

Handicapper's Journal – Doug McPherson
Thursday, May 22nd 2025

Race 1

#5 Imperial Trick - Best Bet

#3 Sloans Sky

#2 Sake and Sushi

#1 Lillz Turn

#5 IMPERIAL TRICK is not a speed horse per se but looks like she could be the pacesetter in this spot. She had one decent effort in four starts as a two-year-old and is promptly dropped in for \$10,000 for her return. #3 SLOANS SKY has already made two starts at the meet and could simply win on fitness; she makes her second start with blinkers here. #2 SAKE AND SUSHI closed out 2024 with best effort to date, rallying to be beaten a nose for \$7,500. She catches a soft field; we'll see how she fares off the layoff. #1 LILLZ TURN drops in for a new low tag for her seasonal debut and has competitive Beyer figures; the blinkers come off for her return.

Race 2

#2 Fracen Macho

#1 Frac Right

#5 He Shoots He Wins

#4 Hanlan

#2 FRACEN MACHO was wide throughout and flattened out in the stretch en route to a distant fourth place finish in a race won by a speedy US invader on April 27. With a better trip he should be much more live with the drop down from the N1X/\$32,000 level. #1 FRAC RIGHT was not particularly consistent in the back half of the 2024 season. Speedy gelding draws the rail which has been the live part of the track over the last couple of weeks; he will be hoping to outspurt He Shoots He Wins. #5 HE SHOOTS HE WINS could be the thorn in the side of Frac Right here. He chased Speed Figures before fading to be fifth, a half-length behind Fracen Macho on April 27. #4 HANLAN kicked off his season with a win against \$15,000 non-twos; will need to step up if he is going to three-peat.

Race 3

#3 Isaac Leo

#1 Indy One

#5 Reggie Boy

#2 Fun Fella

#3 ISAAC LEO set the pace but was caught at the wire while running a career-best 57 Beyer when facing three-year-olds on May 3; a threat to go gate-to-wire in his first try against older foes. #1 INDY ONE was a solid third in his first start of the season on opening day. The winner of that race came back to finish second for \$40,000; this gelding looks like the other main contender in his second start off of the bench. #5 REGGIE BOY did not do much running last year save for an okay fourth for this price in his final start of the campaign; should be there for a share. #2 FUN FELLA's best effort was a distant fifth in November, which could be enough to earn a minor share here. Blinkers are going on.

Race 4

#4 Souper Pecan

#3 Ala Turka

#5 Home for a Rest

#6 Quiet Maddelena

#4 SOUPER PECAN was put away after a poor effort on turf for \$25,000 in September. She ran a couple of fringe efforts at the N1X/\$32,000 level last year; should be live with this drop in for \$10,000. #3 ALA TURKA completely blew the break but had an eye-catching finish to be fourth in a \$7,500 event 12 days ago; worth a look assuming she breaks better. #5 HOME FOR A REST narrowly missed second when finishing fourth behind the ultra-consistent Stolen at this level on May 3; she is arguably the one to beat as she finds an easier-looking group for the level. #6 QUIET MADDELENA was a half-length behind Home for a Rest after chasing the pace on May 3. She has speed but may have to tussle with Nice Baby in the early stages.

Race 5

#4 Onejabtoomany

#3 Rhaenyra

#5 Executive Success

#2 Arya's Quest

#4 ONEJABTOOMANY had a strong late rally to be beaten only a head when kicking off her season on April 26. That rateability could do her well in a field with plenty of speed types. #3 RHAENYRA was fast early and drew clear to a very easy maiden win on April 27. The third place finisher came out of that race to win on Sunday; we'll see if she can outsprint the other speed early. #5 EXECUTIVE SUCCESS was claimed from her maiden win at Gulfstream for \$50,000. She has not run a bad race to date; the 74 Beyer she earned for that win stands out here; seems to have good tactical speed. #2 ARYA'S QUEST rallied from last to be third, 1 ¾ lengths behind Onejabtoomany on April 26 and may be a little overlooked.

Race 6

#4 I'm a Gambler (IRE)

#3 Candy Overload

#7 Poulin in O T

#1 Sky's Not Falling

#4 I'M A GAMBLER (IRE) missed the start and was a distant third in Patches O'Houlihan's track record-breaking Thorncliffe Stakes. He won twice at this level late last year and should have a good setup here. #3 CANDY OVERLOAD had two Stakes wins in three starts last year before being sidelined after a fifth-place effort in the Jacques Cartier. He has been lightly-raced over the past few season but his turn of foot is quite explosive when he is feeling good; tough horse to ignore. #7 POULIN IN O T used his speed to get clear and was never threatened when winning an N2X/\$50,000 on April 27. He will have to avoid doing too much too early with this class jump and stretch out to seven furlongs, especially with War Strategy potentially there to keep him honest early; he has won at this distance on turf in the past. #1 SKY'S NOT FALLING may not be a flashy, stand-out name in most player's minds but he has quietly had a very nice career to date, with one Stakes win and many on the board finishes against Stakes company year in and year out; probably better on turf but has been training well at Fair Hill.

Race 7

#7 The Fiery One (GB)

#2 Purrfect Girl

#1 Maxine Magic

#5 Super Serenade

#6 Annia Cornificia F

#7 THE FIERY ONE (GB) continues to drop after an unlucky trip in a six furlong sprint 12 days ago. She can improve with experience and could be a threat with a clean trip. #2 PURRFECT GIRL was in the hunt turning for home but finished evenly to be fifth for \$30,000 at Turfway on March 26. She looks like the one to beat taking the drop in for \$15,000. #1 MAXINE MAGIC has raced well on the Gulfstream Tapeta. She has tactical speed and draws inside. #5 SUPER SERENADE got out to two turns for her final two-year-old start and finished second behind a stablemate with an impressive rally. She has been breezing steadily. #6 ANNIA CORNIFICIA F had a couple of okay route efforts at the bottoms levels last year; fringe player.