

## RACE BY RACE ANALYSIS



by *Ron Nicoletti*

#### FIRST RACE:

**4 BEARS GENERAL** makes his local debut after showing major improvement when Lasix was added for his 6-furlong sprint vs. \$16,000 maidens at Woodbine. Trainer Reade Baker has the gelding working consistently at Palm Meadows in preparation for this assignment. **2 B. B JAZZ**, now in the Tino Attard barn, drops to the \$30,000 level after rallying 3-wide to finish second vs. maiden special weight competition at 7 furlongs on the Woodbine Polytrack. You might want to bet a few Looneys' on this all-Canada exacta. **3 TO TELL THE TRUTH**, 1 of 2 in the 7-horse field from trainer Nick Zito (Todd Got Even), races without blinkers after following a respectable fourth place finish vs. \$50,000 maidens at Keeneland with a chase-and-fade performance when blinkers were added for a \$30,000 maiden test at Churchill Downs.

**SELECTIONS: 4-2-3**

#### SECOND RACE:

**1 YES MASTER**, a reclaim by trainer Pat Reynolds, plummets to the \$6,250 level after failing to show much in back-to-back sprints vs. \$25-\$35K claimers at Aqueduct. The recent half-mile drill in :48 & 3 indicates he likes the local surroundings (5-0-2-0). **9 SUPER WHIPPER** is cutting back to 5 ½ furlongs after a solid local debut vs. similar at three-quarters of a mile in which he dueled for the lead throughout and was beaten only three-quarters of a length. **6 STARSHIP VICTORY** will try to make it two in a row at the distance after drawing off to defeat \$6,250 'three-lifetime' claimers at Calder by 6-plus lengths. Trainer Steve Dwoskin has jockey Javier Santiago in the saddle again. **8 INDY CONNECTION** earned a spot on the ticket after hitting the board in four consecutive sprints vs. similar competition at Calder. Consistency is always an attractive trait when dealing with low-level claimers.

**SELECTIONS: 1-9-6-8**

#### THIRD RACE:

**7 RUN JAMAICAN'S RUN** is turning back to a mile and a sixteenth after encountering traffic on the turn (boxed in) when finishing second vs. a solid group of \$25,000 types at 9 furlongs on the Calder turf. **10 NOORISSUN** drops into the claiming ranks after running into trouble on the far turn (checked) and finishing seventh, as the favorite, in a 1-mile maiden special weight test on the Calder sod. Trainer Todd Pletcher has John Velazquez atop the daughter of Chapel Royal.

**1 NOBLE RULE**, 3 for 5 'in the money' on the turf vs. better, returns to the grass after rallying through the lane to finish third vs. maiden special weight competition in a 2-turn mile on the Calder main track. **11 OH YES I PRAY** drops, and stretches

out around 2-turns with blinkers added, after saving ground and getting beat 4 ¾ lengths vs. \$75,000 maidens at 6 furlongs on a 'yielding' Belmont turf. Trainer Carlos Martin has Eibar Coa handling the stretchout.

**SELECTIONS: 7-10-1-11**

#### FOURTH RACE:

**6 CAR THIEF** is expected to show more after pressing the pace along the inside, on a track that favored mid-path runners, and finishing fifth in his local debut at this level and distance. Trainer Eddie Broome has Alan Garcia penciled in for the return assignment. **2 CHOBE**, now in the Bruce Levine barn, drops into this \$10,000 'two-lifetime' claimer after facing tougher on the turf up north. Trainer Levine, 36% with new tenants to his barn, 39% with the 61-180 day layoff, and 36% with the turf-to-dirt angle, has Eibar Coa at the helm. **11 HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE** is turning back to 6 furlongs after stalking the pace and fading to finish third vs. similar in his local debut at a mile. Trainer Rebecca Maker has Chris DeCarlo in the saddle.

**1 MR GOLD PROSPECT** makes his first start since coming within a half-length of defeating similar at 6 ½ furlongs on the Calder main track (Nov. 20).

**SELECTIONS: 6-2-11-1**

#### FIFTH RACE:

**9 SWIFT STRIKE** makes his local return after rallying to come within a length of notching this condition on a 'yielding' Aqueduct turf. Trainer Jonathan Sheppard has John Velazquez atop the gelded son of Smart Strike. **3 STAR PLAYER** will try \$35,000 'three-lifetime' claimers after his 2-race win streak, which included a maiden special weight victory on the Monmouth turf, ended when he bumped at the start and finished fifth, as the favorite, vs. entry-level allowance competition on the Jersey Shore. Trainer Chad Brown has Jose Lezcano handling the colts first start since Aug. 15. **6 OPPORTUNE MOMENT** is cutting back to a mile after coming within a neck of notching this 'three-lifetime' condition at a mile and a sixteenth on the Calder green. **8 OSCEOLA PRINCE** is turning back to a mile after setting the pace and weakening late to get beat 1 ¼ lengths vs. \$16,000 'three-lifetime' claimers on the Calder turf. Trainer Wesley Ward, 4 for 8 (50%) at the meeting thus far, has Elvis Trujillo at the controls.

**SELECTIONS: 9-3-6-8**

**SIXTH RACE:**

**11 HOPE FOR GOLD** drops to the \$15,000 level after dueling for the lead and tiring, as the even-money favorite, in her \$32,000 career debut at Calder. Trainer Wesley Ward has Paco Lopez named to ride. **3 DARCU**, trained by Ed Plesa Sr., and **9 QUICK PICKLE**, conditioned by Ed Plesa Jr., are an interesting father and son combination. The former makes her first start since finishing second, as the favorite, in her career debut at this level and distance (Nov. 1) while the latter, second at this level on Dec. 8, drops after failing to fire when Lasix was added for her recent outing at the \$25,000 maiden level. **1 GUMPY** drops down with blinkers added after facing better on both dirt and turf at Laurel. Trainer Dale Capuano, 23% with first-time blinkers, has Pedro Monterrey Jr. handling the inside post.

**SELECTIONS: 11-3-9-1**

**SEVENTH RACE:**

**5 DIVINE MASTER**, 6-5-1-0 on the turf, which includes a 2-2-0-0 record at Gulfstream, debuts locally for trainer Scott Lake after failing to show much vs. \$40,000 allowance optional claimers on a 'muddy' Laurel main track. Jermaine Bridgmohan rides the turf specialist. **4 BECKHAM BEND** will face multiple winners after drawing clear on a 'soft' Aqueduct turf to defeat \$25,000 'two-lifetime' claimers on what is clearly his preferred surface (3-2-0-0). Trainer Christophe Clement has Alan Garcia atop the lightly raced 4-year-old. **9 T HARRY**, now in the Peter Walder barn, who was competitive on the grass vs. this caliber of competition during 2008 (7-3-1-0), makes his first start since finishing fourth vs. \$25,000 claimers at Aqueduct on Nov. 23. Walder, 29% with new acquisitions, has hot jock John Velazquez at the controls. **3 DAVID K** makes his local return after a frustrating end to his 2008 campaign in which he finished a late-closing third in three consecutive \$18,000 claimers on the Hawthorne turf. Trainer Dave Kassen has Elvis Trujillo try to get him out of third gear.

**SELECTIONS: 5-4-9-3**

**EIGHTH RACE:**

**4 BRADY BABY** will get the acid test vs. winners after drawing off like an international 'good thing' to break his maiden at first asking by 13 ¾ lengths. Trainer Michelle Nihei has the son of Gone West training sharply at Palm Meadows in preparation for this assignment. **7 WEB GEM**, beaten only a head in the Grade 3 West Virginia Derby in August, is back vs. allowance company after hitting the board in 1 of 2 stakes races contested a 9 furlongs on the Aqueduct main track. Trainer Nick Zito has Elvis Trujillo in the saddle. **2 AUSTIN LAVIVA BABY** is stretching out to a mile after steadying on the backstretch and finishing third in his local return at 6 ½ furlongs. He's sitting on a winning performance. **5 JEDI CODE** is stretching out a mile after ending his 2008 campaign with a late-closing second, as the favorite, in a 'key' 7-furlong allowance test at Churchill that has produced three next-out winners. Trainer Ian Wilkes has Julien Leparoux named on this intriguing possibility.

**SELECTIONS: 4-7-2-5**

**NINTH RACE:**

**11 FLIBBERJIBIT** is cutting back to a mile after an eventful local debut at a mile and a sixteenth in which she steadied both on the first turn and backstretch to avoid running up into rivals, and still managed to finish third. Trainer Mary Wolfson has Javier Castellano named to ride. **8 SENIOR RITA LADY** is a late-striding daughter of Fusaichi Pegasus who makes her first start since hitting the board in 1 of 3 overnight stakes on the New York turf circuit. Trainer Rick Violette Jr. has her working sharply on the Palm Meadows turf. **9 THOUGHTLESS MOMENT** makes her North American debut for trainer Christophe Clement after hitting the board in 5 of 10 races in Ireland (10-2-3-0). Trainer Clement, who has the mare firing bullets at Payson Park, adds Lasix and Edgar Prado for this assignment. **1 ACCORDING TO PLAN** will try and flaunt her speed from the rail after steadying on the first turn and fading to finish seventh behind Flibberjibit - but beaten only 3 ¾ lengths. The course, kinder to speed with the rail set at 60 feet, could be the key to her success.

**SELECTIONS: 11-8-9-1**

**TENTH RACE:**

**1 MORE THAN WILLING** is stretching out to 9 furlongs for the Ken McPeck juggernaut after recovering from an awkward start to finish a fast-closing second in his local debut at three-quarters of a mile. Kent Desormeaux will handle the stretchout. **9 REPENT IN TIME** will make his first trip around 2-turns after an eventful 7-furlong career debut at Calder in which he broke slowly, was steadied repeatedly, and was beaten only three-quarters of a length. The son of Repent certainly has the bloodlines need to handle a mile and an eighth. **10 DISCREET STREET** is a late-striding son of Street Cry who will try 9 furlongs after closing from far back to finish third in his local debut in a 1-turn mile. Trainer Ian Wilkes has Javier Castellano handling the ultra tough outside post (10). **8 RIGHT OF WAY** should be ready to offer more for Jerkens and Uske after making a 4-wide bid and fading to get beat 4 lengths in his local debut at this level and distance.

**SELECTIONS: 1-9-10-8**

**BEST BET: RACE 10 - 1 MORE THAN WILLING**

**LONG SHOT: RACE 5 - 1 JEBSTER**

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