

ARIMA RACE CLUB
RACE DAY PREVIEW
DAY 26 SATURDAY 17TH JULY 2010

Music Maestro, 'Thunder' back in action

MUSIC MAESTRO and Sound Of Thunder will make very quick returns on Saturday after scoring impressive victories only a week ago at Santa Rosa Park, Arima. The Glenn Mendez-trained runners will be part of a seven-race card for the 26th round of the Arima Race Club's 2010 Season. Music Maestro, who scored by over eight lengths to be the most convincing winner on last Saturday's card, will move up from Restricted Handicap class to tackle a group of quality opponents in a Starter Allowance event. Before his breath-taking triumph last week, the American-bred five-year-old had raced in Starter Allowance company and was beaten "off the board" by over ten lengths. Music Maestro had won the first two starts of his career in similar fashion to his only victory this year, but has lacked consistency ever since because of struggles with injury.

But when the lovely-looking Errol Stables-owned dark bay colt decides to run he must be respected and if he is in the mood again this week he would be very dangerous, especially with a penny stamp of about 47 kilos. Five of the seven runners have won their previous start, but the horse to beat could be one of the other two. Honest Hero, runner-up in his last two starts, has even held his own against the top class horses as he proved by finishing fourth behind giants Bruceontheloose, Sweet Alex and Storm Street in the Santa Rosa Dash on May 8 over Saturday's 1,200-metre trip. Allan Madoo's American-bred four-year-old will race with 52.5 kilos, just three more than when he ran in the Grade II \$150,000 contest. However Honest Hero came back just one week after that gallant effort to finish a tame fourth over course and distance behind that grand creole Mister Kingston. He has had a two-week break between races this time and gets another shot at Luca's Gold, another consistent locally-bred horse who finished more than two lengths ahead of him when second to Mister Kingston. Luca's Gold, who seems to be better than ever at the moment, received 2.5 kilos from Honest Hero that day, but will be one kilo heavier this time.

Mission King edged Honest Hero by a head over 1,750 metres two weeks ago when receiving 7.5 kilos. Last year's Republic Bank Derby runner-up will only get one kilo on this occasion, but this versatile Jamaican chestnut is in grand form and has won four of the last five races he completed. After being off the course for an entire year, 2008 Stewards Cup runner Divine Bull, came back in January and has not returned to his best. This American-bred six-year-old has been in two-turn events in three of his last four starts and managed to score his first win since his comeback over 1,600 metres on the turf last time out a month ago in Starter Allowance company.

We will see on Saturday if Divine Bull still has what it takes in a sprint. Trinity Fire, also owned by Gerard and Sharon Ferreira and trained by Sharon, made all the running to win over 1,100 metres in a good time last time out on June 26, but it was only his third career start and the American-bred three-year old may not yet be ready for this level of competition. Roman Anthem may also need more time as this American-bred four-year-old has run only twice in T&T and has been disappointing on both occasions. The feature is the penultimate event and the gates are scheduled to open at 4.53 p.m. The day's activities will start at 1.30 p.m. with the only staying event on the programme. Sound Of Thunder, a four-length winner in a \$35,000 Optional Claimer last Saturday, has been allotted the massive impost of 60 kilos, but three-kilo claimer Alan Podmore has been booked.

The race will be over 1,600 metres on the turf and the unplaced second favourite in last year's Derby has finished second in his last two attempts over course and distance. Eight will oppose Sound Of Thunder, including fellow Jamaican-bred four-year-old Call Of The Wild and American-bred three-year-old Cherokee Wells. The Pick 6 will begin in the very next race with nine locally bred maidens involved in a 1,200-metre contest at 2.08 p.m. And since there was no winner of the last Saturday's Pick 6, there is a carryover of \$1,500. And despite the fact that there are just seven races, there will be HI-5 betting in three of them - the third, fifth and curtain event. The first HI-5 is billed for 2.52 p.m. and 13 horses have been declared to race over 1,100 metres on the turf in the \$15,000 Optional Claimer. There are also 13 horses - West Indian-bred three-year-old maidens involved at 4.15 p.m. in a 1,300-metre contest, and the card will conclude at 5.40 p.m. with 13 horses racing over 1,200 metres in a \$20,000 Optional Claimer.