

Globeform Subscription Service

Previews and ratings by Geir Stabell



10

3:37 ET

GLOBEFORM RANKING

CIGAR MILE HANDICAP (G2) 8 dirt, Aqueduct Saturday, Dec. 6

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	MIKA 3yo	107p	107p - 103p - 80	Maker / M Franco
1	4	CRAZY MASON GF 116 also in Apr '25	116	114+ 116 - 100	Sacco / I Ortiz Jr
2	1	DOC SULLIVAN	111	111 - 107 - 109	J A Ortiz / Santana Jr
3	6	PHILEAS FOGG	115	115 - 111 - 115	G Rodriguez / Rosario
6	7	BISHOPS BAY GF 112 in Mar & May '25	112	110 - 109+ 110+	Cox / Prat
7p	3	PENTHATLON	104p	104p - 90 - 92	McGaughey / Alvarado
7	5	BRAZENLY	100	100 - 100 - ?	C Englehart / Velazquez

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

In the analysis and in horse bios: When you read for example "ran to **Globeform 114**" this tells you that it was the horse's best career rating; while when you see "ran to GF 114" written it simply tells you that the performance in question was worth 114 but it was not the horse's career best rating.

Most recent winners of the Cigar Mile

2024	LOCKED	GF 119p	Todd Pletcher	John Velazquez
2023	HOIST THE GOLD	GF 118	Dallas Stewart	John Velazquez
2022	MIND CONTROL	GF 115	Todd Pletcher	John Velazquez
2021	AMERICANREVOLUTION	GF 119	Todd Pletcher	Luis Saez
2020	TRUE TIMBER	GF 118	Jack Siston	Kendrick Carmouche
2019	MAXIMUM SECURITY	GF 130?	Jason Servis	Luis Saez

Average winning Globeform: 117.8 (excluding Maximim Security)

GLOBEFORM ANALYSIS

MIKA, who has been assigned just 114lbs, tops the ranking. Surprised about that? Me too; note that it's based on a provisional rating (given that it was earned against run of the mill rivals at Laurel Park) but this fast improving 3yo has looked well up Listed to G3 winning standard in his two most recent races. And with such a low weight, that's actually good enough to give him a chance in the Cigar Mile. He produced GF 103p when switched from turf to dirt for an impressive 9 1/4-length win over an extended mile (on a sloppy track) at Delaware in late May, and improved to **Globeform 107p** when cruising home by 14 1/2 lengths over 8.5 furlongs on a fast track at Laurel in mid-November (with a layoff in between). Mika made all and left the others in a different county, coming home geared down with at least another two lengths up his sleeve. His runner-up, Rhythm 'n Blues was coming off a maiden win at the ninth attempt, winning a four-runner race where he and the second drew 21 lengths clear. These are not the types of formlines we normally deal with but Mad Banker, who was third to Mika, was coming off a second to Call Me Fast, who beat him by 9 lengths. Call Me Fast, a five-time winner, went on to win a minor stakes race next time out.

This is a case where the question is; "how badly could the others have run?". Even when assessing the second and third to just GF 76 and GF 74 (i.e. way below decent allowance standard), Mika's rating becomes **Globeform 107p**. It may be a bit high but it may just as well be a bit low. The next question is what will it take for this Mike Maker trainee to win under this weight. He is up against older, well exposed horses, unlikely to improve; we know what they are, and probably ever will be capable of. If Mika runs to GF 108-110 he has a winning chance, but one problem with that angle is that he is likely to get a few pounds of overweight - so do keep an eye on that. Manuel Franco has done 118lbs on a regular basis lately but I'm not sure about his minimum riding weight. Anyone who knows, please drop us a line.

Either way; this really is a fascinating contender. The morning line is not out at the time of writing but Mika's is likely to be temptingly high. We are dealing with a young, progressive horse taking a step up in class, with weight conditions in his favor. I think we need to back this horse.

This gives me a rare and irresistible opportunity to boast about one of my first great value bets landed in this game. When Cigar went for this event, then the NYRA Mile Handicap, back in 1994 I had two days left of one of my early US trips. The obligatory pre-return-flight shopping at the mall was done; the last travelers checks and plenty of cash would not be heading back to Norway. Couldn't buy everything I wanted, ah well, there's always one last big race to handicap. Long story short; as non-smoker going right back to having tried two cigarettes and fainted at the age of seven, I disliked the name of one horse entered for the NYRA. "Cigar", I thought to myself, "what an awful name for a horse". Then I started handicapping. He was up against Devil His Due and Bertrando, both coming off poor runs in the Breeders' Cup Classic, Brunswick, coming off an awful performance in the Woodward, American Chance, coming off an eighth placed effort in the Breeders' Cup Sprint, Itaka, who was a losing chalk in the Sports Page Handicap four weeks earlier, and so on and so on. I did not fancy any of the favorites for the race at all, they seemed ready for a break, not yet another hard race. This 'badly named', unknown quantity trained by Bill Mott had at least won last time out, and that by 8 lengths as the second favorite in an allowance race over the NYRA Mile trip - and his weight in the NYRA was just 111lbs. My handicapping led me to the conclusion that 'with such a low weight, if this horse is capable of around 105 on my figures, he wins the race'. Did I *know* that winning an Aqueduct allowance heat by eight was up to 105? Not at all, but I reckoned it probably was. So I backed Cigar and he won by 7 lengths under Jerry Bailey; paying almost 9-1. Next day; one more trip to the mall, after all those Levi's jeans and leather jackets were about four times the price back home in Norway. After my return to the land of the midnight sun an extra bonus was selling a big feature to a sports weekly. Headline; "Cigar, American horseracing's new superstar?"

This is in no way an attempt at suggesting Mika might be another Cigar, but there are at least some similarities. Except for the fact that he is up against accomplished rivals that are coming off good runs. On the other hand, are Crazy Mason, Phileas Fogg and Doc Sullivan as good as Cigar's NYRA Mile runner-up Devil His Due, Bertrando, American Chance and Itaka were? I don't think so.

Note that Rhythm 'n Blues, hammered when second to Mika at Laurel, is entered for R7 at that venue on Saturday; his race is set to go off at 2:52 ET. Conveniently that's almost an hour before the Cigar Mile. >>>

CRAZY MASON is the most sensible selection, especially if Mika gets a few pounds overweight. This classy sprinter is stretching out to a mile, having shown much better form over shorter distances than on the three occasions when he did try mile tips in the past; but this one-turn mile might suit him - and the pace scenario should be to his liking. With plenty of speed in the mix we should see solid fractions, something that means stamina will come into play at the finish. It's a bit of a gamble to go for Crazy Mason, as there's no guarantee that he will appreciate covering a mile. He has been performing much like a horse that will, however, and if he runs up to his best he will be hard to beat. The 4yo son of Coal Front improved to **Globeform 116** when he came from well off the pace to win the 7-furlong Carter Stakes at Aqueduct in April, he returned the same rating when third to top class sprinter Book 'em Danno in the Forego Stakes over the same distance at Saratoga in August, and he ran to GF 114+ when badly pace compromised in the Vosburgh, also over 7 fur., back at Aqueduct in late September. The prominent runner Patriot Spirit had the run of the race that day and won by 1 1/2 lengths from Crazy Mason, who came with his customary late charge to beat Scotland by half a length for second. Scotland had been 3/4 length ahead of him in the Forego. **DOC SULLIVAN** was fourth in the Vosburgh, 3/4 length behind Crazy Mason. Crazy Mason has a good record at Aqueduct, he goes well after breaks and he gets Irad Ortiz Jr on board; he is the A-horse.

DOC SULLIVAN has shown good, consistent form through his five races since his March to July break. The first three were all over 7 furlongs; a win the Morrissey Stakes at Saratoga (beat The Wine Steward by a head), fourth in the Forego Stakes (2 3/4 lengths behind Book em' Danno, 1 length behind **CRAZY MASON**) and fourth in the Vosburgh (2 1/4 behind Patriot Spirit, 3/4 length behind **CRAZY MASON**). A month after the Vosburgh, Doc Sullivan dropped back to statebred company and ran second, beaten a neck by Bank Frenzy, in the 9-furlong Empire Classic. That distance is stretching his stamina and he gained revenge on Bank Frenzy when the met again in the 7-furlong NY Stallion Series Stakes in late October. Running over a sloppy track, Doc Sullivan flashed speed all the way and he drew off for an easy 5 1/2-length win over Dr. Kraft, with Bank Frenzy third. His best performances, both worth **Globeform 111**, came in that race and in the Forego Stakes. Doc Sullivan is as good on wet tracks as he is on fast tracks, and any change in the weather forecast would be good news for his connections; the rail draw probably wasn't though.

PHILEAS FOGG ran up to his previous best rating when second to Locked (won won the Cigar Mile last year) in the three-runner Woodward Stakes over 9 furlongs at Aqueduct in late September, and he has been rested since. With only three runners, and the third placed Post Time disappointing in much easier company next time out, the form may be rather dubious, but Phileas Fogg ran a game race and we know that he is capable of **Globeform 115**; he reached that level in the Suburban at Saratoga in July. He made all and just held on to win by a head when Antiquarian threw down a late challenge in the 10-furlong Suburban. Coming off a win in the Excelsior Stakes over 10 furlongs at Aqueduct and a game second to Awesome Aaron in the Pimlico Special over 9.5 furlongs, he improved again in the Suburban. It was a strong performance and Phileas Fogg has become such a consistent runner this season. He stepped up in class in the Jockey Club Gold Cup in late August, like the Suburban contested over 10 furlongs at the Spa. The race became a right mess and his rider's actions were the reason, as he came in soon after the gates opened caused terrible interference. Phileas Fogg kept on running and he passed the winning post in third place, beaten 1 1/2 lengths and 1 1/4 lengths behind Antiquarian and Sierra Leone, but was disqualified and placed seventh. At his best when allowed to dictate matter in front, he cuts back to a one-turn mile here, and it's unlikely that he will get an uncontested lead; so this will be a new experience for the 5yo son of Astern. In addition, he has joint top weight, and he will be trying blinkers for the first time. Looking at his ratings, he makes appeal; looking at all of the other factors, there plenty to make one skeptical about his winning chances here. It seems likely that he will go off as favorite or second favorite; either way he'll represent poor value.

BISHOPS BAY is the other top weight, like Phileas Fogg assigned 125lbs. He has also been very game and consistent this season and he is running of his best distance, but he has mainly been operating in races that are a notch below the races Crazy Mason and Phileas Fogg have contested, and it's hard to agree with his weight here. He improved to **Globeform 112** when beating Bendoog by a neck to win the restricted American Pharoah Stakes Overnight Stakes over 8.5 furlongs at Oaklawn Park after a two-month break in March, and he confirmed that rating by winning the Westchester over a mile at Aqueduct in May, beating Quint's Brew by half a length. Bishops Bay led all the way on both occasions, and he raced prominently also in his three subsequent starts; an easy muddy track score in the Salvator Mile at Monmouth in June (beat Nelson Avenue 5 1/2 lengths), sixth in the Forego (well behind **CRAZY MASON** and **DOC SULLIVAN**) and a win in the Forty Niner Stakes back over a mile at Aqueduct (by 3/4 length from Nelson Avenue, with Scotland third). This 5yo son of Uncle Mo is a reliable, honest performer, he is 2-for-2 at Aqueduct and he is 3-for-3 over a mile, and he retains to red hot Flavien Prat. Add these factors together and you have a horse that will probably be overbet, despite the fact that he needs to improve again to have a winning chance. >>>

PENTATLON is coming off his career best run, having moved up to **Globeform 104p** when gaining a comfortable 3 1/4-length win over Top Gun Rocket in a mile allowance race at Aqueduct in October. He came with a smooth run from off the pace and won with a bit in hand. Top Gun Runner has some decent form in the book, as does the third placed Sheriff Bianco; but the trouble with this form is that neither has done much to write home about in recent runs. Top Gun Rocket was last of seven on his preceding start and last of six on his next start; while Sheriff Bianco was a distant fifth of six on his preceding and a distant fifth of nine next time out. So it's fair to assume that Pentathlon was flattered but he had returned GF 103 when winning over 7 furlongs in the slop at Saratoga back in June and he is a decent horse. He may sneak into the Trifecta.

CONCLUSION: Crazy Mason has things in his favor here; if we were talking about 7 furlongs he'd be a strong bet; and there's every chance that the mile is within his compass. It might even suit him ideally, so he is the obvious selection, whereas Mika is the value bet in the race, even if he gets a few pounds of overweight. Doc Sullivan and Phileas Fogg have about an equal chance; neither would mind a wet track but the weather forecast does not give much hope of that. Bishops Bay would also love some rain, though his fast track form is also good. That the track is likely to be fast is another reason to go for Crazy Mason and Mika, as the others won't have a track condition edge on them if it does stay dry. Trifecta players using Crazy Mason / Mika as a double key can throw all others into the mix. Brazenly will probably find this too tough, but leaving one horse out should never be done.

GLOBEFORM SELECTIONS

A	4 CRAZY MASON
B	2 MIKA
C	1 DOC SULLIVAN, 6 PHILEAS FOGG

Crazy Mason 2nd / Vosburgh Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5XLY-ppGGDQ>
4th Doc Sullivan

Crazy Mason 3rd / Forego Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAi0FSxlu5w>
4th Doc Sullivan 6th Bishops Bay

Crazy Mason / Carter Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uPrC2ER9EtY>

Phileas Fogg 2nd / Woodward Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAxZxs3Xu1A>

Phileas Fogg 3rd (DQ) / Jockey Club Gold Cup: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NnBx8AJJz2A>

Phileas Fogg / Suburban Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDWyEVV3p9s&t=2s>

Bishops Bay / Forty Niner Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P8EzN8Q7JoQ>

Bishops Bay / Salvator Mile: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AUqTt3l3ExE>

Bishops Bay / Westchester Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhHYdwep8Ww>

Doc Sullivan / NY Stallion Series Stakes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M3JeaNo64uA>