



RACE BY RACE ANALYSIS

BY RON NICOLETTI



Saturday, December 5, 2020

RACE 1:

3 UPTOWN FLIRT is debuting locally after a posting a trio of solid turf outings on the New York circuit. Trainer Bill Mott has Tyler Gaffalione atop the daughter of Speightster. **1 PANGAEA PROXIMA** is a daughter of Temple City, and a half-sister to A Thread of Blue, who won both the Palm Beach and Dania Beach over this course. Trainer Graham Motion has Luis Saez named to ride. **10 PARTISAN KITTEN**, a daughter of productive turf sire Kitten's Joy, debuts for trainer Mike Maker with Irad Ortiz Jr in the irons. The tote action should tell us more.

SELECTIONS: 3-1-10

RACE 2: THE GLASS SLIPPER

2 LIZA STAR, the defending champ in the Glass Slipper, and a 10-time local winner, is back home after shipping up to Pimlico and finishing 5th in the \$100,000 Skipat. Trainer Peter Walder has Tyler Gaffalione in the saddle. **6 SKY CHASER** is back locally after following the sharp \$25,000 optional claiming victory here with a game 3rd place finish behind next-out stakes winner Gibberish in a \$62,500 optional claimer going a 2-turn mile at GP West. **5 DON'T GET KHOZY** is stretching out to a mile after closing to finish 3rd and 2nd, respectively, in a pair of sprints vs similar quality across town. Trainer Antonio Sano has Irad Ortiz Jr atop the daughter of Khozan.

SELECTIONS: 2-6-5

RACE 3:

8 FIGHTING FORCE, a beautifully bred son of Air Force Blue, is returning to the turf after following his 2nd-place finish behind next-out Grade 3 Futurity Stakes winner Second of July in his turf debut with a 3rd place finish in a race moved from the grass to 8 ½ furlongs on the Keeneland main track.

2 VOTER PROTECTION, a half-brother to \$1.6 million earner Musical Romance, is stretching out to a mile after following the 4th place finish behind Fighting Force in his sprint debut with a late-closing 3rd in a race moved to the Belmont main track. Trainer Chad Brown has Tyler Gaffalione atop the son of More Than Ready.

3 EASTON ROCKS debuts for trainer Todd Pletcher, who also conditions Fighting Force, with the breeding need to love both the distance and surface. The son of Declaration of War has Irad Ortiz Jr in the irons.

SELECTIONS: 8-2-3

RACE 4: THE EXPRESS

1 KRSTO SKYE, a speedy son of City Zip, is back in S Fla after following his set-the-pace 2nd here in the Grade 3 Smile Sprint with a set-the-pace 4th in the Grade 3 DeFrances at Pimlico. Trainer Carlos David has Irad handling the inside gas. **7 COMBINATION**, a 7-time local winner, is stretching out to three-quarters of a mile after the hard-fought score going 5 panels across town. Trainer Saffie Joseph Jr has Edgard Zayas atop the horse-for-course play.

4 WHYRUAWESOME should sit an ideal stalking trip off the speed after tracking the pace and notching back-to-back victories using those stalk-and-pounce tactics. The winner of 4 of his last 5 races has Miguel Vazquez in the irons.

SELECTIONS: 1-7-4

RACE 5: THE DISTAFF DASH

10 JAKARTA, who was a solid 3rd behind classy Grade 1 winner Got Stormy in the Buffalo Trace at Keeneland 2 starts back, is back on the grass after setting the pace and tiring going 7 furlongs on the synthetic surface at Woodbine. The daughter of Bustin Stones classes up perfectly in this spot. **9 THINKIN COWTOWN**, the defending champ in the Dash, was given some time off after finishing 3rd in a turf sprint here in September. The hard-knocking mare, who runs well fresh, is reunited with Tyler Gaffalione, who was aboard for the victory last year. **7 DAHLONEGA** moved to the Carlos David barn via the claim, and steps up the competition, after finishing a rallying 2nd vs \$10,000 claimers going 5 panels across town: Irad Ortiz Jr rides.

SELECTIONS: 10-9-7

RACE 6: THE JEWEL

2 JESUS' TEAM, the feel-good story of the summer, is back home after finishing 3rd in the G2 Jim Dandy, 3rd in the G1 Preakness, and 2nd – at 62-1 – in the G1 Breeders' Cup Dirt Mile. **7 DACK JANIEL'S** is turning back to a mile and an eighth after dueling for the lead and finishing 3rd in the 13-furlong G2 Aftercare Alliance at Keeneland. Trainer Jack Sisterson has Julien Leparoux named to ride. **4 PRINCE OF ARABIA**, 2 for 2 'in the money' going 9 furlongs on the dirt, is going back to the main track after finishing 3rd in the mile and three-sixteenth Richard Lee on the turf. Trainer Patrick Biancone is a strong 28% with the turf to dirt angle.

SELECTIONS: 2-7-4

RACE 7: THE EMERALD

9 MUGGSAMATIC, the defending champ in The Emerald, is turning back to a mile, and makes his 2nd start back, after an ambitious summer campaign in which he followed his victory here in the Soldier's Dancer with a yeoman's try in the Grade 1 United Nations, followed by a 3rd place finish vs starter allowance company at Kentucky Downs. Trainer Mike Maker, who has 5 horses entered in the race, has Miguel Vazquez atop this part of his multi-coupled entry. **6 TUSK**, who has had some tough battles with the top choice in the past, makes his first start since winning the Grade 3 Tropical Turf here in January. Trainer Saffie Joseph Jr is 33% with the 180 days-plus layoff. **4 TEMPLE**, another from Mike Maker, is consistent late-running son of Temple City who loves the local terrain (8-4-2-2): Tyler Gaffalione rides.

SELECTIONS: 9-6-4

RACE 8: THE RAPID TRANSIT

1 AVANT GARDE, no slouch in the win department, got back to his winning ways last out after his 4-race win streak ended when he finished 4th in the G3 Oklahoma Derby. He'll be tested for class at a price. **12 I'M A G SIX**, claimed twice recently for \$62,500, the last by Todd Pletcher, cuts back to 7 furlongs after encountering trouble and finishing 4th behind pricey stablemate Tatweej going a mile in the slop here last out. The son of Alternation will have Irad handling the outside draw. **5 MILES AHEAD** is stretching out to 7 furlongs after posting his 3rd consecutive victory when he defeated \$25,000 optional claimers going 6 ½ furlongs. Trainer Ed Plesa Jr has Paco atop the ultra-consistent gelding.

SELECTIONS: 1-12-5

RACE 9: THE TIARA

5 QUEEN'S EMBRACE, 3rd in the G2 Lake Placid at the Spa in July, moved to the Danny Gargan barn via the claim after finishing 5th in an \$80,000 optional claimer at Belmont. The barn, 46% with new claims, has Luis Saez named to ride. **11 SUGAR FIX** is debuting locally for Saffie Joseph Jr after stalking the pace and fading in the G3 Valley View at Keeneland, a race that's already produced a pair of next-out stakes winners: Tyler Gaffalione rides.

1 BIENVILLE STREET is a consistent daughter of Street Boss who has parlayed her stalking style into a trio of solid turf performances, which includes the neck defeat in the \$75,000 Monroe 2 starts back.

SELECTIONS: 5-11-1

RACE 10: THE CANTERBURY

5 TIGER BLOOD, an 8-time local winner, is hoping the weather cooperates after catching yielding, or soft turf, in a trio of recent stakes races. Trainer Mike Maker has Tyler Gaffalione atop the 19-time winner.

9 UNMOORED, another from the Mike Maker juggernaut, is going back to the turf after his 4-race win streak ended when finished 5th in a rained-out turf sprint at Churchill. The speedy 6-year-old will have Irad Ortiz Jr doling out his speed. **1 FIYA**, a very consistent Maryland-bred, was sent south after reeling off 4 consecutive sprint victories up north, including the allowance score at Belmont. Trainer Tom Albertrani reunites the gelding with Luis Saez, who rode him in New York.

SELECTIONS: 5-9-1

RACE 11: THE IRON HORSE

1 FROST OR FRIPPERY, who has been the odds-on choice in the 7 races since the claim by Brad Cox, debuts locally after winning 5 of those 7 races in impressive fashion. The 10-time winner at the distance has Luis Saez at the controls. **6 SNAP HOOK** is stretching out to a mile and a sixteenth after just getting nipped at the wire when finishing 2nd vs this level of opposition going 2-turn mile across town. The consistent 6-year-old will have strong front running jock Emisael Jaramillo rationing his speed. **3 BOBBY G** was sent south after a trio of solid victories in Maryland, including a pair at this mile and a sixteenth distance. Trainer Johnathan Maldonado has Irad named to ride.

SELECTIONS: 1-6-3

BEST BET: RACE 10 – 5 TIGER BLOOD

LONGSHOT: RACE 8 – 1 AVANT GARDE