

Stakes Review

The Jerome Handicap (G2)

Sept. 13, Belmont 1 mile, 3-year-olds,
Purse: \$150,000

1 – DURING	6.60-1	BEYER: 100
Previous three Beyer:		102-92-96
T: Bob Baffert (495-98 .20)	J: Jose Santos (927-138 .15)	
2 – Tafaseel	6.30-1	Beyer: 99
Previous three Beyer:		80-104-102
T: K McLaughlin (96-26 .27)	J: Rich Migliore (727-132 .18)	
3 – Pretty Wild	1.20-1*	Beyer: 90
Previous three Beyer:		104-85-99
T: Stanley Hough (215-36 .17)	J: Jerry Bailey (631-171 .27)	

ALSO RAN: Inamorato(87), Your Bluffing(83), Roses In May(81), Distinct Vision(72), Gigawatt(64), Region Of Merit(53).

FRACTIONS:	22.58	45.04	1:09.68	1:36.32
OTHER ROUTES, DIRT:				
Race 1 (F-Clm20,000, 3yo)	23.51	47.38	1:12.91	1:39.31
Race 5 (MdnSplWt, 2yo)	22.68	45.68	1:10.82	1:38.57
Race 9 (F-G1 Ruffian, 3+)	23.11	45.90	1:10.10	1:34.67 1:41.23

COMMENT: During made a name for himself by beating Ten Most Wanted in the Swaps, but then two poor outings at Saratoga made that win look like a fluke. But, under a superb ride by Jose Santos, During bounced back nicely. He broke alertly, prompted a solid pace, pitched three wide turning for home and held off the late-charging Tafaseel. The race doesn't mean he's ready to dive back in against the likes of Ten Most Wanted, Empire Maker, Funny Cide, and Peace Rules, but it was a nice win for a horse who can make some noise in the right spots. Tafaseel bounced back nicely after a miserable Pennsylvania Derby run. He apparently didn't like slop that day, but on dry land here he made a big move in midstretch, and looked as though he would roll on by During. Pretty Wild was the heavy chalk after a big return sprint win Saratoga. He rushed up inside to take the lead, got pressed all the way around, put away the speedy Distinct Vision, but didn't have an answer when the top pair came calling. A mile may be a smidge beyond his best at this level.

The Matron (G1)

Sept. 14, 1 mile, 2-year-olds, fillies
Purse: \$200,000

1 – MARYLEBONE	7.00-1	BEYER: 79
Previous three Beyer:		65
T: Todd Pletcher (601-146 .24)	J: Edgar Prado (1138-207 .18)	
2 – Lokoya	2.40-1	Beyer: 79
Previous three Beyer:		70-81
T: Todd Pletcher (601-146 .24)	J: John Velazquez (997-224 .24)	
3 – Eye Dazzler	5.40-1	Beyer: 68
Previous three Beyer:		71-72
T: Mark Hennig (375-59 .16)	J: David Flores (814-127 .16)	

ALSO RAN: Feline Story(65), Sisti's Pride(62), Funny Honey(36), Charming Humor(31), Stand On Top(30).

FRACTIONS:	22.49	45.27	1:10.70	1:38.02
OTHER ROUTES, DIRT:				
Race 7 (G1 Futurity 2yo)	23.04	45.56	1:10.03	1:35.75
Race 8 (AlwN2X, 3+)	23.78	46.77	1:11.97	1:37.91 1:44.68
Race 9 (Alw58,000C, 3+)	23.34	46.13	1:09.91	1:35.06 1:41.56

COMMENT: Marylebone bided her time early, made her move on the far turn, and despite traffic trouble got by stablemate Lokoya in the final strides. All in all a pretty darn nice second career start – but considering her final time was nearly three seconds slower than the boys went later in the Futurity, it seems unlikely whether she or anyone else in here can threaten Halfbridled, Tizdubai, Ashado, Victory U. S. A., Class Above or Daydreaming. Lokoya broke alertly and dueled from the inside immediately. They weren't going terribly quickly and she battled back more than once. Her good showing gave trainer Todd Pletcher a one-two finish. Eye Dazzler was the one dueling with Lokoya from the start. She tried to stay involved turning for home but simply couldn't keep up in the lane. To her credit she held a clear third. Feline Story didn't show the same pizzazz she'd shown while winning three of her first four races. Her main weapon is speed and she was taken off the pace. A mile may be pushing it for her.

The Ruffian (G1)

Sept. 13, Belmont, 1 1/16 miles, 3-year-olds and upward, fillies and mares
Purse: \$300,000

1 – WILD SPIRIT-CHI	0.55-1*	BEYER: 110
Previous three Beyer:		92-110-106
T: Robert Frankel (290-88 .30)	J: Jerry Bailey (631-171 .27)	
2 – You	4.30-1	Beyer: 104
Previous three Beyer:		88-100-103
T: Robert Frankel (290-88 .30)	J:Eibar Coa (1027-164 .16)	
3 – Passing Shot	6.40-1	Beyer:95
Previous three Beyer:		92-89-87
T: H Allen Jerkens (262-60 .23)	J: Jose Santos (927-138 .15)	

ALSO RAN: Devon Rose(85), She's Got The Beat(83), Nonsuch Bay(76)

FRACTIONS:	23.11	45.90	1:10.10	1:34.67	1:41.23
OTHER ROUTES, DIRT:					
Race 1 (F-Clm20,000, 3yo)	23.51	47.38	1:12.91	1:39.31	
Race 5 (MdnSplWt, 2yo)	22.68	45.68	1:10.82	1:38.57	
Race 8 (F-G2 Jerome, 3yo)	22.58	45.04	1:09.68	1:36.32	

COMMENT: Wild Spirit was supposed to romp in the Grade 1 Personal Ensign, but finished second. This time she looked every part the super filly. She broke slowly from the rail, and her rider, Jerry Bailey, guided her to the outside where she had clear sailing and a dream trip. Her connections said her dislike of the inside may have been the main factor to her Personal Ensign loss. Today, she rolled up to get abreast of the leaders under wraps, then drew off. It's still hard to say whether she or Sightseek is the best in the Frankel barn – after all, wouldn't Sightseek have probably won with similar ease? The Oct. 4 Beldame is next in her sights, then a big decision by Frankel about whether to supplement her to face Azeri and Sightseek in the Breeders' Cup Distaff. You, who has been relegated to a supporting player in the Frankel barn, made an easy lead and ran on strongly throughout, finishing second in this race for the second straight year. She's obviously far from washed up, and as long as she stays away from the big girls can win some important races. Passing Shot never looked like the horse who beat Wild Spirit in the Personal Ensign. She chased the pace, tried to go with Wild Spirit, but never amounted a challenge and in the end looked a bit like a tired filly. It could be a busy campaign has taken its toll. Devon Rose chased You, and had no response when Wild Spirit and Passing Shot came to her.

The Futurity (G1)

Sept. 14, Belmont, 1 mile, 2-year-olds,
Purse: \$200,000

1 – CUVEE	1.30-1*	BEYER: 102
Previous three Beyer:		103-69-93
T: S Asmussen (1327-314 .23)	J: Jerry Bailey (631-171 .27)	
2 – Value Plus	1.90-1	Beyer: 86
Previous three Beyer:		87
T: Todd Pletcher (601-146 .24)	J: John Velazquez (997-244 .24)	
3 – El Prado Rob	42.75-1	Beyer: 77
Previous three Beyer:		68-68-57
T: Nicholas Zito (382-49 .13)	J: Javier Castellano (857-120 .14)	

ALSO RAN: Tabacchi(63), Flushing Meadows(59), Tumblebrutus(55)

FRACTIONS:	23.04	45.56	1:10.03	1:35.75
OTHER ROUTES, DIRT:				
Race 6 (F-G1 Matron 2yo)	22.49	45.27	1:10.70	1:38.02
Race 8 (AlwN2X, 3+)	23.78	46.77	1:11.97	1:37.91 1:44.68
Race 9 (Alw58,000C, 3+)	23.34	46.13	1:09.91	1:35.06 1:41.56

COMMENT: Cuvee is mighty quick but he showed a new dimension here and it could be vital down the road: patience. He was pressed the pace set by the quick Flushing Meadows, put him away on the far turn, and dismissed Value Plus when he made his bid. Despite a sprint pedigree, Cuvee is on the BC Juvenile short list. Value Plus hit the gate at the start and was away a couple lengths behind the field. He loomed a big threat turning for home, but he couldn't go with Cuvee when the real racing began. His mediocre finish prompts question as to whether he's a BC Juvenile contender. El Prado Rob ran on to be a well-clear third, though he was no factor in the race. Flushing Meadow showed fine speed, and may be a sprinter only. Much-ballyhooed Euro Tumblebrutus was unruly before the start, then broke slowly and never picked up a foot. Very disappointing.

The Kentucky Cup Classic Handicap (G2)

Sept. 13, Turfway, 1 1/8 miles, 3-year-olds and upward.
Purse: \$350,000.

1 – PERFECT DRIFT	1.40-1	BEYER:112
Previous three Beyer:		100-112-117
T:Murray Johnson (74-10 .13)	J: Pat Day (761-147 .19)	
2 – Congaree	0.50-1*	Beyer: 110
Previous three Beyer:		116-92-116
T: Bob Baffert (495-98 .20)	J: Edgar Prado (1138-207 .18)	
3 – Crafty Shaw	9.50-1	Beyer: 104
Previous three Beyer:		105-102-100
T: Peter Vestal (49-3 .6)	J: Shane Sellers (779-130 .17)	

ALSO RAN: Even The Score(103), M B Sea(101).

FRACTIONS:	24.31	48.35	1:11.84	1:37.15	1:50.43
OTHER ROUTES, DIRT:					
Race 9 (f-KyCupJuvFillies, 2yo)	23.31	47.67	1:12.80	1:39.04	
Race 10 (G3 KyCupJuv, 2yo)	23.22	47.12	1:11.99	1:39.72	1:46.61
Race 12 (f-G3 TurfwayBC, 3+)	24.09	47.71	1:12.09	1:38.28	1:44.98

COMMENT: Perfect Drift was good enough to beat Mineshaft and Aldebaran in the Grade 1 Foster, then was no factor in the Grade 1 Arlington Million. That race raised questions about whether he was as good as he looked in the Foster or whether he's better on dirt. Well now we know: it was the surface. Back to dirt here, Perfect Drift chased a classy speedster in Congaree, who got to set his own slow pace, and never looked like a loser. He hooked Congaree with a half-mile to go and was traveling the better of the pair every inch of the way. If he's good enough to beat Mineshaft and Aldebaran and now Congaree, he would certainly merit ample respect in the BC Classic. But his trainer, Murray Johnson, says he won't run in the Breeders' Cup and instead will to in the Sept. 28 Hawthorne Gold Cup. Congaree stumbled a bit at the start but made the lead relatively easily, set slow splits, and fought back when Perfect Drift came at him. Have to think Congaree's trainer, Bob Baffert, may be having second thoughts now about a BC Classic run. Crafty Shaw pressed Congaree, couldn't go with the top pair when they really got busy turning for home, and ran third. He would be awfully tough in races like the Schaefer Mile at Hoosier Park and the Grade 2 Clark at Churchill in November.

The Atto Mile (G1)

Sept. 14, Woodbine, 1 mile turf, 3-year-olds and up,
Purse: \$1,000,000

1 – TOUCH OF THE BLUES	5.45-1	BEYER: 106
Previous three Beyer:		105-103-97
T: Neil Drysdale(137-26 .19)	J: K Desormeaux (418-55 .13)	
2 – Soaring Free	4.40-1	Beyer: 105
Previous three Beyer:		105-98-105
T: Mark Frostad (144-41 .28)	J: Todd Kabel (531-110 .21)	
3 – Perfect Soul-Ire	3.55-1	Beyer: 101
Previous three Beyer:		105-100-106
T: Roger Attfield (221-22 .9)	J: Julie Krone (927-138 .15)	

ALSO RAN: Wando(101), Chopinina(95), Moonshine Hall(92), Freefourinternet(90), Sarafan(88), Numerous Times(88), Tap The Admiral(87), Wake At Noon(86)

FRACTIONS:	22.84	45.38	1:09.38	1:33.39
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OTHER ROUTES, TURF:				
Race 4 (G2 Summer, 2yo)	23.45	46.26	1:10.58	1:34.95
Race 6 (f-G2 CanadianH, 3+)	23.93	47.08	N/A	N/A 1:44.56

COMMENT: Touch of the Blues took his customary spot near the back of the pack, gradually made headway under Kent Desormeaux, and powered home to get the best of a battle-weary Soaring Free. Despite the win, he doesn't appear quite as talented as previous Drysdale stars Labeeb and Hawksley Hill, and may find the Breeders' Cup Mile waters too deep. Soaring Free ran huge in defeat. He pressed the pace early, disposed of the other speed, and just couldn't come up with another response when Touch of the Blues came calling. Perfect Soul came home strongly but was never really a threat. The primary reason is he was simply given far too much to do, falling back to last and remaining there until they hit the straight. Wando, the Canadian Triple Crown winner, pressed the pace, surged to the lead turning for home and for a moment appeared on his way to victory. But he tired and just missed the show. Still, a good effort. Sarafan was uncharacteristically unruly before the start, refusing to load and having to be blindfolded and finally coaxed in. He made a move going into the far turn but it evaporated as quickly as it had materialized.

– Trip notes by Michael Hammersly