A Palin entry could upend Bachmann and benefit Pawlenty in Iowa

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With the apparent purchase of a home in Arizona and the re-hiring of aides, Sarah Palin has once again reignited speculation about a 2012 presidential run.

Her candidacy is by no means a certainty, but every ambiguous tug on the strings by the pit bull in lipstick seems to get the pundits twitching.

Perhaps the dearth of enthusiasm for the already declared GOP hopefuls is the encouragement that Ms. Palin needs after previously stating last October that she would run “if there’s nobody else to do it.”

Not exactly a stirring answer to a patriotic call to duty but sufficient to unleash analyses about how she might shake up a field that includes the Godfather’s Pizza guy and the candidate with the Name That Shalt Not Be Googled. (It’s Santorum. Go ahead but remember that you were duly warned.)

If Ms. Palin does indeed run her magnetism would very likely inject some energy and excitement into the lethargic albeit very early primary race.

But what would it specifically mean for Minnesota’s Michele Bachmann and Tim Pawlenty?

The St. Paul Examiner has previously speculated that Mike Huckabee’s contraction of Cat Scratch Fever was a potential boon to Ms. Bachmann and Mr. Pawlenty’s chances in the January 2012 Iowa primary that Mr. Huckabee won three and a half years ago.

Ms. Palin’s arrival could upend Ms. Bachmann’s hopes of capitalizing on a large Evangelical contingent in the Iowa GOP that Mr. Huckabee left behind.

The two candidates are similar charismatic fire-breathing social and fiscal conservatives of dubious intellect that play fast and loose with reality and facts.

But Ms. Palin has national recognition and a superior fund-raising apparatus. The shrewd Iowa voter may therefore see more longevity and possibility in Ms. Palin.

While Ms. Bachmann may benefit from her Iowa roots, only the most ludicrous of Ms. Bachmann’s comments reach a national audience, while seemingly every tweet from the Twit is digested across the country, aided and abetted by Ms. Palin’s cable news channel sponsor.

To be quite frank, Ms. Bachmann is the poor man’s Palin.

Ms. Bachmann could, however, play spoiler to Ms. Palin by siphoning enough votes from her to open the door for another Evangelical that is more temperate, reasonable and accomplished than a one half of a term governor and a House Representative.

Iowans might prefer someone that knows that the Founders fought to preserve, not end slavery. They may favor a candidate that can name a Founding Father, for that matter.

Mr. Pawlenty is the only one of the three that has officially declared his candidacy. He has over seven months to convince Iowans that Minnesota Nice is a good alternative to Arkansas Amiable.