Globeform Subscription Service
Previews and ratings by Geir Stabell

5:36 ET

GLOBEFORM RANKING
MAC DIARMIDA STAKES (G2) 11 fur Turf Gulfstream Park, Sat Feb 28

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	7	ZVEREV	109p	102 - 109p - 108	Maker / Prat
3	5	GRAND SONATA	112	104 - 105 - 112	Pletcher / Gaffalione
4	8	PADIDDLE	105	105 - 91 - ?	Dobles / Castellano
5	3	LAYABOUT	110	110 - 103 - 101p	Biancone / Egan
6	1	ECHO LANE *GF 103 also in Jun '25*	103	101 - 103 - 100	Crichton / E Gonzalez
7	6	ANEGADA	106	106 - 103 - 102	Maker / I Ortiz Jr
7	4	DANCIN IN DA'NILE	104	100 - 104 - 104	Cox / Alvarado
7	9	TANK *GF 104 in July '25*	104	102 - 102 - 0	David / L Saez
10	10	JUNIPERO SERRA	99	99 - 96 - ?	Drexler / Maragh
14p	2	WITHOUT	95p	95p - 92p - ?p	Motion / Velazquez

Most recent winners of the Mac Diarmida				
2025	CAPTURE THE FLAG	GF 105	Todd Pletcher	John Velazquez
2024	STARTING OVER	GF 109	Mike Maker	Edgar Zayas
2023	VALUE ENGINEERING	GF 115	Mike Maker	Jose L Ortiz
2022	TEMPLE	GF 110	Mike Maker	Jose L Ortiz
2021	PHANTOM CURRENCY	GF 109	Brian Lynch	Paco Lopez
2020	ZULU ALPHA	GF 119	Mike Maker	Tyler Gaffalione

Average winning Globeform: 111.1

GLOBEFORM ANALYSIS

ZVEREV tops the ranking based on his good performance when winning the Boone County Stakes at Turfway Park in December; but he was below that level when fifth, beaten 2 lengths behind the front-running winner **LAYABOUT** in the 12-furlong William McKnight Stakes at Gulfstream Park in January. Layabout was sent straight to the lead in that contest and ridden like stamina wasn't an issue - despite the fact that he had never tried further than 8.5 furlongs previously. Sometimes we see stretch-out runners ridden like this, as their connections take the view that 'if our horse stays he stays, and we will take a shot that he does'. In this case, however, it seemed obvious that trainer Patrick Biancone and rider David Egan knew they had a horse with plenty of staying power. Layabout raced with great zest and made sure the McKnight became a test of stamina; he just kept pouring it on in front, something that helped the late closer **PADIDDLE** to get up for second, 1 1/4 lengths behind Biancone's 6-1 winner. Padiddle has never been better and he looks a Trifecta candidate once more. Layabout improved to **Globeform 110** in the race, having run to GF 103 when beating Tiz Dashing by a nose in the Tropical Park Derby in December. Note that Tiz Dashing runs >>>

>>> in the Canadian Turf today (R4). Can Layabout complete the McKight / MacDiarmida double? These races are well connected and he obviously has a chance. Drawn in stall 3, he has a prominent runner to his inside (Echo Lane / 1). The start is close to the first turn and we can expect Layabout to make an attempt at taking charge right from the off. Echo Lane is stepping markedly up in distance (and also in class) and his best option must be to tuck in behind the leader (assumed to be Layabout). The only other speed in the mix is **TANK**, who is badly drawn and unlikely to appreciate this distance; so, yes, Layabout has a good setup here. The cut-back to 11 furlongs will also be in his favor. The one worry would be a possible bounce; as there can be little doubt that he had a hard race last time.

Zulu Alpha did the William McKnight / MacDiarmida double in 2019, while three recent winners of the MacDiarmida were coming off a second placed finish in the McKnight; Temple (2022), Value Engineering (2023) and Starting Over (2024) - and back in 2021 we saw Tide of the Sea winning the McKnight then run second in the MacDiarmida.

ZVEREV might be a danger. He is 3lbs better off at the weights this time and that equals about 2 lengths, the margin between him at Layabout in the McKnight. This 5yo son of Oscar Performance has improved since joining Mike Maker from Cherie DeVaux, with three wins from five starts for his new barn. After beating Fuerteventura by a hgead over 11 furlongs at Saratoga in August, he improved to GF 108p with a thoroughly game one-length win over the odds-on favorite Common Defense over the same distance at Churchill Downs in September. Common Defense went for the Red Smith Stakes at Aqueduct next, and was beaten just a nose by Cugino; a nice boost to Zverev's form. Still, Zverev went off at 7-1 when these two met again in the Boone County Stakes over 10 furlongs at Turfway Park in December. Whereas Zverev was at the front end at Churchill Downs, he came from last as he followed up with an impressive win on the Tapeta track at Turfway, this time beating Common Defense by half a length, with the useful yardstick Safe Trip Home readily beaten in third. Zverev improved again, and again he won the race in the manner of a horse with more to offer; he returned **Globeform 109p**. He ran to GF 102 in the McKnight, not what we had expected but not a terrible run either; and he should not be dismissed here. Well in at the weights, Zverev is capable of making an impact; he gets Flavien Prat on board and note that the Maker / Prat combo is sporting an impressive 32% strike rate.

GRAND SONATA produced good form but had a frustratingly winless 2025 campaign, when his first good run of the season was a narrow defeat under a tough weight in the 12-furlong MacDiarmida Stakes at Gulfstream Park in early March (running to GF 110). He went on to hit the board in better races later in the year. His career best, **Globeform 112**, was produced when he was runner-up to Fort Washington in the 10-furlong Arlington Million at Colonial Downs in August. The Million was his third runner-up effort of the season; he was beaten just a head when trying to give Capture the Flag 6lbs MacDiarmida, and he passed the winning post 1 1/2 lengths behind the smart winner Redistricting in the 11-furlong United Nations Stakes at Monmouth Park in July. His last two runs of the season where below par efforts and he has now been rested since finishing sixth in the Sycamore Stakes at Keeneland in October. Grand Sonata, now aged seven, has developed a habit of filling the exacta spot (9 times in 33 runs) but some of these defeats were in close finishes so it may be unfair to use the stat against him. He fits well into this race of course; the distance suits him and he has two wins over the course. At his best, he's a strong win contender; but is he quite ready for a big run after the layoff?

ANEGADA, like Zverev representing Mike Maker, has made steady improvement through his four most recent starts, from taking the 9-furlong Hawthorne Derby with a closing finish in October, to landing the much more competitive Connally Turf Cup over 12 furlongs at Sam Houston Park in January, when he improved to **Globeform 106** and beat Presider by a length; with the odds-on favorite Truly Quality 2 1/4 lengths further adrift in third place. Ridden just off the pace over the yielding turf course, Anegada took the step up in distance in his stride; though it needs mentioning that the pace was rather pedestrian (25.9 - 52.2 -1:18.0), something that suited him better than those he beat. Presider was a 10-furlong allowance winner at Colonial Downs in the summer, while Truly Quality was coming off a win in the Hollywood Turf Cup at Del Mar and went on to be third in the San Marcos Stakes at Santa Anita. Anegada could well improve again but his chances increase if the pace is slow - something Layabout's rider will probably not allow.

CONCLUSION: Long distance turf contests are often rather straightforward, but this race actually looks a bit tricky. Layabout is likely to have the tactical advantage, but Zverev is almost as good and he is the one who comes out best on the ranking, while Grand Sonata is the established class in the field; and Anegada is a bit of an unknown; is he a stamina horse or did the slow pace at Sam Houston simply make him look like one? Layabout was very game last time out so he gets a narrow vote, ahead of Zverev and Grand Sonata as B-horses, with Anegada and Padiddle as C-horses. A decent to strong pace will suit our top three, so perhaps the sensible plan is to just box them up in exactas; in an attempt at grinding out a profit. A real longshot getting into the Tri would be no big surprise. The one that looks intriguing is Graham Motion's French import **WITHOUT.** Based on ratings, this son of Lope de Vega has a mountain to climb, but he is bred to be a stakes performer and Motion could have found him a much easier task as he gives this lightly raced 4yo his second Stateside run, just four weeks after he filled second behind Chad Brown's Dirand over this course and distance. Without can improve. He has too much to find on the top three on the ranking but the gap up to the others is not all that big.

GLOBEFORM SELECTIONS

A	**3 LAYABOUT**
B	5 GRAND SONATA, 7 ZVEREV
C	6 ANEGADA, 8 PADIDDLE

Layabout / W L McKnight Stakes: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXemTKB0Nyo
2nd Padiddle, 5th Zverev

Layabout / Tropical Park Derby: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXVKLSAho6o

Zverev / Boone County S: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-CYMbfEQGOo

Grand Sonata 2nd / Arlington Million: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aU1Ad2KhIZE

Grand Sonata / 2nd MacDiarmida '25: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Fnh1WuBAP0

Anegada / Connally Turf Cup: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoALTuU2HdY