



# RACE BY RACE SELECTIONS

by Ron Nicoletti

Thursday, January 2, 2020

## RACE 1:

**8 MYSTERY BANK** is dropping to the \$32,000 level after making a 3-wide bid – at 69-1 – to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> vs special weight company going 5 furlongs on the GP West turf. Trainer Jesus Lander secures the services of jockey Irad Ortiz Jr. **6 ALASKAN** moved to the Mike Maker barn via the claim, and returns to the turf, after pressing the pace and weakening to finish 4<sup>th</sup> when facing similar here going 6 furlongs on the main track. Jose Ortiz rides the son of Kantharos.

**1 MIAMI CROCKETT** is a son of Kitten's Joy debuting on the turf with the speed needed to use the inside post to his advantage. Trainer Skip Einhorn has Wilmer Garcia named to ride.

**SELECTIONS: 8-6-1**

## RACE 2:

**6 WHO IS JARETT** is dropping to the \$50,000 level on the main track after tracking the pace and finishing 4<sup>th</sup> in his career debut going 5 furlongs on the turf. Trainer Jorge Navarro, 33% with the grass to dirt angle, has Luis Saez handling the surface change. **2 TAPPING** is a son of Tapizar debuting for trainer Gilberto Zerpa with a string of solid workouts showing over the GP West training track. The colt gets Lasix, and has Emisael Jaramillo in the saddle. **5 WICKED TEMPTATIONS** is another dropping to this level on the main track after failing to show much in his 5-furlong career debut on the turf. Trainer Ed Plesa Jr has Paco Lopez handling the combo surface switch/dropdown.

**SELECTIONS: 6-2-5**

## RACE 3:

**2 OCEAN FIRE** is making the 3<sup>rd</sup> start of her current form cycle, and turning back to 7 ½ furlongs, after finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> at a mile and a sixteenth last out, and 2<sup>nd</sup> a mile – at Aqueduct - 2 starts back. Trainer Bill Mott has Jose Ortiz atop the daughter of Animal Kingdom. **6 SMACK**, who was 3<sup>rd</sup> behind Ocean Fire when they competed at a mile at Aqueduct, renews the rivalry after finishing a well-meant 2<sup>nd</sup> here going 8 furlongs last out; Tyler Gaffalione rides.

**5 KITTEN BY THE SEA**, a 4-year-old daughter of strong turf sire Kitten's Joy, debuts for trainer Mike Maker with Irad Ortiz Jr named to ride. The tote action should help point us in the right direction.

**SELECTIONS: 2-6-5**

## RACE 4:

**6 SHANGHAISWEETHEART** is turning back to three-quarters of a mile after responding in her local return by setting the pace and finish a clear 2<sup>nd</sup> going 6 ½ furlongs. Trainer Nagib Aboughaida has apprentice Cristian Torres atop the one to fear. **2 ALPILLES** is dropping to the \$6,250 level on the main track after showing speed and fading late when facing tougher going 5 furlongs on the turf. Trainer Fernando Abreu is 25% with the grass to dirt angle. **1 SIZZLING ROMA** is turning back to three-quarters of a mile after returning from the 2-month freshening to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> behind the top choice going 6 ½ furlongs. Trainer Gilberto Zerpa has Emisael Jaramillo atop the 1-for-18 mare.

**SELECTIONS: 6-2-1**

## RACE 5:

**1 TRAFFIC TROUBLE** will try to avoid trouble after having the steady on the first turn when finishing 5<sup>th</sup> in his local turf debut going a mile. Trainer Brian Lynch has Javier Castellano handling the turnback to 7 ½ furlongs. **7 BLAMELESS** is turning back to this distance after returning from an almost 8-month layoff at Aqueduct and finishing 5<sup>th</sup> – beaten a little over a length – going a mile on a firm course. Trainer Michael Matz has Jose Ortiz atop the gelded son of Blame. **5 BLUE LOU BOYLE (IRE)**, listed as a gelding, is making his first start since finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> at this level here last July. Trainer Mark Casse, who has 2 in the field (Seclusive), has the son of Quality Road working well for the return.

**SELECTIONS: 1-7-5**

**RACE 6:**

**2 FAST ONE** will race with the blinkers off after setting the pace and weakening at the furlong marker when finishing 4<sup>th</sup> here at the distance last out. Trainer Scott Becker has Paco rationing the gelding's speed again. **6 SMASH** is stretching out to a 1-turn mile after showing speed and finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> when facing similar quality going 7 furlongs on a wet track at GP West. Trainer Juan Alvarado has Edgard Zayas atop the Arindel homebred. **4 PROSPECT PROJECT** who returned from a layoff to finish a closing 3<sup>rd</sup> at this level and distance, can ending up sitting the 'trip' if the top two selections get hooked in an early speed duel. Trainer Juan Arias has Jairo Rendon named to ride.

**SELECTIONS: 2-6-4**

**RACE 7:**

**3 HIRE THE LADY** is debuting locally after the pair of sharp turf victories across town in which she broke her main at the distance by 4 lengths, and backed that up with another 4-length score vs \$10,000 '2-lifetime' claimers. She'll be tested for class in this spot. **8 PLAY THAT TONE** will try 'non-winners of 3-lifetime' competition after returning from the layoff to finish a useful 5<sup>th</sup> vs \$16,000 state-bred optional claimers at the distance. Trainer Jose Garoffalo has Paco handling the 2<sup>nd</sup> race off the bench. **4 ADAMANT** is turning back to 5 furlongs after opening and surrendering an early 2-length lead when facing considerably tougher in a \$25,000 optional claimer going a mile on the grass; Luca Panici rides for trainer Emmet Jolley.

**SELECTIONS: 3-8-4**

**RACE 8:**

**6 ARCELOR** moved to the Saffie Joseph Jr barn via the claim after returning locally from Parx to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> vs this level of competition going three-quarters of a mile. The new connections tab Paco to handle the stretchout to 6 ½ furlongs. **2 PRINCESS LATINA** moved to the Bobby Dibona barn after the claim, and stretches out to 6 ½ furlongs, after setting a pressured pace and finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in front of Arcelor last out; Victor Lebron handles the previous winner at the distance (1-1-0-0). **3 SHE TAKES HEART** is turning back to a sprint distance with blinkers added, after shipping back to Gulfstream and finishing 5<sup>th</sup> going a 1-turn mile. Trainer Barry Croft has Marcos Meneses handling the turnback.

**SELECTIONS: 6-2-3**

**RACE 9:**

**8 MALIBU MUSIC** is stepping up the competition, and wearing blinkers, after showing a fondness for the local turf when he finished 3<sup>rd</sup> – beaten a half-length – vs \$16,000 '2-lifetime' claimers. Trainer Patrick Biancone has Julien Leparoux atop the longshot special. **4 MO ZONE**, a perfect 1 for 1 on the turf, is shifting back to the grass after facing allowance level competition in a series of route races on dirt in Kentucky. Trainer Eddie Kenneally has Javier Castellano atop the gelded son of Uncle Mo. **2 PEACOCK KITTEN** moved to the Saffie Joseph Jr barn via the claim after returning from the layoff to defeat \$35,000 '2-lifetime' claimers by a hard-fought nose. The new connections tab Luis Saez to ride.

**SELECTIONS: 8-4-2**

**RACE 10:**

**5 RECESS** is making his first start since finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in front of a trio of next-out winners in a 'key' \$30,000 '2-lifetime' claimer going a mile and a sixteenth on a good Belmont turf. Trainer Todd Pletcher has Irad atop the daughter of Point of Entry. **6 MAGIC RIVER** is back on the turf at this level after returning from a 3-month layoff at Woodbine to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> on the Tapeta surface vs \$40,000 optional claimers. Trainer Mark Casse has Tyler atop the daughter of Violence. **4 COMIC KITTEN** is plunging into this '2-lifetime' claimer, and turning back to a mile, after facing both allowance and stakes level competition from 8 ½ to 11 furlongs. Trainer Mike Maker has Luis Saez handling the dropdown/turnback.

**SELECTIONS: 5-6-4**

**BEST BET: RACE 10 – 5 RECESS**

**LONGSHOT: RACE 9 – 8 MALIBU MUSIC**

