

Handicapper's Journal – Doug McPherson  
Friday, July 4th 2025

Race 1

**#4 Ecliptical Ladybug**

**#5 Punkin Boy**

**#3 Highland Peak**

**#2 Armino**

#4 ECLIPTICAL LADYBUG was only beaten 2 ¼ lengths despite a less than ideal trip on June 14. She adds blinkers and gets significant weight as a filly taking on the boys with an apprentice aboard. #5 PUNKIN BOY tried turf on June 15 and narrowly missed second in a race with a dominant winner. This field looks very manageable; the one to beat. #3 HIGHLAND PEAK was a non-factor when taking on OS/\$40,000 foes for his local debut. He has run some solid speed figures at more comparable class levels in Florida and could show up this time. #2 ARMINO was a half-length behind Punkin Boy when finishing fourth on June 15. It is tough to say how he will fare on the Tapeta as his two tries over the surface came in spots that were far too tough.

Race 2

**#1 Ringintheholiday**

**#6 Prime Plus One**

**#3 You and Me Baby**

**#2 Earning My Ears**

#1 RINGINTHEHOLIDAY had some early trouble but ran on fairly well to be fourth when making his turf debut on June 13. He is making his third start of the season here and could move forward at a solid price. #6 PRIME PLUS ONE rallied into contention and dueled down the stretch, missing by a head when kicking off her season in the aforementioned June 13 race. This is just his third career start; the one to beat. #3 YOU AND ME BABY had early traffic and rallied to be third, 1 ½ lengths ahead of Prime Plus and clear of Ringintheholiday on June 13; a logical option with a good post. #2 EARNING MY EARS chased the pace before emptying out in the stretch when kicking off her season at the OS/\$40,000 level on June 15. He figures to be a speed factor stretching out to two turns and will appreciate the class drop.

Race 3

**#6 Dissectologist**

**#7 Proud Ronin**

**#5 Frost Bitten**

**#4 Midnight Tempesta**

#6 DISSECTOLOGIST was empty in his first start off of the claim but ran a much better race when returning on June 13, running on well to be fourth by just 1 ¾ lengths, missing place by a neck; a contender with a repeat of that effort. #7 PROUD RONIN was able to win a \$25,000 Tapeta sprint in his first start off of the bench, then came up empty when trying a turf route at the OS/\$40,000 level on June 20. Looking solely at the win on May 25, he should be the favourite here. #5 FROST BITTEN moved into contention on the backside but came up empty on the far turn when routing on the inner turf on May 30. He won sprinting on this surface two back; worked sharply on June 27. #4 MIDNIGHT TEMPESTA has been on the edges at best this season. He catches a smaller field this time and could earn a better check; the blinkers are coming off.

Race 4

**#8 Mehlek - Best Bet**

**#3 Rapture Bay**

**#6 Catholic Jackie**

**#2 Jay Bird**

#8 MEHLEK has not been seen since a good third-place effort against open \$10,000 foes at Gulfstream in December. He has been breezing steadily and gets significant class relief for his return. #3 RAPTURE BAY has taken to Woodbine very well, missing by narrow margins in his two most recent starts at this level. If Mehlek does not fire off of the layoff, this is the clear horse to beat. #6 CATHOLIC JACKIE made a wide rally to be a non-threatening third in a turf sprint on June 20. He drops down from the \$15,000 level and is probably better on the main track. #2 JAY BIRD forced the pace but could not match Rapture Bay and gave way to be sixth on June 13; he is not the most reliable horse but is capable of being a factor here on his better days.

## Race 5

### #4 Sarah's Dancer

### #2 Moral Turpitude

### #5 Cardio Princess (JPN)

### #3 Our Flag Flying

#4 SARAH'S DANCER was third in a blanket finish sprinting on the EP Taylor course on June 20. She will have no problem getting back out to a route and could be ready for a peak effort in her third start off of the bench. #2 MORAL TURPITUDE has improved with each start this season, most recently finishing second for \$25,000 in an off-turf race on May 29. We'll see if she can continue that trajectory as she drops in class; her lone turf win came over this course. #5 CARDIO PRINCESS (JPN) made her first start of the year in the same race that Moral Turpitude exits, finishing  $\frac{3}{4}$  lengths behind that foe in third. Her fitness should be on par now that she has a race under her belt. #3 OUR FLAG FLYING set the pace but gave way in deep stretch in the same race that Moral Turpitude and Cardio Princess exit; we'll see if the turf carries her speed a little further.

## Race 6

### #4 Heat

### #6 El Alacran

### #8 Lumberyard

### #2 Tiger Town

#4 HEAT put in a winning effort on debut last May but showed nothing in three starts after that. He returns from the sidelines as a gelding and gets significant class relief; we know he can run well fresh. #6 EL ALACRAN broke his maiden in his local debut at this level but came up empty when taking on OS/\$40,00 foes in December. He has had some good turf efforts south of the border and could be live in his return to the races. #8 LUMBERYARD has finished second in three of four turf tries, though the one poor one was his only try over this course. He has to overcome a tough post but could rebound from a couple of poor efforts if he can work out a trip. #2 TIGER TOWN sprinted clear from the 12 hole and was able to hold on to break his maiden for \$15,000 on May 30. Lumberyard and Arami's Speightster could apply pressure early.

## Race 7

### #5 Embrace My Uncle

### #4 Sunrise Drive

### #2 Bringer of Rain

### #3 Elusive Knight

#5 EMBRACE MY UNCLE has come rolling late to be second-best in a pair of sprints at this level this season, most recently behind Fighter in the Win who came back to run big in the turf sprint series. He has a good record routing and should fare well. #4 SUNRISE DRIVE used his winter fitness to his advantage when rallying to pick up Hemlo Gold on May 23. A repeat of the 80 Beyer he posted for that win could be enough to double up. #2 BRINGER OF RAIN made a wide rally on the far turn before flattening out to be fifth over the inner turf on June 13. He gets back to his preferred surface and should be more live. #3 ELUSIVE KNIGHT used his back class and got up to win a \$7,500 non-three/non-winners in a year on May 24, attracting a claim. He is in much tougher this time; fringe player.

## Race 8

### #4 Im Not Lost

### #3 Yoddha

### #7 Reggie Boy

### #2 Big Lew

### #6 Admiral Nelson

#4 IM NOT LOST showed speed but came up empty when debuting at this level on June 13. Blinkers are being added; we'll see if he can show some improvement in a race without much inspiring form. #3 YODDHA is the one to beat based on speed figures. He made just four starts last year and raced well each time; the best horse in the race but very suspect. #7 REGGIE BOY pressed the pace before fading to be fourth for \$15,000 on June 13. He figures to be a factor with the class drop. #2 BIG LEW ran a credible race when finishing fourth on June 13. He draws well and can hit the ticket with the right trip. #6 ADMIRAL NELSON has struggled to make the races since returning to Woodbine and now plunges in for \$10,000. The synthetic definitely seems like his best surface; if you can cross out his last two races you can easily make a case for him.