

RACE BY RACE ANALYSIS



by *Ron Nicoletti*

FIRST RACE:

1 NIKIMOTO and **1A SLAM'S HONOR** are a pair of Stronach Stables homebred 3-year-olds debuting for trainer Wesley Ward with some interesting stats to peruse. The former, a daughter of Macho Uno, shows 12 Palm Meadows workouts, including the recent 3-furlong bullet gate work in preparation for the debut while the latter, a daughter of Grand Slam, worked a fifth slower than her stablemate (:35 & 3), in preparation for this assignment. Trainer Ward, 31% with his first-time starters, and 25% with his turf sprinters, has Elvis Trujillo named on both halves of the entry.

7 REVEL IN THE WIN, a half to multiple stakes-placed turf performer Snow Cone, gets second-time blinkers after finishing fourth in her career turf debut at this level and distance. **9 MARIA'S DAUGHTERS** is turning back to 5 furlongs in the first start since finishing third in a 'key' mile and a sixteenth turf race at Calder that produced three next-out winners (Nov. 6th). **3 LEGALLY BLANCA** tries the turf after closing to finish third in her 5-furlong career debut on the dirt (Feb. 7th).

SELECTIONS: 1-1A-7-9-3

SECOND RACE:

8 CUVEE ROUGE drops to the \$15,000 level in preparation for the first start since finishing fifth vs. maiden special weight competition on the Keeneland Polytrack (Oct. 8th). The colt, now in the Todd Pletcher barn, shows six Palm Meadows workouts, including the recent 5-furlong bullet in 1:01 & 2, in preparation for his first race in 6-plus months. **5 PAPAL DECREE** is dropping to the bottom after stalking the pace and finishing third vs. \$25,000 maidens in his recent outing at the distance. Trainer Allen Jerkens has Jose Lezcano in the saddle again. **7 TRE ALPHA** merits consideration in start number two after an eventful career debut vs. similar in which he steadied twice on the turn, and apparently bled. Trainer Ed Plesa Jr. adds Lasix and Elvis Trujillo for this assignment. **3 CAN'T WATCH**, another from trainer Todd Pletcher, drops to the bottom after breaking slowly and finishing sixth behind Papal Decree in their recent clash at the \$25,000 level. Pletcher, 22% with horses making their second start, has Paco Lopez atop this half of his uncoupled entry.

SELECTIONS: 8-5-7-3

THIRD RACE:

6 INTAGLIO will try 'two-lifetime' competition after stalking early and drawing clear late to defeat \$30,000 maidens by 3-plus lengths. Trainer Barclay Tagg, 23% with horses winning consecutive races, has Jose Lezcano named to ride.

2 POP PANEBIANCO will face conditioned claimers after stalking the pace, encountering trouble in the stretch (tight quarters), and getting beat 5 lengths vs. multiple winners in a \$12,500 starter allowance. **3 HEEZ FOR DOC** is another dropping into this 'two-lifetime' claimer after setting the pace and weakened to finish sixth - beaten 3 ½ lengths - in the same starter allowance race as Pop Panebianco. Trainer Larry Bates has Wesley Henry Sr. at the controls.

4 SUN SCORPION is turning back to a mile and a sixteenth after closing to get beat 2 ½ lengths vs. similar at 9 furlongs. Trainer Ralph Ziadie has Wilmer Galviz in the saddle.

SELECTIONS: 6-2-3-4

FOURTH RACE:

4 KIERNAN'S LEGACY will try \$5,000 conditioned claimers after a disappointing return from a 10-week freshening in which he broke a step slow and finished fifth, as the 4-to-5 favorite, vs. \$10,000 'three-lifetime' claimers at 6 ½ furlongs. Trainer Wesley Ward has Elvis Trujillo handling the stretchout to seven-eighths. **1 CHICKEN WING** is stretching out an additional furlong after dueling for the lead and tiring to finish fourth vs. multiple winners in a \$6,250 claimer at three-quarters of a mile. **6 QUICK AND EASY** is dropping a notch, and stretching out a tad, after posting the best last-race Beyer (66) when finishing fifth vs. \$6,250 claimers at 6 ½ furlongs. **5 TRUTHSAYER**, a previous winner at the distance (7-1-1-3), is back in South Florida after hitting the board in 2 of 3 starts vs. similar at Tampa.

SELECTIONS: 4-1-6-5

FIFTH RACE:

4 ENTERTAINING, who became eligible for this race when she broke her maiden at Calder for a \$25,000 tag (Oct. '08), will try to make it two in a row after using an abundance of speed to defeat \$50,000 claimers at the distance. Trainer Phil Gleaves has Manoel Cruz atop the only filly in the field. **3 GRAND CASH** drops to the \$25,000 level after finishing seventh - beat 5 ¾ lengths - in a 'key' \$40,000 starter allowance that produced next-out winners Cheeks Malone and Maccarib Pass. **7 LEATHER** will face multiple winners after posting a competitive speed figure (66) when finishing third vs. \$35,000 'two-lifetime' claimers at a mile and a sixteenth. Trainer David Fawkes has Jose Lezcano handling the gelded son of Delaware Township. **10 DEALING LUCKY**, a consistent son of Greenwood Lake, returns to the turf after earning a check in three consecutive starter allowance races on the dirt.

SELECTIONS: 4-3-7-10

SIXTH RACE:

4 SNEAK PEEK, beaten 2 lengths at the distance on the dirt vs. maiden special weight state-bred competition, drops to the \$30,000 level on the main track with blinkers added after finishing a troubled fifth (steadied first turn) vs. maiden special weight runners at a mile and a sixteenth on the turf just 6 days ago. Trainer Ken McPeek, 39% with horses making similar class drops, has Manoel Cruz handling the surface change. **7 LOVE ON A WIRE**, a popular son of Broken Vow, claimed in consecutive races, cuts back to a mile on the dirt for new trainer Peter Walder after getting beat 2 ¾ lengths, as the favorite, vs. similar at a mile and a sixteenth on the lawn. Trainer Walder, 31% with new claims, has 7-pound apprentice Ares Campos in the saddle.

8 GRAND BLACK JAK who showed a definite fondness for the local sod when he responded to both the surface switch, and a drop in competition, with a troubled second place finish last out, returns to the dirt to figure prominently.

5 TRANSLUCENT SKY is hoping to find a little more for the stretch drive after finishing fourth in consecutive starts at this level and distance.

SELECTIONS: 4-7-8-5

SEVENTH RACE:

8 MYROSLAW is stepping up the competition after a perfectly timed ride by jockey Manoel Cruz produced a \$50,000 claiming victory in his local turf debut at the distance. Trainer Ken McPeek, 26% with horses winning consecutive races, readied the colt for this performance with a sharp half-mile drill over the track. **9 SCHLEPROCK**, who has the distinction of being the only participant in the race that can claim multiple victories on the local sod (3-2-0-0), returns to the claiming ranks after his 2-race win streak ended when he made a 4-wide bid and finished fifth vs. entry-level allowance competition last out. **4 SAFETY SQUEEZE**, 8-2-1-2 on the turf, stretches out to a mile (1-1-0-0) after stalking 3-wide and failing to earn a check vs. hard-knocking allowance runners at 5 furlongs. Trainer Manny Azpurua has apprentice Ares Campos in the saddle. **3 RISQUE** moved to the Chad Brown barn via the claim after an impressive first-out turf victory in which he recovered from a bumping start to defeat \$30,000 maidens by 3 ¼ lengths. Jose Lezcano rides.

SELECTIONS: 8-9-4-3

EIGHTH RACE:

3 B. B. BEST, a sharp winner at this level and distance on Feb. 14th, drops, and turns back, after setting the pace and tiring in a tough 9-furlong \$50,000 starter allowance race that included 2008 Grade 1 Belmont Stakes winner Da'

Tara. **6 MYSTERY PROSPECT** is stepping up the competition after notching his third consecutive victory here at the distance when he was headed and fought back to defeat \$16,000 starter allowance runners last out. Trainer Peter Walder has Jose Lezcano atop the horse-for-course play (6-3-2-0). **4 I'M SPECTRAL**, second behind Mystery Prospect on Jan. 10th and Feb. 20th, renews the rivalry after drawing clear to defeat \$25,000 claimers at 9 furlongs. Trainer Tino Attard has Mario Madrid handling the turnback to a 1-turn mile.

SELECTIONS: 3-6-4

NINTH RACE:

3 LEAN MACHINE plunges to the \$30,000 level on the turf after dueling for the lead and fading to finish last in his local debut vs. maiden special weight competition at 6 furlongs on the main track. Trainer Todd Pletcher has Chris DeCarlo handling the \$160K gelded son of Grand Slam.

12 FEARLESS HONOR is turning back to 5 panels after showing good early speed and fading vs. similar at 7 ½ & 8 furlongs, respectively. The only concern is the outside post (12). **5 HE'S APPEALING** is giving the turf another try after responding to a drop in competition with a second place finish vs. this caliber of competition at 5 ½ furlongs on a sealed 'sloppy' track. **2 AGAIN ELEVEN** is turning back to five-eighths of a mile (1-0-0-1), and racing without blinkers, after stalking the action and getting beat 4 lengths vs. similar at a mile on a 'firm' course.

SELECTIONS: 3-12-5-2

BEST BET: RACE 6 - 4 SNEAK PEEK

LONG SHOT: RACE 7 - 5 ZOOMING WHITE STAR

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