

The Boston Globe

MONDAY, AUGUST 4, 2008

COVERED-ISH

TODAY: Times of clouds and sun; perhaps a p.m. T-storm. High 82-87.
TOMORROW: Partial sunshine; late-day shower possible. High 75-80.
HIGH TIDE: 1:42 a.m., 2:14 p.m.
SUNRISE: 5:40 SUNSET: 8:00
FULL REPORT: PAGE B7

Suffolk schedule looks promising

MassCap may fit as Classic prep

By Mark Blaudschun

GLOBE STAFF



HASKELL
NOTEBOOK

OCEANPORT, N.J. — With a stirring down-the-stretch run, Big Brown reestablished his credentials as a winning — and perhaps super — horse in the \$1 million Haskell Invitational yesterday at Monmouth Park.

The key question now, following his 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ -length victory over Coal Play, is what's next for the 3-year-old bay colt?

"I think right now [trainer **Rick Dutrow**] will evaluate him and we'll plan a sensible campaign," said Big Brown co-owner **Michael Iavarone**.

"The Breeders' Cup Classic is

the ultimate goal. But there are only a few [Breeders] Cup prep races] out there and the MassCap is right in the middle of it."

That would be the \$1 million Massachusetts Handicap Sept. 20 at Suffolk Downs, and discussions are underway between Iavarone and Suffolk officials about bringing Big Brown to East Boston.

"We've already talked and they are class guys," said Iavarone, who said he would probably make a decision in the next few weeks. "They are interested and we are interested and they're definitely in the crosshairs. Let's see how things work out."

MassCap officials are toying with the idea of enticing last year's 3-year-old champion, Curlin, into the field and raising the purse, perhaps as high as \$2 million.

The general plan for Big Brown is to make sure he is healthy and have him run in one race before

the Classic Oct. 25 at Santa Anita.

Dutrow all but ruled out the Travers Stakes at Saratoga in three weeks, feeling that the time between races was too short.

Given the time frame Dutrow and Iavaorne want, the Goodwood Stakes at Santa Anita Sept. 27 looms as the only other logical contender.

That race, like the Classic, will be run on a poly turf surface, which could be perceived as an advantage since Big Brown never has run on it before.

Record-setter

Big Brown went off as 1-5 favorite, which matched the biggest favorite in Haskell history, equaling the 1-5 odds Holy Bull had in 1994 ... The handle was \$17,642,954, a record, outside of the Breeders' Cup, in New Jersey. The previous record was \$14,122,636 at last year's Haskell.