



BELMONT STAKES BETTING GUIDE

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HOW TO READ A PAST PERFORMANCE

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12 Cathryn Sophia (E/P 5)
Own: Cash Is King Lic
 Green, Multi-colored Crown, Green Shamrocks On White
CASTELLANO JAVIER (0 0-0-0 0%)

2016 494 22% 54% -0.54
 +JKYw/EP types 591 26% 57% -0.15
 +JKYw/Trn L60 2 50% 100% +10.60
 +JKYw/ Routes 107 22% 54% -0.28

2016 69 33% 57% +0.92
 Graded Stakes 28 7% 36% -1.84
 +Btn favorite 74 30% 54% +0.13
 +Routes 482 18% 43% -0.05

2016 214 14% 45% -0.40
 +JKYw/S types 114 11% 44% -0.20
 +JKYw/ Routes 107 22% 54% -0.28

7 B. f. 3 FTMSEP 2014 \$30k
Sire: Street Boss (Street Cry (IRE)) \$12,500
Dam: Sheave (Mineshaft)
Brdr: Robert T Manfuso (MD)
Trnr: Servis John C (0 0-0-0 0%)

8 Prime Power: 147.1 (1st)

5 Sire Stats: AWD 6.7
6 Dam's Sire: AWD 7.3
4 Dam's Stats: Unraced
SoldAt: FTMSEP 2014

12 Life: 5 4- 0- 1
2016 3 2- 0- 1
2015 2 2- 0- 0
CD 0 0- 0- 0

11 L 121

10 Fst (109)
99 Off (109)
108 Dis (108)
110 Trf (110)
AW

15 Mud 241MudSts
15 Mud 820MudSts
100% 2yo 1str
SireAvg: \$53.3k

1.57spi
2.23spi
1w 1sw 18.02dpi
StudFee: \$15,000

13 Land Over Sea (S 1)
Own: Reddam Racing Llc
 White, Purple Belt, White Band On Purple Sleeves, Purple
GUTIERREZ MARIO (0 0-0-0 0%)

2016 228 19% 45% -0.13
 +Shpper 135 20% 39% 0.25

2016 135 20% 39% 0.25

19 Ch. f. 3 OBSAPR 2015 \$130k
Sire: Bellamy Road (Concerto) \$7,500
Dam: Belle Watling (Pulpit)
Brdr: Jack Swain III (KY)
Trnr: O'Neill Doug F (0 0-0-0 0%)

Prime Power: 139.7 (4th)

8 Life: 8 2- 4- 1
2016 3 1- 2- 0
2015 5 1- 2- 1
CD 0 0- 0- 0

L 121

97 Fst (107)
93 Off (106)
97 Dis (107)
108 Trf (108)
AW

20% Mud 492MudSts
17% Mud 1422MudSts
1.22spi
2.26spi

★ Finished 3rd in last race ★ Best Dirt Speed is fastest among today's starters
 ★ Hot Jockey in last 7 days (13 4-5-1)

● Failed as favorite in last race ● Poor 'Graded Stakes' trainer record: 7% wins 28 sts

DATE TRK	DIST	RR	RACETYPE	BCR	E1	E2	LP	1c	2c	SPD	PP	ST	1C	2C	STR	FIN	JOCKEY	ODDS	Top Finishers	Comment
09Apr16Kee6	1 ^{1/8} ft	:24	:47	1:11	1:43	2	3	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	CastellanoJJ ¹²¹	L *0.50	WpNmRkRclsVIntnRk CtrnSp ²	Bold bid 4w; hung 5
27Feb16GP5	1m ft	:24	:47	1:11	1:36	3	3	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	3 ^{1/2}	CastellanoJJ ¹²²	Lf *0.20	CthrynSph ⁷ LwsBy ³ Drst ¹³	Pressed3w;bid1/4;handy 6
30Jan16GP3	7f ft	:22	:45	1:09	1:22	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	RosarioJ ¹²⁰	Lf *0.10	CthrynSph ⁵ IslndSnt ⁴ BalDiva ³	Off step slow;in hand 6
05Dec15Lrl5	7f ft	:23	:46	1:11	1:23	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	RosadoRJ ¹¹⁹	Lf *0.10	CthrynSph ¹⁶ Prgnss ⁵ ThndrngSk ¹	On left lead; handy 6
30Oct15Pxx5	6f ft	:22	:46	:58	1:11	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	RosadoRJ ¹²²	L *2.40	CtrnSp ¹² AWnndSn ⁵ Wrlbrsfl ²	Sharp; handy fashion 9

● 23Apr Kee 5f ft :59³ B 1/36 03Apr Kee 4f ft :48¹ B 5/37 26Mar Pmm 6f ft 1:13 B 1/1 13Mar Pmm 4f ft :48² B 2/42 ● 20Feb Pmm 4f ft :48 B 1/66 24Jan Pmm 4f ft :50² B 89/103
 ● 16Jan Pmm 5f ft :59³ B 1/13 08Jan Pmm 5f ft 1:00³ B 2/23 ● 31Dec15 Pmm 4f ft :48 B 1/76 ● 20Dec15 Pmm 4f ft :48¹ B 1/37 ● 25Nov15 Pxx 5f ft 1:00³ B 1/14 ● 16Nov15 Pxx 5f ft :59³ B 1/13

- 1 BRIS Pace and Speed Pars
- 2 Jockey Stats
- 3 Trainer Stats
- 4 Dam Stats
- 5 Sire Stats
- 6 Sales Stats
- 7 Horse's Pedigree, Sales & Breeding Information
- 8 BRIS Prime Power Rating
- 9 Run Style Stats
- 10 BRIS Pedigree Rating
- 11 Medication, Equipment, and Weight the Horse Will Carry
- 12 Horse's Lifetime Start Information
- 13 Owner & Jockey Silks
- 14 Positive and Negative Comments
- 15 Date of Race, Track, and Race Number
- 16 Surface, Distance, and Track Conditions
- 17 Fractional Times of Leader, Final Time, and Age Designation
- 18 BRIS Race Rating and Class Rating
- 19 Race Type
- 20 BRIS Pace and Speed Ratings
- 21 Post Position, Placement Throughout Race, and Finish
- 22 Jockey and Weight
- 23 Medication, Equipment, and Odds
- 24 Top Finishers, Comment, and Number of Starters
- 25 Workouts
- 26 BRIS Race Shapes



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BELMONT STAKES SCHEDULE

Race	Grade	Purse	Restrictions	Surface	Distance
Belmont Stakes	I	\$1,000,000	3YO	Dirt	1 1/8
Jaipur Stakes	I	\$250,000	4&UP	Turf	6 Furlongs
Longines Acorn Stakes	I	\$300,000	F3YO	Dirt	1 Mile
Pennine Ridge	II	\$150,000	3YO	Turf	1 Mile
Wonder Again	III	\$150,000	F3YO	Turf	1 Mile
Woody Stephens	I	\$250,000	3YO	Dirt	7 Furlongs



AT A GLANCE

A look at the current Belmont Park meet: June 3 through June 14, 2020.

AVG. WINNING ODDS: 6.57 - 1

FAVORITE WIN%: 29% **FAVORITE ITM%:** 70%

EXOTICS	PAYOFF
Quinella	108.98
Exacta	149.35
Daily Double	150.78
Trifecta	1,048.92
Pick 3	1,543.75
Superfecta	8,489.93
Pick 4	23,552.16
Pick 5	36,160.32
Pick 6 Jackpot	45,540.67
Grand Slam	310.59



TRACK BIAS MEET (06/03 - 06/14)

Distance	# Race	% Wire	Best Style	Best Posts
6.0fDirt	20	45%	E	Rail/Ins
6.5fDirt	11	36%	E	Rail
1 MileDirt	3	0%	S	Outside
1 1/16mDirt	9	44%	E	Outside
InTf Sprint	10	10%	P	Outside
Turf Sprint	8	25%	S	Rail/Ins
InTf Routes	10	30%	P	Rail
Turf Routes	16	31%	E	Inside

TRACK BIAS WEEK (06/08 - 06/14)

Distance	# Race	% Wire	Best Style	Best Posts
6.0fDirt	10	40%	P	Middle
7.0fDirt	6	0%	E/P	Middle
1 MileDirt	2	50%	E/P	Inside
1 1/16mDirt	7	29%	E	Middle
InTf Sprint	4	0%	P	Middle
Turf Sprint	3	0%	E/P	Mid/Out
InTf Routes	5	20%	E/P	Outside
Turf Routes	5	0%	P	Rail/Ins

WHO'S HOT, WHO'S NOT

HOT TRAINERS	Starts	Wins	Place	Show	Avg. Odds	Winning Favorites	'19-'20 Win %
Cox Brad H.	9	5	1	1	4.03	1	25%

COLD TRAINERS	Starts	Wins	Place	Show	Avg. Odds	Beaten Favorites	'19-'20 Win %
Sciacca Gary	21	0	1	0	35.60	1	9%
Rice Linda	17	0	4	1	9.73	1	21%
Cannizzo David A.	11	0	0	0	37.62	0	10%
Ryerson James T.	10	0	0	0	32.89	0	10%
Stidham Michael	10	0	3	0	8.99	1	18%

COLD JOCKEYS	Starts	Wins	Place	Show	Avg. Odds	Beaten Favorites	'19-'20 Win %
Vargas, Jr. Jorge A.	15	0	1	3	20.72	2	15%
Gutierrez Reyly	12	0	1	0	44.07	0	12%
Harkie Heman K.	11	0	0	3	81.37	0	4%

BELMONT STAKES CONTENDERS



DR POST

Owner: St. Elias Stable
Breeder: Cloyce C. Clark
Trainer: Todd Pletcher
Jockey: Irad Ortiz
Sire: Quality Road
Dam: Mary Delaney
Color: Dark bay/brown

Lifetime: 3-2-0-0 **Total Earnings:** \$76,635
Top Speed Rating: (104) when breaking maiden at Gulfstream Park.



Though Dr Post could only finish fourth behind future stakes winners Green Light Go and Another Miracle in his debut at Belmont last summer, this \$400,000 yearling purchase snowed significant improvement at Gulfstream during the spring, breaking his maiden with a powerful 104 Brisnet Speed rating before stretching out around two turns and rallying to victory in the 1 1/16-mile Unbridled S. Trainer Todd Pletcher has won the Belmont Stakes three times and is off to a hot start at the Belmont meet, suggesting Dr Post—an improving mid-pack closer—can threaten for a spot on the board in the first leg of the Triple Crown.



FARMINGTON ROAD

Owner: Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners, Chrysalis Stables, and Robert V. LaPenta
Breeder: Chrysalis Stables
Trainer: Todd Pletcher
Jockey: Javier Castellano
Sire: Quality Road
Dam: Silver La Belle
Color: Bay

Lifetime: 6-2-1-0 **Total Earnings:** \$110,000
Top Speed Rating: (96) when finishing second in the Oaklawn S.



Farmington Road doesn't have much tactical speed to speak of, but the son of Quality Road does possess a strong stretch kick that has allowed him to hit the board in three rich stakes races leading up to the Belmont Stakes. Farmington Road came closest to victory when finishing second by half a length in the 1 1/8-mile Oaklawn S. and struggled a bit when beaten seven lengths in the second division of the Arkansas Derby (G1), but if a hot pace unfolds at Belmont Park, expect this Todd Pletcher-trained youngster to be gaining ground down the lane.



FORE LEFT

Owner: Reddam Racing
Breeder: Machmer Hall
Trainer: Doug O'Neill
Jockey: Jose Ortiz
Sire: Twirling Candy
Dam: Simply Sunny
Color: Bay

Lifetime: 9-4-0-2 **Total Earnings:** \$355,902
Top Speed Rating: (90) when finishing third in the Golden Nugget S.



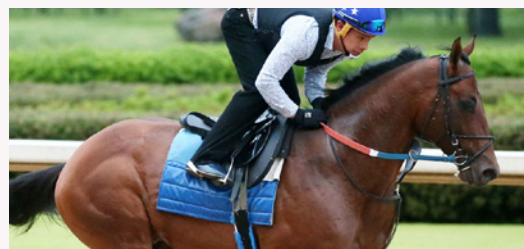
A two-time stakes winner sprinting in North America, Fore Left elevated his game to a new level when racing in Dubai this winter, employing front-running tactics to win the 1,600-meter UAE Two Thousand Guineas (G3) in comfortable fashion. You can argue Fore Left wasn't facing the stiffest competition abroad, but the son of Twirling Candy has been training sharply in preparation for his first start since February and figures to be a pace factor at the very least.



JUNGLE RUNNER

Owner: Calumet Farm
Breeder: Calumet Farm
Trainer: Steve Asmussen
Jockey: Reylu Gutierrez
Sire: Candy Ride
Dam: Minx
Color: Bay

Lifetime: 8-2-0-0 **Total Earnings:** \$110,415
Top Speed Rating: (79) when winning the Clever Trevor S.



As a son of Candy Ride out of a mare by Tapit, the sire of three Belmont Stakes winners, Jungle Runner has the pedigree to handle classic distances. But though this Calumet Farm homebred won Remington Park's Clever Trevor S. as a juvenile, he's been beaten a minimum of 14 lengths in four subsequent starts against tougher company. With a career-best Brisnet Speed rating of just 79, Jungle Runner will need a big step forward to factor in the Belmont Stakes.

BELMONT STAKES CONTENDERS



MAX PLAYER

Owner: George E. Hall
Breeder: K & G Stables
Trainer: Linda Rice
Jockey: Joel Rosario
Sire: Honor Code
Dam: Fools in Love
Color: Dark bay/brown

Lifetime: 3-2-1-0 **Total Earnings:** \$173,500
Top Speed Rating: (95) when prevailing in the Withers (G3).



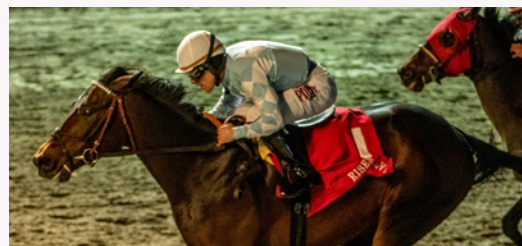
Unlike many of his Belmont Stakes rivals, Max Player is already proven over 1 1/8 miles, having overcome a wide trip to win the Withers (G3) at Aqueduct by a convincing 3 1/4 lengths. But this son of champion Honor Code hasn't run since Feb. 1 and showed a disdain for kickback in the Withers, so a clean trip racing outside of runners may be necessary for Max Player to show his best.



MODERNIST

Owner: Pam and Martin Wygod
Breeder: Wygod Family
Trainer: Bill Mott
Jockey: Junior Alvarado
Sire: Uncle Mo
Dam: Sybmolic Gesture
Color: Dark bay/brown

Lifetime: 5-2-0-2 **Total Earnings:** \$388,800
Top Speed Rating: (93) when finishing third in the Louisiana Derby (G2).



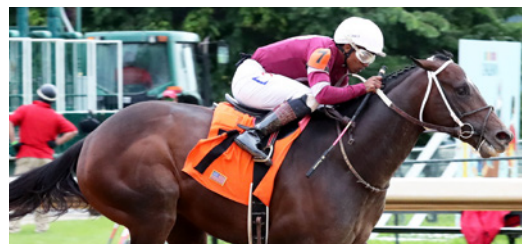
A relentless, grinding style is Modernist's forte, and the son of popular sire Uncle Mo has put his resilience to good use, winning the second division of the 1 1/8-mile Risen Star (G2) before fighting through a wide trip to finish third in the 1 3/16-mile Louisiana Derby (G2). Trainer Bill Mott saddled 2010 Belmont Stakes champion Drosselmeyer and sends Modernist to post off a series of quick workouts, including a bullet 5 furlongs in :59 1/5 on Sunday at Belmont. Even a small step forward could place Modernist in contention at a fair price.



PNEUMATIC

Owner: Winchell Thoroughbreds
Breeder: Winchell Thoroughbreds
Trainer: Steve Asmussen
Jockey: Ricardo Santana
Sire: Uncle Mo
Dam: Teardrop
Color: Dark bay/brown

Lifetime: 6-4-1-1 **Total Earnings:** \$101,850
Top Speed Rating: (95) when winning allowance race at Oaklawn Park.



Winchell Thoroughbreds homebred has kept good company during his brief career, beating the next-out winners Skol Factor and Liam's Pride in his debut sprinting before stretching out to a mile and handing stakes winner Captain Bombastic a 2 1/2-length defeat in an Oaklawn Park allowance race. Most recently, Pneumatic gave Road to the Kentucky Derby veterans Maxfield and Ny Traffic quite a tussle in the 1 1/16-mile Matt Winn (G3), finishing third by less than two lengths. The question now is whether Pneumatic can handle another sixteenth of a mile while testing the waters against Grade 1 competition.



SOLE VOLANTE

Owner: Reeves Thoroughbred Racing and Andie Biancone
Breeder: Flaxman Holdings
Trainer: Patrick Biancone
Jockey: Luca Panici
Sire: Karakontie
Dam: Light Bow
Color: Bay

Lifetime: 6-4-1-1 **Total Earnings:** \$226,800
Top Speed Rating: (102) when rallying to victory in the Sam F. Davis (G3).



Powerful stretch runner is bred for turf but has excelled since transitioning to dirt, sandwiching victories in a Gulfstream Park allowance race and the Sam F. Davis (G3) around a deceptively strong runner-up effort in the Tampa Bay Derby (G2). He's already proven effective in one-turn routes similar to the Belmont, and with a bevy of triple-digit Brisnet Speed and Late Pace ratings to his credit, Sole Volante ranks among the fastest runners in the Belmont Stakes field. He looms as the main threat from off the pace.

BELMONT STAKES CONTENDERS



TAP IT TO WIN

Owner: Live Oak Plantation
Breeder: Live Oak Stud
Trainer: Mark Casse
Jockey: John Velazquez
Sire: Tapit
Dam: Onepointhreekarats
Color: Bay

Lifetime: 6-3-1-0 **Total Earnings:** \$124,672
Top Speed Rating: (101) when crushing an allowance race at Belmont Park.



Improving youngster is 2-for-2 this season and ran a hole in the wind at Belmont Park on June 4, carving out fast fractions in a 1 1/16-mile allowance race before powering clear down the stretch to win by five lengths with a 101 Brisnet Speed rating. Trained by Mark Casse, who won the 2019 Belmont Stakes with Sir Winston, Tap It to Win has the speed to shake loose on an uncontested lead, at which point the stoutly-bred son of Tapit could be tough to catch under Hall of Fame jockey John Velazquez.



TIZ THE LAW

Owner: Sackatoga Stable
Breeder: Twin Creeks Farm
Trainer: Barclay Tagg
Jockey: Manny Franco
Sire: Constitution
Dam: Tizfiz
Color: Bay

Lifetime: 5-4-0-1 **Total Earnings:** \$945,300
Top Speed Rating: (108) when dominating the Holy Bull (G3).



This talented New York-bred enters the Belmont Stakes as a formidable favorite for Sackatoga Stable and Barclay Tagg, the same team behind popular 2003 Kentucky Derby champion Funny Cide. A dominant winner of the Holy Bull (G3) and Florida Derby (G1) during the winter, Tiz the Law showed a clear-cut affinity for Belmont Park when powering to a 4-length score in the Champagne (G1) as a juvenile. This once-beaten New York-bred has done little wrong in five starts and has been training forwardly for his stiffest test to date, setting the stage for another resounding victory.



TWINSPIRES TIPSHEET



152ND RUNNING OF THE BELMONT STAKES

The Belmont Stakes (Gr 1)

1 1/8-Mile Dirt

PURSE \$1,500,000

POST	HORSE	ML ODDS
1	Tap It to Win	6-1
2	Sole Volante	9-2
3	Max Player	15-1
4	Modernist	15-1
5	Farmington Road	15-1
6	Fore Left	30-1
7	Jungle Runner	50-1
8	Tiz the Law	6-5
9	Dr Post	5-1
10	Pneumatic	8-1

TOP PICKS	
1	Tiz the Law
9	Dr Post
2	Sole Volante
4	Modernist
\$20 EXACTA	
8 with 9	
\$1 SUPERFACTA	
8 with 2,4,9 with 2,4,9 with all	

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#1 TAP IT TO WIN has run a pair of huge races to kick off 2020 following two unplaced efforts to close out his juvenile campaign. Tapit sophomore nearly set a track record in a local allowance win on June 4, and he figures to be involved from the start with a cozy draw on the rail. John Velazquez retains the mount.

#2 SOLE VOLANTE has never run a bad one during his six-race career for conditioner Patrick Biancone. Grade 3 victor has a strong turn of foot and comes in with a sharp allowance prep win at Gulfstream Park most recently. Karakonite gelding could be moving best of all inside the final furlong with Luca Panici signed on.

#3 MAX PLAYER was last seen drawing off to a decisive win in the Withers (G3) at Aqueduct for Linda Rice. Son of Honor Code is unbeaten from a pair of outings since adding blinkers, and he will move forward if the pace backs up late. Joel Rosario has the call.

#4 MODERNIST was victorious in a division of the Risen Star (G3) two back, prior to finishing an even fourth in the Louisiana Derby (G2). Mott pupil ran well on debut in his lone local appearance, and the Uncle Mo colt should be as fit as any contender in the field with a trio of efforts at nine furlongs and beyond this campaign.

#5 FARMINGTON ROAD is an interesting late runner from the Pletcher barn. Quality Road colt has put in three races at 1 1/8 miles since February, and he might appreciate the Belmont Park surface on Saturday with expected improvement. Javier Castellano will be in the controls.

#6 FORE LEFT is a wildcard in the cast making his first run since taking a Group 3 test at Meydan in early February. Doug O'Neill trainee is a question mark both at the distance and from a class perspective, but he has trained well on the oval and also entices top pilot Jose Ortiz to ride.

#7 JUNGLE RUNNER has failed to hit the board in four straight stakes tries, being beaten by a combined 76 lengths in the process. Asmussen charge looks overmatched in a fine field.

#8 TIZ THE LAW is the leader of his division and looms large for Barclay Tagg. Standout son of Constitution has been superb in two 2020 romps, and he also is a Grade 1 victor on the surface following his Champagne (G1) triumph as a juvenile. New York-bred will be difficult to upend in the Belmont with something resembling his top performance. Regular rider Manny Franco will be in the stirrups once again.

#9 DR POST overcame prolonged traffic to win going away in the Unbridled S. while making his stakes debut at Gulfstream Park last time out. The lightly raced son of Quality Road has been visually impressive from two starts this campaign, and he has a lot of room for improvement with just three career tries to his credit. Kentucky-bred will be running from off the pace under the guidance of Irad Ortiz, Jr.

#10 PNEUMATIC exits a very good third in the Matt Winn (G3) at Churchill Downs for Asmussen. Talented Winchell homebred is two-for-three lifetime and could be sitting on a big effort in his first attempt at 1 1/8 miles. Dark bay will likely be forwardly placed despite drawing widest of all in the cast.

THE ODDS-ON FAILURES TO START THE TRIPLE CROWN

by Ron Flatter

BELMONT STAKES ODDS AND TRENDS

Tiz The Law is on the verge of making some Triple Crown history even before the gates fly open Saturday for the 152nd running of the Belmont Stakes.

If pari-mutuel bettors follow the trend established in futures markets, the horse with the Belmont field's only two previous Grade 1 victories will be an odds-on favorite. The best price to be found early this week on Tiz The Law was 4-5, the odds set by four bookmakers based in London. At Circa Sports in Las Vegas his backers were asked to lay \$135 to win \$100.

It certainly looks like Tiz The Law will be the first odds-on favorite for the first race of a Triple Crown in 28 years. Including coupled entries (remember those?), this will mark the eighth time it has happened in the last 72 racing seasons.

Of course all those other times were in the Kentucky Derby. Now that the abridged Belmont has temporarily taken on the task of raising the curtain, it inherits a history that has not been kind to those big favorites. Other than Seattle Slew and Spectacular Bid, the other six since 1949 all lost.

These are stories that have a common thread of misinterpreted form, bad luck, familiar names like Day, Valenzuela and Jones, and maybe even an old politician.

ARAZI

The last time it happened was 1992, when Arazi came into the Kentucky Derby. His five-length victory in the Breeders' Cup Juvenile (G1) over the same dirt track six months earlier made him all the rage. When Santa Anita Derby winner A. P. Indy was scratched because of a bone bruise the morning of the race, bettors practically ignored the other 17 horses. Florida Derby winner (G1) Technology was the only other starter in single digits.

Bettors ignored Arazi's travel from his base in France, his whopping one prep race on turf back home, a condensed training schedule, his wide draw and, oh yes, the operation he had right after the Breeders' Cup to clean out chips from both knees.

Despite all that Arazi was 9-10 at post time. About 1 1/2 minutes later, he looked like a boy among men. The undersized, underlaid favorite was overtaken in the stretch by a late charge led by Lil E. Tee, a colt that had been sold for only \$2,000 when he was a yearling. The 16-1 long shot held on for a one-length victory over 29-1 Casual Lies and 33-1 Dance Floor, giving jockey Pat Day his first and only victory in what would be 22 Derby rides.

With jockey Pat Valenzuela taking him wide through the final turn, Arazi was left to finish eighth, the worst result for an



odds-on favorite in Derby history. Afterward trainer François Boutin joked to the media that “you made this horse a super horse, not me. You explain how the super horse got beat.”

EASY GOER

For Day and Valenzuela, it was a reversal of fortune from the odds-on disappointment of 1989. That was when bettors felt confident in the coupled entry of Easy Goer and Awe Inspiring. Both owned by Ogden Phipps and trained by Shug McGaughey, they arrived at Churchill Downs fresh off Grade 1 wins at opposite ends of the east coast. For Easy Goer, it was his third overall Grade 1 triumph, and the champion 2-year-old was the main reason they were bet down to post-time odds of 4-5.

Sure enough, the Phipps entry finished the Derby just a head apart, with Day and Easy Goer getting the benefit of the nod. The only problem was that Valenzuela and Sunday Silence beat them both, carrying 3-1 odds to the winner’s circle, leaving Easy Goer in second and starting one of racing’s all-time great rivalries.

After losing to Sunday Silence in what may have been the greatest duel in Preakness history, Easy Goer went on to win the Belmont before defeating older horses that year in the Whitney (G1), Woodward (G1) and Jockey Club Gold Cup (G1). In one of the finest seasons for a non-champion 3-year-old, Easy Goer validated the faith bettors had in him on Derby day, even if all those tickets turned into trash.

Those odds-on 1980s losses were part of a 20-year run of failures for Derby favorites that began after Spectacular Bid’s win as a 3-5 choice in 1979.

Eventual Triple Crown winner Seattle Slew was a 1-2 winner before that in 1977, part of a decade that yielded three sweeps of the classics.

HONEST PLEASURE

While three favorites won the roses in the ‘70s, there was a glaring exception involving another 2-year-old champion. Honest Pleasure went 4-for-4 in 1975 and 4-for-4 to start 1976, collecting five Grade 1 victories in the east for trainer Leroy Jolley. All the while Bold Forbes was breaking his maiden in Puerto Rico before stumbling into his 3-year-old season with a pair of wintertime losses at Santa Anita. But after recording three straight wins, including the Wood Memorial (G1), he began to earn some positive attention from bettors.

Both were pure speed horses, and they were the clear choices at the Churchill Downs windows in 1976. With his undefeated record, Honest Pleasure went off at odds of 2-5; Bold Forbes was 3-1. Living up to their form, they ran 1-2 the entire race. Even though Honest Pleasure was poised to catch up in the stretch, jockey Ángel Cordero Jr. and Bold Forbes never blinked, finishing a length ahead at the wire.

They both wilted to Elocutionist in the Preakness, and then Honest Pleasure did not run in the 1976 Belmont. Neither did Elocutionist. So it was left to Bold Forbes to absorb most of the wagers and win the race. In doing so he left a mark that Tiz The Law figures to take from him. He was the last odds-on favorite to start a Belmont that did not have a Triple Crown there for the taking on race day.

Before that, your grandfather’s Kentucky Derby provided the two most recent odds-on, Triple Crown-opening failures. The only loss of Native Dancer’s career came in 1953 as a 7-10 favorite (coupled with Social Outcast). He fell victim to a bumpy trip and lost by a head to pacesetter 24-1 long shot Dark Star. And back in 1949, Olympia won five consecutive races before wilting as the 4-5 favorite, finishing sixth to 16-1 Calumet Farm afterthought Ponder. Even legendary trainer Ben Jones was surprised to have gotten the fifth of his record six Derby triumphs.

THE TAKEAWAY LESSON...

If there is a lesson to take from all this – other than there is no such thing as a sure thing – it is that the public can create a self-fulfilling prophecy. Or whatever the opposite of that is.

Perhaps these odds-on losses to start Triple Crowns actually started with a very different campaign by Thomas E. Dewey. He was widely regarded by pollsters and the nation-at-large as a can’t-miss favorite to win the 1948 presidential election. If the late gambler Jimmy “The Greek” Snyder was to be taken at his word, he bet \$10,000 at 17-1 that President Harry S. Truman would deliver the upset victory. And he cashed.

Maybe it would be appropriate, then, if Tiz The Law changes the trend in the uniquely run, nine-furlong, one-turn race that will be this year’s Belmont. Because it will be run in New York. That is after all where Dewey served as governor.

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