DOGHOUSE CONFIDENTIAL by Mr. X

KENTUCKY DERBY 2008

1 Cool Coal Man Odds 20-1 Jockey: Julien Leparoux Trainer: Nick Zito Owners: Robert V. LaPenta	**11 Z Humor** Odds 30-1 Jockey: Rene Douglas Trainer: Bill Mott Owners: Zayat Stables	
2 Tale Of Ekati Odds 15-1 Jockey: Eibar Coa Trainer: Barclay Tagg Owners: Charles Fipke	**12 Smooth Air** Odds 20-1 Jockey: Manoel Cruz Trainer: Bennie Stutts Jr. Owners: Mount Joy Stables	http://www.heraldleaderp mooth-air/
3 Anak Nakal Odds 30-1 Jockey: Rafael Bejarano Trainer: Nick Zito Owners: Four Roses Thoroughbreds	**13 Bob Bla** Odds 20-1 Jockey: Richard Migliore Trainer: James Kasparoff Owners: Jeff Harmon and Tim Kasparoff	
4 Court Vision Odds 20-1 Jockey: Garrett Gomez Trainer: Bill Mott Owners: IEAH Stables and WinStar Farm	**14 Monba** Odds 15-1 Jockey: Ramon Dominguez Trainer: Todd Pletcher Owners: Starlight Stable, Lucarelli & Saylor	
5 Eight Belles Odds 20-1 Jockey: Gabriel Saez Trainer: Larry Jones Owners: Fox Hill Farms	**15 Adriano** Odds 30-1 Jockey: Edgar Prado Trainer: Graham Motion Owners: Courtlandt Farms	
6 Z Fortune Odds 15-1 Jockey: Robby Albarado Trainer: Steve Asmussen Owners: Zayat Stables	**16 Denis of Cork** Odds 50-1 Jockey: Calvin Borel Trainer: David Carroll Owners: Mr and Mrs. William K. Warren Jr.	
7 Big Truck Odds 50-1 Jockey: Javier Castellano Trainer: Barclay Tagg Owners: Eric Fein	**17 Cowboy Cal** Odds 20-1 Jockey: John Velazquez Trainer: Todd Pletcher Owners: Stonerside Stable	
8 Visionaire Odds 20-1 Jockey: Jose Lezcano Trainer: Michael Matz Owners: Team Valor Int. and Vision Racing	**18 Recapturetheglory** Odds 20-1 Jockey: E.T. Baird Trainer: Louie J. Roussel III Owners: Louie J. Roussel III and Ronald Lamarque	
9 Pyro Odds 6-1 Jockey: Shaun Bridgmohan Trainer: Steve Asmussen Owners: Winchell Throroughbreds	**19 Gayego** Odds 15-1 Jockey: Mike Smith Trainer: Paulo Lobo Owners: Cubanacan Stables	
10 Colonel John Odds 4-1 Jockey: Corey Nakatani Trainer: Eoin Harty Owners: WinStar Farm	**20 Big Brown** Odds 3-1 Jockey: Kent Desormeaux Trainer: Richard Dutrow Jr. Owners: IEAH Stables and Paul Pompa Jr. et. al.	

The time has finally come to make our selections for the Derby. We always say that having the best horses in a twenty-horse field doesn't mean that we will cash. You need to have a serious amount of luck on top of having horses that can compete at 10 furlongs.

We have followed all of the horses and find this group to be mediocre at best. The only consistent thing about these horses is that they are inconsistent. Look at the Beyer numbers. The winning Beyer for the Derby is around 105, yet only one horse (Big Brown) has eclipsed that number. Most have not broken the 100 Beyer. On the other hand, maybe the Beyer numbers are not correct on the artificial surface (Colonel John), and these numbers need to be raised significantly. So we have artificial surfaces to deal with along with the weather that does not look good. We will handicap for a wet track, but really our selections are the same, rain or shine.

We have a number of horses that have met our criteria of less than 68% and less than 38 seconds (see earlier Kentucky Derby analyses at Meet Mr. X). Of that group, some are front runners that cannot compete with Bob Black Jack and Big Brown. That leaves us with the closers that meet our criteria: Colonel John, Visionaire, and Z Fortune. Adriano, Monba, Cowboy Cal, Recapturetheglory, Bob Black Jack, and Z Humor don't make the grade either because of their running style,look like turf or artificial surface horses, or have very bad posts.

I am fairly confident that **COLONEL JOHN** will finish in the money, and he is my top choice. His Santa Anita Derby was outstanding, and his work at Churchill was eye-opening. He has the look of a winner,

rain or shine. **Z FORTUNE** looks to be moving in the right direction, so I give him a good chance. I have to include **PYRO** and forgive his effort in the Keenland Bluegrass. My view is that Steve Assmussen, who trains both, is a better trainer than most people think even though he looks like the Devil. **VISIONAIRE** looks to be slower than these, but does close very well and came out of the fog in the Aqueduct race on a sealed, wet track to win impressively. Could be a live longshot to get into the money. I don't like **BIG BROWN** because of his campaign, bad energy numbers, bad feet, and bad post. But he did post a huge Beyer at Gulfstream in a bad post. He could outclass all of these and run to the front and continue to run to the wire. So you need to include him. I included Court Vision in the final triples because I just can't dismiss Garrett Gomez choice of Court Vision over Colonel John. I don't think he has any chance to win, but he does close, and he has won at Churchill.

Big Brown will want the lead or be close. There are a number of speed horses inside of him, so we can expect that Big Brown will likely be second to Bob Black Jack going around the first turn. I expect Big Brown to be in front at 6 furlongs and likely at one mile. At the eighth pole, I expect that he will reach his energy limit and start to back up. Colonel John and the rest should close. Praying for Colonel John should start at six furlongs.

You can make a case for any number of horses in the money because of the mediocrity of the group. But you can't bet them all.

Here is my safe bet:

$2 Exacta Box: 10 with 6-8-9-20 = $16

Here is what I will bet:

$20 Exacta Box: 10 with 6-9 = $80

$10 Exacta Box: 10 with 8-20 = $40

$1 Triple Box: 6-8-9-10-20 = $60

$1 Triple: 10 with 4-6-8-9-20 with 4-6-8-9-20 = $20

$1 Triple: 4-6-8-9-20 with 10 with 4-6-8-9-20 = $20

$1 Triple: 4-6-8-9-10 with 4-6-8-9-20 with 10 = $20

Total: $240

Don't blow your brains out on this race. It is very difficult, so bet what you want. It could be a chaos race where the payoffs could be huge. Have fun!

Mr. X