

## Race 1 Selections

## The Horseplayer's Journal by Garnet Barnsdale

**#1 ZETTE ATHENA** went a big trip in defeat here on June 26th. For starters, she was carried wide by a breaker to her inside on the first turn, which cost her a few lengths. She caught up to the first flight before the field reached the half, then she latched onto third-over cover around the last turn. She tipped widest turning for home won the race for third over two other rivals. The ground she lost on the first turn was at least equal to the losing margin. She adds Lasix tonight, and she has already beat non-winners of two twice in her past six starts. Assuming that she will get a more aggressive steer tonight, she gets top billing to kick off the \$75,000 guaranteed Pick 5.

**#2 ARTFUL DODGER** will get bet tonight simply because he has been testing better and faster company than this non-winners of two group, and he comes in off two solid efforts in fast races. After trying the Goodtimes elimination on June 7th and racing against arguably the best sophomore trotting colt in North America, he was more reasonably spotted in his next start in a Grassroots race, and he finished much closer after passing some rivals in the back half. In his most recent start, he chased a strong leading favorite and took a run at him in the stretch but was rebuffed. That was a solid effort in a fast race, and he should be one of the main contenders here and another one for early Pick 5 tickets.

**#6 SUNDAY SHOES** comes in off a blowout win at Georgian Downs where he looked much the best and he converted as the 2 to 5 favorite. The last time he raced at this non-winners of two level, he was third to two nice horses, Ungawa and Rising Interest. Tonight, the trainer hands the lines to Jody Jamieson who has been running hot lately. This gelding is the third one in here that I would consider using in the early Pick 5.

**#7 KADIDDLE** stepped up to non-winners of three last time and she showed little after starting from a wide post, but she did trot her own back half in 56-flat to stay sharp. She races much better in non-winners of two where she fits much better. In her five starts prior to that last one, she took two wins and a second and two other cheques, so it's clear that is where she fits best. She will take back and look to rally, and she should be able to get a slice in this spot.

## Race 2 Selections

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**#5 KIKI DEE HANOVER** shipped in from Ottawa last week in good form, but she was sent off at 22 to 1 simply because she was in a tougher spot and didn't show any recent wins on her card. She managed to blow up the tote board, and it was an impressive effort I thought. First, she was in a firing line of five fillies heading into the opening turn, and she protected her position, forcing two of her rivals to take a seat behind her. She stayed in third to the last turn where she slipped out on cover. When the loose leader tired and drifted out several lanes in the stretch, the race was thrown wide-open, and she closed to prevail. She gets a better post tonight which should facilitate an even better start. She gets the call to repeat.

**#6 PIZZAZZ HANOVER** is another Rideau Carleton shipper who raced well last week, and she was facing a better field than the top pick in here. Coming in off two big wins, she left well enough from her wide post to get away fourth. She found live cover in the back half, but she spun her wheels in the stretch. That was most likely due to that mile being paced in 1:51 3/5, and she was only beaten two lengths. Her 152-flat clocking was the fastest of her career. She draws perfectly for a speed try tonight, and I could see the two Rideau fillies racing 1-2 then deciding this race in the stretch.

**#8 MARLENES LEGACY** got the leading driver in the bike last week, she got bet down to favorite, and she delivered. She used her good gate speed to land in the pocket, then she found herself sitting third entering the last turn. She angled out coming off the last turn and sailed past the two leaders to get up for her second win and a new lifetime mark. That was by far her best mile since May. While I prefer the two above over her, she should be a threat right back despite drawing wide.

**#2 ACEFORTYFOUR LADY** brought a good record with her from the B tracks last week, and she sat a trip in a fast race then stuck around for a slice in only her second race at Mohawk Park. Tonight's driver Doug McNair sat behind her once before at Georgian Downs, and that partnership resulted in a win last August. She should be in the mix for another small share in this spot.

### Race 3 Selections

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**#2 A SPLASH OF GREEN**, a \$55,000 London Classic buy, is by the top trotting sire in the country and she came into her pari-mutuel debut off a good qualifier after breaking stride on June 12th. She was unveiled here in the Grand Circuit Tompkins-Geers race, going off as the 7 to 5 favorite. She left no doubt, leading all the way by open lengths and not giving any of her rivals a chance. She is also related to three \$100,000+ winners the most successful being Draft Year, who won the OSS Gold Superfinal for two-year-old trotting colts and geldings here in 2017. Off that sharp winning debut, she gets the call to repeat here in the opening leg of the early Pick 4.

**#6 BINGO NIGHT** drew the widest post in a nine-horse field on debut, and it didn't matter as it turned out. The daughter of top sire Green Manalishi was a professional looking winner, blasting right to the front, taking cover then re-rallying for an easy win. The Jones Stable homebred draws best now and she should once again be blasting off the gate. She should be able to get well positioned near the front again, and that makes her a threat to repeat in this first stakes engagement.

**#5 LO AND BEHOLD** looked good winning her lone qualifier here on July 4th. She showed sharp gate speed as she was in front instantly when the wings of the gate folded open. She led all the way from there, and she repelled the pocket sitter who got the perfect trip. When that rival got close in deep stretch this filly responded when asked by Louis-Phillipe Roy and out sprinted that rival to the wire. The \$65,000 London Classic Sale buy is the second foal to make the races from the dam. The first was P L Rachel who won four of 28 races contested at this track including a lifetime best of 1:55 2/5. This filly looks ready to give a good account on debut here.

**#7 CANUKEEPASECRET** finished second to the top pick in the Tompkins Geers when she was provided with a perfect pocket trip, then she made two moves in defeat here on July 4th. She gets Jody Jamieson back tonight, and he drove her in that Grand Circuit race where she finished second. I can see her blasting for position then sticking around for a share.

## Race 4 Selections

## The Horseplayer's Journal by Garnet Barnsdale

**#6 ANTEBELLUM** is by top trotting sire Bar Hopping out of Bella Dolce, and that makes her a full sister to superstar double millionaire Bella Bellini, winner of the Hambletonian Oaks and two Breeders Crowns. This filly is a homebred that raced better in her second qualifier after breaking stride in her first attempt. She gets the best post and Trevor Hen in the bike for this first lifetime start, so it should be all systems go. She gets top billing in this opening leg of the 20-cent Pick 6.

**#7 MEME QUEEN** comes out of a decent maiden voyage in which she floated out fourth then made a middle move to the front, only to be immediately overtaken. She made another move to the front at the three quarters, only to be overtaken by the filly that followed her and a deep closer that was flying late. This \$10,000 Harrisburg purchase should benefit from that initial experience, and he can be right there tonight with slight improvement and an easier trip.

**#2 WALNERS GROVE** started her career in a Grand Circuit race, and she acquitted himself well, racing on the engine most of the way then getting passed in the lane by two rivals. She ran in for a good part of the stretch drive, which didn't help, but she was likely finishing third regardless. This should be an easier spot, and she is in with a decent chance here.

**#10 SOUTHWIND MANHATTN** was one that was tabbed here last week, and she was in with a good chance on second-over cover until she blew up bending around the last turn. She was very impressive chasing down a loose leader racing first-over in her lone qualifier. The goal here of course will be to get around and trot the whole way. If she stays flat though, she may fly late to get a piece. She will probably take no action at all this week coming off that break, and she might add some value to Tri or Super bets.

## Race 5 Selections

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**#6 MISS CHANTILLY N** hasn't hit the board racing here since shipping north from New Jersey on June 13th, but she has been in some tough spots, and she took a cheque in each one of those races while never getting beat far. Those results may have been a blessing in disguise, because it helped her meet the earnings threshold to make this Pop Up series. This is an easier spot, and she gets off the rail and draws the best post now. She keeps Doug McNair in the bike, too, and she has a big shot tonight. She gets top billing in the opening leg of this Pop Up series.

**#9 ONLYTHEGOODDIYOUNG** comes out of some fast races, the swiftest of which was her last start on July 4th in which a rival blasted to the front, paced as fast as she could from the outset, and bottomed out the field in a remarkable 1:49 1/5. This mare did well to pass some rivals to take fourth. This is no doubt an easier spot, and I wouldn't be surprised if Phil Hudon changes tactics and leaves with her. She would be no surprise in this spot, and she merits a look for multi-race tickets.

**#5 CHELSIS CHOICE** was finishing on the edges racing here at Mohawk Park, so she shipped to Grand River on June 18th for a trio of tries in some conditioned races that were easier than the ones she was racing in here. She raced well in all three of them, culminating in a 13 to 1 upset win on July 2nd. She was a game first-over winner on that night, now she draws on of the best posts in a spot where she appears to fit well. She is the third one that I would consider using in the anchor leg of the early Pick 5.

**#2 NO MONEY HONEY** took a two-month break and seemingly came back better, taking shares in both starts since returning. In her last start, she came on for second in a good conditioned claimer field where some of the same mares knock heads every week. She is still winless in 2025, and I expect that to remain unchanged tonight, but she can close for another share in here.

## Race 6 Selections

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**#7 M E LAUREL**, a \$50,000 Harrisburg purchase, caught the eye on debut last week and she can parlay that sharp race into a good result in this first OSS Gold try. After dropping back to eighth in a field of nine, she stalked from the back, saving her move for the stretch. Once she was unleashed, she closed with a furious rush to get second in a visually impressive effort, trotting a 27-flat kicker at first asking. The short seven-horse field should help her tonight, and she gets top billing to kick off the late Pick 5.

**#3 CALGARY MORNING**, a \$65,000 Lexington buy, was well meant on debut when the leading driver took the lines from the trainer, who drove her in her qualifier. She was sent to the front from the 10-hole, and she led all the way from there while cutting some easy fractions. Still, a two-year-old trotting filly winning her debut from post 10 isn't something that you see very often. She can improve tonight, and she should be one of the top contenders in this initial OSS Gold attempt.

**#1 CHER HILL** got a good tightener in for this stakes start on July 1st here. She was sent straight to the front starting from the best post, then she took a mid race shuffle. She, and all of her rivals gapped out in one the backstretch as the leading 3 to 5 favorite trotted a 28 4/5 third quarter to sprint away from the field. I like that this filly rallied with a 26 4/5 kicker. She will likely look to stalk starting from the rail, and if she can find a live helmet to follow, she could be right there at the wire.

**#2 TWIN B SHOWBIZ**, a \$47,000 Harrisburg purchase, is a full sister to Twin B Showtime who won four of seven starts, including a victory in her debut race. She closed well in both qualifiers while trotting some nice last quarters and she looks perfectly prepped for this career debut. She is another in with a chance in a competitive looking first Gold leg and she is another option in what looks like a good betting race.

**SPOT PLAY: M E LAUREL**

## Race 7 Selections

## The Horseplayer's Journal by Garnet Barnsdale

**#6 ULTRA MYLES** was a perfect trip winner here on June 19th in his second start of the year, and he parlayed that win into a good second-place finish in his first OSS Grassroots try this year. In that mile, he led a firing line of three that looked like they wanted the front into the first turn. He used rail control to park them all. He eventually let the even money favorite go on the backstretch. He popped out of the pocket at the head of the lane and chased the winner home, gradually closing some ground on him. That was a solid effort, now he draws best in this non-winners of two dash. He gets top billing in a spot where he should get another good trip racing on or near the lead throughout the mile.

**#5 OUTBOUND TRAIN** looked good here two races back on June 24th, making several moves to get up for a Grassroots race, taking a new lifetime mark of 1:54 3/5 in the process. He came back on July 1st and he tried racing first up, but tired after chasing the leader who was cutting some very fast fractions on the way to a 1:53 3/5 score. This looks like an easier spot, and he should be able to get positioned near the front leaving the gate getting off the rail tonight and drawing one of the best two posts. He should bounce back with a much better effort in this spot, and he is in with a shot to take his third win.

**#8 FRENCHMONI HANOVER** is typically a deep closer, so it doesn't matter that she draws wide here because she is probably dropping back at the start regardless. She was on good cover in her last start, but the leader crawled to the three quarters then sprinted away. That 27-flat final quarter was too much for this filly, but she only lost one length in that final quarter, trotting her own kicker in 27 1/5. She can pass some of these late to land in the bottom of the Tri or Super.

**#4 FIREFLIESNTHUNDER** scored a perfect trip maiden win two starts back, then he faced much tougher last week and took only the smallest cheque after leaving for the lead at the start then taking a shuffle. He can get a trip racing close to the front here, and I see him sticking around to round out the Tri or Super this time.

## Race 8 Selections

## The Horseplayer's Journal by Garnet Barnsdale

**#6 ROYAL CAPTAIN** is one of two in here for trainer Dustin Jones, this colt being by the Hambletonian winner Captain Corey who has been turning heads with this first crop. This colt is the first foal from a dam that finished third in the Peaceful Way final and won an OSS Gold race, both at this track as a two-year-old. The lone qualifying race where he trotted a 56 2/5 back half and a 27 4/5 kicker in victory should have him prepped for a big try in this debut. He gets top billing as we kick off the late Pick 4 here.

**#9 CAPTAIN MICAH** is another Captain Corey offspring that got some pari-mutuel experience in a Grand Circuit race here on June 27th where he was sent off as the 1 to 5 favorite but never really made an impact. He stayed in around the last turn then moved up the pylons briefly before switching out and finished behind the second and third place finishers. He should benefit from getting that initial race in and I can see him moving forward tonight. One thing is certain: if you still like him, you'll get a much better price this time.

**#7 SOUTHWIND CHESTER** exits the same Grand Circuit race as Captain Micah, and he was ahead of that rival every step of that race. He blasted straight to the front and he rated kindly as his driver slowed the pace and stole a 1:00 2/5 middle half. The final quarter was trotted in 27 1/5 and he didn't have that kind of speed in his arsenal, although he did hang around for third. Those were simply better horses that beat him. He is in with a decent chance in this field.

**#2 ICE PACK** is the seventh foal from his dam, and the other six all made it to the races with five of them winning. He was much better in his second qualifier, showing some handy speed and getting up for the win while dropping five seconds. He retains Jody Jamieson who had other options in here. I could see him getting a good trip racing close to the front and sticking around for a spot in the Tri or Super.



## Race 9 Selections

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**#4 SARA B DELIGHT** is 0 for 6 so far this year, but she has taken five slices, and she has been right there in several of those races. Most recently, she was hard used to make front in a 55 1/5 opening half, and she didn't have enough left in the lane to fend off a challenger. Two starts back, she made front from the widest post, and she stuck around for second behind a blowout winner. She is well set up here with a good post from which to utilize her sharp gate speed, and she shouldn't need to cut a 55 1/5 to make front this time. The seventh try can be the charm. She gets top billing.

**#2 CATCH MY PASSION** was good in two straight races leading to her last start. Three starts back she led most of the way before getting passed late then she fired a good closing effort in a fast Grassroots race to get second. In her most recent start, she followed the cover of the sharp winner, and she finished on the wrong end of the place photo with Sara B Delight. That rival now has a recency advantage, but I'm not sure how much of a difference one week will make. This Shawn Steacy pupil has a chance to take her maiden win in this twelfth start and she is the other one that I would consider using on late multi-race tickets.

**#8 WICKED WORDS** makes her Woodbine Mohawk Park debut here coming in with some good Kawartha Downs form for conditioner Amanda Riley. She is interesting because she drew the leading driver. She has shown high gate speed in some of her miles, showing she could leave in 26 4/5 three starts back. She should be able to get positioned near the front early in this mile, and I see her sticking around for a share.

**#3 WHO ARE YOU** tried some Pennsylvania Sires Stakes in May, and she took one cheque. In her return race here, she had some late pace to land in the bottom of the Super. She shows two good races in this class here in May when she was raced more aggressively. She can land in the Tri or Super here if she gets put into the race early enough.

**#3 CAVIAR N CRACKERS** looked unbeatable for a stretch of races that culminated with a win in the Forest City Pace in London on May 30th. She then missed three weeks and didn't she wasn't at her sharpest for two starts. Last week's mile indicated that she is coming back to her best form. The 18-time winner dropped to the back, then came with her patented late kick to just miss, pacing a 26 3/5 kicker and a 1:49 4/5 mile which was the first sub-1:50 mile of her 81-race career. I think she will get more aggressive tonight with Grit N Grace not in the race, and she gets the nod to get back on track tonight.

**#1 ANGOSTURA HANOVER** also camped out at the back last week and when Caviar N Crackers went outside to rally, she dove inside. She closed with a furious rush to just miss in a three across photo, nosing Caviar N Crackers out for second. She typically needs a trip racing at this top level, but that could happen in this compact field of six. She will likely sit back again and save everything for the stretch drive. She can close for another piece of the purse in this spot.

**#4 BLUE PACIFIC** is another mare that should benefit from the absence of Grit N Grace tonight, especially when you consider that she finished second to that streaking mare in two straight starts at this level in June. This looks like a spot where Doug McNair will get aggressive with this Dave Menary trainee, and she should be prominent throughout this mile. If she makes front early and gets left alone, she could get brave, but I'm not sure that scenario will play out with the presence of speedball Blue Mea Kiss in this race. I prefer to use this mare underneath tonight.

**#6 BLUEMEA KISS** is the wildcard in here coming off four strong efforts racing several classes lower than this Preferred level. Most recently, she left the gate in 25 4/5 from the rail, but that wasn't fast enough to secure the lead. A charged-up rival overtook her and led all the way, setting some wild fractions on the way to a 1:49 1/5 score. She gets the leading driver tonight, but this is a big jump. I see her sticking around for a small share.

**BEST BET: CAVIAR N CRACKERS**

## Race 11 Selections

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**#3 MADRID A** has made three starts since shipping north from New Jersey with varying results. The common denominator for her last two starts was that she had to contend with Blue Mea Kiss, who she won't see on the gate tonight as that mare is in the top class in race 10. This mare's best race came two starts back when she cut some big fractions and almost held on. Doug McNair was in the bike that night and he returns here. I'll give this mare the nod to top tonight's High-5.

**#4 CAUGHTSTEALINGHOME** already has a mark at Mohawk Park this year, but she was on a B track stint until July 4th, and she produced a good closing effort that night. After dropping back to eighth from post eight, she stayed inside heading into the last turn. She rallied along the pylons with pace, but she was blocked until very late in the mile which probably cost her a placing or two. She paced a sub-54 back half that shoes she is sharp. She can be better in this second start back at Mohawk Park. She merits a look for the late Pick 4.

**#6 GOT SEXY SCARS** raced twice at this level with the leading driver in the bike, and the second try was better than the first. In that mile on June 27th, she led most of the way and was part of a blanket finish that she came out of the wrong side on. She draws best here, and she will likely be leaving again. She was sent off at exactly \$1.75 to 1 in both of the aforementioned starts, and she has the feel of one that might get over bet in here. I'm inclined to try to beat her, but that doesn't mean that she can't win.

**#1 ONE LAST BET** has raced well in most of her recent starts at this level to take some shares while still being unable to break through for her first win of the year. She is now 0 for 22 but she has taken 12 slices. I don't love the rail for her in this spot, but she should be able to get away in the top four and ride a trip to a small share.

**#2 KELLENA DIAMOND** is another that is winless this year, but this is only her seventh start. She has been better in recent starts, and she came within a head of breaking through two starts back. She projects to get another following trip racing near the front, and she will likely finish on the edges this time.