#2 JUST ALL OUT enters her debut race off two powerful qualifying wins at Grand River, the first one with the trainer driving and the most recent one with a catch driver in the bike. The $15,000 London Classic Sale graduate is the first foal from a half sister to $339,000 earner Fiji (29 wins, 1:53 3/5 M.). She gets the leading driver in the bike tonight and he will put her into play. I'll give her a slight nod in he opening leg of tonight's $75,000 guaranteed Pick 5.

#8 HP SOPHIA is a homebred daughter of Alarm Detector that comes into this debut race off a solid qualifying effort on July 4th where she set the pace and got passed late in the fastest quarter of the race by the pocket sitter who was ready to fire a 27 4/5 final quarter. She is the second foal – and first one to race – out of a dam that won $448,000 and was ready to roll on debut, winning an OSS Gold race by five and a half lengths. This filly has Louis-Phillipe Roy in the bike, and he chose her over the top pick. She has a good chance to take a maiden victory on debut tonight.

#1 EYE SEE YOU is a $32,000 Harrisburg buy that holds an experience advantage on all of her nine rivals tonight, having raced for a purse on July 4th. Drawing the 10-hole, she was raced conservatively, and she trotted a 27 2/5 kicker racing at the back. I don't love the rail post for two-year-old trotters, but it is much better than post 10. J R Plante should get away much better with this filly, and that makes her a threat. She is another one that merits a close look for the early Pick 5.

#10 BELIEVE is a $34,000 Lexington buy that is related to 10 winners, the best of which was Sonnet Grace, who earned $463,000 from eight wins, half of it coming from a win in the Goldsmith Maid. This filly looked good winning er second qualifier, but she draws worst, and I am inclined to use her underneath tonight.

Race 2 Selections   **The Horseplayer's Journal by Garnet Barnsdale**

#5 PHEONIX hasn't hit the board since June 9th, but he has faced some tougher company than he meets in this opening leg of a Pop Up series tonight. He made too much money to make the earnings threshold for this series, but going to Georgian Downs last Tuesday gets him in, and there is reason to believe that he will be much better tonight. He was coming off a rare break in stride on that night, and he got around the track with a needed flat mile in a race that was won by the #1 horse in this race. He now gets regular driver Bob McClure back, and I think he gets a more aggressive drive starting from the middle of the gate. I'll side with him hoping that he goes off at a square price.

#1 SPARKS FLY was the winner of that Georgian Downs race, wiring the field in a no doubt mile, winning like a 1 to 5 should. He is another one that needed to start for a $10,000 (or less) purse to qualify for entrance in this series. He does his best work on the engine, and I wonder if he will get a little roughed up in here looking at three rivals lined up directly to his right that also like to race on the front. He will no doubt be moved to the front as early as possible if he doesn't hang them all out racing into the first turn. He fits well versus this group, and he will likely be the one to catch when they turn into the stretch.

#4 TREGARON is only a one-time winner so far this year, but his recent form is decent. That win came two starts back as the favorite in a race where he controlled the pace from the start. He came back on Canada Day, and he started outside the 4 to 5 favorite who was intent on making front. After being forced to drop in third, he was one-paced and he lost third in a bit of a disappointing effort as the 3 to 2 second choice. He has a good chance to sit a trip following Sparks Fly in this spot, and I think he can stick around for a share.

#2 COOL CLIFFORD is a veteran of the racing wars that makes his 206th start tonight looking for his 27th win. He has been a good earner along the way, taking just under $440,000 in purses. He has been a handy sort which is why he takes frequent cheques. He has been racing fourth or better at the quarter in 16 of his last 17 starts, and that streak should continue here. He can sit a trip and land in the bottom of the Tri or Super.

#2 OCEANVIEW RUMOURS was second to the excellent filly Tellers Choice in Leg 1 of the Grassroots in late May, then she produced a big effort to win Leg 2, making a big first-over move to easily draw away for her lone win of 2025 so far. In her last start, she was in against the tough filly Foxy Amee who has been a killer since adding trotting hopples. That filly trotted a 1:53 2/5 mile on the front end and all her rivals could do was follow her around that track. That mile should be a perfect tightener for tonight's third Grassroots Leg, and this Green Manalishi filly is the clear top pick in a spot where she looks best on paper.

#1 IVY LYNNE was a dominant winner in the first Grassroots leg in late May, but not much has gone right for here since that impressive victory. She has had some gait issues and bad draws, both of which when added up aren't the recipe for success. She is capable of better than she has been showing, and I don't mind the rail draw for her in this spot. Picking up driver Louis-Phillipe Roy after Bob McClure opted for Oceanview Rumours won't hurt either. I think she can get a good piece of this if she stays trotting.

#3 LILLY LACE is only a one-time winner so far this year, but she did try OSS Gold company twice, both miles being trotted under 1:53. She didn't have much of a chance in those races won by Monalishi and Sprite Seelster, but she has a better shot tonight racing in the Grassroots. She comes out of a good conditioned race where the winner was taking her fifth victory from 12 starts. She should be able to get positioned near the front tonight, sit a trip, and take a share.

#4 D A DREAM GIRL gets the ultimate driver change to James Macdonald tonight, who always seems to run hot at this track (he won five times on Thursday). This Muscle Mass filly's best recent effort came when she finished fourth in the Grassroots here three starts back. I like that Macdonald qualified her on July 11th and that he sticks with her tonight. She can get a piece of this at a square price.

#7 D A BODACIOUS brought $140,000 at the London Classic sale being from hot sire Cattlewash's first Canadian crop. He is a half brother to $410,000 winner Risenshine Seaside, who won 23 times and took a mark of 1:48 3/5 in an Open Handicap at The Meadows. This colt dropped five seconds racing in three qualifiers, and he looked good winning here on July 7th, pacing his final three quarters in 1:25-flat. Trevor Henry drove him in that qualifier, and he handles the lines here. We have seen several Cattlewash offspring that have shown they can fly early in this season, and this might be yet another.

#5 CORONA SEELSTER has already had two starts, the first one being a decent second and the next one coming in a tough spot versus Grassroots rivals. In that race, he tried to chase down a loose leader by going first-over in the third quarter, and he couldn't get there despite pacing a 27 1/5 kicker. He will likely look for the front early this time drawing a post in the middle of the gate, and he figures to be a big threat in this spot.

#2 BARBARO started his career in an ambitious spot, racing in an OSS Gold race. When potential superstar Beau Jangles showed up in that race, they were all racing for second. This $30,000 Harrisburg Sale buy got some valuable experience in that initial start, and facing maidens that don't look anywhere near as fast as Beau Jangles gives him a shot in this second career start. He will likely lay much closer to the front in this spot, and he is worth a look.

#3 WINDSUN TUXEDO is a homebred, and he is the sixth foal from the dam, all six being winners. He brings a one for one record to this race having recorded a nice closing win at Kawartha Downs in a short field that was reduced to four due to a scratch. He dropped close to four seconds off his qualifier, and he should be able to drop more time here switching to the bigger track. He draws the leading driver for this Mohawk Park debut, and he can take a share in this tougher spot.

#2 FIGURATIVELY is a homebred half sister to 10-time winner Itdontmattertome ($78K, 1:561/5 F.). She qualified three times in two weeks and while the first two tries were nothing special, the July 4th qualifier was much better. She was put on the point at the outset, and she set decent fractions on her way to a 1:58 3/5 win. Most importantly, she accelerated in the lane while under no urging from Tyler Jones, and she held the closers at bay, including the #1 in this race who sat third all the way then made a late move. This daughter of Green Manalishi gets top billing on her maiden voyage in this anchor leg of the early Pick 5.

#6 TIMELESS had a start in a maiden race starting from the tough rail post and she got away sixth and couldn't advance late because the final quarter was trotted in 27 2/5. This daughter of a top sire was still able to make a late move and close a little ground, while throwing down an impressive 26 4/5 final quarter. That mile should have her set up perfectly for this first Grassroots race, and moving to the best post, she will likely show much more gate speed and get put into this race early. She is one that is hard to leave off Pick 5 tickets in a spot where she is likely to improve sharply.

#1 HP CRYSTALINE was much better in her second qualifier where she dropped five seconds. She sat third on the inside for the first seven eighths of a mile while Figuratively led throughout. She was angled out in mid stretch, and she ended up in the three wide path trying to catch the two that she followed to that point. She gained late in a decent effort. The homebred is the first foal of $218K winner HP Bruxelles, who is a half sister to 63-time winner Call For Justice ($777K, 1:52 4/5 F.). She can contend for a share on debut.

#3 TYMAL ELECTRA is a $45,000 Harrisburg buy that improved sharply, dropping five seconds in her second qualifier. She is sent out by a trainer that excels with young trotters, and she is worth a look for the bottom of Tri and Super bets on debut tonight.

#1 STOVID has the best race on this page, and it came three starts back when she finished a bang up second to Foxy Aimee who trotted a 1:52 4/5 mile on the engine that night. Her next two starts are tosses for me. On June 28th she raced against some tough colts, and she showed speed before backing up to sixth while still trotting a sub-28 last quarter. On July 3rd, she lost her regular driver, drew wide for the second start in a row, and was raced conservatively, dropping straight to the back at the start then closing mildly. She gets Doug McNair back in the bike tonight, and there will be no retreating at the start of this Grassroots race. I doubt we will get the 6 to 1 morning line price, but she likely won't be favored, either. She gets top billing in the opening leg of the late Pick 5 hoping to get some value right off the bat.

#2 P L STEVIE raced great in defeat in Leg 2 of the Grassroots when second to 4 to 5 favorite Lil Sweet. She re-rallied well in the stretch that night and off that effort, she was made the 2 to 1 favorite from post 10 in her next start despite that post producing only six per cent winners on the trot so far this year. The money turned out to be smart. She was sent forward leaving the gate, and she made front passing the quarter. From there she led all the way and held off a bold first-over challenger. She is in peak form now, and she should be right there again tonight. She is the one that Stovid will likely have to worry about late if that filly is on the lead turning for home as expected in this spot.

#5 ALL STAR ANGEL is an improving filly that is worth a look for use underneath in this spot. Two starts back, she produced a good closing effort to get third behind tough fillies The Green Book and Tellers Choice in a Grassroots race where she closed at 38 to 1. She came back on July 4th and tried to wire a non-winners of two field and just failed to hold on in a mile that keeps her tight for this Grassroots try. I can see her closing for another slice tonight.

#7 NIGHTINGALE was much better last time when she finished a close third to P L Stevie after drawing a wide post. Aggressive driver Billy Davis Jr. put her right on the point early and after letting P L Stevie go, she rode the pocket to a share. She draws widest here, but this is only a seven-horse field. She should get early position and stay for a share.

SPOT PLAY: STOVID

#8 SARAQUEL qualified three times for this debut in a Grassroots race, and she got better in every one. She followed to the lane on second-over cover on July 4th and she ducked inside when the filly she was following broke stride. She closed on the leader while getting nailed right on the wire for second. She gets a key driver change to Trevor Henry tonight, and I will take a price stab on her expecting her to improve again in this spot.

#5 ELBOWS UP beat the choice here on July 4th, dropping close to three seconds in the process. This $30,000 Harrisburg purchase is a full sister to $543K earner Mischievous Rose (8 wins, 1:52 2/5 S.) and $259K earner Muscling Vegas (5 wins, 1:53 1/5 S.). She starts from a perfect post to once again flaunt her early speed, and she should be the one to catch and beat in here.

#4 EVANGELISTA had a start, and it was a decent one where she closed in 27 3/5 and got placed up to fourth. The $31,000 London Classic Sale grad is the first foal from a dam that is related to millionaires Duly Resolved and Righteous Resolve. She showed enough in that first start to suggest that she could be right there tonight with a little improvement, and she is worth a look at what should be a square price.

#1 MARY J brought $57,000 at the London Classic sale and she is related to two winners from three foals from her dam including $136K earner Candy Bomber (7 wins, 1:55 4/5 F.). She was a game winner of her second qualifier over the #9 in this race. She certainly has the credentials to be a contender at first asking, but as the morning line choice, I'm inclined to try to beat her starting from the rail where she could get out sprinted at the start.

#1 STASH IT AWAY was game in defeat and a little bit unlucky last week. He was the only one to move on a leader that was cutting fast fractions, and he got past that one in mid stretch, but he was immediately passed by a rival that stayed inside and found a seam when Howmac Victor couldn't keep up on cover, allowing the eventual winner a lane. That rival had done no work in the mile to that point, and he was full of pace late. This gelding has done well since being claimed by Tony Montini five starts back, taking a win and now three consecutive seconds. He figures to be right there again tonight.

#5 DIRTY LIL PIGLET does his best work when he goes as fast as he can an opens up on the field – see his two sub-1:50 wins on June 9th and June 30th. He didn't quite get away from the field last week, though, and he eventually succumbed to the first-over pressure of Stash It Away late in the mile, while staying game to be beat only one- and three-quarter lengths. His blinding speed makes him one that you have to always consider, although he typically does his best work racing one level lower than this. He will likely be the one to catch again tonight when the field turns for home.

#7 KYLES ART drops tonight, and he should be better in this spot. He has been racing in the pocket at the three quarters in all of his last five starts, and he almost pulled off a big upset two starts back. Assuming that he lands in the pocket again following Dirty Lil Piglet, he figures to get towed to the top of the stretch. That makes him a threat in this spot and one to consider for late multi-race tickets.

#3 BET THE BB is another one that drops after chasing a fired-up P L Ozzy around the track last week. He left for position and stuck around for a small share in an okay effort. His race two starts back from post 10 was decent too as he closed a bit late in a 1:48 4/5 mile that featured a 53-flat opening half. I think he gets positioned near the front tonight and sticks around for a spot in the Tri or Super.

#2 WHAT ABOUT ELMO is 0 for 10 so far this year, but failing to record a win helps him get into this Pop Up series which should be a much easier spot for him when you consider some of the horses he has been racing against recently. He has been on the receiving end of four losses to Masstercraft, who would likely be a big favorite in this field. Elmo did well to finish second to that rival in three straight races in late May and June, and he comes into this race off a decent closing effort in the winners of three but not more than five class. I expect Tyler Jones to take control of this race early in the mile and keep the lead to the wire.

#4 DEVILS ARCH is the other one in here that has been facing a steady diet of tougher company that he meets tonight, and when he is on his game, he will be right there in a field like this one. He was racing aggressively and doing well up to June 16th when he broke stride before the start. In his next two starts he was raced more conservatively in some fast miles. He moves from a wide post to one where he should be able to get positioned close to the front and it is expected that Jody Jamieson will give him every chance in this spot. He would be tough if he raced in the choice's pocket, which is very possible. He is the other one that I would consider using on late multi-race tickets.

#5 YANK MY HALO comes out of a decent Pop Up series where he closed in every leg and the final, taking shares in the two preliminary legs then missing a cheque in the final while only getting beat by three lengths. He seems to be a decent fit in this race, but his lack of early speed puts him at a disadvantage. He will likely be passing horses late again, but I prefer to use him underneath in this spot.

#7 CADILLAC MOON has improved in recent starts, and he never gets bet. Two starts back, he enjoyed a pocket ride and a clear run along the pylons in the stretch to steal a 23 to 1 win. Last week, he moved up and showed speed against better in a fast race. I could see him getting positioned near the front again and sticking around for a spot in the Tri or Super.

#1 FOXY AMEE has been right there in every start this year except for the race where she tried OSS Gold fillies, and she tried racing first up against last year's 'O Brien Award winner that night and stuck around for a cheque. Racing in Grassroots company, she has recorded two wins and two seconds in four starts, and she has recorded the two fastest wins in this field. She is clearly the fastest filly in this field, and she will likely get put on the point again by Doug McNair and lead all the way as the big favorite.

#2 SHAMPOO GIRL will get plenty of attention tonight getting a driver change from trainer Rick Zeron to leading driver James Macdonald. She is winless so far this year, but she was decent in both of her last two starts where she raced on the engine in both starts. I don't see her beating the top choice, but the money she will take on the driver switch could lead to Foxy Amee going off as a bit of an overlay.

#4 TAHONTA started her career learning her trade racing at Kawartha Downs where she took three straight wins. Her next three starts all came at Mohawk Park, and she raced well in all three without taking a win. Her first start here was a good effort from post 10 where she made front, took a shuffle, then re-rallied for third. She then closed for a slice in a Grassroots race and followed that up with a good second place finish. This Muscle Mass sophomore has done nothing wrong so far in her career, and she should be good for a share here.

#5 YS QUEEN BETH is one of the best closers in this race when she stays flat, but she had some gait issues in June that required her to requalify. She came back and raced evenly versus Foxy Amee, and most importantly stayed on gait. Her narrow Grassroots loss to Incantation on May 26th shows that she fits at this level, and she can close for a share tonight if she minds her manners.

BEST BET: FOXY AMEE

#8 BOLD SPIRIT took a lot of action at the windows in his Canadian debut last week, and the intent was certainly there. He left the gate sixth, but he was kept in the outer flow by Louis-Phillipe Roy, who urged him several times heading to the first turn. He got pushed three wide but he continued on to the front, then he conceded the lead at the half. He lacked room in early stretch then he came out between horses and closed late to miss in a blanket finish. That was a good effort, and he could be even better now making his second start for high percentage trainer Dave Menary. He can beat these tonight if he gets a slightly better trip.

#7 LEGION SEELSTER is the horse that kept Bold Spirit out in the three wide path around the first turn, then he stayed out in the two path and drove on. He made front just past the half, and tried to see it through, but he tired late from his early efforts to make front in the opening half. That was a strong effort, and he could do in here if he gets an easier trip. He is another one to consider using on late multi-race tickets.

#3 LIVINTHEBEACHLIFE has missed a cheque in five straight starts, but that allows him to drop down to the non-winners of $6,900 last five level. That is significant because the last time he raced this low, he was a front end winner in a season's best clocking. He will most likely be leaving hard this time, and he is another in with a shot on the class drop in a good betting race.

#4 WANNABEABIGSTAR raced well in defeat last week, flying late to finish ahead of the top two choices in this race. That followed a mile where he hinted that he might be coming back to form when he made a late wide move and passed some horses in a 1:49 1/5 mile. He could do in here if they mix it up again on the lead, and that is a possibility with the top two picks drawing outside and Livinthebeachlife expected to blast off the gate on the class drop.

#2 BEYOND BETTER was the beneficiary of a slowing late pace last week and he motored up late to almost get up for his third win of the year. He is in good form, but he steps up now and his closing move will likely be dulled here because the better horses will finish faster than the ones he faced last week. He will probably finish on the edges tonight.