

ARIMA RACE CLUB
RACE DAY PREVIEW
DAY 19 MONDAY 31ST MAY 2010

Triple Crown set for grand start

The gates will open on the 2010 Triple Crown on Monday with a mega clash in the \$315,000 Carib Brewery Limited Guineas at Santa Rosa Park, Arima. The richest race of the year thus far will headline a ten-race Carib Brewery Limited-sponsored Indian Arrival Day holiday card. Just 11 West Indian-bred three-year-olds have been declared to do battle over 1,800 metres at 4.55 p.m. in the Grade I contest. Last year Santa Rosa Boy won the Guineas at odds of over 80/1, but this time it will be very difficult to imagine an outsider even getting into the trifecta with three potential superstars in the line up.

Grand Riviere and Treasure Hunt have been dominating their contemporaries since they were juveniles last season, but Go For The Gold joined the conversation when he won a two-turn event by an incredible 17 lengths three weeks ago. There are advantages and disadvantages to supporting all three and that certainly adds even more intrigue to the 4.55 p.m. day's penultimate event. Go For The Gold is the least experienced of the trio with just three starts under his belt, but his runaway victory on May 8 makes Balkrishen Sagan Maraj's chestnut a very serious contender. To put that performance into perspective, the Dr Ryan Shim-trained Jamaican-bred colt covered the 1,750 metres in 1:52.26 seconds, more than two seconds faster than the time that Grand Riviere had registered in winning the Gleneagle Stakes a week earlier.

But as she has already proved in the past, it would be very dangerous to discount the Poon Tip Stud Farm Association filly based on times. When they won the juvenile events (St James Stakes and St Ann's Stakes) at the end of last season, Treasure Hunt had stopped the clock more than a second faster than Grand Riviere. But the filly was able to produce a major upset when their only clash ended in a thrilling finish on February 20. Trainer John O'Brien has admitted that Grand Riviere only does what is necessary to win. And she surely knows a thing or two about being in front at the finish line as the daughter of A Great Team has won her last five starts and has only been defeated just once in seven career outings.

Despite his narrow defeat by Grand Riviere, Treasure Hunt has been by far the most impressive of this group. The Joanne Kanta Persad-owned Jamaican has not only crushed the opposition in his four other starts, he has prevailed in fast times on every occasion. Venezuelan Wilmer Galviz will be aboard for the very first time as connections have brought down the United States-based former champion jockey to partner the Douglas Bennett-trained chestnut. It should be a battle royale between the three for the top prize of \$189,000. Another Challenge, who finished third in the 'Flamingo' and then impressively beat the older horses over 1,750 metres, is expected to occupy the other place on the board.

Majestic is an unbeaten horse in Trinidad, but he has only faced the starter on one occasion since his arrival and may not be ready to make an impact at this level right yet. As was the case in last year's classics, there are more Jamaican-bred runners than locals in the field and the disparity is so great that just three of the 11 - Grand Riviere, Dionysus and Kickupastorm - were bred here. Just before the Guineas, Sweet Alex - arguably the quickest horse out of the gates in the country - will be in action, and despite having to tote the heavy impost of 58.5 kilos, it will be very difficult to deny last year's

Stewards Cup runner-up in the Shandy Carib Handicap 1 & Lower event. Eight will be in opposition over 1,350 metres at 3.15 p.m., including Stewards Cup fourth Mister Kingston, and hat-trick bound American-bred three-year-old Exquisite Touch. The Pick 6 wager will begin in the fourth event at 1.25 p.m. with arguably the most competitive event on the card. All nine horses including last year's Guineas hero Santa Rosa Boy, Illusionist, a winner of three of his last four, hat-trick bound Skyline Pigeon, Savvy, and light-weight American-bred Regent Street - declared for the Carib Beer Conditional Handicap A must be considered in the 1,750-metre affair.

The race is sandwiched between two HI-5 races and there will be four on the programme for only the second time. HI-5 action will get going at 1.47 p.m. in the third race, the 1,200-metre Ginseng Up (\$7,500) Optional Claimer, which has a single-winner bonus of \$30,447. The first two races have been scheduled to be contested over 1,100 metres on the turf, but the rainy season has begun with a vengeance and the grass may not be a possibility on Monday. The other turf race is the Black Wolf Restricted Handicap, a 1,600-metre contest which has attracted 14 horses including 2008 Stewards Cup runner-up Divine Bull, Forwardtracking, Call Of The Wild, Dream Girl, Powerball and Sweetmutacat.

Mission King has also been declared for the 2.10 p.m. contest but last year's Republic Bank Derby runner-up will only compete if the race is switched to the main course. Post time for the 19th round of the Arima Race Club's 2010 Season is 11.30 a.m.