

# Handicapper's Journal – Doug McPherson

## Saturday, July 4th, 2026

### Race 1

#### #7 Suvari (FR)

#### #2 Mew N Me

#### #3 Tap My Desire

#### #4 Refinement

#7 SUVARI (FR) had a wide trip while racing between horses for much of the race when debuting on June 11, not an easy trip for a first timer. She has since had a bullet work on the training track and could improve in her second attempt. #2 MEW N ME is offered for a tag for the first time after offering no rally in her seasonal opener on May 30. She raced well on turf in her first two starts; her speed figures are very competitive with these. #3 TAP MY DESIRE narrowly missed place to Refinement after giving up a lot more ground than that foe when racing in the same June 11 race that Suvari exits. She should be able to pick up another slice here. #4 REFINEMENT broke well before giving up the lead into the backstretch and kept on to be second on June 11 after a troubled debut; lightly raced and could keep improving.

### Race 2

#### #3 Bermuda Brew

#### #2 Skydigger

#### #4 She Reigns

#### #9 Lemon Sweets

#3 BERMUDA BREW lost momentum at the ½ mile pole then had to wait for a split turning for home before showing finishing interest and galloping out well on May 23. She had a very wide trip when going two turns on the inner turf on June 11; drops in class here and could fare well with some racing luck. #2 SKYDIGGER was claimed from a runner-up effort for this price before coming up empty in a maiden special weight route in her first start off of the claim. She drops back in and could be a speed factor with these. #4 SHE REIGNS dropped in for \$40,000 in the same inner turf race that Bermuda Brew exits, racing three-wide and keeping on decently to be fifth. She takes another drop in hopes of finding her level. #9 LEMON SWEETS hit the front in deep stretch but could not hold when making her seasonal bow at this level on June 13. Her Tapeta sprints have all been respectable efforts.

### Race 3

#### #4 Orion Beach

#### #6 Bossy Candy

#### #3 Empty Handed

#### #5 Xarabella

#4 ORION BEACH chased a hot pace while racing off the rail and was in contention in the stretch before taking two solid bumps from Xarabella, but appeared to still be running on after regaining her footing in her June 13 seasonal bow. She was nearly able to win an N1X/\$32,000 in September; hopefully gets a clean run today. #6 BOSSY CANDY was second best behind a bias-aided foe when racing at this level on May 3, then set the pace in the Fury where she was caught in deep stretch by Piper's Gift. We'll see if she ends up as the pacesetter again. #3 EMPTY HANDED broke slowly and took up a few strides in, then made a sustained rally into the hot fractions to be third (placed second) on June 13. The start has been an issue in both of her starts so far, but she has come back with a sharp gate work on June

27; hopefully that kink has been ironed out. #5 XARABELLA chased the pace from the inside and ran a game second but was DQd for coming out and bothering Orion Beach in the stretch. She is the type of horse who tries hard every time; hard to ignore.

### Race 4

#### #5 Spicy Bourbon

#### #1 Copacabana

#### #6 Elissa's Macho

#### #8 Red Guitar

#5 SPICY BOURBON made a run up the rail turning for home but spun her tires in the stretch when debuting May 23. She ran like she may not have liked the Tapeta but seemed to make an effort; her pedigree suggests she'll like the turf and she had a breeze on the training turf last week. #1 COPACABANA dropped back, passed two stopping foes turning for home and had some late energy to grab fourth when making her local debut on May 23. She drops in for a tag for the first time. #6 ELISSA'S MACHO has had three runner-up finishes in as many starts to date in her career, missing by a neck to North York when making her turf debut on June 11; looks logical. #8 RED GUITAR caught the eye when rallying from last after a poor break to be fourth, 1 ¾ lengths behind Elissa's Macho when debuting on June 11. She has not breezed since that start; we'll see how she fires in her second attempt.

### Race 5

#### #1 Lac Macaza - Best Bet

#### #6 Ever Dangerous

#### #4 Cornwall

#### #3 Nauvoo

#1 LAC MACAZA ran a much improved race in his first start off of the claim to be third behind the pacesetter Itsastormymonday on the inner turf. He drops in for \$25,000 and draws well on the inside. #6 EVER DANGEROUS was claimed from his easy \$15,000 win on May 9 and came back to run a game third in an N1X/\$32,000 on June 14 in which the winner was aided by a major inside/speed bias. He looks very live in this spot. #4 CORNWALL ran on well to be second behind the loose-on-the-lead Mad Dog N Joe, who had winter raced in Tampa, when making his seasonal debut on May 31. He is a long time between wins but he grinds his way to a lot of checks. #3 NAUVOO made his local debut at this level on June 13, opening up a big early advantage before being outfinished by Grandson and settling for place. The blinkers come off today; we'll see what the tactics will be this time.

### Race 6

#### #3 Spellcheck

#### #4 Lady Iona

#### #6 Mikelle

#### #7 Just Magnificent

#3 SPELLCHECK outkicked the other speed but was outfinished by a perfectly-tripped stalker when finishing second for \$25,000 in her seasonal bow on June 18. She rises in class here but isn't catching the toughest field and ran very well in her only previous turf try. #4 LADY IONA had a wide trip near the back and failed to fire when last racing on June 13 against allowance company, but had a good runner-up effort at this level in her seasonal debut. Her maiden win came over this turf course; rebound candidate. #6 MIKELLE drops back in for a tag after failing to threaten in a solid N2L allowance on May 30. She has hit the board in

all three of her tries over this turf course; hopefully the surface change can reverse her fortunes. #7 JUST MAGNIFICENT added blinkers last time, getting better than normal early position and keeping on to be third. She is a frequent check earner and is not out of the question today.

#### Race 7

##### #6 Winning Agenda

##### #2 Pharoah's Affair

##### #4 Meet Me At Midnite

##### #1 Glitter and Glow

#6 WINNING AGENDA far outran her 37-1 odds when finishing a trying fourth in a race won by the very impressive first-timer Aretha on June 13. We'll see if she can put everything together in her second start off of the bench. #2 PHAROAH'S AFFAIR offered nothing in two dirt tries south of the border to begin her campaign but greatly improved when getting onto the Tapeta on May 23 when missing by a neck to the pacesetting Lake Louise. She will be well supported on the strength of that last effort. #4 MEET ME AT MIDNITE was sent off as favourite when debuting in a six furlong sprint on June 7 but showed no speed and rallied from last to be a non-threatening third. Blinkers and lasix are added for this stretch out in distance. #1 GLITTER AND GLOW was never a threat when debuting on May 23 but had some trouble in the stretch; we'll see if she can improve second time out with a stretch out in distance.

#### Race 8

##### #1 Unforgettable Face (IRE)

##### #4 Belle

##### #7 Celebrity Warrior (IRE)

##### #6 Lazy Y Collection

#1 UNFORGETTABLE FACE (IRE) was rank early and never raced less than three-wide when making her local debut on June 13. She draws a much better post and will hopefully improve with some cover. #4 BELLE was kept out in the middle of the racetrack and flattened out in the stretch when heavily favoured on May 23. Her debut on the Keeneland turf was impressive, beaten a head by La Rascasse who has since won the Monomoy Girl at Churchill; we'll see if turf and a better trip reverses her fortunes. #7 CELEBRITY WARRIOR (IRE) is a Stakes-placed filly who was thought highly enough of to try the Breeders' Cup Juvenile Fillies Turf last year but didn't seem to be at her best at Gulfstream during the Championship meet. She clearly has talent and could get back to form with the change of scenery. #6 LAZY Y COLLECTION set the pace and ran a very good race to be third behind the impressive Aretha on June 13. Both of her efforts so far have been solid; this will be her turf debut.

#### Race 9

##### #5 Hello Stranger

##### #2 Very Special

##### #1 Coburg

##### #4 Who Goes There

#5 HELLO STRANGER has had wide journeys in both of his starts so far this season, most recently finishing third on a day with an extreme inside/speed bias. He had a string of three very good efforts in a row last year; the talent to win a race is clearly there. #2 VERY SPECIAL was second best behind a pacesetting winner in a three-year-old race on June 14. Son of Ghostzapper figures to be well backed as he looks to make his third time the charm. #1 COBURG made a circling move before evening out to be a non-threatening

fourth in his local debut on May 24. His speed figures fit well; worth a look. #4 WHO GOES THERE is another who ran against the June 14 bias, finishing second behind a class-dropping, pacesetting winner in an OS/\$40,000. He rises in class but shouldn't be overlooked.

#### Race 10

##### #6 Like the King

##### #3 Cool Kiss

##### #2 Lucky Guest

##### #7 Hammerhead

#6 LIKE THE KING made his seasonal debut at this level on May 23, getting a very good inside trip and racing well to be third behind Wyoming Bill and English Actor. Back-classy eight-year-old should be very live in his second start off of the bench. #3 COOL KISS failed to make a serious dent when kicking off his season in a tough N3X/\$80,000 sprint on May 23. An upset winner of last year's Durham Cup, he drops in for \$50,000 and gets back out to two turns. #2 LUCKY GUEST was stymied in the stretch when going 5 ½ furlongs on April 19 but had no problem going gate to wire in an N2L allowance on May 31. He faces much tougher this time. #7 HAMMERHEAD was an even fifth when returning to the races in the same race that Like the King exits. The Valedictory winner never seems to maintain consistent form so he can be tough to predict; we'll see how he fires today.

#### Race 11

##### #10 Ciunas

##### #2 Real Savvy

##### #6 King d'Oro

##### #5 Kekoa

##### #8 Palace View (IRE)

#10 CIUNAS looked great when winning his seasonal debut in an OS/\$40,000 non-three on May 24. He has a tough post to work from and has to take on tougher, but I don't think we've seen him hit his ceiling yet. #2 REAL SAVVY ran too good to lose while attracting a \$40,000 claim in his Woodbine debut, just missing in a stretch battle with Philip My Wine. Speedy type nearly won an allowance in Tampa back in February. #6 KING D'ORO never saw the rail on an inside/speed favouring day but rallied to be fourth by 2 ½ lengths on June 14. I would not be shocked to see him improve off of that effort. #5 KEKOA ran a huge race to be second behind the pacesetting Itsastormymonday over this course on June 7. Stakes-winner runs more good ones that bad and is hard to ignore. #8 PALACE VIEW (IRE) had a wide trip on that biased June 14 track when finishing sixth, a beck behind King d'Oro. He may not be quite as good on turf as he is on the Tapeta but he is capable of winning on the grass.