [P] – Only a slow maiden win to his credit. TOSS.

CONCLUSION

This is a highly competitive affair with many unknowns. What we do know is that **MUTASAABEQ** and **ABARTA** have run well at Keeneland. For that reason, they are my preferred **WIN** selections at ML odds. Use SEALIWAY, NEW MANDATE, PUBLIC SECTOR, CADILLAC, FIRE AT WILL, BATTLEGROUND and GO ATHLETICO in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th spots of vertical exotics.