



# RACE BY RACE SELECTIONS

by Ron Nicoletti

Wednesday, January 1, 2020

## RACE 1:

**3 GUNMAN** is debuting locally at a mile and a sixteenth after rallying to finish 3<sup>rd</sup> in his promising 6-furlong debut on the Belmont turf. Trainer Todd Pletcher has John Velazquez named on the gelded son of War Front. **4 SMIRK**, a half-brother to superstar Elate, is making his turf debut for trainer Bill Mott after breaking slowly and never getting untracked in his special weight debut going a mile and a sixteenth on a sloppy Churchill main track; Edgard Zayas rides. **10 MAVERICK KITTEN** is stretching out an additional sixteenth of a mile after finishing a late-closing 4<sup>th</sup> going a mile in that oh so important race over the course here on December 7. Trainer Mike Maker has Luis Saez in the saddle.

**SELECTIONS: 3-4-10**

## RACE 2:

**10 DIXIELAND HUMOR** is turning back to a sprint distance after tracking 4-wide and finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> when facing similar going a 1-turn mile here last out. Trainer Ralph Nicks has Cristian Torres handling the classic turnback move. **8 BULLDAT** is dropping to the \$12,500 level, and adding blinkers, after encountering trouble at the start in back-to-back sprints vs better at GP West. **3 VARSOVIA** is another turning back to 6 furlongs after prompting the pace and fading to finish a distant 4<sup>th</sup> going a 1-turn mile here last out.

**SELECTIONS: 10-8-3**

## RACE 3:

**5 GIN AND TINS** is dropping a notch on the competition scale after departing from the rail and finishing a rallying 3<sup>rd</sup> – beaten a length – going a mile vs \$25,000 starter optional claimers. Trainer Juan Avila has Rajiv Maragh in the saddle.

**1 ALIEN INVASION** will depart from the rail after setting the pace and weakening to finish 7<sup>th</sup> behind the top choice. He has the speed, and the post, needed to turn the tables on Gin and Tins at a price.

**3 SMALL HOPE** is debuting locally for trainer Kent Sweezey after drawing clear to defeat a pair of next-out winners in a 1-mile allowance on the Tampa turf. Trainer Sweezey, who has 2 in the field (Paddy O'Dini), tabs Nik Juarez to ride the gelded son of Treasure Beach.

**SELECTIONS: 5-1-3**

## RACE 4:

**3 CABRE** is making his local return at three-quarters of a mile after an interesting pair at GP West in which he was beaten a neck going 5 ½ furlongs, and a set-the-pace-and-fade 5<sup>th</sup> going a 2-turn mile in his last. **2 MONEY COME** is going back to the main track in the first race since splitting a pair of next-out winners when finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in a \$10,000 '2-lifetime' claimer going 5 furlongs on the GP West turf. Trainer Nagib Aboughaida claimed him last out, and tabs Luis Saez to ride. **7 FREE FLAYME** is dropping to the \$6,250 level after returning from the 2-month layoff to show speed and fade vs \$12,500 state-bred optional claimers going 7 furlongs. Trainer Joe Orseno has Irad Ortiz Jr in the saddle again.

**SELECTIONS: 3-2-7**

## RACE 5:

**2 BEE WINGS** is debuting locally for trainer Brendan Walsh after proving she could handle 2-turns on the turf when rallying to finish 2<sup>nd</sup> – beaten a half-length – at this 7 ½-furlong distance; Tyler Gaffalione rides. **9 GALIT JAK** is dropping to the \$32,000 level, and turning back slightly to 7 ½ furlongs, after prompting the pace in her special weight turf debut going a mile. Trainer Gilberto Zerpa has Emisael Jaramillo atop the newly turned 3-year-old.

**5 BIG BOSS LADY** is debuting on the turf after the pair of 'in the money' finishes sprinting in the Churchill main track. Trainer David Fawkes, 19% with the dirt-to-turf angle, has Paco Lopez handling the Kentucky invader.

**SELECTIONS: 2-9-5**

**RACE 6:**

**4 SUE'S MONSTER BABY** is plunging to the \$12,500 level after following back-to-back \$20,000 sprint victories at GP West with a stalk-and-fade 7<sup>th</sup> here when going a mile vs \$50,000 starter optional claimers. Trainer Jorge Navarro has Luis Saez named to ride. **1 PROBABLY GRACE** is debuting locally for trainer Larry Rivelli after drawing clear on the Hawthorne main track to defeat \$25,000 maidens by 6 widening lengths; Irad Ortiz Jr rides the 3-year-old daughter of Congrats. **6 SHADDAY** is dropping to this level after following her impressive \$25,000 maiden score going 5 ½ furlongs with a chase-and-fade 4<sup>th</sup> vs \$20,000 claimers going 7 furlongs at GP West; It's Zerpa and Jaramillo!

**SELECTIONS: 4-1-6****RACE 7:**

**9 GAUGUIN (GER)** is debuting locally at 9 furlongs for trainer Bill Mott after a couple of well-meant turf outings – 3 days apart - at Aqueduct - in which he was 3<sup>rd</sup> going 11 furlongs last out, an 2<sup>nd</sup> going a mile – 3 days earlier – on November 14<sup>th</sup>.

**4 SHORE MAGIC** is cutting back to a mile and an eighth after following his maiden score at Keeneland going a mile & three-sixteenths with a slow starting 5<sup>th</sup> going 11-furlongs at Churchill. Trainer Christophe Clement has Julien Leparoux returning on the lightly raced 4-year-old son of Medaglia d'Oro.

**11 DUC DE CALAS (FR)**, another from Christophe Clement, returns as a gelding, and makes his first start since the summer of 2018, with a steady work tab showing at Payson Park. You have to like the fact that Irad Ortiz Jr accepts the riding assignment.

**SELECTIONS: 9-4-11****RACE 8:**

**5 WHYRUAWESOME**, now in the Elizabeth Dobles barn, the gelding returns to the starter optional claiming ranks after returning from the layoff to finish a duel-and-flatten 5<sup>th</sup> in the Claiming Crown Express. The stakes-placed 9-year-old has Irad at the controls. **6 FAST PASS** is wheeling back after getting a perfect closing setup with fractions of 21 & 4 and 44 & 4 when coming up only a nose shy in the Express last out. The gelding could see a similar pace scenario today.

**4 TRAVY BOY** can turn out to be the controlling speed after getting hooked in an early duel prior to fading to 6<sup>th</sup> in the Express. Paco is the man you want at the controls.

**SELECTIONS: 5-6-4****RACE 9:**

**8 SOUL SPIRIT**, now in the Tom Albertrani barn, is turning back to 9 furlongs after making a middle move and flattening out when finishing 6<sup>th</sup> vs allowance competition going 11 furlongs at Churchill; Edgard Zayas rides the longshot special.

**1 BAREEQA** is hoping for a clean trip after getting mired in traffic when finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> in the mile and a sixteenth Claiming Crown Tiara. Trainer Danny Gargan tabs Emisael Jaramillo to handle the inside draw. **4 SMOOTH WITH A KICK** is a daughter of Candy Ride debuting on the turf for trainer Chad Brown after winning 1 of 7 races on the main track vs similar quality. Trainer Brown, who has 2 in the race (Clairvoyance), is 22% with horses making their turf debuts at Gulfstream.

**SELECTIONS: 8-1-4****RACE 10:**

**9 LUCKY POLLY** is making her 3-year-old debut the first start since coming within a neck of exiting the maiden ranks going a mile on the Keeneland turf. Trainer Mark Casse has Tyler Gaffalione in the saddle. **6 OSAKA GIRL** will be treated with Lasix after returning from the layoff to set a pressured pace when finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> here going a mile on a firm course. **5 HAPPY BEE** is eligible to show more at a price after taking the overland route and finishing 6<sup>th</sup> – at 36-1 – in here career debut here going a mile. Trainer Brendan Walsh sweetens the deal with Hall of Fame jock John Velazquez at the controls.

**SELECTIONS: 9-6-5****BEST BET: RACE 7 – 9 GAUGUIN (FR)****LONGSHOT: RACE 9 – 8 SOUL SPIRIT**