

Pgm	Horse	Note	My odds	M/L
1	Mo Donegal	After four troubled races, most of them his fault, two of which he won, including a G2 at Aqu, Mo finally got a clean break and ran a monster race under Rosario, with Taiba, the top speed figure in the race. He comes off three G2's, and runs for arguably the best connections in the race: Irad, who has won on him twice, and Todd. He is a stone closer who historically runs about 7th at 2nd call. Overall, he's the second best closer in the race, and closers generally are the way to go in the Derby unless there's a lone speed horse. 6th of 8 at 2nd call in the Wood , he made a big move to win by a neck. Like most of the horses in this race he's never run this far, but he's bred to do it. My only problem with him is his post position; because of his lack of speed, Irad will have to work out a trip. He's certainly capable of doing so, but it is at least a small issue for me. Is he the best horse? Possibly. But only one horse has won the Derby from the one-hole since 1968. So... because of the post and his predilection for causing his own trouble, I think he has about a 12% chance of winning this race, making my odds around 5-1.	5-1	10-1
2	Happy Jack	Started off well, breaking his maiden at Santa Anita at 6f, then was thrown into three graded stakes in a row, his last being the Santa Anita Derby, in which he started slowly and placed 3rd by 12 lengths to Taiba and Messier. O'Neil takes the blinkers off and puts Bejarano up, but I don't think that will make much of a difference. Just don't think he's a contender. 30-1	30-1	30-1
3	Epicenter	Ran his first two races two races at CD; ran poorly in his first; won his second handily and never looked back, except for that glitch in his first graded stakes race, in which he placed 2nd by a head. Has won two G2's in a row, both at the Fair Grounds, for Asmussen and Rosario, and in doing so beat many of the other horses in this race. He likes the front end and has plenty of quickness, but he can also press and close, so Joel should be able to work out of good trip. His last win was just a furlong shorter than today's distance, and with CANDY RIDE and GIANT'S CAUSEWAY in his background there should be no question about his getting it. It's been a long time since anyone won from the three-hole, but Epicenter looks like the kind of horse that could do it. Of course he's never run with this kind of a crowded field, but neither have most of the others. Certainly one of the top contenders. I'd probably put him at 3-1.	3-1	7-2
4	Summer Is Tomorrow	Here's an interesting horse. Has never run in the U.S. or at the distance, and has never won a graded stakes. His breeding is somewhat suspect as far as the distance is concerned, and while I personally know very little about his rider and trainer, I'm aware that Barzalona is a top international rider and has won a Breeder's Cup race here in the states. But I'm somewhat mystified about how this horse got into the Derby at all. I do notice, however, he has led in five of his seven races, winning two of them. Recently he led the Dubai Derby for a long time, till eventually succumbing to Crown Pride. No idea how fast he had to run to lead those races. Do I think he has a chance to win? Not a reasonable one. But – depending on Barzalona – he may be involved with the pace, and even though he may tire quickly, he could be a factor where the other early	18-1	30-1

		speed horses are concerned. I would rate him a non-contender.		
5	Smile Happy	Based on his breeding, it would seem the distance would not be a problem, yet he evidently ran out of gas in his last two races, both at a mile and an eighth. He did win a grade 2 three races back here at CD, however, and has a couple of decent workouts here since his last. He's a decent closer, and has run against Zandon twice, finishing 2nd to his 3rd once, and 2nd to his first in their last race. He also finished 2nd to Epicenter in a G2 at the Fair Grounds two races back, so if you think those horses have a shot you might consider Smile Happy a potential longshot. He has also beaten Classic Causeway and White Abarrio. I like Corey and Kenny a lot, but think their chances in this race are in the neighborhood of 12-1.	12-1	20-1
6	Messier	John Velasquez, one of only five jockeys in this race who have won the Derby, has won it three times, so he knows the drill. He rides Messier, whose last three races have been a G3, a G3, and a G1, in that order. While posting triple digit speed figures, Messier only managed to win one of those races, and was beaten by Tabia in his last. He has two brilliant workouts since that race. He is quick, has won decisively on the front end, but can also close. Since there is some speed in here, you'd have to think Johnny V will put him on the leaders' shoulders and try to take over in the late stages. He has the class, he has the style, he has the rider. Because of Baffert's recent trouble, Tim Yakteen – long an assistant trainer for Baffert, has taken over as Messier's trainer. Certainly a contender. I rate him at 4-1.	4-1	8-1
7	Crown Pride	Another interesting horse, ridden by Lemaire, who has been the leading rider in Japan for the past five years. And today he's on a horse bred in Japan – a horse who won this year's Dubai Derby, running down Summer is Tomorrow. As usual, we can't see fractions on the imports, but we know that at least in the Dubai Derby he came from behind to win. He is third off a layoff, and had a sparkling workout here on the 27th, so appears ready to run. Can he win the Kentucky Derby as well? Of course. Depending on the race flow, the condition of the track, and a dozen other factors, almost any horse in this race could win. Will he win? That's a whole 'nother question. I think he's capable, but I doubt that he will. Too many new pieces to the puzzle. New jockey, new country, new surface. Since he won at Dubai, he's evidently capable of overcoming all those things, but I don't think he'll do it today. 12-1 in my book.	12-1	20-1
8	Charge It	Light on experience, with only three races behind him, Charge It has a lot to prove. His connections are excellent, his history indicates he runs well 2nd off a layoff, and he had a nice work on the 30th. He was beaten in his last, the Florida Derby, by White Abarrio, after hitting the gate at the start. He can apparently run on the front end or press, and has a good deal of quickness, so he can stay in the mix if Saez decides to rate him. He's beautifully bred (a Tapit horse among others), so the distance should be no problem. The only question is does he have the class and speed necessary to win the Derby. Not this one, I think. Love Saez, Pletcher, and Tapit, but I rate this horse's chances at 15-1.	15-1	20-1

9	Tiz the Bomb	Kenny McPeek's other horse (he also has Smile Happy) in the race. Of his eight races, only two were on dry dirt; five were on the turf, and one was in a race taken off of the turf. To be frank, his dirt races have been pretty awful. Based on those, I'd have to consider him a serious non-contender. I make him 30-1.	30-1	30-1
10	Zandon	His first three races were all marred by trouble. In his last, trouble free at last, he won the Blue Grass (G1), finishing a couple of lengths ahead of Smile Happy. Prat, who was DQ'd into a Derby win, stays for Chad Brown, so he has excellent connections. The problem is there's no telling what he'll do next. Will he cause himself some trouble again? If not, will he repeat, or even surpass, his last (and only) trouble-free race? It's a guessing game, and the fact that he's already been beaten by a few in here really isn't relevant. But look at his last race. He was 9th at the jump, 10th at 1st call, 11th at 2nd call by over five lengths, and won by daylight. How impressive is that? It's a pretty good style for this race; if he repeats it he could get the roses. A contender for sure. I make him 9-2.	9-2	3-1
11	Pioneer of Medina	Has won two races out of six: a 55K maiden and a 50K optional claiming race. Pletcher's second horse in the race, with Jersey Joe Bravo up. In spite of some very nice works, I just can't see it. 40-1.	40-1	30-1
12	Taiba	The most expensive horse in the race (a cumulative \$1.8 million), with GUN RUNNER and CANDY RIDE in his background, Taiba proved his worth by dominating both of his only two races so far: a 67k maiden and the Santa Anita Derby. Another that has been moved from Baffert's stable to Tim Yakteen, who is a former assistant trainer for Baffert. Certainly low on experience, but high on the trainer and jockey (Mike Smith). Impossible to predict how this horse will run, but a must use in just about any kind of exotics, although his price may be too low for a win bet. 6-1.	4-1	12-1
13	Simplification	Beaten by #8 and #15 in his last, with no visible excuse, Simplification comes into the Derby a little light on figures, with only one triple digit number (103) when he broke his maiden. He's had two wins since then, one a G2, and all his races have been run at Gulfstream. However, he is bred for the distance, with CANDY RIDE and GIANT'S CAUSEWAY in the background. He keeps Jose Ortiz for Sano. Starting from the 3-hole in his last, Jose got him out early and led the race at one point, but eventually gave in to White Abarrio and Charge It. This, I believe, is not a good way to come into the Derby. He's had some good works since then, but is trapped in a tough post. I don't see it. I make him 18-1. He'd be higher except for my respect for Ortiz.	18-1	20-1
14	Barber Road	Has only been out of the exacta twice in his eight races, the last three graded stakes, but has only won twice: a 30k maiden claimer and a 30k allowance, both last year. Gutierrez has been on him every race but one. He'll have to answer a bunch of pertinent questions today – questions about the distance, his connections, his post position, and others. He has run reasonably well at Churchill, but I don't think that helps him much today. Just don't think he can close and win against horses of this caliber. Strange things sometimes happen in the Derby, but... I'd rate this horse at 30-1.	30-1	30-1

15	White Abarrio	Comes in off of two graded stakes wins: the Florida Derby and the Holy Bull, both under Tyler. Has won four of his five total races, the only loss coming under Zayas at Churchill Downs, with no apparent excuse, which prompts the question: does he just not like Churchill? He's never been stuck this far outside, but he has the running style available to win from the 15-hole if Tyler can work out a trip. He's beaten several of the second level horses in this race, but also lost to Smile Happy and Charge It in his only race at Churchill. He certainly has connections capable of winning, and has posted three excellent works since his last – though none at Churchill. Of course he has a shot, as does almost every horse in this 22-horse field, but all things considered, I think he falls in the 10-1 range of probability.	10-1	10-1
16	Cyberknife	With Taiba, Another GUN RUNNER/CANDY RIDE horse, and one of four horses in the race with CANDY RIDE in the background. Won his last race, the G1 Arkansas Derby, by daylight at 1 1/8 mile, looks like he wouldn't have any trouble with an extra furlong or two. Has an excellent workout on the 30th at Churchill, and broke his maiden here, but was disqualified in that race and had to break it again. He's a presser with plenty of speed. Geroux has been on him on all six of his races for Brad Cox. No triple digit speed figures; his best was in his last: a 94. With his quickness, Geroux should have him in the mix early; if not, with his style of running he's in trouble. Outside post, average speed figures, only one graded win, I will probably think of him as about 22-1.	22-1	20-1
17	Classic Causeway	Sometimes a horse doesn't like – I mean <i>really</i> doesn't like – a racetrack. That may be what happened in his last race. He'd just won a G3 and a G2 at Tampa under Irad Ortiz, and had run reasonably well at CD, Kee, and Sar. So what happened at Gulfstream? Trackman says "CLASSIC CAUSEWAY set the pace along the rail, gave way readily nearing the far turn and was not persevered with." Pretty obvious Irad knew pretty much from the start that he didn't have much horse under him. He's been beaten by others in here every time he's met with them; why should today be different? Leparoux takes over for Irad. Will that do it? Probably not, even though Julien's a terrific rider. Especially since no one has won from the 17 hole in modern times. Does that make it impossible for this horse? Of course not. It just makes it highly improbable. No triple digit figs, terrible last race, leaving from post 17, switch to an unfamiliar rider... 25-1.	25-1	30-1
18	Tawny Port	Statistics, statistics. I won a bunch of money on FUNNY CIDE because all the "experts" said a New York bred couldn't win the Derby, especially with a trainer who'd never even been in the race and a small-time stable. Well, statistics say only one horse has ever won the Derby from the 18-hole. That was GATO DEL SOL, in 1982. Optimists will say "that proves it can be done." But I don't think it will happen again today. He's run at four different tracks in his five-race career, winning three, among them his last – the G3 Lexington at Keeneland. Has run only two races on the dirt, both of them below average when compared to the competition he's facing today, in spite of his really good connections. He's a deep closer, which can work in a race of this type, but which means a long trip outside or a	30-1	30-1

		difficult trip threading through at least a dozen other horses. Either way, I just don't care for his chances. 30-1.		
19	Zozos	There have been only two winners from this post in the history of the Derby. I know statistics can lie, but this one looks pretty solid. However, Zozos does have pretty good early speed, if Manny chooses to use it, which would seem the best course. If he can get into the front ranks without using too much energy, he might have a decent chance. His speed figures are improving every time as he moves up in quality foes: \$53k Mdn, \$50k OC, to the 1 3/16 mile Grade 2 LA Derby, in which he placed 2nd to Epicenter by 2 1/2 lengths. Breaking from the two-hole he immediately took the lead and held it to the turn. Now he breaks from an impossible post and has to run a bit farther, but he has shown the ability to press and close against cheaper. He's in tough today – too tough, I think. 22-1.	22-1	20-1
20	Ethereal Road	Lukas' only entry in this year's Derby, with a high speed figure of 91 and no graded wins, he just hasn't shown enough to make you think he can handle this competition. While BIG BROWN did win from this post in 2008, so it's statistically possible, I don't think it's in the least probable. If you like him, though, you'll get a hell of a good price. I don't give him a chance. In fact, I think he might be scratched to let one of the also's in. We'll see. 50-1 in my book.	50-1	30-1
21	Rich Strike	AE		
22	Rattle 'n Roll	AE		