

RACE BY RACE ANALYSIS



by *Ron Nicoletti*

FIRST RACE:

10 EARLY RELEASE drops to the \$6,250 level, and returns to the main track, after following a well-meant third place showing here vs. \$14,000 claimers with a clunker on the turf in which he was eased back to last. **6 POLAR STAR** is turning back to 7 furlongs after dueling for the lead along the inside and tiring to finish eighth in his local return vs. similar at a mile. Trainer Richard Root has Abdiel Toribio in the saddle again. **7 KELLYS RX**, claimed for \$10,000 by Ferris Allen on Dec. 13, drops after showing early interest and fading vs. another group of \$10,000 claimers at Calder. Elvis Trujillo rides. **9 BORRA MIS HUELLAS** shortens up to seven-eighths of a mile after closing late to get beat 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ lengths vs. similar here at a mile.

SELECTIONS: 10-6-7-9

SECOND RACE:

3 BLACK RUSSIAN, who became eligible for this \$25,000 starter allowance when she broke for her maiden at first asking (July 17), gets some major class relief after facing stakes caliber competition, on both dirt and turf, at Calder. Trainer Steve Standridge has Eibar Coa atop strictly the one to beat. **2 TADISHA** will try to make it two in a row at the distance after notching her third career victory when she defeated \$25,000 claimers here last out. Trainer Ed Plesa Jr. has a 19% win average with horses winning consecutive races. **5 SWING MUSIC**, 8 for 11 'in the money' during her productive career, moves towards the outside (Post 5) after stumbling at the start and rallying to finish second behind Tadisha when breaking from the rail last out.

SELECTIONS: 3-2-5

THIRD RACE:

9 SCHLEPROCK, fourth vs. maiden special weight competition in his only previous turf race at Arlington (Aug. 17), debuts locally for trainer David Fawkes after threatening to break his maiden in a pair on the Hawthorne main track. The new connections have Eibar Coa handling the surface switch. **10 OSKI OSKI** is stretching out to a mile and a sixteenth after rallying 4-wide to finish second in his promising career turf debut at 5 furlongs on the Calder sod. Trainer Kathy Mongeon has the son of Forest Wildcat training consistently on the Palm Meadows turf. **2 STORMY FEBRUARY** debuts locally after rallying to finish fourth at the distance in consecutive \$25,000 maidens tests on the Calder turf.

Trainer Manny Estevez tabs Paco Lopez to ride. **1 COACH ABS** is stepping up, and stretching out, after breaking slowly and finishing fourth vs. \$25,000 maidens at 5 furlongs on the Calder turf.

SELECTIONS: 9-10-2-1

FOURTH RACE:

5 MISS CATRINA moved to the Peter Walder barn via the claim after drawing clear to defeat three next-out winners in a 'key' \$16,000 maiden event at Calder on Dec. 11. Trainer Walder, 29% with new claims, has leading jock John Velazquez in the saddle. **9 SEA SPIRIT** should be primed and ready to score after a useful return from a 9-week freshening in which she encountered traffic on the turn (tight quarters) and finished fourth in her local debut at this level and distance. **4 THENPUTITBACK**, third at this level and distance here on Jan. 7th, returns to the main track after closing to finish fourth vs. \$30,000 'two-lifetime' claimers at a mile on the turf. Trainer Bobby Hale has A Maragh handling the surface switch. **10 LAURA'S LUCK** will face winners after shaking off trouble on the turn (bumped, steadied) to defeat \$15,000 maidens here by 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ lengths. Trainer Gerald Procino has Herb McCauley going for two in a row.

SELECTIONS: 5-9-4-10

FIFTH RACE:

3 GRAND CASH will try to make it three in a row after following his \$25,000 starter allowance score on the Calder sod with a 'come-from-behind' money-allowance victory here on January 16. Trainer Dave Vivian has Jermaine Bridgmohan going for the hat trick. **5 MAN OF FAITH**, who defeat \$40,000 'two-lifetime' claimers by 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ lengths in his only previous turf race (Nov. 23), returns to the lawn after drawing off to defeat \$12,500 starter allowance runners on the Calder main track, despite the fact that he had a rough start (off slow, bumped chute). **11 CHEEKS MALONE** will race with blinkers after chasing the pace and weakening to finish fourth behind Grand Cash at Calder on Dec. 10th. Trainer Brian Prichard takes over the training and has Juan Leyva handling the rematch. **8 BOLD IMAGE** is stretching out to a mile and a sixteenth after closing from far back to finish third vs. \$30,000 'two-lifetime' claimers at a mile on the Calder turf.

SELECTIONS: 3-5-11-8

SIXTH RACE:

6 STIRRUP EXCITEMENT plummets into this \$10,000 'three-lifetime' claimer after facing allowance level competition with success in his December campaign at Hawthorne. Jose Lezcano handles the Midwest invader. **8 SAINT SPOT** is returning to the main track after facing \$16,000 'three-lifetime' claimers on the Calder turf, including the recent fourth place finish, as the favorite, behind Qualified To Kill, who notched his second consecutive victory here on January 11th. **4 PROPER CAUSEWAY**, competitive with a notch tougher on the Churchill main track, returns to the dirt after showing speed and fading vs. multiple winners in a mile and a sixteenth \$16,000 claimer on the Tampa turf.

1 CRUZATTE will depart from the rail after bumping at the start and finishing second best in his local debut at this level and distance. Trainer Kerry Zavash has Junior Alvarado in the saddle again.

SELECTIONS: 6-8-4-1

SEVENTH RACE:

7 ON FIRE is stretching out to 9 furlongs after rallying strongly to finish second in his local turf debut at a mile. Trainer Shug McGaughey has Elvis Trujillo atop the gelded son of Pulpit. **2 SOLITAIRE** makes his first start after rewarding his backers when he broke his maiden at the distance, as the odds-on choice, on the Belmont turf. Trainer H James Bond has Eibar Coa returning on the son of Victory Gallop. **1 SOL A PINO** is going for three in a row after following his \$35,000 maiden win at Belmont with a \$35,000 'two-lifetime' victory here at a mile. Trainer Boll Mott readied him for the hike in competition with a bullet half-mile drill (Jan. 21). **3 UNCLE INDY**, third behind Solitaire at Belmont on Oct. 19th, will face winners after making a 3-wide move to break his maiden at a mile and a sixteenth on the Calder turf. Trainer Angel Penna Jr. has Cornelio Velasquez in the saddle again.

SELECTIONS: 7-2-1-3

EIGHTH RACE:

2 COOL COAL MAN, undefeated at Gulfstream, which includes a victory in the 2008 Grade 2 Fountain Of Youth, and who was third behind Big Brown in the Grade 1 Haskell at Monmouth in August, was given some time off after failing to fire in both the Grade 1 Travers and the Grade 2 Jerome Handicap (Oct. 5). **8 TALENT SEARCH**, a multiple Grade 1 stakes-placed performer in 2007, who finished second in the Grade 3 Phoenix at Keeneland in his only start in 2008, returns under the tutelage of trainer Mike Maker, who tabs Julien Leparoux to ride. **6 GOLDEN SPIKES** is back home after stalking the pace and fading in the Grade 1 Malibu, which was contested on the synthetic Pro-Ride sur-

face at Santa Anita. Sizzling trainer Marty Wolfson has leading jock John Velazquez handling the homecoming.

4 GOLD TRIPPI, 6-2-0-3 at Gulfstream, returns after breaking slowly and finishing fifth behind Fabulous Strike, when carrying 129 pounds in the Fall Highweight Handicap.

SELECTIONS: 2-8-6-4

NINTH RACE:

12 ROCAMADOUR is turning back to a mile after setting the pace and fading to finish fourth behind next-out winners El Crespo, who won here on Jan. 10, and Coach Gravy, who defeated maiden special weight competition at the Fair Grounds. Javier Castellano will ration his speed today.

10 RIBOLETTO, a \$1-million dollar son of Unbridled's Song, debuts for trainer Tom Albertrani with a series of useful Palm Meadows workouts showing. The colt starts his campaign with Lasix and jockey Edgar Prado added to the equation. **9 TWISTED DREAM**, a son of Distorted Humor, has trained sharply in preparation for his career debut. Trainer Todd Pletcher adds Lasix, and go-to jock John Velazquez for this assignment. **2 CAUSEWAY'S KIN**, a beautifully bred son of Giant's Causeway, debuts on the turf for trainer Bill Mott after a couple of chase-and-fade performances on the dirt. Mr. Mott readied him for the surface switch with a bullet half-mile drill here on Jan. 21.

SELECTIONS: 12-10-9-2

BEST BET: RACE 2 - 3 BLACK RUSSIAN

LONG SHOT: RACE 7 - 9 JACK'S ELEVEN

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