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Get to know the Horses

1. Ami’s Flatter (8/1)
   **Owner:** Ivan Dalos
   **Trainer:** Josie Carroll
   **Jockey:** Javier Castellano

   The fourth-choice in this year’s Florida Derby, AMI’S FLATTER joins the fray off a solid second-place finish in the Grade 2 Tampa Bay Derby. He finished behind the heralded Carpe Diem that day, and that effort should have this Ontario-bred son of Flatter set up for a good run this time around. He already has experience at Gulfstream, having finished a good second in the Mucho Macho Man Stakes in January, making him a must-use horse on your Trifecta and Superfecta tickets. He’ll be ridden for the first time by Javier Castellano, who won last year’s edition of this race aboard Constitution.

2. Jack Tripp (20/1)
   **Owner:** Robert J. Baron
   **Trainer:** Dale L. Romans
   **Jockey:** Irad Ortiz Jr.

   It’s rarely a winning proposition for a horse to make a successful stakes debut in a Grade 1 race like this, but Dale Romans’ JACK TRIPP will look to do just that in this year’s Florida Derby. But with just one win in seven career starts, the odds aren’t in his favor. He was beaten a combined 18-lengths in two prior starts at Gulfstream Park, including a 7-length defeat to Itsaknockout here in January. However, if you’re looking for precedent to bet a Dale Romans longshot in the Florida Derby, you just have to look back four years to 2011, when his Shackleford nearly took the field wire-to-wire at odds of 68/1.

3. Indianaughty (20/1)
   **Owners:** Team Valor International
   **Trainer:** Dale L. Romans
   **Jockey:** Corey J. Lanerie

   Team Valor International, which has campaigned superstars like Animal Kingdom, Captain Bodgit and Ipi Tombe, obviously has an eye for talent. So when they privately purchased INDIANAUGHTY following his maiden win in the UK, we took notice. It wasn’t a surprise to us when he won his first US start on the turf, but his subsequent 9th place finish in the Grade 3 El Camino Real Derby on Golden Gate’s Tapeta surface was a head-scratcher. Now his first dirt start is against the best field he’s ever faced. He’ll be tough to back, especially to win, but note that Corey Lanerie picked him over Romans’ other starter. That’s a plus.

4. Itsaknockout (2/1)
   **Owners:** Starlight Racing
   **Trainer:** Todd A. Pletcher
   **Jockey:** Luis Saez

   ITSAKNOCKOUT’S graded stakes debut in last month’s Grade 2 Fountain of Youth couldn’t have been any more eventful. After being interfered with down the stretch by heavy-favorite Upstart, who he faces again today, the stewards controversially disqualified Upstart, making ITSAKNOCKOUT the race’s winner. How you feel about that disqualification will go a long way in determining how you bet today’s race. Some handicappers felt the disqualification was warranted, while many are certain ITSAKNOCKOUT wasn’t going to beat Upstart either way. Trainer, Todd Pletcher, has been very pleased with how ITSAKNOCKOUT has worked since the Fountain of Youth, and we expect him to take another step forward in just his fourth career start.

5. Quimet (20/1)
   **Owner:** Lucky Shamrock Stable
   **Trainer:** Nicholas P. Zito
   **Jockey:** Edgard Zayas

   While overmatched on paper, QUIMET does have one of the best trainers in the business in his corner. Hall of Famer Nick Zito, who has won this race three times, most recently in 2011 with Dialed In, has his work
Get to know the Horses

cut out for him this year. A win with QUIMET would be quite the shock. He finished 16 ¾-lengths behind Materiality earlier this month in the Islamorada Handicap, and that’ll be a very difficult margin to make up this time around. Zito does have a penchant for springing upsets, as he did in the 2004 Belmont Stakes with QUIMET’S sire, Birdstone. Ultimately, though, he’s not for us.

6. My Point Exactly (30/1)
Owner: Pinnacle Racing Stable, LLC, R. Norman, R. Justice & H. Hendricks
Trainer: William A. Kaplan
Jockey: Juan C. Leyva
At 30/1, MY POINT EXACTLY may end up offering the best value of any horse in the field. He enters this race with two straight victories, including a win in last year’s Sunday Silence Stakes at Louisiana Downs. Previously, he broke his maiden by 10-lengths right here at Gulfstream Park. Problem is, he hasn’t raced since September and that’s a long time away and this is an incredibly difficult comeback race. His trainer, William Kaplan, remarked that the horse is “in perfect physical condition” at the draw, and Kaplan is no stranger to success. His Champion Mare, Musical Romance, won the Breeders’ Cup Filly & Mare Sprint in 2011.

7. Materiality (7/2)
Owner: Alto Racing, LLC
Trainer: Todd A. Pletcher
Jockey: John R. Velazquez
Todd Pletcher’s “other” horse is MATERIALITY, an impressive son of Afleet Alex that has something on his resume that nobody else in the race has – a win at the Florida Derby’s 1 1/8-mile distance. And while he’s started just twice, meaning he spots the field significant experience, it’s clear he has the talent to excel against stakes horses. His outside draw should do wonders for securing a traffic-free trip around the oval, and his jockey, John Velazquez, is no stranger to Florida Derby success. He has won the race twice, most recently in 2013 aboard Orb. If MATERIALITY runs like he did last time, the others will have their hands full.

8. Dekabrist (30/1)
Owner: Raut, LLC
Trainer: Gennadi Dorochenko
Jockey: Jesus M. Rios
A winner of 2-of-13 lifetime starts, DEKABRIST is the most experienced horse in this year’s Florida Derby. Unfortunately, he’s lost 11 straight races, and hasn’t finished better than fourth in more than ten months. All of his best races have come around one-turn, and all of his recent dirt races have been subpar, so it’s impossible for us to recommend using him on your tickets. Trainer Gennadi Dorochenko did win the 2012 Louisiana Derby with Hero of Order at astronomical odds - 109/1 - but he’d need to bring that same type of magic with him to get DEKABRIST into the winner’s circle today.

9. Upstart (8/5)
Owner: Ralph M. Evans
Trainer: Richard A. Violette Jr.
Jockey: Jose L. Ortiz
Go ahead and try to find a bad race on UPSTART’S resume. You can’t. He’s been incredibly consistent, even in defeat, and his losses have come against some of the best names in his generation, including Texas Red, Daredevil and Carpe Diem. He crossed the wire first in last month’s Grade 2 Fountain of Youth, but was subsequently disqualified in a controversial decision. The important thing to remember is he did hit the wire first that day, and we expect another strong performance from him here. His trainer, Rick Violette, did mention his draw was “not ideal,” but he seems to like racing outside of horses, so we’re not worried about it.
Analysis:
This year’s rendition of the Florida Derby is another stellar one, and the real puzzle will be figuring out which of the favorites we like most. UPSTART has the most experience and class, but Todd Pletcher’s duo of MATERIALITY and ITSASKNOCKOUT both have great tactical speed and very savvy jockeys. We see MATERIALITY going straight to the lead and setting manageable fractions. If he does, reeling him in might be a tall task. And with not much speed signed on, we think it’ll be very difficult for any of the deep closers to factor in the late stages of the race.

Main Contenders:
UPSTART, MATERIALITY and ITSASKNOCKOUT are all between 8/5 and 7/2 on the morning line, and we’d be very surprised if the winner of this race doesn’t come from that group. UPSTART has the best resume – he’s been racing at this level since October and has crossed the finish line first in both of his Gulfstream starts – while MATERIALITY and ITSASKNOCKOUT start for Todd Pletcher, who has been the top trainer at Gulfstream Park every year since 2004.

Value Plays:
In a race where five horses are 20/1 or longer, there is value to be had. We think the best longshots in the race are INDIANAUGHTY and MY POINT EXACTLY. INDIANAUGHTY has run well previously and if you write off his last race as an anomaly, he’s enticing. And while MY POINT EXACTLY has to overcome a long layoff, he has some really nice races on his resume.

$100 Wagering Strategy:
• $5 Trifecta #4 Itsaknockout, #7 Materiality, #9 Upstart [$30]
• $2 Trifecta #7 Materiality / #4 Itsaknockout, #9 Upstart / All [$28]
• $2 Trifecta #7 Materiality, #9 Upstart / #7 Materiality, #9 Upstart / #1 Ami’s Flatter, #3 Indianaughty, #4 Itsaknockout, #6 My Point Exactly [$16]
• $5 Exacta #7 Materiality, #9 Upstart / #4 Itsaknockout #7 Materiality, #9 Upstart [$20]
• $2 Win, Place, Show #6 My Point Exactly [$6]

$500K Guaranteed Late Pick 4 Strategy:
• Race 11 – WHITE ROSE is dangerous in her second off the layoff, but RIPOSTE will be very difficult to beat up front. Also consider PHOTO CALL and BEAUTY PARLOR.
• Race 12 – You can feel comfortable using the 1-2-3 finishers of last month’s Davona Dale – EKATI’S PHAETON, BIRDATTHEWIRE and ESKENFORMONEY.
• Race 13 – TWILIGHT ECLIPSE finally doesn’t have to tackle Main Sequence, who’s in Dubai. Single him.
• Race 14 – We love MATERIALITY and UPSTART, but we recommend ITSASKNOCKOUT, too.

Recommended Picks
1. Materiality
2. Upstart
3. Itsaknockout
4. My Point Exactly

DID YOU KNOW
The post-time favorite has finished in the Trifecta (finished 1st, 2nd or 3rd) in 19 of the last 24 editions of the Florida Derby.

Don’t Count Us Out

Are the Odds in their Favor?
No favorite has won the Florida Derby since Big Brown did so in 2008. Last year’s favorite, Cairo Prince, finished 4th at odds of 1.20/1.
Mike Smith and Edgar Prado lead all active riders with 3 Florida Derby wins each. 2 other riders have won the Florida Derby more than once:
- Alex Solis [1997, 1986]
- John Velazquez [2013, 2009]

6 horses have won the Florida Derby at odds of 20/1 or higher. The highest-paying winners of the Florida Derby are:
- Williamstown Kid [1966; $183.60]
- Croeso [1983; $172.00]
- Friends Lake [2004; $76.80]
- Brian’s Time [1988; $67.60]
- Bull Inthe Heather [1993; $60.80]
- Ice Box [2010; $43.40]

In the last 24 years, just 4 horses have won the Florida Derby in wire-to-wire fashion. They are:
- Take Charge Indy [2012]
- Big Brown [2008]
- Hal’s Hope [2000]
- Holy Bull [1994]

Since 2001, Florida Derby alums have gone on to win 9 Triple Crown races. They are:
- Orb [2013 Kentucky Derby]
- Union Rags [2012 Belmont]
- Shackleford [2011 Preakness]
- Big Brown [2008 Kentucky Derby, Preakness]
- Da’ Tara [2008 Belmont]
- Barbaro [2006 Kentucky Derby]
- Empire Maker [2003 Belmont]
- Monarchos [2001 Kentucky Derby]

The Todd Squad
Todd Pletcher, the leading trainer at Gulfstream Park every winter since 2004, has won the Florida Derby twice [2013, 2007]. His overall record in the race is 17-2-2-4 ($0.88 Win ROI).

The Sun Always Shines on Florida Derby Day
Of the previous 64 editions of the Florida Derby, only 4 were run on a wet track. The last wet track Florida Derby was the 1993 rendition, when Bull Inthe Heather sprung the upset at odds of 29/1.

On the Edge of Your Seat
Only 1 of the last 5 editions of the Florida Derby was decided by more than a length. Last year, Constitution won the Florida Derby by a neck over Wildcat Red.

All or Nothing?
Since 1995, Florida Derby winners have gone on to win the Kentucky Derby 5 times, the most recent being Orb in 2013. The last Florida Derby loser to wear the Roses was Go for Gin in 1994.
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