

SANDOWN PREVIEW

November 15, 2008

SANDOWN CLASSIC 2400M

Group 2 WFA
RACE 7, 4.10pm

In the past 25 years, only five horses have won the Sandown Classic (2400m) after starting in the Emirates Melbourne Cup (3200m); the latest was **Zipping** in 2007, who had finished fourth to his stablemate Efficient in the Cup at Flemington.

Zipping backs up again as a firm favourite to repeat last year's win, and although on paper his ninth behind Viewed in the Melbourne Cup doesn't match his fourth in 2007 (and 2006), it was in the view of many just as good a performance, and probably a better "lead-up" run to the Sandown Classic, as he ran smack bang into the back of Gallopin who was dropping out of the race after choking down.

Jockey Dan Nikolic said it took him 300m to get the gelding balanced only to run into a succession of retreating Irish plodders – first Honolulu, then Alessandro Volta and finally Septimus – between the 500m and the 300m. Zipping's storming finish was all too late, although the difference between 11th and finishing in the first 10 was \$115,000.

The Sandown Classic is a race of good quality and depth that also reflects some of the best "second tier" form during the spring, particularly through the three horses that missed the Melbourne Cup to fill the placings in the Group 3 Queen Elizabeth Stakes (2500m) on final day – **Capecover**, **Light Vision** and **Baughurst**.

Trainer John Sargent felt **Red Ruler** wasn't mature enough to run in this year's Cup, and the high class New Zealand 4YO remains the horse to test Zipping on the strength of his good

sixth in the Caulfield Cup, and he has proved himself at weight-for-age by finishing second to Princess Coup in the Group 1 Kelt Capital Stakes (2040m) at Hastings in October.

Add to the mix the Group 1 Yalumba Stakes (WFA 2000m) winner **Douro Valley** who missed the Flemington carnival in preference to the Sandown Classic after finishing a disappointing 13th behind All The Good in the Group 1 Caulfield Cup (2400m), a race in which he finished second in 2007.

While the improving **Road To Rock** has outside claims despite being disadvantaged at weight for age, it can be expected that **Boundless**, after her tiring 15th (fourth on the turn) in the Melbourne Cup, is hard to fancy, but her form in the autumn, and at home, was well up to this.

Danny Power Tips: Zipping to beat Red Ruler, Capecover and Douro Valley.

TEMPO: MODERATE

The lack of natural front-runners in this race opens the door for **Douro Valley** to repeat his Yalumba Stakes (WFA) performance when he surprisingly took the lead at the 1400m. Jockey James Winks was able to dictate the terms, making the race a sprint home, and Douro Valley, at \$41, held on to beat Guillotine and Pompeii Ruler.

Boundless overraced when chasing the exuberant Irish trio in the Melbourne Cup and Greg Childs might have to lead if Boundless takes charge, which could put some pace into the race.

Red Ruler has drawn to get the box-seat run behind the pace while **Zipping** will go back from his wide draw. The Queen Elizabeth Stakes trio are likely to settle behind Red Ruler and **Red Lord**.

AND ALSO

No Comment and **Little Bull ...** sounds like a couple of trainers not giving much away about their horses' chances. Could be, but two-year-olds of those names hold the key to Triple M's Rocking Horse Stakes (formerly known as the Merson Cooper Stakes) over 1000m on the Hillside track at Betfair Park (formerly known as Sandown).











No Comment (b f Danzero-Won't Tell, by Rory's Jester), trained by John Hawkes and sons (formerly John Hawkes), was an impressive debut second to Leon Corstens' Starspangledbanner and looks the one to beat. Early oddsetters agree and have her favourite at a shade under \$3.

Leon Corstens (formerly Bart Cummings' foreman) has **Little Bull** (b c Noverre (USA)-Pettrious, by Rivotious (USA)) racing for the first time after trialling nicely at Flemington. He is safe in early assessment around the double-figure mark. The stable's 2YO's are hot this season with two wins and a third, so this colt can't be ignored. **Marveen** (ch f Orientate (USA)-Shiny, by Forest Glow (USA)) won the Merson Cooper last year, and on her win in the Listed The Lexus (1400m) on Cup day she is the better chance of the fillies in the Sandown Guineas. If you're not prepared to take about \$6 on her getting the 1600m, **Lucky Thunder** (b c Lucky Owners-Smytzer's Thunder, by Thunder Gulch), at around \$3.50-\$4, will run the trip, judged on his close second to the smart Dr Doute's in the Group 3 Carbine Club (1600m) on Derby day.

Stephen Howell

SPEED MAP

Predicted positions on settling

				
Boundless	Red Lord	Light Vision	Reggie	Zipping
				
Douro Valley	Road To Rock	Red Ruler	Baughurst	Capecover