Handicapping Analysis
Sat July 8th, 2023

Stakes Spotlight

Belmont Park Race 11

Post Time 5:21 PM CST

Analysis by Emily Gullikson

Pace makes the race and makes it the most interesting when the race shape plays against the favorite as is the case in the G3 Victory Ride Stakes. Morning line favorite, #5 MAPLE LEAF MEL is one of a group that projects to be forwardly placed and part of the "Fire" Contention and honest 38 SpeedRate. #2 DAZZLING BLUE can often break slow (SLOG, RUSH) though can recover to show early speed and projects to be part of that early pace - potentially vulnerable as a Q1 Circle. #6 DOWNTOWN MISCHIEF while not a contender she has a purpose in this race bringing more sprint speed (Quad I), though class on the weaker wise stepping up from the listed stakes and overall figures on the softer side as well. #4 ADELIESE'S SMILE is positioned today in Quad IV though that is due to some trips and keying off her more competitive races, she is one that has some early speed and likely to race forwardly placed, a change from that Plot position and add more fuel to the "Fire."

That forwardly placed group should be joined by ***#8 RED CARPET READY***, one that is likely to fight for favoritism in this race. She has the class and given the preference of the Quad I (Large Square) group, though as part of the contention could get caught up in the fast pace.

That scenario allows **#1 INTERPOLATE** to save ground and work first run and stalking trip. She showed ability as a juvenile, especially STRONG maiden win (B+ OptixGRADE) over this course. She has improved with each start coming back this season as a sophomore and holds class earning a B OptixGRADE in the Beaumont (G2) back in April at Keeneland. **#3 VAHVA** showed some distance limitations in the stakes route races at the Fair Grounds and projected to move forward with the return to ONE_TURN which she has with the improving OptixFIG in Kentucky and looks to continue her progress here.