

DOGHOUSE CONFIDENTIAL by Mr. X

May 2, 2014

140TH KENTUCKY DERBY

PP	HORSE	TRAINER	JOCKEY	ODDS
1	Vicar's In Trouble	Mike Maker	Rosie Napravnik	30-1
2	Harry's Holiday	Mike Maker	Corey Lanerie	50-1
3	Uncle Sigh	Gary Contessa	Irada Ortiz Jr.	30-1
4	Danza	Todd Pletcher	Joe Bravo	10-1
5	California Chrome	Art Sherman	Victor Espinoza	5-2
6	Samraat	Rick Violette Jr.	Jose Ortiz	15-1
7	We Miss Artie	Todd Pletcher	Javier Castellano	50-1
8	General a Rod	Mike Maker	Joel Rosario	15-1
9	Vinceremos	Todd Pletcher	Joe Rocco Jr.	30-1
10	Wildcat Red	Jose Garoffalo	Luis Saez	15-1
12	Dance With Fate	Peter Eurton	Corey Nakatani	20-1
13	Chitu	Bob Baffert	Martin Garcia	20-1
14	Medal Count	Dale Romans	Robby Albarado	20-1
15	Tapiture	Steve Asmussen	Ricardo Santana Jr.	15-1
16	Intense Holiday	Todd Pletcher	John Velazquez	12-1
17	Commanding Curve	Dallas Stewart	Shaun Bridgmohan	50-1
18	Candy Boy	John Sadler	Gary Stevens	20-1
19	Ride On Curlin	Bill Gowan	Calvin Borel	15-1
20	Wicked Strong	James Jerkens	Rajiv Maragh	8-1

Analysis

Once again, the Derby is the hardest race in the world to handicap and with a twenty-horse field, you need a great deal of luck even if you have the best horse. This year is no different. Looks like great weather.

For the most part, I almost invariably bet my qualifying horses based on energy distribution and last three furlong times. That is the group that can get 10 furlongs. See the list at the bottom of the Meet Mr. X page.

20 Wicked Strong is my top horse, making all my numbers on energy distribution, last three furlong times, and the best final time of the group. However, he will be overbet because of the Boston Marathon connection. Wicked Strong does not like crowds and may be upset by the noise of the crowd. The good news is he will be loaded in the next to last group, so he won't be standing in the gate too long. His trainer isn't crazy about his post, but as a closer, he needs to break well, have the speed horses out of the gate to the front with no one in his way to drop over close to the rail immediately. A tall order. On the other hand, his closing move in the Wood was fantastic, so let's hope Maragh can get him

to calm down before the race, get over to the rail or close to it as soon as possible, and put the horse in position at the quarter pole to make his run. He has been working very well at both Belmont and briefly at Churchill, so he is ready to go.

4 Danza is a very lightly raced horse from Pletcher that ran a great race in the Arkansas Derby. He meets my criteria, has been working well at Churchill, and could be a sleeper. He has a good positional post if he can stand his ground and not be knocked around at the start or through the first turn. While a major improvement last time, he does have a slower final time than Wicked Strong, although he won by almost five lengths and likely just sailed through the final sixteenth of a mile. He is a threat to win it all, particularly if Wicked Strong runs into trouble.

5 California Chrome is the West Coast hope and has done nothing wrong. He will be the big favorite, but I think he is a very vulnerable favorite. He doesn't break well, so he could find himself immediately behind horses. He has not trained well at Churchill according to DRF's clocker. While his Beyer numbers are the best in the field, my projected numbers put him behind Wicked Strong. We'll see whether the California horse can win at Churchill as he has in California. On the other hand, he may lay over the field like Big Brown did and win anyway. I'm betting he gets beat.

The other horses who qualified under my numbers (energy distribution and last three furlong times) were General A Rod, Wildcat Red, and Ride on Curlin. General A Rod and Wildcat Red both seem to have peaked in Florida, so I'm throwing both out. Ride on Curlin just doesn't excite me with a very slow time in the Arkansas Derby.

After vowing that I will not bet horses running on the rug, i.e. Keeneland, I find myself including the two horses that qualified on the rug and have made a good appearance and training well on dirt: **12 Dance With Fate**, and **14 Medal Count**. Both have a chance to make the exacta, but I am doubtful that either can win.

The Bet:

Here is my safe bet: \$2 Exacta: 4-5-20 over 4-5-12-14-20 = \$24

Here is what I will bet:

\$10 Exacta box: 4-5-20 = \$60

\$20 Exacta box: 4-20 = \$40

\$10 Exacta: 4-20 over 12-14 = \$40

\$1 Triple: 4-5-20 over 4-5-12-14-20 over 4-5-12-14-20 = \$36

Total: \$176