



**Iron Maidens Thoroughbreds
The Fairgrounds, Race 10
Louisiana Derby (G-2)
1 1/8 Miles, 3 YO
March 26, 2011**



Showing just how wide open the Derby picture is at this point, the Louisiana Derby drew a full field of twelve contenders. Mucho Macho Man and Wilkenson, the conquerors of the Risen Star (G-2) and Southwest Stakes square off and runners-up from both races come back for more. The usual assortment of allowance winners and fresh of the win maidens rounds out the rest of the field.

The authoritative winner of the Risen Star Stakes in his second off of a layoff, [MUCHO MACHO MAN](#) (Macho Uno – Ponche De Leona, by Ponche) is the morning line favorite. He may find 1 1/8 miles at the top of his distance range. His sire has a few winners at 1 1/8 miles, but produces mostly miler types. Mucho Macho Man's dam and damsire are stakes winning sprinters. Mucho Macho Man will try to take them all the way on the lead and the Ritvo barn has a strong 20% with graded stakes winners.

Facing off against Mucho Macho Man is [WILKINSON](#) (Lemon Drop Kid – Tasha's Delight, by Afternoon Deelites). He has a stamina over speed pedigree and this distance should be within his scope. Wilkinson's dam is a stakes placed half sister to Grade 2 winner Miss Pickums. Wilkinson came up the rail to grab the LeComte Stakes by a determined head over Pants On Fire, getting a heady ride from Garret Gomez who returns to the saddle for the Louisiana Derby.

Wilkinson's stablemate, the well regarded [MACHEN](#) (Distorted Humor – Ready's Gal, by More Than Ready) was a disappointing fourth in his first graded stakes try. Distance shouldn't be a problem for this well-bred colt. His sire is becoming the now horse, with progeny winning left and right, while Machen's dam is a multiple graded stakes winner who was at her best between 1 1/16 and 1 1/8 miles. Machen has been keeping pace with older horses in the mornings and his works are strong.

The stronger half of the Breen entry, [PANTS ON FIRE](#) (Jump Start – Cabo De Noche, by Cape Town) has a stamina over speed pedigree. His sire Jump Start, a well bred son of A.P. Indy, produced Grade 2 winners Rail Trip and Sir Whimsey. His offspring are generally best at a mile and farther. Cape Town generally gets sprinters, but his speed is tempered by the stamina influence of Pants On Fire's second damsire Bates Motel. Pants On Fire's dam is a half sister to stakes winning sprinters Hatfield and Key Hunter. After leading by all but one step of the way in the Southwest Stakes, Pants On Fire showed nothing in the Risen Star Stakes. He's had only one work in the last month, but it was a strong four furlong effort. He gets a jockey change to Anna Napravnik as his regular rider Joe Bravo sticks with the lightly raced Nacho Business.

[NACHO BUSINESS](#) (Rahy – Palaestra, by Atticus) has a stamina-oriented pedigree. His sire won up to a mile, but he receives stamina influences from his sire Blushing Groom and damsire Halo. Nacho Business' stakes placed dam is a half sister to the Personal Ensign (G-1) heroine, Pompeii. Nacho Business takes on stakes company after finishing second by ½ a length to the well regarded Arch Traveler. He's been breezing well, but the Breen barn has only 5% graded stakes winners this year.

Popping up in the Louisiana Derby after scratching out of the Rebel Stakes, [ELITE ALEX](#) (Afleet Alex – Catch The Moment, by Unbridled) is by a Champion Classic winner out of a mare by a Champion Classic winner, you can't get much better than that. His immediate distaff family has little blacktype, but the third dam was stakes placed and her daughters produced some nice winners, included recent Santa Ynez winner California

Nectar. Elite Alex had excuses in his last two contests, but still finished in the money. The added distance should be to his liking and he should receive a good stalking trip under Calvin Borel.

After a steady diet of Polytrack and yielding turf, [MAVERICKING](#) (Empire Maker – Ioya Two, by Lord At War) finally gets to try two turns over the dirt. He has similar breeding to Kentucky Derby runner-up Pioneer of The Nile and Personal Ensign (G-1) heroine Icon Project, as all three are by Empire Maker out of Lord At War mares. Mavericking is a half brother to the multiple stakes winner Amazing Results. Their dam won the Modesty Handicap at 1 3/16 miles during her 32 race career and she's a half sister to Illinois Horse Of The Year Mystery Giver, who made a career of winning the Fairgrounds Breeders' Cup Handicap three years straight. Mavericking has been firing off works like a machine gun, but the Pessin barn is 0 for 5 with graded stakes.

[POPULIST POLITICS](#) (Don't Get Mad – Cedar Summer, by Souvenir Copy) takes on open company after dropping a head decision in a state-bred stakes race at 1 1/6 miles over the turf. He has a modest but hard running distaff family. Populist Politics takes after his dam. She placed in two listed stakes, but is the only blacktype in two generations. The Amoss barn is 30% with horses switching from turf to dirt. Populist Politics is also entered in the Crescent City Derby, and would be better suited to that venue.

The field's lightly raced but highly regarded entry is the Claiborne Farm bred [LEFT](#) (arch – Leave, by Pulpit). He has a stamina oriented pedigree. Left's distaff family is filled with stakes quality runners. His dam was unplaced in her only start and is a full sister to the precocious Laity, winner of the Cradle and John Battaglia Memorial. Her half sister Trip is a multiple G-3 winner and produced another Cradle winner in Passport. Another stakes winning half sister, Joke, produced the multiple Grade 1 hero Zensational. Left is undefeated in two starts and gets an ambitious class test in the Louisiana Derby.

Two Asmussen trainees get tossed into the deep end here. [NEHRO](#) (Mineshaft – The Administrator, by Afleet) receives stamina from both his sire and distaff family. His hardy dam raced 26 times, with four wins, including a listed stakes and placing 11 times. Nehro is a half brother to Discovery Handicap (G-3) hero Saint Marden, plus his half sister Sweet Lips won the Sunshine Millions Distaff. Nehro has strong stamina attributes in his distaff family from second damsire, the long-winded Cyane and Damascus is his third damsire. Typical for his slow maturing pedigree, Nehro won his maiden in his third attempt.

His stable-mate [LE MANS](#) (War Front – Call Your Beau, by Caller ID) has a miler pedigree. He's by the new sire sensation War Front, who has two Kentucky Derby contenders in his first crop. Le Man's damsire was a sprinter, but his second damsire Cougar II was a long-winded router. Le Mans' dam won three of 25 starts and placed seven times. She's a half sister to the Canadian Champion Turf Horse Hasten To Add and the Grade 1 heroine See How She Runs. Le Mans has been whipped by 16 lengths in two maiden races.

After two so-so attempts last fall, [MAJESTIC HARBOR](#) (Rockport Harbor – Champagne Royale, by French Deputy) took some time off to mature and rewarded his connections with a 6 ¼ length win in his first start of the year. Majestic Harbor has a middle distance pedigree. His second-crop sire's progeny win stakes races up to 1 1/16 miles, although many have yet to try longer distances. His damsire French Deputy was a blazing fast miler. Majestic Harbor's dam won four of 11 starts and placed in a listed stakes going 1 1/16 miles. She's a half sister to two stakes placed runners. Majestic Harbor may try to match strides with Mucho Macho Man on the lead.

Last and probably least, [LIONDRIVE](#) (Lion Tamer – Outta The Park, by Grand Slam) was embarrassed by over 19 lengths when he faced Mucho Macho Man in the Risen Star. Liondrive has a speed over stamina pedigree.

His sire was a sprinter and hasn't been a success at stud. Liondrive's dam won twice in five starts and this is a very modest distaff family. On a side note, Liondrive has Inbreeding to the blue hen Tamerett, but he'll need more than that to keep up with this group.

Selections:

How the track is playing: Only three races have been held at 1 1/8 mile distance this meet and all were won by pace pressers. The track is generally fair for races held at 1 1/16 miles although pace pressers have a slight edge. The forecast calls for partly cloudy weather with a 20% chance of rain. The track should be fast.

Only two horses in the race, **NACHO BUSINESS** and **MUCHO MACHO MAN** have experience at 1 1/8 miles. Unlike last week's Rebel Stakes, there is no blazing speedball in the Louisiana Derby. **PANTS ON FIRE** is the only confirmed front runner and he sets moderate fractions. **MUCHO MACHO MAN** will probably sit off of **PANTS ON FIRE** along with **WILKINSON**, with **LET** and **MACHEN** behind them. **ELITE ALEX**, **NEHRO** and **MAVERICKING** will make their runs from the back of the pack.

It's **MUCHO MACHO MAN's** race to loose and he has some of the best speed figures in the group. **ELITE ALEX** should love every bit of the distance but once again, he has an outside post. **WILKINSON** has never finished out of the money and should have a say. **MACHEN** could rebound after being wide in his stakes debut. It's tough to leave him out of the top three, but use him in your tickets. **NACHO BUSINESS** tries stakes company, but can get the distance, he could also take a piece of it. **MAVERICKING** could show the most improvement in this group. He's bred to go two turns over the dirt and is working well. At 20-1 morning line, he could upset the applectart.

#4 MUCHO MACHO MAN – 3rd

#9 ELITE ALEX

#11 WILKINSON

#4 MAVERICKING – longshot pick