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INSIDE TRACK

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This **Inside Track to the Malibu Stakes** wagering guide gives you an inside look at the six stakes races running at Santa Anita Park on December 26, 2021, including the \$300,000 RUNHAPPY Malibu Stakes (G1) featuring the lightly-raced potential superstar Flightline for John Sadler.

The Racing Dudes have been at it for 10 years, offering daily handicapping picks and analysis for every track across the country. For this year's **Inside Track to the Malibu Stakes**, our lead handicappers have been scouring through the card at Santa Anita in search of winning tickets on this loaded day of racing.

Along with the Malibu, the other stakes Sunday at Santa Anita are the \$300,000 La Brea (G1), the \$300,000 American Oaks (G1), the \$200,000 San Antonio (G2), the \$200,000 Mathis Brothers Mile (G2), and the \$200,000 San Gabriel (G2).

But that's not all! Along with the six major stakes races, this Inside Track to the Malibu Stakes wagering guide also includes race-by-race analysis, betting suggestions, and multi-race plays for Santa Anita's entire Sunday card.

For each of the six stakes at Santa Anita, you will find the following:

FULL PREVIEW FOR THE RACE, including:

- ♦ Race Overview
- ♦ Race Shape and Pace Analysis
- ♦ Top Selections
- ♦ Major Threats
- ♦ Longshots to Use

You will also find specific wagering under the "Picks and Plays" section, which includes:

- ♦ Win Bet
- ♦ Place or Show Bet
- ♦ Longshot to Play Across the Board
- ♦ Exacta
- ♦ Trifecta
- ♦ Superfecta
- ♦ Horses to use in Multi-Race Wagers
- ♦ What to Play on a Straight Wager
- ♦ What to Play on an Exotic Wager

Each Win, Place, Show, or Across the Board wager comes with a confidence rating so that you can see how strongly we feel about each pick.

Finally, always remember to wager responsibly and never wager more than you can afford.

Good luck today!



RACE No. 5:

SAN GABRIEL STAKES (G2)

**1 1/8 MILES (TURF)
3-YEAR-OLDS & UPWARD
\$200,000**

OVERVIEW:

The day's stakes action kicks off on the turf in this event that drew a solid and competitive group of horses. Many of these can win on their best day, which leaves us a nice challenge from a handicapping prospective. This division has been fun to watch in California.

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A SLOW PACE

Pure Speed: *Red Storm Risen*

Pressing Speed: *Bob and Jackie*

Stalkers: *Ready Soul, Hit the Road*

Closers: *Indian Peak, Majestic Eagle, Friar's Road*

Red Storm Risen looks like he might get loose on the lead, which could make him tough to catch. There doesn't look to be much pace in this race other than him.

TOP CHOICE: #4 HIT THE ROAD

This horse is definitely the class of the race. He won a Grade 1 over this track back in the spring and finished third behind 2 very good horses in his last 2 starts. This spot makes a ton of sense for him and serves as a pretty big drop in class. He should be able to stalk the early pace, then pounce at the top of the stretch. But, he is now scratched

MAJOR THREATS: #2 Friar's Road, #6 Red Storm Risen, #7 Ready Soul

Friar's Road has been consistent since moving to the turf, finishing third in 2 straight stakes. This horse has great dirt form as well now that the race is off the turf. #7 Ready Soul also moves back up in class after winning an allowance race last time out.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #5 Majestic Eagle

This horse has been consistent at this level, always finishing within range of the winner. He can do the same again here and could hit the board at what should be a pretty solid price.

OTHERS: #1 Indian Peak, #3 Bob and Jackie

These two horses have run well against lesser company; however, it's questionable whether they can win versus this class.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

BET TO WIN: #2 Friar's Road - Confidence Level: 4 out of 5

BET TO PLACE: #7 Ready Soul - Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

ACROSS THE BOARD PLAY: #1 Indian Peak - Confidence Level: 2 out of 5

EXACTA: 2,7/1,2,7

TRIFECTA: 2,7/1,2,7/1,2,7

SUPERFACTA: NONE

MULTI-RACE WAGER HORSES: 2

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$20 Win on #2 Friar's Road

EXOTIC WAGER: \$2 Exacta 2,7/1,2,7



RACE No. 6:

SAN ANTONIO STAKES (G2)

1 1/6 MILES (DIRT)
3-YEAR-OLDS & UPWARD
\$200,000

OVERVIEW:

California's older dirt male division has not been all that strong this year, but Hot Rod Charlie injects life into this field in his final start as a 3-year-old. He should be able to handle the older horses in this spot.

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A MODERATE PACE

Pure Speed: *Hot Rod Charlie*

Pressing Speed: *Eight Rings, Extra Hope*

Stalkers: *Go On*

Closers: *Kiss Today Goodbye, Express Train, Azul Coast*

Hot Rod Charlie will make the fractions honest. Past him, it will just be a matter of what decision the jocks make on Eight Rings and Extra Hope. Both can press, but both can also sit off and have better success.

TOP CHOICE: #4 HOT ROD CHARLIE

This horse has had an outstanding 3-year-old season, dancing in every big dance and running well each time. He'll move up to face older horses for the second time here and should be able to take care of business this time around, as the Breeders' Cup Classic (G1) was against the best horse in the world. This should be an easy finale to round out his fantastic campaign.

MAJOR THREATS: #5 Eight Rings, #7 Azul Coast

Eight Rings and Azul Coast are both Bob Baffert runners who could upset the big favorite if he doesn't show up with a top effort. Baffert owns this track, so it's always hard to count him out.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #6 Kiss Today Goodbye

This horse ran well last time out in the Native Diver Stakes (G3), running second to the Baffert-trained Azul Coast. He could hit the board at a big price to spice up the exotics.

OTHERS: #1 Extra Hope, #2 Express Train, #3 Go On

This group looks overmatched while not being in the best form heading into this race. However, if the big favorite struggles, then this race opens up.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

BET TO WIN: #4 Hot Rod Charlie - Confidence Level: 5 out of 5

BET TO PLACE: #7 Azul Coast - Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

ACROSS THE BOARD PLAY: #5 Eight Rings - Confidence Level: 2 out of 5

EXACTA: 4/5,7

TRIFECTA: 4/5,6,7/5,6,7

SUPERFACTA: 4,5,6,7 BOX

MULTI-RACE WAGER HORSES: 4

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$50 Win on #4 Hot Rod Charlie

EXOTIC WAGER: \$2 Trifecta 4/5,6,7/5,6,7



RACE No. 7:

SANTA ANITA MATHIS MILE STAKES (G2)

1 MILE (TURF)
3-YEAR-OLDS
\$200,000

OVERVIEW:

A field of 9 entered this race, giving us plenty of viable betting options. The turf races in California have been ultra-competitive all year long and this figures to be no different. A double-digit price could definitely win this.

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A MODERATE PACE

Pure Speed: *Cane Creek Road, Beyond Brilliant*

Pressing Speed: *Tesoro*

Stalkers: *Tarantino*

Closers: *Law Professor, Du Jour, Airman, Flashiest, Zoffarelli*

Cane Creek Road and Beyond Brilliant can run early, but neither should set an overly fast pace. Expect reasonable fractions.

TOP CHOICE: #7 DU JOUR

Reunited and it feels so good! Du Jour is back with trainer Bob Baffert and also gets Flavien Prat back aboard, which could make a very big difference. He also gets back to his home track after trying to tackle the giants on the east coast, plus he returns to his preferred distance of a mile. All of those factors should work greatly in his favor here.

MAJOR THREATS: #6 Flashiest, #8 Beyond Brilliant, #9 Law Professor

Flashiest has been consistently competitive against these types all season long. Beyond Brilliant has been great since moving to the turf, picking up a big stakes win at Del Mar last time out. Law Professor will look to make it 2 in a row after an impressive allowance win.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #1 None Above the Law, #5 Cane Creek Road

None Above the Law will try to rebound after 2 poor races. His best race is competitive with this group. Cane Creek Road moves up in class after 2 straight wins. He's most likely the one to run down in the stretch.

OTHERS: #2 Tarantino, #3 Airman, #4 Zoffarelli

These horses have had nice seasons but are overmatched by this tough field.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

BET TO WIN: #7 Du Jour - Confidence Level: 3.5 out of 5

BET TO PLACE: #8 Beyond Brilliant - Confidence Level: 3.5 out of 5

ACROSS THE BOARD PLAY: #9 Law Professor - Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

EXACTA: 7,8,9 BOX

TRIFECTA: 6,7,8,9 BOX

SUPERFACTA: 6,7,8,9 BOX

MULTI-RACE WAGER HORSES: 6,7,8,9

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$10 Win on #7 Du Jour

EXOTIC WAGER: \$.50 Cent Trifecta BOX 6,7,8,9



RACE No. 8:

LA BREA STAKES (G1)

7 FURLONGS (DIRT)
FILLIES 3-YEAR-OLDS
\$300,000

OVERVIEW:

The last dirt Grade 1 for 3-year-old fillies will be contested by this solid field, and unlike in the Malibu, this race doesn't seem to have a heavy favorite. This betting situation could be quite favorable to the players.

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A FAST PACE

Pure Speed: *Kalypso, Private Mission, Livingmybestlife*

Pressing Speed: *Canoodling*

Stalkers: *Brilliant Cut*

Closers: *Eddie's New Dream, Missy P.*

Three entrants have solid early speed, which should lead to a fast pace. These 7-furlong races at Santa Anita are fairly quick, so expect no different here.

TOP CHOICE: #7 LIVINGMYBESTLIFE

We'll hope for a very minor upset with this horse who's won 2 straight impressively. She should like this distance and drew outside of all the other speed in the race, so she'll have the option to go to the front or sit just off Private Mission to her inside. She should have a big chance when turning for home.

MAJOR THREATS: #4 Private Mission, #5 Missy P.

Private Mission cuts back in distance while also taking a class drop. She's much better suited for this race. Missy P. returns off of a layoff while moving back to the dirt. She's worked well leading up to this race.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #1 Canoodling, #3 Kalypso

Canoodling moves up in class after running well against weaker company. She's ready to give this type of company a try. Kalypso returns off of a long layoff and can be part of the pace if she's ready to fire.

OTHERS: #2 Eddie's New Dream, #6 Brilliant Cut

These two looked outclassed against this field. It'll be hard for them to make an impact here.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

BET TO WIN: #7 Livingmybestlife - Confidence Level: 2.5 out of 5

BET TO PLACE: #4 Private Mission - Confidence Level: 2.5 out of 5

ACROSS THE BOARD PLAY: #5 Missy P. - Confidence Level: 2 out of 5

EXACTA: 4,5,7 BOX

TRIFECTA: 1,4,5,7 BOX

SUPERFACTA: 1,4,5,7 BOX

MULTI-RACE WAGER HORSES: 4,5,7

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$10 Win on #7 Livingmybestlife

EXOTIC WAGER: \$2 Exacta BOX 4,5,7



RACE No 10:

7 FURLONGS (DIRT)
3-YEAR-OLDS
\$300,000

RUNHAPPY MALIBU STAKES (G1)

OVERVIEW:

The main event should not disappoint, as we have several heavy hitters signed on in this spot. The big favorite will be Flightline, but this race won't be easy, with Dr. Schivel and Triple Tap ready to take him down. Will talent prevail, or will class prove strongest?

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A FAST PACE

Pure Speed: *Flightline*

Pressing Speed: *Team Merchants*

Stalkers: *Baby Yoda, Dr. Schivel*

Closers: *Timeless Bounty, Triple Tap, Stilleto Boy*

The pace should be quick with Flightline entered, but don't expect him to be pressured, as nobody in this race has that kind of early speed. It will simply be a matter of how far he can carry his speed.

TOP CHOICE: #5 FLIGHTLINE

We'll see if he can live up to the nearly impossible hype that he created after 2 incredible starts. His connections have remained patient with him, electing not to go to the Breeders' Cup and instead pointing toward this race all along. His first stakes start comes against a field that isn't light, but he should set the early pace and be very tough to run down.

MAJOR THREATS: #4 Dr. Schivel, #7 Triple Tap

Dr. Schivel has been great in every one of his starts, including a heartbreaking second in the Breeders' Cup Sprint (G1) last time out. Triple Tap also ran on Breeders' Cup weekend, winning an allowance race impressively. Like our top choice, he's ready to debut against stakes company in his third career start.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #3 Stilleto Boy

He cuts back in distance and takes a class drop after running fifth in the Breeders' Cup Classic (G1) last time out. This horse can hit the board at a big price, spicing up what looks to be an otherwise chalky race on paper.

OTHERS: #1 Baby Yoda, #2 Timeless Bounty, #6 Team Merchants

Simply put, this race looks to be too tough for this group. They'll need several rivals to not show up with their best efforts just to have a chance.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

BET TO WIN: #5 Flightline - Confidence Level: 4 out of 5

BET TO PLACE: #4 Dr. Schivel - Confidence Level: 4 out of 5

ACROSS THE BOARD PLAY: #7 Triple Tap - Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

EXACTA: 4,5/4,5,7

TRIFECTA: 4,5/3,4,5,7/3,4,5,7

SUPERFACTA: 3,4,5,7 BOX

MULTI-RACE WAGER HORSES: 5

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$20 Win on #5 Flightline

EXOTIC WAGER: \$2 Trifecta 4,5/3,4,5,7/3,4,5,7



RACE No 11:

AMERICAN OAKS (G1)

1 1/4 MILES (HILLSIDE TURF)
FILLIES 3-YEAR-OLDS
\$300,000

OVERVIEW:

A large field of 11 will take aim at the final Grade 1 of the year, including a few East Coast shippers. The locals look tough in this race as well, though, which leaves us with another competitive event. Let's see if we can get a price home and end the day with a bang.

RACE SHAPE: EXPECT A SLOW PACE

Pure Speed: *Burgoo Alley*

Pressing Speed: *Queen Goddess, Nicest*

Stalkers: *Single Soul, Eddie's New Dream, Ivy League*

Closers: *Core Values, Fluffy Socks, Going Global, Closing Remarks, Charges Dropped*

The pace should be fairly mild, with not much early speed signed to turn. Look for Burgoo Alley to set the early fractions without much pressure.

TOP CHOICE: #5 GOING GLOBAL

It's hard to go against a horse who's done nearly nothing wrong all year, winning 6 of 7 races. The only race that she lost this year came at a mile, where she got a poor trip and couldn't quite get the job done. This field could be a little trickier than what she's faced in the past, but she should be up for the challenge. This is one of the better turf fillies that we've seen in California in quite some time.

MAJOR THREATS: #1 Fluffy Socks, #4 Nicest, #7 Burgoo Alley

Fluffy Socks ships back to California after failing to get the job done at Del Mar last time out. Nicest will like this distance and gets John Velazquez to ride. #7 Burgoo Alley has won 3 of her last 5 while also hitting the board in her 2 defeats.

LONGSHOTS TO USE: #3 Closing Remarks

Great to see this horse back in California after running poorly at Keeneland last time out. She might be worth the risk at a price, as she nearly beat our top choice 2 starts back. She could rebound here with a solid effort.

OTHERS: #2 Core Values, #6 Charges Dropped, #8 Ivy League, #9 Queen Goddess, #10 Eddie's New Dream, #11 Single Soul

Anyone from this group making an impact in this spot would be a surprise. They need a lot of improving from a speed figure standpoint.

PICKS AND PLAYS:

BET TO WIN: #5 Going Global - Confidence Level: 4 out of 5

BET TO PLACE: #4 Nicest - Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

ACROSS THE BOARD PLAY: #1 Fluffy Socks - Confidence Level: 3 out of 5

EXACTA: 1,4,5 BOX

TRIFECTA: 1,4,5,7 BOX

SUPERFACTA: 1,4,5,7 BOX

MULTI-RACE WAGER HORSES: 1,3,4,5,7

STRAIGHT WAGER: \$20 Win on #5 Going Global

EXOTIC WAGER: \$.50 Cent Trifecta BOX 1,4,5,7

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SANTA ANITA

NON-STAKES ANALYSIS & PLAYS

Race 1: 11-4-7-10

#11 Crosby Beach nearly won last time out, finishing second at this level, and gets the services of Jose Ortiz. **#4 Blackadder** moves to the turf after 2 average dirt efforts. **#7 Lottery Pick** and **#10 Khantaro D'Oro** is into the mix now that the race has been taken off the turf.

Exacta: 4,7,11 BOX

Trifecta: 4,7,10,11 BOX

Multi-Race: 4,7,10,11

Suggested Bet: \$.50 Cent Trifecta BOX 4,7,10,11

Race 2: 1-5-6-3

#1 Escape Route has hit the board in 6 straight starts, including 3 straight close seconds. **#5 Sumo** can win if he rebounds from a poor effort last time out. **#6 Notre Dame** should be loose on the lead. **#3 Sea to Success** moves up in class after running well recently.

Exacta: 1,5/1,5,6

Trifecta: 1,5/1,3,5,6/1,3,5,6

Multi-Race: 1,5

Suggested Bet: \$5 Exacta 1,5/1,5,6

Race 3: 1-6-9-4

#1 Aloha Kitten won 2 in a row before a poor effort last time out. She gets Prat back aboard and should enjoy the downhill course. **#6 Nazuna** cuts back in distance, which should help. **#9 California Kook** has dirt form that looks better than the rest of this field. **#4 Honor America** also has dirt form that makes him competitive here.

Exacta: 1,6,9 BOX

Trifecta: 1,4,6,9 BOX

Multi-Race: 1,4,6,9

Suggested Bet: \$.50 Trifecta BOX 1,4,6,9

Race 4: 6-5-1-2

#6 Shaaz debuts for Bob Baffert, who wins 2-year-old races in bunches. He's been working lights out. **#5 Elector** debuts with Flavien Prat up for the ride. **#1 Hopkins** is the "other" Baffert debuting here. **#2 Patron d'Oro** is the best of the experienced horses. He earned a solid speed figure last time out.

Exacta: 5,6/1,5,6

Trifecta: 5,6/1,2,5,6/1,2,5,6

Multi-Race: 5,6

Suggested Bet: \$5 Exacta 5,6/1,5,6

Race 9: 1-2-6-8

#1 Fantail was close at this level last time out, losing by a nose. Flavien Prat is back aboard again. **#2 Super Game** was a winner over this track 2 starts back. **#6 Kalon** finally broke her maiden last time out at Del Mar. **#8 Another Eddie** looks like he could enjoy the surface switch to the dirt.

Exacta: 1,2,6 BOX

Trifecta: 1,2,6,8 BOX

Multi-Race: 1,2,6,8

Suggested Bet: \$.50 Cent Trifecta BOX 1,2,6,8



Santa Anita

MULTI-RACE ANALYSIS & PLAYS

RACE 1: \$0.50 PICK 5

4,7,10,11 with 1,5 with 1,4,6,9 with 5,6 with 2,7 = \$64

RACE 2: \$0.50 PICK 4

1,5 with 1,4,6,9 with 1,5,6 with 2,7 = \$24

RACE 7: \$0.50 PICK 5

6,7,8,9 with 1,4,5,7 with 1,2,6,8 with 5 with 1,3,4,5,7 = \$160

RACE 8: \$0.50 PICK 4

4,5,7 with 1,2,6,8 with 4,5 with 1,3,4,5,7 = \$60

