

Handicapper's Journal – Doug McPherson
Thursday, May 29th 2025

Race 1

#6 Kitten's Romance

#3 Katherine's Gem

#5 Hard to Capture

#7 Kavala

#6 KITTEN'S ROMANCE was a comfortable winner when dropping back in for this tag on October 27, attracting a claim which was voided by the veterinarian and being sidelined right after. Hard-knocking mare is in search of her 10th career win and should be fine after the winter off. #3 KATHERINE'S GEM kicked off her season in a five furlong dash on May 3, dropping back and running on to be a solid third behind the very tough Stolen. That race should have been a good tightener for her; figures to be live getting out to a more ideal distance. #5 HARD TO CAPTURE made an impressive rally down the far outside to win for \$7,500 on April 26. The lack of pace may hinder her here but she should be confident coming into this. #7 KAVALA ran only one truly bad race in 11 starts last year. She was a winner off of the bench last year, though she had been winter trained at Gulfstream going into that season.

Race 2

#2 Cinnamon Bits

#1 Gather

#6 Sterling Heights

#8 Daddy's Daisy

#2 CINNAMON BITS was on the edges in routes while sliding down the class ladder last season. Her lone win did come in a sprint as a two year old. #1 GATHER did her best running in turf routes last year but did have a couple of good efforts sprinting on the Tapeta. She has some tactical speed in her arsenal. #6 STERLING HEIGHTS stalked the pace and kicked clear to win comfortably for this price in December. Two-year-old races at the \$15,000 level are often soft; we'll see if she's ready for tougher company in her three-year-old debut. #8 DADDY'S DAISY was in good form early in the 2024 season and could be live after the winter freshening at a square price.

Race 3

#7 Magic Token

#2 Dreams and Schemes

#1 Cardio Princess (JPN)

#4 Moral Turpitude

#7 MAGIC TOKEN was never a factor in an OS/\$40,000 sprint 18 days ago. This race is absolutely paceless but she was able to win on the lead at Colonial last year; if she can find that early zip today she could be at an advantage. #2 DREAMS AND SCHEMES hit the board in five of nine starts last year including a win over this turf course against the boys. She is a bit win shy but looks like a contender from a good post. #1 CARDIO PRINCESS (JPN) had a few good results after returning to Woodbine via claim at Gulfstream last year. She draws the rail and would not be a surprise to see being the speed here. #4 MORAL TURPITUDE tracked a lone speed winner and lost place at the wire when travelling seven furlongs on the Tapeta on May 16. She makes her third start in the month of May here.

Race 4

#8 Souper Success

#1 Walter Me Lad

#6 Legal Attack (GB)

#5 Mr. Marshall

#8 SOUPER SUCCESS was a much the best winner of a soft starter/optional \$15,000 on April 27 and now drops in for \$10,000a after being a steward's scratch from this level on May 18. Hard-knocking nine-year-old should be tough to beat. #1 WALTER ME LAD was claimed from a winning effort at this level in December and now makes his debut for new connections. On the board in 12 of 18 starts, he has raced well for everyone who has had him and could be a win threat with a good trip. #6 LEGAL ATTACK (GB) is probably best on turf but has a solid record on the Tapeta. He ran far more good races than bad when arriving here last year and could be a handy horse in this division as the season goes on. #5 MR. MARSHALL made the lead but was second-best behind Souper Success last time; will need to work to turn the tables.

Race 5

#1 Oscar Joy

#3 Groot

#4 Four Strong Winds

#6 Call Me Sue

#1 OSCAR JOY makes his way to Woodbine by way of California where has been a useful turf sprinter, capable of showing some nice speed on the right day. His speed figures are strong for this group he if takes to the Tapeta he may take some beating. #3 GROOT sat midpack before bursting clear in the stretch to break his maiden in October. He has been gelded over the winter; appears to have a lot of upside as he begins his three-year-old campaign. #4 FOUR STRONG WINDS has not been seen since his dominant maiden win in September of 2023. Full brother to Stakes-winner Sister Seagull definitely showed he could be any type as a two-year-old; we'll see what we can in his return. #6 CALL ME SUE threw in a clunker in his most recent start at Tampa against starter allowance company. The Clarendon runner-up could get back to form with the return to the Tapeta.

Race 6

#4 Moon Landing - Best Bet

#6 Indian Peak

#5 Priceless Will

#3 Pat's Gamble

#4 MOON LANDING broke a bit slowly (which is normal for him) and ran on to be second behind Souper Dormy in the Welcome Back Handicap on May 4, a week after being claimed for this price. A clean break combined with the stretch out to seven furlongs could put him in very good early position. #6 INDIAN PEAK made a wide bid on the turn before evening out in his final start of 2024 at this level. A multiple Stakes-winner in California as a younger horse, he definitely has the class and could be in good shape after the winter off. #5 PRICELESS WILL was outkicked by Moon Landing for place in the Welcome Back Handicap. He had some explosive rallies late in the 2024 season; very consistent with 27 top three finishes in 43 starts. #3 PAT'S GAMBLE went through his final OS/\$40,000 condition in November. He does not catch an easy spot for his 2025 debut but was able to win off of the bench last year.

Race 7

#1 Cara Cara

#5 Little Teddy

#4 Chromeplated Heart

#3 Garnet and Gold

#1 CARA CARA raced wide while forcing the pace before flattening out when kicking off her season on May 3. She has come very close to winning this condition multiple times and could be the main speed from the rail here. #5 LITTLE TEDDY launched a rally and was able get up late to pass the speedy Miss Vyvyanne to win an N1X/\$32,000 on April 26. Restricted Stakes-winning filly is remarkably consistent; certainly has a shot to double up. #4 CHROMEPLATED HEART sat just behind Cara Cara and was able to kick on and fought hard while missing by a neck at this level on May 3. A tremendous claim for just \$15,000, she is tough to ignore for a small barn that is off to a great start this season. #3 GARNET AND GOLD is two-for-two since arriving at Woodbine, beating OS/\$40,000 non-threes before handling N1X/\$32,000 types on May 17. She will be making her third start in a 26 day span here.

Race 8

#6 Spellcheck

#7 Baby Lala

#10 Abino Bay

#1 Speak Up

#8 Design Diva

#6 SPELLCHECK ran an improved race when dropping in for \$25,000 in December, finishing second behind a pacesetter winner. The tag is waived here despite this being a rise from the \$25,000 level she last ran at; intriguing player in her turf debut. #7 BABY LALA is tagged for the first time after showing little in three starts against allowance foes at Gulfstream. She may appreciate turning back to a sprint after two route tries. #10 ABINO BAY failed to factor when debuting on the Gulfstream dirt on March 22. She takes the drop in for \$40,000 and is bred for the grass; blinkers go on today. #1 SPEAK UP makes her first start in over a year. She had some good turf efforts at Gulfstream in early 2024; inexpensive purchase from a recent digital sale could be worth a look at an okay price. #8 DESIGN DIVA had two very nice efforts at this level over the inner turf last summer. She debuts for a new barn here and will try sprinting on the EP Taylor for the first time.