



# RACE BY RACE SELECTIONS

by Ron Nicoletti

Thursday, February 6, 2020

**RACE 1:**

**10 SWIRLING CANDY** moved to the Cheryl Winebaugh barn via the claim, and wheels back, after setting the pace and getting nailed late when finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> – as the favorite – at this level and distance; Luis Saez rides. **6 IM THIRSTY TOO** is dropping to the \$25,000 level after pressing the pace and fading in a pair of local turf sprints under maiden special weight conditions. Trainer Mark Casse has Tyler Gaffalione handling the class relief.

**7 R U ROYALTY** is daughter of Uncaptured debuting for trainer Georgina Baxter with the breeding, and the connections, that indicate this one will be in the first flight playing catch me if you can.

**SELECTIONS: 10-6-7**

**RACE 2:**

**2 ICONIC** is dropping to the \$8,000 on the dirt after failing to run a step vs \$16,000 'non-winners of 3-lifetime' runners going a mile and a sixteenth on the turf. Trainer Mike Maker, who claimed this horse 3 starts back for \$40,000, has Irad Ortiz Jr handling the freefall though the claiming ranks.

**8 FALSE ACCUSATION** moved to the Jose Garoffalo barn via the claim, and steps up to the \$8,000 level after rallying – as the favorite – to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> at the distance vs \$6,250 '3-lifetime' claimers.

**3 AMERICAN RIVER (VEN)** is hoping to stretch his speed to the wire after vying for the lead and finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> at this level and distance last out.

**SELECTIONS: 2-8-3**

**RACE 3:**

**3 HIGHER AUTHORITY** should have the proverbial screws tightened after returning from the 3-month layoff to finish a troubled 2<sup>nd</sup> (boxed in) – as the odds-on choice – at this level and distance. Trainer Jason Servis has Irad in the saddle again.

**6 RED MULE**, 5 for 7 'in the money' on the turf, is going back to the grass in the first start since finishing a distant 5<sup>th</sup> in a monster 'key' race on the

dirt that produced 4 next-out winners from 7 starters. Jorge Navarro takes over the training, and has Edgard Zayas named to ride. **1 OROSCOPO** will depart from the rail after a solid local return in which he rallied to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> behind the top choice. Trainer Tom Bush has Rajiv Maragh in the saddle.

**SELECTIONS: 3-6-1**

**RACE 4:**

**8 FIRST RATE** is shifting to the main track after returning from the layoff for trainer Jorge Navarro and failing to get untracked vs \$50,000 maidens going a 2-turn mile on the turf. The barn, 33% with the turf to dirt angle, add 2<sup>nd</sup>-time blinkers, and Irad Ortiz Jr. to the mix. **6 EMBRACE MY UNCLE**, 2<sup>nd</sup> at this level and distance 2 starts back, drops after showing some early interest and fading vs special weight competition going a mile and a sixteenth.

**4 BLESSED JOURNEY** is dropping to this level on the dirt, and removing the blinkers, after making a 5-wide bid to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> vs \$75,000 maidens going a mile and a sixteenth. Trainer Bob Hess Jr, 30% with the grass to dirt move, has apprentice Romero Maragh in the saddle.

**SELECTIONS: 8-6-4**

**RACE 5:**

**6 MR ATILA** is stretching out to a mile after responding in the first race after the claim by Jorge Navarro with a sharp 6-furlong victory vs this level of competition; Luis Saez rides. **5 EMPIRE POWER**, who does his best running from a stalk/close position, should sit in the catbird seat behind what is sure to be a sizzling early pace scenario. Edgard Zayas rides for Antonio Sano. **2 IL FARAONE** is stepping up the competition after notching his 4<sup>th</sup> victory at the distance when he drew clear along the rail to defeat \$8,000 open-claimers. Trainer Monica McGoey has red-hot Marcos Meneses in the saddle.

**SELECTIONS: 6-5-2**

**RACE 6:**

**4 CHOUCOU DE BOO** is dropping to the \$25,000 level, and turning back to 5 furlongs, after pressing the pace and fading when facing \$50,000 maidens going a mile on the local turf. Trainer Tom Bush has Emisael Jaramillo returning on the daughter of Big Brown. **5 ROMAN CITY** is another getting her maiden tag sliced in half after making a 4-wide charge to finish 4<sup>th</sup> going 5 furlongs at the \$50,000 level. Trainer Steve Klesaris has Irad in the saddle again. **6 KAYLA'S TUNE** should be primed and ready to offer more after returning from the 4-month layoff to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> at this level and distance. Trainer Joe Orseno has Tyler Gaffalione in the saddle again.

**SELECTIONS: 4-5-6**

**RACE 7:**

**8 WOLF RIDGE** is dropping to the \$8,000 level, and turning back to 7 furlongs on the main track, after tracking the pace and finishing a so-so 6<sup>th</sup> vs 16,000 '2-lifetime' claimers going 7 ½ furlongs on the turf. Paco Lopez rides for Mike DePaulo. **9 STEADILY** moved to the Angel Quiroz barn via the claim after making a 4-wide bid to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> vs similar going a mile. The previous winner at the distance has Santiago Gonzalez handling the turnback.

**7 BODIE CODY** is trying the dirt for the first time after facing better on the turf with mixed results. Trainer Juan C Perez has Miguel Vazquez named to ride.

**SELECTIONS: 8-9-7**

**RACE 8:**

**11 BATTLE OF BLENHEIM** is dropping back to this level after following his \$35,000 claiming victory at a mile with a hard-fought battle at the distance in which he defeated \$50,000 claimers last out. Red-hot trainer Mike Maker has Irad Ortiz Jr named to ride, as his brother Jose moves to **12 LEMONIST**. The latter, trained by Todd Pletcher, is dropping to the \$40,000 level after returning from Aqueduct to finish a sightseeing 5<sup>th</sup> vs \$62,500 optional claimers going a mile. The stretchout to 8 ½ furlongs should bolster his chances to win the war with the top choice.

**4 KING OF SPADES** is turning back to a mile and a sixteenth, and facing \$40,000 claimers; after just getting edged at the wire when finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> – beaten a head – vs \$35,000 optional claimers going a mile and an eighth. Trainer Kelly Breen has Nik Juarez atop this longshot possibility.

**SELECTIONS: 11-12-4**

**RACE 9:**

**1 SOLDADO**, who was highly touted after his debut maiden victory here last February, is making his 4-year-old debut after ending his disappointing sophomore campaign with a 4<sup>th</sup> place finish vs \$75,000 optional claimers at Oaklawn Park. Trainer Todd Pletcher has the son of Verrazano working sharply for the return to action. **4 ALLURSTRA** will try to make it 2 in a row at the distance, and notch his 5<sup>th</sup> local victory, after defeating \$16,000 state-bred optional claimers last out. Trainer Terri Pompay has Paco in the irons again. **5 THE GIPPER** is going back to the main track after making a 5-wide charge to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> vs \$25,000 optional claimers going 5 panels on the turf. Trainer Jorge Navarro has Irad handling the surface switch.

**SELECTIONS: 1-4-5**

**RACE 10:**

**2 MR STARK** is stepping up, and stretching out to a mile, after dueling from start to finish, getting mugged in the stretch, finishing 2<sup>nd</sup>, then being placed first in a \$16,000 2-lifetime' claimer going 7 ½ furlongs. Savvy front-running jock Edgard Zayas can steal the nightcap at a price. **1 PAWNBROKER** moved to the Angel Rodriguez barn via the claim, and will cut back to a mile, after coming within a neck of notching this condition going a mile and a sixteenth. The new connections keep the status quo with leading jockey Irad Ortiz Jr at the controls.

**6 VALDOLOBO (IRE)** is stepping up the next level after shipping in for trainer Brendan Walsh and defeating \$16,000 'non-winners of 2-lifetime' runners going 7 ½ furlongs. Jose Ortiz rides as Irad sticks with Pawnbroker.

**SELECTIONS: 2-1-6**

**BEST BET: RACE 8 - 11 BATTLE OF BLENHEIM**

**LONGSHOT: RACE 10 – 2 MR STARK**