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Previews and ratings by Geir Stabell



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GLOBEFORM RANKING

SYCAMORE STAKES (G2) 12 fur Turf, Keeneland Friday Oct 10

Horses ranked in pounds (0.45kg). 1 length = 1.5 pounds over this distance

Rank	No.	Name of horse	Globeform	GF most recent runs	Trainer / Jockey
From right to left (most recent first)					
0	5	GRAND SONATA	112	105 - 112 - 110	Pletcher / Gaffalione
0	3	MERCANTE <i>GF 112 in May '24</i>	112	100 - 105+ 110	Knippenberg / Ramos
1	4	UTAH BEACH <i>GF 113 in May '25</i>	113	96 - 104 - 109	Correas / J L Ortiz
2 / 12	10	OHANA HONOR <i>GF 110 in Apr '24</i>	110 / 100	99 - 95 - 100	McGaughey / Prat
3	9	GOLDENEYE	109	98 - 109 - 104+	McPeck / I Ortiz Jr
5p	2	SAFE TRIP HOME	107p	107p - 106 - 94	Cowans / Esquivel
5p	6	DESVIO <i>GF 107p in May '24</i>	107p	103+ 98 - 97	Meyers / Velazquez
5	11	ANGLOPHILE <i>GF 107 in May '25</i>	107	98 - 106 - 104	Lynch / Saez
7 / 15	8	SAN SIRO <i>GF 103 in Apr '25</i> <i>GF 105 in Feb '25</i>	105 / 97	96 - 84 - 97	Walsh / Dettori
9	1	IL SICILIANO	103	101 - 103 - 95	Sano / Arrieta
?	7	REIQUIST	?	?	Yakteen / Graham

Globeform rating with a "p" attached = this was the horse's best rating to date and the horse is likely to improve

Globeform rating with a "+" = this was not its best rating but the horse ran better than the rating suggests

Most recent winners of the Sycamore

2024	HIGHWAY ROBBER	GF 111	Brian Lynch	Tyler Gaffalione
2023	BOLD ACT	GF 115	Charlie Appleby	Jamie Spencer
2022	HIGHLAND CHIEF	GF 114	Graham Motion	John Velazquez
2021	SPOOKY CHANNEL	GF 112	Jason Barkley	Julien Leparoux
2020	RED KNIGHT	GF 113	William Mott	James Graham

Average winning Globeform: 113

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GLOBEFORM ANALYSIS

GRAND SONATA was below par when beaten 7 lengths to be fifth in the Kentucky Turf Cup at Kentucky Downs in September, a race he won in 2024. He has run two good races in defeat this term but he has also had quite a busy schedule and it may be that he is beginning to feel the effects. That said, we only need to go two starts back to find his career best, **Globeform 112**, produced when he was runner-up to Fort Washington in the Arlington Million in August. The Million was his third runner-up effort of the season; he was beaten just a head when trying to give Cash Equity 6lbs in the 12-furlong MacDiarmida Stakes at Gulfstream Park in March, and he passed the winning post 1 1/2 lengths behind the smart Redistricting in the 11-furlong United Nations Stakes at Monmouth Park in July. Effective over this distance, and when ridden just off the pace, he should get a race run to suit him this week and he must be respected.

MERCANTE comes back just six days after running in the Coolmore Turf Mile, where he beat just two home as a 60-1 outsider. That was in tough company but he would have been a lot closer if he had run up to his best. He steps markedly up in distance for a second time, having had a good season while operating over 8.5 and 9 furlongs - and it's a bit hard to imagine this horse relishing 12 furlongs. He is a prominent runner and could be part of a moderate pace, but he still needs to cover the distance. His best chance lies in a scenario where the early fractions are slow enough to turn this into a virtual 9-furlong race, and that's asking a lot. Mercante put together three solid runs in the spring; winning the 9-furlong Kentucky Cup Classic at Turfway Park (by a length from Encino), running a close second to Spirit of St Louis in the prestigious Turf Classic over the same distance at Churchill Downs; then beating the in-form Brilliant Berti by a neck to capture the Arlington Stakes over 8.5 furlongs (also at Churchill). That win came on the last day of May and Mercante was given a break up to August 2, when he made a satisfactory return to run fourth to Beach Gold over a mile at Ellis Park, before taking fourth in the 12-furlong Kentucky Turf Cup; returning GF 105+ after tiring inside the final furlong. Another try over the trip may be worthwhile but doing so on a six-day 'rest'? It does not appeal much to me.

UTAH BEACH, like **MERCANTE** (4th) and **GRAND SONATA** (5th), was also well beaten in the Kentucky Turf Cup, trailing home in ninth place as the co-favorite. He ran his best race to date when taking the Louisville Stakes over 12 furlongs at Churchill Downs in May. His 1 1/2-length win over Verstappen, who he was spotting 5lbs, earned **Globeform 113**. It was a visually taking performance though it was gained in an unsatisfactory event; Rebel Red fell, Tapit Shoes lost his rider and Idratherbebled. This meant that Utah Beach had just five to beat (two at 38-1 and 53-1) but he won well and he improved on his Elkhorn winning form at Keeneland in April, when he beat Limited Liability by a head, with **ANGLOPHILE** 1 1/4 lengths further back in third. Utah Beach's best form puts him in with a winning chance, he stays this trip and he likes this course. He never got into the race at Kentucky Downs so that's probably a run to ignore.

OHANA HONOR sits high on the ranking thanks to a strong allowance win over 12 furlongs at Keeneland in April 2024. He took that contest by making all the running and drawing off to score by 5 3/4 lengths from Foreign Relations, who checked in 4 lengths clear of the third placed He's Got Swagger. Foreign Relations (who has not raced again since) had won the Louisville Stakes over the same trip back in 2023 and He's Got Swagger was an allowance winner at Churchill Downs the same year. In outclassing these two, Ohana Honor improved to **Globeform 110**. He went on to run second to Silver Knott in the Man O'War Stakes and third to Measured Time in the Manhattan Stakes (produced GF 107 and GF 106), then lost his form. He was eighth of ten in last year's Sycamore and subsequently sidelined right up to August this year, when he was beaten 5 1/2 lengths in second behind Lagynos in the Tapit Stakes at Kentucky Downs. Lagynos was runner-up in the Mint Millions next time. Cameo Performance, who was third in the Tapit, runs in a good allowance race at Keeneland on Wednesday (R8). Ohana Honor is hard to place here; but note that his career best came on a second start after a long layoff and that's the case again. He is the one that may set the pace, and he should not be ruled out. >>>

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GOLDENEYE did not care much for the 2-mile trip when beaten almost twelve lengths as fourth in the Bowling Green Gold Cup at Kentucky Downs in late August, and he returns to a more suitable distance here. Unless the marathon race took too much out of him, this son of Hard Spun has a winning chance in the Sycamore. He improved through his three first starts for trainer Ken McPeck, He was visually impressive when coming from off the pace (after a bad stumble at the start) to beat the odds-on favorite Wolfie's Dynaghost easily over 9.5 furlongs at Saratoga on August 1. Quickening past horses down the lane, his rider had him under a hand ride and Goldeneye won by 2 lengths from Wolfie's Dynaghost, who was coming off a 4 1/2-length win in the Prince George's County Stakes at Laurel Park, and won a good handicap at Colonial Downs next time out. Goldeneye improved to **Globeform 109p** with this win. Winner of an allowance race over 12 furlongs at Kentucky Downs last year (made all to beat My Boy Tony with ease), he has 6 wins from 29 starts and a 48% top three strike rate.

SAFE TRIP HOME has improved in his two most recent starts; he performed to Globeform 107p when winning the 12-furlong Colonial Cup in September, idling in the closing stages and showing clear signs that there was plenty left in the tank as he beat **DESVIO** by 2 1/4 lengths. These two are both worth a close look.

Safe Trip Home can should beat Desvio again but he was given a better ride at Colonial Downs, and note that the margin between them was about the same as they turned for home as it was at the finish. Safe Trip Home had more up his sleeve, though he was also the one who was given the best ride. While his jockey decided to make a forward move from off the pace on the home turn, Desvio was still being waited with. Recent form counts for a lot, especially when we are into the fall and horses that have done well through the summer begin to regress. Safe Trip Home is quite the opposite, as he was rested two months between his allowance win at Churchill Downs and his Colonial Cup success. This late developing son of More Than Ready is a 5yo with just 10 starts and 4 wins, and he could improve again. Morning line 6-1 may not look like great value but, as a bunch of his rivals have higher profiles, it's not impossible that we will get better odds about this in-form contender.

DESVIO has six horses above him on the ranking and his career best performance lies four starts back, but he is also an interesting horse and **20-1 looks tempting**. It's a huge price and we may just get it, as his recent runs won't inspire too many players. His last run was much better than it may seem though; he was given a poor ride sitting too far off a pedestrian pace for far too long in the 12-furlong Colonial Cup just over a month ago, and did well to get up for second, 2 1/2 lengths behind **SAFE TRIP HOME**, who won the race well to add to his previous win over 11 furlongs at Churchill Downs. Could Desvio reverse the form? Not if his run at Colonial Downs is as good as he is but he has one performance that was better; his staying-on third behind subsequent Arlington Million winner Fort Washington in the Dinner Party Stakes over 9 furlongs at Pimlico in May. Desvio, who won the Kent Stakes over 11 furlongs last year, improved to **Globeform 107p** at Pimlico. He came from well off the pace also in that event and was beaten no more than 2 1/4 lengths. Two things worth noting about this 20-1 shot; he will appreciate going back up in distance, and he gets a significant upgrade in the saddle, from Weston Hamilton and Forest Boyce to John Velazquez. Another plus; he managed to close into a slow pace (on soft ground) in the Dinner Party, so even if we see a similar scenario here he can be efficient at the finish.

ANGLOPHILE, yet another who could hit the board if he puts his best foot forward, was seventh in the Kentucky Turf Cup last time out, thus behind **MERCANTE** and **GRAND SONATA** but in front of **UTAH BEACH**. He ran his best race when second to the high class Far Bridge in the 11-furlong Man O'War at Aqueduct in and ran close to the same level when a close third behind Highway Robber and next out Kentucky Turf Cup winner Ole Crazy Bone over 10 furlongs at Ellis Park in August. >>>

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CONCLUSION: As many as eight horses in the selections box is hardly usual; and it's normally not a good idea when we are considering a possible Trifecta plan, but this is *that type of race* and, in taking the two Colonial Cup runners against the field, one at 6-1 and the other at 20-1, we can afford to fill up with six others on our Trifecta plan. It is an ambitious plan all right, but we are dealing with a very open looking and tricky contest. So why not apply this betting rule; "When a race looks too difficult, try something that looks impossible". Getting Safe Trip Home and Desvio both in the top three is asking a lot; it may seem impossible even, but it's not. They ran well at Colonial and they both have a chance on ratings, particularly if their rivals are bit below their best form after busy campaigns. So, here goes; a Tri plan with the two A-horses to hit the board with the six others + a Superfecta ticket where we use these two in 1st & 4th with the others in between.

GLOBEFORM SELECTIONS

A	2 SAFE TRIP HOME, 6 DESVIO
B	5 GRAND SONATA, 9 GOLDENEYE
C	3 MERCANTE, 4 UTAH BEACH, 10 OHANA HONOR, 11 ANGLOPHILE

Grand Sonata 2nd / Arlington Million: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aU1Ad2KhIZE&t=4s>

Mercante 4th / Kentucky Turf Cup: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=415H98pLDQM>
5th Grand Sonata 7th Anglophile 9th Utah Beach

Goldeneye / Saratoga Allowance (R2 45:00) / : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JCLSda6r0yU&t=3366s>

Safe Trip Home / Colonial Cup: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMja0n3lyFo>
2nd Desvio

Desvio 3rd / Dinner Party Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hWriZ89WA5w&t=10s>



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