

Race 1 Selections

The Horseplayer's Journal by Garnet Barnsdale

#5 CORPORATE BUSINESS raced terrific in defeat here last Saturday in a driving rainstorm on a night when the remainder of the card was cancelled after his race due to weather, track conditions, and visibility concerns. After blasting to the front, he took a shuffle back to fifth following a couple of leadership changes. He came out onto third-over cover in the third quarter, tipped wide turning for home, then closed willingly on the 4 to 5 winning favorite. He kicked home in 27 1/5 on the wet track. The lone winner in this field has a big shot to take his second victory in this spot and he gets a strong recommendation to kick off the guaranteed \$75,000 Pick 5.

#3 CAPTAIN HURLEY comes out of the same race as the top choice in here, and he raced well, considering the conditions, his post, and his trip. After tucking in fifth early, he made a middle move to the front. He came under siege on the final turn, and he battled the 4 to 5 favorite to the head of the stretch. Racing down on the inside in the stretch, which probably wasn't the best part of the track at that point, he got passed by the favorite and two others, but he held fourth. He can get a better trip tonight and finish closer to Corporate Business.

#4 STRONGMAN HANOVER got bet down to 4 to 5 favorite in his last start no doubt based on the locked and blocked trip that he got on March 7th. In that race, he was twisting and turning for the entire stretch drive looking for a lane that wouldn't appear until there were a couple of strides left which was far too late. It was no surprise that he got sent to the front on March 14th, but he couldn't match strides with the longshot winner then got passed by two more rivals that sat inside covered trips to the stretch. I don't love the stale date when the top two choices have a 15-day recency edge, but this gelding should be able to get a piece of this.

#10 ROCKY J had a similar shuffled trip as the choice, but he made his move on the backstretch earlier and he managed to stave that rival off for second. His problem now is, he is at a severe post position disadvantage. I don't foresee this five-year-old Big Jim gelding breaking his maiden in this thirteenth try, but he might be able to sneak into the Tri or Super at a good price.

BEST BET: CORPORATE BUSINESS

Race 2 Selections

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#3 CENTURY JAMILA is the “now” mare at the top level for female pacers, having won two straight at this level, both times beating her stablemate Blue Pacific, who prior to those two losses was on a roll herself, winning four straight including two in a row at this top level. Most recently, she did it the hard way, racing first up and she out sprinted her stablemate to get up for her fourth win in five starts. This will be the week that she finally gets bet, and there is reason to believe that her stablemate can turn the tables on her this time, but she is the sharpest mare in this field, and she gets the nod to notch the Mares Preferred threepeat.

#6 BLUE PACIFIC seemed unbeatable until there was no race at this class level for a month and she got beat by her stablemate on March 7th on a night where she was at a clear recency disadvantage. Because there was no race carded in this top class for a calendar month, she started the race on a stale date while Century Jamila had only a two-week gap between starts. This Sweet Lou mare looked like a short racehorse in the stretch that night. Last week, when she was tighter, she lasted much longer on the lead, and sprinting well with her stablemate in deep stretch. She gets back to a seven-day rotation tonight and she has thrived in the past when her races were close together. She would be no surprise here if she turned the tables.

#4 SO MUCH MORE was the queen bee of older pacing mares at this track for many years in a row. At nine years old, however, she has taken a back seat to the two Dave Menary trainees picked above her here. She couldn't have asked for better cover last week than Century Jamila, but she gapped that cover then fought for a share, winning the battle for show. At this point of this season, she seems a step or two behind the Menary mares, and another small slice is likely her ceiling tonight.

#2 GLENBORO is a handy sort that always gets good position leaving the gate which results in her getting good trips and earning cheques in most starts. In her last start, she was edged for third by So Much More. So far in 2025, she has not missed finishing in the top four in any of her 10 starts, and that trend will likely continue here.

Race 3 Selections

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#1 POWDER PLAY has been racing well recently and it's only a matter of time until she erases the goose egg in the 2025 win column. In her most recent start, she tried hard first up but the 1 to 5 class dropping leader was resilient and not going to be passed. Two starts back, she suffered a similar fate, chasing a class dropping favorite home to finish second, just edging one of tonight's rivals, Chiefs Dream Girl, for second. She is in peak form right now and she surely will get another aggressive steer from leading driver James Macdonald. She gets top billing here.

#7 CHIEFS DREAM GIRL is an honest mare that bounces up and down the class ladder, typically trying her best in every start, and clicking for a win when she is in a class that she fits and gets a decent trip. Tonight, she is in a spot where she could pop up and take her second win of the year. She had no shot in her last start racing against the likes of Raptors Won in the non-winners of \$14,000 last five class. Two starts back, however, she produced a nice late kick to get in the show photo with Powder Play. I see her sitting and rallying here and if she gets into a live flow, she could get the job done.

#5 ETHEL is interesting dropping back down to the non-winners of \$8,000 last five tonight because that is the level where she showed something two starts back. It appears that she is in over her head when she races higher than that. In that race on March 14th, she kicked home in 26 3/5 while finishing behind the top pick in this race. She has a big late kick on her best day when she is classed properly, and she is worth a look here at a price starting from one of the best posts where she should be able to beat at least a couple of these off the gate.

#8 BETTERNOTMACHME finished third behind Powder Play in her last start racing at tonight's level. She has compiled a nice record so far this year taking three wins and two other shares in six starts. Her best weapon is her good gate speed as she frequently gets put in position near the front early in her miles and that often leads to good results. She has fared better racing one class lower than this, but she is capable of landing near the front at the start of this mile and sticking around for a slice.

Race 4 Selections

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#8 DG HOLI SHAMOLIE rallied for a nice win here on March 20th after losing ground through no fault of her own on the backstretch due to a breaker. She made up 13 lengths from the quarter to the finish, rolling past the post time favorite in mid stretch to take her second win. She has found her best racing style in her past four starts, sitting back and rallying and coming within a nose and neck of winning three times while breaking stride in the other race. She retains the leading driver here and post eight is no concern because she her strategy was likely to drop back again leaving the gate. She gets the call to repeat in a competitive field that has a few live options for early multi-race tickets.

#10 SUPERIOR DELIGHT put it all together in her past two starts after hinting that good things were coming by producing good closing efforts in her first two starts of the year. The key in both of those starts was that she was raced more aggressively and put right on the point leaving the gate. That task becomes tougher here starting from post 10, which as of April 2nd produced only two winners in 132 starts in races contested on the pace (1.5 per cent strike rate). Price should be baked into taking that risk, so I wouldn't accept anything less than 6 to 1 here, but I could see her taking the third win from this post if she gets a reasonable trip.

#6 CALCITE had some issues in some of her races earlier in the year because she appeared hard to handle. But she looked good two starts back when finishing third and that was a hint that better things were coming for her. Flash forward to her last start on March 13th, she was aggressively handled and on her best behavior and she converted while holding off the top choice in this race. She draws perfectly for another speed try here, but she shows a stale date which is a bit of a concern. She is one of the ones that is in the mix for the win here.

#5 WHISKEY BLUE CHIP has been right there in three straight starts since she changed her racing style and has been sent to the front leaving the gate in every one of those races. She hasn't been able to beat Superior Delight in her last two starts, but she has post position advantage on her tonight which could help level the playing field somewhat. She seems likely to take another share rather than a win in this field, however, and I prefer to use her underneath.

Race 5 Selections

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#4 RAPTORS WON shoots for the fourpeat here racing again for a tag in a class that she seems to fit like a glove. Her most recent win was impressive in that she was required to fend off a pocket sitter in Coco Jojo who returned to the races sharp and was seeking a second straight win to start the season. Team Cullen sends out this Big Jim mare who gets another good post to work from. She will likely leave in the top three or four then make another early move to the front and dare her rivals to come and catch her. This class level is ideal for her, but she faces some class droppers now. I think that will help keep her price viable and I'll stick with her.

#2 WESTERN WISH finished second to the choice two starts back then was elevated to the top class where she was overmatched by the likes of Century Jamila, Blue Pacific, and So Much More. Dropping back down to the non-winners of \$14,000 last five, she fits much better. She gets a good pos from which to leave hard for position, and she could be a pocket rocket following the choice tonight. She is one that is hard for me to leave off multi-race tickets in this spot.

#5 LYONS BETTORDAY raced okay against Raptors Won last time when you consider that she started from the worst post. She was an even fifth after pulling out into the flow and racing first-over. She gets a much better post tonight and two starts back she finished a close third in the top class after starting from post five. She should be better tonight because of the post relief. I see her taking a share in this spot.

#6 ANGOSTURA HANOVER is making a habit of finished fourth lately. She often finds good cover but finishes only evenly. She will get overlooked in the wagering here starting from the widest post, but she is capable of passing a few of these in the back half. In addition to finishing fourth in four of her 10 starts this year, she has also finished second twice, but starting from a wide post here, a smaller share is likely her ceiling. She could add some value to the Superfecta tonight.

Race 6 Selections

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#3 GO BLUE was a good Ontario Sires Stakes performer last year, and he was sharp early in the season, finishing a good third on debut, then winning a Grassroots race on the engine in his second start. He moves to trainer Gregg McNair's barn tonight, and that move has already worked well with another Green Manalishi gelding, Wearing The Green, who crushed a non-winners of two field last Saturday in his sophomore debut. Doug McNair, who drove him in his debut last year, takes the lines, and it's expected that he will be aggressive leaving the gate. This gelding gets top billing.

#5 GREEN MONSTER is another Green Manalishi offspring that had a decent rookie campaign that stretched into January of this year with a second straight win before he was given a break. His qualifier on March 21st versus Wearing The Green was decent when you consider how good that rival was in his sophomore debut. Phil Hudon has been a good partner for this gelding who gets sent out by veteran horseman Jerry Duford. He merits a look for the opening leg of the Pick 5 that starts here.

#6 MAMBO NUMBER SIX was a nice debut winner here off March 6th, trotting away from his rivals late for a 12 to 1 score. He was raced more aggressively in his second start, but he couldn't repel the favorite on the last turn. After losing a couple of positions in early stretch, he raced evenly to the wire in a decent effort. He draws the best post tonight and he should get put into play again at the start of this race. He can get a good trip and stick around for a spot in the Tri or Super.

#1 TEN has been good in his last two starts after breaking stride to start his sophomore campaign on March 20th. He was raced aggressively in both of those starts and that likely won't be an easy task here starting from the rail in a field where it is expected that a few lined up to his outside will be looking to leave hard. I don't love the rail post for him in this spot and I think that he is likely limited to taking a small share facing a much tougher field than he beat in his most recent start.

SPOT PLAY: GO BLUE

Race 7 Selections

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#2 COCCO PUFF POWER returns in a good spot here and adds Lasix for trainer Meg Crone. When last seen, she was facing tougher in the Blizzard series than she meets here. She has yet to take a win in 2025, but she should get every chance tonight facing non-winners of two. Doug McNair will likely leave with her and find a spot near the front then look to take control of the race on the backstretch. She gets the nod to notch her third lifetime win in this spot.

#1 LOVE ON ME raced well in the recently concluded Pop Up series but neither she, nor any other mare in that series, was a match for Coz Im Special who swept her preliminary legs and the final. This looks like an easier spot for her, and I don't mind the rail post because she is likely to drop to the middle of the pack early then launch a rally. She has taken wins in five for her 30 starts in 2024-25, and she has a good chance to add to that total in this spot tonight.

#8 SWIFT TALKER gets off the rail tonight and that should mean that she gets aggressive like she did two starts back where she set a strong pace and almost lasted at this level. In her last start, after starting fifth early, her goose was cooked when the opening half was clicked off in a snail-like 58 3/5. She had no chance of advancing in the 55-flat back half. She has a much better chance here, especially if she gets sent forward as expected. She merits a close look for late multi-race tickets.

#10 COUNTRY DANCING is sent out by The Stable seeking her second win over this track in as many starts. She produced a nice first-over effort to take a win in her local debut on February 21st. Her most recent start at the Meadows is a toss out due to her making an equipment break at the start. She has the second fastest mark in this field after the top pick and she seems to fit okay. She should be good for a share in this spot despite drawing widest.

Race 8 Selections

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#3 PESO HANOVER is one of two that battled for the win here on Monday night that return quickly here to take advantage of the \$20,000 optional claimer being carded twice in the same week, and they will likely be the ones disputing for the win at the wire again. This Walner gelding made two early moves to the front and raced well enough to win on Monday night, but his rival that starts from the rail here got the better trip and had fresher legs late in the mile to get up for the win. In the process of splitting hairs choosing between the two, I land here.

#1 BUCK DANCER rallied well from third-over on Monday night and he closed quickly late in the stretch to get up for the win. That was his fourth victory in 10 starts so far this year and second in just four starts for trainer Carmen Auciello since being claimed out of one of these races on Valentine's Day. I don't mind the rail post for him tonight; he has enough gate speed to get away in the top five from there. He will likely be the one that the choice will need to hold off late again and he is hard to leave off late multi-race tickets.

#8 CADILLAC MOON was involved in a race that was called off on Monday night because one of the horses fell near the wire. When the race was signalled as a no contest, though, he was on the lead and looking like he had a big shot to win. He adds Lasix tonight and the expectation is that driver Tyler Jones sends him early looking once again to make the front. He is worth a look for late multi-race tickets as he should offer a good price here and he could get the winning trip racing on or near the lead.

#6 MISTER MAGIC like his stablemate Buck Dancer, is always in the hunt at this level, but he has only one win in 12 starts this year to show for it so far. He was in good position on Monday night when he made what has become an uncharacteristic break and plummeted through the field. He draws best here, and he likely will get put into the race leaving the gate, but he seems more likely to take a slice than a win at this point, assuming he stays flat this time. I'll use him underneath in this spot.

Race 9 Selections

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#9 ON TIME DELIVERY raced well in his first start off the Kyle Fellows claim, but he got picked off right on the wire by a 92 to 1 shot that he meets again tonight. The 27 4/5 third quarter while not being challenged likely took just enough out of him to make him vulnerable late in the stretch. He races on Lasix for the first time tonight and he gets Doug McNair back in the bike. He can clear from his wide post and get the job done this week.

#6 TARQUINUS HANOVER came into last week's race with one bad line racing for a purse on January 6th, and a similar qualifying line on March 14th. Virtually no one expected him to step up off those paired 1:59-flat miles and spring an upset; that's why he was sent off as a 92 to 1 longshot. But step up he did, first leaving hard for position, then sitting a nice trip racing third inside to the stretch. When they straightened out, he fanned out and engaged in a three across battle and he prevailed, much to the delight of his few backers that were returned \$186 for every deuce bet on his nose. Starting from the best post tonight, I can see him sitting in On Time Delivery's pocket, and that makes him a threat to repeat.

#8 STARS TREASURE was bet down from 98 to 1 on March 14th to 4 to 1 six nights later, likely on the strength of his 27 3/5 closing speed that he produced in that start on the 14th. He rewarded those that hammered him down to 4 to 1 with a win, threading the needle between horses in deep stretch after idling and awaiting room. He is clearly improving but he was beaten handily by the top pick in here two starts back. I'll use him underneath tonight.

#5 JIMMY WHISPERS is right there every week it seems, having taken a win and seven other shares from 11 starts so far this year. In his most recent start, he was given a perfect drive by Jody Jamieson which led to him getting a perfect trip. In the three-horse drive to the wire though, he lost a position which doesn't inspire a lot of confidence that he can beat either of the horses that finished ahead of him that night. He seems best used on the bottom of Tri and Super bets.

Race 10 Selections

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#4 CHICKABELL comes off her second good race in a row at this level, closing in the rain along the pylons for second to a class dropping winner that had the race sewn up at that point. It's impressive that she motored home in 27-flat when you consider the weather and track conditions at the time of her race. She fits this class well and she retains the leading driver. She is the mare to beat here.

#6 ONE LAST BET rallied well to get third behind Chickabell last week in a strong effort when you consider that she started from post 10 and lost ground on the final turn and into the stretch then turned it on to get up for third, pacing a 27 2/5 kicker to get there. She gets major post relief here and considering how sharp she is, I won't be surprised if she finds some gate speed tonight. She will likely be the one that the choice needs to fend off coming down the lane.

#8 WAITINONAWOMAN dropped into a conditioned claimer for her last start, and she smoked that field at Flamboro Downs. This is a tougher spot, but she races best when in for a tag, which is where she took most of her wins in the past two seasons. She is sharp and certainly not out of the question in this field. She merits a look for late multi-race tickets.

#1 BLUEMEA KISS got a needed start in, and she raced evenly behind the choice on March 21st. She should be better in this spot and I can see her leaving quicker and getting better position in this spot. She has the speed to go with these on her best day – see her 1:50 1/5 lifetime mark taken here last year – and she can get a share tonight.

#3 ACEFORTYFOUR DAISY should appreciate not seeing Coz Im Special lined up on the gate tonight when you consider that mare was the winner of her last four races. She should find these mares more to her liking, and the late kick should play better in this spot. I see her closing for a slice, and she is a good one to use in the lower rungs of the Tri, Super and High-5.