



East Avenue, the one to beat in the BC Juvenile

Chancer McPatrick, Chad Brown's Breeders' Cup Juvenile contender, was impressive when he came from well off the pace to win the Champagne Stakes at Aqueduct on Saturday, but less than an hour and a half later on the day we probably saw an even better juvenile strutting his stuff at Keeneland; the incredibly comfortable Breeders' Futurity winner **EAST AVENUE**. It's may be stretching it to say that he is markedly better than Chancer McPatrick, and perhaps he's not, but one thing's for sure, East Avenue is the one who has most speed. He combines easy cruising with stamina. That will make him a tough horse to handle at Del Mar. Bookmakers now have him at 9-2 and for the BC Juvenile. I'm surprised he's not much shorter.

Going off second favorite, behind Ferocious, East Avenue had no problems in beating that rival in the 8.5-furlong contest at Keeneland and, with the rest strung out to the tune of 36 lengths behind him, he looked at top class prospect, in what was only his second start. Tyler Gaffalione gave him a confident ride, sending the handsome son of Medaglia d'Oro straight to the lead and dominating the race from start to finish. There was a bit of 'half-scrimmaging' going into the first turn, intimidating Ferocious, but a claim of foul was correctly dismissed by the stewards. East Avenue travelled strongly in front and he ran out a very easy 5 1/4-length winner. He had the race won halfway around the home turn and he was under a hand ride through the last furlong, winning the BC prep with plenty up his sleeve. Ferocious ran a valiant race to be a clear second, though he never looked likely to pose a threat to the winner, who is trained by Brendan Walsh.

This form is so solid. Ferocious was coming off a game runner-up effort in the Hopeful Stakes at Saratoga, where he was beaten just half a length by Chancer McPatrick, who went on to beat Tip Top Thomas (a nice Saratoga maiden winner) by 2 3/4 lengths in the Champagne Stakes. That's a good indirect form boost to East Avenue's performance and there are direct lines to like also; Filoso and Dapper Moon, who ran third and fourth a long way behind East Avenue in the Breeders' Futurity, had both impressed in maiden heats at Saratoga on their preceding starts. Going back to East Avenue's debut win at Ellis Park, where he bolted up by 8 lengths, we find that he had a talented colt named Built almost ten lengths behind him in third place. Built, a scopey and attractive colt trained by Wayne Catalano, turned up in an 11-runner maiden at Keeneland 24 hours after the Breeders' Futurity, and won as he pleased.

East Avenue is sure to improve again, he will have no trouble with the distance, and that he travels so well straight out of the gates makes him an ideal fit for Del Mar. By multiple G1 winner and successful stallion Medaglia d'Oro, this colt is out of the unraced Dance Music, a daughter of Ghostzapper. Dance Music's dam, Dance Card, is well known in racing and breeding circles; she has also produced champion miler Cody's Wish (Curlin) and G2 winner Endorsed (like East Avenue a son of Medaglia d'Oro).

Breeders' Futurity

