

DOGHOUSE CONFIDENTIAL

SARATOGA STRATEGIES by Mr. X

Mr & Mrs. X and the Junior Dooleys

Belmont Stakes

Saturday, June 10, 2006

BELMONT STAKES 138 FIELD				
Purse: \$1,000,000 - 1 1/2 miles				
Post	Horse	Jockey	Trainer	M/L Odds
1	Platinum Couple	Jose Espinoza	Joseph Lostritto	30-1
2	Sunriver	Rafael Bejarano	Todd Pletcher	4-1
3	Hemingway's Key	Jeremy Rose	Nick Zito	15-1
4	Bob and John	Garrett Gomez	Bob Baffert	5-1
5	High Finance	Eibar Coa	Richard Violette Jr.	12-1
6	Oh So Awesome	Mike Smith	James A. Jerkens	20-1
7	Deputy Glitters	Edgar Prado	Tom Albertrani	15-1
8	Jazil	Fernando Jara	Kiaran McLaughlin	10-1
9	Bluegrass Cat	John Velazquez	Todd Pletcher	3-1
10	Double Galore	Mike Luzzi	Myung Kwon Cho	30-1
11	Steppenwolfer	Robby Albarado	Daniel Peitz	9-2
12	Sacred Light	Victor Espinoza	David Hofmans	15-1

Well, we have a real mix of horses after Barbaro was injured and Bernadini took a pass. It looks to me that Todd Pletcher has the cards with Sunriver and Bluegrass Cat. **SUNRIVER** looks like an improving horse, winning the Peter Pan in excellent time. His last three furlongs was 35.9 seconds, and his energy distribution was great. As we have discussed, both would indicate that Sunriver can go further than 9f to 10f, the distance of the Kentucky Derby. Recall that Sunriver did not run in the Derby because he didn't have the required earnings. Pletcher was upset with Baffert because Baffert ran Sinister Minister with a foot bruise instead of scratching him. We know that Sunriver can get 10f, but can he stretch to the 12f Belmont? I think he is the horse to beat.

Pletcher continues to say that Bluegrass Cat is looking good and at the top of his game, but Bluegrass Cat looks to me to be a one speed horse, meaning that he will run a very consistent time (except for Keeneland). Whether that time will win the race is another question. His record this year doesn't excite me, and he seems to lack the final punch to put horses away. Of course, this race is 12f so maybe he can just continue to sail at his own pace and win. I just don't like him.

JAZIL is an improving horse that ran a monster race in the Derby to close for 4th after flattening out in the stretch. He could improve. His final eighth of a mile in the Derby was less than 12 seconds, so even though he couldn't get up to the 2nd, I still think he is the logical horse to complete the exacta. Because he is a deep closer, he has the wrong running style for the race. However, he did have a very good and fast workout, so that could be an indication of some speed earlier so that he will not be as far back. Wet doesn't hurt. Let's hope he closes for second.

Steppenwolfer is another consistent late runner who also had a great work. He hasn't had a rest since starting last year, so I don't see him winning. He is a good bet to be underneath somewhere. I just don't think he can win.

Bob and John will likely try to go to the front and steal the race. High Finance is an important horse in that he needs to run to the front to have an honest pace. This race will fall apart if we have a lone speed horse out in front, slowing down the pace.

So here is my safe bet:

\$2 Exacta Box: 2-8-9-11 = \$24

Here is what I will bet:

\$50 win 2 = \$50

\$5 Exacta Box: 2-8-9-11 = \$60

\$60 Exacta: 2-8 = \$60

\$20 Exacta: 8-2 = \$20

\$1 Superfecta: 2 with 8-9-11 with 8-9-11 with 3-4-5-7-8-9-11-12 = \$36

May the horse be with you!

Mr. X