

## RACE BY RACE ANALYSIS



by *Ron Nicoletti*

### FIRST RACE:

**10 EON** is dropping to the \$15,000 level, and turning back to 7 ½ furlongs, after setting the pace and fading to finish third in his local debut vs. \$25,000 maidens at a mile. Trainer Nick Zito has Julien Leparoux atop strictly the one to beat in the opener. **5 SCARIFF ISLAND** plummets to the bottom of the maiden scale after facing special weight company during his 3-race campaign last summer. Trainer Dale Romans has Cornelio Velasquez named to ride. **12 RIFLMAN** is a son of Northern Afleet who has trained consistently enough to be a factor in his career debut. Trainer Rick Dutrow Jr. has Mario Madrid in the saddle. **3 INTRUSIVE** is stretching out to 7 ½ furlongs after hitting the board in 1 of 2 starts vs. similar competition at shorter distances. Trainer Teri Pompay has Alan Garcia named to ride.

**SELECTIONS: 10-5-12-3**

### SECOND RACE:

**3 GOLDEN MYSTERY**, who is also entered to run in the Darley Ocala Sprint on Monday, looks strong if co-owner/trainer Jose Pinchin opts to run her here. The daughter of Awesome Again makes her allowance debut after a very impressive first-out maiden victory at the distance. Note that the back-to-back bullet workouts in preparation for this assignment. **1 LIGHT GREEN** and **1A CASANOVA MOVE** are parts of an Edward Evans entry that merit serious consideration. The former, trained by Todd Pletcher, stretches out after holding on gameily to break her maiden here at 6 furlongs while the latter, conditioned by James Jerkens, wears blinkers after finishing fourth in the 'key' Grade 3 Old Hat that has produced impressive next-out winners Elusive Heat and Frolic's Dream, who won the Grade 2 Forward Gal. **6 HONESTLY** debuts locally for the hot Marty Wolfson barn after following her monster maiden victory with a stalk-the-pace-and-fade fourth place finish vs., first-level allowance runners at Calder. **5 ZOI ZOI**, another from Pletcher, faces winners after breaking her maiden at Calder by 8 lengths.

**SELECTIONS: 3-1-1A-6-5**

### THIRD RACE: THE HURRICANE BERTIE (G3)

**2 GAME FACE** stretches out to 6 ½ furlongs after recovering from a troubled start (in tight) to win the 6-furlong Grade 3 First Lady Handicap here by almost 3 lengths. Trainer Todd Pletcher has John Velazquez in the saddle. **3 ANY LIMIT**, who won the 2007 Hurricane Bertie after running strongly - and actually winning - the 6-furlong First Lady Handicap, stretches out after finishing second behind Game Face in the 2009 edition of the First Lady. Trainer Allen Jerkens has Cornelio Velasquez in the saddle. **4 LOVELY ISLE** is stretching out an additional half-furlong after stalking the pace and finishing second here, as the favorite, in the 6-furlong \$300K Sunshine Millions Filly & Mare Sprint. Trainer Bobby Frankel has Edgar Prado in the saddle again.

**SELECTIONS: 2-3-4**

### FOURTH RACE:

**3 SONOFAWITCH** is stepping up, and stretching out, after dueling early and drawing clear late to defeat \$10,000 'two-lifetime' claimers, at a mile, by 3 ½ lengths. Trainer Peter Walder, 22% with horses winning consecutive races, has John Velazquez in the saddle. **8 CHARKO**, beaten a nose at this level and distance at Calder last June, stretches out to 9 furlongs after getting beat 2 ¼ lengths in his local return at a mile. Trainer Barry Croft has Cornelio Velasquez in the saddle. **6 CRUZETTE** will debut at the distance after dueling from start-to-finish and getting beat only a neck in a game local debut at a mile. Trainer Kerry Zavash has Junior Alvarado named to ride. **2 WARM MEMORIES** will try a mile and an eighth after making a 4-wide bid and finishing fifth - less than a length behind Cruzette at a mile. Five-pound apprentice Jose Ortiz rides.

**SELECTIONS: 3-8-6-2**

### FIFTH RACE:

**2 VUE DE CHAT** is stretching out to a mile and a sixteenth (12-2-1-2), and racing without blinkers, after setting the pace and weakening late to get beat a half-length vs. a notch tougher at a mile. Trainer Peter Walder has John Velazquez rationing her speed without the shades. **1 ROAD TRACK'S DREAM**, now in the Larry Rivelli barn, hopes to conjure up a little more for the stretch run after finishing a willing fourth behind **4 TALENTED PRINCESS** in her local debut at this level and distance. The latter, another from the Peter Walder barn, was game in defeat when she rallied wide to come within a length of scoring at this level and distance. The only knock on this half of the Walder uncoupled entry is the 6-0-0-1 record on the local sod. **6 HALFBETTERTHANNONE** is stretching out to her most accomplished distance (6-1-0-2) after rallying up the rail to finish less than 2 lengths behind Vue de Chat in their recent clash at a mile.

**SELECTIONS: 2-1-4-6**

### SIXTH RACE:

**8 ACCESS CODE**, now in the Larry Rivelli barn, cuts back to 6 ½ furlongs after dueling early and drawing clear late to defeat \$10,000 'three-lifetime' claimers, at a mile, by 5-plus lengths. **1 SANTURI** is turning back to 6 ½ furlongs after drawing clear late to defeat \$6,250 'three-lifetime' claimers at Calder by 3 widening lengths. Trainer Ed Plesa Jr. has Paco Lopez handling the inside post. **7 SMOOTH VALENTINE**, who defeated \$6,250 conditioned claimers at Calder on Dec. 27th, drops after making a 3-wide bid and fading to finish fifth behind also eligible Flint Mountain in a \$10,000 claimer at the distance. **13 FLINT MOUNTAIN** just needs to get in off the top of the also eligible list to merit serious consideration on the ticket. The winner of 50% of his Gulfstream races (8-4-0-2) is spotted perfectly vs. \$6,250 claimers.

**SELECTIONS: 8-1-7-13**

**SEVENTH RACE:**

**5 BECKHAM BEND**, a previous winner at the distance, steps up to the next logical level after making a 5-wide charge to defeat \$25,000 'two-lifetime' claimers at a mile and a sixteenth on a 'soft' Aqueduct turf (Dec. 3). Trainer Christophe Clement has Alan Garcia named to ride. **12 GLEE CLUB** drops into this 'three-lifetime' claimer, and stretches out to 9 furlongs, after encountering trouble on the first turn (steadied) and rallying to come within three-quarters of a length of defeating multiple winners in a \$35,000 claimer at a mile. Trainer Ian Wilkes has jockey Jermaine Bridgmohan handling the stretchout. **8 VALISE** will try a mile and an eighth after his 2-race win streak ended when he finished a late-closing third vs. this caliber of competition at a mile on the Aqueduct sod (Nov. 28). Trainer Chad Brown teams with Jose Lezcano.

**11 EXCELLENT SOLIDER** is hoping to find a little more for the stretch drive after surrendering a late lead to finish third - beaten three-quarters of a length - vs. similar in his local return at a mile. Trainer Tim Ritvo has Rene Douglas in the saddle again.

**SELECTIONS: 5-12-8-11**

**EIGHTH RACE:**

**2 MATCHLESS ORINDA** certainly lived up to her name when she drew clear under a strong hand ride to break here maiden here, as the favorite, by 11 ½ lengths. Hall of Fame trainer Allen Jerkens has Jose Lezcano returning on the \$375K daughter of Sky Mesa. **8 SUSIES GAL** is turning back to 7 furlongs after a rough local return at a mile in which she steadied when bumping a rival in the chute, then steadied up the entire backstretch, before rallying to finish a distant third vs. money-allowance competition. **9 SWANS NEST** will make her 2009 debut the first start since dueling for the lead and fading in a 'key' entry-level allowance test a Churchill that produced a pair of next-out winners at the Fair Grounds. Trainer Ian Wilkes has the daughter of With Approval training beautifully at Palm Meadows. **5 FLYING DIXIE** is stretching out to seven-eighths of a mile after ending her 2008 campaign with hard-fought 6-furlong maiden score at Aqueduct (Nov. 26). Trainer Shug McGaughey has Eibar Coa atop the daughter of Dixieland Band.

**SELECTIONS: 2-8-9-5**

**NINTH RACE: THE COCONUT GROVE**

**5 HABAYA**, second to recent Grade 1 Hollywood Starlet winner Laragh in the \$150K Jessamine at Keeneland in October, stretches out after rallying 3-wide to win the 1-mile Grade 3 Miesque at Hollywood Park on Nov. 28th. Trainer Kiaran McLaughlin has Richard Migliore named on the class of the field. **12 WEEKEND STRIKE**, a half to multiple stakes winner Court Vision, stretches out with blinkers added after rallying to finish second here in the 1-mile \$100K Sweetest Chant. Trainer Todd Pletcher, 25% with first-time blinkers, has the daughter of Smart Strike training nicely at Palm Meadows.

**8 OILGONEWILE** will try to make it three in a row after following an upset score in the Ga. Debutant at Calder with a 22-1

victory here in the Sweetest Chant. Trainer Joe Calascibetta has Wesley Henry Sr. in the saddle again.

**2 JUST LIVIN A DREAM**, a half to hard-knocking stakes winner Precious Passion, stretches out after closing from far back to finish fourth - beaten only 2 lengths - in the Sweetest Chant.

**SELECTIONS: 5-12-8-2**

**TENTH RACE:**

**11 DANCING FLAME** debuts on a traditional dirt surface after encountering traffic (blocked) and finishing second - beaten a half-length at the distance - on the Woodbine Polytrack. Trainer Brian Lynch adds Lasix for the return.

**4 PAST TWILIGHT** is turning back to 7 furlongs after recovering from stumbling start to finish fourth in her local debut at a mile. Trainer Eddie Kenneally, 30% with horses making the second start after a 45-180 day layoff, has Julien Leparoux in the saddle again. **10 PHANTOM RISING** is a daughter of Mr. Greeley who is training sharply at Payson Park in preparation for her career debut. Trainer Bill Mott has leading rider Kent Desormeaux at the controls. **1 ROYAL AMBITION** is stretching out to 7 furlongs after losing all chance when she broke slowly and finished last in her career debut at three-quarters of a mile. Trainer Steve Standridge hopes jockey Paco Lopez can avoid the pitfalls associated with the inside post coming out of the 7-furlong chute.

**SELECTIONS: 11-4-10-1**

**BEST BET: RACE 9 - 5 HABAYA**

**LONG SHOT: RACE 10 - 1 ROYAL AMBITION**

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