

RACE BY RACE ANALYSIS



by *Ron Nicoletti*

FIRST RACE:

5 EXCESS CAPITAL, third behind impressive winner Formidable when competing at this distance here on Jan. 9th, returns to sprinting on the dirt after stalking throughout and finishing fourth - beaten 1 ½ lengths - in a 2-turn mile on the turf. Trainer Mark Henning has Eibar Coa handling the surface switch. **6 TIMBER CRUISE** shows back-to-back bullet workouts over the deep stamina enhancing Payson Park training track in preparation for the first start since racing greenly and finishing third, at the distance, at Aqueduct last April. Trainer Shug McGaughey has Elvis Trujillo at the controls. **4 EAST TO WEST** is turning back to three-quarters of a mile after closing to finish fourth in his local debut vs. similar at a mile. Trainer Carl Nafzger has Julien Leparoux atop the son of Gone West.

SELECTIONS: 5-6-4

SECOND RACE:

2 TODD GOT EVEN is stepping up to the next logical level after responding to a drop in competition with a 'much-the-best' \$30,000 maiden victory at the distance. **6 BERNING BLAZE** will try \$35,000 'two-lifetime' claimers after getting carried 6-wide on the turn when finishing a distant sixth behind impressive repeat winner Formidable in a 'two-lifetime' allowance test here on Feb. 13th. Trainer Tim Hills has Eibar Coa atop the gelded son of Bernstein. **5 EON** moved to the Terri Pompay barn via the claim after responding to a vigorous hand ride with a commanding 10-length victory vs. \$15,000 maidens at 7 ½ furlongs. The new connections tab Cornelio Velasquez to ride.

SELECTIONS: 2-6-5

THIRD RACE:

7 TOMFOOLERY is cutting back to three-quarters after breaking from Post 12, tracking the action 4-wide and fading to finish fourth, as the odds-on choice, at 6 ½ furlongs. **4 HEZ GONNA B FAMOUS** is a son of Three Wonders who shows six local workouts, including a couple of bullets, in preparation for his career debut. Trainer Terri Pompay adds Lasix and Manny Aguilar for this assignment. **6 BEACHMONT FASHION** is turning back to 6 ½ furlongs after surrendering a 2-length lead to finish fourth vs. similar at 7 ½ furlongs. Trainer Vinnie Blengs keeps it light with 5-pound apprentice Jose Ortiz at the controls. **2 CABAIGUAN** is turning back slightly after rallying to finish third, at 74-1, vs. similar at 6 ½ furlongs. Trainer Walter Rosas-Canessa has Junior Alvarado atop the gelding.

SELECTIONS: 7-4-6-2

FOURTH RACE:

1 ACCORDING TO PLAN, who posted a victory and a second when sprinting on the Belmont turf, cuts back to 5 furlongs after showing speed, against a 'come-from-behind' bias, in a pair of route races on the lawn here in January. Trainer Barclay Tagg has Eibar Coa handling the classic turnback. **4 ASGOODASSELOOKS** looked pretty darn good when she broke from Post 12, dueled for the lead, and finished third - beaten 2 lengths at this level and distance. Trainer Kathleen O'Connell has Edgar Prado handling the filly's second start back from the freshening. **2 DON'T STOP DREAMIN** is a candidate to rebound after following a well-meant second at the distance vs. \$50,000 claimers on Jan. 16th with a late-starting fifth place finish behind Asgoodasshelooks last out. **6 ANACHINI** makes her first start since using her speed to defeat \$16,000 allowance optional claimers at 5 furlongs on the Calder turf (Dec. 10). Trainer Darrin Miller has Manoel Cruz going for two in a row.

SELECTIONS: 1-4-2-6

FIFTH RACE:

2 PRINCESS BUDDHA will try \$50,000 claimers on the dirt in the first start since making a 4-wide move to finish second in a 'key' maiden special weight test on the Ellis Park turf last August that produced three next-out winners, including next-out stakes winner Abbott Hall. Leading trainer Ken McPeck, 32% with the 180-day plus layoff and the turf-to-dirt move, has Kent Desormeaux in the saddle. **5 KALEIDOSCOPE SKY** is turning back to 7 furlongs on the dirt after recovering from a pinball start (bounced around) to finish fourth - beaten 1 ¼ lengths as the favorite - in a \$40,000 maiden test at a mile and a sixteenth on the turf. Trainer Stan Hough has Cornelio Velasquez handling the surface change. **3 OPENEDFORBUSINESS** is stretching out to seven-eighths after losing her best chance when she broke awkwardly in her 6-furlong career debut. Trainer Alan Goldberg readied her for this assignment with a half-mile bullet workout out of the gate. **10 CHECK POINT**, another from trainer Alan Goldberg, drops to the \$50,000, and races without the blinkers, after encountering early trouble (steadied) and finishing fifth vs. \$80,000 maidens at a mile on the turf.

SELECTIONS: 2-5-3-10

SIXTH RACE:

3 SONOFAWITCH, a sharp \$10,000 'two-lifetime' claiming winner at the distance on opening day, turns back after tracking the pace and weakening to finish fifth vs. this caliber of competition at 9 furlongs. Trainer Peter Walder has John Velazquez handling the turnback. **1 BRUNO'S A BITER** is stepping up to the next level after drawing off to defeat \$10,000 'two-lifetime' claimers, at the distance, by 5 ¼ lengths. Trainer Scott Lake has Jermaine Bridgmohan going for two in a row. **6 CAR THIEF** is stepping up, and stretching out, after holding on gamely to defeat 'two-lifetime' types at 6 furlongs. Trainer Eddie Broome, 5 for 20 (25%) with horses stretching out in distance, has Paco Lopez at the helm. **12 NATIVE DOOD** was game in defeat when he gave way grudgingly to finish fourth - beaten a length - at this level and distance.

SELECTIONS: 3-1-6-12

SEVENTH RACE:

12 CURRENT CASE, beaten a neck at this marathon 12-furlong distance at Keeneland last October, stretches out after ending his 2008 campaign with a second place finish - beaten a length - to red-hot three-peat winner Furthest Land in a 9-furlong entry-level allowance test at Churchill on Nov. 27th. **1 SOLITAIRE**, second while still a maiden to Not Bourbon in Woodbine's Plate Trial, and third to him in the million-dollar Queens Plate, who then proved he could handle a distance of ground on the turf when finishing third vs. Ontario-breds in the 12-furlong \$502K Breeders', stretches out with blinkers added after checking on the far turn and failing to fire in his local turf debut at 9 furlongs. **11 DEZBA** will face the boys after surrendering a late lead to finish third vs. the gals in a 12-furlong turf test here on Jan. 9th. Trainer Pat Byrne has Julien Leparoux in the saddle again. **5 CHINSEGUT BAY**, a troubled third at this distance on Jan. 10th (shuffled back far turn) returns to the grass after failing to show much vs. similar on the main track.

SELECTIONS: 12-1-11-5

EIGHTH RACE:

3 CHEF is stepping up, and stretching out, after drawing off to win his 7-furlong career debut in impressive fashion. Trainer Alan Goldberg has Carlos Marquez Jr. returning on the \$400K son of Smarty Jones. **7 AL KHALI** makes his North American debut for trainer Todd Pletcher after showing tons of promise when winning 2 of 3 races in Peru. The son of Medaglia d'Oro, who worked a 5-furlong bullet at Palm Meadows in :59 & 4 gets Lasix for his U. S. allowance debut. **2 ATOMIC RAIN**, beaten a neck at this level and dis-

tance, as the favorite, returns to South Florida after failing to fire when blinkers were added for his seventh place showing in the 2-turn mile and a sixteenth Grade 3 Sam Davis at Tampa. Trainer Kelly Breen tabs Joe Bravo to ride as John Velazquez switches to Al Khali. **5 IDOL MAKER** returns to the allowance ranks after chasing the pace and fading in the 9-furlong Grade 3 Holy Bull.

SELECTIONS: 3-7-2-5

NINTH RACE:

2 BRADY THOMAS drops to the \$80,000 level after finishing a respectable fifth - beaten 3 ¾ lengths - in a 'key' maiden special weight test that produced next-out local winners Conservative and Proud Ruler. Trainer Rick Dutrow tabs Julien Leparoux to ride. **12 CANTRUSHPERFECTION** make his turf debut after rallying to finish fourth vs. similar in his 7-furlong career debut on the dirt. Trainer Ken McPeck, 25% with horses making their second start, has Kent Desormeaux handling the surface switch.

7 DIPLOMATIC CODE is hoping to break straight and true after ducking out at the start prior to finishing three-quarters of a length behind Brady Thomas in that aforementioned 'key' maiden special test on Jan. 10th. **9 LAVER** makes his career turf debut with blinkers added after showing promise in main track sprints at Keeneland and Saratoga. Trainer Todd Pletcher has John Velazquez atop the \$175K son of Grand Slam.

SELECTIONS: 2-12-7-9

BEST BET: RACE 5 - 2 PRINCESS BUDDHA

LONG SHOT: RACE 4 - 5 EXOTIC BLOOM

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