



RACE BY RACE SELECTIONS

by Ron Nicoletti

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RACE 1:

6 SHE FLED THE SCENE is dropping to the \$20,000 level, and stretching out to a mile and a sixteenth, after threatening to notch this 2-lifetime condition in consecutive turf outings vs tougher going a mile.

5 STRELLA'S WAR is stretching out an additional 16th of a mile after rallying to finish 3rd behind the top choice when they hooked up at a mile on March 5th. Trainer Rodolphe Brisset has Luis Saez handling the rematch.

7 GEA will face conditioned claiming competition after following her maiden victory with a 4th place finish vs open-competition going a mile at the \$20,000 level. Trainer Oscar Gonzalez has Marcos Meneses at the controls.

SELECTIONS: 6-5-7

RACE 2:

2 LIME is a homebred daughter of Iqbaal debuting for trainer Wesley Ward, who is one of the best at getting 2-year-olds to win at first asking; Tyler Gaffalione rides.

7 PRETZEL is a daughter of Brethren, and a half-sister to stakes-placed Sweet Khalessi, debuting for Arindel, and trainer Juan Alvarado, with Paco Lopez named to ride. **1 AWESOME VIEW**, a daughter of Awesome of Course, debuts for trainer Ralph Nicks, who has a 26%-win average with his freshman runners. The concern is the always-daunting inside post.

SELECTIONS: 2-7-1

RACE 3:

4 WEEKEND DREAMER is wheeling back after responding to the surface switch with a well-meant 2nd place finish – beaten a neck – at this level and distance on the turf. Trainer Emmet Jolley keeps it light with apprentice Cristian Torres named to ride.

7 MORE THAN USUAL is dropping to the \$25,000 level, and turning back to 5 furlongs, after tracking the pace and fading when facing better going 8 and 8 ½-furlongs, respectively, for trainer Saffie Joseph Jr.

10 BYCHANCE will break from the outside after departing from the rail, making a middle move and weakening, when finishing 5th behind Weekend Dreamer last out. Trainer Amador Sanchez, who has 2 in the field (1 Mr. Vecchio), tabs Leonel Reyes to ride this half of his uncoupled entry.

SELECTIONS: 4-7-10

RACE 4:

7 GREY MANNERS is dropping to the \$6,250 level on the main track after showing speed and fading late when facing tougher in back-to-back 5-furlong turf sprints. Trainer Efen Loza Jr has Luis Saez named to ride this intricate part of the pace puzzle.

10 LUXE DIAMOND is stepping up to the next logical level after drawing clear to defeat \$12,500 maidens by almost 10 lengths. Trainer Joe Orseno has Cristian Torres named to ride. **9 TAKE CHARGE AGAIN** has her claiming tag carved in half after pressing the pace and weakening when facing \$12,500 '2-lifetime' claimers at the distance; Paco Lopez rides.

SELECTIONS: 7-10-9

RACE 5:

11 SUMMER IN THE CITY is dropping to the \$50,000 level, and stretching out to a mile, after tracking the pace and finishing 5th in her useful career debut going 5 furlongs on the turf. Trainer Todd Pletcher, 33% with similar class drops, has Luis Saez handling the added real estate. **5 WICKED MERCURY** is dropping to this level after stalking the pacesetters and finishing 3rd vs \$75,000 maidens going a mile. Trainer Jane Cibelli has Paco Lopez in the saddle again. **1 OUR FANTASY** is another dropping to the \$50,000 level, and breaking from the rail, after prompting the pace and finishing 5th behind Wicked Mercury last out. Trainer Kathleen O'Connell has Dylan Davis quarterbacking the inside post.

SELECTIONS: 11-5-1

RACE 6:

6 LOOKIN AT ROSES is turning back to a mile with the 'key' late running style needed to capitalize in a field stocked from top to bottom with 'need the lead' type runners. Trainer Guadalupe Preciado has Miguel Vazquez named to ride. **8 CONQUER** will face 'non-winners of 2-lifetime' competition after opening and surrendering an early 15-length lead when finishing 4th vs \$25,000 optional claimers. Trainer Larry Pilotti has Luis Saez rationing his speed. **7 CLAMOR** is stretching out around 2-turns after chasing the pace and finishing 5th vs similar going 5 furlongs last out. Trainer Tom Bush has Edgard Zayas handling the stretchout.

SELECTIONS: 6-8-7**RACE 7:**

3 JANUARY WON is plummeting to the \$25,000 '2-lifetime' level after an interesting 3-race campaign before the layoff in which he followed his debut victory at Saratoga with a pair of 'out of the money' finishes in the G3 Iroquois, and G1 Breeders' Futurity. Trainer Ken McPeck has Paco named to ride.

6 BIG HAMBONE is returning to the main track after responding in the first race after the claim by Brendan Walsh with a stalk-the-pace 2nd vs \$16,000 2-lifetime foes going a mile on the grass; Tyler Gaffalione rides.

10 AWESOME PARTY, a \$700,000 son of Curlin, drops into the claiming ranks after following the maiden special weight score at Aqueduct with a troubled starting last in the \$100,000 Private Terms at Laurel. Trainer Todd Pletcher has Cristian Torres named to ride.

SELECTIONS: 3-6-10**RACE 8:**

8 DRAMA IN DIXIE, listed as a gelding, drops to the \$12,500 level after following a solid 2nd place finish vs \$30,000 claimers with a troubled outing (steadied twice) in a \$25,000 starter optional claimer at the distance. **6 EARTHQUAKE** is hoping to bounce back at the \$12,500 level after following back-to-back victories with a poor showing vs \$16,000 claimers last out. It's the old bounce/rebound angle.

5 ST JOE VIPER is debuting on the turf after setting the pace and holding on to finish 2nd vs \$14,000 types going a 1-turn mile on the dirt. Trainer Larry Pilotti has Paco handling the surface switch.

SELECTIONS: 8-6-5**RACE 9:**

6 R MERCEDES BOY a swift son of Overdriven, is returning from the layoff with a string of glib workouts showing in preparation for the return. Trainer Georgina Baxter has Emisael Jaramillo named to ride.

2 FAST LOADED is turning back to three-quarters of a mile after prompting the pace and weakening to finish 3rd in the 7-furlong American Fabius last out. Trainer Ralph Nicks has Tyler Gaffalione named to ride, as Jaramillo moves to the top choice.

5 CHARLIE THE GREEK, one of the gamest horses on the grounds, is cutting back to three-quarters after drawing clear to defeat this level of competition going 6 ½ furlongs. Trainer Bob Hess, 4 for 6 at the spring meeting thus far, has Paco going for 2 in a row.

SELECTIONS: 9-2-5**RACE 10:**

7 SARASOTA COUNTY should be primed to offer more, and sit in the catbird seat behind the speed, after returning from the layoff to finish a late-closing 2nd – beaten a head – in a 5-furlong allowance. Trainer Bill Hickey tabs Joe Bravo to ride. **4 QUARKY** is debuting locally at 5 furlongs after the consistent sprint campaign up north in which he used his speed to amass a 11-2-4-2 record. Trainer Mike Dini has Luis Saez atop the son of The Factor. **11 MACHO BLUE** has been knocking on the door in back-to-back entry-level allowance races at the distance, and just needs a little racing luck to end up in the picture ceremony.

SELECTIONS: 7-4-11**RACE 11:**

7 FRENCH QUARTER is dropping a notch, and turning back to 5 ½ furlongs, after holding on gamely to defeat \$8,000 claimers going three-quarters of a mile. Trainer Saffie Joseph Jr has Paco going for 2 in a row.

2 PASS THE GRAVY is plunging to the \$6,250 level in the first race since showing speed and fading to 4th vs \$40,000 claimers at Keeneland about 18 months ago. Trainer Larry Rivelli has Victor Lebron atop the 5-year-old son of Afleet Alex. **1 SILENT TIGER** is cutting back to this distance after returning from the layoff to finish 2nd vs \$7,000 claimers going 6 ½ furlongs. Trainer Victor Barboza Jr has Tyler Gaffalione named to ride.

SELECTIONS: 7-2-1**BEST BET: RACE 6 – 6 LOOKIN AT ROSES****LONGSHOT: RACE 10 – 7 SARASOTA COUNTY**