

EBLOUISSANTE GOES UP TO SARATOGA

Well, it is not exactly a hot sports weekend, F1 is off until next weekend's Hungarian Grand Prix and the NFL preseason will have to wait for two more weeks when the Cowboys and Dolphins open up with the NFL Hall of Fame Game. But fear not lugnuts, the time seems ripe to let our hair down with some trash talk and there IS one very exciting event on tap to give us the necessary reason.

Yep, the great Zenyatta's little sister, Eblouissante, is going racing at Saratoga Downs today in a Grade stakes race. The 84 Lumber/Shuvee Stakes that is. From BloodHorse, who has been superb tracking Zenyatta and Eblouissante:

Eblouissante, half sister of 2010 Horse of the Year Zenyatta, will return to the races July 20 when she aims for her first career stakes win in the \$200,000 84 Lumber Shuvee Handicap (gr. III) at Saratoga Race Course.

Off since extending her record to 2-for-2 on Jan. 17 in Southern California, the 4-year-old daughter of Bernardini is one of seven fillies and mares entered in Saturday's 1 1/8-mile race, although she is one of several potential starters in the field cross-entered in other races.

Eblouissante, whose name means "dazzling" in French, did not make her debut until late in her 3-year-old season, posting an easy 4 1/4-length victory going 1 1/16 miles on the synthetic track at Betfair Hollywood Park. Two months later, she scored by 1 3/4 lengths at the same distance in an optional claimer at Santa Anita Park. After some minor issues, she has been

training forwardly at Belmont Park since her arrival from the West Coast, most recently breezing seven furlongs in 1:27.18 July 14.

"After she arrived here she has started to fill out," said trainer John Shirreffs of the imposing filly who stands nearly 17 hands tall. "She has grown a lot and has put on a significant amount of weight, so I'm really happy with the way she has developed over the last month. She looks strong. I think time is the most important ingredient in a horse's development. Their bodies need a chance to catch up."

Eblouissante, who is also under consideration for an optional claimer around two turns July 22 at the Spa as well, drew post position 3 for the Shuvee with Junior Alvarado named to ride. She was listed at 4-1 on the morning line.

The race appears to be going off a little after 5:00 pm EST, and I can find no evidence of any live television coverage. Also, sadly Emptywheel's roving horse racing reporter, Rosalind, will not be able to cover Eblouissante's trip east from her normal comfy west coast confines of Hollywood Park and Santa Anita. If anybody finds a good live stream or TV coverage, please link in comments.

Otherwise, what you got going today, let's chat!