Handicapper's Journal – Doug McPherson Thursday, June 12th 2025

Race 1 #6 Wagstaff #5 Private Label #4 Ratings Upgrade (IRE) #1 Nikinzie

#6 WAGSTAFF was beaten just 1 ¼ lengths when sprinting on the EP Taylor 13 days ago. His turf speed figures are solid and he could be the speed stretching out to a route. #5 PRIVATE LABEL debuted against winners on May 10 and ran a respectable third. He should not have a problem with the stretch out to a route and should definitely appreciate getting to face maidens this time. #4 RATINGS UPGRADE (IRE) rallied from last to be fourth when debuting at Tampa 419 days ago. Inexpensive Keeneland January purchase is a filly taking on the boys; a wild card in her return to the races. #1 NIKINZIE never reached contention when debuting in a maiden special weight route in December. He is offered for a tag for his turf debut; the pedigree is not strong for turf.

Race 2

#7 Rock Hard Rose #3 Twisting Pistons

#2 Chevonaruta

#1 Double Tap

#7 ROCK HARD ROSE makes her first start since January where she finished fourth on the drop in for \$25,000. Private purchase has done some good running on turf; will go without blinkers and lasix today. #3 TWISTING PISTONS dueled on the lead and gave way in the final furlong to be fourth on May 23, her first start in a year. She has the strongest speed figures in this field and is arguably the one to beat in her second start off of the layoff. #2 CHEVONARUTA stalked the pace before weakening in the stretch when kicking off her season on May 29. Daughter of Society's Chairman should like the turf and gets class relief here. #1 DOUBLE TAP is by 3for-19 debut sire Perfect Timber, and is full sister to multiple Stakes-placed, debut-winner Fourfiftyfour. She worked evenly with a stablemate from the gate on May 25.

Race 3 #5 Mizzen Ash #1 Lady in Red #3 Ashbury #6 Pluie d'Avril

#5 MIZZEN ASH kicked off her season in a 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ furlong Tapeta sprint where she rallied well to be third behind the very in-form Gizmo's B F F. She raced well over this course last year and could be finishing best here. #1 LADY IN RED will be sending to the lead from the inside here and seeing how far she can take them. Hit or miss type is more than good enough to win this on one of her better days, especially if left alone on the lead, but she may need a start off of the layoff. #3 ASHBURY was able to win twice over this course last year. She typically comes from far out of it but in this race where Lady in Red is the only true speed, she may be in better early position. #6 PLUIE D'AVRIL ran a respectable third behind Gizmo's B F F in her first start off of the layoff but regressed when finishing sixth in the same race that Mizzen Ash exits. She has had success on turf before; we'll see if she can rebound.

Race 4

#6 Saratoga Holiday - Best Bet #4 Hoodless #3 Onejabtoomany #2 No Rejoyce

#6 SARATOGA HOLIDAY launched a bid late on the turn and burst clear to an easy win on May 18. She has not run a bad race yet; if there is pace to go with Hoodless it could set up for a repeat. #4 HOODLESS set reasonable fractions and drew off to a seven length score against \$25,000 maidens on May 10. If she can set another comfortable pace she may be able to double up on the class rise. #3 ONEJABTOOMANY put in a big late run to be beaten a head in her first start off of the layoff on April 26 but regressed when returning on May 22, racing wide and finishing a distant fifth of six. She is clearly capable of better; we'll see what she has to offer today. #2 NO REJOYCE was outclassed when facing N2L allowance types on May 24. A Stakes-winner in Alberta as a twoyear-old, she could move forward with the class relief and a start under her belt.

Race 5

#2 Ryo Amazing #6 Aint No Girly Girl #1 Silent Sunshine #3 Crumlin Trouble

#2 RYO AMAZING ran a good third in her only try for the Parente barn in August before being sidelined. Her turf races are both very respectable despite not hitting the board; an interesting player coming off of the layoff. #6 AINT NO GIRLY GIRL finished well to finish fourth behind repeat-winner Saucy Name on May 18. With a better break she could be the one to beat in her second attempt. #1 SILENT SUNSHINE made the lead but emptied out in the final furlong when kicking off her season on May 29. She drops down from the OS/\$40,000 level and looks like she could be the controlling speed but the blinkers are coming off. #3 CRUMLIN TROUBLE was bothered at the start and passed tiring foes when debuting against OS/\$40,000 company on May 25; has reason to improve this time.

Race 6 #1 Highly Flammable #2 Border Town #3 Dryden #6 Echo With Laughter

#1 HIGHLY FLAMMABLE ran a decent fourth for \$35,000 in his first start off of a \$16,000 claim at Gulfstream. He is 2-for-2 over the Woodbine Tapeta and may be in a good spot to get his first win since July 2023. #2 BORDER TOWN was able to win when plunging in for this price in November before closing out the season with two fringe efforts. Back-classy nine-year-old probably needed the winter off and is arguably the one to beat. #3 DRYDEN rattled through his conditions with three consecutive wins for this price last fall. There looks like there will be a quick pace to rally into; we'll see how he handles the acid test of open company. #6 ECHO WITH LAUGHTER had a very strong 2024 campaign racing primarily in \$5,000 starter/optional \$10,000s, winning four of nine and only missing the top three once. He will likely be tracking Bold Reload in the early stages.

Race 7

#1 Artemus Citylimits#6 Speed Figures#4 Roi Soleil#2 Its Time to Shine

#1 ARTEMUS CITYLIMITS made his debut for the Drexler barn in March at Gulfstream with an even fifthplace effort. He goes without blinkers today and catches a somewhat questionable field for this level with pace to run into; could be the class. #6 SPEED FIGURES was an easy gate-to-wire winner against N1X/\$32,000 types on the Tapeta on April 27. He may have a harder time getting clear on the lead this time but will be tough to run down if he does. #4 ROI SOLEIL exits a credible fourthplace effort at this level on May 25. He makes his third start off of the bench here and should be happy to get back to the turf; his last win came over this course and distance. #2 ITS TIME TO SHINE came up empty after dueling on the lead in his only previous turf start, a seven furlong EP Taylor race. He is two-for-two this year and could be worth a look if you can forgive that one previous turf disappointment.

Race 8 #10 Easter Sunday Girl #4 Let's Be First #2 Right Brightly #8 Closing Appeal #12 Not So Swift

#10 EASTER SUNDAY GIRL pressed the pace and came up empty when moving up to the \$15,000 level on May 30. She raced fairly well in her local debut and is one of many options in this murky field. #4 LET'S BE FIRST kicked off her season for \$15,000 on May 16, stalking the pace before an even finish. Lightly-raced filly figures to be well supported in her second start off of the bench. #2 RIGHT BRIGHTLY is by 4-for-47 debut sire Katz My Song and is the first foal to race out of an unraced Singing Saint mare. The Gittens barn scored with a firsttime-starter for Schickedanz on Sunday. #8 CLOSING APPEAL continues to slide down in value after a flat try in a \$15,000 route on May 22. Her speed figures are not bad for this group. #12 NOT SO SWIFT is by poor debut sire Ami's Holiday and is the first foal to race out of an unraced Big Screen mare. She attracts leading rider Pietro Moran and has a few five furlong drills coming into this debut.