

OSCAR'S 2007 WOODWARD GREEN SHEET

"HELP WANTED!"

2007 will be known forever as the year in which the careers of two notorious Hispanic males came to an end. *Deseo que no fuera verdad! Qué lástima!*

DIS GRACEFUL



VERY GRACEFUL



First we have **Attorney General Alberto Gonzales**. Alberto raced to the top of his profession in 2005 but shortly thereafter became embroiled in a bitter dispute regarding his part in the firings (Bushwhacking?) of eight U.S. Attorneys. Almost immediately the inquiry sign was posted, and he has been sitting on the verge of a DQ ever since.

Alberto saved the Congressional Stewards some valuable time and the taxpayers considerable money by resigning earlier this week. Stud plans have not been announced at the time of this writing. However, I do have it on good authority that he applied to the Jockey Club for a name change to Alberto the Great. They denied it, saying that it was too close to a name already used by an individual who retired under more honorable circumstances.

The second notorious Hispanic male who resigned this year is the **2006 Horse of the Year Invasor**. This son of Candy Stripes is the most famous Argentine-bred since Eva and Juan Peron! He raced to the top of his profession in 2005 when he won Uruguay's Triple Crown, and continued to fire into 2007 with victories in the 2006 BC Classic and 2007 Dubai World Cup. Unlike Alberto, nobody disputed those firings!

Unfortunately Invasor was retired following a workout on June 23 after fracturing a bone in his right hind ankle. (All Gonzales fractured was his credibility.) Invasor retired having won 11 of 12 races with his only defeat coming in his 4th place finish in the 2006 Dubai World Cup. His career earnings amounted to \$7.8 million. He will begin his stud career at Shadwell Farms in Lexington in 2008.



So what we are left with are job openings at the top rung of these two professions. President Bush is studying the past performances of several candidates, trying to decide who he can appoint as Attorney General that will not have problems vetting-out. (This has been a significant problem for him in the past. As a matter of fact he is considering moving the whole operation from Washington, D.C. to New Bolton!)

I have been studying past performances myself, in the Daily Racing Form, and I've found someone who just might vet-out as a successor for both Alberto as Attorney General and Invasor as Horse of the Year.

His name is Lawyer Ron!



Ok, let's get the easy job done first. Is he qualified to be Attorney General? He certainly has the appropriate qualifications - he is obviously a lawyer, (well duh, he's not named Plumber Ron), plus who in the world is going to take issue with a decision made by an Attorney General who weighs approximately 1,100 pounds and can run 40 miles per hour?

The second job opening will be more difficult to fill, and the competition is much stiffer. Ron can take the next step in updating his resume and presenting his case for the Horse of the Year job on Saturday if he receives a winning verdict in the Grade 1 Woodward.

Let's see what his chances are and who his competition is for this job:

Todd Pletcher is struggling at Saratoga. Well ok, most trainers would like to "struggle" like that, but if I told you that Pletcher would be winning at only about an 11% clip going into the last week at Saratoga, would you believe me? You probably would have thought that Pletcher must have been auditioning for a part in the new movie *The Invasion*. It looks like Pletcher, it talks like Pletcher, but there is no way that this can be the *real* Pletcher!

In the midst of his "struggle" there were some bright spots. One was Lawyer Ron's victory in the 1 1/8 mile Whitney. Not only did he pull away down the stretch with authority to win by almost 5 lengths, he won from post 10 and set a new track record in the bargain! In fact, Lawyer Ron's winning time of 1:46.64 was so amazing in comparison to the other races run on the same card that an appeal was filed. The appellate court reviewed the time using the video recording of the race, and the original time decision was upheld. Appeal denied! In winning this race he guaranteed himself a place in the trial for the BC Classic.

The big question now is can he repeat, or even come close to his Whitney performance? Pletcher felt that Ron was actually helped by the outside post in the Whitney, and is concerned about his inside draw for this race. The only other time that he broke from this post this year was in the Met Mile where he finished a weakening 3rd to Corinthian. However, he did win the Rebel as a 3 year-old from post one, and quite frankly, I think what beat him in the Met was the distance, not the post. I think this mile and one eighth, where he is 3 for 4, with one place, is his best distance.

He doesn't have to repeat his Whitney performance to win, but he can't regress too much either.

WANDERIN BOY

In the Whitney, Wanderin Boy went right to his customary position at the head of the pack, and although he maintained an undisputed lead into the stretch, he was pressured the whole way by Fairbanks. He had no answer for Lawyer Ron who sped past him, but he did manage to hold off a fast closing Diamond Stripes and everyone else. That was huge race for him.

You have to wonder what would have happened if Fairbanks had not been in that race. Like Wanderin Boy, Fairbanks wants the lead in all his races. Well we will get our chance to see on Saturday, as he is not entered.

The jockeys on the horses that have some speed (yet are best when stalking) will be faced with the dilemma of whether to use some of their horse's speed to keep Wanderin Boy within the same zip code, sit back and wait for someone else to do it, or hope that Wanderin Boy stops wanderin and comes back home to them.

If Wanderin Boy can relax with an uncontested lead he will have enough left to successfully hold off the closers. Wanderin Boy is very dangerous when allowed to cruise alone in front, and without Fairbanks, or another "need the lead" horse running, he has a legitimate chance to win this mile and an eighth race. He has won 3 of 8 at this distance as you might expect a son of Seeking the Gold out of a Pleasant Colony mare would be able to do.

Corinthian and Political Force have good tactical speed, however, it is doubtful that either Kent Desormeaux or Cornelio Velasquez will elect to go after Wanderin Boy. Lawyer Ron began his career as a speedball, but has been trained to relax, a running style that has helped him improve from very good to brilliant. So you can bet that he will not challenge Wanderin Boy.

Given the above, Wanderin Boy would be my top choice except for the fact that he seems to have established a bizarre pattern of peaks and valleys.

Last October in the Jockey Club Gold Cup he ran a terrific second to Bernardini with a Beyer of 107. In his next race, the Clark (an 1/8 of a mile shorter), he went to the lead but then backed up to finish sixth with a 98 Beyer. In his next race, the Alysheba, he again showed brilliance, practically wiring the field with a Beyer of 103. Then he wanders around to a fifth place finish and a 90 Beyer in the Stephen Foster. The Whitney was next, a race where it took Lawyer Ron's track record to beat him. His Beyer was an outstanding 108.

So let's look at his finish and Beyer patterns since last October:

2 nd	107	1 ¼ CD fst
6 th	98	1 1/8 CD fst
1 st	103	1 1/16 CD sly
5 th	90	1 1/8 CD fst
2 nd	108	1 1/8 Sar fst

If that pattern continues, he is due for a stinker on Saturday. I had to look twice to make sure that I didn't copy the recent pattern of the stock market by mistake!

From this pattern you could predict he will run a Beyer in the low to mid 90's, and it's going to take one of at least 106 to win this race. Still there is nothing more dangerous than a horse who will be lone speed, and has the pedigree to get the distance.

Very, very mixed feelings on this guy.

DIAMOND STRIPES – Oscar’s Bud Longshot



Lone speed is one dangerous commodity. We have that with Wanderin Boy. Another is a lightly raced horse who appears to have real talent. Grasshopper fit this second category, and so does Diamond Stripes. This 4 year-old son of Notebook has had only 6 races. Three were last year and he got his picture taken 3 times, including the G3 Pegasus.

This year he won an optional claimer and then finished second twice, in the G1 Stephen Foster and G1 Whitney. In the latter he was gaining on Wanderin Boy with every stride as they crossed the line. With the exception of his maiden race, he has run consistent Beyers in the 104-106 range. If he repeats that pattern on Saturday he will be on the board.

Another thing to consider is that he is trained by the red hot Richard Dutrow. Through August 30 he has won with 10 of his 30 starters, including 3 of 5 in stakes races (4 of 5 were on the board)!

Do not overlook this Diamond in the rough.

POLITICAL FORCE

Political Force showed a completely new dimension when he won the 1 ¼ mile Suburban – stamina! He had done most of his racing and all of his winning in races of one mile or less. In his two previous races at 1 1/8 miles, he lost ground in the stretch, although he still achieved a credible on the board finish.

He is trained by Allen Jerkens – no problem there, and his Beyers in his last 3 races are 105, 107, and 105. That should place him in the running here if he repeats.

My problem with him is that he has won 4 races, but is 0 for 6 at Saratoga. He has finished 2nd twice and 3rd once, but he's never been a winner here. He is very iffy to hit the finish line first, but he could hit the board, and if he is anywhere near his 10-1 morning line, he would be a big overlay.

CORINTHIANMAGNA GRADUATESUN KINGBRASS HAT

I've grouped these four horses together because basically my comments are the same for all. These are horses, who on occasion can run exceptional races, but who also jump in and out of running a good race more often than Britney Spears goes in and out of rehab!

As an odds-on favorite in two of his last three races, **Corinthian** has burned almost as much money as Leona Helmsley left in her will to her dog. He didn't just finish off the board, he finished last in one race and next to last in the other.

Sandwiched between those two terrible races was a brilliant performance in the Met Mile where he defeated both Political Force and Lawyer Ron! He has also defeated Jazil, not once, but twice! Go figure!

While he jumped in the air at the start of one of his recent poor races, he had no excuse in the other (either medical or racing luck-wise) where he finished over 12 lengths behind Political Force, a horse that he had beaten a month earlier.

Ok, his win over Political Force was at one mile and the Suburban was at 1-¼ miles. However, he also finished over 8 lengths behind Magna Graduate in a 1 1/8 mile stake in April. On the other hand he's won 2 of 5 starts at 1 1/8 miles. He's just about as inconsistent as you can get.

Magna Graduate runs like a valedictorian at times (Stephen Foster), while at other times he completely flunks out (Whitney). Both were Grade 1 stakes run at 1 1/8 miles on fast tracks. Was it Saratoga that caused him to flunk his mid-term? It must have been and given that poor showing, I can't support him.

Sun King has won only one race in two years, but he has finished on the board in 7 of 11 starts during that time, including a 3rd place finish as the favorite behind Premium Tap in last year's Woodward. He was "pinched back early" in the Whitney, but he still should have finished better than 10th.

He is 0 for 4 at Saratoga, but shows a bullet work on August 24 as the best of 49. He is a one run closer who I think would be better off running in the Forego, one race earlier.

Brass Hat is 4 for 7 at this distance, but one of those losses was a dismal 8th place finish in the Whitney behind several others who are also entered today. His Beyers since he returned from Dubai have been nowhere near good enough to win this race and his post will hurt him. If he could somehow run back to his winning performance earlier this year in the Donn he will be a major player, but I'm betting that it won't happen.

HOW TO BET THE WOODWARD

Even though I anticipate a bounce, I think Lawyer Ron should win. He will be able to save ground from his inside post, swing off the rail coming into the stretch and catch Wanderin Boy, running him down like he did in the Whitney. Wanderin Boy should last a little longer because I expect him to be lone speed. I also expect a bit of a bounce on his part.

Diamond Stripes is the horse who is most likely to improve off the Whitney. First, as stated above, he is lightly raced. Second, this is his 3rd start off a layoff and that is often when a horse fires his best shot. Third, he is from the red hot Dutrow barn.

I think it was Einstein (the man, not the horse) who said "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different outcome."

Well, I've been often referred to as "a little nuts", but never insane, so based on that:

I am going to recommend the same trifecta that won the Whitney. The only caveat that I will make is to box WANDERIN BOY and DIAMOND STRIPES in the place and show spots under LAWYER RON.

Can Lawyer Ron lose his case? Sure he can – he's not Invasor or even Street Sense. One of those inconsistent horses I mentioned earlier could revert to one of their brilliant performances, but absent that, I think the only horse who could be guilty of beating Lawyer Ron is Wanderin Boy. Yes, we're back to that dangerous lone speed scenario again.

In any event, please keep the kids home on Saturday, this may be an "X" rated race. I have it on good authority that Lawyer Ron will be dressed in a bridle, saddlecloth, and saddle. However this dual candidate for Attorney General and Horse of the Year is so well prepared that he will be appearing in the Woodward Court without his briefs!

Buena suerte, Lawyer Ron.