



## Analysis: Louisiana Derby's the time to bet Chestertown

By **Reinier Macatangay**  
March 19, 2020 01:20pm



Share on Facebook



Share on Twitter



Share via Email



Photo: Chelsea Durand/NYRA

Wells Bayou, Chestertown and Shake Some Action were my main contenders last weekend upon first glance at Saturday's Grade 2, \$1 million **Louisiana Derby**. Given Fair Grounds' early draws, there's always time to further define those choices.

Fourteen 3-year-old horses will compete at the extended distance of 1 3/16 miles, making it a unique contest compared to the nine-furlong prep races. After pondering the race further, **Chestertown** looks like the one to upgrade. This Tapit colt runs like a long-winded router who will love the distance.

Chestertown debuted on Oct. 4 in a Belmont Park maiden sprint restricted to New York-breds. While a six-furlong sprint may sound like the ideal spot for the son of Artemis Agrotera, he did not show any of his dam's precociousness or flashy brilliance, running evenly for third. He never got closer than 2 ½ lengths, nor did he fall farther than three lengths.

Horses that run the same tempo are likely to stretch out successfully.

### RELATED PAGES

- » PROFILE: [Steven M. Asmussen](#)
- » RACE: [Louisiana Derby \(2020\)](#)
- » HORSE: [Chestertown](#)



### Meet Reinier Macatangay

My first time at the racetrack came as a 5-year-old kid at Santa Anita Park. For most of my younger life, that was the only track I attended other the occasional visit to Hollywood Park.

Years later, after graduating California State University, Stanislaus with an English MA, I began writing for Lady and the Track. From late 2014-2016, my articles were seen on a weekly basis and covered handicapping, interviews with well-known racing personalities, fashion and more.

The handicapping style I use concentrates on pace analysis. Some horses are compromised by the pace. Others are helped. Handicappers just starting out cannot easily see how pace affects the finish, so with this blog, I hope to

On an unrelated note, I enjoy video games and attending anime or comic-book conventions. I am currently based in Kentucky, but spend a lot of time traveling between there and California.

But the longer distance helped Chestertown break his maiden, and he moved well toward the finish line indicating the desire to go longer.

From there, connections opted to send Chestertown to Fair Grounds with trainer Steve Asmussen's main winter string rather than remain in New York. He stretched out again, this time taking on more open company in a local Jan. 18 allowance optional claimer 1 1/16 miles; Chestertown ran third by 5 1/4 lengths. However, he also faced some fast horses in Blackberry Wine and Digital. Despite finishing third, Chestertown improved his speed figure on TimeformUS to a 103, showing ascending numbers.

Chestertown's three middle pace figures for the Jan. 18 race were 102, 102 and 101, followed by a raw final 103 figure. He failed to accelerate along with Blackberry Wine and Digital, but he never actually stopped, either.

On Feb. 15, Chestertown stretched out to nine furlongs in another local optional claimer, and this time he ran his career-best race, even if second.

Stuck in eighth and last behind a crowded pack, Ricardo Santana Jr. had to wrangle back Chestertown through crawling fractions of 25.50 and 50.24.

Approaching the far turn, Chestertown began to move up. But he became stuck again once he reached fifth in between horses and behind the leaders Ranaan and Winning Impression. As Chestertown waited, Shake Some Action began to roll up on the outside and take dead aim at the leaders.

Shake Some Action took advantage of the clear path and met Winning Impression at the top of the stretch, putting his nose in front after a short battle. But Chestertown had to keep waiting behind his stablemate.

In mid-stretch, Unthrottled finally gave Chestertown some room. Chestertown accelerated with a strong move and almost caught Shake Some Action late, only losing by a neck. He did switch to his wrong lead as he rallied, but that part is forgivable considering his other problems.

When considering the amount of waiting time, Chestertown ran the best race.

For the runner-up effort, Chestertown received a 100 TimeformUS Speed Figure. But comparing that number to the 103 received two back is tricky because of the extreme pace scenario and trip presented in his more recent race. Those factors affect the final time.

Notice that Chestertown still earned a raw TimeformUS figure of 104, his career-best number if not adjusted down. For what it is worth, his pace figures also kept gradually rising in the race (52, 72, 85 and 96).

Chestertown now stretches to 1 3/16 miles, which is perfect given he always finishes strong. With the right trip, he could take the next step forward.

A \$2 million auction purchase, Chestertown started as the favorite in all his previous races. But in this tougher spot, he is almost guaranteed to go off at a higher price, which makes this a good time to play him from a value standpoint.

While Chestertown's 15-1 morning line is not realistic, he might offer 8-1 to 10-1.

In addition, John Velazquez hops aboard. Some handicappers might see Velazquez as an upgrade over Santana Jr., although the change means Santana chose to ride Chestertown's stablemate Silver State.

### BEST OF THE BLOGS



#### Division Rankings: Starship Jubilee blasting off at age 7

In most years, the three stakes races that Starshi...



#### HorseCenter: Derby delay reaction; Louisiana Derby picks

This week on HorseCenter, co-hosts Brian Zipse an...



#### 3-year-old pedigrees: Donna Veloce brings class and distance

The classy Donna Veloce earned her first graded v...

### UPCOMING MAJOR RACES

3/21	2020 Mervin H. Muniz Jr. Memorial Handicap (G2)
3/21	2020 Louisiana Derby (G2)
3/21	2020 San Luis Rey (G2)
3/21	2020 Fair Grounds Oaks (G2)
3/21	2020 New Orleans Classic (G2)

### TOP STORIES



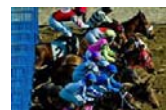
#### Gulfstream Park suspends racing one day; new protocols in place

After multiple jockeys, including Eclipse Award wi...



#### NFL's Payton positive for COVID-19 after attending Oaklawn races

Sean Payton, head coach of the NFL's New Orleans S...



#### NYRA suspends live racing after positive coronavirus test

The New York Racing Association announced Thu...



#### Head to Head: Handicapping the 2020 Louisiana Derby

Saturday's Louisiana Derby (G2), the hig...



#### Analysis: Bonny South's in with a Fair Grounds Oaks chance

Finite enters Saturday's Grade 2, \$400,000 Fair Gr...

RSS



Subscribe to RSS

possible. But if some in this field regress at the longer distance and he keeps coming, Chestertown can upset.

### Horse Racing Nation Comment Policy

Please read our [Comment Policy](#) before commenting.



18 Comments

Horse Racing Nation

Disqus' Privacy Policy

Login

Recommend

Tweet

Share

Sort by Newest



Join the discussion...

LOG IN WITH



OR SIGN UP WITH DISQUS ?

Name

Email

Password

Please access our [Privacy Policy](#) to learn what personal data Disqus collects and your choices about how it is used. All users of our service are also subject to our [Terms of Service](#).



**deano** • 6 hours ago • edited

Nice rider switch on Chestertown but 1 Major Fed, 2 Mailman Money, and 8 Royal act should do better at decent prices. Throw in 10 Enforceable for exotics.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**moveover** • 9 hours ago

this may be the last 'derby trail' race we see in a while. Hate it, but inevitable.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**deano** → moveover • 6 hours ago

Will do wonders for horses on the mend. Nightmare for handicappers but that's what makes horse racing a challenge. We'll see how it plays out. Stay healthy.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**travel\_vic** • 10 hours ago

Will this one go? Backstretch people will test positive over time...

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**slewof damascus** • 12 hours ago

Lots of ifs in that analysis. But great connections here. The Bromans won a BC F/M Sprint with a 60-1 shot. Getting to the KD would definitely check a big one off their bucket list. I'm rooting for him all the way.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**John M** • 14 hours ago

So now we have three closers in this race, Enforceable, Silver State, and Chestertown with the latter two having made bullet workouts recently.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



That wasn't the conclusion I came to about chestertown

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Dean Tharp** · 16 hours ago

Isn't it time for Fairgrounds to follow suit and cancel all racing?

^ | v 1 · Reply · Share ›



**Bobby Flay** → Dean Tharp · 10 hours ago

no

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Roland Williams** · 16 hours ago

My first glance in (PP order) was Fed Biz, Portos, Enforceable, Silver Slate, and Modernist.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**travel\_vic** · 17 hours ago

How many on the backstretch here are currently spreading the virus to others all the while ASYMPTOMATIC?

1 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Alwuhush** → travel\_vic · 12 hours ago · edited

How many people are walking around Walmart doing exactly the same thing?

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**travel\_vic** → Alwuhush · 12 hours ago

quite a few methinks

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Marius Josipovic** → travel\_vic · 15 hours ago

You mean like everywhere else only worse? You can't believe that applies in a more severe way to backstretch workers at a closed track taking precautions. How about all the millennials running around like nothing is happening while asymptomatic and not taking precautions and spreading it around to those that are at risk. That is a thousand times worse. And I doubt he got it on the backstretch and probably got it elsewhere, but of course could spread it, so he's at home.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Krishaboss74** · 21 hours ago

If this horse wasn't purchased for such a high amount, I can say with confidence that he wouldn't even be considered in this race. Reiner, I know you're a big fan of the beyer books. Remember what he says about purchase price? Meaningless unless if they're running for less than they were purchased for on debut.

Maybe you're right and he'll get some more pace to run at than his last few. He certainly looks to be an underlay from his 15-1 ML and I can't justify taking less than 20-1 on him. I'll post my pick when I have more time to go over the pps. Nonetheless, good luck!

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Bobby Flay** → Krishaboss74 · 10 hours ago

I concur. People are selecting him for all the wrong reasons.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



**Marius Josipovic** → Krishaboss74 · 18 hours ago

I think you're right, if not for the high ticket price, he wouldn't be getting

their favorite, some think he will be the derby winner yet he hasn't even started yet. Why is that? 3.6 million dollar purchase price.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



**bsheets30** • a day ago

At this point in there careers, is Johnny V an upgrade over Santana? I have my doubts. Did like Chestertown when I looked at the PP's though. Don't have a pick for the race yet.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

[Subscribe](#)  [Do Not Sell My Data](#)