

OSCAR'S 2008 PREAKNESSS BROWN SHEET

PONY EXPRESS, SECOND STOP BALTIMORE!



Mail delivery was slow in 1860. (Not that mine is particularly fast today!) The mail was delivered by stage from St. Joseph Missouri to Sacramento California and that usually took 3-4 weeks. Enter the Pony Express. The Pony Express broke its maiden on April 3, 1860, and ran for 18 months before being retired to stud in October 1861, where it eventually sired the U. S. Postal Service.

The fastest run during that time occurred in March 1861 when President Lincoln's inaugural address was carried in a record breaking 7 days and 17 hours. History didn't record the horse's name, but he earned a Beyer figure of 108 and a Ragozin number of 0! (Ok folks, before you jump all over me with a history lesson, I'm taking some poetic license here. The Pony Express was actually a relay with horses being changed about every 10-15 miles and riders being changed every 75 -100 miles.)

Jumping ahead exactly 148 years and one month to the day, on May 3, 2008, Big Brown, the modern day Pony Express delivered big time, earning a Beyer of 109 and a Ragozin number of negative 3/4. (That one is true – no need for any poetic license taken there!)

The Pony Express horses had to run in all kinds of weather, on all kinds of terrain (well ok they didn't run on synthetics), and had to be able to outrun Indians and outlaws. On Saturday, Big Brown is being asked to make another special run, possibly in bad weather. He will have a target on his back just as surely as the Pony Express horses did in their day as he tries to outrun his pursuers.

Can he possibly be caught? Well the Pony Express ran for 18 months and used approximately 400 horses. Only one was caught by the Indians. So I guess it is possible that someone could catch Big Brown. However, on paper he has about as much chance of losing this race as Zippy Chippy has of coming out of retirement to win the BC Classic this fall!

I am not going to waste your time with 20 pages of analysis, and then go on to predict that the winner will be Big Brown (who will pay \$2.20, or maybe even \$2.10). Let's get that over with now:

OSCAR PROJECTS THAT BIG BROWN HAS A 97% CHANCE OF WINNING!

WARNING! If Big Brown finishes 4th or worse, DO NOT under any circumstances walk or drive beneath any bridges for at least 24 hours. You will run a significant risk of being seriously injured by the falling bodies of the bridge jumpers!

So why am I bothering to do a Brown Sheet if the winner is so obvious? Because even with Big Brown as a sure winner at 1-20, the trifectas and superfectas should pay quite well. Once you get by Big Brown this race is absolutely wide open.

On the following pages I will discuss the four horses that I feel have the best chance to round out the trifecta underneath Big Brown.

On the last page I will tell you how to use them along with Big Brown to make the Preakness a **profitable proposition**. (Hey that's not a bad name for a horse!)

ICABAD CRANE -- how appropriate - he won the Tesio by a head.

Beware the local horse...



His owners obviously took some poetic license with the spelling of his name. It brings back memories of my youth and the pedagogue character Ichabod Crane in one of my favorite stories – the Legend of Sleepy Hollow by Washington Irving. I still remember the nightmares that short story gave me!

Speaking of nightmares, I had one last night, but it had to do with another literary character – Oliver's Twist. Now why the Dickens would I have a nightmare about Oliver's Twist? Well the fact is that this was no made up story – I was actually reliving a real incident that took place thirteen years ago. It was the 1995 Preakness and I had a lot of confidence in my exacta of Timber Country and Thunder Gulch. I bet the farm (well ok in those days my farm consisted of a small vegetable garden) on that exacta. As

they came to the 16th pole Timber Country had the lead, followed by Thunder Gulch. The only horse gaining on them was the local horse, Oliver's Twist who was coming up the rail.

Was I worried? No way! This little local nobody at 25-1 trying to run down the Derby winner Thunder Gulch, the same horse who had refused to be passed as he raced to victories in his Derby preps – are you kidding me? I reached for my car keys, preparing to head to the bank once the result was official. I would be heading to the bank all right – to take OUT money! That's when I awoke in a cold sweat...with the car keys in my hand! Now how did that happen?

To this day I do not know how Oliver's Twist could possibly have beaten Thunder Gulch for the place spot! Wait a minute. Yes I do. He was the local horse! Although he had run well in his prep race at Pimlico, I tossed him as not being in the same zip code as Timber Country and Thunder Gulch.

Seven years later in 2002 it was déjà vu all over again when the local horse Magic Weisner finished second at 45-1 behind War Emblem. In 2005 it took a superhuman effort by Afleet Alex to run down Scappy T after miraculously averting a disaster at the head of the stretch. Once again the local horse finished second at a price.

Get the picture now? Oliver's Twist, Magic Weisner, and Scappy T all came out of the Tesio to run second in the Preakness at long odds, and Deputed Testamony came out of the Tesio to win the Preakness in a real shocker in 1983.

Icabad Crane just won the Tesio, and while it seems impossible for him (or anyone else in this field for that matter) to be able to defeat Big Brown, he can finish second or third, providing good value to an exacta or trifecta despite the winner being what I expect will be the lowest priced favorite in Preakness history. Mint Lane, the horse he defeated in the Tesio came back to run a solid second in the Peter Pan to Casino Drive, the only three year-old that I've seen so far with the potential to defeat Big Brown.

I am concerned about his lack of tactical speed; however, the only time that he tried to stay close to the leaders (Rushaway Stakes), it compromised his closing kick. I do not believe that Rose will repeat that tactic. He is the only horse to have had a race over the track and that was a win. Despite that he will be close to 20-1. That's good enough for me to take a shot with him. Maybe this time I can go to the bank to deposit!

GAYEGO



he breaks alertly, doesn't get bumped, and can assume his favored position stalking a moderate pace, he has a very good chance to hit the board. Because he is the only horse other than Big Brown to come out of the Derby where he definitely had excuses, he should be a clear second choice at around 8-1. That's 8-1 to win. He will be less than half of that to finish second, and consequently with him finishing second, it would result in a very modest trifecta payoff. However, if he finishes 3rd and a 20-1 or 30-1 finishes second, the trifecta could have some value. It's worth taking a chance.

Leaving from post 19 in the Derby, Gayego looked like a pinball as he was buffeted around from the left (Adriano) and right (Big Brown) as they passed the stands for the first time. Taken completely out of his game, he never recovered, racing wide and rank before fading to finish 17th. This was his only poor effort. He had never failed to hit the exacta, including a win on dirt in the Arkansas Derby. Although he is coming back on only two weeks rest, the Derby was pretty much just a workout for him. On the negative side he is really not bred to go much beyond 1 1/8 miles and with his home base at Hollywood Park, he has logged more frequent flyer miles in the last five weeks than Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton combined!

He has drawn another bad post (12) for the Preakness, but if he breaks alertly, doesn't get bumped, and can assume his favored position stalking a moderate pace, he has a very good chance to hit the board. Because he is the only horse other than Big Brown to come out of the Derby where he definitely had excuses, he should be a clear second choice at around 8-1. That's 8-1 to win. He will be less than half of that to finish second, and consequently with him finishing second, it would result in a very modest trifecta payoff. However, if he finishes 3rd and a 20-1 or 30-1 finishes second, the trifecta could have some value. It's worth taking a chance.

YANKEE BRAVO



He certainly is versatile, having raced on turf, dirt, cushion track and Tapeta. While he seems to be at his best on the turf or a synthetic surface, his one dirt try was not all that terrible. He finished 3rd in the Louisiana Derby on a day when Pyro was unbeatable. What impressed me the most was his SA Derby where he made a huge inside move around the far turn and looked poised to spring the upset. Unfortunately he failed to sustain it, but did finish evenly for third as Colonel John exploded past him. I expect an improved performance from him in the Preakness. He has the best closing kick in the field, but is devoid of tactical speed. With the potential for a slow to moderate pace his late running style could be a case of too little, too late.

Hopefully it will be enough to get him past some tired horses and into the trifecta. If you see a half run in :46 and change start counting your money.

HEY BYRN



Hey Byrn is the only horse in the field (and this includes Big Brown), to have had a race at the Preakness distance. Not only did he race at 1 3/16 miles, he won by over 2 lengths when he defeated six horses of modest ability in the Holy Bull on April 12. He is also the only other horse besides Gayego to have faced Big Brown who defeated him by 15 lengths in the Florida Derby. (Hey I'm not saying that he can beat Big Brown, I'm only trying to identify horses who I think can hit the board behind him!) He has won 4 times, and only Big Brown and Giant Moon have that on their resumes. In fact five horses have only beaten maidens!

On the negative side, he will break from the far outside where he will have to use his good tactical speed (at what cost?) to establish position. Also he will probably be 3 or 4 wide on the first turn and possibly even on the second. His

win in the Holy Bull was accomplished from post 2 where he was able to save ground. I would have said that his other negative factor was his breeding; however, he has already proven that he can win at this distance.

HOW TO MAKE MONEY ON THE PREAKNESS

Play two \$1trifectas. Each will cost \$44:

1. **BIG BROWN with
ICABAD CRANE – GAYEGO – YANKEE BRAVO – HEY BYRN with
ALL**

2. **BIG BROWN with
ALL with
ICABAD CRANE – GAYEGO – YANKEE BRAVO – HEY BYRN**

