

ANDY RICHMOND'S IN RUNNING NOTES 24th August 2012

YORK 3.05 – Skybet Strensall Stakes 1M 208yards

IN-RUNNING OBSERVATIONS

A very “odd” race to analyse this one as there are as few of the protagonists that have had various running styles and some which has been campaigned in very different ways this year and I get the feeling that we could get a race with a very strange feel about it here.

However, let's try and present the “facts” and come to a sensible conclusion based on the evidence that we have available. The first thing to say is that there is no natural front runner and the majority of these have very little form racing really close to the pace. Questioning is one horse who could well be cast in that role thought especially as William Buick is very comfortable in taking races on from the front as we saw with Thought Worthy in the Great Voltigeur and I suspect he might try similar tactics here on Questioning who has front-run this year and is being campaigned to run closer to the pace this year – if he does ping out of the gates and is allowed an easy lead he could be a dangerous customer especially as this near 9F trip should be about his optimum.

Dubai Prince was one of the horses who laboured under a changed riding style last time out, probably in an attempt to get him to see out the 12F trip that he was tried at, and one that in all honesty he failed to stay – in his run prior to that he had beaten Fury in a small field where he was better suited by the trip and how he was ridden, the next question would be – is he up to this class? I would have to answer that despite his rating of 116 he may well again have to play a minor role here, it's true he won a G3 as a two-year-old but overall his record is disappointing for one with that rating.

Side Glance is a horse who can take a strong hold and the gallop here may not be strong enough for him overall, but he does respond well to pressure and on the whole he appears to be a very game and genuine customer with a good overall record at this level. His taking a keen hold may cause some early reaction against him in the IR market; that could be something to take advantage of as he finds plenty during and at the finish of his races and this is the right grade for him.

Fury used to be held-up in his races but he appears to be ridden a little closer to the pace this year finally getting his nose in front in a 15-runner handicap here in May off of a strong pace, it's doubtful that he will get that here. He also has plenty of previous on his in-running CV and is not one that I would be keen on taking a short price IR about.

Tazahum came back to form last time out but overall has been found wanting at this level and I thought that he got the run of the race last time and could well be over rated here. Barefoot Lady is a consistent type and she to like Questioning has been known to lead in the past although generally she has been held-up in her races – she certainly did well to win here at York last time out and beat the improving Emirates Queen over 10F – she's an adaptable type who never stops trying and could if ridden from the back of the field cause a shock as she stays on readily and all her wins have seen her trade well above her SP.

That leaves us with two three-year-olds to consider and in Stipulate a horse who could well prove to be still on the upgrade and has travelled well in all of his races without necessarily having a lot of

luck IR, despite hanging left last time out he was still going well and was reported to have lost a shoe. That pattern of travelling well has been a trait of most of his races and in all but one of his eight races he has traded at well under his SP some of which have been fairly large in the first place – 2.22 (14.4 SP) and 1.19 (18.5 SP) being the two notable examples this year.

For the sake of being complete with the field Tales Of Grimm, the other runner from the Classic generation is generally held-up and can start slowly. With a rating of 99 he looks to have something to find with the principals here and overall form leaves him something to find.

PACE MAP

FRONT RUNNER:

PROMINENT: QUESTIONING

CHASE LEADERS: DUBAI PRINCE

TRACK LEADERS: SIDE GLANCE, FURY, TAZAHUM, STIPULATE

HELD UP: BAREFOOT LADY, TALES OF GRIMM

BETTING ANGLE

A puzzle, but the nonetheless an interesting one and you might have to react to what goes on shortly after the start rather than play in the race itself.

If Questioning does jump out into the lead then it may well be worth going with the flow and backing him as quickly as possible as it is possible that he could take this field all the way but obviously that won't be known until the gates ping back.

As far as bets are concerned in this race – Side Glance is a horse who is very worthy of consideration at this level and I'll be looking to back him shortly after the start at hopefully a few points above his SP as he does respond well to pressure despite taking a keen hold, hopefully there will be some opposition early and we can grab an advantageous price.

The main bet has to go with Stipulate though who will surely score at this level and possibly beyond soon – he clearly travels well in his race and that smooth style often catches the eye of IR backers so I will be backing Stipulate pre race at around 7.0 or better with a view to trading out later in the race and given his style possibly quite deep – as a guide I'd say 3.05 for the stakes and to take a profit win or lose a further bet of the stake size at 2.32.



****All the pace map and IR information is obtained via the Proform Professional software - (www.proformprofessional.com)***

Note: the rest of the card especially with three two-year-old races left very little room for much else to get stuck into on the Friday card – Saturday looks much more promising with three races that are among my favourites in the calendar to get stuck into with the Melrose, Lonsdale and Ebor all looking to jostle for a position on the IR dance card.

However although not covering the race in full I would like to just put forward a thought for **the 5F Nunthorpe Stakes**. In sprints at York I'm never that keen on horses drawn very high as they sometimes find it difficult to get cover and tuck in and that could be the case here with three of the leading fancies Bated Breath, Pearl Secret and Sole Power all drawn high in 15, 19 and 18 respectively and that could just provide them with a little inconvenience they don't need and as we have seen before at G1 level everything needs to be right. Far better drawn are Ortensia (8) and Spirit Quartz (10) and I'll be having a small back-to-lay interest in both given my question marks about the York draw. As a guide Ortensia should be backed at 6.2 or better and Spirit Quartz at 34.0 or better, use the guideline of half the obtained odds at which to trade out with further insurance trades on each – again as a guide 2.32 Ortensia and 7.8 on Spirit Quartz.

Don't forget to check back for Saturday's bumper York IR edition which will be available for download from around 6pm.



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