



Iron Maidens Thoroughbreds
Kentucky Oaks Analysis
April 30, 2010



This year's Oaks fillies all have one thing in common. Well, ok two things, considering they are all in the same race. They are all remarkably consistent. Most of them have run in the money in every start they've made. There is some speed in the Oaks, but not half as much as in the Derby. Unlike their hot-headed counterparts, all of the pace setting fillies can sit off the lead and win.



Luck - Photo: Anne Eberhardt

This year's Oaks favorite is Blind Luck, who, like her counterpart favorite in the Derby, Lookin At Lucky, raced mainly in California. In her first start over dirt since her maiden win, the long striding chestnut filly gave her standard late run and appears much stronger over the dirt than on synthetic tracks. She's already bested five of the entrants, Tidal Pool, Evening Jewel, Beautician, Crisp and the aforementioned Amen Hallelujah, but was a hard luck third behind Crisp a race after beating that rival. Outside of a poor break or other mishap, the only thing that *Blind* could hamper Blind Luck is a slow to tepid pace up front, but she has an excellent rider who should be able to compensate. The mud should be no problem for her.

Only two of the 14 fillies have experience running 1 1/8 miles, Amen Hallelujah and Joanie's Catch, second and third respectively in the Bonnie Miss Stakes behind Devil May Care, who after her easy win in that race, is headed to the Derby. Amen Hallelujah was clearly second best in the Bonnie Miss and with her sprint oriented pedigree, may find this field a little hard to handle, but she has one of the best mud pedigrees in the field which may move her up.

Joanie's Catch is the filly counterpart to Jackson Bend. Based at Calder during her two year old season, Joanie's Catch ran in the Florida Stallion Stakes races. She has a ton of heart and has been in the money twelve of 18 lifetime starts, mainly in stakes races. Joanie's Catch probably won't be at her best at 1 1/8 miles and she faces the staunchest group of fillies in her career, but she is one tough, determined filly.



Joanie's Catch - Photo Mathea Kelley

One of the pace setting fillies who has shown strong improvement since switching to dirt and has a pedigree to relish the 1 1/8 miles is Champagne D'Oro. The daughter of Medaglia D'Oro has been placed ambitiously throughout her juvenile career, but now appears to be improving. After setting the pace in her last race, she was second by a 1/2 length to Quiet Temper in the Fairgrounds Oaks. Champagne D'Oro's pedigree suggests that she'll be right at home over the mud. Can she be the second daughter of Medaglia D'Oro to win this race in as many years?

Evening Jewel also has an excellent pedigree to enjoy mud. Her sire is known to get mud runners and damsire Giant's Causeway is no slouch either. She's never been tested over a dirt track, but this amazingly consistent filly has been in the money in all but one of her eight starts. Her single out of the money finish was in her debut. She's another filly that doesn't like to be too far off the lead and she should move forward in her second start off a brief freshening.



Crisp - Photo: Benoit

A few months ago, everyone was talking about the bizarre race Crisp ran while breaking her maiden. She bolted on the turn but still got up to win by ½ a length. Another distinction is that Crisp is the only filly in the race to have beaten Blind Luck since December '09. Granted, Blind Luck was compromised that day, but the win still speaks to the skill of Crisp. Like Evening Jewel, Crisp will be making her dirt debut, but she's had two decent works over the Churchill surface. Her pedigree indicates that the off track shouldn't be a factor.

Quiet Temper, yet another front runner, is practically two for two since stretching out to 1 1/16 miles. She was on the wrong end of a nose bob in the Silverbulletday Stakes, missing out to Jody Slew, but a month later Quiet Temper changed her running style, coming from off the pace to win the Fairgrounds Oaks. This is an improving filly with a strong distance and mud pedigree.

Tidal Pool has really come into her own in her last two starts. In her three year old debut, the daughter of Yankee Gentleman found trouble but still finished third. Like Quiet Temper, Tidal Pool has changed her running style. She prefers to be up front with the action and getting a confidence booster, trounced a group of allowance fillies by eight lengths. Jumping into the Fantasy Stakes, she was no match for Blind Luck, and finished second, but her speed figures have improved noticeably. Tidal Pool has a chance to make history. Her jockey Calvin Borel will attempt to win the Oaks two years running. No jockey has won back to back Oaks since the legendary Eddie Arcaro, who rode to victory three straight years from 1951-1953. Tidal Pool's trainer Wayne Lukas has won the Oaks a record four times, but hasn't stood in the winner's circle since 1990. Given the forecast for potential flash flooding in the area, Tidal Pool is a great hunch play!



Tidal Pool Photo: Anne Eberhardt

It's Tea Time enters the Oaks with only three starts under her girth. The improving filly was a rapidly gaining second to Evening Jewel in the Ashland Oaks. It's Tea Time has never run over the dirt and her pedigree is more suited towards turf. Her few works over the dirt a few months back were poor to fair.



Beautician - Photo: Ann Eberhardt

Beautician won her debut over the Churchill surface almost a year ago. The pretty gray filly is well traveled, having run at six different tracks during her career. She's much better over dirt and her last race should be tossed. She may be over looked due to her race record over synthetics, but her dirt speed figures fit right in with this group of fillies.

Bella Diamante has a strong sprint pedigree. She managed to find trouble in her last four starts against lesser, but still appears over matched here. Ailalea won the Tempted Stakes (G-3) at Aqueduct last November, but has been off the board in two starts this year. Her pedigree suggests that a start over the lawn may be in her future.

Jody Slew threw in a clunker last time out in the Fairgrounds Oaks. Her works since that race have been tepid and her speed figures are going in the wrong direction.

Age of Humor has been in the money in all lifetime starts, but in her initial meeting with quality fillies, she finished a very distant third, walloped ten lengths in the Silverbulletday. (Selections next page).

Selections:

Blind Luck

Quiet Temper

Evening Jewel

Beautician

Joanie's Catch - longshot