



Devil May Care
(the only filly in the Derby)

DERBY MUSINGS: 2010

George Chimento

With the unfortunate injury to Eskendereya, the 2010 Kentucky Derby is a contest to determine the second best three year old in the country. It will be a competitive race, but none of these approach the quality of Eskendereya, who never really stretched his legs and still won his first two this year by 18 lengths. Needing to bail his owner out of a \$37 million bankruptcy was just too much weight for Eskendereya. Luck rarely comes to those who need it.

And speaking of bad luck, the new favorite, *Lookin at Lucky*, drew the worst possible post position at Churchill Downs, # 1 on the dreaded inner rail. Year after year, the inside horse gets blocked by one of the nineteen to his outside, all of them seeking a shorter circumference. In this very long race, there is no choice for the rail horse. *Lookin at Lucky's* jockey must use precious speed earlier than he would like, just to stay out of

trouble (hopefully).

Now, *Lookin at Lucky* could get lucky, but he is at a real disadvantage or, as his trainer Bob Baffert eloquently put it,

Plan A is to break well. Plan B is we're screwed.

So I am into the fourth paragraph of this year's Derby musing, and I have not mentioned who I am betting, but you can guess it will not be *Lookin at Lucky*, even though he may be the best horse on Saturday. Instead, I will continue my favoritism for the fillies.

Devil May Care (isn't she beautiful?) could have romped today in the Kentucky Oaks, a

race limited to young females. Instead, they are putting her in with the boys on Saturday. How come?

This was not just for fun. You do not abandon a sure win in a prestigious race like the Oaks just for fun. With the defection of Eskendereya, they think she can win, because the Derby is no longer a race just for second place.

Who should know better than trainer Todd Pletcher, who is also the trainer of injured Eskendereya, and three other Derby entrants: *Super Saver*, *Mission Impazible*, and *Discretely Mine*. That's 20% of the field running for Pletcher, which is some kind of record for a guy who is 0 for 21 in Derby starts, but seems to win everywhere else and is long overdue for the Roses.

Even better, top jockey John Velasquez, the rider of injured Eskendereya, will not be stuck in the stands and still gets to ride in the Derby. I'm sure his opinion to run her on Saturday counted for a lot.

Now, why pick a girl??

We went through all this last year, of course, when I professed my love for Rachel Alexandra in the Preakness, but it's worth repeating.

Girls run just as fast as boys (when they are horses).

And, if they have enough size to bump back in a tough race like the Derby, they can win. The March 20 race of *Devil May Care* in Florida was very fast, earning her the same speed figure as a colt who won the more prestigious Florida Derby on the same day. And anyone who saw that Florida race knows that *Devil May Care* can improve a LOT.

***Devil May Care* only needs to run a straight line in the stretch**

In Florida, even though she won convincingly, she acted like a kid in the playground, weaving back and forth in the stretch.

To keep her mind on business, she will be wearing blinkers for the first time in the Derby. I infer from her fast workouts --1st out of 26 runners on April 21, and 1st out of nine on April 27 -- that she was wearing blinkers on those mornings. Blinkers help a horse to focus on what's in front, rather than on the peripheral distractions that cause a weave or three in a young horse who is playing around.

**Her odds are 10:1, meaning you get back a \$20 profit for every \$2 you bet.
I will bet at least \$5.**

For those who want others, here they are, with their jockeys, in order of preference:

<p><i>Super Saver</i> (Calvin Borel) <i>Lookin at Lucky</i> (Garret Gomez) <i>Mission Impazible</i> (Rajiv Maragh) <i>Awesome Act</i> (Julien Lejaroux) <i>American Lion</i> (David Flores) <i>Ice Box</i> (Jose Lezcano)</p>

And if you really want the winner and a large profit, discard all of the above. What does Chimento know? That still leaves you thirteen others. **Good luck.**