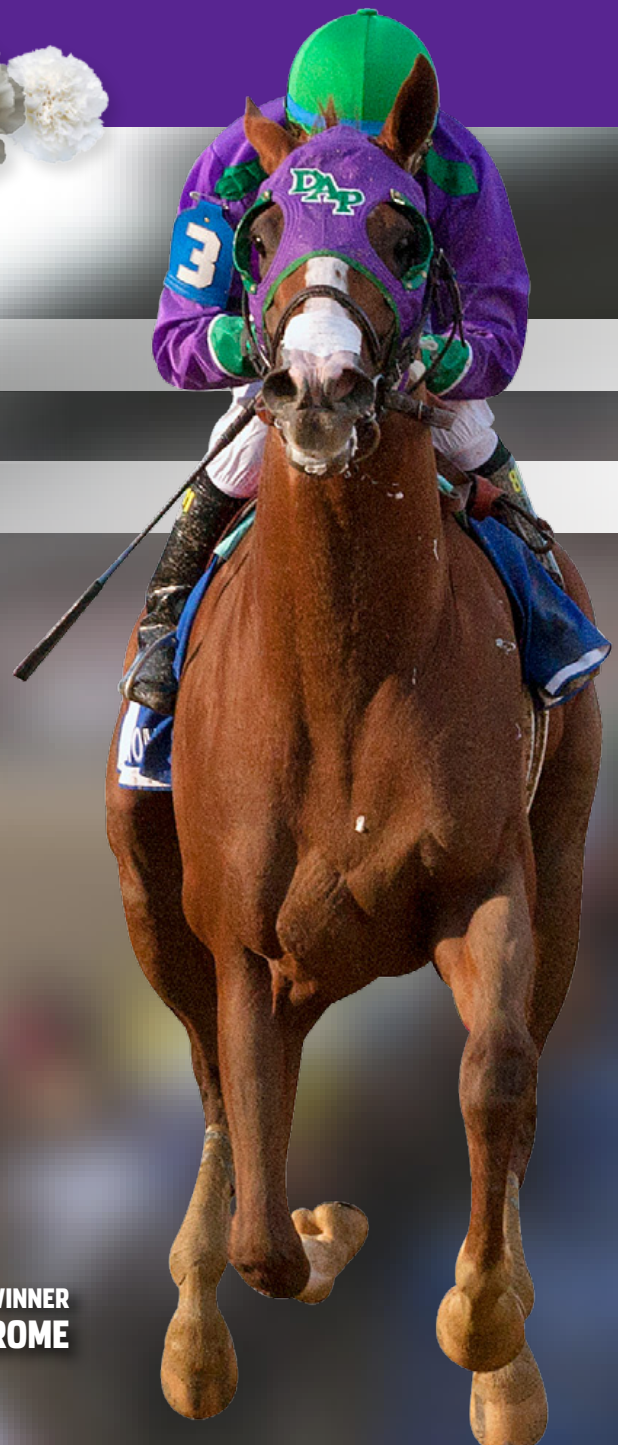




# BELMONT STAKES 2014 FAN GUIDE



CONTENDER PROFILES  
PEDIGREE ANALYSIS  
PAST PERFORMANCES  
ANALYSIS OF 8 UNDERCARD STAKES



KENTUCKY DERBY AND PREAKNESS WINNER  
CALIFORNIA CHROME

# Belmont Stakes 146

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Odds by Mike Watchmaker

ANALYSIS OF 8 UNDERCARD RACES

# Racing long overdue for a Triple Crown winner

By Dave Litfin

While it is true none of the 11 previous Triple Crown winners beat more than seven rivals in the Belmont Stakes, and California Chrome may find as many as 10 or 11 foes blocking his path to immortality, his legion of supporters can take heart in the fact that the flashy chestnut has already beaten most of them.

The rags-to-riches colt has taken the measure of Commanding Curve, General a Rod, Kid Cruz, Medal Count, Ride On Curlin, Samraat, Social Inclusion, and Wicked Strong at least once.

Three other prospective starters the Kentucky Derby and Preakness winner has not faced as yet – Commissioner, Matterhorn, and Matuszak – are a collective 0 for 7 in graded stakes.

The fourth newbie to the Triple Crown trail is Tonalist, who took a sloppy renewal of the Grade 2 Peter Pan Stakes and benefited from having not a single graded stakes winner in his wake. That was just the fifth career start and the first since February for Tonalist, who has trained in bar shoes due to foot issues. In the past four decades, only eventual 3-year-old titlist Summer Bird (2009) has won the Belmont with so little experience.

So, the stars are seemingly aligned for California Chrome to pass the “Test of the Champion” and become the first to sweep the storied series since Affirmed in 1978.

“What could possibly go wrong?” you might ask. How about anything and everything? Since Affirmed became the third Triple Crown winner of the glorious 1970s, here are the depressing dozen who took the first two legs but missed the third:

YEAR	HORSE	BELMONT FINISH	COMMENT	WINNER
2012	I'll Have Another	scratched	Injured; retired	Union Rags
2008	Big Brown	pulled up	Lone career loss	Da'Tara
2004	Smarty Jones	2nd	Never ran again; ride?	Birdstone
2003	Funny Cide	3rd	Keyed up; wet track	Empire Maker
2002	War Emblem	8th	Stumbled badly start	Sarava
1999	Charismatic	3rd	Finished on broken leg	Lemon Drop Kid
1998	Real Quiet	2nd	Worst beat in history	Victory Gallop
1997	Silver Charm	2nd	Never saw winner late	Touch Gold
1989	Sunday Silence	2nd	Winner a killer in N.Y.	Easy Goer
1987	Alysheba	4th	No Lasix; classy winner	Bet Twice
1981	Pleasant Colony	3rd	Came up flat	Summing
1979	Spectacular Bid	3rd	Safety pin; ride?	Coastal

To paraphrase a bumper sticker from the 1970s: (Stuff) happens. And when it does, it comes to the chagrin of chalk players. Other than I'll Have Another, withdrawn the morning before and retired by race day, everyone on the list was favored, and most were prohibitive odds:

Spectacular Bid, the best of the lot, was 3-10.

Pleasant Colony, Alysheba, Sunday Silence, Real Quiet, Smarty Jones, and Big Brown were odds-on as well.

Ironically, it may be that California Chrome's biggest potential pitfall is Victor Espinoza, who has so far been his biggest asset. So far, they are a perfect 6 for 6 together by better than 27 lengths, but the mammoth “Big Sandy” layout is unlike any other dirt track, and Espinoza has not ridden locally since the 2008 fall meet. (He will ride at Belmont one full week before the race.)

Overall, Espinoza has a 2-for-65 career record at Belmont. His only wins have come on Officer (\$2.60) in the 2001 Champagne Stakes and Pico Central (\$6.40) in the 2004 Vosburgh Stakes, both one-turn races. His best finish in the Belmont was a distant second in 2001 on A P Valentine.

“It's such an enormous circumference that even the horses get lost,” said Kent Desormeaux, who opened a four-length lead with Real Quiet in the stretch but was nailed in the final stride by Victory Gallop and Gary Stevens.

“It's easy to get lost,” agreed Stevens, who considers that the ride of his life. “I always thought of myself as a patient rider, but I had to be even more patient at Belmont Park.”

The legendary Damon Runyon wrote: “. . . the battle isn't always to the strong, nor is the race always to the swift, but that's the way to bet.”

That remains terrific advice in many a race to this day but hasn't necessarily applied to the Belmont for quite a while now.

May the best horse win and may they all safely come home.

# California Chrome

# 3-5

**Breeder:** Martin Perry & Steve Coburn  
**Trainer:** Art Sherman  
**Owner:** Martin Perry & Steve Coburn  
**Jockey:** Victor Espinoza  
**Record:** 12-8-1-0



TOM KEYSER

**BEST BEYER**  
**108**

## STRENGTHS

California Chrome's attributes include speed and a stunning ability to burst clear turning for home. When the pace is quick, he wins. When the pace is slow, he wins. California Chrome puts himself into the race early and kicks late. How do you beat that? California Chrome wins with solid speed figures, and he wins when the number is soft. He just wins – six straight, five months, four racetracks. Reports are that California Chrome has thrived at Belmont Park. He takes his track with him and stays cool under scrutiny. He has maintained his condition and is likely to reproduce his outstanding form once more. The Triple Crown is within reach.

## WEAKNESSES

This section is pure conjecture, but here goes: The shortage of speed in the Belmont might not help California Chrome. Forwardly placed, he could be a sitting duck for rivals who will attack in waves. California Chrome moved too soon in the Preakness and won anyway. He cannot move early in the 1 1/2-mile Belmont. He needs patience. He must put away Tonalist, Samraat, and Commissioner, then deal with closers Ride On Curlin and Commanding Curve.

## BETTING VALUE

For bettors who believe that every winner is an overlay, California Chrome is fine. But the Belmont is a longshot race. The median payoff since 2000 is almost \$28. Starting with Spectacular Bid in 1979, the losing streak for Derby-Preakness winners in the Belmont is 11. At even-money or less, California Chrome is an underlay again.

– Brad Free

## SIRE

Lucky Pulpit is a son of the late Pulpit, one of A.P. Indy's best sons at stud. California Chrome is far and away the best runner by his sire. Other standouts include stakes winner Rousing Sermon, third in the 2012 Louisiana Derby and eighth in the Kentucky Derby, and stakes-winning sprinter Luckarack. Lucky Pulpit never won beyond 5 1/2 furlongs and – with turf influence from broodmare sire Cozzene – captured the Smile Stakes on the Arlington Park turf. He was second in the Grade 2 Santa Catalina Stakes going 1 1/16 miles on dirt. The male line launched by great-grandsire A.P. Indy, the 1992 Belmont winner, is typically a stamina influence.

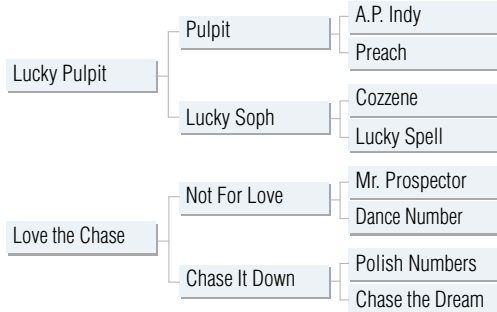
## DAM

California Chrome is the only starter out of Love the Chase, a Maryland-bred whose only win came in a one-mile maiden claimer on an all-weather surface. Second dam Chase It Down has not produced a stakes horse. She is a half-sister to Amourette, a dual stakes winner at 1 3/8 miles who is the dam of Grade 3-placed turf router Lemonade Kid. Love the Chase sports a solid extended pedigree, inbred 3X3 to 1971 champion filly Numbered Account.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

Triple Crown hopeful California Chrome has seemingly already outrun the distance and class limitations suggested by his pedigree, answering, in succession, the questions posed by the Santa Anita Derby, Kentucky Derby, and Preakness. However, the Belmont is a different beast, and there is a chance his background will catch up with him in that final quarter-mile.

– Nicole Russo



Foaled: Feb. 18, 2011  
 Homebred

## California Chrome

Own: Coburn Steven and Martin, Perry



Ch. c. 3 (Feb)  
 Sire: Lucky Pulpit (Pulpit)  
 Dam: Love the Chase (Not For Love)  
 Br: Perry Martin & Steve Coburn (Cal)  
 Tr: Sherman Art(0 0 0 0.00) 2014:(41 15 .37)

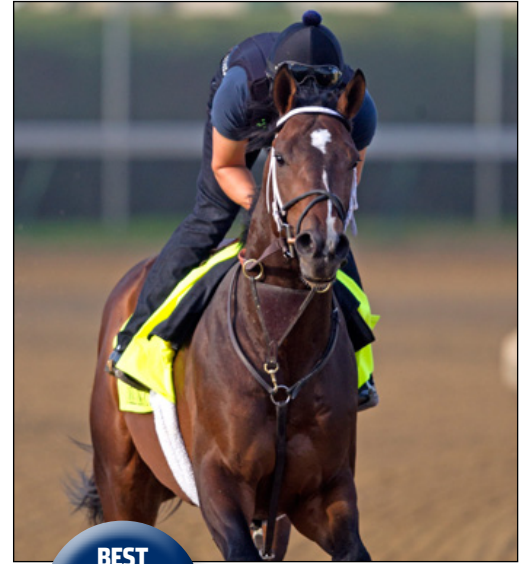
17May14-12Pm fst 1 3/5	:464:1.11	1:353 1:544	Preaknes-G1	105	3	32 1/2	32	21	13	11 1/2	Espinoza V	L126 b	*50	105-05	CliforniChrom 1 1/2	RidOnCurlin 6 1/2	SocilInclusion 9 1/2	3w,bid btw,clear,hold	10
3May14-11C fst 1 1/4	:471:1.114	1:372:2.033	KyDerby-G1	97	5	32	3 1/2	1 1/2	15	11 1/2	Espinoza V	L126 b	*250	91-12	CaliforniaChrome 1 1/2	CommndngCurve 1 1/2	Dnz 2 1/2	Rate 3w,bid btw,driving	19
5Apr14-8SA fst 1 1/8	:47	1:104 1:35	SADerby-G1	107	5	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	15	15 1/2	Espinoza V	L122 b	*70	95-10	California Chrome 5 1/2	Hoppertunity 3 1/2	Candy Boy 1 1/2	Vied,clear,ridden out	8
8Mar14-5SA fst 1 1/8	:23	:452 1:092	SnFelipe-G2	108	2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	14 1/2	17 1/2	Espinoza V	L118 b	*140	99-	California Chrome 5 1/2	Midnight Hawk 6 1/2	Kristo 1 1/2	Inside,ridden out	7
25Jan14-10SA fst 1 1/8	:232	:472 1:114	CalCupDbyB250k	88	7	3 1/2	3 1/2	3 1/2	15 1/2	15 1/2	Espinoza V	L124 b	2.50	85-15	California Chrome 5 1/2	Tamarando 3 1/2	Life Is a Joy 1 1/2	3wd bid,drift in,clear	10
22Dec13-10BHP fst 7 1/2	:222	:453 1:094	KnGlorious200k	91	7	4	4 1/2	4 1/2	13 1/2	16 1/2	Espinoza V	L119 b	*220	95-15	California Chrome 6 1/2	Life Is a Joy 1 1/2	Pray Hard 5 1/2	4wd to turn,ridden out	10
11Nov13-3SA fst 1	:23	:464 1:112	GoldnStJuv200k	71	1	5 1/2	4 1/2	6 1/2	5 1/2	6 1/2	Delgado A	L121 b	3.20	77-12	Better Bet 1 1/2	Electric Eddie 1 1/2	Tamarando 1 1/2	Hopped start,off slow	9
4Sep13-8Dmr fst 7 1/2	:223	:45	DMrFut-G1	73	8	9	7 1/2	8 1/2	5 1/2	6 1/2	Delgado A	L122 b	5.70	90-06	Tamarando 1 1/2	Dance With Fate 3 1/2	Can the Man 1 1/2	Rallied btw,tight late	11
31Jly13-7Dmr fst 5 1/2	:221	:454	Graduation100k	83	6	2	4 1/2	3 1/2	11	12 1/2	Delgado A	L120 b	6.20	96-11	California Chrome 2 1/2	Moving Desert 1 1/2	Gangnam Guy 1 1/2	3wd bid,led,clear	7
15Jun13-8BHP fst 5 1/2	:22	:46	WProctrMem101k	47	7	6	2 1/2	2 1/2	6 1/2	5 1/2	Nakatani C S	L120 f	5.10	79-14	KobesBck 3 1/2	WillieBAwesome 1 1/2	SolidWger 2 1/2	Dueled 3wd btwn,wkened	9

WORKS: Apr26 LA 4f fst :481 H 5/12 Apr19 LA 4f fst :474 H 8/29 Mar29 LA 4f fst :462 H 1/21 Mar22 LA 4f fst :472 H 7/31 Mar2 LA 5f wf 1:002 H 1/1

# Commanding Curve

15-1

**Breeder:** T.F. VanMeter  
**Trainer:** Dallas Stewart  
**Owner:** West Point Thoroughbreds  
**Jockey:** Shaun Bridgmohan  
**Record:** 7-1-2-2



BARBARA D. LIVINGSTON

**BEST BEYER**  
**94**

## STRENGTHS

Lightly raced and has started only three times at 3, so his arc of development should bend upward more than most Belmont rivals. Indeed, Commanding Curve has improved start by start during his brief 2014 campaign. The notion that deep closers making up ground in shorter races will prove more effective with added distance is often erroneous but seems to actually be the case with Commanding Curve. He improved from a mile to 1 1/16 miles to 1 1/8 miles, and to 1 1/4 miles. The pattern, obviously, suggests that the 1 1/2-mile Belmont could enhance his performance level. With just three 2014 races and a five-week gap between the Derby and the Belmont, Commanding Curve should come into this race a fresh horse.

## WEAKNESSES

While he clearly performed well in the Louisiana Derby and the Kentucky Derby, Commanding Curve has but one lonely win. And a skeptic could turn his pattern of improvement upside down, suggesting Commanding Curve has come a long way in three starts and could easily hit a plateau or fall into decline. Finishing second in the Derby, Commanding Curve had a clean, uneventful trip, particularly in comparison with the two horses just behind him, Danza and Wicked Strong. Commanding Curve lacks positional speed and seems a true deep closer, a running style that has fared poorly in the Belmont. Atigun in 2012, Brilliant Speed in 2011, and Mine That Bird in 2010 rallied from near the back to finish third, but Commanding Curve probably will drop farther out than those three, and the last true deep closer to win the Belmont was Victory Gallop in 1998.

## BETTING VALUE

A Triple Crown chance brings with it souvenir win bets and an influx of casual gamblers, which means

every non-California Chrome starter should offer some degree of value. The 37-1 that supporters got in the Derby is long gone, but Commanding Curve still should offer win-pool value. That might not be the case as an "under" horse in exactas, trifectas, and supers, where he is likely to find a spot on most players' tickets.

— Marcus Hersh

## SIRE

Commanding Curve is from the final crop by multiple Grade 2 route winner and millionaire Master Command, who died in 2010. The best runners by the A.P. Indy horse include Unbridled Command, a Grade 1 winner on turf, and Master Rick, a multiple Grade 3 winner. Those two scored their biggest victories at 10 and 8 1/2 furlongs, respectively.

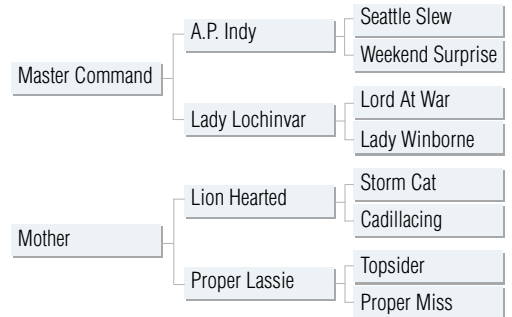
## DAM

His mother scored both her victories at six furlongs. Her only other starter is the Indian Charlie filly Hot Roots, a winner from six furlongs to a mile and the third-place finisher in the 2012 Femme Fatale Stakes going six furlongs at Penn National. Broodmare sire Lion Hearted was a pure sprinter, never winning beyond seven furlongs, but is out of Cadillacing, a Grade 1-winning full sister to 1989 Belmont winner Easy Goer.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

Possessing a page shy of much black type, Commanding Curve handled a major step up in class with aplomb in the Kentucky Derby, rallying into the slow pace for second. The A.P. Indy sire line can typically be counted on as a source of stamina. The 1992 Belmont Stakes winner, A.P. Indy did sire a Belmont winner in 2007 heroine Rags to Riches, and many of his sons are considered stamina influences.

— Nicole Russo



Foaled: March 23, 2011  
 \$75,000 Ocala Breeders' Sales 2013 two-year-old

## Commanding Curve

Own: West Point Thoroughbreds



B. r. 3 (Mar) OBSAPR13\$75,000  
 Sire: Master Command (A.P. Indy) \$12,500  
 Dam: Mother (Lion Hearted)  
 Br: T. F. VanMeter (Ky)  
 Tr: Stewart Dallas(0 0 0 0 .00) 2014:(58 7 .12)

3May14-11CD	fst	1/4	:4711:114	1:3722:033	KyDerby-G1	94	16	18121811	115 97 21 3/4	Bridgmohan S X	L126	37.80	89-12	CaliforniChrome <sup>13</sup>	CommdngCurve <sup>12</sup>	Dnz <sup>23</sup>	Mv btw,swung 8w,game	19
29Mar14-11FG	fst	1/6	:4741:12	1:37 1:503	LaDerby-G2	89	7	107 108 3	96 47 35	Albarado R J	L122	13.10	80-11	VcrsnTroub <sup>13</sup>	IntnsHoldy <sup>13</sup>	CommdngCr <sup>33</sup>	Bmpd brk,3-4w 2nd turn	10
22Feb14-11FG	fst	1/6	:241 :48	1:13 1:434	RisenStr-G2	83	12	118 118 3	84 56 68 1/2	Albarado R J	L117	11.90	86-13	Intense Holiday <sup>no</sup>	Albano <sup>53</sup>	Vicar's in Trouble <sup>13</sup>	Inside 1st turn,5w1/4	14
30Nov13-4CD	fst	1/6	:243 :482	1:1311:441	Mid Sp Wt 40k	80	11	83 54 3	32 11 11 1/2	Bridgmohan S X	L118	*3.00	84-16	CommdngCr <sup>11</sup>	HrborBound <sup>12</sup>	IrshYouWill <sup>nk</sup>	Off slow,bid 4w,clear	12
7Nov13-6CD	fst	1/6	:243 :494	1:143 1:452	Mid Sp Wt 35k	81	8	42 62	42 3 3 3/4	Albarado R J	L118	5.00	77-21	Chas's Legacy <sup>3</sup>	Thundergram <sup>nk</sup>	CommdngCurve <sup>13</sup>	4 wide 2nd turn	10
28Sep13-3CD	fst	1	:223 :46	1:111 1:364	Mid Sp Wt 45k	77	6	22 2 2 1/2	21 2 <sup>nk</sup>	Bridgmohan S X	L118	9.40	82-13	Purple Sky <sup>nk</sup>	CommdngCurve <sup>14</sup>	Fire Starter <sup>13</sup>	Pressed,led,caught	8
31Aug13-5Sar	sly <sup>S</sup>	7f	:224 :46	1:111 1:242	Mid Sp Wt 80k	27	4	3 5 5	612 721	Rocco J S Jr	L119	5.70	59-12	GrandArrival <sup>63</sup>	VillageWarrior <sup>3</sup>	Can'tStoptheKid <sup>3</sup>	Off rail trn,no threat	8

WORKS: May23 CD 5f st :594 B 3/27 May16 CD 4f gd :484 B 7/37 Apr26 CD 5f st 1:023 B 36/70 Apr18 CD 5f st 1:002 B 6/15 Apr10 CD 4f st :481 B 6/24 Mar22 FG 5f st 1:012 B 12/45

Life	7	1	2	2	\$542,434	94	D.Fst	6	1	2	2	\$541,900	94
2014	3	0	1	1	\$504,000	94	Wet(366)	1	0	0	0	\$534	27
2013	4	1	1	1	\$38,434	81	Synth	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
Bel	0	0	0	0	\$0	-	Turf(307)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
							Dst(271*)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-

# Commissioner

# 30-1

**Breeder:** WinStar Farm  
**Trainer:** Todd Pletcher  
**Owner:** WinStar Farm  
**Jockey:** Javier Castellano  
**Record:** 7-2-2-1



TOM KEYSER

**BEST BEYER**  
**94**

## STRENGTHS

This well-bred son of A.P. Indy has given the impression all along that he should get better the farther he goes, so the 1 1/2 miles of the Belmont would appear to be right up his alley. Although he failed to live up to early expectations this season, he does appear to be moving forward at this time, and his effort in the Peter Pan, when a distant second behind Tonalist, may be considered his best yet.

## WEAKNESSES

Although distance seems to be his friend, he appears to have been one-paced in most of his races, having lost ground through the stretch in each of his last four starts. He has also failed to prove he can handle the upper echelon of the division throughout the first half of his 3-year-old campaign, finishing far back in both the Fountain of Youth and Arkansas Derby in the two most important races of his career to date.

## BETTING VALUE

Since he has already proven no match for two of the leading contenders in the Belmont, Tonalist and Ride On Curlin, in earlier meetings and with California Chrome obviously looming a formidable obstacle, taking anything less than 20-1 for a win wager would be considered an underlay for those backing a horse who would need a breakout performance to spring an upset in the same manner stablemate Palace Malice did in this event a year ago.

— Mike Welsch

## SIRE

A.P. Indy, arguably the most important dirt sire of the early 21st century, was voted Horse of the Year in 1992 after winning the Belmont and Breeders' Cup Classic. A son of Seattle Slew, A.P. Indy sired such standouts as 2007 Belmont winner Rags to Riches, 2006 Preakness, Travers, and Jockey Club Gold Cup winner Bernardini, 2003 Jockey Club Gold Cup winner Mineshaft, and 2001 Jockey Club Gold Cup and Hollywood Gold Cup winner Aptitude. The last two winners of both the Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks are by A.P. Indy sire-line stallions. Commissioner is from A.P. Indy's final crop.

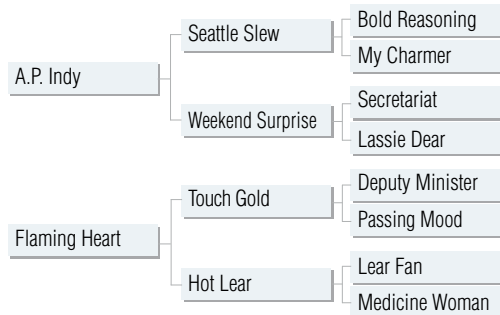
## DAM

Medicine Woman won 5 of 12 starts, including the 1 1/16-mile Hill 'n' Dale Stakes at Woodbine, and also finished second by a length in the 1 1/8-mile Grade 3 Next Move Handicap at Aqueduct. She has produced three other winners: Mythical Bride and Saint X, who both won races up to a mile, and Grade 3 winner Laugh Track, who won at 1 1/16 miles early in his career but has performed best as a sprinter. Laugh Track was second in last year's Breeders' Cup Sprint. Broodmare sire Touch Gold won the 1997 Belmont, spoiling Silver Charm's Triple Crown bid.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

Commissioner has strong pedigree ties to the Belmont and should be grinding his way into contention for the chance at a minor award in the late stages of Saturday's running.

— Patrick Reed



Foaled: April 7, 2011  
 Homebred

## Commissioner

Own: WinStar Farm LLC



B. c. 3 (Apr)  
 Sire: A.P. Indy (Seattle Slew) \$150,000  
 Dam: Flaming Heart (Touch Gold)  
 Br: WinStar Farm, LLC (Ky)  
 Tr: Pletcher Todd A(49 13 3 12 .27) 2014:(444 113 .25)

	Life	7	2	2	1	\$235,767	94	D.Fst	6	2	1	1	\$195,767	91
2014	5	1	1	1	1	\$176,767	94	Wet(416)	1	0	1	0	\$40,000	94
2013	2	1	1	0	0	\$59,000	78	Synth	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
Bel	1	0	1	0	0	\$40,000	74	Turf(312)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
								Dst(315)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-

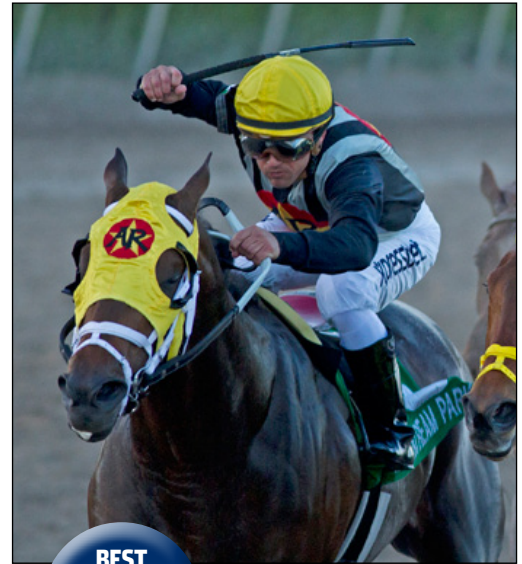
10May14-9Bel	sly	5	1	1/8	:46 <sup>4</sup> 1:10 <sup>4</sup> 1:35 <sup>3</sup> 1:48 <sup>1</sup>	PeterPan-G2	94	3	42 <sup>1</sup> 42 <sup>3</sup> 22 <sup>3</sup> 23 <sup>1</sup> 24	Castellano JJ	L116 b	3.50	87-21	Tonalist <sup>4</sup> Commissioner <sup>2 1</sup> Irish You Well <sup>hd</sup>	Tracked ins, mild kick	7
12Apr14-110P	fst	1	1/8	:47 <sup>3</sup> 1:12 <sup>1</sup> 1:37 <sup>1</sup> 1:49 <sup>3</sup>	ArkDerby-G1	84	5	78 <sup>3</sup> 88 <sup>3</sup> 87 <sup>3</sup> 71 <sup>0</sup> 61 <sup>1</sup>	Smith M E	L118 b	6.60	84-08	Danza <sup>4 3</sup> Ride On Curlin <sup>2</sup> Bayern <sup>2</sup>	Fractious, off slow	8	
23Mar14-11Sun	fst	1	1/8	:46 <sup>2</sup> 1:09 <sup>3</sup> 1:34 <sup>2</sup> 1:47 <sup>4</sup>	SunDrby-G3	90	3	97 <sup>3</sup> 86 <sup>3</sup> 67 <sup>3</sup> 51 <sup>0</sup> 37	Velazquez JR	L122 b	3.80	91-12	Chitu <sup>2 1</sup> Midnight Hawk <sup>4 3</sup> Commissioner <sup>1 1 1</sup>	Bobbled st.4w2ndturn	9	
22Feb14-11GP	fst	1	1/8	:23 .46 <sup>1</sup> 1:10 1:41 <sup>4</sup>	FntnOYth-G2	83	1	65 <sup>1</sup> 75 <sup>3</sup> 56 <sup>3</sup> 78 <sup>1</sup> 61 <sup>0</sup>	Velazquez JR	L116	3.60	89-06	Wildcat Red <sup>hd</sup> General A Rod <sup>2</sup> Top Billing <sup>4 1</sup>	Off rail, tired	12	
3Jan14-9GP	fst	1	1/8	:49 1:13 <sup>4</sup> 1:38 <sup>2</sup> 1:50 <sup>3</sup>	OC 75k/1x-N	91	5	2 <sup>2</sup> 32 <sup>3</sup> 32 32 1nk	Lezcano J	L118	6.80	86-25	Commissioner <sup>nk</sup> Top Billing <sup>2</sup> Hy Kodiak Warrior <sup>hd</sup>	All out, prevailed	7	
28Aug13-1Sar	fst	1	1/8	:47 <sup>3</sup> 1:12 <sup>4</sup> 1:38 <sup>3</sup> 1:51 <sup>1</sup>	Md Sp Wt 85k	78	3	43 <sup>3</sup> 44 41 <sup>3</sup> 21 1 <sup>hd</sup>	Velazquez JR	L119	*.90	82-14	Commissioner <sup>hd</sup> SouprLucky <sup>2 2 3</sup> GiningGround <sup>nk</sup>	Driven 3w into lane, up	6	
11Aug13-8Mth	fst	1	1/8	:24 .48 <sup>1</sup> 1:13 <sup>1</sup> 1:39 <sup>4</sup>	Md Sp Wt 40k	54	5	7 <sup>8</sup> 79 <sup>3</sup> 69 <sup>3</sup> 51 <sup>2</sup> 28 <sup>1</sup>	Decarlo C P	L119	2.70	67-25	Solemnly Swear <sup>8 1</sup> Commissioner <sup>1</sup> Nauset Beach <sup>5</sup>	Outrun early, rallied	7	

WORKS: May25 Bel 5f fst 1:00<sup>3</sup> B 9/29 May3 CD 4f fst :48<sup>2</sup> B 9/51 Apr6 PmM 4f fst :49 B 8/24 Mar16 PmM 5f fst 1:01<sup>2</sup> B 4/12 Mar8 PmM 4f fst :49<sup>1</sup> B 30/74

# General a Rod

# 30-1

**Breeder:** Hare Forest Farm  
**Trainer:** Michael Maker  
**Owner:** Skychai Racing and Starlight Stables  
**Jockey:** Joel Rosario  
**Record:** 7-2-2-1



TOM KEYSER

**BEST BEYER 101**

## STRENGTHS

His recent form is dirtied-up thanks to poor trips and circumstances in the first two legs of the Triple Crown. Normally a frontrunner, General a Rod was taken all the way back in the Kentucky Derby, was moving late along the inside, but he lost a couple of places when checked hard inside the final furlong. Two weeks later, General a Rod was in prime striking position entering the far turn but was shuffled completely out of the running. Still, he gave a solid stretch rally to just miss third. Perhaps General a Rod will revert to the speedy tactics that worked well for him at Gulfstream earlier this year.

He has shown that he can run fast races with the 101 Beyer earned in the Fountain of Youth and the 96 he received in the subsequent Florida Derby as prime examples of his ability.

Perhaps some of that Roman Ruler magic will rub off on General a Rod in the Belmont. Roman Ruler is also the sire of Ruler on Ice, who pulled off the upset in the 2011 Belmont.

## WEAKNESSES

The distance is a concern. While General a Rod did show late life in both the Derby and Preakness, he has yet to win a two-turn race.

He's a good horse, but is he at California Chrome's level? They've met twice, and it could be argued that General a Rod wouldn't have gotten much closer to the Triple Crown aspirant even with perfect trips. General a Rod probably needs the race of his life in order to play the spoiler.

## BETTING VALUE

He was 30-1 in the Derby and 20-1 in the Preakness, and a price somewhere in the middle seems just about right for him in the Belmont. He is certainly not a hopeless longshot and deserves some consideration on the bottom of exotic wagers.

— Daniel Illman

## SIRE

Roman Ruler won the Grade 1 Haskell at 1 1/8 miles and took two Grade 2 stakes at 1 1/16 miles. The son of Fusaichi Pegasus is the sire of 2011 Belmont Stakes winner Ruler on Ice and of two-time Argentine champion Caldine, a Group 1 winner at about 1 1/4 miles. Still, the average winning distance for Roman Ruler's progeny is 6.57 furlongs, which puts him second-to-last among this year's sires of Belmont starters.

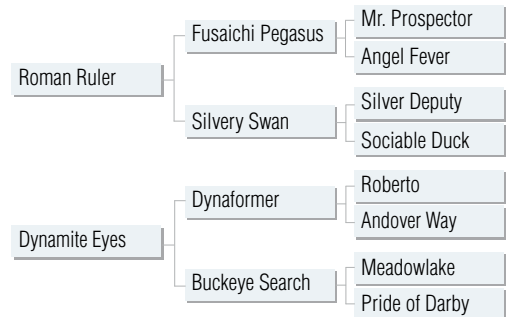
## DAM

Dynamite Eyes, by Dynaformer, won 1 of 9 starts — that at 6 1/2 furlongs — and raced beyond seven furlongs only once. General a Rod is a half-brother to Peter Louis, whose only win from 21 starts came at a mile. The extended family tree includes stakes-winning second dam Buckeye Search, runner-up in the 1997 Black-Eyed Susan, and 1974 French champion and French Derby winner Caracolero.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

Roman Ruler has proven capable of siring a classic-distance horse, but General a Rod's female family does not offer much stamina. The Belmont distance appears to be beyond the colt's scope.

— Joe Nevills



Foaled: Feb. 26, 2011  
 Purchased privately

## General a Rod

Own: Skychai Racing LLC and Starlight Raci



Dk. b or b. c. 3 (Feb) FTKOCT12 \$72,000  
 Sire: Roman Ruler (Fusaichi Pegasus) \$8,500  
 Dam: Dynamite Eyes (Dynaformer)  
 Br: Hare Forest Farm (Ky)  
 Tr: Maker Michael J (8 1 3 0 .12) 2014:(399 97 24)

17May14-12Pim	fst	1 3/16	:46	1:11	1:35	1:54	Preaknes-G1	92	2	43	42 1/2	6 1/2	48	Castellano J J	L126 b	20.10	97-05	CliforniChrome <sup>1 1/2</sup>	RideOnCurlin <sup>6 1/2</sup>	SocilInclusion <sup>hd</sup>	Shuffled back 3-1/2	10	
3May14-11CD	fst	1 1/4	:47	1:11	1:37	2:03	KyDerby-G1	85	8	16 1/2	15 3/4	16 3/4	13 1/4	11 1/2	Rosario J	L126 b	30.70	83-12	CaliforniaChrome <sup>1 1/2</sup>	CommandingCurve <sup>1 1/2</sup>	Danz <sup>2 3/4</sup>	Stdy 5-1/2, in tight lt	19
29Mar14-44GP	fst	1 1/8	:48	1:12	1:36	2:49	FlaDerby-G1	96	6	21	2 1/2	31	31 1/2	Rosario J	L122 b	4.80	92-09	Constitution <sup>mk</sup>	Wildcat Red <sup>1 1/2</sup>	General a Rod <sup>2 1/4</sup>	3 wide, weakened	8	
22Feb14-11GP	fst	1 1/16	:23	:46	1:10	1:41	FtnnOYth-G2	101	5	2nd	1st	2nd	2nd	2nd	Castellano J J	L120 b	3.40	99-06	Wildcat Red <sup>hd</sup>	General a Rod <sup>2</sup>	Top Billing <sup>4 1/2</sup>	Dueled, just missed	12
1Jan14-9GP	fst	1	:23	:45	1:10	1:35	GpDerby100k	92	9	3 1/2	31	1st	2nd	1st	Rosario J	L117 b	3.80	89-15	General a Rod <sup>hd</sup>	Wildcat Red <sup>2 1/4</sup>	East Hall <sup>1 1/2</sup>	Long duel, edged rival	9
30Nov13-40CD	fst	1	:22	:45	1:10	1:35	QC 75k/N1x-N	81	10	1 1/2	2nd	11	2 1/2	2 1/2	Albarado R J	L118 b	6.20	88-16	Conquest Titan <sup>1 1/2</sup>	General a Rod <sup>3</sup>	Son of Dixie <sup>11 1/2</sup>	3 wide, 2nd best	12
18Oct13-6Kee	fst	*7f	:22	:45	1:10	1:26	Md Sp Wt 55k	65	8	4	9 1/2	66	12	12 3/4	Napravnik R	L118	7.40	88-14	General a Rod <sup>2 1/2</sup>	Valdina's Will <sup>mk</sup>	Long Station <sup>mk</sup>	Drifted in bit 3/16 pl	11

**WORKS:** ●May31 CDT 5f fst:1:00<sup>1</sup> B 1/10 Apr29 CD 4f fst:49<sup>2</sup> B 17/27 Apr23 CD 5f fst:1:03<sup>2</sup> B 13/15 ●Apr17 CDT 5f fst:59<sup>4</sup> B 1/4 Mar23 GP 5f fst:1:01 B 7/25 Mar15 GP 5f fst:59<sup>2</sup> B 6/53

Life	7	2	2	1	\$372,200	101	D.Fst	6	1	2	1	\$338,600	101
2014	5	1	1	1	\$330,000	101	Wet(392)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
2013	2	1	1	0	\$42,200	81	Synth	1	1	0	0	\$33,600	65
Bel	0	0	0	0	\$0	-	Turf(281)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
							Dst(297)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-

# Kid Cruz

# 30-1

**Breeder:** Machmer Hall  
**Trainer:** Linda Rice  
**Owner:** Vina Del Mar Thoroughbreds  
**Jockey:** undecided  
**Record:** 6-3-1-0



**BEST BEYER 91**

JIM McCUE/MARYLAND JOCKEY CLUB

## STRENGTHS

He is among just five prospective starters to have won past 1 1/16 miles, having taken the Private Terms at 1 1/8 miles in his stakes debut, two starts after being claimed from a maiden win. Based on his pedigree, there is the potential to get 1 1/2 miles, as sire Lemon Drop Kid lit up the tote at \$61.50 in the 1999 Belmont Stakes. While Kid Cruz never entered contention in the Preakness, wins in the Private Terms and Federico Tesio suggest he is a natural stayer. Perhaps he simply "bounced" off two peak performances in Maryland.

## WEAKNESSES

Whether he stays at any distance against Grade 1 competition remains a big question. While some recent Belmont winners like Commendable, Jazil, and Ruler On Ice were even less accomplished going in, that type of thing usually happens in "off years," when the field is comparatively weak. That is hardly the case with California Chrome seeking a seventh straight win and a measure of immortality.

## BETTING VALUE

He was a popular wise-guy special at 12-1 in the Preakness, and the bandwagon has emptied. If the runners in the first flight get the staggers into the stretch, as has been known to happen, it's not inconceivable that he could clunk up with an on-the-board finish at a huge price.

— Dave Litfin

## SIRE

Champion Lemon Drop Kid, a son of Kingmambo, won four Grade 1 races at 1 1/8 miles or longer: the Belmont Stakes and Travers Stakes in 1999 and the Whitney Handicap and Woodward Stakes in 2000. He has sired 11 crops of racing age, and his foals have an average winning distance of just farther than eight furlongs, which compares favorably to the typical North American sire. His 30 graded/group stakes winners are led by the long-winded Richard's Kid, a two-time winner of the 1 1/4-mile, Grade 1 Pacific Classic and the 1 1/2-mile, Grade 3 Cougar II Handicap.

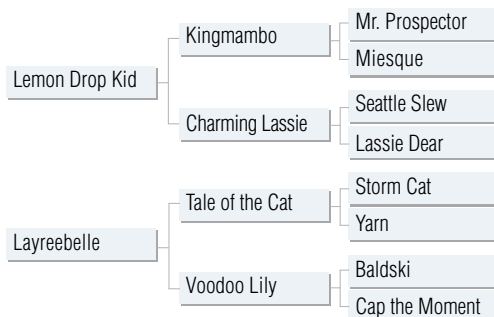
## DAM

Layreebelle is an unraced Tale of the Cat mare whose other winner, the Bernardini filly Spellbound, won this year's Grade 2 La Canada Stakes at 1 1/16 miles and has two more wins at a mile. Layreebelle is out of the Baldski mare Voodoo Lily, a Grade 3-winning sprinter who produced three graded stakes-placed runners and two stakes-placed horses.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

Kid Cruz has the tools to be competitive in the Belmont from a pedigree standpoint, but his disappointing performance in the Preakness raises doubts over whether he can compete at this level.

— Joe Nevills



Foaled: March 30, 2011  
 \$80,000 Keeneland September 2012 yearling

## Kid Cruz

Own: Vina Del Mar Thoroughbreds LLC and BI



B. c. 3 (Mar) KEESep12 \$80,000  
 Sire: Lemon Drop Kid (Kingmambo) \$35,000  
 Dam: Layreebelle (Tale of the Cat)  
 Br: Machmer Hall (Ky)  
 Tr: Rice Linda (29 2 8 3 .07) 2014:(171 31 .18)

17May14-12Pim fst 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub> :46<sup>4</sup> 1:11 1:35<sup>3</sup> 1:54<sup>4</sup>  
 19Apr14-10Pim fst 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> :24<sup>3</sup> :50<sup>2</sup> 1:16<sup>1</sup> 1:47<sup>1</sup>  
 8Mar14-8Lrl fst 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> :49<sup>4</sup> 1:14<sup>4</sup> 1:41<sup>3</sup> 1:54<sup>4</sup>  
 26Jan14-4Aqu fst 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> □ :24<sup>1</sup> :47<sup>3</sup> 1:11<sup>3</sup> 1:44<sup>1</sup>  
 22Nov13-1Aqu fst 1 :23<sup>2</sup> :46<sup>4</sup> 1:12<sup>1</sup> 1:37<sup>3</sup>

Preaknes-G1 80 7 10<sup>14</sup>10<sup>16</sup> 10<sup>12</sup> 9<sup>18</sup> 8<sup>16</sup> Pimentel J  
 FdrcoTesoB100k 89 5 5<sup>8</sup><sub>2</sub> 5<sup>3</sup> 5<sup>2</sup><sub>1</sub> 1<sup>hd</sup> 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Pimentel J  
 PrivatTrmB100k 91 8 10<sup>16</sup>10<sup>18</sup> 10<sup>14</sup> 3<sup>3</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 1<sup>4</sup> Pimentel J  
 Alw 65660N1x 81 5 3<sup>7</sup> 3<sup>9</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 3<sup>9</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 2<sup>4</sup> 2<sup>3</sup> Ortiz I Jr  
 Md c-(50-40) 71 1 5<sup>4</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 5<sup>4</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 3<sup>3</sup> 1<sup>hd</sup> 1<sup>6</sup> Alvarado J  
 Mott William I Trainer 2013(as of 11/22): (556 104 76 60 0.19)  
 Md Sp Wt 75k 39 3 6<sup>5</sup> 5<sup>4</sup> 7<sup>8</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 6<sup>11</sup> 7<sup>16</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Alvarado J

Claimed from Black Swan Stable for \$50,000, 3Nov13-4Aqu fm 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> □ :23<sup>4</sup> :50<sup>2</sup> 1:16 1:46  
**WORKS:** Apr2Bel tr.t5f fst 1:02 B 6/26

Life	6	3	1	0	\$161,375	91	D.Fst	5	3	1	0	\$161,000	91
2014	4	2	1	0	\$133,400	91	Wet(407)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
2013	2	1	0	0	\$27,975	71	Synth	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
Bel	0	0	0	0	\$0	-	Turf(321)	1	0	0	0	\$375	39
							Dst(325)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-

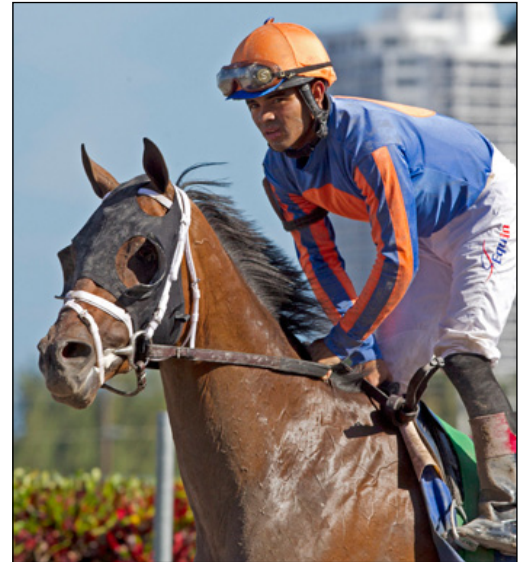
L126 b 12.30 89-05 CliforniChrome<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> RidOnCurlin<sup>6</sup>/<sub>2</sub> SocilInclusion<sup>hd</sup> Lagged,by tired foes 10  
 L120 b \*1.20 78-30 Kid Cruz<sup>3</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Matuszak<sup>hd</sup> Joint Custody<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 4wd,eager,rddn out 6  
 L116 b 4.20 75-39 Kid Cruz<sup>4</sup> Joint Custody<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Matuszak<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Stp slw,angl,bw,lay in 10  
 L118 b 3.00 93-09 Undertaker<sup>3</sup> Kid Cruz<sup>6</sup> Matuszak<sup>1</sup> Ins 3/8-1/4, 3w upper 5  
 120 b 6.70 81-24 Kid Cruz<sup>6</sup> Mack Miller<sup>6</sup> Hook Em<sup>9</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 4w upper, drifted out 6  
 120 b 17.80 63-21 All Tied Up<sup>hd</sup> Sycamore Lane<sup>5</sup> Classic Sense<sup>nk</sup> Btwn foes 1st, tired 9



# Matterhorn

# 30-1

**Breeder:** Town & Country Farm Corp.  
**Trainer:** Todd Pletcher  
**Owner:** Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners  
**Jockey:** undecided  
**Record:** 4-1-0-1



## STRENGTHS

Matterhorn has always shown potential. Case in point, he defeated Tonalist in his career debut at Aqueduct. His connections felt that Matterhorn did not appreciate the speed-favoring nature of the Gulfstream dirt track when well-beaten Feb. 22, and the colt held his own when working in company with salty older foes such as Micromanager and Revolutionary prior to his fourth-place effort in the sloppy Peter Pan Stakes. With only four starts, he is capable of giving an improved performance. The \$625,000 juvenile buy (recently purchased privately by Eclipse Thoroughbreds), once regarded as a 64-1 chance as an individual entry in Pool 2 of the Kentucky Derby Future Wager, will be saddled by two-time Belmont Stakes winner Todd Pletcher (Rags to Riches, 2007; Palace Malice, 2013). Matterhorn is by one of the hottest stallions in the world. Tapit has sired eight graded stakes winners in 2014.

## WEAKNESSES

Matterhorn only boasts a maiden win, and his top Beyer Speed Figure (90) is light years away from the Belmont par of 104. He simply may be too slow to contend in this year's edition. While Tapit is a top stallion and Matterhorn is a three-quarter brother to a multiple-Grade 3 winner at nine furlongs (also Grade 3 placed at 1 3/8 miles), the dam and female family did most of their best work sprinting. Matterhorn may be better at shorter distances. Although he beat Tonalist at 2, that foe has come back to finish ahead of Matterhorn twice in the interim.

## BETTING VALUE

Stranger things have happened in "The Test of the Champion," but even with Pletcher at the helm, Matterhorn looks outclassed. Odds between 30-1 and 40-1 seem logical.

— Dan Illman

## SIRE

Tapit is one of North America's leading commercial sires, and never raced at a distance less than a mile in six career starts. The son of Pulpit's most notable victory came in the 2004 Wood Memorial at 1 1/8 miles. Of Tapit's 12 Grade/Group 1 winners, nine joined the club in races longer than a mile, and six have additional graded wins beyond a mile. Among them are champions Stardom Bound and Hansen, and this year's Kentucky Oaks winner Untapable.

## DAM

Winter Garden is a multiple Grade 3-winning Roy mare who only raced beyond a mile once in 18 career starts. She has produced Title Contender, by Pulpit, a gelding still in training who won the 2013 Grade 3 Ohio Derby at 1 1/16 miles and Grade 3 British Columbia Derby at 1 1/8 miles. Her other winning foals are Outta Speight, by Speightstown, who never raced longer than six furlongs, and Garden Tour, by Bluegrass Cat, who won a starter allowance at one mile and 70 yards.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

Matterhorn has respectable distance credentials on both sides of the family, and he's never been tried at less than a mile. A Grade 1 race 1 1/2 miles might be too much to ask, but at least he shouldn't be losing position in the stretch.

— Joe Nevills

Foaled: February 7, 2011  
 Purchased privately

## Matterhorn

Own: Magnier Mrs. John, Tabor, Michael and



B. c. 3 (Feb) FTFMAR13 \$625,000  
 Sire: Tapit (Pulpit) \$150,000  
 Dam: Winter Garden (Roy)  
 Br: Town & Country Farm Corp (Ky)  
 Tr: Pletcher Todd A(49 13 3 12 .27) 2014:(444 113 25)

10May14-9Bel slyS 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>6</sub> :46<sup>4</sup>1:10<sup>4</sup> 1:35<sup>3</sup>1:48<sup>1</sup> PeterPan-G2  
 28Mar14-8Aqu fst 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>6</sub> :48<sup>2</sup>1:13 1:38 1:50<sup>3</sup> 34 Alw 67000n1x  
 22Feb14-6GP fst 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>6</sub> :24<sup>1</sup> :47<sup>3</sup> 1:11 1:42 OC 75k/n1x-N  
 16Nov13-4Aq fst 1 :23<sup>4</sup> :46<sup>2</sup> 1:10<sup>3</sup>1:36 Md Sp Wt 75k

90 1 6<sup>4</sup> 6<sup>6</sup> 5<sup>6</sup> 4<sup>7</sup> 4<sup>6</sup><sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Velazquez JR L116 b 7.30 85- 21 Tonalist<sup>4</sup> Commissioner<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Irish You Well<sup>hd</sup>  
 83 5 5<sup>4</sup> 5<sup>4</sup> 4<sup>2</sup><sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> 3<sup>4</sup> 3<sup>6</sup><sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Ortiz I Jr L116 b 3.55 81- 18 Mighty Ian<sup>5</sup><sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Idle American<sup>3</sup><sup>2</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Matterhorn<sup>6</sup><sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>  
 65 3 7<sup>4</sup><sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 7<sup>4</sup><sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 8<sup>7</sup><sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> 10<sup>15</sup> 10<sup>18</sup><sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Saez L L118 b 3.30 79- 06 Constitution<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Tonalist<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Mexikoma<sup>1</sup>  
 79 3 6<sup>3</sup><sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 5<sup>2</sup><sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> 2<sup>1</sup> 1<sup>hd</sup> 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Saez L L120 b 13.80 89- 09 Matterhorn<sup>1</sup><sup>2</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Harpoon<sup>2</sup><sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Woelf Den<sup>3</sup>  
 WORKS: May4 Bel tr.t 4f fst :48<sup>1</sup> B 2/57 Apr27 Bel tr.t 4f fst :48<sup>3</sup> B 21/53 Apr19 Bel tr.t 4f fst :48<sup>2</sup> B 30/116 Apr13 Bel tr.t 4f fst :49 B 13/65 Mar16 PmM 4f fst :49 B 3/48

Life	4	1	0	1	\$62,102	90	D.Fst	3	1	0	1	\$52,102	83
2014	3	0	0	1	\$17,102	90	Wet(395)	1	0	0	0	\$10,000	90
2013	1	1	0	0	\$45,000	79	Synth	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
Bel	1	0	0	0	\$10,000	90	Turf(264)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
							Dst(283)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-

Angled 4w 3/8, belated 7  
 Off beat slow, 4w 2nd 7  
 Bumped start, 3 wide 10  
 3w 1/2,bid 1/4,game 9

# Matuszak

# 50-1

**Breeder:** Sha-Li Leasing Associates, Inc.  
**Trainer:** William Mott  
**Owner:** George J Prussian  
**Jockey:** Mike Smith  
**Record:** 8-1-1-2



BARBARA D. LIVINGSTON

## STRENGTHS

Colt named for the late great Oakland Raiders defensive specialist John Matuszak has been making steady, if not spectacular, progress for his Hall of Fame trainer, Bill Mott, who has been known to pull the occasional major upset. He shows the kind of staying power that should be well suited to Big Sandy, which, fortunately for him, has become his home track. All in all, he has developed into a fairly reliable sort.

## WEAKNESSES

Has shown little to suggest he belongs in the same league as the top of the division, i.e., California Chrome. Even before his respectable efforts in minor stakes in Maryland, he had been tried twice in first-level allowances and was found wanting. Career-high Beyer is an 83, and that simply won't do here. What he owns in stamina he lacks in eye-catching speed.

## BETTING VALUE

Just has to be one of the longer shots in the field, probably somewhere in the 30-1 to 50-1 range. While it's very difficult to make a strong case for him shocking the sports world with an upset, it's not all that hard to see him slugging up for a minor share in the vertical plays, i.e., adding some longshot value to the tri or super.

— Marty McGee

## SIRE

Champion Bernardini won the Grade 1 Travers Stakes, Jockey Club Gold Cup, and Preakness in 2006. His five crops of racing age are led by a pair of Travers winners in Stay Thirsty and Alpha, and his foals boast an average progeny winning distance of 7.73 furlongs, which is above average for North American sires. Matuszak's grandsire A.P. Indy won the 1992 Belmont Stakes and is the sire of 2007 Belmont winner Rags to Riches.

## DAM

Golden Sonata, a daughter of the legendary Mr. Prospector, won the Grade 3 Oaklawn Breeders' Cup Stakes and the listed Truly Bound Handicap at 1 1/16 miles in 2004. The mare also won her maiden at 1 1/2 miles in England. She is the dam of Gold Triumph, a full brother to Matuszak, who is stakes-placed at six furlongs.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

Matuszak is reminiscent of Incognito in last year's Belmont: A horse with a light résumé whose pedigree seemingly begs for distance (they're even bred on a similar A.P. Indy-Mr. Prospector cross). Given Matuszak's past performances, replicating Incognito's fourth-place finish might be an ambitious goal.

— Joe Nevills

Foaled: February 15, 2011

## Matuszak

Own: Prussian George J



**Dk. b or b. c. 3 (Feb)**  
**Sire:** Bernardini (A.P. Indy) \$100,000  
**Dam:** Golden Sonata (Mr. Prospector)  
**Br:** Sha-Li Leasing Associates, Inc. (Ky)  
**Tr:** Mott William I (34 5 6 7 .15) 2014: (296 37 .12)

19Apr14-10Pim	fst	1 1/16	:243	:502	1:16	1:47	Fdrco TesoB100k	<b>83</b>	3	610	653	641	521	231	Karamanos H A	L116 b	11.20	74-30	Kid Cruz <sup>3</sup> Matuszak <sup>hd</sup> Joint Custody <sup>1 1/2</sup>	Blocked 3/16, gamely	6
8Mar14-8Lrl	fst	1 1/8	:494	1:144	1:41	1:54	PrivatTrmB100k	<b>83</b>	2	911	812	791	431	351	Karamanos H A	L116 b	16.00	70-39	Kid Cruz <sup>4</sup> Joint Custody <sup>1 1/2</sup> Matuszak <sup>1 1/2</sup>	Bmp st, angled 5w, wllng	10
26Jan14-4Aqu	fst	1 1/8	:241	:473	1:11	1:44	Alw 65660n1x	<b>70</b>	2	481	411	412	47	361	Maragh R	L118 b	4.30	87-09	Undertaker <sup>2</sup> Kid Cruz <sup>6</sup> Matuszak <sup>1</sup>	Lite bump st, mostly 2w	5
4Jan14-8Aqu	fst	1 7/8	:24	:481	1:13	1:45	Jerome-G2	<b>77</b>	5	79	881	79	761	441	Maragh R	L115 b	16.50	70-31	Noble Moon <sup>2</sup> Classic Giacroll <sup>2 1/2</sup> Scotland <sup>hd</sup>	Ins early, shy out uppr	8
30Nov13-9Aqu	fst	1 1/8	:523	1:172	1:41	1:52	Remsen-G2	<b>73</b>	5	87	861	76	691	691	Alvarado J	L116 b	34.50	72-10	Honor Codeno <sup>2</sup> Cairo Prince <sup>3</sup> Wicked Strong <sup>2 1/2</sup>	6w upper, no response	8
9Nov13-7CD	fst	1 1/8	:234	:471	1:12	1:44	OC 75k/n1x-N	<b>73</b>	9	88	811	76	58	571	Goncalves L R	L122	6.70e	73-20	Almost Famous <sup>6</sup> Dobra Historia <sup>1 1/2</sup> Myositis Dan <sup>1 1/2</sup>	4 wide 3/8 pl	10
20Oct13-7Kee	fst	1 1/8	:24	:48	1:13	1:45	Alw 56491n1x	<b>60</b>	2	891	812	86	871	881	Bridgmohan S X	L122	4.70	63-27	Laddie Boy <sup>2 1/2</sup> Kids Rule <sup>1 1/2</sup> King Cyrus <sup>nk</sup>	No threat	8
21Sep13-5CD	fst	1 1/8	:232	:474	1:13	1:46	Mid Sp Wt 45k	<b>71</b>	8	811	815	751	22	1nk	Bridgmohan S X	L118	2.90	74-24	Matuszak <sup>nk</sup> Long Station <sup>4 1/2</sup> Ring Weekend <sup>2</sup>	5w, drifted in, in time	8

**WORKS:** May26 Bel 5f fst 1:01 1/2 B 19/30 ● May19 Bel 5f fst :59 3/4 B 1/35 ● May12 Bel tr.t 5f fst :59 4/4 B 1/60 May4 Bel tr.t 5f fm 1:04 B(d) 3/4 Apr12 Bel 4f fst :48 3/4 B 9/19 Apr3 Bel tr.t 4f fst :48 3/4 H 9/63

<b>Life</b>	8	1	1	2	\$78,643	83	<b>D.Fst</b>	7	1	1	2	\$78,257	83
2014	4	0	1	2	\$46,700	83	<b>Wet(441)</b>	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
2013	4	1	0	0	\$31,943	73	<b>Synth</b>	1	0	0	0	\$386	60
Bel	0	0	0	0	\$0	-	<b>Turf(232)</b>	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
							<b>Dst(262)</b>	0	0	0	0	\$0	-

# Medal Count

# 20-1

**Breeder:** Stonestreet Thoroughbred Holdings LLC  
**Trainer:** Dale L. Romans  
**Owner:** Spendthrift Farm LLC  
**Jockey:** Robby Albarado  
**Record:** 8-3-1-0



KEENELAND/COADY PHOTOGRAPHY

**BEST BEYER**  
**94**

## STRENGTHS

He finished a relatively close eighth in the Kentucky Derby despite a rough trip. He was shuffled back early, and encountered more trouble late when steadied sharply in midstretch when cut off by the eventual third-place finisher Danza. He ran evenly thereafter, and in losing by 7 1/2 lengths was just 1 3/4 lengths behind fourth-place Wicked Strong — considered one of California Chrome's main Belmont rivals. A Grade 3 winner, Medal Count has trained quickly since at Churchill Downs, working five furlongs in 59.40 seconds May 24. He is also bred for 1 1/2-mile Belmont, being by stamina sire Dynaformer.

## WEAKNESSES

His two fastest races, a win in the Transylvania and a runner-up finish in the Blue Grass, came over Polytrack at Keeneland, and each earned him just a 94 Beyer Speed Figure, a number well below par for the Belmont. Though he is a winner on dirt, it came in slow time in an off-the-grass race last summer at Ellis Park. And his other dirt races, besides his eighth in the Derby, resulted in an 11th in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile and a fifth in the Fountain of Youth.

## BETTING VALUE

Short odds on California Chrome as he bids for Triple Crown glory will boost the prices on all his opponents, and given this horse's limited success on dirt, he appears a 30-1 longshot.

— Byron King

## STALLION

Dynaformer was a perennial leading sire prior to his death in 2012. He was a two-time Grade 2 winner on dirt, once at 1 1/4 miles and once at 1 1/8 miles. Later in his career, he won a 1 1/2-mile turf allowance at Keeneland. Dynaformer has sired 22 crops of racing age, with an average progeny winning distance of 9.15 furlongs, putting him the highest among this year's sires of Belmont starters. While predominantly known as a turf sire, Dynaformer does have a Triple Crown race on his resume in 2006 Kentucky Derby winner Barbaro.

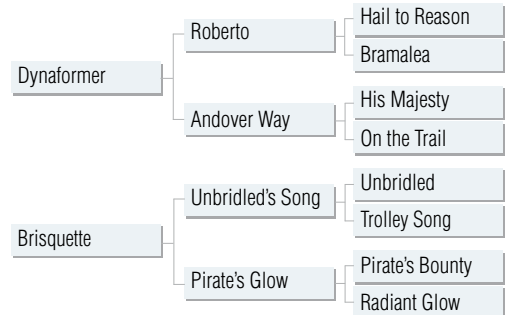
## DAM

Brisquette is a Grade 3-placed Unbridled's Song mare who raced only once at a mile or beyond, finishing off the board. She is the dam of four winners from six foals to race, including Garden District, who is a Grade 3 winner at six furlongs. Medal Count is Brisquette's first foal with any meaningful success on the longer side of two turns.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

The stallion's side of the pedigree is rock solid for the Belmont distance. The question will be if it's enough to carry the dam's side, which has been a wellspring of sprinters. Given his past performance, the Dynaformer factor should keep Medal Count in contention approaching 12 furlongs.

— Joe Nevills



Foaled: May 1, 2011

\$360,000 Keeneland September 2012 yearling

## Medal Count

Own: Spendthrift Farm LLC



B. c. 3 (May) KEESEP12 \$360,000  
 Sire: Dynaformer (Roberto) \$150,000  
 Dam: Brisquette (Unbridled's Song)  
 Tr: Stonestreet Thoroughbred Holdings LLC (Ky)  
 Tr: Romans Dale L (3 1 0 0 .33) 2014:(233 34 .15)

3May14-11CD	fst	1 1/4	:47.1	1:11.4	1:37.2	0:33	KyDerby-G1	86	13	10	4	10	5	8	8	7 1/2	8 1/2	Albarado R J	L126	26.20	83-12	California Chrome 1 1/2	Commding Curve 1 1/2	Dnz 2 1/2	Shuffld early, chkd 1/8	19		
12Apr14-11Kee	fst	1 1/8	:47.2	1:12.3	1:37.4	1:50	BlueGras-G1	94	13	9	4	9	4	8	5	3 1/2	2 1/2	Albarado R J	L123	6.60	81-23	DanceWithFte 1 1/2	MedCount 1 1/2	PbloDelMonte 5 1/4	Came 6w, finished well	14		
4Apr14-9Kee	fst	1 1/8	:23.2	:47.2	1:12	1:43.1	Trnsylvn-G3	94	1	7	5	3	5	4	1	1	1 1/2	Albarado R J	L118	3.00	88-19	Medal Count 1 1/2	Picozza 1/2	Woodfield Springs 3 1/4	Slipped thru, cleared	8		
22Feb14-11GP	fst	1 1/8	:23	:46.1	1:10	1:41.4	FntnOYth-G2	84	3	4	5	3	3	4	3	4	5	5 1/2	Rocco J S Jr	L117	43.20	90-06	Wildcat Red 1/2	General a Rod 2	Top Billing 4 1/2	3 wide, gave way	12	
12Jan14-9GP	fm	7 1/2	:25	:51	1:15	1:32.1	OC 75k/n1x-N	80	4	3	5	2	1	1	1	1	1 1/2	Lanerie C J	L118	*2.10	73-27	DH MedCount 1 1/2	DH Drover Road 1/2	Scorched Cat 1/2	Closed fast, just up	10		
2Nov13-8SA	fst	1 1/8	:22.3	:45.1	1:09.3	1:43.2	BCJuvnle-G1	59	10	6	2	7	6	1	0	9	13	14	11	Albarado R J	122	26.90	67-12	New Year's Day 1 1/2	Havana 3/4	Strong Mandate 1 1/2	3wd, dropped back	13
6Oct13-7Kee	fst	1 1/8	:23.2	:47.4	1:12	1:43.2	Bourbon-G3	73	12	9	3	7	2	2	4	2	5	2	Albarado R J	L118	5.40	85-12	Poker Player 1	Bashart 1/2	Non Accord 3/4	Middle move in traffic	13	
1Sep13-7EIP	fst	1	:23.2	:46.3	1:12	1:39.1	Mid Sp Wt 29k	58	5	4	1	3	1	1	3	1	1 1/2	Morales R	L120	2.50	84-15	Medal Count 6 1/2	Victory Colors 1 1/2	Cov 1/2	Boxed in, bumped rival	7		

WORKS: ● May24 CD 5f fst :59.2 B 1/42 May17 CD 4f fst :49 B 29/67 Apr26 CD 6f fst 1:13 B 1/3 Mar29 GP 5f fst 1:00.1 B 7/26 Mar22 GP 5f fst :59 B 4/36 Mar15 GP 5f fst :59 B 4/53

# Ride On Curlin

# 15-1

**Breeder:** G. Watts Humphrey Jr. & Louise Ireland Humphrey Revocable Trust - 2008  
**Trainer:** William G. Gowan  
**Owner:** Daniel J. Dougherty  
**Jockey:** John Velazquez  
**Record:** 11-2-3-4



BARBARA D. LIVINGSTON

**BEST BEYER 103**

## STRENGTHS

Ride On Curlin was second to divisional leader California Chrome in the Preakness, and the Beyer Speed Figure of 103 that he earned ranks as the second-best last-race number in the Belmont Stakes. Ride On Curlin has more seasoning than most of his rivals, and his 11 starts give him a nice foundation for the 1 1/2-mile test. He's also familiar with the local surface, having run third in last year's Champagne. Ride On Curlin raced about 10 lengths closer to the pace last out than he did in the Kentucky Derby and still put in his bid to finish 1 1/2 lengths behind California Chrome.

## WEAKNESSES

There's a chance he could regress following his career-best performance in the Preakness, where he earned his first triple-digit Beyer. The concern is tempered, however, by the fact that his trainer, Billy Gowan, told *Daily Racing Form* the horse is holding his flesh well and continues to be energetic in his training. Ride On Curlin's running style as a closer leaves him dependent on both pace and trip.

## BETTING VALUE

He was 17-1 in the Kentucky Derby and 10-1 in the Preakness, but it's doubtful he'll offer double-digit odds in the Belmont after coming closer to California Chrome than any horse has in the favorite's current six-race win streak. Ride On Curlin can win and also is one for the exotics.

— Mary Rampellini

## SIRE

Two-time Horse of the Year Curlin captured the Preakness, Breeders' Cup Classic, Dubai World Cup, and two editions of the Jockey Club Gold Cup; he also was a close second to the filly Rags to Riches in the 2007 Belmont Stakes. The Smart Strike horse got his stud career off to a rousing start when Palace Malice emerged from his first crop to win last year's Belmont. All eight of Curlin's stakes winners have scored their best victories at a mile or beyond. Two of those, Ol Donyo and Diversy Harbor, are out of Storm Cat mares, the same cross as Ride On Curlin.

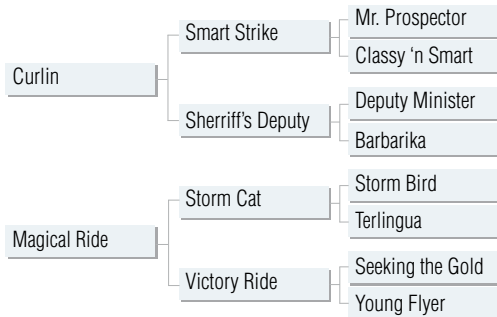
## DAM

Magical Ride finished third in the Grade 2 Adirondack Stakes at 6 1/2 furlongs as a juvenile, and the winning daughter of leading broodmare sire Storm Cat is now the dam of two winners from as many starters, both by Curlin. Second dam Victory Ride was a brilliant speedster who ran the legs off champion Xtra Heat in capturing the Grade 1 Test Stakes in 2001. It is the family of River Flyer and Slew's Exceller, both Grade 1 winners at route distances on turf.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

Preakness runner-up Ride On Curlin has extreme class on both the top and bottom of his pedigree. With his consistent record and a stamina boost from Curlin, he is a logical contender here.

— Nicole Russo



Foaled: Feb. 16, 2011  
 \$25,000 Keeneland September 2012 yearling

## Ride On Curlin

Own: Dougherty Daniel J



B. c. 3 (Feb) **KEESEP12** \$25,000  
 Sire: Curlin (Smart Strike) \$25,000  
 Dam: Magical Ride (Storm Cat)  
 Br: G. Watts Humphrey Jr. & Louise Ireland Humphrey Revoca (Ky)  
 Tr: Gowan William G (0 0 0 0 .00) 2014: (10 1 .10)

17May14-12Pim fst 1 1/16	:46 1:11	1:35 3 1:54 4	Preaknes-G1	103	10	98 3/4	98 3/4	84 3/4	2 3/4	2 1/4	Rosario J	L126	10.30	103-05	CliforniChrom <sup>1 1/2</sup>	RidOnCurlin <sup>6 1/2</sup>	SocInclusio <sup>hd</sup>	Settled,4wd mve,willing	10
3May14-11CD fst 1 1/4	:47 1:11 1:14	1:37 2:03 3	KyDerby-G1	87	18	19 18 19 14	17 9 1/2	14 15	7 6 3/4	Borel C H	L126	17.30	84-12	CaliforniaChrome <sup>1 1/2</sup>	CommandingCurve <sup>1 1/4</sup>	Dnz <sup>2 1/2</sup>	Rail,study 1/4,angl 9wd	19	
12Apr14-11OP fst 1 1/8	:47 1:12 1:11	1:37 1:49 3	ArkDerby-G1	94	3	6 4 1/2	6 3 3/4	7 3 3/4	3 3 1/2	2 3/4	Court J K	L118	7.20	90-08	Danza <sup>4 1/2</sup>	Ride On Curlin <sup>1 1/2</sup>	Bayern <sup>2</sup>	Bmp strt,3-6w 1/4	8
15Mar14-10OP wfs 1 1/16	:24	.47 4 1:12 1:43 4	Rebel-G2	98	2	2nd 2 1/2	2nd 1 1/2	1st 3 1/4	3 1/4	3 1/4	Desormeaux K J	L117	11.70	90-14	Hoppertunity <sup>1 1/2</sup>	Tapiture <sup>3</sup>	Ride On Curlin <sup>1 1/2</sup>	Vied,drift,not enuf	8
17Feb14-90P fst 1 1/16	:23 2	.47 4 1:13 1:44 4	Southwst-G3	80	9	6 1 1/2	1st 2nd	35 3 10 1/4	1 1/2	1 1/2	Borel C H	L118	8.40	76-17	Tapiture <sup>4 1/2</sup>	Strong Mandate <sup>6</sup>	Ride On Curlin <sup>1 1/2</sup>	7w7/8,pressd3w,savd3rd	12
12Jan14-60P gd 6 1/16	:21 4	.45 4 .59 1 1:13 3	Alw 56000n1x	74	10	4 4 1/2	1st 1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	Borel C H	L117	*1.20	74-27	RideOnCurlin <sup>2 1/2</sup>	SmilingCharlie <sup>2</sup>	RiversRunDeep <sup>2</sup>	4-3w bid,clear,driving	10	
27Oct13-5CD fst 1	:22 4	.47 1:12 1:36 3	StretSense61k	73	4	6 5 5 1/2	4 2	4 5 3 7	3 7	Lanerie C J	L118	*1.00	76-21	Coastline <sup>3</sup>	Ichiban Warrior <sup>4</sup>	Ride On Curlin <sup>3 1/2</sup>	Off rail turn,no rally	6	
5Oct13-40Bel fst 1	:22 4	.45 2 1:10 1:35 4	Champagn-G1	90	2	8 5 1/2	8 10	8 3 1/2	2 1/2	3 1 1/2	Solis A	L122	17.00	83-17	Havana <sup>nk</sup>	Honor Code <sup>1 1/2</sup>	Ride On Curlin <sup>6 1/2</sup>	6-7w upper,good kick	9
7Sep13-7CD fst 1 1/16	:23 1	.46 3 1:11 1:45 3	Iroquois-G3	65	8	3 2 3 1/2	3 1 1/2	2 1/2	4 2 1/2	Borel C H	L118	*2.20	74-16	Cleburne <sup>nk</sup>	Smart Cover <sup>nk</sup>	Tapiture <sup>2</sup>	4 wide 1st turn	10	
13Jly13-4EIP fst 5 1/16	:22 3	.45 2 .56 4 1:03	Md Sp Wt 29k	91	1	3 1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 1/2	Borel C H	L120	*.40	103-05	Ride On Curlin <sup>7 1/2</sup>	Union Hall <sup>3 1/4</sup>	ThatcherStreet <sup>4 1/2</sup>	Off slow,drifted about	6	

WORKS: ●May14Pim4f fst:49 3 B 1/5 Apr27CD 7f fst:1:29 B 1/1 Apr6OP 7f fst:1:26 1/2 B 1/1 Mar30OP 5f fst:1:00 3 B 4/46 Mar6OP 7f fst:1:26 1/2 B 1/1

# Samraat

# 20-1

**Breeder:** My Meadowview LLC  
**Trainer:** Richard A. Violette Jr.  
**Owner:** My Meadowview Farm  
**Jockey:** Jose Ortiz  
**Record:** 7-5-1-0



MICHAEL AMORUSO

**BEST BEYER 98**

## STRENGTHS

He is all heart, and fires every time. He prevailed in the Withers after a race-long battle and gained the decision in the Gotham after a three-way stretch battle. In his first career defeat in the Wood Memorial, he gamely took second from Social Inclusion, who was coming off a huge score over Remsen winner Honor Code. And he was a creditable fifth in the Kentucky Derby after racing prominently from the outset, beaten only a nose for fourth by Wood winner Wicked Strong. He has become more versatile even as the difficulty of his assignments has increased, learning to rate effectively. He is small in stature, and the five-week break he received between starts by passing the Preakness gives him every chance to rebound from his Derby effort and produce his best performance.

## WEAKNESSES

Distance is the biggest concern. No one really wants 12 furlongs, but the jury is still out in regard to his true distance proficiency. Despite his typically good efforts in the Wood and Derby, the fact remains he has yet to win beyond 1 1/16 miles. And despite how game he was in the Wood and Derby, his actual victories in his first five starts were at the expense of weaker company.

## BETTING VALUE

There are better win candidates. But at around 15-1, and because he tries so hard, he will be a price horse definitely worth using in prominent slots underneath in exotics.

— Mike Watchmaker

## SIRE

Noble Causeway, by Giant's Causeway, earned all three of his career victories at 1 1/8 miles, with graded stakes placings at that distance in the 2005 Florida Derby and 2006 Ben Ali Stakes. Samraat is Noble Causeway's only U.S. graded stakes winner. Giant's Causeway, leading North American general sire by earnings in 2009, 2010, and 2012, has yet to sire a U.S. classic winner.

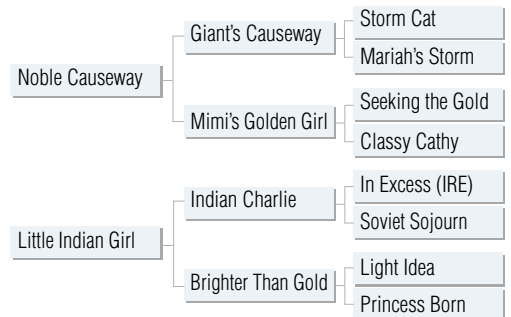
## DAM

Samraat is the first graded stakes winner out of the winning Indian Charlie mare Little Indian Girl, whose only win came at 1 1/16 miles. He is a half-brother to Screen Legend, Grade 3-placed at a mile. My Noble, Samraat's full sister, graduated at Fair Grounds going one mile and 70 yards. Little Indian Girl is a half-sister to Nonsuch Bay, winner of the Grade 1 Mother Goose at 1 1/8 miles in 2002.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

Both of Samraat's Grade 3 wins came at 1 1/16 miles, and he ran willingly with added distance in the Wood. He appeared to hit his ceiling in the Kentucky Derby, and his status as an outlier among his sire and dam's progeny does not help his case at 12 furlongs.

— Joe Nevills



Foaled: April 16, 2011  
 Homebred

## Samraat

Own: My Meadowview Farm



Dk. b or b. c. 3 (Apr)  
 Sire: Noble Causeway (Giant's Causeway)  
 Dam: Little Indian Girl (Indian Charlie)  
 Br: My Meadowview LLC (NY)  
 Tr: Violette R A Jr (13 1 1 2 .08) 2014:(73 11 15)

Life	7	5	1	0	\$833,200	98	D.Fst	6	4	1	0	\$773,200	98
2014	4	2	1	0	\$700,000	98	Wet(349)	1	1	0	0	\$60,000	95
2013	3	3	0	0	\$133,200	95	Synth	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
Bel	1	1	0	0	\$36,000	78	Turf(262)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
							Dst(264*)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-

3May14-11CD	fst	1 1/4	:47	1:11	1:37	2:03	KyDerby-G1	89	6	42	4 1/2	2nd	35	55 3/4	Ortiz J L	L126	16.70	85-12	CaliforniChrome <sup>13</sup>	CommndngCurve <sup>14</sup>	Dnz <sup>23</sup>	Bump,4w,bid,outfinshd	19
5Apr14-10Aqu	fst	1 1/8	:47	1:11	1:36	1:49	WoodMem-G1	98	7	42 1/2	42	32	31 1/2	23 1/2	Ortiz J L	L123	3.20	91-13	WickedStrong <sup>33</sup>	Samraat <sup>no</sup>	SocialInclusion <sup>11</sup>	Rated 2p,alt crse uppr	10
1Mar14-9Aqu	fst	1 1/16	:23	:48	1:12	1:44	Gotham-G3	96	6	41 1/2	3 1/2	3 1/2	1 1/2	1nk	Ortiz J L	L123	*2.20e	93-12	Samraat <sup>nk</sup>	UncleSigh <sup>nk</sup>	InTrouble <sup>51</sup>	Rated 3w in aim, game	9
1Feb14-9Aqu	fst	1 1/16	:24	:48	1:12	1:46	Withers-G3	94	5	2 1/2	2 1/2	2 1/2	1 1/2	11	Ortiz J L	L118	1.15	84-20	Samraat <sup>1</sup>	UncleSigh <sup>10</sup>	Scotland <sup>23</sup>	Attended 2p, gamely	6
18Dec13-3Aqu	gd	1 7/8	:24	:49	1:15	1:44	DamonRunyn100k	95	1	11	11	12	18	116 3/4	Ortiz J L	L116	*.70	83-29	Samraat <sup>16</sup>	ForeverUtopia <sup>23</sup>	Deceived <sup>2</sup>	Opened up, handily	6
22Nov13-8Aqu	fst	7 1/2	:23	:46	1:10	1:30	Alw 62000n1x	78	7	3	1 1/2	11	13	15 1/2	Ortiz J L	L120	*.85	96-13	Samraat <sup>5</sup>	NativeHero <sup>3</sup>	Sidearm <sup>3</sup>	Pace ins, drew off	7
23Oct13-2Bel	fst	6f	:22	:46	:58	1:11	Md Sp Wt 60k	78	1	2	1 1/2	12	13	13 1/2	Ortiz J L	120	2.60	85-18	Samraat <sup>3</sup>	BluegrassFlash <sup>2</sup>	Woke Up Tired <sup>6</sup>	Strong drive	7

WORKS: May25 Bel 1 fst 1:41 B 1/1 May18 Aqu 4f fst :48 B 2/15 Apr25 Aqu 1 fst 1:45 B 1/1 Apr18 Bel 4f fst :49 B 8/19 Mar28 PmM 1 fst 1:44 B 1/1 Mar22 PmM 1 fst 1:45 B 1/1

# Social Inclusion

# 15-1

**Breeder:** Robert Tillyer, Martin Keogh & Dr. Chet Blackey  
**Trainer:** Manuel Azpurua  
**Owner:** Rontos Racing Stable Corp.  
**Jockey:** undecided  
**Record:** 4-2-0-2



TOM KEYSER

**BEST BEYER 110**

## STRENGTHS

He has accomplished much in four races, including his Feb. 22 debut, easily winning his first two starts and then proving his stakes quality with thirds in the Wood Memorial and Preakness. He flashed eye-catching moves in some of those races, such as when he drew away from Honor Code in a March 12 allowance at Gulfstream and when he accelerated with California Chrome on the final turn in the Preakness. He possesses a career-best 110 Beyer Speed Figure, earned in his victory over Honor Code, and that figure is higher than even California Chrome's top figure of 108. Optimists could make a case that he has a right to be fitter in the Belmont than he was for the Preakness. He missed his prep in early May at Gulfstream due to a hoof issue, potentially setting him back.

## WEAKNESSES

Stamina. He has not won beyond 1 1/16 miles, and was noticeably fatigued late in the 1 1/8-mile Wood Memorial and 1 3/16-mile Preakness. And in order to win the Belmont, he needs to improve — which seems unlikely at the race's 1 1/2-mile distance.

## BETTING VALUE

He figures to be a larger price than his 5-1 odds in the Preakness. Given how questionable he seems at 1 1/2 miles and facing a better field than in the Preakness, odds of around 15-1 seem appropriate.

— Byron King

## SIRE

Millionaire Pioneerof the Nile scored all his wins around two turns with his biggest score coming in the 2009 Santa Anita Derby; he was runner-up in the Kentucky Derby. Pioneerof the Nile is by 2003 Belmont Stakes winner Empire Maker, a son of Unbridled; the sire line is responsible for classic winners Grindstone, Birdstone, Summer Bird, Mine That Bird, and Red Bullet.

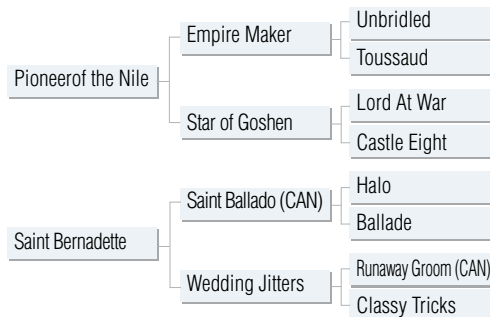
## DAM

Saint Bernadette never won beyond 6 1/2 furlongs, although she did finish third behind Adoration in the 2002 Grade 2 Hollywood Breeders' Cup Oaks at 1 1/16 miles. Her only other starter is Saint Midas, who scored both her wins against claiming company. Social Inclusion's second dam is the very useful Wedding Jitters, dam of seven winners from as many starters. However, the stakes-placed mare's longest victory came at a mile, and the average winning distance of her foals is 6.3 furlongs.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

The speedy Social Inclusion ran respectably to finish third in the Preakness. He'll need to rely heavily on the stamina provided by his sire line in a marathon such as the Belmont Stakes.

— Nicole Russo



Foaled: May 1, 2011  
 \$60,000 Keeneland September 2012 yearling

## Social Inclusion

Own: Rontos Racing Stable Corp



B. c. 3 (May) KEESEP12 \$60,000  
 Sire: Pioneerof the Nile (Empire Maker) \$20,000  
 Dam: Saint Bernadette (Saint Ballado)  
 Br: Robert Tillyer, Martin Keogh & Dr. Chet Blackey (Ky)  
 Tr: Azpurua Manuel J(0 0 0 0 .00) 2014:(120 12 .10)

Life	4	2	0	2	\$314,400	110	D.Fst	4	2	0	2	\$314,400	110
2014	4	2	0	2	\$314,400	110	Wet(407*)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
2013	0	M	0	0	\$0	-	Synth	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
Bel	0	0	0	0	\$0	-	Turf(279)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-
							Dst(302*)	0	0	0	0	\$0	-

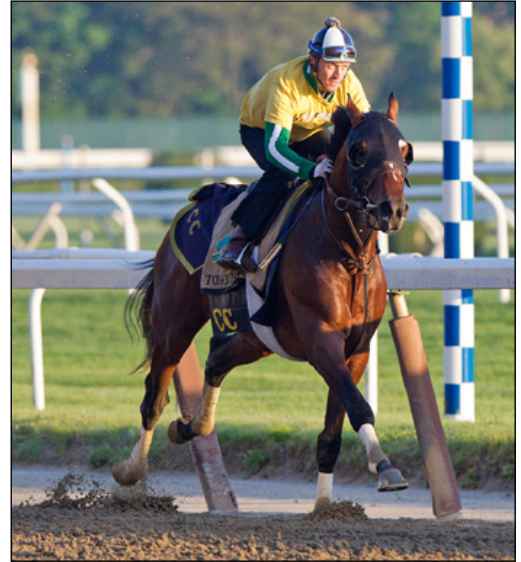
17May14-12Pim	fst	1 3/8	:46	1:11	1:35	1:54	Preaknes-G1	92	8	5 1/2	5 3/4	3 1/2	3 1/2	38	Contreras L	L126 fb	5.30	97-05	ClifoniChrome <sup>1 1/2</sup>	RidOnCurlin <sup>6 1/2</sup>	SocialInclusion <sup>hd</sup>	4-3w,bid,press,faded	10	
5Apr14-10Aqu	fst	1 1/8	:47	1:11	1:36	1:49	WoodMem-G1	98	10	2 1/2	1nd	1 1/2	1 1/2	33 1/2	Contreras L	L123 fb	*1.60	91-13	WickedStrong <sup>3 1/2</sup>	Samraat <sup>no</sup>	SocialInclusion <sup>1 1/2</sup>	3-2 1st,nail ins	1/16p	10
12Mar14-8GP	fst	1 1/16	:24	:47	1:10	1:40	Alw 61500nc	110	1	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 3/4	1 7/8	110	Contreras L	L119 fb	1.40	104-08	SocialInclusion <sup>10</sup>	HonorCode <sup>17 1/4</sup>	We'reAllSet <sup>17</sup>	Inside, ridden out	5	
22Feb14-2GP	fst	6f	:22	:44	:56	1:09	Mid Sp Wt 39k	92	1	7	1 1/2	1 1/2	1 5/8	1 7/8	Contreras L	122 fb	9.10	94-06	SocialInclusion <sup>7 1/2</sup>	TigerTank <sup>nk</sup>	Tuneintobow <sup>5</sup>	Inside, drew off	8	

WORKS: ●May12 Pim 4f fst :47 B 1/5 Apr28 GP 4f fst :48 B 2/13 Apr24 GP 3f fst :34 B 1/3 Apr16 GP 3f my :35 B 2/10 Mar29 GP 4f fst :46 B 2/51 ●Mar26 GP 3f fst :35 B 1/11

# Tonalist

8-1

**Breeder:** Woodslane Farm  
**Trainer:** Christophe Clement  
**Owner:** Robert S. Evans  
**Jockey:** Joel Rosario  
**Record:** 4-2-1-0



BARBARA D. LIVINGSTON

## STRENGTHS

This bay colt has been very highly regarded all along and was given mention early in the year as a viable Kentucky Derby prospect before briefly being sidelined. He has a nice turn of foot to go along with his Christophe Clement-infused stamina, and that 101 Beyer Speed Figure he earned in his nice-looking Peter Pan Stakes romp says he belongs on the same racetrack with the best of his class. Spacing between races toward this has been ideal, and he sure looks like the most dangerous "fresh" horse of the field. Clement, despite a dearth of Triple Crown starters, long has been regarded as one of the game's elite trainers.

## WEAKNESSES

He has done battle with a couple of decent Todd Pletcher-trained 3-year-olds (Constitution and Commissioner) but otherwise has never been tested against the best of the class, most notably against the likes of California Chrome. He did play catch-up for part of the spring when missing time; it's hard to say whether that will affect him here. He's clearly lacking in stakes experience in comparison to some of these others.

## BETTING VALUE

He figures among those in contention to be the distant second choice behind California Chrome, say in the 8-1 range, along with Ride On Curlin and Wicked Strong; anything much shorter or longer would seem unreasonable. Clearly, it's up to individual bettors to decide whether that's the kind of price worth accepting, whether it be in the win pool or in the exotics.

— Marty McGee

## SIRE

Prominent young sire Tapit, by Pulpit, added another feather to his cap when daughter Untapable dominated the Kentucky Oaks. She was the latest Grade 1 winner for her sire around two turns; others include juvenile champions Stardom Bound and Hansen, and Careless Jewel, the winner of the 2009 Alabama at 1 1/4 miles. Pulpit — also the grandsire of California Chrome — was a son of 1992 Belmont winner A.P. Indy. That breed-shaping sire is represented by 2007 Belmont winner Rags to Riches.

## DAM

Settling Mist, whose only win came at nine furlongs, is the dam of four winners from five starters. Three of those have an average winning distance beyond a mile. Settling Mist is a half-sister to four stakes producers, including Easter Bunnette, the dam of 2011 Horse of the Year Havre de Grace, and Grade 3-placed The Bink, the dam of Grade 1-winning turf standout Riskaverse. Settling Mist's next three dams are Broodmare of the Year Toll Booth, influential producer Missy Baba, and Irish Oaks winner Uvira II. This extended family includes Belmont winners A.P. Indy and Lemon Drop Kid as well as Preakness winner Summer Squall.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

Tonalist hails from a classy female family with a number of powerful distance influences. He appears well equipped based on pedigree to handle the Belmont challenge.

— Nicole Russo

Foaled: February 11, 2011  
 Purchased privately

## Tonalist

Own: Evans Robert S



B. c. 3 (Feb)  
 Sire: Tapit (Pulpit) \$150,000  
 Dam: Settling Mist (Pleasant Colony)  
 Br: Woodslane Farm (Ky)  
 Tr: Clement Christophe (45 9 10 7 .20) 2014: (175 38 .22)

10May14-9Bel sly<sup>5</sup> 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>6</sub> :46<sup>4</sup> 1:10<sup>4</sup> 1:35<sup>3</sup> 1:48<sup>1</sup> PeterPan-G2  
 22Feb14-6GP fst 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>6</sub> :24<sup>1</sup> :47<sup>3</sup> 1:11 1:42 OC 75k/n1x-N  
 18Jan14-4GP fst 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> :47<sup>4</sup> 1:12<sup>2</sup> 1:37<sup>1</sup> 1:50<sup>1</sup> Md Sp Wt 42k  
 16Nov13-4Aqu fst 1 :23<sup>4</sup> :46<sup>2</sup> 1:10<sup>3</sup> 1:36 Md Sp Wt 75k

101 4 2<sup>nd</sup> 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 1<sup>2</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 1<sup>4</sup> Rosario J L117 b \*1.20  
 92 8 4<sup>2</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 3<sup>1</sup> 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 2<sup>2</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Bravo J L120 b 2.60  
 90 1 7<sup>6</sup> 7<sup>4</sup>/<sub>4</sub> 4<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 1<sup>4</sup> Bravo J L122 b 3.50  
 72 7 7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>2</sub> 4<sup>6</sup> 44 Rosario J 120 16.00

91-21 Tonalist<sup>4</sup> Commissioner<sup>2</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Irish You Well<sup>hd</sup>  
 95-06 Constitution<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Tonalist<sup>2</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Mexikoma<sup>1</sup>  
 88-09 Tonalist<sup>4</sup> Global Strike<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Palace Gate<sup>2</sup>/<sub>4</sub>  
 85-09 Matterhorn<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> Harpoon<sup>2</sup>/<sub>4</sub> Woelf Den<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>

Coaxed turn, kicked cl 7  
 3 wide, bid, 2nd best 10  
 5wd bid, edged clear 12  
 3w & asked 3/8pl 9

WORKS: May25 Bel 5f fst 1:01<sup>3</sup> B 20/29 ● May4 Bel 5f fst 1:00 B 1/11 Apr17 Pay 5f fst 1:03<sup>2</sup> B 5/6 Mar27 Pay 5f fst 1:04 B 8/11 ● Mar20 Pay 5f fst 1:02<sup>3</sup> B 1/6 ● Mar13 Pay 5f fst 1:03 B 1/5

# Wicked Strong

# 10-1

**Breeder:** William F. Lynn  
**Trainer:** James A. Jerkens  
**Owner:** Centennial Farms  
**Jockey:** Rajiv Maragh  
**Record:** 7-2-1-1



BARBARA D. LIVINGSTON

**BEST BEYER**  
**104**

## STRENGTHS

Considering that he stumbled out of post 19, bumped with a rival while five wide around the first turn, and had to alter course while weaving through traffic late, he ran very creditably in the Kentucky Derby to beat 15 horses.

He offers a threefold combination of stakes seasoning, freshness, and home-court advantage as A) the only Grade 1 winner other than California Chrome in this field; B) having a beneficial five-week break between races; and C) being able to run out of his own stall.

There is a reasonable chance we have not seen his best race yet, and the barn has been exceptionally "live" in New York all spring. Therefore, Beyer Speed Figure devotees who factor in trainers might have a strong suspicion that a "bounce-rebound" scenario is at hand.

## WEAKNESSES

The two races that brought him to prominence — a close third in the Remsen Stakes last fall and a return to top form in the Wood Memorial — both took place at Aqueduct; whether that is simply a coincidence remains open to debate.

## BETTING VALUE

With the whole world betting on a California Chrome sweep, and after a flashy win by Tonalist in the Peter Pan Stakes, Wicked Strong might be in the 6-1 range as in the Derby. That seems like an acceptable proposition for those detecting any chinks in the favorite's armor.

— Dave Litfin

## SIRE

Hard Spun was a standout member of a very good 2007 3-year-old class, posting a strong runner-up effort in the Derby behind Street Sense and finishing third in the Preakness and second in the Breeders' Cup Classic, both won by Curlin. His High Grade 1 win came at seven furlongs in the King's Bishop. Hard Spun is the sire of champion filly Questing, who won the 2012 Alabama Stakes and Coaching Club American Oaks at Saratoga by a combined 13 1/4 lengths. Hard Spun's sire, Danzig, was one of the dominant stallions of the late 20th century and sired 1986 Belmont winner Danzig Connection among his 202 stakes winners.

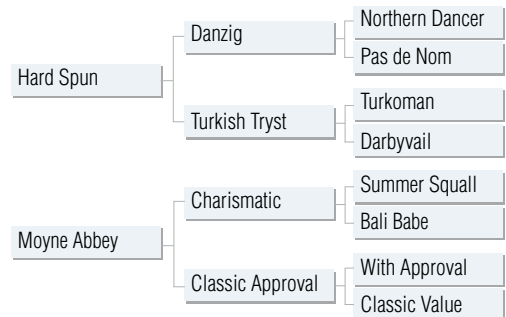
## DAM

Moyné Abbey, by 1999 Kentucky Derby and Preakness winner Charismatic, won once at 1 1/16 miles. Her dam, the stakes-placed Classic Approval, is by Canadian Triple Crown winner With Approval. Classic Approval produced three stakes winners, including middle-distance turf horse Gulch Approval. This is the female family of Pacific Classic winner Student Council.

## PEDIGREE OUTLOOK

Wicked Strong appears to relish added distance, based on his finishes in the Wood Memorial and Kentucky Derby, and has an encouraging pedigree for the Belmont's taxing 1 1/2 miles.

— Patrick Reed



Foaled: April 28, 2011  
 \$375,000 Keeneland September 2012 yearling

## Wicked Strong

Own: Centennial Farms



B. c. 3 (Apr) KEES12 \$375,000  
 Sire: Hard Spun (Danzig) \$38,750  
 Dam: Moyné Abbey (Charismatic)  
 Br: William F. Lynn (Ky)  
 Tr: Jerkens James A (10 4 1 1 .40) 2014: (43 12 .28)

3May14-11CD	fst 1/4	:47 1/16	1:37 2/10	33	KyDerby-G1	89	19	148	127	104	67 1/2	45 3/4	Maragh R	L126	6.50	85-12	California Chrome <sup>1 1/2</sup>	Commding Curve <sup>1 1/4</sup>	Dnz <sup>2 3/4</sup>	Stumbled, traffic, wllng	19
5Apr14-10Aqu	fst 1/8	:47 2/16	1:11	1:36 1/16	1:49 1/16	104	1	64 1/2	64	42	13 1/2	Maragh R	L123	9.20	95-13	Wicked Strong <sup>3 1/2</sup>	Samraat <sup>no</sup>	Social Inclusion <sup>1 1/2</sup>	Ins 1st, 4w 5/16, drvng	72	
22Feb14-6GP	fst 1/8	:24 1/8	:47 3/16	1:11	1:42	87	9	108 1/2	88 1/2	75 3/4	66	46 1/2	Lezcano J	L118	6.40	91-06	Constitution <sup>3 1/4</sup>	Tonalist <sup>2 1/4</sup>	Mexikoma <sup>1</sup>	3 wide, passed tired	10
25Jan14-10GP	fst 1/16	:23 3/8	:46 3/8	1:10 1/16	1:42	67	8	85 1/2	85 1/2	108	10 1/2	9 1/2	Castellano J J	L116	4.30	82-07	Cairo Prince <sup>5 1/2</sup>	Conquest Titan <sup>1/2</sup>	Intense Holiday <sup>3/4</sup>	Stopped	11
30Nov13-9Aqu	fst 1/8	:52 3/16	1:17 2/16	1:41	1:52 4/16	87	6	53 1/2	52	4 1/2	3 3/4	Maragh R	L116	10.70	81-10	Honor Coden <sup>no</sup>	Cairo Prince <sup>1/2</sup>	Wicked Strong <sup>2 1/4</sup>	Erratic str, gd energy	8	
26Oct13-5Bel	fst 1	:23	:46	1:11 1/16	1:37	81	4	54	3 1/2	11	11	12	Prado E S	L120	4.10	79-19	Wicked Strong <sup>2</sup>	Cool Samurai <sup>1 1/4</sup>	Bourbon Sense <sup>no</sup>	3w to near 1/4, driving	10
21Sep13-2Bel	sly <sup>s</sup> 6f	:22	:46 2/16	:58 3/16	1:12	72	5	67	45 1/2	35 1/2	25 1/2	Prado E S	120	7.30	74-20	Manhattan Johnnie <sup>5 1/2</sup>	Wicked Strong <sup>bd</sup>	Round <sup>2</sup>	3 wide, no match	8	

WORKS: May25 Bel tr.t 1fst 1:39 2 B 1/1 May18 Bel tr.t 5fst 1:01 4 B 2/20 ● May1 CD 3fst :36 3 B 1/27 Apr25 Bel tr.t 7fst 1:27 B 1/1 Apr17 Bel tr.t 4fst :49 3 B 14/28 Apr3 Bel tr.t 3fst :37 1 B 5/21



## ACORN S.

### Grade 1

\$750,000, 3-year-old fillies, 1 mile

#### By Marcus Hersh

The Grade 1 Acorn might have been the landing spot for Untapable, North America's best 3-year-old filly – if not the best 3-year-old, period – but her connections don't want to switch Untapable from a series of two-turn starts to the one-turn, one-mile Acorn. The two-three finishers behind Untapable in the Kentucky Oaks, My Miss Sophia and Unbridled Forever, are pointed to the Acorn, however, as are several other high-class fillies in what should be an excellent edition of the race.

My Miss Sophia wasn't in Untapable's league, but she finished six lengths clear of third-place Unbridled Forever in the Oaks. Both My Miss Sophia and Unbridled Forever have sharp one-turn wins to their credit, and neither should be disadvantaged by the cutback from nine furlongs around two turns to a one-turn mile.

Fiftyshadesofgold had been an Oaks possible herself but wound up instead in the Eight Belles Stakes earlier on the Oaks card, a seven-furlong race she won by a half-length.

Fiftyshadesofgold has lost only twice, once to Untapable and the other time when she was nearly put over the inner rail in the homestretch at Saratoga last summer.

Artemis Agrotera and Sweet Reason were the top two 2-year-old fillies in New York last fall, and both are expected for the Acorn. Sweet Reason hasn't come back to her best form in two 2014 starts, while Artemis Agrotera will be making her 3-year-old debut.

#### PROBABLES:

##### HORSE

Artemis Agrotera  
Fiftyshadesofgold  
Fashion Plate  
House Rules  
Lady Paradime  
My Miss Sophia  
Sweet Reason  
Sweet Whiskey  
Unbridled Forever  
Aqua Regia (possible)  
La Madrina (possible)  
She's a Tiger (possible)

##### TRAINER

Michael Hushion  
Bret Calhoun  
Simon Callaghan  
Allen Jerkens  
Kelly Breen  
Todd Pletcher  
Leah Gyarmati  
Todd Pletcher  
Dallas Stewart  
Tom Albertrani  
Shug McGaughey  
Jeff Bonde

## BROOKLYN INV. S.

### Grade 2

\$500,000, 4-year-olds and up, 1 1/2 miles

More so than any other race on Belmont Stakes Day, no race resembles the Belmont more than the Brooklyn Invitational. A Grade 2, \$500,000 race for older horses, it, like the Belmont, is one lap around the main track, 1 1/2 miles.

What it lacks relative to the Belmont Stakes is depth. Even with its rich purse, it typically draws a short- to medium-size cast, and this year's race is no exception. As of May 28, NYRA stakes coordinator Andrew Byrnes was anticipating a field of six to eight.

A horse being pointed to the race with a win at the distance is Ever Rider, who developed into a quality marathoner in Argentina last year before being imported to the U.S. Initially slow to come around, he started running to his potential this spring, finishing second in the 1 1/2-mile Tokyo City Stakes at Santa Anita before finishing second to Ground Transport in the Drosselmeyer, Belmont Park's prep for the Brooklyn.

Ground Transport is also expected to return in the Brooklyn, though he does not have the staying experience of Ever Rider. A winner of two consecutive stakes, he has never raced beyond 1 1/4 miles.

Others being considered for the Brooklyn include Bigger Is Better, Eriugena, Golden Soul, Micromanage, and Norumba, Byrnes said.

Of those, Eriugena would seem a horse capable of handling 1 1/2 miles, being an Irish-bred with a staying pedigree.

Golden Soul is perhaps the most recognizable horse among the prospective starters, having run second in the 2013 Kentucky Derby. He has recorded six consecutive rear-half finishes since, an out-of-form streak that began with a ninth-place finish in last year's Belmont. Golden Soul was scratched last week from a first-level turf allowance at Churchill Downs due to a mild case of colic, according to trainer Dallas Stewart.

– Byron King

#### PROBABLES:

##### HORSE

Bigger Is Better  
Eriugena  
Ever Rider  
Ground Transport  
Micromanage  
Norumbega  
Footbridge  
Golden Soul

##### TRAINER

Rodrigo Ubillo  
Mike Maker  
Juan Ortiz  
Mike Stidham  
Todd Pletcher  
Shug McGaughey  
Eoin Harty  
Dallas Stewart

## JAIPUR INV. S.

### Grade 3

\$300,000, 4-year-olds and up, 6f, turf

#### By Mary Rampellini

Ben's Cat will be stepping outside his Mid-Atlantic beat for the Grade 3, \$300,000 Jaipur Invitational, a six-furlong turf race for 4-year-olds and up that will mark just his second start in New York. Back in 2010, he was second in a one-mile dirt stakes at Aqueduct. Since that time, Ben's Cat has established himself as an elite turf sprinter, and in the Jaipur, the 8-year-old who did not launch his career until he was 4 will be seeking his 17th win on the grass. He could face nine others.

Chief among his potential rivals are Marchman, Undrafted, and Positive Side, the first three finishers May 2 in the Grade 3 Turf Sprint at Churchill Downs; Upgrade, winner of the Jaipur in 2012, when run over seven furlongs; and Global Power, a three-time stakes winner who has experience over the course at Belmont.

Ben's Cat, who will be making his third start off a layoff, could get an ideal tracking trip behind Marchman, a candidate to show the way based on his recent races and the bullet half-mile he worked in 46.80 seconds May 29 at Churchill Downs. Positive Side, meanwhile, is a closer who figures to make good use of the added ground he picks up in the Jaipur. His trainer, Grant Forster, said the five furlongs in the Turf Sprint was a bit less than optimum for the horse, whom he also said bled in the race. Forster said Positive Side, a 6-year-old he has trained since the horse was 4, will make his first start on Lasix for the barn. Positive Side won on the diuretic earlier in his career, when he was 3.

#### PROBABLES:

##### HORSE

Anyriderill Do  
Ben's Cat  
Global Power  
Marchman  
Marriedtothemusic  
Non Stop  
Positive Side  
Spring to the Sky  
Undrafted  
Upgrade

##### TRAINER

Ronny Werner  
King Leatherbury  
Jonas Gibson  
Bret Calhoun  
Linda Rice  
David A. Cannizzo  
Grant Forster  
Bruce Brown  
Wesley Ward  
Chad Brown

## JUST A GAME S.

### Grade 1

\$750,000, 4-year-olds and up, f&m, 1 mile, turf

#### By Kenny Peck

The Just a Game Stakes is not an easy race to plot in terms of pace, and that means it's not an easy race to handicap.

Somali Lemonade is one of the candidates to make the lead, and that makes her a threat, as the fractions could be controlled. But she was greatly aided by key late scratches and favorable race flow in her Gallorette win last time out, and she could have trouble running back to that Beyer if she's not as fortunate in the Just a Game.

Discreet Marq is the other obvious pace factor, and though her usual Beyers are a little light her best figure came in a race at this distance two back, when she stalked a mild early tempo.

Stephanie's Kitten, who won this race over a yielding course last year, is certainly a threat to repeat. But she has had only two starts in the interim, including only one this year, a loss in the Jenny Wiley. She was beaten a little more than three lengths in the Wiley by Hard Not to Like, a closer at the top of her game. Hard Not to Like looks for her third straight victory, as does Coffee Clique, who won the Distaff Turf Mile in her latest.

Better Lucky, second in the 2013 edition of the Just a Game, may be the main threat. She has a solid late kick, and she's as consistent as any runner in here. The main question is this: Will she get enough pace? Not easy to say. But if so, look out.

#### PROBABLES:

##### HORSE

Better Lucky  
Coffee Clique  
Dame Marie  
Discreet Marq  
Hard Not to Like  
Somali Lemonade  
Stephanie's Kitten  
Unlimited Budget  
Waterway Run  
Filimbi

##### TRAINER

Thomas Albertrani  
Brian Lynch  
Eddie Kenneally  
Christophe Clement  
Michael Matz  
Michael Matz  
Chad Brown  
Todd Pletcher  
Chad Brown  
Bill Mott

# MANHATTAN S.

## Grade 1

\$1,000,000, 4-year-olds and up, 1 1/4 miles, turf

### By Dan Illman

Imagining, the winner of the Grade 1 Man o' War Stakes on May 11, is pointing for the Grade 1, \$1,000,000 Manhattan Stakes, one of nine black-type events on the June 7 Belmont Stakes undercard.

Since the 2013 Dixie Stakes on May 18, Imagining has reeled off four wins from six starts. Not only is he in razor-sharp form, he is versatile. He can win from on the lead — as he did in the Man o' War — or from as far back as eighth at the first call.

Little Mike, the hero of the 2012 Breeders' Cup Turf, returned to the winner's circle May 17 in the \$90,000 Flying Pidgeon Stakes. That was Little Mike's first start in more than five months, and he produced a solid gate-to-wire score against inferior competition.

Five Iron could provide a sharp pace threat to Little Mike. The front-running winner of the Grade 3 Fort Marcy Stakes, Five Iron may try to shake Little Mike, but the 10-furlong distance is a question mark.

Hey Leroy rallied for second in the Dixie on the Preakness undercard. He's raced 10 times in 2014, with four wins and five seconds. Thus far, however, Hey Leroy has competed in middle-distance events and will get a stamina test at 1 1/4 miles.

Real Solution, Grandeur, and Amira's Prince chased Imagining in vain in the Man o' War. Real Solution looked on the verge of passing Imagining but hung in the final sixteenth.

Kaigun, Seek Again, and Boisterous get the benefit of being away from Wise Dan. Seek Again fell a head shy of the champion in the Grade 1 Turf Classic on the Kentucky Derby undercard and has plenty of upside.

#### PROBABLES:

##### HORSE

Amira's Prince  
Boisterous  
Five Iron  
Grandeur  
Hey Leroy  
Imagining  
Kaigun  
Little Mike  
Real Solution  
Seek Again

##### TRAINER

Bill Mott  
Todd Pletcher  
Brian Lynch  
Jeremy Nosedá  
Manuel Azpurua  
Shug McGaughey  
Mark Casse  
Carlo Vaccarezza  
Chad Brown  
Bill Mott

#### POSSIBLE:

Summer Front  
Utley

Christophe Clement  
Jonathan Sheppard

# METROPOLITAN H.

## Grade 1

\$1,250,000, 4-year-olds and up, 1 mile

### By Mike Watchmaker

Palace Malice was so dominant winning his last two starts that even though the Grade 1, \$1.25 million Metropolitan Handicap is coming up with a large and strong field, he is absolutely the one to beat.

Palace Malice, winner of last year's Belmont Stakes, walloped the highly regarded Normandy Invasion in the New Orleans Handicap two starts back, scoring by almost five lengths. And while the opposition was less formidable in the Westchester Stakes in Palace Malice's most recent outing, he was no less impressive, running away to a near 10-length score. But Palace Malice was not only visually compelling in his last two starts, he was also strong against the clock. The 114 Beyer Figure he earned in the New Orleans and the 111 Beyer he received in the Westchester, were the two best Beyers of his career.

Central Banker is another coming into the Met Mile in career form. His determined victory in the Churchill Downs Stakes on the Kentucky Derby undercard was good for a 107 Beyer, and was his best performance to date.

Goldcents will be making his 4-year-old bow in the Met Mile. Goldcents won two Grade 1 races last year, the Santa Anita Derby and the Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile, in which he capitalized on a speed-biased surface.

Normandy Invasion was favored when no match for Palace Malice in the New Orleans Cap. However, the sense is he can be more competitive off the cut back in distance to a one-turn mile.

Two capable Californians — Sahara Sky and Shakin It Up — are considered possible Met Mile starters.

Sahara Sky nosed Cross Traffic to win the Met Mile last year. And though he won the San Carlos this year, in truth, Sahara Sky is still seeking a return to his excellent form of 2013.

Shakin It Up lost the stretch battle with Central Banker at Churchill last time out, but beat that opponent when he won the Grade 1 Malibu late last year, right before he won the Strub.

#### PROBABLES:

##### HORSE

Broadway Empire  
Capo Bastone  
Central Banker  
Declan's Warrior  
Goldcents  
Moreno  
Normandy Invasion  
Palace Malice  
Romansh  
Sahara Sky  
Scarly Charly  
Shakin It Up  
Vyjack

##### TRAINER

Robertino Diodoro  
Todd Pletcher  
Al Stall Jr.  
Nick Zito  
Doug O'Neill  
Eric Guillot  
Chad Brown  
Todd Pletcher  
Tom Albertrani  
Jerry Hollendorfer  
Mike Hushion  
Bob Baffert  
Rudy Rodriguez

## OGDEN PHIPPS S.

### Grade 1

\$1,000,000, 4-year-olds and up, f&m, 1 1/16 miles

#### By Brad Free

It's pretty cool that the Breeders' Cup Distaff moved to June at Belmont Park, right? Actually, the race is the Grade 1 Ogden Phipps, with a small field and a distinct Breeders' Cup feel.

Beholder, Close Hatches, and Princess of Sylmar have won a combined 12 Grade 1 races, \$6.5 million, and 25 races from 35 starts. In the 1 1/16-mile Phipps, they meet for the first time since the BC Distaff last fall at Santa Anita.

Beholder crushed the 2013 Distaff, Close Hatches finished second, and Princess of Sylmar misfired, finishing last. All three have returned to form in 2014. Beholder and Princess of Sylmar won minor stakes by open lengths, and Close Hatches won two graded stakes.

The California-based Beholder is the likely favorite in her first New York start, though 12 of the last 14 Phipps winners had previously won at Belmont (the exceptions are Life At Ten in 2010 and Tiz Miz Sue in 2013). Beholder, 9 for 13, will arrive early and post her final work at Belmont.

Princess of Sylmar won four Grade 1 races at three tracks in 2013, including a decisive Grade 1 at Belmont. The New York-based Princess of Sylmar, 9 for 12, defeated Beholder when they met on neutral ground last spring in the Kentucky Oaks.

Close Hatches began 2014 by winning twice at Oaklawn Park, including the Grade 1 Apple Blossom. She is 7 for 10 and earned a career-best 102 Beyer Speed Figure last summer at Belmont by romping in the Grade 1 Mother Goose.

My Wandy's Girl, a Grade 2 sprint winner, would be the outsider in a small field. As of May 30, there were just five confirmed starters with two others possible.

My Wandy's Girl is quick enough to set the pace and likely to be dogged by Beholder. Close Hatches figures to be positioned third, while Princess of Sylmar will rally from the back.

#### PROBABLES:

##### HORSE

Beholder  
Princess of Sylmar  
Close Hatches  
My Wandy's Girl

##### TRAINER

Richard Mandella  
Todd Pletcher  
Bill Mott  
Mike Hushion

#### POSSIBLE:

Classic Point  
Belle Gallantey  
Lunar Surge

Allen Jerkens  
Rudy Rodriguez  
George Weaver

## WOODY STEPHENS S.

### Grade 2

\$500,000, 3-year-olds, 7f

#### By Marty McGee

Like so many of the Belmont undercard stakes, the seven-furlong Woody Stephens Stakes for 3-year-olds promises to be full of intrigue and all sorts of possibilities.

While the May 10 Laz Barrera at Santa Anita looks like a key race toward this, with as many as three Woody Stephens starters – Top Fortitude, Tonito M., and Kobe's Back – returning from it, the April 5 Bay Shore also has produced a couple of live ones in Coup de Grace and Financial Mogul.

In addition, there are a couple in here turning back from traditional Derby preps run around two turns (Conquest Titan and In Trouble), as well as a Breeders' Cup runner-up (Havana), the Derby Trial winner (Embellishing Bob), and the Swale winner (Spot).

Invariably, a quick pace develops in this race, and with such fast ones as Tonito M., Coup de Grace, Embellishing Bob, and Havana likely to start, that kind of scenario might well unfold again this year. Confirmed back runners who would stand to benefit are Conquest Titan, Kobe's Back, Spot, and maybe even the south Florida shipper Little Daddy.

Havana, trained by Todd Pletcher, is perhaps the most interesting of all the Stephens prospects. A standout at 2, he has had a limited campaign at 3, with only a disappointing defeat in a recent Belmont prep on his 2014 record thus far.

Social Inclusion is being considered for this race if he doesn't run in the Belmont.

As if there were not enough to consider already, the variables involving post positions, once known, also must be factored in.

#### PROBABLES:

##### HORSE

Conquest Titan  
Coup de Grace  
Embellishing Bob  
Financial Mogul  
Havana  
In Trouble  
Kobe's Back  
Little Daddy  
Spot  
Tonito M.  
Top Fortitude

##### TRAINER

Mark Casse  
Chad Brown  
Steve Margolis  
Rick Violette  
Todd Pletcher  
Anthony Dutrow  
John Sadler  
Carlo Vaccarella  
Nick Zito  
Jerry Hollendorfer  
Kory Owens

#### POSSIBLE:

Social Inclusion

Manuel Azpurna