

Handicapper's Journal – Doug McPherson

Saturday, July 19th 2025

Race 1

#3 Back River

#4 Golden Test

#7 Clive Cross

#2 Get Out the Vote

#3 BACK RIVER blew the break and had some traffic on the backside, then hit the front in the stretch before giving way when last competing on June 27. He has been knocking on the door and should be tough with a clean trip. #4 GOLDEN TEST was very game on the lead in defeat when beaten a neck in the same race that Back River exits. He will have other speed to deal with here. #7 CLIVE CROSS was able to score his overdue maiden win at the \$10,000 level in his first start of the season, but was empty when bumping up to the \$15,000 level for his first try against winners on July 3. He should be more competitive on the drop in for \$7,500. #2 GET OUT THE VOTE was outsprinted from the far outside post and never got involved when taking on \$25,000 mares on the inner turf two weeks ago. She plunges back in for bottoms; takes on the boys but should be a speed factor.

Race 2

#6 Benny's Jets - Best Bet

#7 Alzado

#3 Livininthefastlane

#4 Stephen B Good

#6 BENNY'S JETS forced the pace and was outfinished by the class-dropping Happy Quad on June 27. He could be the main speed in this field. #7 ALZADO has raced twice on turf, drawing the far outside post both times and both times finishing midpack. He is dropping sharply from the OS/\$40,000 level and could be a factor if he handles the Tapeta. #3 LIVININTHEFASTLANE fell back after showing some tactical speed and finished midpack when debuting for \$10,000 on July 4. He may have simply been green in that start; we'll see if he can progress this time. #4 STEPHEN B GOOD missed most of 2024 but did run well when coming off of the bench in November; wild card.

Race 3

#6 Jinx Me

#1 Wild Red

#3 Florida Vacation

#4 Ruthless Action

#6 JINX ME broke slowly but finished very well to be third when debuting on the inner turf on June 28; doesn't need to improve much to break through here. #1 WILD RED

was able to hold second from Jinx Me last time. Her form as been hit or miss but she was nearly able to beat the talented Dolce Fortuna last year; serious contender. #3 FLORIDA VACATION rallied into a collapsing pace to be a non-threatening second in a split of the aforementioned June 28 race. Blinkers are being re-added. #4 RUTHLESS ACTION had a wide trip and came up empty in her most recent start on June 14. A runner-up in five of eight career starts; fringe player.

Race 4

#1 Soupergirl

#4 Firecracker Fiona

#3 Saratoga Holiday

#5 Catch the Drift

#1 SOUPERGIRL tried turf in her return to the races, finishing an even fifth in the Georgian Bay. The My Dear runner-up likely needed a start off of the bench and could be better returning to the Tapeta. #4 FIRECRACKER FIONA forced the pace and kept on gamely to be third behind the strong-closing Speedy Freeze on the turf on June 14. She has run more good races than bad in her career. #3 SARATOGA HOLIDAY has yet to miss the top three in her five start career. A very easy maiden winner two starts ago, she fared well against winners on June 12 and looks live with this group. #5 CATCH THE DRIFT dropped in for this tag on June 28 and ran a credible fourth. Her Beyers last year were consistently in the mid-60s which looks like the number that it will take to win this.

Race 5

#4 Tequilasupernova

#3 Brittany's Way

#5 Rock Hard Rose

#6 Blue's Mommy

#4 TEQUILASUPERNOVA only missed place by a half-length after breaking slow and racing wide in her debut over the inner turf on June 28. With a clean break she could be a serious threat here. #3 BRITTANY'S WAY set the pace but was run down late when facing \$35,000 foes at Gulfstream on February 28. An online auction purchase in May, she could be the quickest out of the gate in her local debut. #5 ROCK HARD ROSE has shown speed and faded to fourth in both of her local starts. We'll see if the cutback in distance helps her at all here. #6 BLUE'S MOMMY failed to sustain her rally when finishing fifth on the inner turf on June 28; that race was a step in the right direction and she can still improve with experience.

Race 6

#6 Danse Macabre

#1 Golden Canary

#7 Without Cause

#4 Uphill Dance

#6 DANSE MACABRE ran a big third in her first start off of the bench in the Giant's Causeway, then finished midpack by just 2 ¼ lengths in the Intercontinental in New York. Millionaire mare should have no problem taking advantage of her class edge here. #1 GOLDEN CANARY has had three solid races at similar levels at Gulfstream and in New York this year. Both of her wins have come over this turf course; if Danse Macabre doesn't fire this seems like the one to take advantage. #7 WITHOUT CAUSE forced the pace and kicked clear to an easy N2L win on June 7. She should be able to find good early position. #4 UPHILL DANCE had a wide trip from the outside gate and ran an okay fourth at this level on June 14. She is drawn much better this time.

Race 7

#3 I'm Into Mischief

#7 Purr Factor

#1 Verdejo

#4 Garnet and Gold

#3 I'M INTO MISCHIEF came up empty after an early duel for \$25,000 on June 27. Her last win came when being outsprinted to the lead and having a target to run at; this field is loaded with speed so she will likely be coming late this time. Lasix is removed. #7 PURR FACTOR attracted a claim while winning easily for \$25,000 non-three and has had two very strong efforts on the lead at this level for the new connections. This will likely be the most contested pace she has had to deal with in a while. #1 VERDEJO rallied well to be fourth against N2X/\$50,000 company on July 3. She drops back in for \$32,000 and should have an ideal pace setup here. #4 GARNET AND GOLD was given nearly a month and went down to Fort Erie for a comfortable open allowance win on June 24. She already has a win at this level this season; worth a look.

Race 8

#3 Clay Soldier

#2 Maximum Fifty

#1 Barbara Joan

#6 Ol' Blondie

#3 CLAY SOLDIER was outkicked for second when making her local debut in a race won by the speedy Miss Vyvyanne over the inner turf. She has done the bulk of her best running on synthetic and looks live in her second local attempt. #2 MAXIMUM FIFTY had two gate-to-wire scores at this level to kick off the season but came up completely empty after being challenge early in an N2X/\$50,000. If she is quick enough to get loose early she should have a chance to rebound on the drop back in for \$32,000. #1 BARBARA JOAN was a gate to wire winner over the Gulfstream turf when debuting in January. We'll see if she can outsprint the more seasoned Maximum Fifty. #6 OL' BLONDIE rallied to be fourth, 1 ¾ lengths behind stablemate Clay Soldier. She could be better in her second try off of the bench.

Race 9

#2 Breaking Alone

#1 C My Meister

#6 Really Good

#7 One More Brew

#5 Fighter in the Win

#2 BREAKING ALONE returned from Fair Ground with a strong closing fourth against N2X/\$50,000 company. This is not an easy field but it is likely easier than what he faced last time; drawn well. #1 C MY MEISTER had the lead nearing the wire but got the worst of a heartbreaking head bob when finishing third on the inner turf on June 29. He rarely runs a bad one; in the hunt. #6 REALLY GOOD was claimed from a disappointing effort at Turfway in February. Solid stayer has been gelded since then; he has back class but will have to be ready to travel the nine furlongs off of the bench. #7 ONE MORE BREW rallied and got the best of the head bob to win the same race that C My Meister exits. Since joining the Tiller barn his only poor race came with a very wide trip from the 12 hole; has to be looked at. #5 FIGHTER IN THE WIN was a game second behind Light the Lamp in the Sprint Series on June 29. He will likely be the pacesetter stretching out an extra three furlongs.