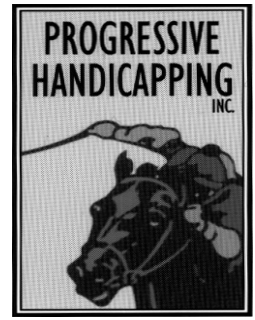


Del Mar
Breeders' Cup XXXI
November 1, 2024



Crushing Zone

PLUS 2024

Friday Races

Epilog

Juvenile Turf Sprint (5 Furlongs Turf)

<i>Crushing Zone</i>	<i>Gray Zone</i>	<i>Pretenders</i>	<i>Pretenders</i>
Aesterius	Magnum Force	Arizona Blaze	Jet Sweep Joe
Big Mojo	ECORO SIEG	Ides of March ue1	Shareholder
GOVERNOR SAM	Gate to Wire	Pali Kitten	
Whistle Jacket ue1			
			Smash It ae1
PROMOTIONS are in BOLD CAPS. DEMOTIONS are in <i>ITALIC CAPS</i> .			

<i>MOST LIKELY TO WIN</i>	2 3	Aesterius (9-2) Big Mojo (4-1)
<i>VALUE PLAYS</i>	10	Governor Sam (12-1)
<i>BOMBERS</i>	4 11	Magnum Force (15-1) Gate to Wire (30-1)

<i>"A" Team</i>		<i>"B" Team</i>		<i>"C" Team</i>
#	<u>Horse</u>	#	<u>Horse</u>	#
2	Aesterius (9-2)	4	Magnum Force (15-1)	5 6
3	Big Mojo (4-1)	7	Whistlejacket (5-1)	12 13
8	Ecoro Sieg (7-2)	9	Shareholder (12-1)	ae 14
10	Governor Sam (12-1)	11	Gate to Wire (30-1)	

The Result:

This race is still evolving but the Euros were emboldened by BIG EVS win in '23 at Santa Anita. They came in force along with a Japanese invader that had just broken a 6f record over there. Of the 12 going to post, 8 were invaders. The bettors were having a tough time but finally settled on the Japanese invader, ECORO SIEG as the 5-2 fave. I had put in a Pick 6 play and was alive through the first leg. I went plenty deep in here but, at the last minute, decided to substitute Aidan O'Brien's IDES OF MARCH for MAGNUM FORCE simply based on connections. Bad move. Despite tabbing him as my CO-BOMBER and his GRAY ZONE status, I left him off the main ticket. My wagering was centered around GOVERNOR SAM. And I looked like a winner around the far turn as the GOV opened up only to get caught late by two Euros: MAGNUM FORCE and longshot ARIZONA BLAZE. I've made these audibles before and sometimes they work out. Other times, like in this race, not so much. Stick to the script, Mazur.

Juvenile Fillies *(1 1/16th Miles)*

<i>Crushing Zone</i>	<i>Gray Zone</i>	<i>Pretenders</i>
Immersive	American Bikini	La Cara
Scottish Lassie	Nooni	Otomena Shacho
	Quickkick	Snowyte
		Vodka With a Twist
PROMOTIONS are in BOLD CAPS. DEMOTIONS are in <i>ITALIC CAPS</i> .		

<i>MOST LIKELY TO WIN</i>	3	Immersive (3-1)
	10	Scottish Lassie (5-2)
<i>VALUE PLAYS</i>	9	American Bikini (5-1)
	5	Quickkick (10-1)
<i>BOMBERS</i>	1	Vodka With a Twist (20-1) pieces
	2	Snowyte (15-1) pieces
	8	Nooni (15-1)

<i>"A" Team</i>			<i>"B" Team</i>			<i>"C" Team</i>
#	<u>Horse</u>		#	<u>Horse</u>		#
3	Immersive (3-1)		5	Quickkick (10-1)		1 2 4 6
10	Scottish Lassie (5-2)		8	Nooni (15-1)		
			9	American Bikini (5-1)		

The Result:

In the previous nine SA-hosted Juv Fillies, SoCal homers took 7 of those editions. But this year Bob Baffert's star filly NON COMPLIANT was a vet scratch and his other entrant NOONI didn't fit the definition of the *Crushing Zone's* NOW FILLY. In fact, only Frizette winner SCOTTISH LASSIE fit the criteria (90 Beyer and fast "come home time") but she was trying to win this off just two starts. Not impossible but difficult. IMMERSIVE looked good in winning the Alcibiades but her "come home time" and 80 Beyer were not impressive. In this field she was my CO-MOST LIKELY but, in order to make my Pick 6 affordable, I decided to single SCOTTISH LASSIE on the main ticket and backups. Japanese invader AMERICAN BIKINI took action (4-1) but was a mystery to most. NOONI tried to steal it. But IMMERSIVE blew by and won for fun. SCOTTISH LASSIE chased but tired. AMERICAN BIKINI finished last. VALUE PLAYER QUICKKICK ran 3rd and BOMBER (for pieces) VODKA WITH A TWIST ran 2nd as predicted. My Pick 6 tickets were all dead.

Juvenile Fillies Turf (1 Mile Turf)

<i>Crushing Zone</i>	<i>Gray Zone</i>	<i>Pretenders</i>	<i>Pretenders</i>
May Day Ready	Lake Victoria ue2	Anshoda	Fiery Lucy
Scythian	Totally Justified ue3	Abientot ue1	Heavens Gate ue2
Thought Process		Correto	Kilwin ue3
Virgin Colada		Acquitted ae1	Nitrogen ue1
Vixen ue1		Supa Speed ae2	Tigerish ae3
PROMOTIONS are in BOLD CAPS. DEMOTIONS are in <i>ITALIC CAPS</i> .			

<i>MOST LIKELY TO WIN</i>	13	Vixen (15-1)
<i>VALUE PLAYS</i>	4	Scythian (12-1)
<i>BOMBERS</i>	6 12	Virgin Colada (20-1) May Day Ready (20-1)

<i>"A" Team</i>		<i>"B" Team</i>		<i>"C" Team</i>
#	<u>Horse</u>	#	<u>Horse</u>	#
4	Scythian (12-1)	1	Lake Victoria (8-5)	3 5 8
6	Virgin Colada (20-1)	2	Nitrogen (15-1)	9 10 11 14
12	May Day Ready (20-1)	7	Thought Process (5-2)	
13	Vixen (15-1)			

The Result:

The history of this race is pretty straight forward: stick with the domestics coming out of the Ms. Grillo, Natalma and maybe the Jessamine. Chad Brown had won 5 of the last 9 editions. Although a Euro won in '22, they usually didn't make an impact. Yet, in this edition, Euro LAKE VICTORIA was installed as the 4-5 fave! Local turf star THOUGHT PROCESS was second fave despite the fact that the locals have never won this race. Meanwhile the runners from the key preps were all slipping away at huge prices. My MOST LIKELY was 30-1. Brown's VIRGIN COLADA (2nd in Ms Grillo) was 18-1. Jessamine winner MAY DAY READY was 13-1. Those were the "A" TEAMERS. But LAKE VICTORIA proved to be the real deal winning by daylight over the unbeaten MAY DAY READY. Ms. Grillo and Natalma didn't produce and the SoCal filly was nowhere to be found. I cashed a small exacta saver on MAY DAY READY but a \$3.40 BC winner, Euro or domestic, doesn't help anyone CRUSH THE CUP.

Juvenile (1 1/16th Miles)

<i>Crushing Zone</i>	<i>Gray Zone</i>	<i>Pretenders</i>
East Avenue	Gaming ue1	Ecoro Azel
Citizen Bull ue1 ue2	Getaway Car ue1 ue2	FEROCIOUS
Chancer McPatrick	Jonathan's Way	Hill Road Shin Believ
PROMOTIONS are in BOLD CAPS. DEMOTIONS are in <i>ITALIC CAPS</i> .		

<i>MOST LIKELY TO WIN</i>	1	East Avenue (5-2)
<i>VALUE PLAYS</i>	10 5	Chancer McPatrick (3-1) Jonathan's Way (9-2)
<i>BOMBERS</i>	2 6	Getaway Car (20-1) Citizen Bull (10-1)

<i>"A" Team</i>			<i>"B" Team</i>			<i>"C" Team</i>	
#	<u>Horse</u>		#	<u>Horse</u>		#	
1	East Avenue (5-2)		2	Getaway Car (20-1)		3	4 8 9
6	Citizen Bull (10-1)		5	Jonathan's Way (9-2)			
10	Chancer McPatrick (3-1)		7	Gaming (8-1)			

The Result:

As expected, **EAST AVENUE** and **CHANCER MCPATRICK** were installed as the 1-2 faves. The former looked to have a better chance than the late-running **CHANCER**. But with **CITIZEN BULL** sitting at 15-1 as part of a Bob Baffert trio, I knew there was only one play: key on him to win and box the Bafferts in the exacta and trifecta and split them with **ALL** in the first two slots of the trifecta. **GETAWAY CAR**, favored in all of his four starts was the longest of the Bafferts at 28-1. **GAMING** was trying to go sprint to route off a win in the 7f Del Mar Futurity.

Although a bad break for those who backed **EAST AVENUE**, his stumble out of the gate left the Bafferts running 1-2-3 for most of the race. **CITIZEN BULL** was on the lead and the other two were protecting his flank. It looked like a Baffert sweep and a major score on my \$10 trifecta box but Euro invader **HILL ROAD** nipped **GETAWAY CAR** at the wire for the show. I couldn't complain though as I had a healthy win wager, exacta and daily doubles finishing and going forward. Still the trifecta calculator told me I had missed a \$10k payday by a neck. But the lessons we have preached in the *Crushing Zone* still pay dividends: always respect the uncoupled entry angle especially a Baffert UE.

Juvenile Turf (1 Mile Turf)

<i>Crushing Zone</i>	<i>Gray Zone</i>	<i>Pretenders</i>	<i>Pretenders</i>
Al Quadra ue1	Aomori City ue1	Dream On	Satono Carnival
New Century	Henri Matisse	Iron Man Cal	Seagulls Eleven ue3
Zulu Kingdom	Minaret Station	Mentee ue2	TENACIOUS LEADER ue2
	Noble Confessor ue2		The Waco Kid ue3
		Kale's Angel ae2	Sabertooth ae1
PROMOTIONS are in BOLD CAPS. DEMOTIONS are in <i>ITALIC CAPS</i> .			

<i>MOST LIKELY TO WIN</i>	4 11	Al Quadra (4-1) New Century (5-2)
<i>VALUE PLAYS</i>	5 13	Zulu Kingdom (8-1) Henri Matisse (6-1)
<i>BOMBERS</i>	12	Aomori City (10-1)

<i>"A" Team</i>			<i>"B" Team</i>			<i>"C" Team</i>
#	<i>Horse</i>		#	<i>Horse</i>		#
4	Al Quadra (4-1)		3	Noble Confessor (15-1)		1 2 6
5	Zulu Kingdom (8-1)		7	Seagulls Eleven (15-1)		9 10 14
11	New Century (5-2)					
12	Aomori City (10-1)					
13	Henri Matisse (6-1)					

The Result:

Historically, this race runs the exact opposite of the fillies counterpart: the Euros dominate. Other profile points: (1) If not a Euro than maybe a domestic from the Pilgrim; (2) never been a wire winner; and (3) never been a SoCal-based winner.

The above guided me to four Euro imports and Chad Brown's Pilgrim winner, ZULU KINGDOM. Two of the Euros—NEW CENTURY and AL QUADRA—had deviated from historical prep paths and shipped over in September for the Summer Stakes at Woodbine. They ran 1-2 continuing a rivalry that had been going on all summer in Europe.

Juvenile Turf continued

AL QUADRA was running uncoupled with his Godolphin running mate **AOMORI CITY**. And trainer Charlie Appleby was on record that **AOMORI CITY** was considered the better of the two.

This was important because the Summer Stakes hadn't produced a Juvenile Turf winner since 2010. But this was the first time I could remember that Euros shipped over. Still history is history.

Others in the field included favorite **HENRI MATISSE** saddled by Aidan O'Brien, a multiple winner of this race.

Another Euro trainer, the obscure (to us anyway) Hugo Palmer was starting two as well. Todd Pletcher had **MENTEE** and **NOBLE CONFESSOR**, the latter being the Pilgrim runner-up. And then there was the Japanese invader **SANTONO CARNAVALE**, a colt getting solid reviews from the clockers.

Taking a page from the previous race, I played all of those uncoupled entries in separate exacta and trifecta tickets. There were too many to mix and match.

I then bet **AOMORI CITY** to win as he was the longer odds (9-1) of the Godolphin entry and used him underneath with the logicals. I then keyed him to run third in the trifecta with those logicals.

And history held sway in this one. The Euros looked like sweepers for the trifecta until a late-running SoCal local named **IRON MAN CAL** slipped between them to earn the place slot at 29-1.

Despite three logicals (all 1-2 faves) in the sequence, the longshot wins by **MAGNUM FAVORITE** and **CITIZEN BULL** bolstered the Pick 6 payoff to \$39k. I was nowhere near that one nor the Pick 5 that paid somewhat less \$4,700. Still I had nice successes in the Juvenile, proving that it only takes one race to **CRUSH THE CUP**.