

RACE BY RACE ANALYSIS



by *Ron Nicoletti*

FIRST RACE:

7 SWEETSOUTHERNSON moved to the Tom Schell barn via the claim, and turns back to a mile, after recovering from a pokey star to defeat similar quality at 9 furlongs. The gelding, 4-2-0-0 locally, has Carlos Marquez Jr. in the saddle again. **9 DEISEL POWER** drops a couple of rungs on the competition ladder after following a \$10,000 claiming victory at Calder with a speed-and-stop performance vs. \$16,000 claimers at Tampa. **6 SIR OSO**, the little brother of multiple stakes winner Sir Bear, cuts back to a 1-turn mile after making a bid on the far turn and tiring to finish fourth behind Sweetsouthernson at a mile and an eighth.

3 SPEED AND HEART, still looking for his first victory in 14 local starts (13-0-1-4), and his second victory in 27 races at the distance (26-1-4-5), turns back after finishing third behind Sweetsouthernson last out.

SELECTIONS: 7-9-6-3

SECOND RACE:

3 DR. GOOGLES BOOGLES, who competed in the Grade 1 Donn Handicap last year, plummets to the \$25,000 level after ending his 2008 campaign on June 1st with a third place finish in a 'key' \$80,000 optional claimer at Churchill that produced a pair of next-out winners. Trainer Dale Romans has Julien Leparoux handling the major dropdown. **5 BLACK SPOT**, a very consistent 9-2-4-1 vs. similar during his 2008 campaign, gets some class relief after failing to handle \$40,000 claimers in his local return. Trainer Ed Plesa Jr. teams with jockey Edgar Prado. **1A MYSTERY PROSPECT**, part of a Peter Walder entry, steps up after using his speed to defeat \$20,000 claimers in his local return at the distance (4-1-2-0). Trainer Walder has Jose Lezcano named on this half of the entry. **6 NORTHERN ACADEMY** is shortening up to a 1-turn mile after a troubled outing vs. similar at 9 furlongs in which he bumped and steadied between rivals at the start, was blocked behind a wall of horses on the far turn, and still managed to finish second.

SELECTIONS: 3-5-1A-6

THIRD RACE:

7 WESTERN SWEEP, now in the Wesley Ward barn, makes her first start since defeating similar at Hawthorne. Trainer Ward, winning races here at a 33% rate, has E T Baird handling the 6-furlong specialist (13-5-6-0).

2 THUMBIN' A RIDE, a perfect 2 for 2 on a regular dirt sur-

face, debuts locally after reeling off back-to-back sprint victories vs. \$20,000 to \$25,000 claimers on the Woodbine Polytrack. Trainer Don MacRae has jockey Jamie McAleney going for the hat trick. **3 BROS SIS** makes her first start since she held on to defeat a pair of next-out winners in a 'key' \$20,000 claimers at a mile & 70 yards on the Monmouth main track (Sept. 25th). Trainer Eddie Broome has Carlos Marquez Jr. in the saddle.

SELECTIONS: 7-2-3

FOURTH RACE:

2 WILD BLUE DREAMS drops to the \$15,000 maiden level in the first start since trainer Rodolfo Garcia claimed him out of a \$40,000 maiden event at Calder in which he ran second. He's the obvious choice unless the suspicious drop has you afraid to commit. **6 SENOR PEDRO** drops to the bottom of the maiden scale, and shortens up to 5 ½ furlongs, after setting the pace and tiring to finish fourth vs. \$25,000 types at three-quarters of a mile. Trainer David Fawkes has Pedro Monterrey Jr. named to ride. **9 YUKI'S RIDGE** is a logical choice to be on the ticket after earning a check in consecutive sprints vs. this caliber of opposition. **8 BRACIOLE** takes an immediate plunge to the bottom of the maiden scale after bumping hard early and fading to finish a distant ninth vs. special weight competition at 5 furlongs on the turf. Trainer Pat Reynolds adds second-time blinkers, and has Edgar Prado handling the surface switch.

SELECTIONS: 2-6-9-8

FIFTH RACE:

4 IT'S OUT HERE will try \$40,000 starter allowance competition after encountering trouble on the first turn and finishing sixth vs. \$50,000 claimers at the distance. Trainer David Fawkes has Eibar Coa in the saddle again. **8 SPICY DUBAI** is stepping up the competition after following his \$25,000 maiden win on the Calder main track with a troubled (steadied twice), but successful, victory vs. \$25,000 starter allowance competition here on the turf. **1 SAFETY SQUEEZE** is turning back to a mile after showing speed and fading late in a pair of local allowance tests at a mile and a sixteenth. Trainer Manny Azpurua has Eduardo Nunez handling the inside gas. **7 GRAND CASH** is turning back after his 2-race win streak ended when he closed late to finish sixth behind Spicy Dubai last out. He's better than his last race might indicate.

SELECTIONS: 4-8-1-7

SIXTH RACE:

7 JAY MIKE drops to the \$30,000 level on the dirt with blinkers added after stalking the pace and tiring to get beat 3 ½ lengths vs. \$50,000 maidens in a 2-turn mile on the turf. Trainer Nick Zito has Joe Bravo guiding strictly the one to beat. **5 IN A BREEZE** drops into the claiming ranks for the first time after facing maiden special weight competition on turf, dirt, and synthetic surfaces with limited success (9-0-0-1). **6 TRIPPEDOUTOFADREAM** makes his first start since finishing fourth behind a pair of next-out winners in a \$15,000 maiden test on the Colonial turf last July 8th. Note that trainer Butch Silva is 3 for 3 - with a \$14.00 return of investment - with horses returning from a longer than 180-day layoff.

2 B. B. JAZZ, 2 for 4 'in the money' at the distance, turns back after encountering trouble on the backstretch (steadied) and finishing fifth vs. similar quality at a mile. Trainer Tino Attard has Jamie McAleney in the saddle.

SELECTIONS: 7-5-6-2

SEVENTH RACE:

4 ICON PROJECT, a Group 2 performer at Ascot, makes her North American debut for trainer Marty Wolfson with a series of very sharp Calder workouts showing. The beautifully bred \$775K daughter of Empire Maker, who has never run in a race shorter than 10 furlongs, gets Lasix and jockey Julien Leparoux for this mile and a sixteenth test.

2 DRESS PARADE is turning back after making what looked like a winning bid and settling for third - beaten a half-length - vs. this level of competition at 9 furlongs. Trainer Michael Matz has suddenly hot jock Jose Lezcano named to ride.

12 GRAND ROUSSE should be ready to score after a useful return from an 18-month layoff in which she encountered trouble on the first turn (steadied) and finished seventh behind Dress Parade - beaten only 2 ½ lengths. Trainer Christophe Clement adds second-time Lasix for this assignment. **8 AWESOME MOMENT**, beaten a half-length at this distance by repeat winner Gdansk Queen at Calder, turns back after making a bid and finishing second in her local debut vs. similar at 12 furlongs. Trainer Rebecca Maker has E T Baird handling the turnback.

SELECTIONS: 4-2-12-8

EIGHTH RACE: THE SABIN (G3)

5 ONE CAROLINE makes her graded stakes debut after keeping her record unblemished when she won a \$62,000 allowance optional claimer here at the distance by almost 7 lengths. Trainer Rusty Arnold has Edgar Prado atop the daughter of Unbridled's Song. **3 MISS ISELLA**, beaten a head at 7 furlongs by (G3) First Lady Handicap winner - and (G3) Hurricane Bertie runner up - Game Face on Nov. 15th, turns back to a mile after closing to win the 9-furlong (G2) Fall City Handicap at Churchill on Nov. 27th. Calvin Borel is

in to ride the daughter of Silver Charm. **7 STORMIN MON** stamped herself as a major player on the local scene when she drew away to defeat some of these in the 7-furlong prep for this race on Jan. 17th. Trainer Marty Wolfson has Jermaine Bridgmohan at the controls. **6 ALINA**, a multiple graded stakes-placed daughter of Game Home, makes her first start since getting beat 2 lengths in the Grade 3 Iowa Oaks last June. Trainer Steve Asmussen, 21% with the longer than 180-day layoff, has Kent Desormeaux handling the Midwest invader.

SELECTIONS: 5-3-7-6

NINTH RACE:

9 EXCLUSIVE HOPPER is turning back to one of her best distances (20-5-3-2) after rallying to get beat three-quarters of a length in her local return vs. a notch tougher at a mile and a sixteenth. Trainer Peter Walder has Julien Leparoux handling the 9-year-old - that's right 9 - mare.

8 INTER GALACTIC drops \$10,000 on the claiming scale after breaking slowly, and closing late, to finish a good fourth - beaten 1 ½ lengths - vs. \$30,000 claimers at the distance. **4 LADY TROPICANA** is a late-striding type trying \$20,000 claimers at a mile after failing to earn a check vs. better in a pair of local turf outings at a mile and a sixteenth. Edgar Prado hops aboard. **3 GIVE NO GROUND**, a hard-fought 'two-lifetime' claiming winner here on Jan. 4th, is hoping to rebound after finishing a troubled ninth (steadied) vs. \$35,000 'three-lifetime' claimers on Jan. 31st. It's the ole bounce/rebound angle.

SELECTIONS: 9-8-4-3

BEST BET: RACE 6 - 7 JAY MIKE

LONG SHOT: RACE 7 - 5 EMPIRESS

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