

Globeform's Subscription Service

Previews and ratings By Geir Stabell



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GULFSTREAM PARK

GLOBEFORM RANKING

KITTEN'S JOY STAKES (LR), 8.5 fur Turf, Gulfstream Park, Feb 1

Horses ranked in pounds (0.45kg). 1 length = 2 pounds over this distance

Rank	No.	Name of horse	Globeform	GF most recent runs	Trainer / Jockey
From right to left (most recent first)					
0p	2	CHARLIE'S TO BLAME	100p	100p - 83p - ?p	Eurton / L Saez
0	8	MI-BAGO	104	100 - 104 - 98p	M Casse / Davis
1	6	TEST SCORE	101	101 - ?p - 88	Motion / Gaffalione
9p	4	TIZ DASHING	93p	93p - ?p	Tagg / Velazquez
10p	5	WALKING IN MEMPHIS	90p	90p	M Casse / Jaramillo
11p	3	MAUI STRONG	91p	91p - 90p - ?p	Romans / Alvarado
11	1	ENTERDADRAGON	89	88+ 84 - 89	D'Angelo / R Maragh
12p	7	COCO COOL	90p	90p - ?p - 0	M Casse / I Ortiz Jr

Most recent winners of the Kitten's Joy

2024	FIRST WORLD WAR	GF 100	Brendan Walsh	Tyler Gaffalione
2023	MAJOR DUDE	GF 108	Todd Pletcher	Irak Ortiz Jr
2022	GRAND SONATA	GF 103p	Todd Pletcher	Tyler Gaffalione
2021	CHESS'S DREAM	GF 103	Mike Maker	Tyler Gaffalione
2020	ISLAND COMMISH	GF 103	Saffie Joseph Jr	Paco Lopez

Average winning Globeform: 103.4

GLOBEFORM ANALYSIS

CHARLIE'S TO BLAME created a really positive impression when winning a mile maiden at Del Mar in early December. Making all the running while racing with great zest, he kicked right off when challenged early in the home straight, and won comfortably by 3 1/2 lengths from Muscled, who had looked a big danger when stalking on a very tight rein; but he had no chance against Charlie's to Blame. Peter Eurton's talented colt won under a hand ride, he had at least another length up his sleeve passing the winning post, and the third placed horse Legitimate was almost six lengths. Legitimate was making his fifth start so it might not have looked *that* good at the time; but Legitimate won by 12 3/4 lengths next time out (on dirt), slamming Bob Baffert's ambitiously named Dettori out of sight. Dettori also ties in with Muscled, as he was fourth and >>>

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>>> Muscled second in a good maiden won by Scipio four weeks after Charlie' to Blame's race. Scipio, only a length better than Muscled, was coming off a game runner-up effort behind Clock Tower in the Cecil DeMille Stakes. Incidentally, the DeMille was run on the same day when Charlie's to Blame broke his maiden, and - although times are a risky tool in turf race - it's worth noting that Charlie's to Blame clocked a time that was about five lengths faster than Clock Tower's. Yes, Clock Tower got away with easy fractions on the lead that day, but this does tell us that Charlie's to Blame absolutely didn't. His pace was a second better than Clock Tower's all the way from the first quarter and a half. A very attractive horse with plenty of scope, Charlie's to Blame is probably a future graded stakes winner, and he is definitely the one to side with in the Kitten's Joy. It took him three starts to win but his debut was on dirt and his second start was over 6 furlongs. He ran like a horse that finds a mile just right at Del Mar, and that's also how he is bred.

A son of Blame out a winless daughter of Medaglia d'Oro, Charlie's to Blame made significantly more than his pedigree would suggest when sold for \$400,000 at the Fasig-Tipton May Sale last year, having changed hands for \$95,000 at Keeneland as a yearling. His dam had previously produced Rock Hard K P (Bellamy Road), a low level winner of 7 races from age 3 to 5 (6 to 8 furlongs; 6 on dirt, 1 on turf), and his second dam, Blushing Heiress, was a winner of the Wilshire Handicap (G2) and Palomar Handicap (G3) over 8.5 furlongs on turf as a 5yo. Charlie's to Blame could well become every bit as good as that mare in due course.

MI BAGO, one of three Mark Casse trainees and the one who is likely to be the shortest priced of his trio, is coming off two front-running wins at Gulfstream; one on turf and one over the Tapeta, as the Dania Beach Stakes was taken off the lawn a month ago. Mi Bago was odds-on in the extended mile event and he won by three parts of a length from Hammerhead, who passed the winning post 2 3/4 length in front of the third placed **MAUI STRONG**. Mi Bago won well enough, but he ran better over 7.5 furlongs in the Pulpit Stakes back in November, when he was also the favorite. His form had improved when he was switched to turf last fall. He won a minor stakes over 5 furlongs at Woodbine (beating Dare to Breeze by a neck). That win set him up for the TBA Stakes over a mile on Breeders' Cup Friday at Del Mar. Going off at 45-1, the son of Vekoma took the step up in class quite well under compromising circumstances. A very slow pace worked against him as he was ridden held up and he pulled hard, thus wasting far too much energy. He finished fifth, 2 lengths behind Chasing Liberty, who beat **TEST SCORE** by a neck and stopped the clock in 1.37.44. That was fully 3 seconds slower than Henri Matisse's time in the BC Juvenile Turf, but the championship race had a much stronger pace and times can often be misleading in turf races. Interestingly, Mi Bago covered the last quarter in approximately 23.49, not too shabby at all. His win in the Pulpit Stakes four weeks later was no surprise; he led all the way and won comfortably by 5 lengths from Hit That Review (who was a non-staying fifth when they met again in the Dania Beach, beaten 3 3/4 lengths). Can Mi Bago make it three straight wins in the Kitten's Joy? Of course he can but this will be a stiffer task over a longer trip and it is just possible that his good run is about to come to an end.

TEST SCORE improved markedly when runner-up to Chasing Liberty (winner of the Texas Turf Mile last Saturday) in the TBA Stakes over a mile at Del Mar in November, when Mi Bago finished fifth, 1 3/4 lengths behind him. Test Score finished strongly from off the pace to get to within a neck of the winner. He was off the bridle and caught out a little as the pace quickened halfway around the home turn, then accelerated nicely through the final furlong. One could say that he ran every bit as well as the prominently ridden winner. Like Mi Bago, Test Score was compromised by the lack of pace at Del Mar. He has been off since so may not have been trained for a big run here but he is an interesting contender. His dam, Joy of Learning, won one of her three starts. She is a half-sister to two classy performers; Coffee Clique, a smart filly who captured the Just a Game Stakes and Churchill Downs Distaff Mile, and Admission Office, an off-the-pace turf runner who won the 12-furlong Louisville Stakes as a 5yo and added the 8.5-furlong Arlington Stakes to his cv two years later. Neither of these was precious enough to run in stakes company at two and Test Score is bred to improve with age. >>>

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MAUI STRONG is a bit of a dark horse in the Kitten's Joy; a longshot who could well surprise a few. His chances don't look good on paper, given that he was beaten 3 1/2 lengths when third to Mi Bago in the Dania Beach Stakes. Maui Strong is almost certainly better than that showing though. He was very edgy in the preliminaries, sweated up badly, was difficult to get into the stalls and he had his head turned as the gates opened. In short; he was not a happy horse on the day. To make matters worse, an average pace worked against his running style. He did well to get up for third and we should not dismiss him here. A strong, attractive and scopey son of Kitten's Joy, this Dale Romans trainee looked a bit special when winning a mile maiden at Churchill Downs in November, having been unplaced when sprinting on his debut at Saratoga and third in a Keeneland maiden previously. After working out a trip from stall 12, he came from well off the pace, sweeping past horses to win easily under a hand ride. Passing the winning post 1 3/4 lengths in front of the favorite Plensa, with second favorite Final Gambit third, he may not have beaten stakes quality horses, but he was so much the best and he was impressive both during and after the race. Not only was he hard to pull up as he galloped out, looking like he'd like to do another circuit, Maui Strong was an absolute handful also cantering back to the winners' circle. He was so full of energy at Churchill, his Dania Beach run was best forgotten, and he fully deserves another crack at stakes company.

TIZ DASHING went straight from a narrow maiden win against Hit that Review (see Mi Bago) to the Awad Stakes at Aqueduct last fall. He went off favorite for the 8.5-furlong contest but lost by a head to Chad Brown's Valuation Metric. The winner was carrying 2lbs less than Tiz Dashing, who raced too freely in the race but ran on gamely to the wire. He is open to improvement

WALKING IN MEMPHIS went in at 24-1 one (quite a big price for a Mark Casse trained maiden winner at this meet) when taking his rivals from gate to wire over 8.5 furlongs at Gulfstream Park in December. He raced keenly and he was immature at the finish but managed to hold his late charging barnmate No More War at bay to win by a neck. It's hard to assess the form; note that Roger Roger, who was beaten a length into third place, runs in race 5 today.

CONCLUSION: Mark Casse has three of the four possible pace setters so perhaps he will be the one to control the speed in this race, though if he instructs his riders to take a hold (also Mi Bago's, as he may not stay this trip) then Luis Saez could glide unchallenged to the lead on Charlie's to Blame, who has a nice draw in stall two. This Californian visitor makes a lot of appeal as a straight win bet. The morning line is not out at the time of writing, but perhaps Mi Bago will be favorite, take money (again) and help us to a value price on Charlie's to Blame. Test Score, with good stakes form in the book, and Maui Strong, a maiden winner having hinted at potential, will both be favored if we see a strong pace. The latter must be monitored in the preliminaries; we would not like to see him misbehave like he did last time as he steps up in class.

GLOBEFORM SELECTIONS

A	2 CHARLIE'S TO BLAME	1st Charlie's to Blame
B	6 TEST SCORE	2nd Mauri Strong 3rd Test Score
C	3 MAURI STRONG	3-1 winner, 32-1 Exacta, 115-1 Trifecta (6 ran)

Charlie's to Blame / Del Mar maiden: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aHN2pSqtS1I&t=2s>

Mi Bago / Dania Beach Stakes (R9 / 19.30 min): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIMet_VB4pc

Mi Bago / Pulpit Stakes / race 9 (17:40 min): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmJ1CBuEekw>

Test Score 2nd & Mi Bago 5th / TBA Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BbKLoZEjGQ&t=197s>

Tiz Dashing 2nd / Awad Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEySWp3DhTI>