

A CLOSER LOOK: Epsom race 5

Bullet Train (GB)

(PP-1) First foal from a Danehill mare who is a half sister to Powerscourt, winner of the 1 1/4m Arlington Million-G1, the 1 5/16m Tattersalls Gold Cup-G1 and the 1 1/2m Great Voltigeur Stakes-G2, this Sadler's Wells colt proved he could stay the distance with a convincing score in the Lingfield Derby Trial over a course similar to Epsom's. Trained by 3-time Derby winner Cecil, but he is stepping up in class here.

Al Zir

(PP-2) Godolphin's second string after Rewilding is trainer Suoror's first string. Half brother to 1m Derby Trial-G3 and 7f Forego Hcp-G1 winner Midas Eyes and to Calder's 1 1/8m Stage Door Betty Hcp-G3 winner Bayou's Lassie was well beaten in Guineas and probably lacks the stamina to stay much further than 9f.

Hot Prospect (GB)

(PP-3) By '05 Epsom Derby winner Motivator, he is bred for speed on his dam's side. A half brother to 6f Haydock Sprint Cup-G1 winner Regal Parade, he was beaten by two Derby foes-Bullet Train and Coordinated Cut- in last two, failing to stay 1 1/4m in the first and 1 7/16m in most recent.

Midas Touch (GB)

(PP-4) Son of '01 Epsom Derby winner Galileo, he won his latest like he would appreciate the added distance of the Derby, although he was beating a short and undistinguished field in that race. Well beaten by favored stablemate Jan Vermeer last fall, he will likely finish behind that one again on Saturday. Second dam Last Second won a pair of British G2's going 1 1/4m, so he should be used in exotics.

Azmeel (GB)

(PP-5) By 1 1/4m Irish Champion-G1, 1 5/16m Prince of Wales's-G1 and 1 1/2m King George VI & Queen Elizabeth-G1 winner Azamour, he was not overly impressive in winning a Chester G3 last time. That form looks suspect as he had perviously been 2nd to Chabal, who was tailed off next time in the key Derby prep, the Dante Stakes-G2

At First Sight (IRE)

(PP-6) In this race strictly as a rabbit for stablemates Jan Vermeer and Midas Touch. Surprised when a nose 2nd in the Ballysax two back when serving the same role for Mikhail Glinka, but weakened as expected last time in the service of Midas Touch, and will surely be backing up through the long Epsom stretch.

Ted Spread (GB)

(PP-7) Life and death winner of an uninspiring Chester Vase, a race from which all the others have declined the honor of running in the Derby. He is stepping up in class and is well deserving of his 33-1 price.

Workforce (GB)

(PP-8) Promising son of 2000 Guineas winner King's Best, who is the sire of last week's 1 1/2m Japanese Derby winner Eishin Flash, he ran somewhat greenly when second in the Dante Stakes, whose winner Cape Blanco is one of the favorites for Sunday's French Derby. Further improvement expected and must be used in exotics, although this race probably comes one race too early in his career for victory.

Coordinated Cut (IRE)

(PP-9) By French Derby, Irish Derby, King George and Arc winner Montjeu, his recent form virtually eliminates him from contention. Offered no challenge to Cape Blanco or Workforce in the Dante and this is much tougher.

Buzzword (GB)

(PP-10) Pivotal colt bred to be a miler makes occasional late run but does not seem to have improved off spotty juvenile campaign. Nice finish in French 2000 Guineas earned him a Derby berth, Godolphin hoping that he will stay on for a place. Don't bet on it.

Rewilding (GB)

(PP-11) Bred in both sides to stay 1 1/2m, he is by the Danehill stallion Tiger Hill, the two-time winner of the 1 1/2m Grosser Pries von Baden-G1 and is a half brother to Dar Re Mi, a two-time G1 winner at 1 1/2m. Manouvered tricky Goodwood turns last time, suggesting he is a handy type who can handle even trickier Epsom 12f, something some of the others are not guaranteed to do. Improving sort who is getting good at the right time is the pick.

Jan Vermeer (IRE)

(PP-12) Cruised to victory in belated 3yo debut at the Curragh, looking even better than he did when taking competitive French G1 in 2yo finale. Deserving of favoritism on form as his sire Montjeu is the best 12f sire in the world while his dam won at 1 3/8m in France, although she herself hails from a family of milers and sprinters. Will be right up there at the finish.
