



# RACE BY RACE SELECTIONS

by Ron Nicoletti

Friday, December 27, 2019

## RACE 1:

**8 LA INCONDICIONAL** moved to the Rohan Crichton barn via the claim, and wheels back at the same level and distance, after stalking the pace and fading to finish 8<sup>th</sup> behind a pair of next-out winners – as the favorite - last out. The sophomore should find it easier on or near the front vs a field that's light in the speed department. **2 CHASING HELICITY** is stretching out to a mile and a sixteenth again after closing to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> when facing similar quality going a mile last out. She'll be there to reap the spoils if the top choice fails to negotiate the distance.

**1 FOR KICKS** is another eligible to show more after rallying to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> at this level and distance on opening day.

**SELECTIONS: 8-2-1**

## RACE 2:

**7 BLESSED BY THE BEST** moved to the Jorge Delgado barn via the claim after rallying to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> vs similar quality when going 6 ½ furlongs in the mud at GP West; Irad Ortiz Jr rides.

**3 MORE THAN STRIKING** is a gelded son of Handsome Mike debuting for trainer Efren Loza Jr with Lasix, and Luis Saez named to ride.

**6 JUST FOR CHUCKLES** is stretching out to 6 ½ furlongs after dueling for the lead along the inside and finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> going three-quarters of a mile. Trainer Mike Yates has Jesus Rios named to ride.

**SELECTIONS: 7-3-6**

## RACE 3:

**6 CODRINGTON** will face \$35,000 claimers after breaking from Post 12, stalking the pace, and weakening to finish 9<sup>th</sup> going a mile and a sixteenth in the Claiming Crown Tiara. Trainer Mike Maker has Irad atop the daughter of Courageous Cat.

**2 NIGHT WATCH** was solid in defeat when she rallied to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> – beaten a length – at this level and distance. Trainer Stanley Gold has Jairo Rendon in the irons.

**3 BELLO PORTE**, now in the Jorge Navarro barn, the sophomore makes her local return with that always-dangerous commodity on her side – Speed! Edgard Zayas rides the lightly raced daughter of The Factor.

**SELECTIONS: 6-2-3**

## RACE 4:

**6 RAY'SWARRIOR** moved to the Amador Sanchez via the claim after returning from a successful sprint campaign up north to draw clear and wallop a field of \$12,500 state-bred optional claimers going 5 ½ furlongs; Hector Berrios rides.

**7 STARSHIP APOLLO** is hoping to find a little more for the stretch drive after making a 4-wide charge to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> behind repeat winner Vinnie Van Go in a \$12,500 open-claimer at the distance.

**2 TRAPPEZOID** is dropping to the \$12,500 level and turning back to 6 panels, after coming up empty when facing a solid group of \$25,000 optional claimers going 6 ½ furlongs. Trainer Elizabeth Dobles has Rajiv Maragh named to ride.

**SELECTIONS: 6-7-2**

## RACE 5:

**2 MARGIE MUSIC** is dropping to the \$16,000 level after following her \$10,000 maiden victory on the Meadowlands turf with a slow starting 6<sup>th</sup> – from a demanding outside post – vs \$30,000 '2-lifetime' claimers on the Aqueduct lawn. **9 SASSY JUSTICE** is stepping up to tussle with winners after parlaying a stalk-and-pounce move into a victory here vs \$20,000 maidens. Trainer Milt Wolfson has Irad Ortiz Jr atop the daughter of Super Saver.

**3 KARENINA** needs to save more for the stretch run after stalking the pace and weakening to finish 6<sup>th</sup> in a fruitful \$16,000 '2-lifetime' claimer that's already produced a pair of next-out winners.

**SELECTIONS: 2-9-3**

**RACE 6:**

**4 WICKED SOLUTION** is dropping to the \$25,000 level, and lures the services of Irad Ortiz Jr, after failing to show much vs special weight competition in Kentucky for trainer Mike Maker.

**8 FAST FRACTION** is cutting back to 7 ½ furlongs after responding to both the dropdown in competition, and the addition of blinkers, with a duel for the lead 2<sup>nd</sup> going a mile last out. Trainer Saffie Joseph Jr has Chris Landeros in the irons.

**12 BETTER BEGIN** will depart from the super-tough outside post, with blinkers added, after rallying to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> behind Fast Fraction when they hooked up at a mile last out.

**SELECTIONS: 4-8-12**

**RACE 7:**

**9 FRENCH QUARTER** is returning to the \$6,250 level after breaking from the outside (Post 12) dueling for the lead, and fading to finish 6<sup>th</sup> in the Claiming Crown Iron Horse last out. Trainer Mike Maker has Irad named to ride.

**6 PEPPY THE HUNTER** is dropping to the \$6,250 level again after showing some early interest and fading when going a mile and a sixteenth in the Iron Horse last out. Trainer Jorge Navarro has Emisael Jaramillo handling the rematch with the top choice.

**10 LOVE TREE** is stretching out to a mile looking to sit the ideal stalking trip behind the speed in the field; Paco Lopez rides.

**SELECTIONS: 9-6-10**

**RACE 8:**

**4 POCKET CHANGE** is dropping to the \$16,000 level after returning from a lengthy layoff and coming up empty in the 5 ½ furlong Rainbow Heir at Monmouth. Trainer Jason Servis has Irad Ortiz Jr named on the stakes-placed 5-year-old son of Unbridled's Song. **6 TALE OF KANTHAROS** was sharp in defeat when he set the pace and was just nipped at the wire when 2<sup>nd</sup> at this level and distance last out. Trainer Peter Walder has Cristian Torres in the saddle. **5 BLACK JET** is making the usually fruitful 3<sup>rd</sup> start back from a layoff after breaking from the rail and finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> – as the favorite – behind Tale of Kantharos last out.

**SELECTIONS: 4-6-5**

**RACE 9:**

**2 PROM CODE** is a \$450,000 son of Union Rags making his local return trying to keep his record in Hallandale Beach unblemished. Trainer Todd Pletcher has Luis Saez named on this lightly raced 3-year-old. **7 BENEFACITOR** is cutting back to 6 ½ furlongs after returning from the layoff to finish 4<sup>th</sup> – beaten 2 lengths – in the 7-furlong Claiming Crown Rapid Transit. Trainer Jorge Navarro has Irad Ortiz Jr atop the gelding. **10 OUTSHINE**, another from Todd Pletcher, is making his first start hoping to recapture the form he displayed winning a 7-furlong sprint here during February and following that with a 2<sup>nd</sup> in the G2 Tampa Bay Derby; John Velazquez rides the \$625,000 son of Malibu Moon.

**SELECTIONS: 2-7-10**

**RACE 10:**

**9 SWEET GIANT** is hoping to come up large at the \$20,000 level after returning from the layoff to finish a much-needed 4<sup>th</sup> here vs \$35,000 maidens. Trainer Juan Avila has Edgard Zayas handling the upset special. **3 DONEGAL ACES** is dropping to the \$20,000 level after following a solid 2<sup>nd</sup> vs \$50,000 maidens at Belmont with a poor showing vs special weight runners on the Aqueduct turf. Trainer Danny Gargan has the gelding working consistently at Palm Meadows, and has Luis Saez named to ride. **7 TRUMP'S KITTEN** has license to improve after stalking the pace and finishing 4<sup>th</sup> at this level and distance last out. Trainer Juan C Perez lightens the impost with 7-pound apprentice Gaddiel Martinez.

**SELECTIONS: 9-3-7**

**BEST BET: RACE 7 – 9 FRENCH QUARTER**

**LONGSHOT: RACE 10 – 9 SWEET GIANT**