Handicapper's Journal – Doug McPherson
Thursday, November 26th 2026

Race 1

#4 Padraig
#7 Field Hockey
#2 Lake Como Heist
#5 Nycely

#4 PADRAIG was a disappointing favourite when last racing on November 1. He plunges into the bottom level here and will add blinkers. #7 FIELD HOCKEY has made just four starts this season but has had a couple of runner-up efforts, finishing second for $7,500 most recently on October 30; bar shoe-wearing gelding figures to be competitive here. #2 LAKE COMO HEIST was part of the early stretch cavalry charge but weakened to be 12th in an effort that wasn't as bad as it looks on paper on November 13. He halves in value for his second start off of the claim; blinkers are added. #5 NYCELY was 1 ½ lengths ahead of Lake Como Heist when finishing 11th last time; was a comfortable maiden winner three-back and is not out of the question.

Race 2

#2 Anita Margarita
#3 Chargethatmountain
#6 Complex Secret
#7 Happy Valentine

#2 ANITA MARGARITA returns to the races for the first time since August 6 when fifth of seven for $25,000. Sparingly campaigned for several seasons, she plunges in for bottoms here and could have okay position despite the 5 ½ furlong distance as there is not a ton of speed here. #3 CHARGETHATMOUNTAIN battled on the lead before emptying out when facing $10,000 company on October 29. With a good break she could have control of the early pace. #6 COMPLEX SECRET was a chasing third in a similar spot when last seen on November 7. She has missed a check just once this season and has to be in the conversation. #7 HAPPY VALENTINE has not been seen since May 22, having been vet scratched on June 11. The highest earner in this field, she has back-class; we'll see if the time off has done her any good.

Race 3

#5 Red Destiny
#8 Global Love
#3 Chinook
#2 Another Seattle

#5 RED DESTINY had a poor break when returning from 111 days off on October 31. Her first two starts solid runs against respectable company; figures to be live with the drop in for $25,000. #8 GLOBAL LOVE battled on the lead before folding when facing OS/$40,000 foes 19 days ago. She drops in value and has speed figures that fit here. #3 CHINOOK drops back in for $25,000 after finishing a chasing fourth for $40,000 on the turf on October 17. She was beaten a neck for this tag on September 12, getting nabbed at the wire as the only front-runner to not win over the Tapeta on that day. #2 ANOTHER SEATTLE drops in for $25,000 after finishing a decent fourth for $40,000 in her debut on October 10, A vet scratch two weeks ago, the barn has had a couple of recent vet scratches which suggest a virus could be the cause.

Race 4

#1 Ruthless Action
#4 Closing Appeal
#3 Blazing Damsel
#2 Greenwich Pike

#1 RUTHLESS ACTION made a solid rally in a game second place effort for this tag on November 6. A repeat of that effort will put her in the hunt here. #4 CLOSING APPEAL has a very similar lifetime record to Ruthless Action. She exits a runner-up effort for $15,000 12 days ago and is arguably the one to beat here on the drop. #3 BLAZING DAMSEL had a solid four-race campaign on the Fort Erie dirt and now races over the Tapeta for the first time since last year. She could get loose on the lead here. #2 GREENWICH PIKE was empty on the far turn when last racing on October 11. Disappointing claim continues to slide down the class ladder; fringe player.

Race 5

#7 My Swagg Daddy Lou - Best Bet
#3 Eubank
#1 Mr. Perfect
#5 Chanchito

#7 MY SWAGG DADDY LOU dominated $25,000 maidens in his second start off of the bench on October 22. He drops in for $15,000 for his first start against winners and should be tough to beat. #3 EUBANK got back to form when dropping in for $25,000 on November 8, finishing very nicely to be third, and figures to be in the hunt again. #1 MR. PERFECT battled down the stretch but was outkicked late by Bee Me in a return to form on November 1. He posted a strong Beyer in his maiden win back in August and could be a threat to the favourite if he can run back to that figure. #5 CHANCHITO made a wide bid before emptying out in a turf route on November 6. His maiden win came in a sprint and he should appreciate cutting back in distance after a trio of route attempts.

Race 6

#6 Madam Gwen
#7 Purrfect Girl
#1 Twisting Pistons
#4 Yankee Doodle

#6 MADAM GWEN has been grinding out checks on turf in recent starts, facing good foes including a very solid Loveumissumeanit. She won twice last year over the Tapeta and could be worth a look at a price. #7 PURRFECT GIRL was an even fifth, well behind Madam Gwen when last racing on October 10 over the inner turf. She has had some extra time between starts and gets back to her preferred surface. #1 TWISTING PISTONS dropped back in for $7,500 on November 5, stalking the pace before driving by in the stretch. She faces tougher tonight but was able to win for this price back in August. #4 YANKEE DOODLE did no running at all when making her local debut over the inner turf on October 10. She had some good figures against Stakes company in Winnipeg this summer; perhaps she will take to the Tapeta.

Race 7

#4 Sam's Rocket
#5 Carrick On Stage
#6 Paddy Holiday
#2 Full Star

#4 SAM'S ROCKET has not raced since August 2024 and has had several starts and stops in his training over the past couple of years but has been able to keep a somewhat regular worktab since arriving at Woodbine and getting onto the Tapeta. He certainly isn't hooking the toughest maiden $25,000 field ever assembled; we'll see how he fares on return. #5 CARRICK ON STAGE gets back out to a route after a couple of fourth-place efforts over seven furlongs. He was beaten a neck over a mile on the inner turf three-back. #6 PADDY HOLIDAY will re-apply blinkers and drop in for a tag after coming up empty on the turf on October 31. #2 FULL STAR exits a fourth-place effort in the same turf race that Paddy Holiday exits. He was third for this tag in his first start off of the claim; potential speed factor.

Race 8

#3 Flightmare
#4 Head Coach D R
#7 Dance With Me Baby
#8 That's a Fact
#2 Miss Brit

#3 FLIGHTMARE returns after being a vet scratch last week. She has done her best running rallying up the rail under the apprentice and draws a favourable post. #4 HEAD COACH D R got a little lost when opening up in early stretch before giving way to be third two-back, then came up empty with a wide trip on November 5. The two-back run shows that at least she is capable of being competitive. #7 DANCE WITH ME BABY rallied belatedly to be fourth when sent off at 4-5 on November 5; the runner-up from that race returned to score last week. #8 THAT'S A FACT has been grinding out checks all season, finishing second or third in half of her 10 starts at the meet and is certainly not impossible here. #2 MISS BRIT got back to the races in a $10,000 race on November 12 where she was flat as the lukewarm favourite; we'll see if she's any better in her second start off of the 75 day gap.