



### **The Juddmonte International Stakes Sectional Timing Analysis**

Sound judgement of pace in the heat of the action is not easy to pull off, as a few of the athletes in Rio have been showing recently, but it is a joy to behold when it occurs.

Andrea Atzeni was on the best horse in today's Juddmonte International Stakes at York, in the shape of Postponed, and the pair might still have won ridden somewhat differently. But Atzeni – with more than a little help from Jack Mitchell on stable-companion and pacemaker King Bolete – left nothing to chance and ensured that the valuable prize went where it should.

The TurfTrax tracking archive at York stretches back to 2012, the year in which Frankel won this race in unforgettable style, and those who did their homework from it knew what to expect this time round.

A time of 31.68s after 2.4f showed that King Bolete was going pretty fast: it was 0.67s faster than Frankel managed at the same stage four years earlier. Highland Reel and Postponed were tracking the pace at this stage, with the others strung out.

The order, and the margins between the horses, remained much the same mid-race. But, as TurfTrax's on-screen sectionals showed, the pace was not so generous. Mid-race furlongs of comfortably over 12s contrasted with historical ones which were slightly under that benchmark.

As a result, Postponed had both plenty in the tank and a good track position when the pace would up from just after halfway. And when Atzeni asked him to strike for home 3f out, most of his rivals still had a few lengths to make up.

Postponed put in successive 11.08s furlongs from 5f out to 4f out and from 4f out to 3f out, followed by individual furlongs of 11.15s, 11.62s and, finally, 12.38s.

The last-named shows that Postponed was beginning to tire slightly, also underlined by his drifting right under pressure. But Highland Reel, who had stuck doggedly to his rival, could not get past, and nor could Mutakayyef, who came from further back and was short of room late in the day.

There had been some suggestions that Postponed lacked pace for a top contest on good to firm going at a distance short of his usual 12f, despite evidence to the contrary in his sprint finish when winning the Coronation Cup at Epsom. This performance settled the matter once and for all.

Whether third-placed Mutakayyef might have finished a bit closer given less to do is a moot point: the sectionals suggest he would have, but the problem with him was the opposite of the perceived problem with Postponed, in that he had not previously proved his stamina for this extended 10f.

That earlier comparison between Postponed and Frankel is worth exploring a little further.

While Postponed, good though he is, is no Frankel, the two horses' overall winning times in this contest were just one-hundredth of a second apart, with Postponed's faster. It should be remembered that Frankel ran his race efficiently enough to put up the joint-best Timeform timefigure of this century that day.

TurfTrax sectionals show that Postponed was 0.28s ahead of Frankel after 2.4f, 0.71s behind after 5.4f, and 0.56s ahead with 3f to go, from where Frankel finished more quickly. Frankel's fastest individual sectional of 11.05s came between 3f and 2f out, while Postponed's were the aforementioned 11.08s from approaching the straight to 3f out.

Interestingly, the fastest sectionals of all in this year's race were the several under 11.0s between 4f out and 3f out from Postponed's pursuers as they tried to close. The Grey Gatsby managed to run a 10.79s furlong at that juncture.

Wider time analysis shows that conditions were quicker at York this year (when the course record was very nearly broken in the opener) than they had been four years ago, but not by much.

There is only one Frankel, but Postponed deserves to be regarded as a well up-to-scratch winner of this historic race, aided by an accomplished partner in the saddle. TurfTrax's horse-by-horse and furlong-by-furlong sectionals give the full picture of what went on.

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