Handicapper's Journal – Doug McPherson Thursday, June 5th 2025

Race 1

#2 Napa Spirit (IRE) - Best Bet

#4 Blame J D

#6 Canadian Avro

#1 Banker's Hours

#2 NAPA SPIRIT (IRE) did not get started until September last season but had good form in tougher starter/optional claiming company. Speedy Irish-bred is taking an edge here and should be tough to catch. #4 BLAME J D returns from a disappointing campaign at Oaklawn primarily racing against Arkansas-breds. He has had some quick breezes over the Tapeta and should fit with these. #6 CANADIAN AVRO chased the pace and kept on to finish third at this level 18 days ago. He makes his fourth start of the season here. #1 BANKER'S HOURS ran a flat race in the same race that Canadian Avro exits but could step forward in his second start off of the layoff.

Race 2

#4 Stormy Ocean

#7 Scored

#5 World Showcase

#2 Tattoosonmysoul

#4 STORMY OCEAN showed improved speed in her return from the layoff and kicked clear in the stretch to win for \$10,000. She takes a drop in value for her first try against winners; catches a field where she could make the lead again. #7 SCORED was in a bit tight early but recovered and ran a credible fourth, missing place by a length when returning from Tampa on May 23; she is capable of showing more speed than she has in recent starts. #5 WORLD SHOWCASE plunges in for bottoms after showing nothing for \$25,000 in her first start off of the bench on May 24. Even when she broke her maiden for \$25,000 the speed figures were not strong; she should be much more competitive here. #2

TATTOSONMYSOUL chased the pace and kept on to be a good third at this level on May 16. Although win-shy she ran more good races than bad last year.

Race 3

#1 Strike a Chord #6 Secret Butterfly #5 April de Velp

#2 Silent Tribute

#1 STRIKE A CHORD set the pace but weakened and gave way to the strong closer Stolen when kicking off her season in a starter/optional \$15,000 on May 3. She gets significantly easier company here and should have an easier time finding the wire. #6 SECRET BUTTERFLY had a wide trip and failed to sustain her bid when taking on \$15,000 non-threes on May 23. She should not have as tough a trip in this short field and halves in value. #5 APRIL DE VELP closed out 2024 with a good runner-up finish in a similar spot. She is not super consistent but can hit the board here with one of her good efforts. #2 SILENT TRIBUTE did no running after being claimed from a \$15,000 non-two win in June. The winter off may have done her some good.

Race 4

#6 Sinful Forester

#1 Sultry Sophie

#8 Ontario Holiday

#7 Kozy Babe

#6 SINFUL FORESTER raced evenly when rising up to the \$25,000 level for her first start off of the bench on May 23. She gets back in quickly in just 13 days and should be better at this level. #1 SULTRY SOPHIE was beaten less than three lengths when finishing fifth of six for \$15,000 on May 16, a step forward from a disappointing effort 20 days prior. She could show more speed stretching out from 5 ½ to seven furlongs. #8 ONTARIO HOLIDAY has been a clear second-best in two starts this season. For a cheap maiden she seems to try every time and has to be considered here. #7 KOZY BABE trained throughout when kicking off her season for \$25,000 on May 18. She has had just two starts to date; could improve with experience and class relief.

Race 5

#3 Saucy Name #2 Pretty Good Joke #5 Whiskey N Ice #1 Zipfire

#3 SAUCY NAME scored her long-overdue maiden win when beginning her campaign on May 18. Proven to be capable on turf, she has the speed to be well positioned here stalking the other pace types. #2 PRETTY GOOD JOKE set very fast fractions and wilted in deep stretch when kicking off her season 12 days ago. She raced well in both of her turf tries last year; we'll see how far she can go in her inner turf debut. #5 WHISKEY N ICE dominated a weak group of \$10,000 maidens on opening day. She raced well at higher maiden levels last year and does have a good turf race on her form; tough to say what we'll get from her here. #1 ZIPFIRE proved best within the final furlong to win in her debut for these connections on May 16. She tries turf for the first time; could be a closer to consider if you think the pace will fall apart.

Race 6
#6 Lady Moonshine
#5 Gizmo's B F F
#7 Cefalo
#2 Royal Blush

#6 LADY MOONSHINE closed out 2024 with a good runner-up finish behind the hard-knocking Make No Mistake. She was winless last year but is capable of running the type of race it will take to win this. #5 GIZMO'S B F F has gotten off to a red-hot start at the meet, most recently prevailing in a stretch duel against Foolish Games to get her second consecutive win. She looks like a deserving favourite here. #7 CEFALO was a decent fourth in the same race that Gizmo's B F F exits. She probably wants to be racing a level or two below this at this stage but does not look completely out of place here. #2 ROYAL BLUSH dueled on the lead but wilted when returning from Oaklawn on May 4; could be dangerous if she can break sharply and get loose.

Race 7
#5 Noyzee Girl
#4 Lillz Star
#2 Sweet Valentine

#6 Hatrixie Moment

#8 Holymolymeohmy

#5 NOYZEE GIRL closed out 2024 with a close third at this level. She had some bad luck in a few of her early starts; her form isn't as bad as it looks overall and she doesn't have much to beat here. #4 LILLZ STAR was nosed out at the wire when kicking off her season for \$10,000 two weeks ago. She should be forwardly-placed here; we'll see how she handles the step up in value. #2 SWEET VALENTINE is by 12% debut sire Passion For Action, out of a mare who's only other foal to race is a maiden winner at Mahoning Valley. She has been working steadily prepping for this start. #6 HATRIXIE MOMENT was a non-threatening fourth when debuting for \$25,000 in November. She drops in class for a new barn and will add blinkers. #8 HOLYMOLYMEOHMY is by 1-for-28 debut sire Danish Dynaformer, out of a mare who was a maiden winner at Mountaineer. She goes for a barn who has been having a good meet so far.