Handicapper's Journal – Doug McPherson
Thursday, November 5th 2026

Race 1

#1 Smokin Empire
#5 Hard Right
#7 Auntie's Bambino
#4 Beyond Adversity

#1 SMOKIN EMPIRE disappointed as the lone speed when last racing on October 11 but once again appears to be the lone speed; if he is an okay price he may be worth a shot as the connections opt to give him another shot at this level. #5 HARD RIGHT has taken very well to turf with two runner up finishes over the surface, most recently getting nabbed late by Hello Stranger. He has had four consecutive second-place efforts and could very well break through today. #7 AUNTIE'S BAMBINO has been third behind Hard Right in a couple of turf starts then wheeled back on seven days' rest on October 18 with a narrow miss on the Tapeta. Hard-knocker has grinded out over $100,000 this season and should be in the hunt again. #4 BEYOND ADVERSITY has been in good form at longer distances with competitive speed figures; we'll see if he can remain competitive with the cutback to seven furlongs.

Race 2

#2 Girls Weekend
#6 Quiet Maddelena
#3 Whiskey N Ice
#4 Genius of Love

#2 GIRLS WEEKEND drops in for $15,000 after a couple of solid efforts for $25,000 on the turf. Closing type switches back to the Tapeta and should have plenty of pace to run at here. #6 QUIET MADDELENA looks to extend her winning streak to three after being claimed back from a winning effort for $10,000 on September 18. 12-time winner definitely warrants respect and seems the least suspect of the potential frontrunners. #3 WHISKEY N ICE returned from 88 days off in the same $25,000 race that Girls Weekend exits, battling on the lead before quitting to be seventh. She takes the drop for her second start off of the bench; we'll see if she can rebound. #4 GENIUS OF LOVE was in contention in midstretch before evening out a bit last time when fourth at this level. She could grind on for a share if the pace falls apart.

Race 3

#2 Kasumi's Ghost
#7 Suvari (FR)
#4 My Turn Now
#10 Fully Completely

#2 KASUMI'S GHOST ran a decent race off the layoff on September 26 when sixth by two lengths then had a very troubled stretch run on October 8. She shortens up to a sprint and gets to try the EP Taylor turf for the first time. #7 SUVARI (FR) posted her highest lifetime Beyer when trying a sprint for the first time on October 17, finishing a distant third on the Tapeta; could be interesting sprinting over this course. #4 MY TURN NOW drops in for $25,000 and tries the turf for the first time after a couple of credible fourth-place efforts at the OS/$40,000 level, most recently in a race won easily by the class-dropping Pepper Patch. #10 FULLY COMPLETELY has improved since getting on turf in her two most recent starts, both over a mile on the inner course, but has a tough post to overcome today.

Race 4

#7 Lover Boy Mo
#6 Royal Presence
#3 Crystal Pearl
#2 Hello Stranger

#7 LOVER BOY MO returns to the races after failing to factor against much tougher in the Elgin. He has raced against some tough customers since graduating to the non-two level, running against Stakes-caliber foes such as William T and Chaos Agent. #6 ROYAL PRESENCE was disappointing against a very solid group of N1X/$32,000 types on the turf last month. He isn't hooking the toughest of groups here and returns to his preferred surface for his third start off of the layoff. #3 CRYSTAL PEARL grinded on to be third as the favourite when making his first start against winners on October 15. His maiden win came over 10 furlongs on turf; the common theme of his Tapeta races has been too little too late. #2 HELLO STRANGER proved best in deep stretch to break his maiden over seven furlongs on turf on October 11. He is capable of showing speed at this route distance but may opt to take back again after having success closing last time.

Race 5

#6 Amazin Queen
#4 Twisting Pistons
#3 Candid Candace
#7 Albie First

#6 AMAZIN QUEEN made a nice rally down the center of the course to win against $6,250 company at Fort Erie on October 20. She has won both of her starts against mares this year. #4 TWISTING PISTONS lacked a rally when facing $15,000 company on the inner turf on October 10. She was an easy winner of her last start for this tag back in July and was able to win for $15,000 after that; speed factor. #3 CANDID CANDACE was a hit or miss type over the summer but overall had a solid season at Fort Erie. She was disappointing albeit against a very tough field last time; could offer a price as she returns to what is arguably her best surface. #7 ALBIE FIRST has won her last two Tapeta starts and drops in for bottoms after failing to threaten against $25,000 non-threes on the inner turf. Would prefer to see her against conditioned company but could run on for a share.

Race 6

#7 Reload Baba
#4 Little Alexa
#5 Butterfly Billie
#2 Noyzee Girl

#7 RELOAD BABA has disappointed in her last couple of starts against tougher and now bombs in for bottoms. While she seems to be better on turf, she is worth a look in an uninspiring field. #4 LITTLE ALEXA has had two runner up finishes in three starts for $15,000 this season and is also taking the sharp drop in for $5,000; figures to be well-supported. #5 BUTTERFLY BILLIE broke her maiden for $10,000 three-back and has found the $15,000 non-twos a bit too tough, though her fourth place effort on October 1 was not bad at all; should be very competitive here. #2 NOYZEE GIRL had a solid season on the Fort Erie dirt and has run well enough on the Tapeta in the past to give her a look for a minor share here.

Race 7

#1 Elgin Park
#3 Temple Hall
#4 Coherence
#6 Souper Strider

#1 ELGIN PARK was able to get up at the wire to nose out Temple Hall at this level 12 days ago. Three-year-old takes advantage of the conditions here and has a good shot to double up. #3 TEMPLE HALL showed his trademark speed but narrowly missed to Elgin Park last time. He should be on the pace again and could be tough to run down if that foe fails to fire. #4 COHERENCE has rallied to two credible runner-up finishes behind tough foes on the Fort Erie dirt in his two most recent outings; warrants respect. #6 SOUPER STRIDER made a nice rail rally to win his non-two three back and has been fourth with respectable efforts in both of his starts against non-threes.

Race 8

#1 Dance With Me Baby - Best Bet
#9 Head Coach D R
#6 Lady Dayrells
#4 Bellalina
#5 Speranza Miracola

#1 DANCE WITH ME BABY was saddled with the 10-hole on debut two weeks ago, making a wide move on the turn before flattening out to be fifth. She draws better today and could improve as she halves in value for her second attempt. #9 HEAD COACH D R hit the front turning for home and was clear in midstretch but gave way to be third on October 15. An inexperienced horse can get lost making the lead early like that, but at least showed that she fits at this level. #6 LADY DAYRELLS was able to nab second from Head Coach D R last time, continuing a streak of solid on-the-board efforts; in with a shot. #4 BELLALINA showed some run in her debut in August but has been disappointing since then; blinkers come off for this sharp drop in for bottoms. #5 SPERANZA MIRACOLA debuts for bottoms but has had a fairly steady worktab since August; has blinkers on and we'll see how she fares at first asking.