



RACE BY RACE ANALYSIS

BY RON NICOLETTI



Saturday, December 4, 2021

RACE 1:

9 INCLUSIVE, a 6-time winner on synthetic surfaces, debut locally after ending his recent campaign at Presque Isle with an ambitious 5th place finish vs \$50,000 optional claimers. Gerald Brooks has Miguel Vazquez atop the 5-time winner at the distance.

3 CATCHING FISH is stretching out around 2-turns after rallying wide to defeat \$8,000 conditioned claimers going 5 ½ on the Tapeta. Gustavo Delgado, 21% with the sprint to route angle, and 20% winning consecutive races, has Jorge Vargas Jr up. **10 JEHA** is cutting back slight to a mile and 70-yards after holding on the defeat \$8,000 claimers going 8 ½ furlongs on the Tapeta. It's Saffie and Edgard!

SELECTIONS: 9-3-10

RACE 2:

8 JOE DI BAGGIO is cutting back to three-quarters of a mile after vying for the lead and weakening to finish 4th vs this level of competition going 6 ½ furlongs. The gelding makes the usually fruitful 3rd start back from the layoff looking to turn the tables on

3 SEPTEMBERTEN. The latter turns back after closing 5-wide to finish 3rd in front of Joe last out. Chantal Sutherland rides for Rohan Crichton. **2 BAILEY** moves to the Dave Braddy barn via the claim after shaking off traffic going into the turn to defeat \$20,000 claimers at his best distance (5-3-1-0). The new connections keep the status quo with Edgard Zayas in the saddle.

SELECTIONS: 8-3-2

RACE 3: THE CLAIMING CROWN IRON HORSE

6 BLUE STEEL is returning locally for trainer Jeff Hiles after following his consistent summer campaign, in which he won a trio of route races on the dirt, with a rousing score going a mile on sealed muddy track at Indiana Grand. Paco Lopez guides the 4-time winner at the distance. **8 ZANESVILLE** debuts locally after closing from the parking lot to defeat \$10,000 starter allowance runners going 9 furlongs on the Churchill main track. The 7-time winner at the distance should get the pace needed to compliment his stalk/close style. **5 TRAPPEZOID** is stretching out to a mile and a sixteenth after having to alter course in the stretch when finishing 2nd – as the odds-on choice – going a mile vs \$16,000 starter optional claimers last out. Jorge Delgado has go-to jock Chantal Sutherland up.

SELECTIONS: 6-8-5

RACE 4: THE CLAIMING CROWN DISTAFF DASH

9 PAYNTDEMBLUESAWAY is hoping to get back to her winning ways after returning from the layoff to set the pace, from a tough outside post (11), before weakening to finish 6th in a screw-tightening outing going 5 ½ furlongs on a yielding Laurel turf. Trainer Jane Cibelli, 6 for 13 (46%) with the 2nd start back from 180 days plus layoff, has Paco Lopez atop the horse for course play (4-3-0-0). **1 STRONG ODOR** is debuting locally for trainer Mike Maker after facing tougher sprinting on the grass with success, which includes the \$80,000 optional claiming score at Saratoga. She breaks from the rail with the class angle on her side. **3 AWSUM ROAR**, an 8-time winner on the GP turf, and a 10-time winner at the distance, returns to her favorite surface after the pair of in-the-money finishes sprinting on the Tapeta. Edgard Zayas rides this fan favorite.

SELECTIONS: 9-1-3

RACE 5: THE CLAIMING CROWN EXPRESS

5 KALU is returning to one of his favorite surfaces (8-4-4-0) in the first start since setting the pace and finishing a game 3rd in the Grade 3 De Frances at Laurel. The 7-time winner at the distance has Edwin Gonzalez rationing his speed. **1 FACE OF VICTORY** will try to make it 2 in a row after vying for the lead and holding sway to defeat \$16,000 starter allowance runners going 6 furlongs in the slop. Saffie Joseph Jr has Edgard Zayas handling the inside draw.

2 UNCORK THE BOTTLE moves to the Rohan Crichton barn via the claim, and steps up the competition, after returning from the layoff to demolish a field of \$8,000 dated claimers going 7 furlongs. The gelding, who has beaten similar in the past, has Paco in the saddle.

SELECTIONS: 5-1-2

RACE 6: THE CLAIMING CROWN TIARA

1 KAHIKO is returning to the grass after following the productive 3-race campaign on the local turf with a stalk-and-clear score going a mile & 70 yards on the Tapeta. Kent Swezey has Paco handling the inside speed. **8 SUGAR FIX**, 2nd – as the favorite - in this race last year, returns home after making a middle move to get the lead before calling it a day going a mile & 70-yards on the Kentucky Downs turf. Saffie Joseph Jr has her training forwardly for her rematch with



9 WHIMSICAL MUSE. The latter, trained by Mike Maker, debuts locally after following a 2nd-place finish vs \$40,000 claimers at Saratoga with a 2nd place finish – in front of Sugar Fix – at Kentucky Downs. Jorge Vargas Jr rides.

SELECTIONS: 1-8-9

RACE 7: THE CLAIMING CROWN GLASS SLIPPER

9 PRETTY RACHEL moves to the Kent Sweezey barn via the claim, and steps up the competition, after posting her 6th consecutive victory when defeating \$6,250 claimers going a mile. The star of the spring/summer claimers will have Paco Lopez going for lucky number 7. **1 DON'T GET KHOZY**, no slouch in the win department either, will try for 2 in a row, and her 7th victory this year, after rocketing clear to wallop \$20,000 starter optional claimers going a mile. The hard-knocking 4-year-old is making her 35th start for Imaginary Stables and Antonio Sano.

11 PAPA'S LITTLE GIRL is hoping to turn the tables on Don't Get Khozy after rallying to finish 2nd to her last out. Trainer Jose Garoffalo has strong closer Junior Alvarado at the controls.

SELECTIONS: 9-1-11

RACE 8: THE CLAIMING CROWN CANTERBURY

2 BAD BEAT BRIAN, 6-3-0-1 on sprinting on the local turf, returns after closing to finish a game 2nd to graded stakes-placed Carotari in an allowance sprint at Keeneland. Trainer Mike Maker has Emisael Jaramillo in the irons. **7 BELGRANO** is making his local return after notching his 3rd consecutive victory with a driving score vs \$25,000 starter allowance on the Laurel turf. Trainer Frank Russo has Jorge Vargas Jr in the saddle again. **9 XY SPEED**, a perfect 2 for 2 on the GP turf, returns locally, and makes his first start since winning the \$100,000 Laurel Dash. Trainer Gerald Bennett has Paco Lopez atop the 7-time winner at the distance (9-7-1-1)

SELECTIONS: 2-7-9

RACE 9: THE CLAIMING CROWN RAPID TRANSIT

5 PUDDING is stretching out to one of his best distances (6-4-1-0) after rallying to finish 2nd -beaten a neck – vs \$80,000 optional claimers going 6 furlongs, and getting a 90 Beyer figure for his effort. Trainer Liz Dobles has Leonel Reyes atop the son of Two Step Salsa. **3 FINANCIAL SYSTEM**, undefeated in his 2 previous races at 7 furlongs, turns back after setting the pace and getting nipped at the wire when finishing 2nd vs \$25,000 optional claimers, which was the first start after the claim by Saffie Joseph Jr.

8 MILES AHEAD, who won the Grade 3 Smile Sprint during the summer, is stretching out to 7 furlongs in the first race since finishing 2nd – beaten a neck – in \$60,000 overnight handicap moved from turf to a sealed sloppy track. Ed Plesa Jr has Paco trying to reignite his class.

SELECTIONS: 5-3-8

RACE 10: THE CLAIMING CROWN JEWEL

10 HANALEI'S HOUDINI, who has the distinction of being the only entrant in the field to hit the board at a mile and an eighth, moves to the Mike Maker barn via the claim, and stretches out, looking to sit in the garden spot behind the strong pace expected. Paco Lopez rides. **3 GIROLAMO'S ATTACK** is heading to uncharted territories when he stretches out to 9 furlongs after returning from the Spa and reeling off back-to-back \$60,000 overnight handicap victories going a mile. The speedy 4-year-old should be on or with the pace with Edgard Zayas in the irons.

5 GLORY OF FLORIDA is another trying 9 panels with the perfect come-from-behind style needed to capitalize on the abundance of speedy types in the field. Miguel Vazquez rides.

SELECTIONS: 10-3-5

RACE 11: THE CLAIMING CROWN EMERALD

1 MID DAY IMAGE, 4-3-0-0 on the Gulfstream turf, returns, and cuts back to a mile and a sixteenth, in the first start since using his speed to defeat \$16,000 starter handicap runners going 11 furlongs on the Monmouth turf. Trainer Luis Carvajal Jr has Paco Lopez quarterbacking the inside speed. **8 MAX K.O.** is returning to his best surface after following a pair of well-spaced races on the turf with a narrow defeat vs \$25,000 starter allowance runners going a mile and 70-yards on the Tapeta. Saffie has Edgard handling the surface switch. **3 ATTENTIVE**, a reclaim by Mike Maker, is turning back to 8 ½ furlongs after rallying late to finish 3rd vs \$40,000 claimers going 9 furlongs on the Belmont turf. The 3-time winner at the distance, should sit the 'trip' behind speed.

SELECTIONS: 1-8-3

BEST BET: RACE 10 – 10 HANALEI'S HOUDINI

LONGSHOT: RACE 11 – 1 MID DAY IMAGE